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Vatican II: Tracing the Ambiguities

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Content

Content	2
Abstract	3
Introduction	3
Private Meeting	4
<i>Humani Generis</i>	6
Ambiguity	8
Traceability	9
Ecumenical Motives.....	11
Risks	14
Conclusion	14
References	16

Vatican II: Tracing the Ambiguities

Jack P. Oostveen

Abstract

It is generally acknowledged, and well documented that many ambiguities exist within the Vatican II documents [1], [2], [3]. These ambiguities were deliberate, and have had significant consequences for the Church. In this paper, the origin and traceability of these ambiguities are identified and analysed. The risks associated with them and some of their consequences are discussed, especially with regard to some aspects of the Ecumenism, the Liturgy and the Messages of our Lady of Fatima.

Introduction

In 1961 Fr. Annibale Bugnini made the following proposal to a closed assembly of a limited number of members and consultants from the Vatican II Preparatory Commission on the Liturgy [4]: *‘It would be most inconvenient for articles of our Constitution to be rejected by the Central Commission or by the Council itself. That is why we must tread carefully and discreetly. Carefully, so that proposals be made in an acceptable manner (modo acceptabile), or, in my opinion, formulated in such a way that much is said without seeming to say anything: let many things be said in embryo (in nuce) and in this way let the door remain open to legitimate and possible post-conciliar deductions and applications: let nothing be said that suggests excessive novelty and might invalidate all the rest, even what is straightforward and harmless (ingenua et innocentia). We must proceed discreetly. Not everything is to be asked or demanded from the Council – the essentials, the fundamental principles [are]’.*

This is clearly a rebellious and deceitful call to delude and betray the Council Fathers in a manner offensive to the Holy Spirit, and should have raised alarm. It is the origin of the methodology promoted for deliberately introducing ambiguities into the Vatican II documents.

Betrayal by deliberate ambiguities:

Any ambiguity, conflicting compromise, vague expression and partial silencing of the Church’s teaching in a Council document is a risk that such a document will be misinterpreted. Therefore, any deliberate ambiguity, conflicting compromises, vague expression or partial silencing of doctrine is a clear betrayal of the Holy Spirit, especially if it is a result of “closed” or so-called “private” group meetings.

While this method had been initiated by Fr. Annibale Bugnini in the preparatory period of the Council, it is confirmed as also having been common practice within the Council's Commissions, and used with the specific intention of deluding the majority of Council Fathers. Near the end of the Council during an interview published in the Dutch Dominican weekly '*Bazuin*', on the occasion of publication of the first edition of the International Theological Magazine '*Concilium*' (February 1965), Fr. Edward Schillebeeckx O.P. confirmed that this 'spirit of lies and deceit' had worked behind the scenes of the Council too. He said [2]: *We will express it in a diplomatic way, but after the Council we will draw out implicit conclusions'*

Private Meeting

A clear and extended description of such attitudes can specifically be found in the published diary of Fr. Henry de Lubac SJ [5]. In this diary, he reported on one of the 'private' meetings held at Bishop Volk's residence on Sunday, November 18, 1962, in the following way: *'I was invited to the 'the Mater Dei' boarding house by Bishop Volk of Mainz. There were about 18 of us: 6 German bishops (Schröffer, bishop of Eichstätt; H. Schöffele, from Freiburg, Volk from Mainz, P. Rusch from Innsbruck, etc.); 4 French bishops (Garonne, Elchinger, Pourchet, and the auxiliary of Lille); theologians from Germany, France, Belgium, Holland ...'* Bishop Volk started this meeting by saying: *'This is an absolutely private meeting, to examine freely among ourselves how we can get out of this impasse. ...'*

These kinds of 'private' meetings are also mentioned by Fr. Yves Congar, in his '*Journal of the Council*' [6] and in Peter Seewald's '*Benedict XVI, a Life*' [7]. The summaries reported of these 'private' meetings confirms the strongly rebellious and conspiratorial nature of the spirit existing at that time against the Holy Office.

It is Rebellious for threatening the authority of See of Peter by judging the Holy Office in carrying out its executive role on behalf of the Pope. The main tasks given to Peter by Christ are namely: **Leading the Church and affirming his brethren in their faith**, which includes (1) **protecting the Faith from false beliefs or heresies**, and (2) **protecting the faithful from confusion**. Therefore, given the Pope's presiding role over the Holy Office, it was the Pope himself, who was in fact the subject of their judgment. This rebellious nature considers the '*Faith of the Holy Office*' as being at the same level as that of non-Catholics: *'There are, between the two groups that confront each other now, a divergence, not only in their way of doing theology, but in their way of understanding the faith. However, there is hope. Let us try to understand the others in the same way as we try to understand non-Catholics'* (Msgr. Philips, prof. at Louvain) [5].

It is Conspiratorial because they discussed tactics to remove and replace the Doctrinal Commission's preparatory documents with other texts. Fr. Karl Rahner stated [5]: *'Either the schema will be rejected, and then it will be necessary for the commission to prepare a new one;*

in that circumstance, we will have to bring to it a positive collaboration, not aiming too high, in order to arrive at least at a compromise. We should be the last to want to impose our ideas. — Or else, if the current schema is accepted as a basis for discussion, it will be necessary to take it article by article, line by line, word by word, in order to bring about profound changes. Even if we do not succeed in correcting everything, it will perhaps not be catastrophic. With this schema more than the second, there are possible arrangements. But, let us determine wisely the precise points on which we must say: -‘Non possumus’. Consent to crawl, to swallow any affront, in order to wage absolute battle over some points. Prepare ammunition for that. Spread studies among the council Fathers, furnish them with materials, explanations’ and ‘... But I wish with all my heart for the rejection of the schema. However, in the contrary case, we must not lose courage. ...’.

While Fr. Daniélou added [5]: *‘I propose a method of working: on each essential point, form a small team of theologians or exegetes (of divergent views, but without calling on those with whom it is impossible to collaborate), who would compose a text and would submit it to a commission of bishops. This text could then be utilized, in one manner or another, according to circumstances. We must not have each person working independently, with no coordination’* and Mgr. Volk added [5]: *‘It is also essential that the bishops who are members of the Doctrinal Commission be in close contact with the theologians who are doing the work.’* Then [5]: *‘there followed a dialogue, in which I (Fr. Henry de Lubac) intervened with some others, on practical manner of organizing this type of work’.*

Furthermore it is Fr. Daniélou who suggested [5]: *‘We could get together with some theologians this afternoon; for example, at the Gregorian, before the reception that is supposed to take place there. Between 4 and 5 P.M., we could try to organize the work’.* And indeed, as suggest by Fr. Daniélou, in the afternoon before the reception at the Gregorian: *‘At 4 P.M., meeting of the theologians who had gotten together that morning, in a parlor of the Biblical Institute. Fr. Danielou, who had taken the initiative on this, proposed a division into small groups among which he would distribute the work. I am to specialize in the critical examination of the texts that I have seen drafted’.*

These citations confirm, demonstrate and document a spirit of real conspiracy against the (what should be) true attitude of the Council Fathers and their theological experts and advisers involved in a Council. What fruits could this produce? This group of rebellious bishops and theologians did not fully recognize their own theological views reflected in the preparatory documents and therefore they acted in a war-like manner with only one goal: to have their new theological views fully included in the final documents.

They accused the Holy Office of having too much influence on the work of the Preparatory Theological Commission; it was too scholastic, too rigid and wrongly unwilling to listen to modern, recent theological developments [5]. Moreover, they also wrongly and prejudiciously accused the Holy Office of changing the draft Preparatory Theological Documents [5], while these changes had been required by the Central Preparatory Committee, and implemented under supervision of the Committee itself [8].

In making such an accusation, they effectively denied the authority of both the Central Preparatory Committee over the Preparatory Documents and of the Holy Office itself as the '*executive Papal body*' carrying out the principal duties of the See of Peter. Above all, the Holy Office is not an institution which can be pejoratively accused of working incorrectly by following '*their way of doing theology*' or '*their way of understanding faith*', while complying with the stated general principles of the Church: to '*never depart from the sacred heritage of truth received from the Church Fathers*' and to remain '*in unity and in accordance with the doctrine taught by the Church Fathers*' [9]. In this case, the Preparatory Commission on Theology as well as the Holy Office had acted in complete conformity to and compliance with Pope St. John XXIII's mandate, when he announced the Council. Pope St. John XXIII, while referring to the actual '*epoch of renewal*', declared that '*certain ancient forms of doctrinal affirmation and of wise provision of ecclesiastical discipline*' should be remembered '*through clarity of thought, through the solidarity of religious unity and through the living flame of Christian fervour*' [10]. He, certainly, did not call for any '*renewal*' to change the structure of the Body of Christ, the Faith, the principles of Pastoral Care and the Liturgy which have taken place since the Council, and which continues today. He did not call for documents with ambiguities, but on the contrary he explicitly called clarity of thought. He did not call for conspiracy and a war-like attitude, but for a solidarity of religious unity and the living flame of Christian fervour!

Humani Generis

From the end of the nineteenth century onwards, different schools of thought emerged from what Pope Pius XII called the "*New Theology*". However, this movement referred to itself as "*Resourcement Theology*" because it claimed to aim at retrieving forgotten or neglected themes from Scripture, the Church Fathers, the liturgy and the works of classical theologians. This phenomenon included the biblical movement, the ecumenical movement, the liturgical renewal, the patristic renewal (especially advocated by those who launched the Sources Chrétiennes series) and the renewal of Thomism. This movement was strongly condemned in its extreme forms by Pius XII in his 1950 encyclical [*Humani Generis*](#) [11].

This encyclical reminded Catholic theologians of their duties and responsibilities towards the Church and faithful. In his encyclical Pope Pius XII first, provides a general overview regarding the main errors of that time in HG 5 to 8, which are recalled here:

1. An **unrestricted evolutionism** which has not been fully proved even in the domain of natural sciences, and which is used to eliminate all ideas of a personal God (HG 5);
2. An **existentialism** that concerns itself only with the existence of individual things and neglects all consideration of their immutable essences (HG 6);
3. A **false historicism** that only attributes value to the events of man's life and overthrows the foundations of all truth and absolute law, both in philosophical speculations and in Christian dogmas (HG 7);

4. An **irenicism** that underestimates reason and disregards the Teaching Authority of the Church (HG 8).

Pius XII then continues in HG 9 by summarising the duty of a Catholic theologian: *‘Now Catholic theologians and philosophers, whose grave duty it is to defend natural and supernatural truth and instil it in hearts of men, cannot afford to ignore or neglect these more or less erroneous opinions. Rather they must come to understand some theories well, both because diseases are not properly treated unless they are rightly diagnosed, and because sometimes even in these false theories a certain amount of truth is contained, and, finally, because these theories provoke more subtle discussion and evaluation of philosophical and theological truths’.*

And in HG 13 indicates the erroneous manner in which new ideas are spread: *‘These new opinions, whether they originate from a reprehensible desire of novelty or from a laudable motive, are not always advanced in the same degree, with equal clarity nor in the same terms, nor always with unanimous agreement of their authors. Theories that today are put forward rather covertly by some, not without cautions and distinctions, tomorrow are openly and without moderation proclaimed by others more audacious, causing scandal to many, especially among the young clergy and to detriment of ecclesiastical authority. Though they are usually more cautious in their published works, they express themselves more openly in their writings intended for private circulation and in conferences and lectures. Moreover, these opinions are disseminated not only among members of the clergy and seminaries and religious institutions, but also among the laity, and especially among those who are engaged in teaching youth.’*

With this encyclical, the Papal Magisterium of Pope Pius XII reminded Catholic theologians of their main duties and tasks as Catholic teachers. And concerning the scientists among them, new theories are to be diagnosed carefully in the light of the whole Truth. Likewise, the supernatural Truth of Faith sets fixed boundaries. Therefore, scientific theologians have a grave responsibility to be cautious and clear. In publishing new ideas and new developments, they must seek to deepen the Faith in the public domain, and they must not confuse the faithful, especially young priests and seminarians.

While theologians attached to the ‘*New Theology*’ opposed the Papal teaching contained in *Humani Generis*, by calling their movement ‘*ressourcement*’, they nevertheless suggested that the main purpose of their movement was to return to earlier sources of the undivided Church. In this way, they hide the real purpose behind their search for such sources. Such acts consequently inhibit the valid development of Truth through deepening study and understanding, while a renewed interpretation of the sources is used to consider a part of the past as a false development. Some harken back to the first Vatican Council as being a false development that had led to a schism concerning the Pope’s infallibility (*Anti-infallibism*). Others go back to the Council of Trent and accuse it of having been ‘*on the whole inadequate*’ to heal Luther’s schism (*Reformation*) [12]. Then others go even further back to the pre-Constantine era (*political liberals, supporting the idea of modern democracy*). These, considered as *historically false* developments, seem to be the foundation of the *New Theology*.

With regard to this foundation, this is indeed why in the post-conciliar era the Church regularly came forwards with all kind of *historical excuses* for what the *Resourcement Theology* considered as historically false.

In this way, the Church itself is directly accused by this movement, of being the actual cause of the evil of schisms, which implies that the Holy Spirit would have been improperly preserving and guiding the Church. Such an accusation is supported by statements such as "*without doubt vital members were removed along with diseased ones (as is often frankly stated by Protestant theologians today)*" [12]. This ignores the ever-present possibility for individual conversions of so-called 'vital members'. Also arguments such as "*This is not the place to discuss the loss of substance that accompanied this amputation. ... But we want to study here the internal Catholic development*" [12] might be considered in essence as further allegations against the Church and the Holy Spirit.

Additionally, in fact speaking about an "undivided Church" is declaring the Church that is the (Mystical) Body of Christ is divided nowadays. How can the (Mystical) Body of Christ considered as divided in two or more bodies? Christ has only one Mystical Body over which Peter reigns as substitute of Christ.

All theologians present at the aforementioned private meeting were periti or expert advisers who worked closely together with the bishops in drafting the conciliar texts, and some of them were indeed leaders of the '*Resourcement Theology*' movement (e.g. Yves Congar, Jean Daniélou, Henri de Lubac and Karl Rahner). Apparently the previously mentioned statement by Mgrs. Philips, which was not denied by the Bishops and theologians present at this private meeting, confirms that Pope Pius XII's condemnation of the '*New Theology*' was indeed correct. By recognizing that proponents of the '*New Theology*' understand their Faith in a different way than the Holy Office, he also affirms that the practice of this '*New Theology*' does indeed lead to a *New Faith*.

Ambiguity

The private meeting mentioned above as well as all other private meetings organized by Mgr. Volk and Fr. Karl Rahner and those which were organized later at the Belgian House [5][6], clearly indicates how well prepared and determined those involved were to impose their '*New Theology*' onto the Council [7]. The profound influence of these meetings can also be observed from the fact that a number of these theologians were private advisers of Cardinals and Bishops. A powerful example of the great influence, which these private deliberations had on the Council, is evident from the results of a proposal put forward during the '*private*' meeting of November 18th 1962 during which Mgr. Garonne, suggested that the doctrinal preparatory document *De Fontibus Revelationis* should be re-written by a joint commission. This revision was then actually ordered to be carried out

three days later by Pope St. John XXIII himself. It confirms the powerful, direct and influential connections this group had with the Cardinals directly advising the Holy Father.

However, contrary to the intent of this group, Pope John XXIII explicitly stated that revision of the document **shall be undertaken in order to shorten it and to re-emphasise adherence to the general principles defined by Trent and Vatican I** [8]. He stated - *‘But the task of this commission should be to revise, shorten and adapt the scheme, but to adhere to the more general principles. Moreover, everyone knows that the same doctrine was presented by the Tridentine Council and Vatican I’*. Since the outcome eventually led to a personal intervention by Pope St. Paul VI to correct the subject of the two sources of Revelation, it is clear that this joint commission did not adhere to the mandate imposed by Pope St. John XXIII.

Furthermore, because of the measures taken by Pope St. John XXIII to restrain the effects of the hijack of the Council [5], none of the distinct groups, preparing the proposed texts of the Documents, had an absolute majority within the Council Commissions. This means that all parties were forced to go for compromises. In fact, this situation would have worked well if all parties involved were of good will and adhered to the basic rules established for the conduct of the Council. That is, everyone should have been graciously and humbly collaborating with the intentions of the Holy Spirit in searching for the Truth. Therefore, while the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth as well as of Love, His intentions can by definition never contradict the absolute Truth or conduct a war against the Church. This then, is the foundation of the general hermeneutics of the Church, and fully consistent with the statements of Pope St. John XXIII in his Opening Address to the Council: *‘Never depart from the sacred heritage of truth received from the Church Fathers’* and *‘in unity and in accord with the teachings of the Church Fathers’* [9]. Such an attitude with a persuasiveness of true and honest arguments that do not contradict the teachings of the Church Fathers could still have produced clear and unambiguous documents while even including valid elements of the ‘New Theology’ ([*Humani Generis*](#). HG9 [11]).

However, the opposite happened due to the war-like nature of the rebellious spirit. As mentioned above in the description of the private meeting of November 18th 1962, this group attached to the ‘New Theology’, was convinced of their own superiority or ***‘their way of understanding the faith’***. But, to get their proposals into the documents they reverted to subterfuge and deceit to convince the vast majority of the Council Fathers by hiding their true ideas, in the manner described Fr. Edward Schillebeeckx [2]: *‘We will express it diplomatically, but after the Council we will draw implicit conclusions.’*

Traceability

Since in fact both ambiguity and silence, can serve this purpose, we see these tactics deliberately reflected in the various Council documents. In this way, it is easy to understand that all the ambiguous methods employed are systematically distinguishable, in the following manner.

	Document		Type	Subject	Risks	
					Associated faults	Consequences
1a	Sacrosanctum Consilium (Appendix 1)	SC 1-54	Ambiguous <i>embryo</i> ; contradictory compromises;	Reform of the Sacred Liturgy	unrestricted evolutionism, false historicism	Change from Theocentric into Anthropological form of the Sacred Liturgy
1b	Sacrosanctum Consilium (Appendix 2)	implementation Liturgical Reform	partly silencing the Doctrine; releasing the rubrics	Lex orandi, Lex credendi	unrestricted evolutionism, irenism:	Loss of sacrality in the Liturgy: a negative spiritual spiral of the <i>Lex orandi, Lex credendi</i>
1c	Sacrosanctum Consilium (Appendix 2)	implementation Liturgical Reform	partly silencing the Doctrine	omission of ' <i>original sin</i> '	unrestricted evolutionism, irenism	boundaries between good and evil blurred
2	Dei Verbum (Appendix 3)	DV ..	ambiguity	Tradition as source of Revelation	unrestricted evolutionism, irenism	Doctrine would be changeable; relativism, indifferentism,
3	Lumen Gentium (Appendix 4)	LG 18-30	ambiguity	collegiality	unrestricted evolutionism, irenism	Body of Christ: rebuilding the Church structure
4a	Dignitatis Humanae (Appendix 5)	DH-1 first part	partly silencing the Doctrine; ambiguity	omission of ' <i>original sin</i> '	unrestricted evolutionism, irenism	false ecumenism: indifferentism, blurring boundaries between good and evil
4b	Dignitatis Humanae (Appendix 5)	DH-1 first + second part	contradictory compromises; ambiguity	omission of ' <i>original sin</i> '; partly corrected by a contradictory but ambiguous expression	unrestricted evolutionism, irenism	false ecumenism: indifferentism, no clear distinction between true and false religion
4c	Dignitatis Humanae (Appendix 5)	DH-2 second + third part	contradictory compromises; ambiguity	due to the omission of ' <i>original sin</i> ' one expression is used for two contradictory subjects. Thereby one of these subjects does not fit the true meaning of this expression. This subject was used to be called " <i>tolerance</i> " which fit better the given description.	unrestricted evolutionism, irenism	false ecumenism: indifferentism, no clear distinction between true and false religion.
5	Nostra Aetate (Appendix 6)	NA generally	partly silencing the Truth about the reality of other religions	omission of ' <i>original sin</i> '	unrestricted evolutionism, irenism	interreligious debate: relativism, indifferentism; no clear distinction between true and false religion
6	Christus Dominus (Appendix 7)	CD-21 CD-31	Ambiguous <i>embryo</i>	false interpretation of a text that in itself add nothing to say	unrestricted evolutionism:	the elder and thus old fashion, conservative priests, Bishops and even Cardinals have to leave their executing office: a physical break between the post Council period from the period prior to Council by

Table 1; Traceability and risk analysis of some ambiguities

Firstly, by recognition of the specific topics of ‘resourcement’ as identified in the encyclical *Humani Generis* [11]:

- a. Unrestricted evolutionism;
- b. Existentialism that concerns itself only with the existence of individual things;
- c. False historicism;
- d. Irenicism which overestimates the power of reason while disregarding the Teaching Authority of the Church;

Secondly, by identifying the driving force behind this ‘resourcement’:

As mentioned already, the underlying motivation behind this so-called ‘*resourcement*’ is the quest for a return to an “*undivided Church*”, by resolving the various schisms and improving its relationship with the world. The latter in particular, has been seriously disrupted over the past two centuries. In addition, the argument most often used by them to introduce their “*resourcement*”- topics, is that of ecumenism through interfaith dialogue, and interreligious debates;

and Thirdly, through a clear recognition of the methods used to hide the true intentions behind their proposals. These are:

- a. Introduction of embryonic ambiguities to avoid any clear recognition of subject or motive;
- b. One-sided silencing of the Truth;
- c. The deliberate introduction of ambiguous expressions or contradictory phrases in case the above methods were recognized.

These methods of hiding the true intentions behind the unilaterally revised preparatory documents, is the ultimate proof that this movement’s intentions were designed to be obscure and ambiguous ab initio.

Table 1 presents a number of clear examples from the preparatory documents to demonstrate how the deliberately ambiguous texts can be traced back to the identifiable origins as stated and warned against in *Humani Generis*, and as discussed above.

Ecumenical Motives

The ecumenical motives behind the second methodology described above deserves some further discussion. Bridging the gaps created by historical schisms between the Church and other Christian denominations as well as the natural gaps with other religions and the world was considered a necessary pastoral goal of the Church. This was to be done using common sense in looking for the formulas and practices in operation prior to each of the individual schisms. In doing so, what was not taken into account was the growth and evolution of such formulations over time, such that the earlier formulations have inherently less depth in understanding than after the conviction of the heresy. As a

result, despite the various condemnations, this endeavor was implicitly and strongly inspired by anti-Infallibilism, the Reformation, Conciliarism and political liberalism which supports the modern ideas of democracy. However, this carried a great risk of implicitly blaming the Church and thus the Holy Spirit himself, of making false doctrinal decisions and condemnations in the past. The movement therefore sought a common understanding of the past by listening to the (pre-schism and pre-reformation) "*undivided Church*" in order to rebuild the Church in a way acceptable to the schismatics, or as one might say today: "*Build the Church Back Better*". In a similar manner, they also strove to "*Build the Liturgy Back Better*" to replace the ancient and Sacred Liturgy of the Church with a modern and simplified form which the schismatics can also understand in their own way. This may therefore be considered an ambiguous and false manner of true ecumenism.

This methodology is clearly described in 1966 by then Fr. Joseph Ratzinger in chapter 3-I [*The Fall of 1964*] of his book "*Theological Highlights of Vatican II*" [12]: "... *It was now clear that behind the protective skin of Latin lay hidden something that even the surgery performed at Trent had failed to remove. The simplicity of the liturgy was still overgrown with superfluous accretions of purely historical value. It was now clear, for example, that the selection of biblical texts had frozen at a certain point and hardly met the needs of preaching. The next step was to recognize that necessary revamping could not take place simply through purely stylistic modifications, but also required a new theology of divine worship. Otherwise, the renewal would be no more than superficial. To put it briefly, the **task only half finished at Trent** had been tackled afresh and brought to a more dynamic completion. This also meant that the problems which Luther and the reformers had seen in the Liturgy had to be dealt with once again. Not the least of these was their objection to the **rigidity** and **uniformity** already evident than in the ceremonies*".

In other words, according to then Fr. Joseph Ratzinger in 1966, the liturgy had to be rebuilt to (subjectively) satisfy the '*needs of preaching*', to (subjectively) remove the '*superfluous accretions of purely historical value*' and to solve Luther's ecumenical problem. It needs to be clarified here, that the '*rigidity*' and '*uniformity*' were not the problems which had caused Luther's Reformation, on the contrary, they were precisely products of the measures taken by the council of Trent against the Reformation.

This same opinion can even be recognised in the preface of Ratzinger's later book "*Der Geist der Liturgie, Eine Einführung*" [13]. Here in 2000, as Cardinal, he stated: "*It could be said that the liturgy at that time -in 1918- resembled in many respects a fresco that, although preserved undamaged, was almost invisible through subsequent layers of varnish. In the missal that the priest followed in his celebration, her form grown from the beginning was fully present, but from the faithful, she was largely hidden under private devotions and forms of prayer. Through the liturgical movement and finally through the Second Vatican Council, the fresco was uncovered and for a moment we were fascinated by the beauty of its colours and figures. But in the meantime, it is in danger due to weather conditions and also due to all kinds of restorations or reconstructions and is in danger of being destroyed if the necessary steps are not taken quickly to stop its damaging influence. Of course it should not be covered with layers of*

varnish again, but a new respect in handling it, a new understanding of what it is and has to say, is required so that the rediscovery does not become the first phase of a permanent loss”.

Here by speaking about “*subsequent layers of varnish*”, that made the liturgy “*almost invisible*” and by praising the work of the liturgical movement and the Second Vatican Council he confirms his opinion of 1966. He only disagreed about the result of the reform by Pope St. Paul VI and proposed in accordance with the hermeneutic of the “*reform in continuity*” that such a “*reform of the reform*” would become the ultimate “*reform*” of the Liturgy

However lacking consideration that such “*almost invisibility*” also could appear as a certain (colour) blindness for, and misunderstanding of the beauty of the Sacred Liturgy, made this opinion truly a subjective prejudice. What should be reformed, renewed or “*re-built*”: the Church and its Liturgy or the spirit of modern humankind? Must we conclude that the creation of His Mystical Body (The Church) by Our Lord Jesus Christ, or the preservation of the Faith and the Liturgy by the Holy Spirit, be imperfect? How can these actions be considered failures?

On the contrary, it is true to say that due to Origin Sin humankind is imperfect, and therefore modern humankind can and does fail. This truth needs to be recalled and remembered especially during an ‘*epoch of renewal*’. At the announcement of the Council in 1959, Pope St. John XXIII reminded the Church very clearly how this was to be done, namely: ‘*through clarity of thought, through the solidarity of religious unity and through the living flame of Christian fervour*’ by ‘*doctrinal affirmation and wise provision of ecclesiastical discipline*’ [10]. And as further confirmed in his Opening Address “*Never depart from the sacred heritage of truth received from the Church Fathers*” and remain “*in unity and in accord with the teachings of the Church Fathers*” [9].

More evidence of the consequences of the deliberate ambiguity and betrayal was the hasty and fully unexpected promulgation of the Roman Missal in 1962 by Pope St. John XXIII, which had been undergoing a previously mandated reform. This surprising promulgation was only about ten days (**23-07-1962**) after the Preparatory Document on the Liturgy had been sent to the Council Fathers (**13-07-1962**). The only reasonable argument supporting this act is that the Pope wished to avoid the consequences of a betrayal by the executive commission who should have implemented changes to the Preparatory Document, mandated by the Central Preparatory Commission, but did not [4]. This hasty promulgation can be considered as a clear sign from Pope St. John XXIII towards the Council Fathers, of his opposition to the rigorous reform of the Liturgy as proposed in this preparatory document.

Pope St. John XXIII also took some other action against Fr. Annibale Bugnini personally. He did not appoint him as secretary of the liturgical commission of the Council as was expected, and dismissed him from teaching at the Pontifical Lateran University. He was the only secretary of a preparatory commission that was not appointed as secretary of a Council commission.

Risks

The statement by Msgr. Philips (prof. at Louvain), that: "*There are, between the two groups that confront each other now, a divergence, not only in their way of doing theology, but in their way of understanding the faith*" [5], must make clear to any objective observer that the **implicit conclusions** of the **diplomatically** expressed ambiguities, vague expressions and the one-sided silencing of the Doctrine [2] in the Council documents, introduces an enormous risk for fundamentally changing the Faith. And as a consequence in accordance with the liturgical law "*Lex Credendi, Lex Orandi*" it also directly affects the Liturgy. This can be factually observed in the *Hermeneutic of Reform* in both forms, the extreme one of *discontinuity* and the more moderate one of *continuity*. The extreme form of this hermeneutic principle strives to suppress the entire pre-conciliar life of the Church, especially its Liturgy (i.e. even that as promulgated by Pope St. John XXIII only a few months before the start of the Council). The moderate form seeks a reform "*in continuity*" and tolerates the pre-conciliar uses as far as it serves their policy of the "*reform of the reform*". Since 2007 after 37 years of suppression, this moderate form indeed tolerates the pre-conciliar Liturgy, but not for supporting or preserving this ancient liturgical form, but in order to reform the reformed Liturgy. This is being done in such a manner, as the increasing support by the faithful attached to this ancient Liturgy, and especially among the young faithful, was entirely unexpected.

In general, by bridging the gap with the Reformation, other religious and the World, both types of the *Hermeneutic of Reform* are in very great contrast with the true *Hermeneutic of the Church* as formulated by Pope St. John XXIII. As a reminder, he mandated very explicitly: "*Never depart from the sacred heritage of truth received from the Church Fathers*" and remain "*in unity and in accord with the teachings of the Church Fathers*". Here valid *orthodoxy* seeks a deepening of the true faith only.

Any departure from John XXIII's mandate necessarily creates a new and different faith. Acting as such is also lacking any gracious and humble collaboration with the intention of the Holy Spirit: "*By their fruits you will know them*" (Matt. 7, 15-16).

Conclusion

Fifty-five years of the post-Conciliar period does not show any real success of this "*bridging the gap*"-ideology. The only group, which had a partial return to the Church, were from the British High-Anglicans. However, their return was not due to any "*bridged gap*", but principally because they disagreed with the official Anglican line that continuously moved further away from the High-Anglican's view of the Church. As they feared for worse, they became more and more close to the Catholic Church. On the contrary, all other conversions were at an individual level, just as before the Council, and this despite all kinds of discouragements these converts have met in the Catholic Church subsequently.

This example itself supports the conclusion that the “*bridging-the-gap*“-ideology of the '*Resourcement Theology*', has certainly failed. Indeed one may strive to close that gap as much as possible, but small as it may seem to be, it is still a gap that has to be bridged, one way or another. By whom will this be done? By those who denied the true Faith by using ambiguities, vague expressions and silencing specific parts of the Doctrine, or by those who despite everything still refuse to convert?

It is truly remarkable how, under the influence of the '*Resourcement Theology*', the Church believed that it could solve the problem of the divided Church by means of a false ecumenism, while at the same time ignoring the supernatural message and warning of Our Lady of Fatima for this purpose, as described in her third secret. According to this message, the problem of the divided Church can only be solved by consecrating Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Only then, the Russian Church, the largest Eastern Orthodox community, would convert and the Church will enter a period of peace. If not, Russia's errors (i.e. Communism) would continue to spread around the world.

And so has it come to pass. Oremus.

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The stakes are too high to simply ignore the ongoing catastrophe



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