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CRITERIA FOR DOCTRINAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MARIAN DOGMAS: AN ESSAY IN METATHEOLOGY

Synopsis

As a critique of recent proposals by E. J. Yarnold, S.J., and R. E. Brown, S.S., to re-think the "meaning" of certain Marian dogmas, a method is proposed for establishing the sense and reference (hence verifiability conditions, falsifiability conditions, axiomatic connexions, and metalinguistic "properties") of these and other dogmas. It is shown that such a method forms an integral part of a general criteriology for doctrinal development. At the outset, then, the possibility and necessity of such a criteriology is defended against certain "theological theories" of doctrinal development, especially that of K. Rahner, S.J. Finally, the relevance of Henri Bouillard's problematic of "reconceptualization" to the here proposed method and general criteriology is evaluated. Several philosophical and theological issues closely related to the main thesis are handled in footnoted discussions.

The problem of stating an adequate theory of doctrinal development still exists, despite a variety of herculean efforts to solve it.¹ Indeed, since Vatican II the problem has taken an unexpected turn.

Prior to the Council, the problem was to construct a theory broad and supple enough to account for all the things which the Church had, in fact, dogmatized. Today the problem is to find a theory stringent enough to provide a rational basis for evaluating the tendencies being proclaimed as "developments." Various "teachings of Vatican II," real or alleged—some attested only in the Council's "spirit"—are announced as authentic "developments of doctrine" for our own day.² Theo-

¹ Full discussion and abundant bibliography of these efforts can be found in two recent works: Winfried Schulz, *Dogmenentwicklung als Problem der Geschichtlichkeit der Wahrheitserkenntnis* (Rome, 1969) and Jan Hendrik Walgrave *Unfolding Revelation* (Philadelphia, 1972).

² A long list of examples could be given: the so-called "new definition" of marriage as *communio vitae et amoris*, the "new definition" of the

logical initiatives of widely different kinds—some claiming a basis in the Council, some only a sort of *licet*—are hailed as signs and portents of “developments” to come.³ So brisk, indeed, has the trade in development-futures become, that many contemporary catechisms, in presenting the Church’s moral demands, invite mere school children to enter the trade by speculating that “future developments” may sweep aside unpopular prohibitions.⁴ Undeniably, the challenge which today’s theological climate presents to the development-theorist is substantially different from the challenges felt even a decade or two ago.

This need for renewed criteriological reflection brings to the fore a seldom emphasized distinction. The integral event of doctrinal development consists of two distinct processes, both prior to the Church’s definitive intervention. The one is a *processus inventionis*. A theologian draws an inference; popular devotion takes a turn; the culture of the time suggests or supports in Christian minds an “angle” on the meaning of some doctrine; the *existentiell* difficulties of the Church in a certain

Church as people of God, the alteration of the exercise of jurisdiction through collegiality, the “historical” (as opposed to “propositional”) character of revelation, the ecclesio-typical approach to Our Lady’s mediation, etc.

³ Thus, for example, Avery Dulles: “Thinkers of the stature of Paul Tillich and Teilhard de Chardin have pointed the way. From such a creative theology new doctrinal insights will emerge and they, in turn, may crystallize into new dogmas,” *The Survival of Dogma* (Garden City 1971) 184.

⁴ *Help is Here: A Teacher Aid to Help Young People Develop Christian Values in Understanding Personal Growth*, compiled by Judy Prindle and James T. Marque, commissioned by and distributed by the Archdiocese of Chicago School Board, 1974, says (to take just one example): “Students should be taught clearly and without ambiguity that the *present* official teaching of the Magisterium of the Church is that all forms of direct abortions are immoral. They should also be alerted to the fact than [*sic*] an increasing number (though probably still a minority) of responsible theologians are questioning the absolute prohibition of direct abortion. It is possible that the Magisterium will modify its position in the future to permit . . . more lenient teaching,” Book 2, p. 63.

time and place bring some aspect of the Gospel into high relief; a scrap of papyrus throws light on a tangled sentence in Paul; a dubious theology is spread abroad which cannot be repelled without sharper formulas. "There is not some one manner or even some limited set of manners in which doctrines develop," observes Bernard Lonergan. "In other words, the intelligibility proper to developing doctrines is the intelligibility immanent in historical process."⁵ This statement is exactly half true; it fits the process of discovery which is part of doctrinal development. But alongside this process, in part simultaneous with it, in part subsequent, is a *processus probationis*. And this second process is not simply a matter of history happening; it is a matter of rigorous, theological method.

The Magisterium does not act blindly. A new notion or tendency, after some labor, will have been reduced to one or more characteristic theses, and these in turn will have been judged certainly or almost certainly true (or else false) *before* the Magisterium intervenes to speak a word guaranteed by the Holy Spirit. New insights of whatever kind, from whatever origin, *end up* as crisp propositions; they do not begin that way. In the usual course of events, bishop will have quarreled with bishop, and scholar with scholar, before it is even clear what exactly is at stake. In other words, it is only at the *last* stage of the *processus inventionis* that the theologically relevant verifiability conditions or falsifiability conditions of the *aliquid novum* are finally in hand. Only then can a process of testing begin, in which a variety of arguments both "positive" and "speculative" will have their place, until a result (either decisive or probable) is achieved.

This theological result—a good deal of ink has been spilled over the character it must have, if the Church is to dogmatize on the matter. Must it be a deductively irrefragable result, or may it be a probable result? How highly probable? May it

⁵ Bernard Lonergan, S.J., *Method in Theology* (New York, 1972) 319.

be a result attained only within speculative theology—that is, a demonstration of the new thesis's axiomatic connexions with other revealed truths; or must it be a positive-theological proof of the thing's "being contained" in the data of Revelation? But does axiomatic connexion count as a mode of "containment?" These questions certainly have their place, and we shall revert to some of them. But their place has been exaggerated. Development-theory is usually negatively, not positively, "predictive." The purpose of an adequate development-theory is not to dictate to the Church *a priori* but to assist her by advancing the question, rigorously and methodically, to whatever state of "ripeness" the evidence permits. And intrinsic to this evidence (not merely something added to it externally) is an *a posteriori* science of how the Christian intellect has reached certainty in the past. Thus the charism whereby the Church may see beyond a current impasse of the theologians is no excuse for pseudo-mystical slovenliness in the theologian himself, nor is it an excuse for abandoning development-theory. After all, there is no theological inquiry which does not ultimately collide with mystery; but if that fact were an excuse for speculative passivity, there would be no theology.

The total fact presented by an instance of doctrinal development, then, is the outcome not of one process but of two. There is a process of discovery—as various as the mind, as broad as history, as mysterious as the touch of the Spirit on the Bride of Christ. But there is also a process of certification which both clarifies what has been discovered and tests what has been clarified. Irreducible to history,²⁸ it is the rational deployment, regulated by faith, of tools both logical and exegetical. It is theological method, applied to one of its tasks. There is nothing

²⁸ Newman emphasizes this irreducibility in the *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, 2nd ed. (London, 1878) 169. He writes: "The only question that can be raised is whether the said Catholic faith, as now held, is logically, as well as historically, the representative of the ancient faith." This is the question which Newman labors to answer in the affirmative; but could it even arise on Loisy's premises?

mysterious about it.

If the distinction here proposed is given at least provisional acceptance, certain consequences will follow.

1. It will become clear that the presently fashionable contrast between "logical" (or "intellectualist") theories of doctrinal development and "theological" theories is largely a comparison of apples with oranges.⁶ The "logical" theories (Suá-

⁶ The contrast is prominent both in Walgrave, *op. cit.*, 135 ff., 278 ff., and in Schulz, *op. cit.* 71 ff., 171 ff. See also H. Hammans, *Die neueren katholischen Erklärungen der Dogmenentwicklung* (Essen, 1965) 103-117. The originator of the contrast was R. Draguet, *L'évolution des dogmes*, in *Apologétique. Nos raisons de croire. Réponses aux objections*, published under the direction of M. Brillant and M. Nédoncelle, 1st ed. (Paris, 1937) 1166-1192; 2nd ed. (Paris, 1948) 1097-1122.

Draguet dubs his favorite approach "theological" because it concentrates on the mysterious "gap" between what critical scholarship can prove and what the Church can nevertheless see and teach as dogma. A "theological" approach valorizes this gap as something positive and explains it by means of the living Tradition which grows with Christian experience of the *realities* (not merely propositions) revealed and committed to the Church. A "logical" or "intellectualist" approach, on the other hand, either denies the gap outright (on the ground that theological reasoning alone can demonstrate, from the primitive facts, everything the Church now teaches) or else dismisses it as due to a purely accidental defect of current scholarship.

Draguet's position is a derivative from the famous "*double pas*" of Maurice Blondel. In his 1904 essay, *Histoire et Dogme* (republished in *Les premiers écrits de Maurice Blondel* [Paris, 1956] 149-228), Blondel had maintained the necessity of an *aller et retour* over *deux intervalles obscurs*: the one from fact to dogma, the other from dogma back to fact. The first gap was the heart of the Modernist problem, in Blondel's view, and also the heart of doctrinal development as an historical process. The second gap was destined to become the heart of the fierce controversy over L. Charlier's *Essai sur le problème théologique* (Thuilles, 1938; placed on the Index in 1942).

It would be impossible to evaluate Blondel's own position in this footnote. But my program of a return to criteriological considerations in development theory does require a brief refutation of what Draguet and Charlier tried to do with Blondel's position: namely, to use the *intervalles obscurs* as a club against the whole project of positive theology from Melchoir Cano to the present (Charlier, *op. cit.*, 37-51). Charlier's claim is that traditional positive theology illegitimately tries to close the gap

between dogma and fact by (vainly) attempting to prove that a datum apprehended *sub lumine supernaturali* (the state of affairs picked out by the dogma) and a datum apprehended purely *sub lumine naturali* (the fact as established by historical criticism) are identical. Hence positive theology falls into an inadvertent naturalism (according to Charlier) and yet wants to remain theology. Being neither fish nor fowl, it neither convinces the rationalist critics nor succeeds in establishing the proofs it desiderates as theology. To escape this quandary, Charlier advises, positive theology should give up the illusion that it has apologetic value and confine itself to interpreting the data of the living Magisterium.

My own program does not require a total rejection of Charlier's views. But it does require that the positive theologian be able to prove *something* about the nexus (or lack of it) between an alleged development and the revealed data. Hence one must clarify, against Charlier, exactly what the positive theologian does and does not prove.

Take the *theotokos* formula, in its relation to the New Testament.

Positive theology does not prove that Mary is mother of a divine Person (it takes this on faith); positive theology does *not* prove that the formula of Ephesus was entertained by some Apostle before the death of the last of them (which would be an anachronism); *nor* does positive theology prove that Ephesus' truth had been held "obscurely," "implicitly," "tacitly," or "globally" by the Apostles (for this is taken on faith and probability; why? because there is no way to *prove* that somebody believed what he never explicitly said). The positive theologian simply proves that the relevant NT data, *as those data have always been understood by the Church*, are such that the dogmatic formula of Ephesus is the sole satisfactory explanation of them *if one asks the Nestorian question*.

To state the matter more rigorously: the bare words of Scripture (which I call γ -sentences) can be taken as making various statements. That statement which the Church has understood a certain text to be making is what I call a ρ -sentence. Materially considered, the Scripture consists of γ -sentences; but formally considered, it consists exclusively of ρ -sentences. In St. Hilary's words: *Scripturae enim non in legendo sunt, sed in intelligendo* (PL 10, 570A). The task of the positive theologian, asked to prove that some dogma is "contained in Scripture," therefore, is to use his knowledge of the data to show the required nexus *between the dogma in question and certain ρ -sentences*. He is not required (and nobody could be required) to demonstrate a dogma's nexus to any and every statement a γ -sentence could (in some critic's view) be thought to make. Therefore, depending on what counter-interpretation a critic proposes, a different "gap," even a different kind of "gap," opens each time. In some cases, the theologian or exegete can show that the critic's interpretation itself implies the Church's interpretation—in which case the gap is harmless. Sometimes no reconciliation is possible, and the critic's view must be rejected simply on faith. And between these extremes there are many

rez, de Lugo, Tuyacerts, Marin-Sola, *et al.*) erred in mistaking certain methods of proof as the sole means of discovery. The "theological" theories (Blondel, Charlier, Rahner, Walgrave, *et al.*) err in tending to identify the whole problem with the *processus inventionis*. This they do illuminate; but by downgrading logical criteria, they sacrifice half the problem. The result is an exaggerated supernaturalism and, ultimately, obscurantism.

2. Once it is seen that "logical" and "theological" theories can be made complementary, an up-dating of the "logical" theories will be fully justified and will answer the post-Conciliar need for criteriological reflection.

3. Such an up-dating will be eminently possible once it is recognized that a theory of the *processus probationis* is identically a theory of theological method. Whatever illuminates the latter will also illuminate the former. But today it is already clear that theological method does not resemble that of a purely deductive science (mathematics) but closely parallels that of empirical science (physics).⁷ "Speculative" theology is not in general a deducing of consequences but an axiomatization of the data of faith.⁸ Therefore, a theory of the *pro-*

grey cases in which the state of the question is obscure on both sides. In any case, insofar as Blondel's "gap" exists, it is not in the positive theologian's proof. It lies farther back: between what the Catholic exegete can prove and what he must believe. No doubt, what he can prove gives *credibility* to what he believes and no more. Something else must supply credence; and something else again, the act of faith. But these matters no "intellectualist" ever denied.

A more thorough-going refutation of Dragnet-Charlier can be found in T. Zapelena, S.J., *Problema theologicum*, in *Gregorianum* 24 (1943) 23-47; 287-326; 25 (1944) 38-73; 247-282.

⁷ J. M. Bochenski, O.P., *The Logic of Religion* (New York, 1965) 62-65. Anyone familiar with this small classic will appreciate the extent of the present writer's debt to it.

⁸ Bernard Lonergan, S.J., who has studied the methods of modern empirical science closely, comes rather close to the position presented here but without achieving full clarity. He is correct, for example, in saying that theology seeks *causae cognoscendi-notiores-quoad-se*, which are anal-

cessus probationis in doctrinal development will not be a typology of deductions (as the classical Scholastic theories made it) but a criteriology for the testing of proposed axiomatizations. Its logic will be largely reductive, not deductive.⁹ By

ogous to the *causae essendi* sought by other sciences, and which are, in our term, "axiomatizations." Cf. Lonergan, *De constitutione Christi ontologica et psychologica* (Rome, 1964) 48f. On empirical method, see his *The Concept of the Verbum in the Writings of St. Thomas Aquinas*, in *Theological Studies* 8 (1947) 49; *De Deo Trino*, 2, Pars systematica, 3rd ed. (Rome, 1964) 33f. On the other hand, Lonergan's distinction between a *via inventionis* and a *via certitudinis*, which is based on his own peculiar extrapolation of the Thomistic distinction between understanding and judgment, has only a verbal similarity to the distinction presented here. For a full, though uncritical, exposition of Lonergan's views, see Giovanni B. Sala, S.J., *L'evoluzione del dogma nel pensiero di Bernard Lonergan* in *Studia Patavina* 13 (1966) 448-509.

Another Jesuit theologian who clearly understands theology as axiomatization (though he does not use the word) is Cyril Vollert, *A Theology of Mary* (New York, 1965) 51f.

⁹We shall see below how this shift eliminates the *fides ecclesiastica* (Note 28). It also does justice to both sides of the 1940's debate on the *problema theologicum*. In skeleton, a reductive inference is of the following form:

$$\begin{array}{l} p \supset q \\ q \\ \text{Therefore } p. \end{array}$$

Such an inference, of course, is not infallible unless there is no alternative to *p*. Hence in practice a reductive logic is always an *applied* logic; the inferences derive their force not from formal considerations alone but also from the nature of the subject matter.

What the *nouvelle théologie* should have been urging, as a corrective to a certain scholastic monopoly, was the fallible character of reductive logic. Say that a certain theological assertion, *p*, axiomatizes (explains/implies) certain data of faith, *a*, *b*, and *c*. But there might be another proposition, *q*, which also explains these or even more revealed data. There is no reason why *p* and *q* could not stand side by side as alternative systematizations or parts of such alternatives. One would have to have explored the *full* axiomatic connection of both *p* and *q*, before one could say definitively that neither contradicts a revealed datum; and in the meantime there is usually only some less stringent ground (e.g. philosophical) for preferring the one over the other. One does not even know for sure (initially) that *p* and *q* are the exhaustive alternatives. Now, if there is no third alternative, then *p* or else *q* will have to be true, not both—

virtue of this same shift to the contemporary model of science, the enormously fruitful distinctions between object language and metalanguage, between data and protocol sentences, and between first and second axiomatizations also become available for theology's self-understanding.¹⁰

4. Nevertheless, no matter how far this aspect of development-theory progresses beyond the classical "logical" views, which were based on the Aristotelian model of a science, it remains true that there cannot be a *processus probationis* unless theology *is* a science. An ancient and rigorous view of scientific procedure can be replaced by a modern view if and only if the latter is also rigorous and is able to safeguard, on its own terms, the stability of the theological edifice already in place and already confirmed at many points by the teaching Church.

unless they can be shown to be "complementary," which is yet another possibility.

The real problem with the *nouvelle théologie* was that it abandoned the standards of intellectual rigor by assuming what needed to be proved, namely, that p and q are complementary, or, that there is in fact (and not merely *quoad nos* at the present stage of theological inquiry) no decisive ground for choosing between them. The scholastic tradition, at least, despite the incomplete logic which served as its organon, was fully committed to seeking this sort of proof and, indeed, correctly saw that theological progress consists precisely therein. In other words, the scholastics saw "theological pluralism" as a fact whose alleged irreducibility would have to be proved before they would abandon their determined efforts to overcome it. The "new theologians" rested complacently in the historically established fact of pluralism, as though its factuality were a justification.

Thus one cannot identify fully with either side of the '40s debate. The New Theology was able to launch what was, in many respects, a successful critique of the regnant scholasticism but misunderstood the grounds for its success. The scholastic answer had the right spirit but the wrong tools. What remains valid in that answer is precisely the point adopted by *Humani Generis*, namely, that a *complacency* in "pluralism" entails the danger, and even the profession, of dogmatic relativism.

¹⁰ For illustrations of these distinctions, see Bochenski, *op. cit.*, 53-82. For the readers convenience, I have fused two of Bochenski's charts with some observations of my own into an overall chart which, I hope, gives an overview of the structure of scientific theological discourse as I understand it. The chart appears at the end of this article.

There must be no return to the pre-Thomistic and largely "rhetorical" view of theology which seems to be preferred by some modern writers.¹¹ For without a stable and technically refined *intelligence de la foi*, there will be nothing against which a new thesis can be tested. The appeal to a contemporary model of science is not intended to suggest a new way of theologizing but simply a better way of understanding what theology has always done, when it did its work successfully.

5. Therefore, finally, if the distinction here proposed is accepted, and if the program which flows from it is also accepted, we will have seen the last of "development theories" which turn out to be nothing more than abstract meditations on propositions, communication, or (as of late) the "historicity of cognition," and whose purpose is simply to lay out the broadest possible *a priori* framework for an understanding that deepens over time. We will demand that such reflections, however valuable in themselves, be counted as prolegomena to something more specific. The process of testing an alleged development terminates at a *theological* judgment. We need to know how that judgment is made. We need to know not only what counts as evidence of dogmatizability but also what counts against it, and with what weight. Indeed, long before the question of dogmatization arises, the new thesis will have gained a certain currency in the Church, will have attracted adherents and detractors, and will have had to be judged *tenable*, if it is to be a candidate for further promotion. The criteria for tenability, then, are not foreign to development theory but are one of its stages.

If this aspect of the total problem has received little attention, it may be because development theorists in the recent past have too often concentrated their attention on the relation be-

¹¹ Perhaps the best single study of this imperative is still M. R. Gagnebet, O.P., *Le problème actuel de la théologie et la science aristotélicienne d'après un ouvrage récent*, in *Divus Thomas* (Piacenza) 56 (1943) 237-270, especially 265 ff.

tween a new proposition and the antecedent "global apprehension" out of which it has arisen, that is, the relation between explicit and implicit in its strongest form. The question is indeed an important one, as it bears upon the *processus inventionis*.¹² But the testing of an alleged development requires a

¹² Karl Rahner is quite correct in pointing out that a new proposition may arise not only from logical explicitation of previously existing propositions but also from a noetic act of bringing-to-judgment for the first time what previously had been grasped in an infra-propositional way. Cf. his essay, *The Development of Dogma*, in *Theological Investigations* 1, trans. Cornelius Ernst, O.P. (Baltimore, 1961) 63 ff. But Rahner's account of this transition from "unthematic" knowledge to judgment is less rewarding than Newman's. In his 15th Oxford University Sermon, Newman explains the globally apprehended "idea of Christianity" as, in effect, a phantasm-complex whose symbolized intelligibilities are gradually unpacked by an ever-expanding set of judgments. More importantly: Newman understands that the most important source and component of this phantasm-complex is *language*—especially that of the Scriptures. (The most glaring omission in Rahner's essay, cited above, is just this appreciation of the linguistic sign as sense datum and polyvalent phantasm.) A language (*la langue* in de Saussure's sense) is a system of synchronic rules and relations which are *mitgeteilt* (so to speak) "in, with, and under" the sentences actually heard. Thus, from finite input, one masters (without necessarily explicitating!) a system through which an infinite number of new and correct sentences may be generated. Analogously (Newman sees, without having the structuralist vocabulary to express his insight adequately), the devout mind, from contact with a finite amount of Christian discourse, absorbs over and above that discourse not only a vivid (and perhaps inexhaustible) impression of what the discourse is about (Rahner's *Mitteilung*) but also the synchronic rules of the discourse itself, whereby more and more can be said *according to the same pattern*. This discovery of the synchronic and metalinguistic rules of the Christian object language was enshrined by Newman in his famous but little exploited distinction between the "principles" of Christianity and its doctrines. Unquestionably, Newman was the first Christian theologian to view the "large fabric of divinity"—not merely as a collection of propositions among some of which, at least, certain logical relations obtained, nor merely as a collection of "expressions," each in some way reflective of and necessary for the integrity of Christian experience—but as a discourse-system. Newman's overall enterprise in the 15th Oxford Sermon and in the *Essay on Development* (and in many smaller contexts) was precisely to analyze relatively long-lived discourse-systems both religious and secular, to show that they are governed in structure and expansion by laws peculiar to themselves,

comparison of explicit with explicit—of the new thesis with what is already assured. We need to know what *this* comparison ought to show, and yet it is precisely here that the discussion rarely rises above banalities.

Everybody agrees, for example, that a new development, in order to be taken seriously, cannot flatly contradict what is already assured. Even Karl Rahner, who seems quite doubtful about the possibility of a development criteriology, admits this criterion.¹³ But flat contradiction is often hard to prove and

and to demonstrate that this is above all the case with Catholic doctrinal discourse. By this novel approach, Newman anticipated by 70 to 80 years the very thing which has become the nub of recent logical and linguistic study, namely, the notion of "formal system."

Unfortunately, there is no room to document these claims here. The author is preparing for publication two articles on these aspects of Newman's thought.

¹³ "There can of course be no question of a contradiction between the two sets of propositions, and such a contradiction could never be demonstrated historically," Karl Rahner, *op. cit.*, 47. In general, however, Rahner maintains that it is "manifestly erroneous *a priori* to attempt to construct an adequate formula of this kind [i.e., an adequate expression of the "laws" of doctrinal development], and by this means to master the single sense of this process and combat possible 'deviations' as false developments," (p. 42). Rahner realizes that his position lays him open to a worrisome objection: "An anxious theologian may enquire, 'How are we to get anywhere, if no adequate laws of this development can be formulated? Are we not leaving the field open to the rankest proliferations of pseudo-theological speculation and callow visionary enthusiasm?'" Rahner responds: "The answer is that this danger, one which is involved in all human experience, is not going to be realized for three reasons" (*loc. cit.*). The three reasons can be omitted, since, in the opinion of many observers of the contemporary theological scene, Rahner's optimism has been disappointed.

Rahner's round eschewal of "adequate laws" is the result of six debatable moves.

(1) He defines dogmatic development as a single "homogeneous process" which is tantamount to the total "historical fortune of the Gospel of Christ under the direction of that Spirit which leads us into all truth . . ." Then, because the Holy Spirit "never makes himself accessible without remainder to laws which can be grasped by human minds," dogmatic development is "never just the working out of a formula and an all-embracing law" (p.

41). In other words, Rahner fails to make the distinction for which this paper has been arguing; he speaks as though nothing were at stake beyond what has here been called the *processus inventioms*. Then, because *this* process is as broad and mysterious as the working of the Spirit in history, he denies that its ultimate "law" can be formulated. No doubt. But the elusiveness of whatever it is that causes a would-be development argues nothing for the elusiveness of the criteria needed to judge it.

(2) Rahner equates dogmatic development with an indivisible historical process which runs from the Incarnation to the Parousia, with the result that "the *perfected* law of dogmatic development... may only be laid down when the whole unique process has reached its term" (*loc. cit.*). We are dealing, then, with the single mystery of the diachronic "conscientization" of the Mystical Body. This notion of development is borrowed, without acknowledgment, from Charlier (*Essai sur le problème théologique*, 66-80) and is a thoroughly dubious move. For, if the sole "term" or outcome, properly speaking, of dogmatic development were the total, final corpus of explicit Christian teaching as it will exist, perchance, a moment before the eschaton, development could not be said to have "produced" anything definitively in the meantime. In which case, our present "dogmas" would be pure points-of-passage and in no sense end-points. But a dogma, *qua* dogma, is an end-point. To be sure, the same proposition which is from one perspective a dogma may be from other perspectives a starting point. But it is a guaranteed and obligatory starting point solely because it is also an end-point: a dogma. Now, granted, a theory of development is a theory about a process; but the product of that process is simply dogma—any dogma. And granted, development (like any other process) cannot be defined, delimited or distinguished from other processes except by reference to its product. But all that this point proves is that a theory of dogmatic development presupposes a theory of dogma, not vice-versa, and will vary with the nature of that theory. Depending on what "dogmas" are taken to be, a theory of how they are certified will describe an historical process, or a logical process, or an emotive process, or whatever. But it is already a matter of defined faith what dogmas are (DS. 3011), and we certainly have enough examples whose *Entstehungsgeschichte* AND *Prüfungsgeschichte* can be studied.

(3) By virtue of these first two mistakes, Rahner turns doctrinal development into something thoroughly unpredictable because thoroughly supernatural, absolutely unique, and *sui generis*. This is exaggeration at best. Catholic doctrine is a discourse-system, and its development is an instance of the general (synchronic) laws of the expansion of a discourse system. To be sure, the Catholic discourse is unique in having divine Revelation at its origin and a divine guarantee of its homogeneous expansion. But what do these supernatural factors do to the thing *qua* system besides perfecting it? *Tollitno gratia naturam?*

In one word: Rahner's vision of development is monophysite.

(4) Rahner implies that one's purpose in formulating criteria for doctrinal development would have to be overweeningly ambitious, namely, to control the Holy Spirit. But the program advocated here has already disavowed any such purpose in two ways. First, it proposes no "laws" at all for the *processus inventionis*, which is where the mystery of grace, in the intimate verifications of Christian experience, is primarily at play. Secondly, this program admits that there are cases in which the findings of the *processus probationis* are peculiar, especially this case: suppose there is a consensus as to a proposition's meaning, axiomatic connexions, and truth, but no consensus *either way* as to its dogmatizability. In such a case, the decision possible to the Magisterium, *assistente Spiritu Sancto*, is not to be predicted in advance. This situation is extremely rare but (as Rahner recognizes) highly important. Herewith, a few comments about it.

In any such situation, a sizeable group of theologians will already have reached the strictly *theological* judgment that the proposition in question was definible. Subsequently, the Church's definition confirms their conclusion but not necessarily the grounds on which they reached it. My interest centers precisely on these grounds. There are four possibilities:

- (1) the Church's definition supports their grounds;
- (2) the definition invokes other grounds; here, three sub-possibilities:
 - (a) the theologians missed the correct ground for dogmatizing *this* proposition, hence their application of the general development criteria was beside the point;
 - (b) they saw the correct ground but misapplied the development criteria;
 - (c) they applied the existing criteria correctly, but the criteria were inadequate.

Possibilities (1), 2a) and (2b) have no impact upon development theory itself. Possibility (2c), however, is exciting. If realized, it tells against the "state of the art." But it does not *abolish* development criteria (as Rahner seems to imply); it simply points up the need for better criteria. Further, it does not indicate that the quest for adequate criteria is asymptotic or open-ended. For the sheer fact that possibility (2c) has occurred at some time says nothing against the possibility that development criteriology may reach such completeness that after some future time the Church's freedom in this situation will always manifest itself in the form of possibilities (1), (2a), or (2b). Further, the occurrence of (2c) does not even indicate that the existing criteria need to be transformed; they might need only to be supplemented. Therefore, even if the quest is asymptotic (a question on which I have no opinion), it cannot be inferred that any of the already established criteria is *simpliciter* "inadequate" (In other words, the "inadequacy," even if perpetual in prin-

often seen only at the end of a methodic reflection, which in turn must have begun with something less than visible contradiction, namely, the symptoms of hidden contradiction. What are those symptoms? Besides, contradiction is only one of many logical relations between propositions, and by far the least interesting.

To illustrate very briefly the rich possibilities which await exploration, one might glance at the logical relations which Newman envisioned in just one of his "notes" of a true development, the sixth one, entitled "Conservative Action Upon Its Past."¹⁴

principle, might be a property only of the *set* of criteria, and not of its members.)

(5) Perhaps the key to Rahner's over-hasty agnosticism is this sentence: "The historical course of the development of dogma is itself the process in which its own mystery is progressively unveiled" (p. 42). As applied to the discovery process, *transeat*. But if this dictum is applied to the *processus probationis*, it follows that theological method is a gradually unfolded mystery. But if the method for dealing with mysteries is itself a mystery, theology collapses into faith, and we have a monophysite theory of the Christian intellect.

(6) Finally, Rahner feels bound to deny the "adequacy" of any particular criterion for a very old-fashioned reason: "In the last resort every reality, even the most limited, is connected with and related to every other reality. The most wretched little physical process isolated in a carefully contrived experiment can only be described adequately (!) if the investigator possesses the one comprehensive and exhaustive formula for the whole cosmos" (p. 43). In other words, reality (the subject of judgment) is one, big object; hence the only adequate statement is the one which says everything. This well-known view (Hegel, Bradley, Blondel, Blanshard) is simply a corollary of Hegel's insistence that all relations are internal. For its refutation, see A. C. Ewing, *Idealism* (London, 1934); G. E. Moore, *External and Internal Relations*, in his *Philosophical Studies* (New York, 1922); Bertrand Russell, *The Momistic Theory of Truth*, in his *Philosophical Essays* (London, 1910).

¹⁴Newman, *Essay*, 199f. It is a pity that all seven of Newman's "notes" cannot be analyzed here, because they are studded with insights into a still unexplored area of social psychology, namely: the psycho-social impact, upon the users of a discourse-system, of the loss of object-linguistic coherence in this system *as contrasted with* the impact of the loss of metalinguistic coherence. Newman realized that most false developments

Newman says that alleged developments "which do but contradict and reverse the course of doctrine which has been developed before them, and out of which they spring, are certainly corrupt; for a corruption is a development in that very stage in which it ceases to illustrate, and begins to disturb, the acquisitions gained in its previous history."¹⁵ A true development, by way of contrast, "may be described as one which is conservative of the course of antecedent developments, being really those antecedents and something besides them: it is an addition which illustrates, not obscures, corroborates, not corrects, the body of thought from which it proceeds. . ."¹⁶

We are dealing, then, not only with various relations between a new sentence and a pre-given set of sentences but also with something a little deeper: a relation between the new sentence and the very "line" of thinking which made possible the generation of the pre-given set. This "line" (or attitude, bent, hidden assumption, "climate" of opinion, whatever) may have done its work without being put into words, much less defined; indeed, it may come to the surface only after an alleged development has begun to "contradict" or "reverse" it. Does Newman mean, then, that theology can never change course? That the Church can never somehow qualify a previous line of development by defining a dogma which brings out a neglected aspect and so restores balance? Certainly not. What Newman requires is simply this: the generation of the pre-given set must still have been possible, intelligible, and legitimate, if the new

of the past had produced both types of dissonance and had been detectable by that very fact. The last decade of his own 19th Century was to witness the rise of the first purely metalinguistic heresy. After all, what was the project of Modernism but to leave the whole object-language of Christianity standing while somehow changing the meaning of it all (principally by altering its falsifiability conditions)?

Newman's seven "notes" have been gathering dust since 1846 because his belletristic commentators have had little idea what to do with them.

¹⁵ *loc. cit.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 200.

sentence is true.¹⁷

In fact, at least six rather formal requirements are established by Newman's sixth "note." If we let the letter *a* stand for the pre-existing set (which may be as small as a single *p*-sentence of Scripture or as large as a whole tract, say Mariology) and let *s* stand for the new sentence, we can make this list:

- every member of *a* must still be true if *s* is true;¹⁸
- every member of *a* must still have its truth-value if *s* is true;¹⁹

¹⁷ A trivial requirement? One need only ask (and it *is* a question, not an insinuation) whether Trent's teachings on grace could possibly or legitimately have been generated, if Karl Rahner's theory of grace is true. See William J. Hill, O.P., *Uncreated Grace—A Critique of Karl Rahner*, in *The Thomist* 27 (1963), especially 354.

¹⁸ The banal requirement of non-contradiction within the object-language set *a*+*s*.

¹⁹ Suppose one of the member-sentences of *a* says, "Christ replaces the whole substance of the bread," and suppose *s* states or entails that there are no such things as substances. Then the problem is not contradiction but loss of "reference" or "denotation." The member of *a* does not become false but moot; it ceases to make any statement at all, because it has been deprived of a necessary *presupposition* (the existence of substances) for its being *either* truth *or* falsity. Does Fr. Avery Dulles, S.J., appreciate the gravity of this situation? He writes: "As a case in point, one might cite the recent dispute about the term 'transubstantiation.' In terms of a common-sense substance philosophy, it is meaningful to say that Christ takes the place of the 'whole substance' of the bread. But if one denies that there ever was such a thing as the 'substance of the bread' or that physical realities are made up of substance and accident, it becomes almost necessary to speak of the 'real presence' in a new way." *The Survival of Dogma*, 178. There is no "almost" about it; it becomes absolutely necessary. Fr. Dulles continues: "To find satisfactory equivalents [*sc.* for the term 'substance'] in other philosophical systems is a task of creative theology." If so, creative theology is deliberate nonsense, because the "satisfactory equivalent" of an empty term would have to be another empty term. In other words, it is self-contradictory to say: (1) there is no such thing as an *A*; (2) the modern equivalent for "*A*" is "*B*"; (3) and there is such a thing as a *B*. Henri Bouillard may also have overlooked this contradiction (see below, p. 32). Hence it is impossible to find much consolation in Fr. Dulles's further remark: "For example, the term 'transubstantiation,' even though it may be unassimilable into modern metaphysics, remains valid as a testimony to the ancient faith of the Church," (*Ibid.*, 183). In *exactly* the same way (for how is

- every member of *a* must still be non-trivial if *s* is true;²⁰
- no member of *a* may lose an axiomatic connexion to other dogma(s) if *s* is true;²¹

it different?) the terms "ether," "centaur," and "vampire" remain valid as testimonies to the ancient faiths of physicists, Greeks, and Transylvanians, respectively.

On the superficiality of the (widespread) assumption that contemporary accounts of physical reality have dispensed with substances, see William A. Wallace, O.P., *Causality and Scientific Explanation*, 2 (Ann Arbor, 1974) 249f. and 269.

For the several theories of denotation (none of which would salvage Dulles's position, by the way) see P. F. Strawson, *On Referring*, reprinted in A. G. N. Flew, ed., *Essays in Conceptual Analysis* (London, 1956) 21-52; a fuller bibliography can be found in Leonard Linsky's article, *Referring*, in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 7 (New York, 1967), *s.v.*

²⁰ Triviality means different things, depending on the sort of sentence trivialized. A standard case would be the reduction of a proposition previously taken as synthetic to analyticity. Thus one could argue that J. C. Murray's theory of Church and State reduces the synthetic teaching that error cannot be the object of rights to the trivial truth that error ought to be avoided (a tautology of practical reason).

Very widespread in current moral theology is what might be called deontic trivialization. It may be defined as follows. (1) *A* is an obligation if and only if there is a situation in which someone is obliged to perform *A*. (2) *A* is a non-trivial obligation if and only if the situation in which someone is obliged to perform *A* occurs frequently or regularly in human affairs. (3) Then a new sentence which defines *A* or the situation(s) in which *A* is obligatory in such a way as to make it virtually certain that such situation(s) will never occur, reduces *A* to triviality. Such a new sentence is, in Newman's terms, a "corruption." It is to be distinguished sharply from the historical contingency that the situation(s) in which *A* is obligatory no longer (or now hardly ever) happen to occur —e.g. the duel.

²¹ The dogma of the Immaculate Conception has important and obvious axiomatic connexions with the tridentine dogma of original sin as a set of privations acquired by human persons by virtue of their biological descent from parents subject to the same privations. But if Protology (as the tract is now sometimes called) accepts a new sentence which redefines original sin as something environmental (the "sin of the world"), the Immaculate Conception loses all connexion with the dogma of original sin (unless one proposes to say that Mary was not born into our world or, perhaps, managed never to encounter sin in her own environment). Hence the new sentence is seen to be a corruption of Protology on the evidence of the destroyed axiomatic connexion of Mariology.

Criteria for Doctrinal Development

- the reasoning needed to generate *a* must still be tenable if *s* is true.²³
- every member of *a* must retain its previously assigned referent, verifiability conditions, and falsifiability conditions, if *s* is true.²³

This last requirement is especially important and will be discussed in detail momentarily. First, however, it would be appropriate (as it is already overdue) to explain the exact theme of this paper.

Having seen that a general criteriology for doctrinal development is possible in principle and necessary in fact, and having seen that a major task of that criteriology is to investigate a variety of logico-linguistic impacts of a new sentence upon a previously established "set" of sentences, one begins to see how a whole group of special development-criteriologies can be constructed by researching the truth-conditions, trivialization-conditions, axiomatic connexions and derivability-conditions for the dogmatic elements of each theological tract.²⁴ And of all the tracts for which this could be done, Mariology is one of the most important and fruitful for development theory.

²³ The reasoning *needed* to generate *a* is not necessarily identical in all points to the reasoning historically *used* to generate it, though it would be strange if the two were different in all points. Hence this criterion needs to be applied with care. It will be argued below (pp 26-27) that the reasoning needed to generate the entire Marian tract is compromised if one accepts Fr. Raymond Brown's problematic of separating "fact" from "theologoumenon" in the case of the virginal conception of Jesus

²³ The theologian is often taxed with making assertions which cannot be "verified," but this charge is due to an illegitimate extrapolation of the verification techniques proper to empirical sciences. A science whose subject matter is not available to the senses (and theology is far from being the only science in this class) will have its own methods of verification or "heuristic rules." Cf. the chart at the end of the article

²⁴ In fact, much of this work has been done, but it has been called by other names; the results have never been brought together as a separate field of study, and their relevance to current problems has been little exploited.

It is nothing new, of course, to say that the Marian dogmas are test cases for doctrinal development. In the past, these dogmas "tested," and found wanting, certain deductivist theories of how the Christian understanding progresses. The theories were shown to be, at best, incomplete; it has been argued above that they were also misapplied, because a clear distinction between discovery processes and theological certification processes had not been maintained. But much still remains to be said about the light Mariology can shed on development theory and thereby on theological method in general.

There are at least six reasons why Mariology is uncommonly illuminating.

In the first place, the Marian dogmas have very far-flung axiomatic connexions. It is as though the whole of traditional theology had to be in place before the mystery of Mary could come into view. Christology had to be far advanced before the precise sense of our "fundamental principle," the divine maternity, could be established; theological anthropology, grace, original sin, ecclesiology—all had to be well understood before the uniqueness of Mary's position could be fully appreciated and the "principle of singularity" formulated.²⁵ As a result the Marian dogmas *presuppose* that a large scattering of tra-

²⁵ G. M. Roschini, *De principiis fundamentalibus Mariologiae*, in *Marianum* 2 (1940) 217-250; 362-385. Thanks to this "principle of singularity," Mary—and not, as Rahner supposes, Christ—is the "supreme realization of that fundamental relationship which prevails between God and the spiritual creation in general," Rahner, *op. cit.*, 28. The reason Christ cannot be this "supreme realization" is because creation is a real relation in the creature whose *fundamentum* is the *res subsistens* itself (St. Thomas, *Quaest. Disp. de potentia Dei*, q. 3, a. 3, ad 7). Since the humanity of Christ is not *id quod subsistit* in Christ, that Sacred Humanity cannot be called a creature in the ordinary sense. Rather, as a principle *quo*, Christ's humanity is concreated (*loc. cit.* and ad 2). In genuine Thomistic theology, therefore, the case of Christ's humanity is in no sense an instance (supreme or otherwise) of that relation which obtains *überhaupt* between God and creature; it is a case altogether special. Hence the supreme instance of the *general* relation is Our Lady. She is the most highly favored being in whom *id quod subsistit* is precisely created.

ditional acquisitions in other theological tracts retain their traditional meanings and implications. Therefore, it is not at all surprising that theologians who have entertained "re-conceptualizations" in broad areas of theology should begin to find the Marian dogmas "obscure and remote from the heart of the Christian faith."²⁶ It must be one test of the validity of such re-conceptualizations that the Marian dogmas do not become obscure.

Secondly, Mariology (in comparison with other theological disciplines) rests upon an extraordinarily thin basis in Scripture and early tradition. Where would one be without that single word, *kecharitōmenē*, or the single sentence, "Son, behold thy mother"? The historian has no difficulty in tracing the steps by which these meager materials grew into the cult and science of Our Lady; the job has been done many times. But it will be a decisive test of any theology, especially any theory of doctrinal development, that it does or does not justify these meager data as basis for a science. There must be a way of viewing the linguistic and extra-linguistic facts of Scripture and Apostolic tradition such that every scrap of this material is pregnant with large intelligibilities. Any other approach destroys the condition for the possibility of Mariology. Thus, if in one respect Mariology has advanced implications, presupposing the technical maturity of many other tracts, it also has conservative implications, requiring the whole theological edifice to pay attention to its roots in the raw data of Scripture. It seems to be a matter of life and death for Mariology that the theological enterprise have at its base not merely revealed "propositions" (from which only implications can be unpacked; a kind of sacred geometry) but inspired sentences, which can be understood to make larger and deeper statements as understanding develops.²⁷

²⁶ Avery Dulles, S.J., *A Proposal to Lift Anathemas*, in *Origins* (Dec. 26, 1974) 420.

²⁷ Karl Rahner moves in exactly the required direction by observing that

the "propositions" with which theology deals are not sharply and arbitrarily limited in content (like those of geometry) but are like ordinary-language expressions; they have a "definite minimum" of meaning but an "indefinite maximum," *op. cit.*, 68f. It is just here, however, that one regrets the general isolation of Continental thinkers from the best work of Anglo-American linguistic philosophers. For Rahner's choice of terms is unfortunate. He makes it sound as though there are two kinds of propositions: the rigid and the elastic. It is more helpful to put the matter this way: sentences, as linguistic structures, are by nature polyvalent; they can be used in different situations to make different statements. The proposition is not an "entity" different from the sentence; it is simply the sentence understood to be making a certain statement, that is, as meaning this or that, hence as determined *ad unum*. Thus one distinguishes between the rich and polyvalent sentences of Scripture and the progressively profound statements which the Church understands them to make.

The safeguarding of this distinction was one of the effects intended by the terminology of γ -sentences and ρ -sentences, already introduced in passing. Perhaps this is the right point at which to explain that terminology more fully, and to introduce its further effect of distinguishing dogmatically authoritative exegesis from any other kind.

Let γ be the set of sentences in canonical Scripture. Let π be the set of sentences in Apostolic oral tradition plus the "gestures" of Apostolic praxis. By "gesture" I mean any non-linguistic fact of which that praxis consisted. For example, if it was Apostolic practice to say S at a time t such that one was performing a rite r at t , then r is a gesture, and the fact that one says S at t is a gesture, etc. Now let ρ be the set of sentences which express the Church's understanding of the elements of $\gamma \cup \pi$ such that every element of ρ can be obtained by application of the heuristic (mostly exegetical) rules to $\gamma \cup \pi$. It may be noted that many elements of π are also (but under a different intension) elements of ρ , in that the Apostolic oral tradition was to a large extent interpretation of Scripture and of Apostolic praxis. Finally, let δ be the set of sentences whose statements are dogmatizable, such that every element of ρ is an element of δ , but not every element of δ is an element of ρ . The elements of $\delta \cap \rho$ are those sentences which are both derivable from ρ -sentences and have certain required relations to ρ -sentences but are not obtainable simply by exegetical procedures. I shall explain below what I think these required relations might be.

The following chart may be helpful.

The Transition From $\gamma \cup \pi$ to ρ

$\gamma \cup \pi$ linguistic material as actually written in Scripture or repeated in oral	becomes by the mediation of acts of understanding	ρ the expanding set of recognized ρ -sentences (second
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tradition; actual gestures in Apostolic praxis (first or pure linguistic/sense data level)	(applying heuristic rules)	or understood linguistic level).
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Both $\gamma \cup \pi$ and ρ are called the "deposit of faith." $\gamma \cup \pi$ is always present in the Church as the basic fund of sense-data which furnishes not only the basis for acts of cognition but also the source for the highly complex phantasms of the devout Christian. At least the crucial portion of ρ (something like a selection set of ρ which is also the doctrinal axiom set) is always present in the Church *objective*. The complete or ideal content of ρ is present in the whole Church *subjective* and in the divine Intellect *objective*. Further:

ρ_t		δ_t
the set of recognized ρ sentences at (time) t	becomes by the mediation of logi- cal rules and "principles" of derivation	the larger set of recognized δ -sentences at (time) t .

The elements of δ are also included in the deposit of Faith by virtue of their logical relations to the ρ -set. Once again, the complete or ideal δ -set is always present in the Church *subjective* and in the divine Intellect *objective*. A subset of δ , namely δ_t , is present in the Church *objective*.

In the light of these distinctions, what does it mean to say that the "fullness" of Revealed Truth is present in the Church at (time) t ? It is more, I suggest, than the claim that the whole ρ and δ -sets are somehow, obscurely, implicitly, and in Newman's sense '*subjective*' present in the Church at t ; it is also the claim that for any dogmatically significant dispute, X , which can arise at t , the δ -sentence which resolves X is either present already in δ_t or may be obtained from $\gamma \cup \pi$ and/or from ρ_t by the use of rules known to the Church at t , with guarantee of the aid of the Holy Spirit.

Epistemologically, the elements of $\gamma \cup \pi$ are material shapes or sounds falling on the senses; the intellect then grasps the meaning of such sentences, while intellect and sensorium together fashion a phantasm which is a new sentence, a member of ρ , by which this precise meaning is held before the mind. The ρ -sentence may remain within the subject as imaginary speech or may be written down or spoken aloud. There is no doubt that such ρ -level equivalents of $\gamma \cup \pi$ sentences formed a large part of Apostolic traditions from the beginning. Hence there is a large and crucial intersection of π and ρ .

The important claim that Scripture and tradition are "living" forces within the Church means not only that the channels and media of *tradere*

are always in use but also that the elements of $\gamma \cup \pi$ are always encountered by the Catholic not as naked data, but within a continuing ρ -context whose source and inspiration is the Apostolic exegesis itself.

Now, time considerations aside, assuming we have ideally complete sets ρ and δ , there are four ways of conceiving the relation between them. (I omit the case of total exclusion.)

(a) ρ is a subset of δ . If so, while all ρ -sentences are dogmas, there are dogmas not "contained" in $\gamma \cup \pi$ in such a way as to be available by the application of heuristic rules alone.

(b) ρ is co-extensive with δ . If so, there are no such dogmas as suggested in (a). Rather, everything taught as a dogma must be in principle discoverable in $\gamma \cup \pi$ by heuristic rules; and everything discoverable by such rules is, in some way, a dogma.

(c) δ is a subset of ρ . If so, dogmas are that subset of ρ officially teachable by the Church, but ρ contains in principle many exegetical details which would not figure even in the ideally complete set of dogmas.

(d) Some elements of ρ are elements of δ , and some elements of δ are elements of ρ . If so, ρ and δ are independent sets which have, however, a non-empty intersection, $\rho \cap \delta$.

Now, commenting on these possibilities in reverse order, the following must be observed.

As to (d): it makes sense only if one adopts a modern exegete's conception of ρ , rather than a dogmatic theologian's. I mean that ρ and δ become independent sets, if the elements of ρ are the sort of thing produced by critical exegesis. On this view, some proposition, p , is a ρ -sentence at time t if and only if p enjoys a consensus of critical scholars at t . In that case, the Church could not have obtained a ρ set prior to the end of the Nineteenth Century (at the earliest), because prior to that time the heuristic rules were never properly formulated or applied, that is, never took into account the exigencies of *Formgeschichte*, *Redaktionsgeschichte*, etc. Hence prior to recent years, the Church could never have had a proper basis for dogmatization or theological derivation. Therefore, the *de facto* set of dogmas and the ideal ρ set would be largely independent sets. Fr. Raymond Brown's (orally expressed) solution to this difficulty, namely, that pre-modern dogmatizations were merely the best that the Church could have said, given the state-of-the-art at the time, is plainly inadequate to the Church's self-understanding of what she does in dogmatizing. Hence (d) is excluded.

As to (c): it seems, again, to reflect a working exegete's conception of ρ rather than a dogmatic theologian's. In any case, it must be rejected on logical grounds, because it does not allow for what might be called second-order dogmas. Suppose it has been traditionally maintained that some sentence, p , is a ρ -sentence; and suppose that at a certain time this assumption comes into doubt. I see no reason why the Church cannot define dogmatically that p is a ρ -sentence and thus settle the controversy

But the δ -sentence that p is a ρ -sentence will rarely, if ever, be itself a ρ -sentence. Therefore δ cannot be a subset of ρ . (For examples of such second-order dogmas, cf. *D-S* 1569, 1616, 1703, 1706, 1716, 1718, 1801, 3034, etc.; 3043 is of higher order still.)

As to (b): it is the opinion one reaches if one takes the word "contained" in the statement that all dogmas must be "contained" in Scripture and Tradition, in one of its traditional senses. Its disadvantages are at least three: first, it again does not allow for second-order dogmas; secondly, it reduces the disparity in the means by which an original ρ -sentence was obtained and those by which a derived sentence subsequently dogmatized was obtained to theoretical insignificance; and thirdly, it thereby seems to expand the notion of exegesis monstrously (until it becomes something like what is now touted as "theological hermeneutics"); every sort of derivation procedure will become but a "moment" within exegesis, and the exegete himself will have to have the metaphysical *habitus*.

As to (a): it is the position one reaches if one allows derived sentences to be dogmatized which have certain required relations to some element or subset of ρ but could not have been obtained from $\gamma \cup \eta$ by exegetical tools alone. This view does not prejudice the logical priority of some ρ -sentence to the dogmatizability of any other sentence.

The position adopted here, as must be evident already, is (a). This is the position to which Newman strongly leaned, given the whole tenor of his argumentation, although it must be admitted that he left the choice between (a) and (b) open in principle. This hesitancy seems, at any rate, to be the most natural interpretation of his claim that Scripture is perpetually "unsubdued land" and hence that "of no doctrine whatever, which does not actually contradict what has been delivered, can it be peremptorily asserted that it is not in Scripture" (*op. cit.*, 71). This is certainly tenable, so long as one either abstracts from the case of second-order dogmas or understands "containment" in a sense broader than object-linguistic statement and implication.

Now, in order to defend (a), three points need to be explained. First, the nature which the set ρ must have, on this interpretation, if all its elements are thereby also elements of δ . Secondly, the nature of the heuristic rule by which such a ρ set can be obtained. And lastly, what precise relation to ρ is required in the elements of $\delta \cap \rho$.

On the first point, once the philologico-critical interpretation of ρ has been set aside, the only other conception available is the one which identifies ρ with the teaching of the (mostly Ordinary) Magisterium insofar as those teachings bear directly on the explicit meaning of Scripture and Apostolic Tradition. Those teachings will be attested in (a) the living Magisterium, (b) the *consensus Patrum* understood precisely as a witness to the Ordinary Magisterium of antiquity, and (c) the content of the Vulgate, defined at Trent as an authentic capture of the dogmatically relevant sense of the elements of γ . On this interpretation of ρ , it is obvious

Thirdly, the solemn definitions of 1854 and 1950 dogmatized

why ρ must be either a proper or an improper subset of δ .

On the second point, the heuristic rule which will yield a ρ -set of the sort required here is nothing other than the traditional rule that Catholic exegetes must view the Scriptures and monuments of Tradition in accord with the "mind of the Church," as reflected in the *consensus Patrum* the *analogia fidei*, etc. Another way of stating this heuristic rule is identically Newman's fifth "principle" of Christianity, namely the interpretation of the texts in a "second or mystical sense" (*op. cit.*, 325, 338-346).

On the third point—and this is the crucial one if (a) is to be tenable—suppose a sentence s_1 is discovered, such that s_1 could not have been derived without the aid of at least one ρ -sentence, and such that with respect to some set a , a subset of ρ , the elements of a cannot all have the meanings and relations traditionally assigned to them unless s_1 , and only s_1 , is true. Under these conditions, s_1 is intrinsically dogmatizable and, if actually taught by the Church, is already a dogma. One can call the relation here stipulated between s_1 and a "meaning preservation" or, more traditionally, "doctrinal development." On this view:

—it will not matter by what logical or semantical procedure s_1 was originally derived (so long as some ρ -sentence was required); s_1 becomes dogmatizable not on the basis of the character of that derivation but on the basis of the discovery of the required relation to a ; and this discovery may have required complex theological reasoning above and beyond whatever was necessary to derive s_1 .

—it is not necessary that the ρ -sentence(s) needed to derive s_1 be the same as the ρ -sentence(s) to which s_1 has the required relation.

—if some sentence s_2 has the required relation to some element of ρ but required no element of ρ for its derivation (that is, was obtainable by "natural reason") s_2 can be at most a defined *tenendum*.

—although s_1 , as described above, is not an element of ρ , nevertheless s_1 owes its dogmatizability solely to its logical relation to ρ .

—to preserve the Vatican I definition of dogma, of course, it will have to be the case that any sentence having the above-mentioned properties of s_1 can be called "implicitly revealed." This should involve no difficulty because, precisely as *explicans* or presupposition of some ρ -sentence(s), s_1 would be at least "implicit" in the statement made by some γ -sentence, hence "contained" in $\gamma \cup \rho$.

It should be clear, therefore, that I am not quarreling with the traditional definition of dogma; my quarrel is with the claim that a proposition proved to be theologically certain in the traditional sense is thereby proved to be non-dogmatizable even if it has the logical relations to ρ I have specified (that is, at least a relation of derivation and the required relation of "meaning preservation"). And of course I am not asserting that every proposition usually classified as theologically certain has these relations.

propositions long considered theologically certain *at best*. Thus Mariology explodes the theory that a proposition correctly denominated a "theological conclusion" cannot be dogmatized—a fact whose implications for theological method have not always been well explained.²⁸

²⁸ The nature and status of "theological conclusions" is hopelessly confused in the classical discussion because each of the key terms of the problem ("truth of Faith," "truth of natural reason," *doctrina Catholica*, etc.) is defined only by a welter of logical, ontological, and gnoseological intentions. Clarity will come when someone succeeds in keeping these aspects distinct, so as to arrive at extensionally defined sets. As a contribution to that end, I propose for consideration and criticism the following scheme. (To avoid unnecessary complication, $\gamma \cup \pi$ is assumed to be complete at time t .)

Temporally-Criteriologically Defined Sets

- ρ_t = the sentences understood by the Church at t to have been obtained by correct application of the heuristic rules to $\gamma \cup \pi$ and thus to express the meaning of the elements of $\gamma \cup \pi$. Thus ρ_t is a subset of the total teaching of the Magisterium (especially Ordinary) up until t .
- δ_t = the set of sentences understood by the Church at t to be ρ -sentences or to have been taught as dogma.
- d_t = the set of sentences understood by the Church at t to be δ -sentences (and thus *divinitus revelata*), or, to be necessary, given some historically actual controversy, for the preservation of the traditionally assigned meanings and relations of certain δ -sentences. Thus d_t will include the entire known authoritative content of Magisterial teaching at t .
- $\tau' \rho_t$ = the set of sentences understood by Catholic theologians at t to be d -sentences or to be consistent with those sentences as further derivations of any kind.

Logically Defined Sets

- ρ = the total set of sentences obtainable by correct application of the heuristic rules of $\gamma \cup \pi$.
- δ = all of ρ plus all the sentences having the properties of (a) being derived from ρ -sentence(s) and (b) being necessary for the preservation of the traditionally assigned meanings and relations of certain ρ -elements.
- d = all of δ plus all the sentences having the property of being necessary, given some logically possible controversy, for the preservation of the traditionally assigned meanings and relations of any δ -sentence.

Criteria for Doctrinal Development

$\tau'p$ = all of d plus all possible valid derivations of any kind from any of its elements of properly-formed subsets.

Note that these sets have been defined as proper subsets of each other, such that $p \subset \delta$, $\delta \subset d$, $d \subset \tau'p$

Thus as long as the sets are logically (atemporally) defined, the following sets are necessarily empty:

$$\begin{array}{lll} p \cap \delta & \delta \cap d & d \cap \tau'p \\ p \cap d & \delta \cap \tau'p & \\ p \cap \tau'p & & \end{array}$$

But reversing the order of the terms, we obtain the following theologically significant intersections:

$\delta \cap p$ = all dogmatizable propositions which cannot be obtained by exegetical procedures alone; here would belong all second- and higher-order dogmas;

$d \cap \delta$ = all propositions definable as *tenenda* but not as *credenda*;

$\tau'p \cap d$ = all theologically certain propositions other than *tenenda* and all tenable theological opinions; differently stated, this set contains only the theological propositions which a Catholic may question (at least in some respect) and excludes those he may not;

$\tau'p \cap \delta$ = this set includes all propositions taught or teachable in the Church as tenable or as *tenenda* and excludes all truths divinely revealed;

$\tau'p \cap p$ = this set is what Bochenski means by $\tau'p$, as opposed to the meaning assigned to that symbol here; the set includes all propositions obtained by derivation from p -sentences and excludes those obtainable by application of the heuristic rules to $\gamma \cup \pi$.

Now the sets listed above as empty cease to be empty and, indeed, acquire major significance, as soon as the right side of each is temporally-criteriologically defined. Thus:

$p \cap \delta^t \cup \delta \cap \delta^t$ = the scope of dogmatic development in the strict sense.
 $p \cap d^t \cup \delta \cap d^t \cup d \cap d^t$ = the scope of doctrinal development in Newman's sense.

$p \cap \tau'^t \cup \delta \cap \tau'^t \cup d \cap \tau'^t \cup \tau'p \cap \tau'^t$ = the scope of theological progress.

By contrast, such intersections as $p^t \cap \delta$, $\delta^t \cap d$, $d^t \cap \tau'p$ are all necessarily empty, thanks to the Church's guarantee of infallibility.

As to how these sets are related to their expansion over time, I think the following chart is self-explanatory:

time	doctrinal discourse
t_1	p^1
t_2	$p^2 \tau'^2$
t_3	$p^3 \delta^3 \tau'^3$
t_4	etc. $p^4 \delta^4 \tau'^4$

In other words, I assume that the Church's penetration of Scripture and Tradition by exegetical procedures goes on continually. But no derived sentences of any kind can be obtained before at least some ρ -sentences are in place. Hence the application of the rules of derivation is always necessarily a step behind the application of heuristic rules. Next, I assume that all derived sentences begin as theological tentatives, and only subsequently are some of these tentatives found to be so related to ρ that they can be declared dogmas.

This last point brings one face to face with the traditional problem of "theological conclusions" and *fides ecclesiastica*. The reader will probably have noticed that the entire system proposed here rests upon the assumption that there is no special, stable class of "theological conclusions" alongside the classes of "revealed truths" and "truths of natural reason." In the proposed system, "theological conclusions" are an unstable group which appear only at the growing edge of theology or, deeper within it, as alternative axiomatizations for which no conclusive argument has been found for preferring one alternative over another (the classical issue of theological "schools"). Where conclusive arguments are available, in other words, the career of a theological conclusion is up or out.

Let us now see if there is a way to prove that this assumption is sound.

We are confronted with three metalinguistic predicates which take whole propositions as their subjects, namely: "p is revealed," "p is a theological conclusion" and "p is a proposition of natural reason," where p stands for any proposition. Let us symbolize these predicates as R, T, and N respectively, so that Rp will be read, "p is revealed," etc.

A major traditional question has been how these three predicates are to be defined. There have been content-definitions, assent-definitions, and derivation-definitions.

A content-definition of R would be: "a proposition whose subject and predicate are both revealed." A parallel definition of T would be: "attaches an (originally) philosophical predicate to a revealed subject" (hence, of course, arises syllogistically whenever a premise of faith is coupled with a premise of natural reason). But one need only page through the *De Deo Uno et Trino* in order to see that practically every *de fide* proposition in it would fit this supposed definition of T.

An assent-definition of R would be: "is assented to on the authority of God revealing." Then, since T-truths are supposed to be assented to by lesser authority (the light of reason), it follows that $Tp \supset -Rp$.

A derivation-definition of R would be: "obtainable by right exegesis of Scripture and Tradition." Then, if T-truths are admitted to require further steps (e.g. syllogistic reasoning), it follows again that $Tp \supset -Rp$.

On any of these definitions, the Church's definition of p would imply that the judgment Tp had been a mistake, or else that p can only be believed by *fides ecclesiastica*.

The usual way out of this dilemma is to say that one and the same

Fourthly, the Bulls defining the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption shed light on how these especially difficult cases are "contained" in Scripture and early Tradition, and on how they are known to be contained therein. Hence Pius IX and Pius XII give rare evidence of the Holy See's own view

proposition, while attained only mediately and by the light of reason in the theologian, may be seen immediately in the sources of Revelation by the Magisterium (or, for that matter, by a better theologian, or even by the faithful). I approve wholeheartedly of this solution, but I also notice what it entails. It entails that T is a predicate which says *nothing* about the content of a proposition and *nothing* about the objective derivation-possibilities of a proposition but says only how the proposition was assented to *by a particular knower*. But if so, Tp will imply *nothing* about whether p is revealed or not. Hence it is *false* that $Tp \supset -Rp$. (This is the first step toward getting rid of *fides ecclesiastica*.)

Now this is precisely the conclusion I wish to maintain. For it means that theological conclusions are radically different in status from truths of natural reason, and the mere fact that they are products of *reasoning* cannot reduce them to that status. In other words, "truth of natural reason" cannot be equivalent to "truth known by the natural light of reason," for both N-truths and T-truths are known by this light. Hence, if we define the symbols " $p \supset q$ " very broadly to mean "the assertion of p leads by deductive steps to the assertion of q," then $p \supset q \cdot Rp \cdot -Rq : \supset : Nq$ (the opinion of many scholastics) is clearly false. N now because a predicate which describes the verifiability conditions of a proposition (namely, "can be verified independently of anything revealed"), whereas T-truths are obviously verifiable only with the help of revealed data. Hence the problem of *fides ecclesiastica* disappears.

The radical difference between N and T can also be brought out in another way. In the Nineteenth Century, the Church reprobated the "rationalist" opinion that Christian dogmas could be deduced from truths of natural reason (D.S. 2904, 2908-9, 3041). Hence, keeping our same broad definition of $p \supset q$, we can formulate an anti-rationalistic axiom:

$$Np \cdot Rq \cdot \supset \cdot -(p \supset q)$$

Now, on any of the classical definitions of T, absolutely no one would replace Np with Tp in that formula. In fact, given only $-Np$ and Rq, the discovery the $p \supset q$ is often a basis for saying that p is definable! To be a theological *implicans* is a far nobler status than to be a theological *implicatum*. After all, what is any plausible heresy but a conclusion which appears sound? The alleged *implicatum* is always tested by seeing what it, in turn, implies. It is turned into an *implicans* precisely in order to see whether it explains, or distorts, the data of faith. Produced, perhaps deductively, it is tested reductively.

of doctrinal development.²⁹

Fifthly, the "fundamental principle" of scientific Mariology has been clarified in recent decades, so that much up-to-date work has been done showing how to construct the whole science on that basis. (Such construction is a textbook case of "second axiomatization." Cf. the chart at the end of this article.) A proposed development in any branch of theology must be consistent with that fundamental principle and with its role as principle; otherwise that proposal destroys Mariology.³⁰

Sixthly, Mariology, to a greater extent, perhaps, than any other tract, arose historically by the aid of certain curious principles known as the *argumenta decentiae, congruentiae, convenientiae, singularitatis, etc.*³¹ But the nature of these princi-

²⁹ Especially illuminating are these words from *Munificentissimus Deus*: "This singular unity of the Catholic bishops and faithful... of itself manifests, in a manner absolutely certain and exempt for all errors, that this privilege is a truth revealed by God and contained in the divine deposit entrusted by Christ to His Spouse... The universal consensus of the ordinary Magisterium of the Church provides a certain and solid argument to establish the fact that the bodily Assumption into Heaven of the Blessed Virgin Mary... is a truth revealed by God..." (*AAS*, 1950, 756, 757). One could paraphrase the teaching this way: an illation from ρ -sentence to fact is valid. As we shall see below (p. 26), this point has troublesome implications for Fr. Raymond Brown's problem *re* the virginal conception.

³⁰ The best synthesis of the discussions on Mariology's fundamental principle, to this writer's knowledge, is Cyril Vollert, *op. cit.*, 49-112. Nevertheless, Fr. Vollert passes on without criticism certain faulty assumptions which seem to have conditioned the entire debate. It is simply not true, for example, that even a purely deductive science (like formal logic) proceeds from a *single* axiom or "fundamental principle." Every formal system has metalinguistic rules as well as its basic object-linguistic axioms. This point has been well established since 1921, when Emil Post published the first complete account of the logic of sentential connectives, along with a formal deductive system, a semantics of the grammar of this system, and proofs of its soundness (freedom from antinomies) and completeness. See E. Post, *Introduction to a General Theory of Elementary Propositions*, in *American Journal of Mathematics* 43 (1921), pp. 163-185. On how certain specifically Catholic metalinguistic rules enter into the construction of the Marian tract, see below, note 33.

³¹ Carolus Balic, O.F.M., *Circa theologiam marianam inde a Concilio*

ples was not recognized. When someone says, "*Decet ut aliquid sit*," he is making a metalinguistic comment (*decet*) upon some particular sentence of the object-language, expressed as a noun clause or as indirect discourse. The comment then becomes the basis of an inference: the thing seen to be "fitting" is, within certain limits, a thing certain to be true. It is not surprising that the use of such an inference gave rise to some incautious conclusions; but that is not the interesting point. What is interesting is to see how such a principle could have been used at all. How could it have produced *any* sound results? Why was it not, in actual practice, as hopelessly subjective as it sounds on bald statement? The answer leads back to a point touched on above (note 12). Even though "fittingness" is nowhere explicitly defined in the sources of revelation, a specifically Christian sense of it is somehow acquired in and through a devout perusal of the sources. This Catholic sense of the "fitting" is neither *lecta* nor formally *intellecta* but is acquired sensorially *in legendo*, much as the syntax of a language is acquired by a child "in, with, and under" the sounds heard. This phenomenon leads to the discovery that there is a "syntax" to the kerygma over and above the syntax of the natural language in which the kerygma is preached. To formulate this quasi-syntax into conscious rules would be to articulate the metalinguistic rules for Catholic dogmatics.²² And Mariology is a

Tridentino usque ad hodiernam diem, in *Problemi Scelti di Teologia Contemporanea* (Rome, 1954) 330-337. See also Maurice Flick, *Il valore dell'argomento di convenienza*, in *ibid.*, 57-62. The principle of *decentia* receives a striking validation in this norm laid down by *Munificentissimus Deus*: "mysteria gratiae, quae Deus in Virgine operatus est, non esse ordinariis legibus metienda, sed divina omnipotentia, supposita rei decentia, absque ulla Scripturarum contradictione aut repugnantia," *AAS*, 42 (1950), 767.

²² In other words, a discourse-system is a kind of macro-language in which the basic units are not sounds or syllables, nor even words, but whole sentences. The notion of synchronic structure was first clarified decisively for linguistics in 1916: Ferdinand de Saussure, *Cours de linguistique générale* (Paris: Payot); English trans., Wade Baskin (New York, 1958).

uniquely privileged tract from which to investigate and discover such rules—not only on account of the influence in Mariology of weak and fallible inference-rules like *decentia*, etc., but also on account of much more important rules which seem to operate at the very base of the tract.³³

With these advantages of Mariology in mind, it will be fruitful to return to the last of the requirements extracted from Newman's sixth "note," to explain its meaning, and to see what light it sheds on the truth-conditions of the Marian dogmas as criteria for development.

Adjusted to Mariology, the requirement will read as follows:

Every dogma of Mariology must retain its referent, verifiability conditions, and falsifiability conditions, if the alleged development is true.

The extrapolation of Saussure's discoveries to discourse-systems and cultural structures was the work of Claude Lévi-Strauss: see his *Anthropologie structurale* (Paris, 1958) 37-93; *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*, revised English trans., J. H. Bell (London, 1969). For theological purposes, the most important and impressive of Lévi-Strauss's achievements is his macro-linguistic analysis of myth: *Anthropologie structurale*, 227-257; an English version of this chapter, entitled, "The Structural Study of Myth," is to be found *apud* Thomas A. Sebeok, ed., *Myth: A Symposium* (Bloomington, 1965); the theory is exhibited *in extenso* in Lévi-Strauss's *The Raw and the Cooked*, trans. J. and D. Weightman (New York, 1969).

³³ These deep-seated and tacit rules govern both the ordering and derivation of much Catholic discourse; some have been verbalized by the Fathers (e.g. St. Augustine's dictum: Seek the mystery!); very few have been explicitly dogmatized. An example is the principle that man must cooperate with grace; that a person's effects in the order of salvation (what Fr. William Most has called the "internal" and "mixed economies") are results of free acts and hence are "proportionate" to that person's own measure of grace; that grace comes, thus, only through the holy; that all God's acts in history are intended for our salvation, etc. These rules certainly *sound* like object language, and they can become such; but they have functioned in Christian history as metalanguage. The author is planning a study in which it is shown that the entire Marian tract can be re-axiomatized employing as primitive postulates only the Divine Maternity and three of these meta-linguistic rules.

Purely for convenience sake, let us call this the "Marian requirement."

What exactly is meant by "referent"? It is a term taken from the theory of signs.

Every properly used sign has sense and reference. It conveys something (its sense), and it stands for something (its referent), and the two functions are irreducible the one to the other. The standard example is Frege's: "the Morning Star" and "the Evening Star" have the same referent but differ in sense.³⁴ A proposition (say, a dogma) is a linguistic sign; specifically, it is an indicative sentence *as understood* to mean this or that (as making a certain statement).³⁵ Leaving aside complicated cases, the referent of the proposition-as-a-whole is the referent of the sign which serves as subject,³⁶ and the main sense of the proposition-as-a-whole is the sense of the predicate-sign *as affirmed* of the referent of the subject-sign.³⁷

³⁴ Gottlob Frege, *On Sense and Reference*, in *Translations from the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege*, ed. Peter Geach and Max Black (Oxford, 1970) 56-78.

³⁵ This medieval view has been revived in contemporary analytical philosophy; see Norman Kretzmann, *Medieval Logicians on the Meaning of the Proposition*, in *The Journal of Philosophy* 67 (1970) 767 ff. The same view is vigorously denied by Husserl and others, who make the proposition an abstract, non-linguistic entity, a purely "ideal" structure (which is not the *verbum interius* of Aquinas but the very thing affirmed or denied), which is merely "expressed" by a sentence. Willard Quine's refutation of "ideal" propositions is, in this writer's opinion, decisive: W. V. Quine, *Philosophy of Logic* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1970) chapter 1.

³⁶ Logical subject, not necessarily the grammatical subject only. For example, the logical subjects of "John hit Arthur" are John and Arthur, of whom a relational predicate ("hit") is affirmed. The grammatical distinction between nominative and accusative expresses the direction of the relation. Scholastic metaphysics was quite aware that every transitive act founds a relation, but scholastic logic failed to take this metaphysical insight as a clue to correct logical analysis.

³⁷ On the modification of a predicate's sense through "contraction" to its subject and the consequent rise of analogically related senses, see James F. Ross, *A New Theory of Analogy*, in *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association* (1970) 70-85, and the same author's *Anal-*

Hence the predicate sign has no referent other than that provided by the subject sign. At the same time, the sense of the subject sign is often irrelevant to the main sense of the proposition, hence to its truth or falsity. For example, if the lamp on my desk is annoying me, it makes no difference whether I say, "This *lamp* is too bright," or, "This *light* is too bright"; the affirmation which I primarily intend is the same.²⁸ (This is the point overlooked by conceptualists, who make the judgment a linking of two concepts or sign-senses; it is also the point which will prove crucial in a fair assessment of the theory that dogmas "use" certain "conceptual structures" which they do not affirm, with the result that these structures can be replaced while keeping the same affirmation.) Hence two things are absolutely unalterable if a sentence is to continue making the same statement: the referent of the subject and the sense of the predicate. And the same two things, of course, determine the verifiability and falsifiability conditions. In the light of these distinctions, it is possible to gain some insight into the phenomenon of re-interpretation. The Church re-interprets the Old Testament by taking γ -sentences which once made state-

ogy and the Resolution of Some Cognition Problems, in The Journal of Philosophy 67 (1970) 725-746.

²⁸ This is to quarrel with Bertrand Russell. Russell would analyze "This lamp is too bright" as making two co-equal assertions: "This is a lamp," and "This is too bright." No doubt, a stickler would agree. But surely our common experience suggests a different analysis. When I assert the sentence in question, what I mainly wish to assert is that this thingmajig is too bright. I *presuppose* that the thingmajig is a lamp; I don't exactly assert it. In fact, it could be argued that oftentimes I don't even presuppose, strictly, the assertion, "This is a lamp," but rather the quite different assertion that "lamp" is an apt word to signify this thingmajig. On this hypothesis, the presupposed assertion is metalinguistic, and the presupposing assertion is object-linguistic. The presupposed act (my choice of the subject-sign) is an act of the cogitative power, and the presupposing act is an act of the intellect, a judgment. Thus, if the choice of subject-sign is totally amiss, the sentence will cease to make a statement and lose its truth-value; but if the choice of subject is within a certain range of acceptability, the thrust of the assertion remains and will be understood.

ments about OT realities and applying them to Christ or one of His mysteries. Hence a Christian ρ -sentence is acquired by typological exegesis. The OT sentence is given a new referent; the sense of its subject-sign becomes a metaphor for the new referent; and the sense of the predicate-sign is spiritualized so as to be affirmable of the new referent. Thus the OT sentence now makes a new statement, whose truth or falsity depends on conditions *toto caelo* different from those on which the truth or falsity of the original statement depended. For example, it is literally immaterial, probably even false, that the Ark rode out a universal flood; but it is typologically true that baptism is a universal means of salvation by water (I Peter 3:20-21).⁸⁹

The fundamental question which decides the legitimacy, not just of this or that type, but of such exegesis in general is this: is it *right* to make the text figurative? If so, a plurality of referents is admitted in advance, hence a plurality of propositional senses. If not, the only referent legitimately assignable to a sentence is the one suggested by historical and grammatical considerations.

Now, although the Church recognizes that at least some γ -sentences of Scripture are legitimately taken as figurative language, she vigorously denies that her own ρ -sentences or dogmas are anything of the kind (e.g., D-S 3426, 3441). It is one of the most fundamental metalinguistic principles of Catholic doctrinal discourse that its object language is fixed in sense and referent (in fact, something close to the point is infallibly defined—D-S 3043). To violate this principle is to revive the Modernist hermeneutic (*supra*, note 14); whereupon an assertion of this sort, "The Virgin Mary is a symbol of women's rights," ceases to be social comment and becomes serious theology.

⁸⁹ It is the Christian (in this case, typological) ρ -sentence, of course, to which inerrancy attaches; it is the "saving truth" intended by God. Cf. *Dei Verbum*, para. 11.

A ridiculous example? To be sure, but methodologically identical to two recent proposals by E. J. Yarnold, S.J., concerning the modern Marian dogmas. In a much-publicized sermon, given at St. Mary's Church, Oxford, on March 7, 1971, Fr. Yarnold argued that the essential theological sense of the Immaculate Conception might be this: "that the grace of God requires human cooperation, provides the conditions which make the human response possible and fruitful, and results in sanctification, so that the holiness of the church will be verifiable in the lives of its members, and will overflow from member to member;" and the theological sense of the Assumption, Yarnold thought, might be this: "that all that is truly of value in human existence continues after death, when it is transformed in heaven."⁴⁰

By coincidence, these proposals of Yarnold were examined by two contributors (working independently) to last year's issue of *Marian Studies*. Fr. Frederick Jelly, O.P., found Yarnold's procedure "good logistically" but disappointing in its application to these two dogmas. Fr. Jelly sensed that the *real event* of Christ's redeeming grace in Mary had been lost from view, so that Yarnold's position ended in a certain abstractness and even reductionism.⁴¹ Meanwhile, the other contributor, Fr. Bertrand de Margerie, also saw a sacrifice of historicity in Yarnold's proposals, with a consequent loss of the specific content of the two dogmas as traditionally understood. Resorting to strong language, Margerie characterized the proposals as "essentially a neo-Gnosticism tainted with Modernism."⁴²

The judgments of both contributors are confirmed by the development criteriology proposed in this paper. What both

⁴⁰ E. J. Yarnold, *The Marian Dogmas and Reunion*, in *The Month* 131 (London, June, 1971) 179.

⁴¹ Frederick M. Jelly, O.P., *Marian Dogmas within Vatican II's Hierarchy of Truths*, in *Marian Studies* 27 (1976) 39.

⁴² Bertrand de Margerie, S.J., *Dogmatic Development by Abridgement or by Concentration*, in *ibid.*, 75-80.

primarily lament is Yarnold's shift of referent.

No longer the Blessed Virgin herself, the referent of the Immaculate Conception becomes God's grace as actively received by men and fruitful among them; the subject-sign of the dogma, Mary, is thereby made a metaphor for this grace; the predicate, "was preserved immune," etc., which makes little sense as affirmed of grace, is cashiered in favor of other predicates (some of them apparently intended to reflect the force of adverbial phrases in the original). With sense and referent altered, there is no philosophically coherent way to claim that the dogma still makes the same statement or preserves the same affirmation.

Similarly in the case of the Assumption: the referent becomes that which is truly valuable in human existence (whatever that may be). Mary is again a metaphor. The predicate, "was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory," is attenuated into "continues after death and is transformed in heaven." Again, with sense and referent altered, the dogma makes a new statement.

In both cases, the verifiability and falsifiability conditions are new. Just as no spatio-temporal contingency about Noah's ark falsifies the dogma of baptism, so also no event or experience in the life of the historical Mary either confirms or falsifies the two "Marian" dogmas. In terms of theological verification, the new statements are verified by abundant data in Scripture and tradition which had no bearing at all on the old statements. The axiomatic connexions are radically different also; neither of Yarnold's statements even presupposes the divine maternity. In fact, as he admits (and it is his main point), it becomes a matter of indifference whether the old statements are true or false. Thus in every respect, what I have called "the Marian requirement" has been violated.

To Fr. Yarnold's credit, however, he makes no pretence of continuing the same "sense." He writes: "Many doctrines have two levels: the symbolic level and the theological level . . .

Certain doctrines, formulated in historical or quasi-historical terms, can have an ulterior sense which could be expressed without these terms. Let us call the historical formulation the symbolic sense, and the ulterior sense the theological sense."⁴³

Thus without argument or apology, Yarnold assimilates the case of "many doctrines" to the case of γ -sentences, as though their metalinguistic properties were identical, specifically, as though a plurality of legitimate referents could be assumed in both cases. In this way, a dogma becomes for him a purely material sentence, capable of being taken figuratively, hence open to a typological exegesis which becomes its *theological* sense.

Exactly the same metalinguistic operation—performed this time upon the doctrine of Our Lady's virginal motherhood—provides the sub-surface problematic of Fr. Raymond Brown's well-known essay on the virginal conception of Jesus.⁴⁴

Brown concedes the ρ -sentence status of the virginal conception: "I think that according to the usual criteria applied in Roman Catholic theology the virginal conception would be classified as a doctrine infallibly taught by the ordinary magisterium."⁴⁵ But he goes on to ask whether the historical *fact* of such a conception might not need to be re-evaluated in the light of the better-understood data now controlled by biblical scholars. The bulk of Brown's essay (what may be called the surface problematic) is an audit of these data, *pro* and *con*; and the result of the audit is rather elusive.⁴⁶ But apparently

⁴³ Yarnold, *loc. cit.*

⁴⁴ Raymond E. Brown, S.S., *The Virginal Conception and Bodily Resurrection of Jesus* (New York, 1973) 21-68.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 35.

⁴⁶ In one place Brown says, "My judgment, in conclusion, is that the totality of the *scientifically controllable* evidence leaves an unresolved problem," *ibid.*, 66. Subsequently he adds: "Nor do I think that modern biblical study favors abandoning the idea of a virginal conception..." (p. 132). This latter could be construed as meaning either the same or something different from the first statement.

Brown thinks there is no direct, positive evidence in favor of the historicity of the virginal conception at all.⁴⁷ The only two reasons for thinking such an event must have occurred are negative in character, namely: the *idea* of a virginal conception would not have been easy to invent (as no genuine parallels have been discovered yet),⁴⁸ and the only plausible alternative, given the NT and early Jewish evidence against an established marital situation, is an "unpleasant" one.⁴⁹ At any rate, it can safely be said that the "objective evidence," as Brown sees it, is not weighted decisively for or against the historicity. Hence it is insufficient to indicate a reversal of the Church's constant tradition. *But: the question must remain open.* Here is where the real difficulty with Brown's position (and its sub-surface problematic) comes into view.

Brown takes a very different stand from previous generations of Catholic scholars and from most (I think) of his contemporaries. These other scholars would hold three things:

(1) the teaching abundantly attested in the ordinary Magisterium is a teaching precisely of the historical fact of virginal conception;

(2) this teaching is attested to in such a way that it can safely be said to have been infallibly proposed by the ordinary Magisterium;

(3) therefore, the evidence against the Church's teaching, which a purely critical exegesis of the biblical and para-biblical data can adduce, can be totaled up in different ways by different scholars; but, no matter what its total, it can neither overthrow the dogma nor alter the meaning which has always been assigned to it.

Brown's position is peculiar in that he admits (2) and can

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 53-61.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 61-65.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 65-66. Brown's handling of the total data of the problem has been severely criticized by Fr. Manuel Miguens, O.F.M., in *Marian Studies* 26 (1975).

be read as accepting (3);⁵⁰ but he denies the applicability of (3) to the present case by casting doubt on (1). He thinks the ρ -sentence *about* the virginal conception might have a theological meaning which does not include the *fact* of such a conception. He writes: "The purpose of my inquiry is to determine which is the most responsible of these various attitudes, all of which rightly accent the theological import but disagree on the underlying historical fact (the manner of the conception)." ⁵¹ So the "theological import" is separable from the fact. What is this "theological import"? Brown answers: "The silence of the rest of the NT enhances the *possibility* of the theologoumenon theory whereby sometime in the 60's one or more Christian thinkers solved the Christological problem by affirming symbolically that Jesus was God's Son from the moment of his conception. According to the theory, they used an imagery of the virginal conception whose symbolic origins were forgotten as it was disseminated among various Christian communities and recorded by the evangelists."⁵² Even Matthew and Luke, says Brown, were interested in the virginal conception "as the idiom of a Christological insight;"⁵³ and elsewhere he speaks of "the underlying beliefs that have been formulated in terms of virginal conception."⁵⁴ In other words, Brown quietly assumes what Yarnold asserts: "Certain doctrines, formu-

⁵⁰ Brown can also be read as denying (3). For instance: "The wide acceptance of the virginal conception stems from its being presented as part of the Christian heritage both in the Bible and in Church pronouncements. *Yet this unanimity does not foreclose the question; for modern theological insights make it necessary to qualify the authority both of the Bible and of Church teaching . . .*" (p. 31, emphasis added). Whatever this particular passage may mean, I think the whole tenor of Brown's essay supports the more benign interpretation adopted above—namely, that Brown accepts (3)—and this interpretation has the additional charm of making Brown's overall position a good deal more sophisticated than it would be otherwise.

⁵¹ Brown, 28f.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 61.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 28.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 67.

lated in historical or quasi-historical terms, can have an ulterior sense which could be expressed without these terms."⁵⁵

Is this a fair charge? Have I attributed to Brown a theory which he merely quotes and considers tenable, but does not adopt? No, because it is this quiet assumption, and this alone, which enables Brown to insist that the question is not "foreclosed." "I am simply asking," he writes, "whether for Catholics a modern evaluation of the evidence is irrelevant because the answer is already decided through past Church teaching."⁵⁶ The question is rhetorical, of course; Brown's sub-surface problematic could not exist without a negative answer. Then how is the negative answer to be secured? By the same separation of fact and theologoumenon: "The question that has arisen today is whether theologians were correct in their assumption that the virginal conception [*sc.* the fact of it] was universally and consistently proposed for belief by the Church . . ."⁵⁷ But how, realistically, can there be any doubt? How can the Church's plain words not include the fact? Brown responds: "the Church has an insight into revelation (through a type of spiritual connaturality) . . . But it is not clear how this principle applies to a question of biological fact such as is involved in the virginal conception."⁵⁸ In other words, Brown wishes to leave open the possibility that the Church's charism of insight into the meaning of revelation *may* not apply to, or reach to, the historical facts underlying the inspired account but per-

⁵⁵ Yarnold, *loc. cit.*

⁵⁶ Brown, 38.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 36.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 37. Note how closely Brown skirts the 23rd proposition condemned in *Lamentabili*: "Exsistere potest et reipsa existit oppositio inter facta, quae in sacra Scriptura narrantur, eisque innixa Ecclesiae dogmata; ita ut criticus tamquam falsa reicere possit facta, quae Ecclesia tamquam certissima credit" (*D-S*, 3423). Brown holds that opposition is exactly possible between the fact and the prima-facie dogma (its "symbolical formulation") but escapes censure by claiming that what the Church really believes may be the underlying "theological sense." Thus Brown stands or falls, not on his NT scholarship, but on this theory of dogma.

haps stops at the theological *meaning* of the account. If so, the Magisterium deals exclusively in "meanings," and the exegetes are free to determine the "facts." It would seem that Brown has not only assumed the metalinguistic theory espoused by Yarnold—he has *used* it to suggest a new solution to the dilemma of Church authority vs. free research.

Before leaving Brown and inquiring into the deeper roots of this metalinguistic theory of dogma, let us consider what Mariology has to lose if Brown is right, and his question is not foreclosed. Suppose (*per impossibile*) the Church were to decide that the original sense of the Marian narratives in Matthew and Luke had been symbolical, so that the fact of a virginal conception were not contained in the deposit of faith but only the Christological truth that Jesus, though God's Son, was truly conceived of human parent(s), hence man like us. Let the title "Virgin" Mary become only a symbolical way of saying *theotokos*. What follows from this re-interpretation?

Well, first of all: if, by virtue of the fact/theologoumenon distinction, such a reinterpretation can (in theory) occur, the least that follows is this: from ρ -sentence to fact there is no illation. Pius XII, however, had been certain of the contrary. In the *Munificentissimus Deus*, the age-long harmony of the Catholic world in professing the Assumption was taken to be an absolutely certain indication of its definability (see above, note 29). If Brown is correct, however, this was no ground at all—unless, of course, even the definition of the Assumption left open the question of fact (whereupon Brown's position would once again rejoin Yarnold's).

Further: unless the corporeal existence of Christ is to become a theologoumenon also, it remains that He *was* conceived, so that one is forced to say something or other about the fact. If it was not a miracle, there are two and only two possibilities.⁵⁹ Either He was conceived illegitimately, or else He was

⁵⁹ I omit the "possibility" of natural parthenogenesis. In a case like

the fruit (humanly speaking) of the marital union of Mary and Joseph. The NT evidence is such that, if one denies the miracle, one is almost forced to assume illegitimacy. Very well, on that assumption, the Incarnation occurred by means of an objectively deadly sin. One could try to make sense out of that by crying, *O felix culpa!* But Mariology would be destroyed root and branch. The privilege of divine motherhood would neither require nor imply any holiness whatsoever in the woman chosen. The Immaculate Conception becomes a failed effort, and the Assumption arbitrary. If we ignore the NT evidence and posit a marriage *ratum et consummatum* between Mary and Joseph, however, we face an opposite problem. It now becomes necessary to speak of a divine paternity. Now if Mariology is a correctly constructed science, that is, if the divine maternity (in its full intelligibility) involves special predestination, immaculate conception, co-redeemership and Assumption, why should not divine paternity, *aequo jure*, involve the same? Why are we not forced to construct a Josephology replete with every one of these privileges and graces? One may object: nothing in Scripture or in the entire tradition of the Church supports such a construction. Fine, abandon it. But if it is thereby admitted that divine paternity involves nothing beyond the sanctity already accorded to St. Joseph, why should divine maternity involve any more? The choice is ineluctible: either a full-scale Josephology, or else the divine maternity fails as principle of Mariology. Either absurd constructions, or the collapse of Marian science.

Finally: if Brown's question is really open, so that a re-interpretation is possible at least in principle (and even if it would not be justified in this particular case as a matter of fact), it will still follow that authentic and even infallible teachings of the Church are not fixed in sense and referent. Take the proposition, "Christ was born of the Virgin Mary."

this, the Church would hardly abandon a miracle in order to affirm a coincidence.

Its logical subjects are "Christ" and "Virgin Mary," between whom the relational predicate "born of" is affirmed. The predicate has a unique sense by virtue of its contraction to these two subjects: it means the virginal being-born of the God-man. But if the proposed re-interpretation is possible in principle, then it is possible for one of the referents to be altered. No longer the extra-propositional Mary who was in fact a virgin, the one referent will become simply the woman Mary. Thereupon part of the subject-sign, the title "Virgin," becomes a metaphor for the divine sonship of the child, and the predicate loses its specific sense. Altered in sense and referent, the sentence no longer makes the same statement and no longer involves the same affirmation. Hence, to accept Brown's problematic as legitimate is identically to accept Yarnold's theory of the metalinguistic properties of dogmas.⁶⁰

Having seen the consequences of this theory, we must now ask what its basis is, and what accounts for its widespread plausibility. Fr. Avery Dulles seems to have the right answer:

In the 1940s the *nouvelle théologie* of Henri de Lubac, Henri Bouillard, and others pointed out that man's religious knowledge is necessarily imbedded in contingent notions that depend upon particular cultural circumstances. From this it followed quite logically that the dogmas of the faith are subject to reconceptualization. The permanent validity of the dogmas—which these theologians did not contest—ought not be identified, they maintained, with the contingent representations involved in any given formulation. The *nouvelle théologie*, of course, was vigorously attacked by conservative theologians and met with some disfavor in the

⁶⁰ It is vital to see that the Yarnold-Brown hypothesis is on this metalinguistic level. For, considered purely as object language, their substitute-statements are unexceptionable; they contradict or trivialize absolutely nothing among the object-language dogmas of our system. The difficulty emerges *only* when one makes the metalinguistic claim that these proposals *could be the theological sense* of certain pre-existing dogmas. It is *this* claim which conflicts with the requirements of orthodoxy, as laid down in the canon of Vatican I (D-S 3043).

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encyclical *Humani generis*. Even in our own day, some theologians continue to insist on the immutability of the concepts and terms employed in dogmatic formulations.

John XXIII, however, opened the door to the more liberal position when he declared that Vatican II should study and expound authentic doctrine "through the methods of research and through the literary forms of modern thought. The substance of the ancient doctrine is one thing, and the way in which it is presented is another."⁶¹

So: the Pope called for new ways of "presenting" the perduring Gospel, and his remark was interpreted as an endorsement of Henri Bouillard's theory of theological discourse, which in turn had been interpreted as a theory of dogmatic formulas and held the field as "the" more liberal position. Hence arose what may safely be called the dominant and central problematic of post-Conciliar theology: to advance doctrinal development (in the broad sense of deepening, expanding, refining, or qualifying Christian understanding) *by means of* this "reconceptualization."

A stunning task; but is the instrument adequate? What exactly is "reconceptualization"? There seems to be but one source to interrogate on the question; for practically every recent theologian who has spoken on the subject has echoed, with or without explicit acknowledgement, the words of Bouillard. Let us examine what that theologian said, asking questions as we go along.

The place to begin is with the fact that "truth resides in the judgment and not in the concept." From this Bouillard reasons that Ecumenical Councils, in their dogmatic formulations, "do not sanction notions but propositions. The notions can only be consecrated by Councils indirectly and in the mea-

⁶¹ Dulles, *The Survival of Dogma*, 117-118. The quotation from Pope John's opening speech is in Walter M. Abbott, ed.; *The Documents of Vatican II*, 715.

sure in which they are necessary to express judgments."⁶² But what is a "notion"? Is it image? phantasm? technical term? concept? We are told only that "notion" is that which is necessary, to one degree or another, to express a judgment. This is not much information. Elsewhere Bouillard gives this clue: "In renouncing Aristotelian physics, modern thought has abandoned the notions, the patterns, the dialectical oppositions which make sense only in function of that physics. In order for theology to continue to offer a meaning to the (contemporary) mind, to be able to fructify it and progress with it, theology must also renounce these notions."⁶³ But this exchange of old notions for new does not destroy the underlying affirmations: "If the notions, the methods, the systems change with time, the affirmations which they contain remain, even though expressed in other categories."⁶⁴ We may now add "category" to the list of things a "notion" might be. We have also learned that expressions and whole systems of expressions are "containers" for affirmations, which are apparently the same as judgments. Bouillard expands on this container-theory: "Christian truth never subsists in a pure state. By this we do not mean that it must inevitably be presented mingled with error, but that it is always imbedded in contingent notions and schemes which determine its rational structure. It cannot be isolated from these. It can be liberated from one system only by passing into another . . . Thus the divine truth is never accessible prior to all contingent notions. Such is the law of incarnation."⁶⁵ We now know that "affirmations" be-

⁶² Henri Bouillard, S.J., *Notions conciliaires et analogie de la vérité*, in *Recherches de sciences religieuses* 33 (1948) 258.

⁶³ Bouillard, *Conversion et grâce chez saint Thomas d'Aquin* (Paris, 1944) 224. This statement, among others, was subjected to a thoroughly incompetent attack by R. Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., in *Angelicum* 23 (1946) 126 ff.; 24 (1947) 124-139; 217-230; 25 (1948) 285-298; 27 (1950) 219-246.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 220.

⁶⁵ *loc. cit.*

come incarnate in "notions" like souls in metempsychosis. But apparently this passage from body to notional body is not entirely free. The new body must be "analogous" to the old, if the same affirmation is to perdure. Bouillard writes: "When one and the same revealed truth is expressed in different systems (Augustinian, Thomist, Suarezian, etc.), the diverse notions which one uses to translate it are neither 'equivocal' (otherwise, one would no longer be speaking of the same thing) nor 'univocal' (otherwise, all the systems would be identical) but 'analogous,' that is, they express the same reality in different ways."⁶⁶

This last is quite confusing. Analogy arises when the *same* term is used to express different things. What arises when different terms are used to express the same thing is either equivalence or partial synonymy; in terms of sign-senses, one would have to speak of non-empty intersections in the extensions of the several "concepts." But if we assume that Bouillard meant to speak of partial synonymy rather than analogy, it follows either that the terms of modern physics are partially synonymous with those of Aristotelian physics or else that theology cannot express its message in the terms of modern physics. The latter Bouillard denies; hence the two physics must employ partially synonymous terms. But this Bouillard seems also to deny, for why should it be necessary for theology to "renounce" the old terms, if all that is needed is a mapping of their partial synonymies in order to restore communication with the modern mind?

Moreover, we still have not been told what a "notion" is; hence we do not know what exact role it plays in the "expression" of a judgment; hence we have no idea of exactly what can change and what can't in the career of a revealed truth.

In other words, the theory of "reconceptualization" turns out to be no theory at all. We are not given the minimum information we would need to pass a judgment on the thing from

⁶⁶ *art. cit.*, 254.

the perspective of an up-to-date semeiotic. Bouillard's position turns out to be a tissue of confusions and bad metaphors (as though "translation" were removal from one container to another; as though "affirmations" were ghostly entities which haunt successive "representations" like Cartesian souls). It is disconcerting, therefore, that theologians of the stature of Fr. Avery Dulles have been able to repeat Bouillard's metaphors with a straight face as serious contributions to the hermeneutics of dogmatic statements.⁶⁷

Thus the central problematic of post-conciliar theology—the penetration of old truths with new insights and their re-statement in new terms—has been guided by a theory which is no theory. Because the operative terms "notion," "scheme" and "category" were never defined, nothing prevented "notion" from being understood as "concept" (whereupon the sense of the predicate-sign became alterable matter) and nothing prevented "category" from meaning "historical representation" as opposed to "theological sense" (whereupon the referent of the subject became expendable). A sloppy theory of partial synonymy between school jargons became a sloppier theory of mutable and immutable in dogmatic formulas, which in turn became an inadvertent revival of the Modernist metalanguage. The indispensable conditions for a proposition's functioning as linguistic sign, having never been clarified in the first place, were tossed aside in a ferment of object-language reformulation. But it quickly became obvious that there was no rational way to decide which "reformulations" were acceptable and which were not.⁶⁸ Hence all criteriology for

⁶⁷ Dulles, *Survival of Dogma*, 187.

⁶⁸ Dulles admits this point candidly. First he considers an objection to his own post-Bouillardian position: "...if new frameworks are admitted, the Church will not possess adequate guidelines for judging the validity of new formulations. Objective criteria cannot be set up except in terms of a common framework. Where two statements are made in different universes of discourse, they are not commensurable by any common conceptual rule, and hence it is difficult to judge whether they can both be

doctrinal development had to be abandoned, and a hundred mutually unintelligible "theologies" were free to bloom.

In this absurd situation, the Marian dogmas can play a providential role. When Whiteheadian "conceptual structures" replace Hellenistic "categories" in the formulation of the divine *perichoresis*, it is a little difficult for anyone to be sure of what has been lost or what gained. But when the same or similar hermeneutic deprives the historical Mary of a place in her own dogmas, the faithful at large can sense the loss, and their reaction may yet force a reconsideration of the post-Bouillard problematic.

This essay, perhaps over-ambitiously, has been a rough attempt toward such a reconsideration. It has involved a defense and up-dating of the logical criteria for doctrinal development, a theory of theological method, a macro-linguistic theory of doctrinal discourse, a set-theoretical description of the deposit of faith, an assignment of metalinguistic properties to the various types of sentences which figure in the theological enterprise, an epistemology of linguistic apprehension, a theory of

expressions of the same faith. The door seems to be flung wide open to subjectivism." Then he answers the objection: "The key to this objection, and to my answer, lies in the term 'objective.' If revelation is essentially mystery, it can never be fully objectified. The experience of grace—inarticulate though it be—enters into the ultimate judgment of whether a given formulation is admissible. Only the man of faith—or the community of faith—can properly judge whether a new expression . . . is an acceptable articulation of the faith," *ibid.*, 202. In other words, it is admitted that the type of metalinguistic judgment called-for is logically impossible, but the Church can make it anyway, thanks to the "experience of grace." This sort of thing used to be called obscurantism. Moreover, it is intriguing to note that in the objection, it was the "criteria" for the judgment that were supposed to be "objective," not the formulations judged. Whether the set of dogmas can ever be commensurate with the entire revealed datum and thus "fully objectify" it, was not in question. But Dulles seems to think that, even so, the objection can be met by saying that dogmatic formulas never express the faith in such a way as to be subject to objective tests of whether or not they make the same statement. If this is so, Dulles's notion of the *semantics* of Christian discourse is close to Schleiermacher's.

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the propositional sign in terms of sense and referent, and the beginnings of a special Marian criteriology on the basis of all of the above. But, though each of the author's specific theories should be found wanting (and most will be, it is safe to predict), his main purpose will have been achieved if, henceforth, the discussion of dogmatic reformulation and development is forced to attain a new standard of analytic rigor.

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BASIC ELEMENTS IN THE STRUCTURE OF A DOCTRINAL DISCOURSE,
ILLUSTRATED BY COMPARISON WITH THE DISCOURSE OF PHYSICS

ELEMENTS	PHYSICS	CATHOLIC DOCTRINE	CERTITUDE	REMARKS
(1) Basic Assumption (Metalinguistic)	Whatever has been perceived directly is to be admitted.	The basic dogma: whatever is contained in Scripture and Tradition, and has been definitively proposed by the Church is to be admitted.	Assumed axiomatically. Probability 1. No doubt is permitted.	In Catholicism, unlike physics, this basic assumption has also entered the object language of theology as a dogma.
(2) Heuristic Rules (Metalinguistic)	Methodological rules which determine the conditions under which a sentence is to be considered as an experimental (protocol) sentence—e.g. established by a trained observer, under repeatable circumstances, etc.	Rules determining which sentences have been revealed (exegetical norms, etc.) and taught by the Church (theological rules for interpreting the documents of the Ordinary and Extraordinary Magisterium).	Probability 1 in principle, but the rules are complex, and doubt may arise whether they have been correctly formulated and/or applied.	In Catholicism, again unlike physics some of these rules have been proposed as object language.
STEP 1:	Application of (2) to the data of sensation.	Application of (2) to the material data of Scripture (γ -sentences) and Tradition (π -material).	Open to doubt	This step yields (3).
(3) Basic Sentences (object language)	The protocol sentences and similar directly verifiable sentences obtained by the application of 2.	The ρ -sentences, that is, the right understandings of Scripture and Tradition as determined by the application of (2).	Assuming the heuristic rules have been correctly applied, no doubt is permitted.	<i>Contra propositionem fidei non valet argumentum.</i> The ρ -sentences are exact and literal expressions of the content of Scripture and divino-apostolic Tradition. Such sentences are available sometimes <i>prima facie</i> in the text, more often are products of exegesis.

ELEMENTS (4) Rules of Derivation (Metalinguistic)	PHYSICS Logical rules drawn from the logic of deduction or from that of reduction. These rules have different degrees of strength and yield results of different probability.	CATHOLIC DOCTRINE The same, except that besides logical rules, Catholicism also has certain special rules of derivation, extrapolation and analogization which are peculiar to Catholic discourse and which Newman called "principles of Christianity."	CERTITUDE Certitude varies depending on whether the rule is fallible or infallible. Doubt may arise whether either kind is really a rule or rightly applied.	REMARKS Theology uses logical rules of all types. Most exegetical and historical-inference rules are fallible. Other rules of derivation are peculiar to religious discourse in general or to the Catholic in particular; a few of these latter have also been dogmatized.
STEP 2: (5) Derived Sentences (object language)	Application of 4 to 3 All sentences which are not verifiable by observation but have been derived from (3) by means of (4).	Application of 4 to 3 The elements of $\tau'p$, that is, "theology" in the broadest sense, understood as including those derived sentences which the Church has dogmatized.	Open to doubt Probability will depend on everything said above <i>re</i> (2) through (4). These sentences are not exempt from doubt, <i>qua derived</i> but may become exempt through dogmatization.	In doctrinal discourse, all derived sentences begin as theological opinions, but this status may be modified through further study—some are shown to be untenable; some, theologically certain; and some are shown to be identical in content to already established p -sentences. These last are dogmatizable <i>eo ipso</i> . Still others will be found to have a unique and irreplaceable role as axiomatizations of p -sentences. These also are dogmatizable. I call all dogmatizable sentences δ -sentences. Those actually dogmatized will be elements of δt , that is, the set of dogmas <i>recognized</i> in the Church at time T .

ELEMENTS	PHYSICS	CATHOLIC DOCTRINE	CERTITUDE	REMARKS
STEP 3:	Application of (4) to (5). May yield further and more general laws.	The same. May yield further elements of $\tau' \rho$.		
STEP 4:	Different application of (4) to (5). Here the derived sentences are taken as axioms and the protocol sentences are derived from them = second axiomatization.	The same. Here derived formulae are taken as axioms and the ρ -sentences are derived from them. This step is essential to determining which derived formulae are not only sound but even dogmatizable.		A limited second axiomatization takes place in the <i>processus probationis</i> of every doctrinal development. A broader second axiomatization, involving the structure of an entire theological science, also happens: in Mariology in the 20th century, in the debate over its "fundamental principle."