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THE USE OF SACRED SCRIPTURE IN MARIOLOGY

The Scriptures have always played an important rôle in Mariology. In the past, and often even today, the use of Scripture in Mariology meant explaining the texts of Scripture that have a Marian content, either all of them or a select group. The time has come when scholars realize that it is necessary to lay down the principles involved in the explanation of Marian texts. To cite but two examples, the outstanding Mariologist Father Roschini, in his introductory volume on Mariology, treats of the frequency with which Mary is spoken of in the Bible, of the various senses in which she is revealed there, of the probative value of these senses, and of the mode in which a doctrine may be revealed in a given passage.¹ Santiago Alameda, O.S.B., in a long article on both Scripture and tradition as sources of Mariology, speaks of the importance of Scripture for the Mariologist and of its use by him.²

True, these principles scarcely differ from those given in treatises on hermeneutics of Scripture and on the sources of theology. They have, however, a special application in Mariology. And today there is a particular need for insisting on these principles. The modern era has been styled the era of Mary. There is a gigantic movement on foot toward increasing devotion to Mary. This has received a forceful impetus from Pius XII's interest in Marian doctrines and devotion. But such devotion to Mary always needs to be properly orientated in the genuine sources of revelation if it is to remain sound.³ Accordingly, we shall treat in order the following, illustrating

¹ G. M. Roschini, O.S.M., *Mariologia* (Romae: 1947) 1, 54-67.

² Santiago Alameda, O.S.B., *La Mariologia y las fuentes de la revelación*, in *Estudios Marianos* 1 (1942), 41-71.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

the principles by Marian texts where possible: I. The presence of Mary in Scripture and the need of Scripture in Mariology. II. The senses in which Mary might be spoken of in the Sacred Text. III. The criteria for finding the genuine sense of a given passage. IV. The styles of presentation.

I. THE PRESENCE OF MARY IN SCRIPTURE AND THE NEED OF SCRIPTURE IN MARIOLOGY

Together with Christ, Mary is the center of the Divine Scriptures. "Together with Christ," because it is really for the sake of Christ and under Him that she is center at all. That Christ is the center of the Bible, also of the Old Testament, can be assumed as sufficiently proved elsewhere.⁴ That Mary is the center can be proved from the extrinsic argument of authority and from the intrinsic argument that she is the final scope and object of the Scriptures, spoken of often in them; and we can show the propriety of this from the fact that she is the Co-redemptrix and Mediatrix together with Christ.

Much as the ancient Christian writers delighted in speaking of Christ as the center of the Bible, they seem not to have mentioned this in regard to Mary. Still we can gather their mind on the matter from the fact that they saw Mary predicted not only literally in a number of passages but in many types as well. Their glorious praises of Mary are clothed in the typical language of the Scriptures. Pope Pius IX put this fact in crystal form in his Bull, *Ineffabilis Deus*, in these words:

This illustrious and singular triumph of the Virgin, together with her most excellent innocence, purity, holiness and freedom from every stain of sin, as well as the unspeakable abundance and greatness of all heavenly graces, virtues and privileges—these the Fathers saw in

⁴ Roschini, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-57; L. C. Fillion, S.S., *Study of the Bible* (New York: Kenedy, 1926), 26-36; idem, *The Life of Christ*, 3 vols. (St. Louis: Herder, 1928), 1, 209-224.

that ark of Noe, which was built by divine command and escaped entirely safe and sound from the common shipwreck of the whole world (Gen. vi. 9); also in that ladder which Jacob saw reaching from earth to heaven, by whose rungs the angels of God ascended and descended, and on whose top the Lord Himself leaned (Gen. xxviii. 12-13); also in that bush which Moses saw in the holy place burning on all sides, but which was not only not consumed nor injured in any way but grew green and blossomed beautifully (Ex. iii. 1-3); also in that impregnable tower before the enemy, from which hung a thousand bucklers and all the armor of the strong (Cant. iv. 12); also in that most august temple of God, which, radiant with divine splendors, is full of the glory of God (3 Kings viii. 10-11); and in very many other types of this kind. By them the Fathers have handed down the tradition that exalted things have been signally predicted of the Mother of God and of her spotless innocence and holiness which was never subject to any blemish. . . . Hence, the Fathers have never ceased to call the Mother of God the lily among thorns, or the earth entirely intact, virginal, undefiled, immaculate, ever-blessed and free from all corruption of sin, from which was formed the New Adam; or the flawless, brightest and most pleasant paradise of innocence, immortality and delights planted by God Himself and protected against all snares of the poisonous Serpent; or the incorruptible wood that the worm of sin had never corrupted; or the fountain ever clear and sealed by the power of the Holy Spirit; or the most divine temple; or the treasure of immortality; or the one and only daughter not of death but of life, the child not of anger but of grace.⁵

Pope Pius X wrote in a similar strain:

Hence, almost every time that the Scriptures prophesy of "the grace that was to appear among us" (Cf. Tit. ii. 11), the Redeemer of mankind is associated with His Mother. The Lamb, the Ruler of the earth, will be sent—but from the rock of the desert; the flower will blossom—but from the root of Jesse. . . . Noah, when shut up

⁵ *Mary Immaculate: The Bull "Ineffabilis Deus,"* transl. and annotated by Dominic J. Unger (Paterson, N. J.: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1946), pp. 11-12 and 14.

in the ark of salvation; Abraham, when prevented from slaying his son; Jacob, when seeing the ladder and the angels who were ascending and descending it; Moses, when amazed at the sight of the bush that burned but was not consumed; David, when he danced and sang while escorting the ark of God; Elias, when he looked at the little cloud that rose out of the sea—all these thought of Mary. Why, after Christ we find in Mary the end of the Law and the fulfillment of the figures and oracles.⁶

From the Scholastic age we have the concise and pregnant statement of St. Bernard of Toledo:

To conclude briefly, concerning her, and because of her, and on account of her, was all the Scripture made; on account of her the entire world was made; and she is full of God's grace, and through her man was redeemed, the Word was made flesh, God was made lowly, and man was made sublime.⁷

Secondly, from the intrinsic argument of the Scriptures themselves it is clear that Mary is their center, because, next to Christ, she is the final scope of the Scriptures and is the most important object in them. Mary is the final scope. St. Paul said, "Christ is the consummation (*telos*) of the Law (Rom. x. 4). Pius X applied that to Mary when he wrote: "Why, after Christ we find in Mary the end of the Law and the fulfillment of the figures and oracles."⁸ We saw how St. Bernard of Toledo worded the idea very succinctly and correctly: "Concerning her, and because of her, and on account of her, was all the Scripture made."

This truth is verified in the Scriptures themselves inasmuch as Mary, with Christ, is the center of Sacred History. All Sacred History before their coming leads up to them and after their coming looks back to them, or should we say, up

⁶ *Mary Mediatrix: Encyclical Letter "Ad diem illum,"* transl. and annotated by Dominic J. Unger (Paterson, N. J.: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1948), p. 15.

⁷ St. Bernard of Toledo, *In Salve Regina, sermo 3, n. 2* (ML. 184, 1069 D). Modern authors are treating this subject *ex professo*, cf. Roschini, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

⁸ *Mary Mediatrix, op. cit.*, p. 5.

to them. They are the golden and silver threads that hold together, in a beautiful pattern, the history of the Old and of the New Israel. They put unity and meaning into what would otherwise be but fragmentary history of an ancient people. This fact is summarized in the genealogies of Matthew (i. 1-17) and of Luke (iii. 23-38), even though neither might be giving the genealogy of Mary, because both lead up to the birth of Jesus from Mary.

After Christ Mary is the most important object of the Scriptures. They speak of her as having been in the eternal plan of God; they manifest her in the prophecies of the Old Dispensation; they describe her in the history of the New. It is not the scope of this paper to explain all the passages of Scripture that might deal with Mary. We shall merely indicate the main ones: Gen. iii. 15; Is. vii. 14, xi. 1; Mich. v. 2-3; Jer. xxxi. 22 (which is disputed); Prov. viii. 22-31; Eccl. xxiv. 5; Cant.; Ps. 44. Besides these there are numerous types as indicated in the citations of Pius IX and X. In the New Testament there is especially the infancy section in Luke 1-2 and Matthew 1-2; then, in the public life of Jesus, there are John ii. 1-10; Matt. xiii. 55; Mark vi. 3; Matt. xii. 46-50; Mark iii. 31-35; Luke viii. 19-21, xi. 27; John xix. 25-27; Acts i. 14. In St. Paul we have Rom. i. 3, ix. 5; Gal. iv. 4; and in the Apoc. xii. 1 ff.

It was quite proper for Mary to be mentioned so in the Scriptures. Since Jesus was to be born of her as Virgin Mother, a unique and miraculous event, we might expect that the Scriptures which tell of Jesus would also tell of His Mother, because mother and child are inseparable. Further, since the Lord's Mother was destined to be His consort in the salvation and glorification of mankind, we have all the more reason for expecting that she would be presented in the Scriptures associated in that work with her Son.⁹

⁹ Cf. Roschini, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

It follows necessarily, then, that God's Word is the primary constitutive source of Mariology, just as of all theology. What Leo XIII prescribed for theology holds equally for Mariology:

It is most desirable and necessary that the use of the Divine Scriptures should influence the entire science of theology and should almost be its soul. . . . Nor will this seem strange to one who considers that the Divine Books ought to have so eminent a position among the sources of revelation that without their assiduous study and use theology cannot be treated rightly or worthily.¹⁰

Our present Holy Father spoke of it as "the heaven-sent treasure [that] the Holy Church considers as the most precious source of doctrine on faith and morals . . . such an excellent source of Catholic revelation."¹¹ On this point, then, all Catholic scholars must and do agree—in theory. In practice, however, some slight the Scriptures at times. In Mariology, more than in other fields of theology, it is so easy to fall into sentimentalism. One needs the solid foundation of Holy Writ to keep the doctrine true and the devotion sound. What superficiality and sentimentalism there is in Marian literature is due to a great extent to a niggard knowledge and bad use of Scripture.¹²

It goes without saying that the Gospels are the principal Scriptural source for Marian doctrines. It is interesting to note that the infancy sections, which furnish much of our information on Mary come at least indirectly from Mary herself. In a sense she wrote her autobiography. The story of Luke was quite probably obtained during the two years that St. Paul was in prison at Caesarea (ca 57-59 A. D.), from

¹⁰ *Providentissimus Deus* (*Ench. Bibl.* n. 99); cf. n. 67: "Praeclarum catholicae revelationis fontem."

¹¹ *Divino afflante Spiritu*, Sept. 30, 1943 (*A.A.S.* 35 [1943] 297 and 300); the translation is from *N.C.W.C.*, nn. 1 and 4.

¹² Cf. Alameda, *art. cit.*, p. 47 f.

where Luke must have made trips through Palestine, especially to Jerusalem. It was particularly then that he must have made the careful investigations, in preparation for his Gospel, of which he speaks in his prologue. Some scholars are of the opinion that he received the information orally.¹³ Perhaps he obtained it from St. John, to whom Mary had been confided, and who scarcely left Palestine for Ephesus until after Paul's martyrdom. Mary, as Luke notes three times (ii. 19, 33, 50), marveled at, and carefully preserved in her heart, all the things that happened to her and Jesus, and pondered over them. It is not impossible for Luke to have met Mary herself. She would then have been about eighty years old.¹⁴ However, tradition has it that she lived only about fifteen years after Christ's death (till about 45-48 A. D.). So perhaps those scholars are more correct who claim the first chapters of Luke have the ear-marks of written documents, either Aramaic or Hebrew.¹⁵

Matthew's first two chapters, too, came from Mary at least indirectly. Some explain it thus. Mary's sister, Mary of Cleophas (?), was perhaps the first to notice the pregnancy of Mary and informed Joseph. He later told her of the angel's message to him. Still later she could have told the story to James the Less, her son. Since he became bishop of Jerusalem, he would have been the logical person to tell Matthew.¹⁶ But this seems a round about way. Mary was with all the Apostles after the Ascension as their teacher. Matthew could very easily have obtained the account from her. Or, could Mary not have given all the Apostles the entire story of Christ's

¹³ M. J. Lagrange, O.P., *L'Évangile selon S. Luc*, in *Études Bibliques* (Paris: Gabalda, 1927), p. LXXXIX; H. Simon, C.S.S.R.-G. G. Dorado, C.S.S.R., *Novum Testamentum* (Taurini: Marietti, 1947), p. 93 f.

¹⁴ Cf. A. Durand, S.J., *L'Enfance de Jésus-Christ* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1908), p. 138; Lagrange, *loc. cit.*; Alameda, *art. cit.*, p. 54; Simon-Dorado, *loc. cit.*

¹⁵ Cf. Durand, *op. cit.*, pp. 135-145; Fillion, *op. cit.*, 1, 236-240.

¹⁶ Cf. Alameda, *art. cit.*, p. 56.

virginal conception and birth and the early trials, perhaps through John with whom she lived? Later, from this Apostolic catechesis Matthew selected what fit his purpose.

PRECIOUS LITTLE

When all the passages of the Scriptures which speak of Mary are added up, they are not too plentiful. Christians always longed for more explicit information about their Savior's Mother and their own. Sainly scholars have commented on this paucity of information; for instance, St. Thomas of Villanova¹⁷ and St. Lawrence of Brindisi.¹⁸ The Gospels in particular, where one might expect more, are quite meager. Mark barely notices her; Matthew has a few bits of information; John mentions her twice; Luke has the infancy section and a few more references to her. A rather small number of texts. So small, in fact, that some non-Catholics are scandalized and complain that the Bible speaks little about Mary, and this little had better been omitted, because it is derogatory; cf. Matt. xii. 48; John ii. 4; Luke xi. 28.

Of course, we cannot agree with such complaints. Nor can we accept some other reasons that have been advanced to explain the dearth of Marian texts.¹⁹ There were those who

¹⁷ St. Thomas of Villanova, *Concio II, In Festo Nativitatis B.M.V.*, n. 7 (Augustae Vindelicorum, 1772), pp. 560-561: "Cogitanti mihi ac diu hesitanti, quid causae sit, quod cum Evangelistae de Joanne Baptista, et aliis Apostolis tam longum fecere tractatum, de Virgine Maria, quae vita et dignitate omnes antecedit, ita summatim percurrant historiam: cur (inquam) non traditum est memoriae, quomodo concepta, quomodo nata, quomodo nutrita, quibus moribus decorata, quibus virtutibus ornata, quid cum filio in humanis egerit, quomodo cum illo conversa sit, quomodo post ejus ascensionem cum Apostolis vixerit. Magna erant haec, et memoratu digna, et quae cum summa devotione a fidelibus legeretur, a populis amplecteretur. O (inquam), O Evangelistae, quare nos tanto gaudio vestro silentio privastis? Cur haec tam laeta, tam desiderata, tam jucunda conticulistis?" He goes on to explain that it was enough for the Evangelists to have said: "De illa natus est Jesus."

¹⁸ St. Lawrence of Brindisi, *Mariale*, Patavii, 1928, pp. 8-9; 590-591.

¹⁹ Cf. Roschini, *op. cit.*, p. 64, who refutes them.

ascribed it to a negligent oversight on the part of the hagiographers, or to mere chance. Such reasons are incompatible with the Providence of the principal Author of the Gospels. Others ascribed it the low esteem the Evangelists are supposed to have had of Mary. But this reason flatly contradicts the Gospels which clearly indicate that the Evangelists and early Christians had a very high esteem of the Mother of Jesus; cf Luke i. 28, 43, 46-55. Even Matt. xii. 46-50 and Luke xi. 28, are an implicit, high praise of Mary. Lastly, there is no positive proof that there was a danger of idolatry in worshiping Mary if her true dignity had been known too well. The Collyridian heresy which claimed Mary was a goddess as all the other goddesses in the pagan cults, cropped up only in the fourth century, and was certainly not based on a correct concept of her dignity as Mother of God.

By way of positive reasons, we maintain that the Provident God actually revealed about the Virgin Mother explicitly all that He willed to and that was necessary.²⁰ There was and is some obscurity; but God intended that, as the centuries rolled on, the Church would gradually unveil His Masterpiece. He planted the seed that should slowly sprout and blossom. Besides, though the passages are comparatively few in number, they are jam-packed with meaning. How much information, for instance, is not packed away in the first glad news of Gen. iii. 15! It contains all Mariology in a nut-shell.²¹ Many statements were not needed for God to tell us of Mary's dignity and rôle in the plan of salvation.²² Secondly, on the part of God, Mary stayed more in the background in this life so that she might be glorified more in heaven;²³ and, on the other

²⁰ Cf. T. Gallus, S.J., in a review of Roschini's *Mariologia*, in *Verbum Domini* 27 (1948), 186.

²¹ Compare what Leo XIII said in general about the obscurity of the Scriptures, in *Providentissimus Deus* (*Ench. Bibl.* n. 93).

²² Cf. St. Thomas of Villanova, *loc. cit.*

²³ Cf. St. Lawrence of Brindisi, *op. cit.*, p. 590.

hand, her' obscurity would be a lesson for us on the vain-glory of worldly things, as the saints have noted.

On the part of the Sacred Authors there were these reasons. Their writings were all written for special occasions and/or with a definite scope in mind. The important issue in the new religion about which they wrote was Christ. His messiahship and divinity. And so mention of Mary would be only occasional and at times even incidental, as was called for by the scope. And even though she was meant to be the helpmate and consort of the Savior, still she would not be spoken of too much, because God and the Sacred Writers accommodated themselves to the conditions of the times, when women did not have an official position whether in civic or religious life.²⁴ We do not wish to insist too much on this argument, because Christ really willed to exalt womanhood and manifest her dignity through His Mother.

Another reason could have been that Mary's main tasks in the life of Jesus was to be mother, and that a virgin mother. Both these facts can be stated rather completely in a few words; and they are too delicate a matter about which to be profuse. As to Mary's personal and social life, that was quite hidden and interior. Even Christ's many years of hidden life were covered by a few strokes of Luke's pen. And Mary's interior life—well, that is rather difficult to describe, and in any case it did not seem to fit the scope of the public work of Christ, which the Evangelists were describing. It is a fact that the few times that she did appear in public in her capacity of Mediatrix and Mother of Christians are recorded by John. Finally, the Evangelists who wrote while Mary was still alive, might have passed over in silence her sublime part in the Gospel, to spare her humility.²⁵ St. John alone wrote, for certain, after Mary's death, and he paints her in her office of Mediatrix and Spiritual Mother. St. Luke also writes to her

²⁴ Cf. Gallus, *loc. cit.*

²⁵ Cf. Roschini, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

praise, but if she was still alive, he could do so, because he was writing for a people far removed from where Mary was.

II. THE MARIAN SENSES OF SCRIPTURE

Today practically every scientific book or article that proves some Marian doctrine from Scripture becomes involved in a discussion of the senses in which the passage has been, or is to be, taken. So we think it advisable to review the matter of the senses of Scripture, with emphasis on certain points and illustrations from Marian texts. Precisely at present much is being written in an attempt to clarify these concepts.²⁶

A "sense" is a mental concept that an author expresses in a given phrase or sentence. All scholars are agreed that concepts can be expressed either directly by the words or indirectly by the object that the words express. So they divide the Scriptural senses into two main classes: the direct and the indirect. The direct sense is more commonly known as the literal sense, because it is expressed by the letter of the words. The indirect sense is also known as the typical sense, and as the spiritual sense,²⁷ because it is a more profound and hidden sense. However, the term spiritual sense is broader, including all but the literal explicit sense.

1. LITERAL SENSES

LITERAL PROPER AND FIGURATIVE SENSES

The literal sense can be divided in several ways. First, according as the words convey the concept in their proper meaning or in a transferred meaning, it can be divided into the

²⁶ Cf. J. Coppens, *Les harmonies des deux Testaments*, in *Nouv. Rev. Théol.* 70 (1948), 799-810; 71 (1949), 3-38; 337-366; 477-496: very interesting and enlightening articles. For a general treatment of the senses see *Institutiones Biblicae* (Romae, 1937), pp. 339-359; H. Simon, C.S.S.R.-J. Prado, C.S.S.R., *Praelectiones Biblicae* (Taurini: Marietti, 1938), pp. 195-213.

²⁷ *Divino afflante Spiritu* (A.A.S. 35 [1943], 310 f.; *N.C.W.C.*, nn. 25-27); St. Thomas, *Quodlibeta*, 7, 14, ad 3; 15; *Summa* 1, 1, art. 10, ad 1.

literal proper and literal figurative. The literal proper sense is the common and natural sense for expressing an idea: "Behold the Virgin shall conceive and bear a son" (Is. vii. 14). The literal figurative sense is had when the words are not intended to express their proper object but another object to which the words are transferred: "He shall crush thy head" (Gen. iii. 15), said of Christ's crushing the power of Satan. In every figurative sense there is an underlying basic or proper sense. In the above passage we imply that a serpent's head can be crushed, thus destroying the serpent. There must be some similarity, some point in common, at least intentionally, between the basic and figurative objects or else the figurative sense would be impossible. The basic sense is not intended formally by the author, only materially, for the sake of conveying the figurative sense.²⁸ One might speak of an allusion to the basic object. Compare the fuller and typical sense below, in which both the basic and the spiritual objects are intended formally. And since this basic object in the figurative sense is not intended formally by the author, it is not a strict Scriptural, inspired sense. The knowledge of its existence by the Holy Spirit and the hagiographer does not make it inspired. Still one might deduce some revelation from it.

Only recently some authors have attempted an explanation of Gen. iii. 15 by the figurative or allegorical sense.²⁹ They claim that Eve must be that woman in some way since she alone is in the context; still according to tradition Eve is not intended directly by the Holy Spirit, only Mary is. Consequently, Eve is meant only as the basis for a figure about Mary. These authors seem to forget that there must be similarity between Eve and Mary in point of comparison, namely, a woman

²⁸ St. Thomas, *Summa* 1, 1, 10, ad 3. Cf. Simon-Prado, *op. cit.*, p. 201.

²⁹ E.g., J. F. Bonnefoy, O.F.M., *Le Mystère de Marie selon le Protévangile et l'Apocalypse* (Paris: Vrin, 1949), 192 pp.; T. Gallus, S.J., *Sensus allegorico-dogmaticus, sensus literalis Protoevangelii* (Gen. iii. 15), in *Verbum Domini* 27 (1949), 33-43.

who is at total enmity with Satan, which tradition denies unanimously for Eve. And if they take woman and the animal serpent in the natural order as enemies, they are introducing something ridiculous into the solemn text. In inverse order, others speak of an allusion to Mary in Apoc. xii. 1; namely, Mary is supposed to be the woman as a figure of the Church, about whom alone the Holy Spirit wished to make an assertion.³⁰

LITERAL EXCLUSIVE AND INCLUSIVE

There is a second way of dividing the literal sense. God is the principal author of the Scriptures Who can foreknow the future; in fact, He sees all things as present. He can, therefore, by one and the same words, intend several objects which are similar and differ only in degree of perfection. There can, therefore, be a literal exclusive sense and a literal inclusive sense. Both of these may be either proper or figurative.

In the literal exclusive sense only one object is intended. "Behold the Virgin shall conceive and bear a son" (Is. vii. 14), refers only to Mary and that in a literal sense. This one object can, of course, include more members, but all must be equal. This would be the case in any universal statement: "*Beatus vir qui timet Dominum.*" For the rest, the concept and existence of the literal exclusive sense causes no difficulty, even in prophetic passages, if we admit the possibility of prophecy.

The literal inclusive sense, also known as the fuller or eminent sense, can be defined as the Scriptural sense which, by the intention of at least the principal author, formally and literally expresses not only a basic object but also a second object, which, though distinct from the basic object, is similar and related to it.³¹ By way of explanation, the principal au-

³⁰ Roland E. Murphy, O.Carm., *An Allusion to Mary in the Apocalypse*, in *Theological Studies* 10 (1949), 565-573, a study of Cardinal Newman's interpretation.

³¹ See *Institutiones Biblicae*, pp. 354 f.; Coppens, *art. cit.*, especially 71

thor, at least, intends both objects *formally*, and so this fuller sense differs from the figurative or allegorical sense, in which the figurative object alone is intended formally. The fuller sense is a *literal* sense, because the words themselves directly express not only the basic object but also the fuller object. At least the principal author sees both objects directly through the words. In this the fuller sense differs from the typical sense, in which the words express directly only the basic objects, and this in turn reflects the typical object.

To illustrate, in Ps. viii. 7: "*Gloria et honore coronasti eum*" was intended in the literal sense of the ideal man in paradise, but in a more complete sense of the Ideal Man, Christ. In contrast, "Not a bone of him shall you break" (Ex. xii. 46), refers literally only to the basic object, the lamb eaten by the Jews at the Passover. But indirectly, through this basic object, it refers to the Paschal Lamb, Christ (John xix. 36).

The basic and fuller objects must be *similar*, else both could not be expressed by the same words in the literal sense. This is, then, not a case of pluriliteralism, of a double literal sense, in the technical meaning of that word, because in pluriliteralism the same words express two or more objects that are *disparate*; e. g., *lege* meaning "by the law" and "read" (imperative) in the same passage. The fact of such pluriliteralism in the Bible is commonly denied, and even the possibility is denied by some authors.³² On the other hand, the basic and fuller objects are not identical in every respect. If they were, we would have a universal concept, not a fuller sense. It is im-

(1949), 3-38, with the up-to-date bibliography; P. de Ambroggi, *Il senso letterale pieno nelle divine Scritture*, in *La Scuola Cattolica* 60 (1932, n. 2), 296-312.

³² Cf. *Institutiones Biblicæ*, pp. 344-350. Recently Antonine De Guglielmo, O.F.M., *Dan. v. 25—An Example of a Double Literal Sense*, in *Cath. Bibl. Quart.* 11, 1949, 202-206, claimed to have found a genuine case of pluriliteralism in the third word (*pāras*) of the handwriting on the wall, as referring, by a double play on words, to the division (*parisath*) of the empire and its subjection to the Persians (*prs*).

portant to realize that the basic and fuller objects must be similar in point of comparison; but they need not be similar in other respects. For instance, the woman of Gen. iii. 15 cannot be Eve as basic object and Mary as fuller object, because according to the unanimous tradition Eve and Mary are not similar, but total opposites, in the point of comparison, which is absolute enmity against, and complete victory over, Satan.

This similarity, however, is not based solely on the Divine Author's intention of considering the basic and fuller objects related, as is the case in the typical sense. No, the basic object has an intrinsic relation to the fuller object. And the relation is either in the physical order of causality (e.g., Abraham's seed in general to Christ, the Seed), or in the moral order, inasmuch as both belong to the same moral person (the prophets to Christ, the Prophet). In both cases there is a kind of germinal development: the basic object gradually unfolds or evolves into the fuller object. Moreover, this intrinsic relation is based on exemplary and final causality. Usually the fuller object is the exemplar and final cause of the basic object (e.g., Christ the King, of King Solomon in 2 Sam. vii. 14). But, contrariwise, the basic object may be the exemplar and final cause of the fuller object (e.g., Increase Wisdom of Incarnate Wisdom in Prov. viii. 22-31; and Mary of the Church in Apoc. xii. 1-18).

Since the final cause is more perfect than the means, it is the final cause that verifies the words more perfectly. And since the fuller object is not always the final cause, it is not true that the second object of the fuller sense is always the more perfect, and that for this reason we speak of a fuller sense. The term fuller sense is justified by the fact that the second object, though less perfect, gives to the words an additional, more complete, meaning.

The second object may be *included* in the basic object in various ways, thus begetting various species of the inclusive

or fuller sense. First, the basic object may be a *collective concept* including an individual or another collection. For example, the seed of Abraham (Gen. xxii. 18) has as basic object the posterity of Abraham, in which is included Christ as the very prominent Seed of Abraham and Savior of the rest (cp. Gal. iii. 16; iv. 4). Israel of the Old Law is the bride in Cantic, including in the fuller sense the Church. Many exegetes and theologians admit this kind of fuller sense in practice in their explanations of the blessings of Abraham.³³ Secondly, the basic object can be a *common noun* referring to a class of individuals and including one very special member. For example, the prophet that is promised in Deut. xviii. 18 is most likely all the prophets but includes in a very special way the Prophet, Christ. Thirdly, the basic object can be an *individual*, expressed by a common or proper noun, that includes another individual or a collection. For instance, the ideal man of Ps. viii. includes Christ the Ideal Man; the king of 2 Sam. vii. 14 is Solomon including Christ; the woman of Apoc. xii. 1 is Mary including the Church.

Fourthly, there seem to be cases of the fuller sense that are not covered altogether by the three classes above. At times some notes are added in the description of the basic object which do not fit the basic object at all, but only the fuller object. There is, in other words, a commingling, a compenetration, of the two objects in the one description. Hence the term *compenetrative sense*. This is possible and is not an abuse of language, because God, in His eternal act sees all the notes of both objects in the same picture and His prophet, too, can see them in the one vision. So the compenetrative sense

³³ Cf. Coppens, *art. cit.*, 71 (1949), p. 29: he, too, gives three kinds of fuller sense, but according to a different basis. His historico-typical sense seems to be equivalent to our first kind. D. Buzy, S.C.J., *Un problème d'hermeneutique sacrée: sens plural, plénier et mystique*, in *Année Théol.* 5 (1944), 385-408, also admits this class of fuller sense; it is his "comprehensive fuller sense."

differs from the simple fuller sense inasmuch as in the latter the notes given are all true first of the basic object, then of the second object, literally; whereas in the compenetrative sense some notes are not true of the basic object at all. The compenetrative sense has been admitted by many authors.³⁴ Already St. Thomas expressed the principle involved thus: “. . . inseruntur quaedam quae excedunt conditionem illius rei gestae, ut animus eleuetur ad figuratum.”³⁵ And it seems the principle must be admitted. However, the existence of this sense in a given passage must be duly proved. Often there might seem to be a case of it, whereas it is really the literal exclusive sense with some figurative expressions; e.g., Ps. xlv. : cix. ; ii. ; Is. vii. 14.

The second *object* of the fuller sense may be Christ or Mary or the Church or any element in the Church. Its basic object is usually in the Old Testament with its fulfillment in the New. But the basic object may be in the New as well. Usually the fuller object is separated from the basic in time; but that does not seem to be essential. Both may be contemporary, or practically so, e.g., Mary and the Church in Apoc. xii.

The fuller sense exists “by the intention of at least the principal author.” This is of utmost importance. The fuller sense is not a mere accommodation of a later author; it exists in the basic passage from the time it was first written.³⁶ Neither is it a new sense that is put into an old passage by reworking it; nor is it merely new light thrown on a text by

³⁴ Cf. Cuthbert Lattey, S.J., *The Emmanuel Prophecy: Isaias 7: 14*, in *Cath. Bibl. Quart.* 8 (1946), 369-376; idem, *The term “ha alma” in Is. vii. 14*, in *Cath. Bibl. Quart.* 9 (1947), 147-154; John Schildenberger, O.S.B., *Weissagung und Erfüllung*, in *Biblica* 24 (1943), 107-124; 205-230; Coppens, *art. cit.*, 71 (1949), 28 f., who makes this his first kind of fuller sense, but weakest.

³⁵ St. Thomas, *Introd. in Psalmos.*

³⁶ Coppens, *art. cit.*, 71, 1949, 26.

new discoveries, historic or theologic, as if it were not even objective revelation.³⁷

There are those who question the existence of the fuller sense as a genuine Scripture sense, because the human author does not seem to have had knowledge of it.³⁸ On the other hand, many scholars invoke it as a Scripture sense for Marian passages. So it is necessary to argue the point more fully. We hope to prove from Leo XIII and from tradition that the fuller sense really exists as a genuine Scripture sense, and we shall show by theological reasons that it is compatible with the concept of inspiration. Pope Leo XIII, *Providentissimus Deus*, wrote as follows:

For, with the Holy Spirit as author, the words of the Bible are made to contain many things that completely surpass the penetrating power (*vim aciemque*) of the human mind, namely, divine mysteries and many other matters related to them; and this is sometimes done by a kind of fuller and more hidden sense (*ampliore quadam et reconditiore sententia*) than the letter seems to express and the rules of hermeneutics seem to point out.³⁹

The Pope is not speaking of the accommodated sense but of a strict Scriptural sense, which, namely, has "the Holy Spirit as author." Besides, he treats of the accommodated sense a few paragraphs later.⁴⁰ Nor is he speaking of the typical sense, because he says the *words* of the Bible themselves express this sense, and he treats of the typical sense in the next sentence. If he says "than the letter seems to express," he is not denying that the letter expresses it but assert-

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 27-28.

³⁸ R. Bierberg, *Does Sacred Scripture Have a Sensus Plenior?*, in *Cath. Bibl. Quart.* 10 (1949), 182-195. Coppens does not seem to be sure of himself on this point; cf. pp. 17-22; 494: it seems he would classify it as typical as soon as the Sacred Author is not aware of the fuller object.

³⁹ Cf. *Ench. Bibl.*, n. 93.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, n. 97.

ing that only at first sight it would seem not to express it. Moreover, he does not mean that this sense escapes all rules of hermeneutics, because then it could not be known at all. It escapes merely the rational criteria. Nor is he speaking of the implicit or consequent sense, because there is question here of the mode in which these are fuller, not of the contents.⁴¹

Tradition is quite in favor of the fuller sense as a Scriptural sense. Though the ancient writers did not use the term "fuller" sense, or had perhaps no special term for it at all, they were aware of its existence and applied it very often in interpretations. St. Jerome has a number of passages in which he clearly admits it.

This seems to be partly fulfilled under Zorobabel and Esdras; but the fullness of the prophecy refers to the time of Christ.⁴² Manifestly the future restitution of the people of Israel is predicted, which was literally fulfilled partially under Zorobabel and Josue the high priest and Esdras; but according to the spiritual meaning the restitution to be achieved in Christ *more truly and perfectly* is described.⁴³ Even though they (Pss. xlv. and lxxi.) exceed the happiness and powers of Solomon since they belong to the prophecy about Christ and the Church, they are nevertheless in the historical sense written about Solomon.⁴⁴

St. John Chrysostom unmistakably and precisely explains Ps. viii. of Christ in the fuller sense. In his commentary on

⁴¹ Benedict XV, *Spiritus Paraclitus* (*Ench. Bibl.*, n. 499), having spoken of the literal sense and the patristic allegoric or accommodated sense, added: ". . . ad plenum ex Sacris Libris sensum eruendum, breviter exponemus." Then he continued by explaining the literal and the spiritual sense. So by "full sense" he meant the literal plus the spiritual, and not the technical "fuller sense." Of course, he does not exclude the "fuller sense" either. Again, Pius XII, *Divino afflante Spiritu* (*A.A.S. cit.*, p. 311), treats of the literal sense and the spiritual sense. His spiritual sense is that which "prefigures," and so is the typical sense, as also Father Vaccari explains (*Periodica* 33 (1944), 124).

⁴² In *Jerem.* 31: 23 (*ML.* 24, 1069).

⁴³ In *Jerem.* 16: 14 f. (*ML.* 24, 953).

⁴⁴ In *Ecclesiasten* (*ML.* 25, 712).

Hebr. ii. 5-10 he says that "these words, even though spoken of common human nature, are nevertheless principally (kyriōteron) appropriate in Christ according to the flesh."⁴⁵ Furthermore, according to the thorough study of Father Vaccari,⁴⁶ the Antiochian Fathers admitted the fuller sense in their doctrine about *theoria*. Moreover, all the Fathers who tell us that wisdom in Prov. viii. 22-31 is not only Increase Wisdom but also Incarnate Wisdom, are using the fuller sense, because there can be no question here of a typical sense. See especially St. Athanasius.⁴⁷

St. Thomas certainly applied the fuller sense to Ps. viii., both in his commentary on the Psalm and on Hebr. ii. 5-10. He writes: "Licet totum genus humanum visitaverit, specialiter tamen illum hominem assumptum in unitate hypostasis."⁴⁸ From then on, and especially in more modern times, the existence of the fuller sense as a true sense of Scripture has been held quite commonly.⁴⁹ Special mention must be given to the Professors of the Biblical Institute of Rome who espouse it for Ps. viii., and as a possible sense for Ps. xv., in the introductory notes to these Psalms in the new Latin Psalter. It is certain, then, from this universal use, confirmed by the Pope's pronouncement, that the fuller sense is a genuine, inspired, Scripture sense.

⁴⁵ *MG.* 63, 38.

⁴⁶ A. Vaccari, S.J., *La "theoria" nella scuola esegetica di Antiochia*, in *Biblica* 1 (1920), 3-36. Coppens agrees with Vaccari, cf. *art. cit.*, 71 (1949), 21 f.

⁴⁷ Cf. Dominic J. Unger, O.F.M.Cap., *A Special Aspect of Athanasian Soteriology*, in *Franciscan Studies* 6 (1946), 35-39.

⁴⁸ St. Thomas, *In Epist. S. Pauli (Opera Omnia, Parmae 1862)*, *In Hebr.* 2: 6, *lect.* 2. In his excellent article on *The Place of Holy Scripture in the Theology of St. Thomas* (*Thomist* 10 (1947), 398-422), J. van der Ploeg, O.P., shows how St. Thomas, in his idea of a double literal sense, was a follower of the Antiochian *theoria* (p. 416).

⁴⁹ P. de Ambroggi, *art. cit.*; with bibliography; A. Fernández, S.J., *Institutiones Biblicae*, pp. 354-355; Coppens, *art. cit.*, especially the second installment in 71 (1949), 3-38.

Those who deny this, do so because they claim it does not satisfy the concept of inspiration. At first sight the objection seems sound. However, we can show that a sense can be inspired even though only the principal author has knowledge of it. First, we must hold that the typical sense is a truly inspired sense precisely because the Holy Spirit, the principal author, intended it, and even though he alone intended it. In this respect Pius XII wrote in *Divino afflante Spiritu*:

Not all spiritual sense is excluded from the Sacred Scripture. For what was said and done in the Old Testament was ordained and disposed by God with such consummate wisdom, that things past prefigured in a spiritual way those that were to come under the new dispensation of grace. Wherefore, the exegete, just as he must search out and expound the literal meaning of the words, intended and expressed by the sacred author, so also must he do likewise for the spiritual sense, provided it is clearly intended by God. For God alone could have known this spiritual meaning and have revealed it.⁵⁰

By spiritual sense the Pope means the typical sense, according to Father Vaccari,⁵¹ because he speaks of things prefiguring the Messianic sense. It is an inspired, a Scriptural sense, because it is "clearly intended by God," and is "a sense of Sacred Scripture." So, *a pari*, if the typical sense is Scriptural and inspired because intended by God, the fuller sense is, too.

Secondly, the doctrines formally implicitly contained in Scripture (e.g., the Immaculate Conception in Gen. iii. 15) are considered as belonging to the inspired revelation by the Church. But no one will hold that the hagiographer was always aware of all such implicit senses. So again, *a pari*, the fuller sense is inspired revelation even though only the Divine Author was explicitly aware of it.

It is, therefore, for us neither to deny the existence of the

⁵⁰ Pius XII, *A.A.S.* 35 (1943), 311.

⁵¹ *Periodica* 33 (1944), 124.

literal fuller sense nor to discard the concept of inspiration, but to try to reconcile the two. And even if *we* for the present cannot see *how* to reconcile them, we must hold fast to both facts. Now, according to Leo XIII's definition of inspiration, the human author must write all and only what the Holy Spirit wants him to.⁵² And such a passage is, then, inspired entirely with all its concepts, even though he does not comprehend all of the hidden concepts. In other words, he may not deviate from the mind of the Holy Spirit, but he need not exhaust it either. On the other hand, the Holy Spirit is the author of everything that the sacred writer asserts, enunciates and insinuates, according to the Pontifical Biblical Commission.⁵³ But from this it does not follow that the human author had to have an adequate knowledge of all the concepts formally contained in the passage.⁵⁴ He is still instrumental author of all those concepts intended by the Divine Author. The Divine Author did not express any concepts except through the words written by the instrumental author. St. Thomas, when treating of prophecy, laid down this principle: "in prophetic revelation the mind of the prophet is moved by the Holy Spirit as an instrument that is defective in relation to the principal agent . . . (and) because the mind of the prophet is a defective instrument, even the true prophets did not cognize all that the Holy Spirit intended in their visions and words."⁵⁵ Authors have generally applied this same principle to the case of the fuller sense.⁵⁶

⁵² Cf. *Providentissimus Deus* (*Ench. Bibl.*, n. 110).

⁵³ Cf. *Pont. Comm. Bibl.* 18 Jun. 1915: ". . . omne id, quod hagiographus asserit, enuntiat, insinuat, retineri debet assertum, enuntiatum, insinuatum a Spiritu Sancto" (*Ench. Bibl.*, n. 433).

⁵⁴ Fernández, *loc. cit.*; P. Straeter, S.J., *Katholische Marienkunde* (Paderborn: Schoeningh 1947), 1, 16; Aug. Bea, S.J., *ibid.*, p. 55 f.

⁵⁵ *Summa*, 2-2, 173, 4.

⁵⁶ C: Pesch, S.J., *De Inspiratione* (Friburgi B.: Herder 1925) nn. 499-501; Aug. Bea, S.J., *De Scripturae Sacrae Inspiratione* (Romae 1935) 55 f.; Coppens, *art. cit.*, 71 (1949), 17.

So even though the human author would not have had a knowledge of the fuller object, it would still be inspired. This is not an abuse of language, because even among men words and their concepts have a certain amount of elasticity; they have more meaning for some than for others. An author may express a truth that will be better understood by others, and though he does not grasp all those hidden concepts, he would not deny them either if disclosed to him.⁵⁷

As a matter of fact, it seems certain that the hagiographer was often privileged with the knowledge of the fuller sense. And really there was no reason for withholding this in general on the score of being too perfect a knowledge for those times. After all, God communicated the knowledge of the exclusive Messianic passages. In particular cases God withheld the knowledge of the fuller sense with the intention of having it unveiled gradually.⁵⁸ The Antiochian writers believed the hagiographers had this knowledge, and they explained it by the *theoria*. Father Vaccari sums up the *theoria* under four points: it always supposes the literal sense; it presents to the mind a second object; the literal basic object is related to the second as something less to something greater; both objects are seen together by the prophet, though in a different manner.⁵⁹ Lastly, it seems to be the mind of tradition in explaining some passages, as Ps. viii., that the psalmist foresaw the fuller object.

Someone might admit that the fuller sense is Scriptural but object that it does not differ from the typical sense.⁶⁰ True, even those who admit the fuller sense, find it difficult at times to decide in a given passage whether it contains a typical or a fuller sense. But the close relation between the two does not argue identity. A doubt could exist only in the cases where

⁵⁷ Cf. Coppens, *ibid.*, pp. 22 f.

⁵⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 14.

⁵⁹ Vaccari, *art. cit.*, *Biblica*, 1 (1920), 3-36.

⁶⁰ Cf. Bierberg, *art. cit.*, p. 188.

an individual concept includes an individual, or a collective includes a collection. Consult below on the typical sense. The cases where a collective or common noun includes an individual are clearly not to be taken in a typical sense. Besides, in all cases of the fuller sense, theoretically, the words themselves express the fuller object; not so in the typical sense. So they should not be confused.

PROBATIVE VALUE

Since we have finished the analysis of the literal senses, we might ask what their probative value is. The literal exclusive sense, whether proper or figurative, has probative value independently of any other text, because it expresses only one object and that literally. But the literal inclusive sense must always be proved first by further revelation. It is a kind of hidden sense and cannot be divined from the text itself. Since the basic object is already present, our mind would never suspect another object. So there must be a new revelation to inform us of this fuller sense. But then the general truth of the fuller sense will be known first through the new revelation. Still, it seems, the fuller sense can give us details that are not given later. For instance, if Gen. iii. 15 were true of Mary in the fuller sense, further revelation would point out that the text is Marian, but her complete victory over Satan would be foretold more clearly and distinctly in Gen. iii. 15 than elsewhere in the Bible.

2. THE TYPICAL SENSE

The typical sense is had when an object (person, thing, action, called the type), of which the words are literally, directly true, and which has its own reason for existence, refers, by positive divine intention to another object (person, thing, action, called the antitype), with which it has some similarity;

that is, the words refer to the second object indirectly, figuratively.

To explain, the basic object of the typical passage must be a real, historic object that has *its own reason for existing*; e.g., the manna (Ex. xvi.). This historic reality of the basic object, which is formally intended by the author, distinguishes the typical sense from the figurative sense, in which only the figurative object is intended formally. If the object is real, but exists merely for the sake of being a type, we have a species of the typical sense called the symbolic sense (cf. e.g., Is. xx. 2; Jer. xiii. 1-11).

In the typical sense the words express the typical object only indirectly. Literally they express only the basic object, which in turn images the typical object. This can be done in two ways: the words can fit the antitype either figuratively, or properly. When they fit the antitype figuratively, we should like to call it a figurative typical sense; e.g., the description of the manna as a type of the Eucharist; or of the paschal lamb, of Christ. When the words fit the antitype in the proper sense, we would call it the proper typical sense; e.g., Melchisedech as a type of Christ the Priest.

Some scholars seem doubtful about this last case, and wonder whether it is really not a fuller sense.⁶¹ Or at least they are not certain about the differentiating principle. The distinguishing point is certainly not the knowledge of the hagiographer, inasmuch as it would be a fuller sense when the hagiographer cognized the second object, but a typical sense when he did not.⁶² For in that case even the figurative typical sense could be a fuller sense, but no one would ever class such as a fuller sense. Nor can the theoretic distinction, namely, that in the fuller sense the words directly touch the second object, whereas in the typical sense only indirectly, be of help, because the

⁶¹ Cf. Coppens, *art. cit.*, 71 (1949), 360.

⁶² A. M. Dubarle, O.P., *Le sens spirituel de l'Écriture*, in *Rev. de scien. phil. et théol.* 31 (1947), 41-72; Coppens, *loc. cit.*

question is precisely whether, when the words fit both objects in the proper sense, e.g., the priesthood of Melchisedech and Christ, they must express the second object directly, or whether they can express it only indirectly. So it seems the true distinguishing point is whether there is a germinal relation between the basic and second object or not. If there is, we have a fuller sense; if there is not, we have a typical sense. The case of Melchisedech seems clear. Though the words fit both him and Christ in the proper sense, no one would consider this a case of the fuller sense. And the precise reason seems to be because there is no germinal relation between the two. There is only similarity intended by God. In contrast, between Solomon and Christ as kings there is a germinal relation, not merely a similarity, which is founded in the fact that both belong to the same royal line, which will be perfected in Christ.

Only *by positive divine intention* does the type image the antitype. They are similar, but there is no intrinsic relation that would connect the two; the relation is entirely extrinsic, established by the divine intention. So if this divine intention is lacking, there is no true Scripture type, only an accommodation, according to the express teaching of Pius XII.⁶³ Whether the antitype was intended also by the hagiographer depends on whether he had it revealed to him or not.

The type and antitype must *have some similarity*. In the proper typical sense the similarity is in the proper sense. In the figurative typical sense, it is metaphorical. The antitype need not be similar in all respects. St. Jerome wrote of this:

Qui ex parte typi fuerunt Domini Salvatoris, non omnia, quae fecisse narrantur, in typo ejus fecisse credenda sunt. Typis enim partem indicat: quod si totum praecedat in typo, jam non est typus, sed historiae veritas appellanda est.⁶⁴

⁶³ Pius XII, *loc. cit.*

⁶⁴ *In Os. 2: 1-2 (ML. 25, 916).*

But it is essential that the type be similar to the antitype in the point(s) of comparison, which is (are), namely, disclosed by the later revelation of the antitype itself. For instance, since Matthew argues from Is. vii. 14 to the virginal conception of the Savior, virginal conception is precisely the point of comparison, and if there is to be any value to his argument, supposing a typical sense, the historic type of the virgin of Is. vii. 14 would have to be a virgin while mother. And such a woman has not been revealed.

However, it is true that notes may be added in the description of the type which fit only the antitype, and then we have a *compenetrative typical sense*, similar to the *compenetrative fuller sense*. But here, too, we must not jump to conclusions and think that when there are notes that fit only the antitype, we have the *compenetrative typical sense*. No, it may be the exclusive literal sense with some things described in literal figurative language, as in Pss. ii. cix. xlv.

St. Paul in Rom. v. 14 called Adam the type of Christ and then proceeded to explain by describing Adam as the exact opposite of Christ. Ever since, Christian writers and scholars have admitted *typology by opposition*. In other words, the type and antitype are not similar but direct opposites. What is said historically in the Old Testament is literally true of the type, but, by divine intention, the exact opposite is true of the antitype. Now this parallel between Adam and Christ tradition, from the beginning and unanimously, applied to Eve and Mary, and drew it out in beautiful and striking contrasts. St. Justin began it and St. Irenaeus perpetuated it.⁹⁵ In this matter, however, it is necessary to guard against an erroneous application; for instance, to claim that Eve is the type of Mary by opposition according to tradition, and then

⁹⁵ St. Justin, *Dialogus cum Tryphone*, n. 100 (MG. 6, 710-712); St. Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses* 3, 22, 4; 5, 19, 1 (MG. 7, 958; 1175 f.; Harvey 2, 123 f.; 375 f.); cf. Dominic J. Unger, O.F.M.Cap., *S. Irenaeus magister noster in interpretando Protoevangelio*, in *Verbum Domini* 27 (1949), 28-32.

to conclude that Eve is the woman of Gen. iii. 15 as type of Mary,⁶⁶ is objectively absolute nonsense, because Eve would then have to verify the words historically, namely, she would have to be completely victorious over Satan; but Mary would be the direct opposite, vanquished by Satan. Yes, the Fathers did speak of Eve as the type of Mary by opposition, but not in verse 15 alone. Mary alone is the woman of Gen. iii. 15 as the total opposite of Eve in the rest of the chapter. That, and that alone, is the traditional explanation which was implied already by St. Justin and expressly taught by St. Irenaeus.⁶⁷

What is the *object* of the typical sense? Must the type be in the Old Testament and the antitype in the New? Some authors imply or even state that the typical object must always be Christ. They, of course, extend the meaning of Christ to include the Church and elements in the Church.⁶⁸ That seems to be stretching the point. The typical object should always, and always will, be Christian; but it need not be directly Christologic.⁶⁹ Besides, the antitype need not be fulfilled in the New Testament era, that is, prior to the descent of the Holy Spirit.⁷⁰ There can be types even after that; as, for instance, the fall of Jerusalem as a type of the end of the world. There are types in the Apocalypse that are gradually being realized. So types can be eschatologic, as those are called that are to be fulfilled at the end of time and in heaven. Tradition has for a long time distinguished three classes of typology because of three kinds of objects: the Messianic, referring to the Messiah on earth; the anagogic (better called the eschatologic), referring to the end of the

⁶⁶ Cf. Ceuppens, O.P., *De Protoevangelio* (Romae 1932), p. 49.

⁶⁷ Cf. note 65.

⁶⁸ Cf. J. Danielou, S.J., *Les divers sens de l'Écriture dans la tradition chrétienne primitive*, in *Ephem. theol. Lovan.* 24 (1948), 119-126.

⁶⁹ Coppens, *art. cit.*, p. 355.

⁷⁰ Cf. *loc. cit.*

world and beyond; the tropologic (better called moral), referring to moral practice.⁷¹

God intended the typical relation, and at times he may have revealed this to the hagiographer. How did others come to this knowledge? How do we recognize types? God has to reveal them explicitly somewhere in the founts of revelation, Scripture or tradition. There seem to be cases, however, in which the type can be recognized without an explicit revelation; namely, if it is revealed implicitly in another type that has been revealed explicitly.⁷² For instance, when the whole is revealed as a type, it seems that the parts are at times also revealed as types:⁷³ since the tabernacle is revealed as a type in Hebr. viii., parts of the tabernacle may be revealed as types too. But this principle is to be applied very cautiously. In general, only those types should be accepted that can be proved by the strictest application of the criteria for interpreting Scripture.⁷⁴

That there are Marian types in Scripture cannot be doubted. True, there are none revealed in the New Testament. But tradition, too, is a criterion of interpretation; and if tradition is unanimous in telling us of a type of Mary as intended by the Holy Spirit, that must be true.⁷⁵ According to tradition there are a nice number of Marian types.⁷⁶ We should, however, not exaggerate their number, as the Middle Ages did. The advice of Pius XII should be sacred here:

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 353-354.

⁷² Cf. Patrizi, S.J., *De interpretatione*, p. 194, cited by Coppens, *art. cit.*, 71 (1949), 356.

⁷³ Cf. Patrizi, *loc. cit.*

⁷⁴ Coppens, *ibid.*, 357-359.

⁷⁵ Cf. Aug. Bea, S.J., *Das Marienbild des Allen Bundes*, in *Katholische Marienkunde*, *op. cit.*, p. 39 f.

⁷⁶ See the quotations from Pius IX and Pius X in the beginning of this paper.

only where it can be proved that God intended the typical sense should we accept it.⁷⁷

The typical sense has the same dignity, on the part of God, as does the literal sense; He is the author of both. However, since the typical sense cannot be known from the words and must be gathered from a future revelation, explicit or implicit, it does not form an independent argument for a doctrine. The doctrine will be known before the type is known.⁷⁸

3. THE EXPLICIT AND IMPLICIT SENSES

Another way of dividing the senses of Scripture is based on the logical relation which concepts have to explicitly inspired concepts: hence, the explicit and the implicit sense. The *explicit sense* is a concept which the words explicitly express; e. g., the absolute enmity and complete victory of the Woman in Gen. iii. 15. But let it be noted that not every formal explicit sense is obvious to us and easily recognized by us. By the words "This is my body," Christ, according to the Council of Trent, expressly and clearly testified that he would give His Body to the disciples (Denz. 874). Still much argumentation was needed to demonstrate it to Protestants. So "formally explicitly expressed or revealed" should not be confused with immediate knowledge of that on our part.⁷⁹

The *implicit sense* is a concept contained implicitly in another. And this may be either formally or virtually. A concept is contained *formally* if it is equivalently the same thing as the explicit concept, and it is such if no strict, deductive, reasoning process is needed to derive it. The major is the revealed concept; but the minor is merely an analysis of the terms. There are various modes in which the implicit

⁷⁷ Pius XII, *Divino afflante Spiritu*, loc. cit.

⁷⁸ Cf. St. Thomas, *Quodlibeta*, 7, art. 14; *Summa*, 1, 1, 10, ad. 1.

⁷⁹ Reginald M. Schultes, O.P., *Introductio in historiam dogmatum* (Parisii: Lethieleux 1922), pp. 179-182.

concept can be contained in the explicit. Authors do not agree in the enumeration of them. Some claim there is an indefinite number of modes; as many as there are ways in which one concept can be implicitly in another.⁸⁰ They all agree pretty well on the following.

First mode, the implicit concept is equivalent to the entire explicit concept, as the defined is equivalent to the definition. And this is known by a simple analysis of the terms. For instance, the Church is infallible, but infallibility means inability to err in matters of faith and morals; therefore. Here, too, belongs the simple expository syllogism in which the major as well as the minor is a singular, not a universal, proposition; e. g., Mary gave birth to Jesus, but Mary is a virgin mother, therefore a virgin mother gave birth to Jesus.

Second mode, the implicit concept is equivalently the same as an *inseparable* part of the explicit concept; the implicit concept is contained in the explicit as a part in the whole. The "whole" in question may be logical, physical, or metaphysical. The logical whole is a universal proposition, in which is contained any particular proposition.⁸¹ For example, God wills all men to be saved (1 Tim. ii. 4), but Paul is a man; therefore. Here is an example of a physical part in a whole: Christ was a perfect man, but a perfect man has an intellect and will; therefore. An example in Mariology is the Assumption Gen. iii. 15: The whole, namely, complete victory of Mary, together with Christ, is revealed in the Protoevangelium; but Christ's complete victory includes immediate resurrection and glorification; therefore also Mary's.⁸²

Third mode, the implicit concept is formally equivalent

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 174.

⁸¹ *Loc. cit.*

⁸² R. Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., *Dé définibilité Assumptionis B. Mariæ Virginis*, in *Angelicum*, 22 (1945), 66-72; id., *L'Assumption est-elle formellement révélée de façon implicite*, in *Doctor Communis, Acta . . . Pont. Acad. Rom. S. Thomæ Aquinatis*, 1 (1948), 28-63.

to the explicit when it has an inseparable relation, positive or negative, to it. For example, a relative term is revealed in its correlative: It is revealed that John is Mary's son; so it is also revealed that Mary is John's mother. The opposite of a contradictory proposition is revealed in the contradictory proposition: Mary is no longer dead; therefore she is alive. Some would add the case of an inseparable cause as revealed in its effect:⁸³ Because it is revealed that Christ had both human and divine actions, it is revealed, too, that He has both a human and a divine nature.

Fourth mode, an implicit concept arrived at by the synthetic syllogism, namely, by the enumeration of all the parts that form the whole. For instance, there are Three Divine Persons because it is revealed that the Father is God and the Son is God and the Holy Ghost is God.

Fifth mode, when both the premises are revealed, the conclusion is formally implicitly revealed. For example, for every salutary act we need Christ's grace (John xv. 5), but faith is a salutary act (Eph. ii. 8; Phil. i. 29); therefore.

It is well to note, with Michel,⁸⁴ that the formal equivalency is known in some cases very easily; but in other cases it takes a long process of evolution in tradition, aided finally by the Church, before we come to the knowledge of it. The divinely guided tradition may be needed to assure us of such an implicit sense; but the sense is there from the beginning, having been intended by the Holy Spirit.

Some call the fuller sense an implicit sense,⁸⁵ and the formal implicit sense a fuller,⁸⁶ or even the only possible fuller sense.⁸⁷ As far as words go, these terms could be interchanged,

⁸³ Schultes, *loc. cit.*

⁸⁴ A. Michel, *Explicite-implicite*, in *Dict. Théol. Cath.* 5, 2 (1924) 1870; cf. Leo XIII, *Provid. Deus* (*Ench. Bibl.* n. 93).

⁸⁵ Simon-Prado, *op. cit.*, pp. 209-213.

⁸⁶ Coppens, *art. cit.*, 71 (1949), 10 and 344.

⁸⁷ Bierberg, *art. cit.*, p. 192.

but the realities are quite different. Technically not every implicit sense is fuller, though every fuller sense is after a fashion implicit. The implicit concept is contained in the explicit by a logically necessary relation. The explicit and implicit concepts belong to, are parts of, numerically the same subject. The inclusive sense, on the other hand, is contained in its basic concept by an intrinsic and intentional relation established by the Divine Author. They are similar concepts, but belong to numerically different subjects.

For instance, if Deut. xviii. 18 has as basic object the prophetic institution in general and as fuller object Christ the Prophet, then it is explicitly revealed and inspired that the prophets and Christ are the spokesmen of God and should be consulted by the people; but it is implicitly revealed and inspired that both are, as prophets, the infallible spokesmen of God. Or, if in Gen. iii. 15 Mary is meant in the exclusive sense, it is formally explicitly revealed and inspired that she is totally victorious over Satan, but implicitly that she is Immaculate. On the other hand, *dato, non concessio*, that the Woman is Mary in the fuller sense, it would be explicitly revealed of Eve and Mary that they are totally victorious over Satan; but formally implicitly that both (!) are Immaculate.

VIRTUALLY IMPLICIT

A concept or conclusion is contained *virtually* in a revealed premise if it can be deduced by a strict deductive syllogism, with the aid of a minor that is known from reason. This the authors call the consequent sense, because it is a consequence from a reasoned syllogism. Some, less precisely and somewhat ambiguously, also call the formal implicit a consequent sense.⁸⁸ The consequent sense is known in theology as a theological conclusion. There is still much controversy on whether the Church can define such a conclusion as a dogma

⁸⁸ Cf. Coppens, *ibid.*, 338-345.

of divine faith or merely as a dogma of ecclesiastical faith.⁸⁹ The consequent sense is not contained formally in the words of the Holy Spirit, and so was not intended formally by Him. Consequently, it is usually not regarded as a Scriptural sense. The fact that God foresaw it and even provided that some Fathers or theologians should deduce it from the revealed premise does not make it inspired.⁹⁰

All admit that, broadly speaking, the consequent sense can be called God's sense, because He posited the premise from which He knew the conclusion could and would be deduced.⁹¹ That is why Christ (Matt. xxii. 31; Ex. iii. 6) and St. Paul (1 Cor. ix. 7 f; Deut. xxv. 4) make use of the consequent sense and ascribe it to Scripture. But they do not thereby say that it is formally intended by the Holy Spirit in the original passage.

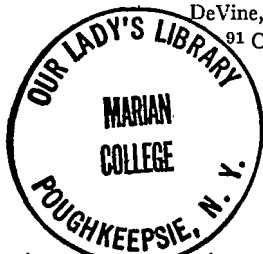
4. THE ACCOMMODATED SENSE

The accommodated sense, though it cannot be used as a proof for a doctrine, needs to be discussed because of its frequent use for the Blessed Mother. It is obtained by fitting the Scriptural words of a particular object to a numerically different, though similar, object, which was not intended by the Sacred Writer. The Scriptural text must already be about "a particular object," because if the object is in a universal proposition, we would have the formal implicit sense; e. g., Ps. cxi. 1 is formally true of any just man. But there must be similarity between the object of the Scriptural passage and the accommodated object. This similarity must be either literal proper or literal figurative. In the former case, the words literally and properly fit the new subject; e. g., state-

⁸⁹ Cf. *Ibid.*, 343-345, and the manuals of theology.

⁹⁰ Cf. Fernández, *Instit. Bibl.*, 1, p. 355. For a different view see C. F. DeVine, C.S.S.R., *The Consequent Sense*, in *Cath. Bibl. Quart.* 2 (1940), 145-155.

⁹¹ Cf. Fernández, *op. cit.*, 355-356.



ments about the high priest of the Old Testament accommodated to a Pontiff. In the literal figurative accommodation the words are true in the literal proper sense of the original, Scriptural, object, but only in a figurative sense of the accommodated object; e. g., Ps. xviii. 5 in Rom. x. 18.

That it is licit to accommodate the Scriptures is common doctrine and practice in the Church, based on the practice of the Apostles themselves.⁹² That, in particular, it is licit to accommodate the Scriptures to Mary is clear from the universal practice of ancient and modern writers, and from the liturgy. It is quite proper to extol the glories of Mary by the phrases of the Holy Spirit. However, this should be done with caution and moderation, closely following the rules for all accommodations. Pius XII admonished:

But let them (Catholic exegetes) scrupulously refrain from proposing as the genuine meaning of Sacred Scripture other figurative senses. It may indeed be useful, especially in preaching, to illustrate and present the matters of faith and morals by a broader use of the Sacred Text in the figurative sense, provided this be done with moderation and restraint; it should, however, never be forgotten that this use of the Sacred Scripture is, as it were, extrinsic to it and accidental, and that, especially in these days, it is not free from danger, since the faithful, in particular those who are well-informed in the sciences sacred and profane, wish to know what God has told us in the Sacred Letters, rather than what an ingenious orator or writer may suggest by a clever use of the words of Scripture."⁹³

These four rules can serve as a guide in the use of the accommodated sense: Rule One: To be licit an accommodation must be based on formal, not material, similarity. The similarity is formal when the idea, not merely the words, of the Holy Spirit are similar to the idea of the new object, either in the proper or figurative sense. Material similarity is based

⁹² Cf. *Ench. Bibl.*, nn. 97, 337, 499.

⁹³ *Divino afflante Spiritu*, A.A.S., 35 (1943), 311-312: N.C.W.C. n. 27.

on a false interpretation, intentional or unintentional, of the true sense of the Scriptural passage. Such a material accommodation can be irreverent and even blasphemous.

For instance, a preacher, when the feast of the Assumption fell on the 19th Sunday after Pentecost with the Gospel of the Pharisee and the Publican, used of the Blessed Mother this verse: "I give thee thanks that I am not like the rest of men." Another used, "Quaeretur peccatum illius et non inveniatur" (Ps. ix. 36) for the Immaculate Conception. Even theologians misuse 3 Kgs. ii. 19 for the intercessory power of Mary. Though Solomon tells his mother, when she comes to ask a favor, "My mother, ask for I must not turn away thy face," he actually is irritated when he discovers the intrigue of his brother.

Rule Two: The accommodated sense can never be used as a Scriptural proof; it may be used merely to clarify doctrines and illustrate practices for the glorification of Mary. Proof sufficient is the statement of Pius XII just quoted. Consequently, an accommodation should never be introduced with the usual formulae for introducing a real Scripture sense.

Rule Three: In the choice of the kinds of passages to be accommodated we should be guided by the common and best usage of the Fathers and theologians.

Rule Four: With regard to the number of the accommodations we should be sparing today, as the Pope advises. Certainly, some have in the past made an exaggerated use of accommodation for Mary. But perhaps we might be more liberal in the use of it for Mary since so little is written of her in the real Scriptural sense. The deficiency can be made up somewhat by a sound use of the accommodated sense.

III. THE CRITERIA FOR FINDING THE TRUE SENSE

After having discussed the various possible kinds of senses in Scripture, we must consider the criteria for finding the true

sense in a given passage. These criteria are twofold, rational and theological. As is evident in principle, but not always observed in practice, before one can speak of finding the sense of the Holy Spirit, he must have the words that the Holy Spirit wrote through the inspired writer; that is, he must have the correct reading.⁹⁴ For instance, it is useless to argue about the spiritual beauty of the Virgin Queen as if contained explicitly in, "Omnis gloria ejus filiae Regis ab intus" (Ps. xlv. 14), since the Sacred Author wrote: "Tota decora ingreditur filia Regis," where the spiritual beauty is only implied in the figure of a gorgeous garment. Nor will it do to argue for the Co-redemption through Mary from the word *ipsa* of the Vulgate in Gen. iii. 15.

RATIONAL CRITERIA

The rational criteria are twofold, literary and circumstantial. The literary criteria are the language (vocabulary and syntax), the context (logical and psychological), the rhetorical tropes, and the literary styles. The circumstantial criteria are the author, occasion, purpose, plan, and the historic, archeologic, and geographic settings. Pius XII, in his recent encyclical on Scripture, insisted on the necessity of using these rational criteria.⁹⁵

The nature of these criteria and their importance in Mariology are, I believe, grasped sufficiently by all. I should like to emphasize two of these criteria. First, the context. A passage must be interpreted in keeping with its context. So it is important to determine what that context is. Still the rules of grammar and logic do not always suffice for this. We must often have recourse to the theological criteria. And not only the Sacred Author's theology, but all theology

⁹⁴ Cf. Pius XII, *ibid*, 306 ff.: *N.C.W.C.*, nn. 14-19.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 305 ff.

must be taken into account.⁹⁶ Especially for the Marian texts is this true since the Old Testament Marian passages are all prophetic and some in the New are full of mystery. Moreover, it is a general rule, universally accepted, that the same word in the same context must be given the same meaning unless there is a cogent reason to the contrary. Still a prophetic text does not belong to its general context as other passages do. The very fact that a passage is prophetic lifts it out of the context at least somewhat. For instance, it can be proved solidly that Gen. iii. 14-15 does not belong to the immediate context in ch. 3.

The second criteria to be emphasized is the purpose. A passage must be interpreted in keeping with the purpose of the author, both remote and proximate. But it is necessary to determine the author's proximate purpose, which may perhaps be different than the remote purpose. For instance, in the Apocalypse John speaks of the victory of the Church, but that is no absolute guarantee that the woman of Apoc. xii. 1 ff. is the Church, because John can and, as I believe, does speak there of Mary as the Virgin Mother to whom the Church is intimately related, and through whom she will ultimately be victorious.

THEOLOGICAL CRITERIA

The second set of criteria are theological. The Bible is the inspired book of faith.⁹⁷ It teaches doctrines of faith, many of which are mysteries of the highest order. For this reason

⁹⁶ Cf. J. Levie, S.J., *Les limites de la preuve d'Écriture Sainte en théologie*, in *Nouv. Rev. Théol.* 71 (1949), 1027; H. Cazelles, *La place de la théologie dans l'enseignement de l'Écriture sainte*, in *Nouv. Rev. Théol.* 70 (1948), 1009-1022, esp. 1021.

⁹⁷ Cf. Pius X, *Lamentabili*, "Exegeta, si velit utiliter studiis biblicis incumbere, in primis quamlibet praeconceptam opinionem de supernaturali origine Scripturae Sacrae seponere debet, eamque non aliter interpretari, quam cetera documenta mere humana" (*Ench. Bibl.* n. 196).

the rational criteria alone do not suffice.⁹⁸ To be a good exegete a knowledge of Oriental languages, history and archeology, though very useful, and even necessary, is not enough.⁹⁹ A St. Thomas with his meagre knowledge of the biblical sciences, was nevertheless an excellent exegete of the theological content.^{99a} The need of the theological criteria is especially pressing when there is question of finding the more profound Scriptural senses, the literal inclusive and the typical,¹⁰⁰ because these can not be recognized by the eye of reason alone; they have to be revealed by God.

The theological criteria can be treated under four heads: the inerrancy of Scripture, the authentic teacher, the analogy of faith, the sources. For every Catholic the fundamental principle of interpretation must be that the Inspired Book is absolutely free from error. The concepts that the Sacred Authors wished to express must be true.

Secondly, every interpretation must agree with the *authentic teaching* of the Church.¹⁰¹ The Church must always accompany the Scriptures through the centuries and guide us in interpreting them.¹⁰² And by authentic teaching we mean not only the infallible teaching—either of a pope or a council or the ordinary magisterium—but any declaration of the au-

⁹⁸ Leo XIII, *Provid. Deus* (*Ench. Bibl.*, n. 93).

⁹⁹ Cf. R. Garrigou-Lagrange, *art. cit.* in *Doct. Com.* pp. 49-50, fn. 25.

^{99a} Cf. Ch. J. Callan, O.P., *The Bible in the Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas*, in *Cath. Bibl. Quart.* 9 (1947), 46: "And while it is true that he based his interpretations and explanations practically all on the Vulgate text, his understanding and explanation of the fundamental passages are as sound and unshakable today as when he wrote."

¹⁰⁰ Ambroggi, *art. cit.*, p. 307 f.

¹⁰¹ Cf. Leo XIII, *Provid. Deus* (*Ench. Bibl.* nn. 93-94); Pius X, *Lamentabili* (*Ench. Bibl.*, nn. 185-186); Benedict XV, *Spiritus Paraclitus* (*Ench. Bibl.*, nn. 484-487); Pius XII, *Divino afflante Spiritu*, *op. cit.*, p. 312 f.; *N.C.W.C.*, nn. 28-30. Cf. the very scholarly treatment of this matter by E. Magenot and J. Rivière, *Interprétation de la S. Écriture*, in *Dict. Théol. Cath.* 7, 2 (1927), 2290-2321.

¹⁰² Cf. Levie, *art. cit.*, p. 1029.

thentic magisterial office of the Church. This is important in Mariological texts. There are today too many scholars writing on Mariological texts and topics who leave the impression that because a pope's interpretation of a text or doctrine is not an infallible pronouncement, it can be rejected without further ado, and an opposite view defended. Too often have we seen authors state that Pius IX did not define the Marian sense of Gen. iii. 15 and then proceed to hold that it is not Marian at all. Of course, a pope's statement must be understood according to his own mind, and may be exegetized for that purpose. But here, too, there can be too much rationalizing on a matter that is quite clear in itself, except for those who are opposed to it. For instance, it seems unjustifiable for a Catholic scholar to reject the spiritual interpretation of John xix. 26-27 after the popes have, on numerous occasions and in documents meant for the whole world, said that the spiritual is the genuine interpretation and has been the constant teaching of the Church.¹⁰³ The documents of the popes have not merely the value of a private scholar; they have the value of the Vicar of Christ who was appointed to teach men the truth of Christ, not only by solemn definitions, but also by less solemn methods.^{103a} And since the popes have their Biblical Commission for matters pertaining to Scripture, it might be well to recall that Pope Benedict XV said that it is not permitted to esteem lightly the decrees of this Commission or to pass them over in silence or to twist them to one's own liking, deceitfully or impudently.¹⁰⁴

A third, very important criterion is the *analogy of faith*. Every interpretation, if true, must harmonize with the rest

¹⁰³ Cf. *Mary Mediatrix, op. cit.*, pp. 23-24.

^{103a} See the excellent remarks of Sylvester O'Brien, O.F.M., *Recent Popes and the Doctrine of the Mediation of Mary*, in *Clergy Review* 22 (1942), 104; and the fine articles of J. C. Fenton, *The Doctrinal Authority of Papal Encyclicals*, in *The Amer. Eccl. Rev.* 121 (1949), 136-150; 210-220.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Benedict XV, *Spiritus Paraclitus (Ench. Bibl. n. 487)*.

of revealed truth. This principle is and must be accepted by every Catholic exegete as clearly insisted upon by the popes.¹⁰⁵

In this connection there are a few questions that call for discussion. The first is that a passage must be given the meaning it had in the mind of the Sacred Author at the time he wrote it, except in the case of the hidden senses that the Holy Spirit may not have revealed to him. Consequently, one should not read later, more developed doctrines into earlier passages. However, in judging the theologic mind of the author one must be guided by the light of the entire synthesis of Catholic doctrine.¹⁰⁶ Moreover, it is quite legitimate to use parallel passages of Scripture for proving the meaning of a text. And one should guard against the abuse of the above principle by insisting unduly on a gradual evolution of revelation or of its manifestation, where this did not obtain. That, as we all know, was at the bottom of the rationalistic errors of interpretation. There are cases where the eye of reason alone might discern no more than a very vague primitive revelation, but the eye of faith can see a rather perfect form of revelation. There are those who insist in an exaggerated fashion on the obscurity of primitive prophecies and the necessity of a gradual evolution in the revelation of the Redeemer.¹⁰⁷ They camouflage the idea with the captivating figure of a seed gradually sprouting and blossoming into full flower—an idea that may at times be invoked, but not in the case of Gen. iii. 15. The genuine tradition of the Church and the declarations of the popes speak of the Redeemer who “was clearly and openly” foretold in that prophecy.¹⁰⁸ The same principle is at play in the question whether Mary at the Annunciation knew that her

¹⁰⁵ Leo XIII, *Provid. Deus* (*Ench. Bibl.* n. 94); idem., *Litterae Apostolicae*, “*Vigilantiae*” (*Ench. Bibl.*, n. 136); Pius X, *Oath against Modernism* (*Ench. Bibl.*, n. 350); Manganot-Rivière, *art. cit.*, 2332-2343.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. Levie, *art. cit.*, 1027.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Aug. Bea, *art. cit.*, *Kathol. Marienkunde* 1, 22, 23.

¹⁰⁸ Pius IX, *Ineffabilis Deus*, cf. *Mary Immaculate*, *op. cit.*, p. 10 f.



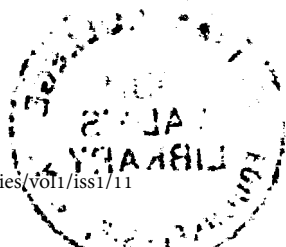
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Son would be Divine. Mary was not a primitive pagan or even a Pharisee that she had to have the divine character of her Son revealed to her gradually; she was to be God's Mother.

A second question, connected with the first, is the knowledge that the actors and readers had of the revelation made. Nowadays, especially in non-Catholic circles, scholars insist that we interpret a text in its historic setting and ascertain what the first readers or actors understood of it. It was meant for them; they should have grasped it. This is a sound principle, if not exaggerated in practice. It does not follow from that, as even some Catholics seem to imply by their method of interpreting, that that is all the text was meant to contain. No, the first readers or hearers, as the Sacred Author himself, did not have to exhaust the meaning of the text. It is possible that of some exclusive Messianic texts the first hearers or readers did not catch the Messianic sense at all; e. g., the Messianic meaning of Is. 53 and perhaps vii. 14 seems to have been missed by the Jews. More so, they did not have to recognize the fuller or typical or implicit senses. In particular, in regard to Isaias and the rest of the prophets, we must hold that they did not always speak for their contemporaries in such a way that these could clearly understand them, but they were predictors of future events.¹⁰⁹ Ordinarily one speaks and writes to be understood, but God had His own reasons for following a different policy. Did not Christ's hearers miss completely the lesson of some of his parables?

Further, the actors and readers of the Bible were not always as ignorant of the meaning of the text as we might be, though we be exegetes of the first class. For instance, much is written about Adam and Eve's knowledge, or ignorance, about the content of the Protoevangelium. Some think that they were left in rather dense darkness even after the prophecy, in spite of the explicit teaching of Pius IX and Pius X to

¹⁰⁹ Pont. Bibl. Com. Jun. 28, 1908 (*Ench. Bibl.*, n. 289)



the contrary.¹¹⁰ This difficulty vanishes if one accepts the solidly probable and growing opinion that Adam and Eve had a revelation of the Incarnation prior to their fall, in the state of innocence, as St. Thomas and the majority of Franciscans hold.¹¹¹ With such revelation they had no difficulty in recognizing the Woman and her Seed. So it is not only licit but necessary to interpret Messianic passages in the light of further revelation, to find the full meaning which the Holy Spirit intended them to have, and how much of that the actors and readers grasped.

It is necessary for a Catholic exegete, lastly, to use the genuine *sources of revelation*, Scripture and tradition. As explained above, we must consult parallel passages of Sacred Scripture. Truth is one and no Sacred Writer can contradict himself or any other writer. Scripture is an authoritative interpreter of itself; e. g., Matt. i. 23 gives the genuine sense of Is. vii. 14, and Apoc. xii. 1 ff. throws much light on Gen. iii. 15.

The tradition of the ancient Christian writers is of the highest authority when it is at least morally unanimous on a matter of faith or morals. An interpretation of such a tradition no Catholic may contradict.¹¹² Note well, however, that when such moral unanimity is lacking, it is false to think that no argument at all can be formed from tradition.¹¹³ In fact, a majority, though short of moral unanimity, can beget a certain argument. Pius IX did not use the term *consensus Patrum Ecclesiaeque scriptorum* when he said that these saw in Gen. iii. 15 the Redeemer and His Blessed Mother; but his whole mode of reasoning makes it quite clear that he meant

¹¹⁰ Cf. *Mary Immaculate*, *loc. cit.*; and *Mary Mediatrix*, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

¹¹¹ Cf. Dominic Unger, O.F.M.Cap., *Franciscan Christology: Absolute and Universal Primacy of Christ*, in *Franciscan Studies*, 2 (1942), 454-458.

¹¹² Cf. Council of Trent, *sess. 4* (*Ench. Bibl.*, n. 47); Vatican Council (*Ench. Bibl.*, n. 63); *Provid. Deus* (*Ench. Bibl.* nn. 63, 96).

¹¹³ Leo XIII, *Provid. Deus* (*Ench. Bibl.*, n. 96).

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there was a sufficiently large number of them to make a certain argument. And certainly a few dissenters do not invalidate an argument from tradition. Moreover, tradition is something living; it continues through the ages. So it is not necessary to be able to trace tradition by written documents back to the first centuries.¹¹⁴ Leo XIII said that the spiritual interpretation of John xix. 26-27 is the constant tradition of the Church;¹¹⁵ but scholars can find a clear written record of this only from Rupert of Deutz on.¹¹⁶

The liturgy, too, is a source of theology, and so a source for interpreting Scriptural doctrines. However, since the liturgy has certainly accommodated passages of Scripture to Mary, its use of a Scripture text does not by itself constitute an argument for a Marian Scriptural sense. However, given other arguments, the liturgical use of the passage can be a very strong confirmation. Such is the case for the passages from the Sapiential books and Canticle.¹¹⁷

EXEGETE OR THEOLOGIAN

It is certainly permissible to distinguish between exegetes and theologians, and between their opinions. The exegete is a scholar who specializes in the study of Scripture as such, applying all the sciences that pertain to this study. The theologian is a scholar who specializes in the theological sciences and uses Scripture as one of the sources of revealed doctrine. The exegete is interested in all Scripture and in the full mean-

¹¹⁴ Cf. J. C. Fenton, *Requisites for an Infallible Pontifical Definition according to the Commission of Pope Pius IX*, in *The Amer. Eccl. Rev.* 115 (1946), 378 f.

¹¹⁵ Leo XIII, *Adjutricem populi*: Sept 5, 1895: "In Joanne autem, quod perpetuo sensit Ecclesia, designavit Christus personam humani generis, eorum imprimis, qui sibi fide adhaeserunt."

¹¹⁶ Cf. J. Leal, S.J., *Beata Virgo omnium spiritualis Mater ex Jn. 19: 26-27*, in *Verbum Domini*, 27 (1949), 65-73; Tiburtius Gallus, S.J., "Mulier, ecce Filius tuus," *Verbum Domini*, 21 (1941), 289-297.

¹¹⁷ Cf. Aug. Bea, S.J., *art. cit.*, *Kathol. Marienkunde*, 1, pp. 33, 36.

ing and style of a given passage, including the theological meaning as the choicest fruit of his investigation. The theologian is interested directly only in those texts that have a theological content, and only in the theological content as a Scriptural proof for a doctrine. The exegete may be more expert in handling the rational criteria, but he may not stop with them; he is obliged to use the theological criteria as well. In fact, in all his investigations there must be a theological orientation.¹¹⁸ The theologian may have more interest in the theologic criteria, and perhaps more ability in evaluating them, but he may not overlook the rational criteria, even though he may rely on the exegete to furnish that fundamental work. So both have their own field and method.¹¹⁹ In a sense they meet in biblical theology, and certainly one and the same scholar can be both exegete and theologian.

Does either one have the right of way? As is clear from the discussion on the criteria, any Catholic scholar, be he exegete or theologian, who wishes to arrive at the true inspired sense of Scripture must use all the pertinent criteria, and he who can and does handle both the rational and the theological criteria satisfactorily should have the right of way. It is wrong to think that simply because the majority of exegetes hold one interpretation and the majority of theologians hold another, that the exegetes should have the right of way, inasmuch as they are in their field. When it comes to theologic content, they are no more in their field than the

¹¹⁸ Cazelles, *art. cit.*, p. 1021, and J. van Ploeg, *art. cit.*, p. 399: "The exegete tries to determine the sense of Scripture; he opens the seals of the closed book and tries to make clear what is obscure. In so doing he may use every human means: philology, history, anthropology, sociology, etc., but his work is theological." P. 413: "St. Thomas would emphatically deny the modern saying of some theologians, that (literal) biblical exegesis is no theology, and the exegete of the Bible no theologian."

¹¹⁹ Cf. Cazelles, *art. cit.*

theologians are.¹²⁰ That is why the Church demands today a degree in theology before granting a degree in Scripture, and insists that Scripture scholars have a command of the entire field of theology.¹²¹ And for the theological degree she demands a fair ability in Scriptural sciences.¹²² In fine, it does not matter whether a scholar is an exegete or whether he is a theologian. The thing that does matter is whether he is using the criteria he is supposed to, and is using them correctly. Were not the modernists condemned for making a false distinction between the critical exegete and the theologian, as if each had to keep exclusively in a field his own?¹²³

For exegetes to insist on the rational criteria, to the practical neglect of the theological criteria, results in what Father Puzo has rightly branded "minimismo Mariológico" in an article anent Father Ceuppens' *Mariologia Biblica*.¹²⁴ It is the spirit which cries, "Be careful, you might give too much dignity to Mary!" To repeat, the rational criteria are not sufficient for finding the sense of Scripture. What they yield in regard to a Marian text is not always all that the Holy Spirit has intended by it. True, we are not to squeeze things out of a text that have not been put there by the Spirit of God. But if the theological criteria disclose a doctrine, we are not squeezing something out of a text which was not intended by the Holy Spirit.

CRITIC AND MYSTIC

Akin to this point is that of the critic and the mystic. Some who take an interest in Marian doctrines are styled critics

¹²⁰ Cf. Felix Puzo, S.J., *A propósito de una reciente Mariologia biblica*, in *Estudios Bíblicos*, 8 (1949), 239-251, especially p. 250 f.

¹²¹ Leo XIII, *Provid. Deus*: "Hujus igitur disciplinae magister hac etiam laude floreat oportet, ut omnem theologiam egregie teneat" (*Ench. Bibl.*, n. 95).

¹²² Cf. Leo XIII, *Provid. Deus* (*Ench. Bibl.*, n. 103); Pius X, *Litterae Apostolicae* "Quoniam in re biblica" (*Ench. Bibl.*, n. 165).

¹²³ Cf. *Ench. Bibl.*, nn. 185, 207 f., 245, 260.

¹²⁴ Puzo, *art. cit.*, pp. 246-251.

and others mystics these days. The critics are supposedly more scientific in their approach to the interpretation of a text or in their defense of a tenet. The mystics are supposedly attracted to a doctrine more by devotion to Mary, which at times is said to amount to sentimentalism or to an exaggerated interest in crowning Mary with more dignities.¹²⁵ Such distinctions seem unfounded. Those who are real Catholic scholars certainly have also more than an average devotion to Mary and are interested in her honor. Those, on the other hand, who are seemingly more devout and enthusiastic in promoting new honors for Mary are certainly not devoid of all scientific approach. Was Scotus the critic and Bonaventure the mystic in the controversy on the Immaculate Conception? Who was capable of analyzing the situation better, the enthusiasts for this doctrine or the opponents? Is one a critic and objective because he can draw distinctions for the sake of denying a Marian doctrine? Is one a mystic and subjective for being able to draw fine and correct distinctions that make an explanation of the Marian doctrine possible?

Our conclusion must again be that it matters not how much or how little one's devotion to Mary is when a doctrine is at stake, but how well one uses the criteria for proving the doctrine and interpreting a text. It is true, a genuine devotion to Mary will be a great aid, but in itself it is no criterion of revealed truth. Mary may, of course, reward devotion to herself, unnoticeably perhaps, by guiding the scholar on the right path. History does seem to bear out the statement that the so-called mystics and enthusiasts for Marian dignities walked off with the honors. They won the battle in regard to the divine maternity, the perpetual virginity, the Immaculate

¹²⁵ Cf. René Laurentin, *Un problème initial de méthodologie Mariale*, in *Maria. Études sur la Sainte Vierge*, éd. Hubert du Manoir, S.J. (Paris: Beauchesne 1949), pp. 695-706.

Conception, the Assumption, the Mediatrix of all graces. God does seem to have bestowed on Mary the best of everything, short of divinity and honors that can belong to her Son alone by native right.

IV. STYLES OF PRESENTATION

Scriptural texts, when analyzed according to the principles laid down, can be presented in various styles. Three of these styles are relevant to this paper: Mariologic exegesis, biblical Mariology, and the Scriptural argument. The matter analyzed may be presented as a commentary on a text or texts for the purpose of drawing out their Marian content. This we have called Mariologic exegesis, for want of a better term, to distinguish it from general exegesis, which analyzes a text or a book of Scripture from every angle, and tries to discover all the facts and truths that might be there. In Mariologic exegesis one may analyze either one or more texts. When a group of them, especially all in the Bible, are analyzed, they are arranged in the order in which they occur in the Bible; or, at any rate, they are not arranged logically or systematically according to doctrines. This distinguishes Mariologic exegesis from biblical Mariology. An example of Mariologic exegesis is Father Ceuppens' *Mariologia Biblica*, in spite of its name, as we shall explain immediately.

Biblical theology is the systematic treatment of revealed doctrines with Scripture as the one direct source. Since it is "theology" it must be an organic whole: it should treat the matter in a logical order, knit together organically.¹²⁶ Since it is "biblical," Scripture must be the source, and should be the only direct source. The other sources must be used, but only indirectly as a proof or confirmation of the Scriptural doctrine. Moreover, biblical theology looks for only the theological doctrine in the Scripture texts. So it differs from

¹²⁶ Cf. Puzo, *art. cit.*, pp. 239-242.

general exegesis and from Mariologic exegesis as described above. It differs, too, from positive theology inasmuch as the latter uses all the sources of revelation as coordinate arguments for a doctrine, whereas the former uses Scripture as the only direct argument, to which, however, the others are subordinated. Lastly, it differs from a Scriptural argument in theology inasmuch as the latter can limit itself to one or several texts for proving a determined doctrine, while biblical theology uses all available texts and covers a whole tract or even the entire field of theology. Still, in many cases of the Scriptural argument, especially when one argues from a group of texts and tries to show their inter-relation, he has practically a chapter from biblical theology.

In keeping with this description, biblical Mariology is a systematic treatment of Mariologic doctrines with Scripture as the one direct source, and it differs from Mariologic exegesis just as biblical theology differs from exegesis. And, though quite laudable in itself, an exegetical analysis of a group of Marian texts should not be titled biblical Mariology. True, as Father Puzo suggests,¹²⁷ such an exegetical analysis might be the first of a two part biblical Mariology.

Now the question is: Can such a biblical Mariology be made? Is not the content of Scripture on the Mother of God so small that it is very difficult or impossible to construct any kind of satisfactory system of Marian doctrine out of Scripture? There is ample material, for instance, for a biblical Christology. But for Mariology? We noted in the beginning of this paper that, few though the Marian texts are, they are pregnant with truths and contain practically all the Marian doctrines. Besides, even though Scripture is the one direct source, one must always use tradition as an indirect source, and thus there will be more than enough material to fill books. As an example of the systematic arrange-

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 245.

ment of a biblical Mariology we could refer to Bishop Schaefer's *The Mother of Jesus in Holy Scripture*.¹²⁸

We already indicated the nature of the Scriptural argument for Marian doctrines and how it differs from biblical Mariology. We should like to stress that the Scriptural argument should not be merely a quotation from Scripture. There should be added the proper analysis to show that the doctrine of the thesis is really contained in the quotation.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion, then, of our paper is that since Scripture must be used as a source of Marian doctrines, because the Holy Spirit deigned to reveal things about His Immaculate Spouse through the Sacred Words, we must be well conversant with the best methods of scholarly exegesis and theology both. Our motto should be: Only the best in methods for her whom God Himself made the Best in creation.

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¹²⁸ Aloy. Schaefer, transl. by F. Brossart (New York: Benziger 1913).