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Soldiers of God in a Secular World: The Politics of Catholic Theology, 1905-1962

A dissertation presented

by

Sarah Elizabeth Shortall

to

The Department of History

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in the subject of

History

Harvard University

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Soldiers of God in a Secular World: The Politics of Catholic Theology, 1905-1962

Abstract

This dissertation examines the impact of Catholic theology on French politics after the separation of Church and state in 1905, approaching this moment as a beginning rather than an endpoint in the political history of the Church. It argues for the productive relationship between secularization and theology, showing how the secularization of public institutions inspired new politico-theological configurations and opened up new modes of religious engagement in political life. As I demonstrate, the events of 1905 provided both the institutional and intellectual impetus for one of the most important movements in twentieth-century Catholic theology, known as the "nouvelle théologie," which would eventually become the leading theological force behind the Second Vatican Council.

This dissertation tells the story of that movement, which was elaborated in part by a group of French Jesuits around Henri de Lubac. These theologians sought to develop a new approach to Catholic politics—one that would allow the Church to be in the newly secular public sphere, but not of it. Rejecting both secular party politics and the royalist dream of restoring the confessional state, they looked to the Church as an alternative site of collective mobilization capable of transcending the limitations of political ideologies and warring nation-states. It was this vision which inspired these Jesuits to lead the "spiritual resistance" to Nazism in France during the Second World War, just as it led them to oppose Communism in the postwar period. But despite their staunch anti-totalitarianism, these priests *also* rejected the basic premises of liberal politics, including the distinction between the private and public spheres, the primacy of the individual, and the sovereignty of the state. Instead, I show how de Lubac's circle deployed the resources ecclesiology, eschatology, theological anthropology, and biblical studies to fashion what I call a "counter-politics"—a way of intervening in questions traditionally classified as political while engaging in a critique of politics itself. As a result, I argue, their work requires us to re-imagine what constitutes a political act and where the boundaries of the political lie, by revealing a dimension of modern European politics beyond the remit of secular parties and ideologies.

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Note on Translations

All translations from French, German, and Italian, unless otherwise indicated, are my own. Where authoritative English translations of the works cited in this dissertation exist, I have opted to cite these, except when I have found these translations infelicitous or inadequate. These instances are noted and explained in the footnotes of the dissertation.

Acknowledgments

This dissertation is about a set of ideas, but it is also, and perhaps above all, about the relationships and institutions that make ideas possible. This is as true for the priests and intellectuals I study as it is for my own work. Just as I argue that affective bonds structured the intellectual lives of the actors I study, so too has this dissertation been profoundly shaped by my relationships to family, friends, and mentors—relationships whose intellectual and affective dimensions are often difficult to disentangle.

This is above all true of the two advisors who have provided me with far more than just intellectual mentorship over the past seven years. As an incoming graduate student who was often intimidated by the self-assurance of my classmates, Judith Surkis pushed me to speak up in the classroom. At once encouraging and demanding, she has always held me to the highest standards of analytical rigor. Her ability to unearth insights that are buried or implicit in my work and fashion them into something far more brilliant never ceases to amaze me. Despite her departure from Harvard five years ago, which has left a deep void keenly felt by many, I am extraordinarily grateful to have had the opportunity to continue to work closely with her. Peter Gordon took me on as an orphaned graduate student and has been an unfailing source of intellectual, moral, and financial support ever since. Not only has he read and commented on virtually everything I have written over the past five years; he has also been an unwavering and extremely patient advocate throughout my first forays onto the academic job market. Above all, Peter has modeled a style of mentorship that attends to all aspects of graduate life, from teaching and research, to professional development and non-academic life—a model I hope to replicate in my own teaching and advising. Over the course of the past seven years, having taught four courses together, organized a major conference, and exchanged countless emails, I have come to consider Peter, like Judith, a friend as much as a mentor.

This dissertation is, I hope, a faithful tribute to their very different but complementary intellectual styles and to the profound debt of gratitude I owe them both.

It is to Francis Schüssler Fiorenza that I owe the genesis of this project. Despite having no background in theology, Francis agreed to prepare me for an examination field in modern Catholic theology and met with me on an almost weekly basis to do so. It was in his class that I first read the work of Henri de Lubac and the article that first gave me the idea for this project: Joseph Komonchak's "Theology and Culture at Mid-Century." This dissertation would quite literally not have come into existence without him. Ann Blair has also been a constant source of support and encouragement over the years, despite the chronological gap between our fields. She has never missed an opportunity to provide astonishingly prompt written feedback and her reliability and patience have been an immense comfort to me while negotiating the academic job market. I would also like to thank David Armitage for his support and the sage advice he offered me over teaching lunches at the CGIS Café.

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At its core, this project is about a group of friends who studied together on the island of Jersey and formed lifelong bonds that would dramatically shape their subsequent intellectual trajectory. If I have stressed the crucial role that friendship plays in intellectual life this is in part because the friendships I have formed in graduate school have been not only the deepest of my life, but have had a formative impact on my scholarship. There are four people in particular who have made the past seven years some of the best of my life. Ben Siegel has been a selfless font of support at some of the most difficult moments of graduate school. He has put his culinary, photographic, and IT skills at my disposal, fashioning more course posters on my behalf than I'm sure he cares to remember. I will remember our jaunts together in Paris over a "*bien profiter*" or two with particular fondness. Rebecca Chang, ever since she first entered my name into her phone as "papaj," has been a perpetual source of energy and amusement. We have shared many laughs from Calvinpad, to Lelandpad, to Dimickpad, and I look forward to sharing many more at whatever "pads" we occupy in the future. Few people have had a greater impact on my life at graduate school than Philippa Hetherington, who has been my intellectual ally, traveling companion, and roommate. From our limited efforts to learn German in Berlin, to summers spent in Paris, Istanbul, and the Greek Islands, to long nights trading academic gossip and discussing Foucault over a glass of natural wine, her friendship has been one of the greatest gifts of graduate school. I can't wait to continue it on the other side of the Atlantic as we both move into a new phase of our careers.

When Joshua Specht and I bonded over the horrors of the Dudley House cafeteria seven years ago, I certainly could not have imagined that he would grow into my best friend and partner. It would be impossible to do justice here to the boundless emotional and intellectual support he has provided, particularly through the challenges of this past year. He has patiently endured my irrational anxieties, long work hours, and bizarre sleep schedule, reading countless drafts and keeping the house well-stocked with Chobani and bananas. He has kept me laughing from Somerville, to France, to California, and will no doubt continue to do so as we embark on new adventures in England and Australia.

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When I returned to Harvard to begin the process of writing in the fall of 2012, several centers provided me with both intellectual and financial support. First among these was the Center for European Studies. I would like to thank the Center for its generous financial support and for providing me with a beautiful setting in which to write. Special thanks are due to the Center staff, including Anna Popiel, Sandy Selesky, and Sarah Delude, as well as to the faculty and students who attended the Center's dissertation workshop and offered generous feedback on multiple chapters of this dissertation. I am equally grateful to the conveners and attendees of the marvelous Center for History and Economics workshop, which provided me with a supportive but demanding environment in which to work through portions of this dissertation. Both before and during the process of writing, the administrative staff of the History Department have guided me through the often opaque institutional side of graduate life. I am particularly grateful to Matthew Corcoran, Liana DeMarco, Dan Bertwell, Mary McConnell, and Cory Paulsen for all their assistance and, above all, their patience over the years. Finally, I would like to thank the American Council of Learned Societies and the Mellon Foundation for supporting my writing over the past year with a Mellon/ACLS Dissertation Completion Fellowship, and Matthew Goldfeder for organizing a tremendously helpful job seminar last September.

This dissertation is dedicated to three people without whom it, and all the work that led up to it, would not have been possible. My parents have been an unwavering source of financial and moral support over the years, never questioning the wisdom of a career path in European intellectual history and always encouraging me to pursue and excel at whatever I turn my hand to. My mother has been a model for how to balance an academic career with family responsibilities, and my father has been ceaselessly patient with my irritations and anxieties over the years. This dissertation is a token of my profound gratitude, respect, and love for them both. When I entered graduate school seven years ago, I looked forward to sharing this dissertation with my maternal grandmother, who has been a towering presence in my life and an intellectual kindred spirit. If she had come of age in a different time, she would perhaps have been a leading environmental scientist, but had to settle for reading my college essays instead. Calling herself "square, green, and puritanical," she was at once the most selfless and the most formidably woman I have ever known. I have missed her every day since her death in 2010 and I only wish I could share this dissertation, which she played such a pivotal role in bringing to fruition, with her now.

Introduction

On December 9th, 1905, the French Republic passed a law proclaiming that "the Republic does not recognize, salary, or subsidize any religion [*culte*]."[1] This Law on Separation, which abrogated the 1801 Concordat between Napoleon and the Holy See, was the culmination of a twenty-five year campaign to systematically dismantle the legal privileges of the Catholic Church in France.[2] The opening salvo in this battle was fired in 1880, when the state dissolved the French branch of the Jesuit order, along with several other religious congregations, and placed its network of Colleges under lay administration.[3] This was quickly followed by broader legislation to remove public education and hospitals from the jurisdiction of Catholic religous orders. Finally, in 1901, the Law on Associations made most of these orders illegal, confiscated their property, and drove tens of thousands of monks and nuns into exile.[4] Many of them would continue their vocations in the colonies, where, for pecuniary and political reasons, the anticlerical laws were not enforced.[5] The 1905 Law on Separation thus sealed a lengthy campaign to disentangle the Catholic Church from the French state and dismantle its network of cultural, legal, and financial privileges.

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[1] "Loi du 9 décembre 1950 concernant la Séparation des Églises et de l'État," *Légifrance: le service public de la diffusion du droit*, Article 2: http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=LEGITEXT000006070169&dateTexte=20080306.

[2] On the anticlerical campaign in France, see Christian Sorrel, *La République contre les congrégations: histoire d'une passion française (1899-1914)* (Paris: Cerf, 2003); Jacqueline Lalouette, *La République anticléricale: XIXe – XXe siècles* (Paris: Seuil, 2002). On the gender discrepancies in the anticlerical education laws, see Sarah Curtis, *Educating the Faithful: Religion, Schooling, and Society in Nineteenth-Century France* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2000), part 2.

[3] On the Republican campaign against the Jesuit order in particular, see Dominique Avon and Philippe Rocher, *Les Jésuites et société française XIXe – XXe siècles* (Toulouse: Éditions Privat, 2001), 81-120; Geoffrey Cubit, *The Jesuit Myth: Conspiracy Theory and Politics in Nineteenth-Century France* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).

[4] On the 1901 law and its aftermath, see Claire Andrieu, Gilles Le Béguec, and Danielle Tartakowsky, eds., *Associations et champ politique: La loi de 1901 à l'épreuve du siècle* (Paris: Sorbonne, 2001).

[5] See esp. J.P. Daughton, *An Empire Divided: Religion, Republicanism, and the Making of French Colonialism, 1880-1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

The law did not, however, bring an end to the public role of the Catholic Church in France. 1905 may have marked the end of a certain kind of Catholic politics, but it also marked the beginning of another. One might assume that henceforth it would fall to the laity to spearhead Catholic political engagement in France. The historiography on twentieth-century French politics has largely embraced this assumption, focusing almost exclusively on the activities of Catholic laypeople and presuming that Catholic theology and the priests who articulate it no longer had an important public role to play after Church and state were separated.[6] And yet, the Catholic clergy did not simply exit the public sphere in 1905; nor did they limit themselves to campaigning for a restoration of the Church's lost privileges. Instead, the events of 1905 forced theologians to reimagine the nature of the Church and its relationship to the political order. How, they asked, could the Church play a robustly *Catholic* role in a public sphere that was neutral or even outright hostile to its values, without compromising these values in the process? Consequently, I argue, the separation of Church and state had a *productive* rather than a destructive effect on Catholic theology, inspiring new approaches to the problem of political theology and launching a theological renaissance that would dramatically transform the Catholic Church as a whole. This dissertation is the story of that renaissance. It approaches the secularization of state institutions as a beginning rather than an endpoint in the political history of religion, demonstrating how this process opened up new avenues for religious engagement in public life.

Not surprisingly, Catholic theologians and philosophers differed over how to approach the newly secular public sphere. The most common approach was the one adopted by those who broadly identified with the tradition of Thomas Aquinas and Scholasticism. Since Leo XIII had enshrined Thomism as the official philosophy of the Catholic Church in his 1870 encyclical *Aeterni Patris*, this approach had gained a virtual monopoly over Catholic orthodoxy. By the mid-twentieth century, it encompassed a range of different theological positions—some more squarely focused on Aquinas himself and some more indebted to his early-modern commentators—as well as a spectrum of political affiliations. But what these various Thomists had in common was a commitment to the distinction between the natural and supernatural orders, grounded in the distinction between the natural and supernatural ends of human life. This distinction owed much to the influence of Aristotle on Aquinas and his commentators, and it allowed them to acknowledge a certain degree of autonomy for temporal affairs—those activities which possess a purely natural end and do not affect salvation. In the early-modern period, this principle was enshrined in the ecclesiological vision of the Church as a "perfect society" analogous to the state, with each self-sufficient in its own domain.

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[6] See, for example, Kay Chadwick, ed., *Catholicism, Politics and Society in Twentieth-Century France* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000); Susan B. Whitney, *Mobilizing Youth: Communists and Catholics in Interwar France* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009). This assumption is also widely shared in the historiography of twentieth-century Europe more broadly. See Tom Buchanan and Martin Conway, eds., *Political Catholicism in Europe, 1918-1945* (London: Routledge, 2004) and the sources cited below in note 14.

In the aftermath of the separation of Church and state in France, this logic was deployed to underwrite a range of secular political projects. For those who had not made their peace with the secular Republic, it served to justify a Catholic alliance with the royalist Action Française.[7] By the late 1930s, however, Thomism took on an entirely new political resonance in the work of the philosopher Jacques Maritain, himself a former partisan of the AF. In his 1936 *Integral Humanism*, Maritain called upon Catholics to give up the dream of restoring the confessional state. Deploying the Thomist distinction between the natural and supernatural orders, he argued that modern political life must invariably take a secular, pluralist, and lay form. This did not mean that Catholics no longer had a role to play within the temporal order. But rather than entering it as "a Christian as such," they would now enter it simply as "a Christian, engaging only myself, not the Church."[8] Such a position left Catholics free to cooperate with non-believers to achieve "a common practical task," even if they did not share "a common doctrinal minimum."[9] By the early-1940s, Maritain would develop these principles into a fully-fledged Thomist theory of human rights and democratic governance, and he would even play a role in the drafting of the UN Declaration of Human Rights in 1948.[10] But his distinction between the temporal and spiritual planes and his vision for a new, secular Christendom would also furnish the philosophical and theological supports for a burgeoning postwar Catholic Left, both within and beyond France.[11]

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[7] On the alliance between Neo-Scholastic theology and the Action Française, see Jacques Prévotat, *Les catholiques et l'Action française: histoire d'une condamnation, 1899-1939* (Paris: Fayard, 2001), 441-8; Michael Sutton, *Nationalism, Positivism, and Catholicism: The Politics of Charles Maurras and French Catholics, 1890-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982). On the specifically Dominican context, see André Laudouze, *Dominicains français et Action Française, 1899-1940: Maurras au couvent* (Paris: Éditions Ouvrières, 1989), ch. 5-7; On the Jesuit context, see Peter Bernardi, *Maurice Blondel, Social Catholicism, & Action Française: The Clash over the Church's Role in Society During the Modernist Era* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1999).

Underpinning these very different political commitments, then, was a common Thomist framework which allowed for a relatively autonomous realm of human affairs beyond the direct remit of the Church. Such a model was well-suited to a context in which the institutions of public life had been secularized. As a result, and even though it could also underwrite a manifestly anti-modern and illiberal political stance, the logic of distinct orders so central to the Thomist tradition may seem surprisingly familiar to the modern secular imagination. This no doubt explains why this approach has dominated the scholarship on Catholic political thought in twentieth-century Europe.[12] A case in point is the attention that Jacques Maritain's work in particular has received. Beyond simply attending to his impact on Catholic political movements of the center and Left, historians like Samuel Moyn have also found in Maritain's work the origins of a much broader contemporary human rights discourse.[13] That Maritain's Thomist derivation of human rights could ramify beyond the Catholic context is perhaps not surprising given that he specifically designed it for this purpose, so that it could serve as a "*civic or secular* faith" intelligible to both believers and non-believers within a modern pluralistic society.[14] In other words, Maritain's work does not present a scandal for the secular political imagination and in fact reinforces many of its core assumptions. This may well explain why he and Thomism more generally have dominated the scholarship on modern Catholic thought, precisely because they are largely intelligible within a secular political logic.

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[8] Jacques Maritain, *Integral Humanism*, in *The Collected Works of Jacques Maritain*, ed. by Otto Bird and trans. by Otto Bird, Joseph Evans, and Richard O'Sullivan, vol. 11 (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1996), 338. Emphasis in original. Maritain distinguishes this position from that of the "Christian as such," when engaging with the spiritual domain.

[9] Ibid., 282.

[10] See Jacques Maritain, *Christianity and Democracy, and The Rights of Man and Natural Law,* trans. by Doris C. Anson (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1986 [1942]). On the theological foundations of Maritain's human rights discourse, see Miguel Vatter, "Politico-Theological Foundations of Universal Human Rights: The Case of Maritain," *Social Research* 80, no. 1 (Spring 2013), 233-60; John P. Hittinger, "Jacques Maritain and Yves R. Simon's use of Thomas Aquinas and his Legacy," in *Thomas Aquinas and his Legacy,* ed. by David A. Gallagher (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1994).

[11] Gerd-Rainer Horn makes much of this debt in *Left Catholicism 1943-1955: Catholics and Society in Western Europe at the Point of Liberation* (Leuven, Belgium: Leuven University Press, 2001), 24-30. So does Philippe Chenaux in *L'Église catholique et le communisme en Europe, 1917-1989: de Lénine a Jean-Paul II* (Paris: Cerf, 2009), 196-204. Marie-Dominique Chenu, for instance, acknowledged his debt to Maritain in *Pour une théologie du travail* (Paris: Seuil, 1955), 35 and in his correspondence with Maritain, held at the Cercle d'Études Jacques et Raïssa Maritain in Kolbsheim, France. Maritain also had a significant influence on the Italian Catholic Left. See, for instance, A. Ardigò, "Jacques Maritain e 'Cronache Sociali' (ovvero Maritain e il dossettismo)," in *Il pensiero politico di Jacques Maritain*, ed. by G. Galeazzi (Milan: Massimo, 1974), 195-202.

Maritain's case is symptomatic of a broader tendency on the part of humanists and social scientists to engage with religious actors from the perspective of secular political categories and ideologies, without considering how these actors might throw such categories into question. Thus, modern European historians have focused on the ways that Catholics contributed to rebuilding postwar democratic institutions, how they engaged with various parties, labor unions, and philosophies of the Left, and the tacit and not-so-tacit support they lent to a slew of right-wing governments from Spain to Croatia.[15] But what of those Catholics who did not translate their political intervention into the familiar language of party politics or who refused the choice between the dominant secular ideologies of their day?

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[12] See, for instance, Alan Fimister, *Robert Schuman: Neo-Scholastic Humanism and the Reunification of Europe* (Brussels: Peter Lang, 2008); Jean-Claude Delbreil, *La revue 'La Vie intellectuelle': Marc Sangnier, le thomisme et le personnalisme* (Paris: Cerf, 2008); Horn, Left Catholicism; James Chappel, "The Origins of Totalitarianism Theory in Interwar Europe," Modern Intellectual History 8, 3 (2011): 561-590; Philippe Chenaux, *Entre Maurras et Maritain: une génération intellectuelle catholique (1920-1930)* (Paris: Cerf, 1999), and many of the sources cited in note 15.

[13] See esp. Moyn's forthcoming *Christian Human Rights* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015); Samuel Moyn, "Personalism, Community, and the Origins of Human Rights," in *Human Rights in the Twentieth Century*, ed. by Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 85-106; Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2010), p. 54; pp. 64-7.

[14] Jacques Maritain, *Man and the State* (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1998 [1951]), 110. Emphasis in original.

Soldiers of God tells the story of one such group. If Thomism offered one answer to the problem of how to engage with public life in the aftermath of secularization, it was not the only available option. Beginning in the 1920s and 1930s, a group of French priests began to articulate a powerful critique of the dominant Thomist and Neo-Scholastic theology of the day, looking instead to the earliest sources of the Catholic Tradition, and in particular, to the work of the Church Fathers. At the forefront of this movement, which would later become known as the "nouvelle théologie," was the Jesuit Henri de Lubac. He came of age in the aftermath of the separation of Church and state and, as a result of the Law on Associations, had to complete most of his religious training at the houses of formation established to cater to French Jesuits in exile. One of these was the Maison Saint-Louis on the Channel Island of Jersey—a dependency of the British Crown located about fourteen miles off the coast of Normandy. It was here, in the early 1920s, that de Lubac met and developed a close friendship with several other young Jesuits, such as Gaston Fessard, Yves de

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[15] There has been a proliferation of new works on Christian Democracy, in recent years, including Wolfram Kaiser, *Christian Democracy and the Origins of the European Union* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Maria Mitchell, *The Origins of Christian Democracy: Politics and Confession in Modern Germany* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2012); Thomas Kselman and Joseph A. Buttigieg, eds., *European Christian Democracy: Historical Legacies and Comparative Perspectives* (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 2003); Michael Gehler and Wolfram Kaiser, eds., *Christian Democracy in Europe since 1945* (London: Routledge, 2004); Marco Duranti, "Conservatism, Christian Democracy and the European Human Rights Project, 1945-50," Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 2009; Giuliana Chamedes, "The Vatican and the Making of the Altantic Order, 1920-1960," Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 2013. On the Catholic engagement with leftwing politics and labor movements, see Horn and Gerard, *Left Catholicism*; Gerd-Rainer Horn, *Western European Liberation Theology: The First Wave, 1924-1959* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Chenaux, *L'Église catholique et le communisme;* Piotr Kosicki, "Between Catechism and Revolution: Poland, France, and the Story of Catholicism and Socialism in Europe, 1789-1958," Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 2011; Denis Pelletier and Jean-Louis Schlegel, eds., *À la gauche du Christ: les chrétiens de gauche en France de 1945 à nos jours* (Paris: Seuil, 2012). The literature on the Catholic engagement with the right is of course vast, but for the period under study, see esp. John F. Pallard, *The Papacy in the Age of Totalitarianism, 1914-1958* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), chs. 4, 7, and 9; Hubert Wolf, *Pope and Devil: The Vatican's Archives and the Third Reich* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2010); Susan Zuccotti, *Under His Very Windows: The Vatican and the Holocaust in Italy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000); Frank Coppa, *The Life and Pontificate of Pope Pius XII: Between History and Controversy* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2013); on Vichy, in particular, see note 19 and on the Catholic engagement with the Action Française, see note 7.

Montcheuil, Robert Hamel, and René d'Ouince, who shared his distaste for the dominant Neo-Scholastic theology of the day and the Royalist politics so frequently aligned with it. Because the anticlerical legislation had removed the ecclesiastical exemption from conscription, these young Jesuits were among the first generation of French seminarians to be drafted into the military when war broke out in 1914. Shocked by the level of unbelief they observed in the trenches, the experience of the war convinced de Lubac and his friends of the need to develop new theological tools capable of bridging the abyss between the Church and the modern world.

Thomism and the broader Scholastic tradition were, they believed, ill-equipped to perform such a task. In fact, by affirming the distinction between the natural and supernatural orders, de Lubac went so far as to argue that this tradition had inadvertently *promoted* the secularization of European intellectual and political life. "The relative autonomy it accorded to nature" was also "a temptation to independence," he warned, and "the transcendence in which it hoped to preserve the supernatural with such jealous care was, in fact, a banishment. The most confirmed secularists found in it, in spite of itself, an ally."[16] But in addition to playing into the logic of secularism, de Lubac's circle also perceived another danger in this theological model, not unconnected to the first. By insisting upon the autonomy of the temporal order, they worried that Thomism could be used to justify a practical collaboration between Catholics and a variety of secular parties, governments, and ideologies. Thus, de Lubac later acknowledged that his suspicion of Thomism owed much to the fact that he had known "a Thomism as patron of '*l'Action française*', a Thomism as the inspiration of Christian Democracy, a progressivist and even a neo-Marxist Thomism," as well as "a 'Thomism' that was scarcely more than a tool in the hands of the government, the rallying point of a party."[17] Much of this suspicion came from the way that non-Catholics such as Charles Maurras, the leader of the Action Française, or regimes such as the Vichy government, used Thomism for purely instrumental purposes to cover their own political agendas with the figleaf of theological legitimacy. As a result, these Jesuits would strenuously oppose any effort to translate Catholic theological principles into support for secular political projects, whatever their color, or even to collaborate with them in the interests of achieving shared practical goals.

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[16] Henri de Lubac, *Surnaturel: études historiques* (Paris: Lethielleux, 2010 [1946]), 153; *Catholicism: Christ and the Common Destiny of Man,* trans. by Lancelot Sheppard and Elizabeth Englund, with a preface by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1988 [1938]), 166-7. De Lubac returned to this argument again and again, throughout his career. See Joseph A Komonchak, "Theology and Culture at Mid-Century: The Example of Henri de Lubac." *Theological Studies* 51 (1990), 579-602.

This did not mean that de Lubac and his friends were apolitical or believed that theology had no role to play in public life. In fact, when France fell under German occupation during the Second World War, this group of Jesuits led an embattled Catholic resistance to Nazism and the collaborationist government of Marshal Pétain. At first they confined their protests to the "licit" channels of official publications subject to state censorship. But in the face of increasingly restrictive censorship from both Vichy and their religious superiors, they chose to move underground and publish anonymously. Thus was born, in 1941, the clandestine resistance journal, *Cahiers du Témoignage chrétien* ("Christian Witness"), which announced the birth of a "great Front of Spiritual Resistance against Hitlerian dictatorship."[18] And yet, its authors never ceased to insist that "the Frenchmen who present you these *cahiers* do not engage in politics" and that their objections to Nazism were of a purely spiritual nature.[19] This was certainly not how the French and German authorities perceived their activities, and while most of the authors managed to elude arrest, one,

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[17] Henri de Lubac, *At the Service of the Church: Henri de Lubac Reflects on the Circumstances that Occasioned his Writings*, trans. by Anne Elizabeth Englund (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1993), 144.

[18] Anon., "Notre Combat," *Cahiers du Témoignage chrétien* II-III (December 1941-January 1942), 1. On *Témoignage chrétien*, see Renée Bédarida, *Les armes de l'esprit: Témoignage chrétien, 1941-1944* (Paris: Éditions Ouvrières, 1977) and Bernard Comte, *L'Honneur et la conscience: catholiques français en résistance, 1940-1944* (Paris: Éditions de l'Atelier, 1998), passim.

[19] Anon., "Témoignage chrétien," *Cahiers du Témoignage chrétien* I (November 1941), 1.

Yves de Montcheuil, was captured and executed by the Gestapo in 1944. How is it possible, then, that these Jesuits did not conceive of their resistance work as a political act?

Soldiers of God takes this question as its point of departure, exploring how theology can have powerful political effects even when it does not translate into the conventional language of secular politics. The history of the Jesuits associated with the "nouvelle théologie" offers a case in point, precisely because they self-consciously rejected all of the dominant political ideologies of their day. Not only did they spearhead the "spiritual resistance" to Nazism during the war, they were also fierce critics of Communism and of the Catholic Left that flourished in France immediately after the war. But despite their staunch anti-totalitarianism, these Jesuits *also* rejected the basic premises of liberal politics, including the distinction between the private and public spheres, the primacy of the individual, and the sovereignty of the nation-state. Instead, I argue that they looked to theology as an *alternative* to political discourse—what I call a "counter-politics."[20] Theology offered them a language with which to intervene in questions traditionally classified as "political," while engaging in a critique of politics itself. In short, it allowed them to be *in* the secular public sphere, but not *of* it. This dissertation traces how de Lubac's circle deployed the resources of ecclesiology, eschatology, theological anthropology, sacramental theology, and biblical exegesis to fashion a theological response to the dominant political questions that exercised their world. In the process, they developed a controversial "new theology" that provoked the condemnation of the Vatican in 1950, but would eventually become a dominant theological force behind the Second Vatican Council.[21]

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[20] In developing this framework, I have drawn upon the insights of Saba Mahmood, *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), William Cavanaugh, *Torture and Eucharist: Theology, Politics, and the Body of Christ* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1998), and Brenna Moore, *Sacred Dread: Raïssa Maritain, the Allure of Suffering, and the French Catholic Revival (1905–1944)* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2013), 17.

[21] On the influence of the "nouvelle théologie" on the Second Vatican Council, see Gerald O'Collins, "*Ressourcement* and Vatican II" and Paul McPartlan, "*Ressourcement*, Vatican II, and Eucharistic Ecclesiology," in *Ressourcement: A Movement for Renewal in Twentieth-Century Catholic Theology,* ed. by Gabriel Flynn and Paul D. Murray (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 372-91 and 392-404; John O'Malley, "Vatican II: Did Anything Happen?" *Theological Studies* 67 (2006), esp. 12-17; Yves Congar, *Mon journal du concile* (Paris: Cerf, 2002); Henri de Lubac, *Entretien autour de Vatican II* (Paris: Cerf, 2007).

The group of Jesuits around Henri de Lubac thus advanced an alternative theological approach to the secularization of public life than the one adopted by their Thomist peers, whom they accused of simply accommodating themselves to the logic of the secular public sphere. Taking their cue instead from the works of the Church Fathers, de Lubac and his friends insisted that the natural and supernatural orders could not be disarticulated in the way that Scholastic theology maintained. It was not possible to imagine an autonomous order of human affairs oriented toward a purely natural end because human life possessed only one end: communion with the divine. The desire for this end was constitutive of human nature itself. Consequently, de Lubac argued, there could be no question "of closing the Church off from any terrain of human thought or action; there is none, as profane as it might seem, in which, one way or another, faith and morals are not implicated." Precisely because "*all of man* has its Savior in Jesus Christ...nothing which is human can ever remain foreign to [the Church]."[22] Language such as this might seem to suggest that de Lubac harbored theocratic pretensions or that he wished to undo the separation of Church and state. Indeed, the Augustinian tradition he drew upon had a long historical association with theocracy, whereas Thomism had more often been used to defend the autonomy of the temporal powers.[23] But de Lubac's circle was by no means calling for the restoration of a confessional state or for the Church to take over the functions of the state. In fact, they were highly critical of the Church's theocratic past, precisely because its effect had been to reduce the Church "to the rank of the powers of this world."[24] Instead, they wished to return to an even earlier moment in the history of the Church, before it became the official religion of the Roman Empire. They believed that the events of 1905 and the secularization of European public life more broadly presented the Church with an opportunity to recover its original role as a critical force vis-à-vis the powers of this world.

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[22] Henri de Lubac, "Pouvoir de l'Église en matière temporelle," *Revue des sciences religieuses* 12 (July 1932), 342-3. The article is a rejoinder to a book by Jacques Maritain's close friend and disciple, Charles Journet: *La Juridiction de l'Église sur la cité* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1931).

[23] De Lubac develops a critique of this historical narrative in "Political Augustinianism?" in *Theological Fragments,* trans. by Rebecca Howell Balinski (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1989), 235-86. On the modern political deployment of Augustine, see Michael J. S. Bruno, *Political Augustinianism: Modern Interpretations of Augustine's Political Thought* (New York: Fortress, 2014).

[24] De Lubac, "Pouvoir de l'Église en matière temporelle," 342.

By applying the Augustinian tradition to the context of the modern secular state, these Jesuits thus advocated something like a spiritualized form of theocracy. They looked to the Church rather than the state as the primary framework for collective life. But what they had in mind, crucially, was not the Church in its visible, institutional form. Instead, they envisioned the Church as something much more totalizing—as the body of Christ progressively incorporating souls here below, but which would attain its fullness at the end of time. Conceived in this way, they believed, the Church was the only communal body capable of overcoming the limitations of secular ideologies and warring nation-states. In contrast, Maritain insisted that Church and state occupied distinct planes and that it must fall to laypeople, acting on their own prerogative and without implicating the Church, to be the face of Catholic politics in the modern secular state. De Lubac's circle instead maintained that the Church, in its capacity as a corporate body, still had a role to play in public life after secularization.

Nevertheless, this role would perforce be a negative and a critical one. As the title of their resistance journal suggested, it consisted in "bearing witness" within the temporal order to the supernatural end of human life, and to condemn those ideologies, laws, and movements which stood at cross-purposes with it. This was a role they would practice themselves, first against the Action Française in the 1920s, then against liberalism, Nazism, and Communism in the 1930s and 1940s. In these various battles, theology was their weapon of choice. In the 1930s, they looked to ecclesiology to develop a personalist third way between liberal individualism and totalitarian collectivism. During the war, they turned to biblical exegesis to articulate a critique of the anti-Semitism of both Vichy and the Third Reich, and to Eucharistic theology for a critique of the biopolitical projects enacted by these regimes.[25] This was a theme upon which they would expand after the war, when they elaborated a theological anthropology designed to preclude the legal and political deployment of human life, whether in the form of fascist biopolitics or the sort of human rights discourse advocated by Maritain. Finally, they turned to eschatology for an alternative to the linear, continuous, progressive model of history underwriting both the Marxist and liberal projects. At roughly the same time as Carl Schmitt was developing his famous political theology, then, these theologians were elaborating what one might call a *counter*-political theology.

Politics, Theology, and Critique

In her 2005 study of the Egyptian piety movement, the anthropologist Saba Mahmood lamented the fact that "we have few conceptual resources available for analyzing sociopolitical formations that do not take the nation-state and its juridical apparatuses as their main points of reference."[26] When religious actors, such as the women at the heart of Mahmood's study or the theologians at the heart of mine, do not frame their goals in the language of party politics, legal rights, or state privileges, they are liable to fall off most scholars' "political radar."[27] That this is so requires some interrogation. Why does scholarship on religion tend either to translate religious discourses into the more familiar language of political, economic, or legal ideology, or to dismiss them as politically irrelevant? It is here that the story of the Jesuits of the "nouvelle théologie" can be particularly useful, for they refused both of these alternatives. In fact, it is precisely because their approach seems so *unfamiliar* from the perspective of a secular political logic, that it can be used to de-familiarize this logic itself and to foreground the role it plays in much contemporary scholarship on religion. Where this scholarship tends to focus on the instances in which theological concepts translate into political ones, a major premise of this project is that we can learn at least as much from the instances in which they do not.

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[25] On the concept of biopolitics, see Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life,* trans. by Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998). The concept owes much to Michel Foucault's lectures at the Collège de France during the 1970s. See Foucault, *Society Must be Defended: Lectures at the College de France, 1975-1976* (New York: Picador, 2003), 239-64.

[26] Saba Mahmood, *Politics of Piety*, 194.

[27] Ibid., 35.

That the political role of religion continues to be framed in terms of a choice between translation and irrelevance suggests that much scholarship on this question remains normatively bound to a liberal framework. The notion that religion occupies a private sphere distinct from the public sphere in which political discourse takes place is of course a key liberal axiom. Jürgen Habermas has recently sought to soften this distinction somewhat by conceding that religious language cannot be banned altogether from the public sphere.[28] He continues to insist, however, that religious actors must translate their faith commitments into the universal, neutral, and secular language of public reason in order for their claims to have any political purchase. "Religious citizens who regard themselves as loyal members of a constitutional democracy," he argues, "have to accept that the potential truth contents of religious utterances must be translated into a generally accessible language."[29] Religious citizens do have a choice, in other words, but it is a choice between translation and irrelevance. This "translation proviso," a term Habermas borrows from John Rawls, is simply "the price to be paid for the neutrality of the state authority towards competing worldviews."[30] Some have pointed out that this approach seems to impose an undue burden upon the religious citizen—

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[28] On Habermas' efforts to offer a fuller account of the religious contribution to public life, see his dialogue with the former Cardinal Ratzinger in *The Dialectics of Secularization: On Reason and Religion,* trans. by Brian McNeil (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2006) and Jürgen Habermas, "Notes on a Post-Secular Society," *New Perspectives Quarterly* (Fall 2008), 17-29.

[29] Jürgen Habermas, "'The Political': The Rational Meaning of a Questionable Inheritance of Political Theology," in *The Power of Religion in the Public Sphere,* ed. by Eduardo Mendieta and Jonathan VanAntwerpen (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 25-6.

[30] Ibid., 26.

one that is not required of her secular counterpart.[31] Even more problematic, however, is the way that Habermas and liberal political theory more broadly present the secular as a neutral space or a universally accessible language, in contrast to the babel of religious particularisms.

Scholars such as Talal Asad have roundly rejected this framework by demonstrating that secularism is far from neutral; that it is in fact a positive ideology in its own right.[32] Indeed, they have gone even further, arguing that key elements of secular ideology derive genealogically from a religious (usually Christian) framework.[33] Such an approach owes much to the theory made famous by the jurist Carl Schmitt, who argued in 1922 that "all significant concepts of the modern theory of the state are secularized theological concepts," which have been "transferred from theology to the theory of the state."[34] And yet, this argument remains just as bound to the logic of translation as the liberal model it rejects. The opposition between the liberal approach to religion and the Schmittian critique of liberalism should not distract us from the fact that both presuppose that religious discourses *can* in fact be translated into the language of the political and, indeed, that they must do so in order to be politically powerful. Even Dipesh Chakrabarty, who has done so much to show up the entanglement between secularism and the European imperial project, argues for the need to translate the "enchanted worlds" of religious actors into the secular and more universal Marxist language of "labor," because "one cannot argue with modern bureaucracies and other instruments of governmentality" without recourse to such language.[35] Chakrabarty does acknowledge that this act of translation always presents a "scandal" for the historian, and precisely because of this, can provide the historical discipline with "a glimpse of its own finitude." Nevertheless, he maintains that "such translation is both inevitable and unavoidable."[36] The notion that religious utterances can and must be translated into political terms in order to be politically effective is thus common to a range of different political projects, and this no doubt explains why so much scholarship on religion remains bound to it.

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[31] See, for instance, Peter E. Gordon, "What Hope Remains? Habermas on Religion," *The New Republic* (14 December, 2012). This is an objection Habermas himself anticipates and believes he has answered in the essay cited above, 25.

[32] See esp. Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003); William E. Connolly, *Why I am Not a Secularist* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999); Winnifred Fallers Sullivan, *The Impossibility of Religious Freedom* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005). On the case of French *laïcité* in particular, see Talal Asad, "Trying to Understand French Secularism," in *Political Theologies: Public Religions in a Post-Secular World*, ed. by Hent de Vries and Lawrence Sullivan (New York: Fordham University Press, 2006), 494-526.

[33] The most recent example of this approach is Gil Anidjar, *Blood: A Critique of Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014).

[34] Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty,* trans. by George Schwab (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 36.

Imagining an alternative to the logic of translation requires us to rethink the scope of the political in such a way that the choice between translation and irrelevance would no longer be necessary. It is here that the history of the "nouvelle théologie" can prove particularly useful. Maritain had accepted that, in order for Catholic theology to have any influence on public life in a modern pluralistic society, it must be translated into a more universally accessible language. This was why he rooted his human rights discourse in natural law, on the grounds that this made it intelligible to all human beings by virtue of their reason alone. De Lubac's circle was of course irrevocably opposed to this logic, not least because they believed that there was no language more universal than the language of faith and no institution more universal, more *catholic*, than the Church. The impulse to translate theology into the language of secular political institutions not only served to degrade theology, they believed; it also gave rise to dangerous hybrids such as Schmitt's political theology, Vichy's National Revolution, or the German Christian movement. These Jesuits were therefore unequivocally opposed to any effort to translate theology into the categories of secular politics and deliberately sought to articulate theological models that would be *untranslatable*. And yet, I argue, this was precisely what endowed their work with a political power all its own. It was precisely because it resisted translation into the language of secular institutions, parties, and ideologies, that this "nouvelle théologie" could play an important *critical* role in twentieth-century European politics. And this role was itself a function of the secularization of public life, which allowed the Church to stand at arm's length from the institutions of worldly power. In this context, I argue, theology became a powerful weapon with which to critique the institutions, ideologies, and presuppositions of secular politics, without having to undergo any form of translation.

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[35] Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 86.

[36] Ibid., 93; 89.

Recognizing the political power of this form of critique, however, requires us to revisit the meaning of critique itself and, with it, the scope of the political more broadly. Critique and critical thinking have long been associated with a secular worldview—an assumption that dates back to a time when religious belief was the default position and blasphemy a punishable offence.[37] One might well ask, however, whether such a definition continues to hold when the default position is no longer a religious, but a secular, one—when we all inhabit what Charles Taylor calls "the immanent frame" and secularism has become the structuring principle of public life.[38] In this context, it may be that religion and theology have critical resources at their disposal which are not available within the existing framework of political discourse. The notion that critique presupposes a secular worldview remains deeply entrenched, however. It owes much to Max Weber's heroic vision of the stoic secular man—for Weber explicitly genders this stance—who refuses to retreat into the comforting embrace of religion.[39] This idea that religious faith somehow implies an abdication of one's critical faculties has been difficult to shake. It has been affirmed most recently by Stathis Gourgouris, who defines critique as a perpetual striving for autonomy that is incompatible with the heteronomous structure of the religious imagination.[40] Leaving aside the question of whether this is an accurate account of religious experience, it is worth considering whether the kind of autonomy Gourgouris imagines is in fact possible or even desirable, and whether it is indeed a necessary precondition for critique. Might it be possible to define critique, not as the totalizing practice of a Promethean agent unbeholden to external authority, but as the work of situated historical actors embedded within certain authority structures, for whom autonomy and heteronomy, submission and dissent are not mutually exclusive? Taking seriously the critical power of theology may well allow for a definition of critique that is less bound to the autonomous, agentive liberal subject.[41]

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[37] For an excellent rejoinder to this position, very much in keeping my own reflections here, see Talal Asad, Wendy Brown, Judith Butler, and Saba Mahmood, *Is Critique Secular? Blasphemy, Injury, and Free Speech* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013).

[38] Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2007), ch. 15.

[39] Max Weber, *The Vocation Lectures*, ed. by David Owen and Tracy Strong, trans. by Rodney Livingstone (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2004). The crucial passage comes towards the end of the lecture: "To anyone who is unable to endure the fate of the age *like a man* we must say that he should return to the welcoming and merciful embrace of the old churches...in

If critique is not an exclusively secular activity, it is also not a purely negative one. As Joan Scott has shown, critique is not the same thing as criticism. Its goal is not simply to negate the existing state of affairs or replace it with a fully-formed alternative, but to examine what makes this state of affairs possible, to denaturalize the assumptions on which it rests, and in doing so, "to open the possibility for thinking (and so acting) differently."[42] It is in this sense that I understand the counter-political vision articulated by the Jesuits at the center of this study. They did not simply adopt a negative stance toward the political, rejecting it in favor of the higher truths of theology. Instead, theology furnished them with a way to access questions traditionally classified as political in an oblique manner, even as they engaged in a critique of politics itself. In many cases, as I try to

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the process, he will inevitably be forced to make a 'sacrifice of the intellect,' one way or the other" (p. 30, emphasis added).

[40] Stathis Gourgouris, *Lessons in Secular Criticism* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013). Gourgouris owes much to the approach Edward Said developed in his 1983 essay "Secular Criticism," in *The Edward Said Reader,* ed. by Moustafa Bayoumi and Andrew Rubin (New York: Vintage, 2000), 218-242.

[41] See, for instance, Saba Mahmood's powerful critique of the liberal feminist model of agency in *Politics of Piety,* passim.

[42] Joan W. Scott, "History-Writing as Critique," in *Manifestos for History,* ed. by Keith Jenkins, Sue Morgan, and Alun Munslow (New York: Routledge, 2007), 23.

show, the claim to remain above politics in fact performed crucial political work for these priests, whether by allowing them to circumvent state censorship, or authorizing them to pronounce upon a set of questions that might appear to be beyond their remit as priests, or by recasting what might seem like a political claim in the ostensibly neutral language of theology.

More often than not, however, their critique did not take place at the level of formal political discourse, but instead targeted those ideas and assumptions which underpin political ideologies and make them possible. This included certain ideas about nature, the human person, communal life, secularization, and historical time, among other things. In this sense, their work can be read less as a straightforward rejection of the available political ideologies of their day, than as an attempt to grapple with, and think differently about, their structuring assumptions. And this is precisely why these priests' work can be of value to scholars, like myself, who do not share their religious faith. In the first place, their theological work provides useful resources for a critique of the nation-state model, of the liberal subject, of biopolitical projects, and of a linear, progressive model of historical time. But, at an even deeper level, and precisely because it cannot be readily translated into the language of secular politics, their work invites us to reconsider what constitutes a political act and where the boundaries of the political lie. It suggests the need for a more expansive definition of the political—one less bound to the conventional sites of political action (state, law, economy, etc.), and therefore capable of accounting for the political power of ideas and practices that do not take these sites as their primary point of reference.[43]

By way of example, let us consider how the counter-political vision of the "nouvelle théologie" can shed light on the limitations of the spatial logic which structures conventional definitions of the political. These tend to derive from a basically liberal model that conceives of religion and politics, Church and state, as occupying distinct spaces or spheres. Such a logic is evident in both the Habermasian model of the public sphere, as well as Maritain's distinction between the temporal and spiritual "planes." The effect of this spatial logic, however, is to naturalize the distinction between religion and politics—to constitute these as logically distinct entities and obscure the ideological work this distinction performs.[44] This spatial language, it should be noted, is also the language of the modern nation-state, defined as it is by jurisdiction over a particular territory. This was something that de Lubac had recognized, and he was therefore highly critical of any effort on the part of both Catholic theologians and the state to theorize Church-state relations according to the spatial language of jurisdiction.[45] To imagine the relationship between Church and state in these terms, he argued, was to approach it the way one would approach the relationship between two territorial states negotiating a shared border—each autonomous and sovereign over its own terrain. Not only did this effectively reduce the Church to the level of a state; it also made the notion of an overlap between the spiritual and the temporal as difficult to imagine as the possibility of two states sharing jurisdiction over a single piece of land.

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[43] This approach very much echoes Saba Mahmood's claims about finding "politics in unusual places." See *Politics of Piety*, 192-4.

This spatial logic continues to structure how we think the relationship between religion and politics and makes it very difficult to imagine how they might interact in a way that would not give one sovereignty over the other or require a translation from one to the other. *Translatio*, the act of carrying something over from one place to another, of course partakes of this spatial logic by definition. In contrast, the Jesuits of the "nouvelle théologie" approached Church and state not as spatial entities, but as as temporal ones. Drawing upon Augustine, they approached the temporal order as precisely that—an order of *time* stretching from the Incarnation to the Second Coming of Christ.[46] The time of the Church, by contrast, was the time of salvation and thus partook, in some sense, of the Kingdom that would come at the end of time. But these two temporalities were by no means distinct, they insisted, for the Church and its sacraments acted as a pivot between the two. This endowed the Church with a special mission to make the time of salvation present in historical time and to bear witness to the Kingdom of God within the temporal order. This was the logic which underwrote the Jesuits' resistance activities during the war. Conceived in the spatial language of jurisdiction, there could be no overlap between the temporal and the spiritual, but the language of time allowed these theologians to imagine the relations between the two in less oppositional terms. By dispensing with the logic of separate spheres, it allowed them to envision a way for the Church to be *in* but not *of* the secular public sphere.

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[44] For an excellent critique of the way a spatial reading of the Habermasian public sphere serves to obscure the power differences that structure it, see Harold Mah, "Phantasies of the Public Sphere: Rethinking the Habermas of Historians," *The Journal of Modern History* 72 (March 2000), 153-82.

[45] See esp. de Lubac, "Pouvoir de l'Église en matière temporelle." He also takes up this theme more obliquely in *Corpus Mysticum: The Eucharist and the Church in the Middle Ages,* trans. by Gemma Simmonds, Richard Price, and Christopher Stephens (London: SCM, 2006). See the discussion in Bryan C. Hollon, *Everything is Sacred: Spiritual Exegesis in the Political Theology of Henri de Lubac* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2009), ch. 3.

In making this observation, I by no means wish to suggest that we simply adopt these priests' approach as our own, but only to indicate how their work can help us unthink the spatial logic that continues to limit the range of possible relations we can imagine between religion (as well as many other things conventionally relegated to the private sphere) and public life. Once again, it is precisely what makes theology so unfamiliar or untranslatable, in this instance, which accounts for its peculiar critical force—its capacity to de-familiarize the categories that structure the secular political imagination, and in doing so, to open the possibility of thinking the political differently.

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[46] William Cavanaugh makes a very similar argument in opposition to the spatial logic that governs the modern relations between Church and state in *Torture and Eucharist* and in *Migrations of the Holy: God, State, and the Political Meaning of the Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011), ch. 7; Catherine Pickstock also criticizes this spatial logic in *After Writing: On the Liturgical Consummation of Philosophy* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 135-66. I should note, however, that their normative investments are rather different from my own.

Theology and the Secular Disciplines

The distinction between religion and the public sphere so central to liberal politics finds its analogue in the structure of the university itself, which separates theology from the presumptively secular disciplines of the humanities and social sciences. This dissertation seeks to bridge this divide by attending to what is lost in the gulf between theology and the secular disciplines and how their encounter can be mutually productive. Bringing together insights from history, theology, philosophy, political theory, and law, *Soldiers of God* thus contributes to three broad bodies of literature: the interdisciplinary scholarship on political theology and secularization, modern European political and intellectual history, and scholarship on theology.

The perceived "resurgence of religion" in public life has, in recent years, yielded a growing body of scholarship on secularization and political theology that draws from anthropologists, political theorists, philosophers, sociologists, historians, and scholars of law, literature, and religion—much of which is discussed above. What is most striking about this rapidly expanding field, however, is how rarely *theology* in fact enters into the discussion of political theology. A case in point is the most authoritative work to date on this subject: an 800-page collection of essays edited by Hent de Vries and Lawrence Sullivan.[47] It contains thirty-five essays on the subject of political theology, but only one of them is the work of a theologian (the Pope Emeritus). This discrepancy no doubt owes much to the dominance of the genealogical approach within the literature on political theology.[48] Taking its cue from Carl Schmitt, this approach tends to focus on the pre-modern theological origins of modern political concepts, treating theology as something that existed in the past but whose formal features have now been taken over by the political. The effect is to confine theology's moment of efficacy to a pre-modern past, foreclosing the possibility that theology might continue to play a robust political role in the modern world. *Soldiers of God* offers a corrective to such one-directional accounts. It attends instead to the *productive* relationship between theology and secularization—the way the secularization of European public life has in fact spurred theological reflection and opened the way for new politico-theological configurations. This is why the dissertation begins in 1905, precisely because both the Maritainian model and the counter-politics of the "nouvelle théologie" were a function of the separation of Church and state in France. By demonstrating the ongoing role of theology in a secular political context, *Soldiers of God* thus puts the "theology" back into the literature on "political theology."

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[47] Hent de Vries and Lawrence E. Sullivan, eds., *Political Theologies: Public Religions in a Post-Secular World* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2006).

[48] See esp. Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology*; Ernst Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997); Claude Lefort, "The Permanence of the Theologico-Political?" in de Vries and Sullivan, 148-187; Marcel Gauchet, *The Disenchantment of the World: A Political History of Religion*, trans. by Oscar Burge (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997); Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular* and *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993). This approach has also been applied to a broader set of secular concepts beyond purely political ones. See, for instance, Karl Löwith, *Meaning in History: The Theological Implications of the Philosophy of History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press,

By integrating the history of theology into the broader intellectual and political history of modern Europe, this dissertation also seeks to transform our understanding of that history. The history of theology tends to be ghettoized under the auspices of "Church history" and told as a separate story from broader intellectual, cultural, and political developments in modern European history. By bringing these two stories together and demonstrating the continuing political power of theology even after secularization, *Soldiers of God* uncovers a dimension of twentieth-century European political history beyond the remit of secular parties and ideologies. In the process, it disrupts historiographical narratives that tend to frame this history as a battle between the forces of fascism, communism, and liberal democracy, for the theologians at the heart of this study rejected all three. Moreover, as I argue above, this dissertation also suggests the need to rethink the definition of the political upon which this historiography relies, so that it can better make sense of the role of religion in modern European politics.

1949); Amos Funkenstein, *Theology and the Scientific Imagination from the Middle Ages to the Sixteenth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986).

In addition to reframing the political history of twentieth-century Europe, *Soldiers of God* also dramatically expands the terrain of modern intellectual history, which has tended to exclude theology. It reveals the key contributions that theologians have made to modern philosophical developments from phenomenology, to political theory, to the philosophy of history. The Jesuits of the "nouvelle théologie" were at the forefront of an extraordinary rapprochement between theologians and secular philosophers in postwar France, which remains one of the most remarkable but also one of the most understudied features of the intellectual history of this period.[49] It brought these theologians into dialogue with a wide range of interlocutors, from Sartre and Merleau-Ponty, to Heidegger and Kojève, to Bataille and Blanchot. Both theology and secular philosophy, I argue, were reshaped in the process. For instance, these Jesuits played a particularly pivotal role in the French reception of Hegel, Heidegger, and the early writings of Marx, as well as the development of Christian existentialism. A major goal of this dissertation, then, is to show that the histories of modern theology and of modern philosophy are far more intertwined than one might imagine, and to integrate theology into the canon of modern intellectual history.

Reintegrating the modern history of theology into the broader intellectual history of which it is a vital part also has important implications for the study of theology, which tends to be confined to a distinct and highly-specialized field. Catholic theologians and historians of theology usually approach it as a process of elaboration internal to the Catholic tradition. The existing literature on the "nouvelle théologie," for instance, tends to frame it as a project of *ressourcement*—an effort to recover the Patristic sources of the tradition that hed been obscured by the dominance of Neo-

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[49] Most of the major intellectual histories of twentieth-century France make little mention of Catholic thought and no mention at all of theology. See, for instance, Mark Poster, *Existential Marxism in Postwar France: From Sartre to Althusser* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975); Michael Roth, *Knowing and History: Appropriations of Hegel in Twentieth-Century France* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988); Gary Gutting, *French Philosophy in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Ethan Kleinberg, *Generation Existential: Heidegger's Philosophy in France, 1927-1961* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005). A notable exception is Stefanos Geroulanos, *An Atheism that is not Humanist Emerges in French Thought* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010), who briefly discusses both Fessard and de Lubac.

Scholastic theology—or as a stepping-stone in the progressive modernization of Catholic theology that began with the Catholic Modernist movement at the turn of the twentieth century and culminated in the Second Vatican Council.[50] Absent from this discussion, however, is a sustained engagement with the intellectual, political, and cultural context in which this theology emerged—the way it was progressively elaborated and revised in response to historical developments, but also helped to shape these developments in its turn. Situating the "nouvelle théologie" within this broader historical context is crucial because, as I endeavor to show, many of the central features of this theological project are unintelligible outside of it. Historicizing this movement thus alters our understanding of both its theological content and the historical moment it helped to create.

Because modern historians tend to treat theology as the exclusive purview of theologians, however, there is a remarkable shortage of archival histories of modern Catholic theology. By focusing on the archives left by the major architects of the "nouvelle théologie," this dissertation yields a rather different picture than the one provided by much of the existing literature on this movement. In particular, it highlights significant divisions between the Jesuits who are the protagonists of this study, and the Dominicans also conventionally associated with "nouvelle théologie," such as Yves Congar, Marie-Dominique Chenu, and Henri-Marie Féret. The existing literature tends to conflate these two branches of the "nouvelle théologie" because of the similarities between their respective theological visions, particularly at the level of ecclesiology, ecumenical engagement, and *ressourcement*.[51] Rather than privileging these sorts of formal parallels, I focus instead on the concrete networks and institutions in which the "new theologians" were embedded. Doing so reveals that the movement's Dominican and Jesuit wings were in fact remarkably distinct, albeit often in sympathy with one another, and that they grew increasingly at odds over the course of the postwar period.

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[50] For an example of the first approach, see Flynn and Murray, *Ressourcement.* For an example of the second, see esp. Jürgen Mettepenningen, *Nouvelle Théologie—New Theology: Inheritor of Modernism, Precursor of Vatican II* (London: T&T Clark, 2010) and Étienne Fouilloux, *Une Église en quête de liberté: la pensée catholique francaise entre modernisme et Vatican II (1914-1962)* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1998). Fouilloux, to his credit, is far more sensitive to the historical context for this movement.

[51] This is true of the Flynn and Murray volume as well as Mettepenningen, *Nouvelle Théologie—New Theology*, and Hans Boersma, *Nouvelle Théologie and Sacramental Ontology: A Return to Mystery* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

Whereas the existing scholarship tends to associate de Lubac above all with Congar, Chenu, Daniélou, Bouillard, and Hans Urs von Balthasar, this dissertation instead privileges the network of friends, disciples, and teachers with whom he most closely identified. These included Gaston Fessard, Yves de Montcheuil, Robert Hamel, René d'Ouince, Victor Fontoynont, Jean Daniélou, Maurice Blondel, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, Pierre Chaillet, and several others. What this group of figures shared was more than just a set of formal theological affinities. They were united by common intellectual, apostolic, and theological goals, but also, in many cases, by a shared institutional formation and above all by the bonds of friendship. Linking these figures together may seem unusual from the perspective of the conventional definition of the "nouvelle théologie," but it emerges from their correspondence and private papers as the more logical grouping. By using this network as the organizing framework for this study, I hope to show how a more historically-grounded approach can yield insights that tend to get lost when theology is abstracted from the concrete contexts, institutions, and communities in which it is elaborated. But I also wish to make a methodological case for the often-overlooked role that friendship and affective ties more generally play in intellectual life.

I approach this network of priests as a point of entry into a much broader story about the political role of theology, and of religion more broadly, after the institutions of public life have been secularized. Such a story is of course not specific to France, and given the transnational nature of the Catholic Church, this project necessarily looks beyond the frontiers of any one nation. And yet, the history of the Church's relationship to the French state is a very particular one, and this is what makes it difficult to draw comparisons between the political position of French theologians and those working in states with a very different historical relationship to the Church. There have been a number of attempts to draw these sorts of comparisons in recent years, but what I have discovered in the course of my own research is that even such a global and self-consciously catholic institution as the Church remained remarkably divided along both geographical and linguistic lines.[52] This was true even when theologians, such as those at the heart of this study, invoked the universality of the Church to critique the primacy of the nation-state. Despite their membership within an order and Church with a global reach, their intellectual networks remained remarkably circumscribed, although language rather than nationality appears to have been the more significant factor. De Lubac, for instance, did not read German (although some of his closest friends did). As a result, his primary interlocutors were French-speaking priests and intellectuals spread out across France, Belgium, Jersey, Rome, and Switzerland. By focusing on these concrete networks rather than attempting to draw connections between individuals who operated in very different contexts and had little or no direct interaction, this project remains historically-rooted and concrete while addressing a much larger set of questions that are less context-bound. In this sense, it is not *really* about the "nouvelle théologie," but uses this group as a way into a much broader debate between Catholics grappling with the appropriate role for the Church after the secularization of European public life. In the process, the dissertation attends not only to the virtues of transnational analysis, but also to its limits—something that is often overlooked in the recent historiographical turn to the transnational and the global.[53]

Studying theology with the tools of a secular discipline such as history of course presents a particular set of methodological challenges. In the course of working with theological sources, I have been forced to confront the secular categories and assumptions that structure my own thinking, as well as the historical discipline more broadly. Faced with this challenge, I have deliberately adopted a strategy of generous reading, such as the one Gary Wilder employs in his most recent book on Aimé Césaire and Léopold Senghor.[54] Like Wilder, my goal has been to "think with" the theologians I study. This has required a momentary "suspension of disbelief" on my own part, in order to imaginatively inhabit a worldview and set of beliefs far removed from my own.[55] But this by no means implies that I have simply taken these actors' statements at face value or limited myself to reconstructing their worldview. Thinking *with* them, as Wilder points out, also requires one to "search their writings for potentialities within them that might exceed them" and "to extend the logic of their propositions far beyond where they may have stopped."[56] This is what the framework of "counter-politics" is designed to achieve, by squaring my actors' claims to remain above politics with my own understanding of the political significance of this gesture. These two positions may not be entirely reconcilable, but I have tried to maintain this tension rather than artificially defuse it, precisely because I believe it to be a productive one.

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[52] Two more successful efforts to draw these sorts of transnational comparisons include James Chappel, "Slaying the Leviathan: Catholicism and the Rebirth of European Conservatism," 1920-1950, Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 2012; Kosicki, "Between Catechism and Revolution."

[53] In this vein, see Samuel Moyn, "On the Nonglobalization of Ideas," in *Global Intellectual History,* ed. by Samuel Moyn and Andrew Sartori (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 187-204.

Entering into the world of the theologian has been an uncanny process. At times, these priests' ideas seem remarkably familiar and even quite contemporary; but there are also aspects of their worldview that remain deeply alienating and indeed scandalous from the perspective of my own political and normative commitments. It is these moments of scandal, however, that have been most productive for thinking through the broader significance of theology in a secular context. Like Saba Mahmood, I have found that thinking *with* non-secular and non-liberal actors in these moments of scandal can help to "parochialize" the assumptions that structure modern politics, and in doing so, to "hold open the possibility that we may come to ask of politics a whole series of questions that seemed settled when we first embarked upon the inquiry."[57]

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[54] Gary Wilder, *Freedom Time: Negritude, Decolonization, and the Freedom of the World* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015), 12-13.

[55] Amy Hollywood, "Gender, Agency, and the Divine in Religious Historiography," *Journal of Religion*, 84, 4 (Oct. 2004), 528.

[56] Wilder, *Freedom Time,* 12-13.

Outline of the Dissertation

At the dawn of the twentieth century, the Catholic Church was locked in a global struggle against the intellectual and institutional foundations of modern life. France was at the epicenter of this conflict, as the Republic launched a concerted campaign to dismantle the institutional power of the Catholic Church, culminating in the separation of Church and state in 1905. Chapter 1 returns to this moment to show how the anticlerical campaign provided the crucible out of which the "nouvelle théologie" emerged. It traces the roots of this movement to the new seminaries-in-exile created to serve the religious orders that had been evicted from France in 1901. I focus in particular on the Jesuit scholasticate on the island of Jersey, where de Lubac, Fessard, Montcheuil, Hamel, and d'Ouince met and bonded over their shared distaste for the Neo-Scholastic curriculum. Together, they began to articulate an alternative vision designed to bridge the chasm that both secular Republicanism and Neo-Scholasticism had conspired to dig between the Church and the modern world. Chapter 1 thus argues that the anticlerical campaign in France unwittingly contributed—at both an intellectual and institutional level—to the vibrancy of French theology in the 1930s and 1940s. It also develops a methodological argument for the role of friendship in intellectual history.

From there, the dissertation moves into an exploration of the revolution in Catholic political theology occasioned by the 1926 Vatican condemnation of the Action Française—the royalist party that had dominated Catholic politics since the height of the anticlerical campaign, and which relied upon Neo-Scholasticism for theological support. This chapter shows how the condemnation of the Action Française effectively broke the monopoly of this politico-theological alliance, opening the way for new political and theological alternatives no longer bound to the goal of restoring the confessional state. The result was a new form of social activism, known as "Catholic Action," supported by a new ecclesiology developed in large part by de Lubac's circle. Figuring the Church as the mystical body of Christ, these theologians argued that it was the only collective body capable of overcoming the excesses of both liberal individualism and totalitarian collectivism. Refusing secular definitions of politics, sovereignty, and the distinction between the private and public spheres, I argue that this ecclesiology constitutes a form of "counter-politics."

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[57] Mahmood, *Politics of Piety*, 39. I elaborate upon this theme at greater length in "Lost in Translation: Religion and the Writing of History," *Modern Intellectual History* (Published online, December 2014), doi: 10.1017/S147924431400081X.

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Chapter 3 traces the genesis of the "spiritual resistance" to Nazism in France during the German occupation. It situates this movement in the context of Pétain's National Revolution and explains why the regime appealed to Catholics on both the right and the left, transcending the ideological divisions of the interwar period between royalist supporters of the Action Française and Catholic Action militants. Amidst this chorus of Catholic support for Vichy, de Lubac's circle emerged as the lone dissenting voice, and the chapter demonstrates how and why theology took on a particularly important political role in their critique of fascism. It allowed these priests to circumvent heavy censorship from both the state and their religious superiors, by encoding their critique of Vichy and Nazi ideology in the ostensibly apolitical language of theology. Even when censorship eventually drove these theologians underground to launch *Témoignage chrétien* in 1941, though, theology remained their primary ideological weapon. In this chapter, I show how their work disrupts existing historical accounts of the war, which presume that those who resisted fascism were either Communists or defenders of liberal democracy. Instead, de Lubac's circle was both anti-totalitarian and anti-liberal.

Chapter 4 delves deeper into the theological foundations of the "spiritual resistance," exploring how theology not only inspired these resistance activities, but was itself reshaped in the process. The chapter focuses in particular on the resources in biblical and Eucharistic theology that de Lubac's circle deployed to defend the rights of non-Christians. I argue that their defense of universal human dignity should not be conflated with a liberal human rights discourse, not least because their resistance to anti-Semitism remained firmly anchored in a supersessionist understanding of the Judeo-Christian relationship with conversion as its ultimate goal. Eschewing both liberalism and fascism, these theologians turned once again to the resources of ecclesiology in order to elaborate their critique of the biopolitical projects being enacted in both Germany and France. Revising their vision of the Church to foreground the centrality of the Eucharist, I show how de Lubac's circle looked to the Body of Christ as the best weapon against the Nazi divinization of the ethno-national body. In the process, they transformed the fields of biblical theology, ecclesiology, and Catholic teaching on Judaism in ways that would have a profound effect on the Second Vatican Council.

Chapters 5 and 6 turn to the postwar debate over humanism in France, which brought Catholics, Marxists, and existentialists into conversation. I argue that this cannot be understood as a dispute between three distinct ideological blocs, for political and theological fault lines traversed all three. Within the Church, this took the form of a division between "secular humanists" and "Christian existentialists," according to the typology developed by de Lubac's disciple, Jean Daniélou. The first group included both the members of a burgeoning postwar Catholic Left and proponents of Christian Democracy and human rights, such as Maritain. Many of these figures drew upon the Thomist distinction between the natural and supernatural orders in order to underwrite their social or political engagements. Not surprisingly, this approach drew strong criticism from de

Lubac and his friends, who envisioned the postwar battle against Communism as the logical extension of their wartime resistance to Nazism. This conflict is the subject of Chapter 5.

De Lubac's circle, including Fessard and Daniélou, instead found themselves in the ranks of the second group. Chapter 6 traces their engagement with existentialism and phenomenology, in an effort to throw light on a Christian existentialist tradition in France that has long been overshadowed by its atheist counterpart within the historiography. I show how these Jesuits weaved together the insights of Catholic theology and phenomenology to develop a dynamic and anti-foundationalist anthropology that was neither properly humanist nor anti-humanist. This vision found its highest expression in de Lubac's controversial *Surnaturel*. By placing the supernatural at the heart of human nature, I argue that this work defined human life in such a way that it could not be codified into law or operationalized to serve a political project. In the process, it provided an alternative, not only to the dominant atheist humanisms of the day, but also to the Thomist anthropology that underwrote Maritain's human rights discourse. Implicit in this debate over the nature of the human was a dispute over the nature of time, and as I show, de Lubac and his colleagues mobilized the discontinuous temporality common to both Christian eschatology and phenomenology as a critique of progressive models of history. Taken together, I argue, this existential eschatology and theological anthropology constituted a powerful theological rejoinder to both liberalism and Marxism. In other words, this was a paradigmatic case of counter-politics.

Chapter 7 moves from the realm of secular politics to that of Church politics, and from France to Rome. It traces the theological controversy that engulfed de Lubac's circle form 1946 on and culminated in the Vatican condemnation of the "nouvelle théologie" in 1950. This was a conflict that pitted Jesuits against Dominicans, Thomists against Augustinians, and a French Church jealous of its independence against Roman authorities anxious to assert their central authority. But above all, I argue, it was a conflict over the nature and distribution of authority within the Church.

This took the form of a debate over the privileged status of Thomas Aquinas and Scholastic theology within the contemporary Church. But it also had much to do with the way de Lubac's circle had challenged the principles of ecclesiastical authority when they defied their superiors to engage in the "spiritual resistance" during the war. By the time the dust settled in 1950, de Lubac and several of his colleagues had been relieved of their teaching and editorial positions and sent into exile. However, as I indicate in the epilogue, they would eventually be rehabilitated at the Second Vatican Council, where they served as "experts," such that all four of the major conciliar documents bear the imprint of the "nouvelle théologie."

A Note on Terminology

Before proceeding, it is necessary to clarify several of the terms employed in this dissertation, beginning with the "nouvelle théologie" itself. This term has long vexed scholars because it was repudiated by virtually all of the theologians usually associated with it. Yves Congar famously referred to the "nouvelle théologie" as a "tarasque," a mythical beast, and de Lubac strenuously denied the appellation on the grounds that his goal was to return to the sources of the tradition rather than to create something new. In fact, he argued, if anything could rightly be termed a "new theology," it was the Neo-Scholasticism itself, which was largely an early-moden invention and departed substantially from both the Patristic tradition and from Thomas Aquinas himself.[58] If these theologians were anxious to distance themselves from the "nouvelle théologie" label, it was because this term was in fact invented by their critics as a term of abuse. It was first used in 1942 by Pietro

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[58] See esp. the "Examen de conscience théologique" de Lubac wrote for his superiors on 6 March 1947, in the Centre d'Archives et d'Études Cardinal Henri de Lubac [Henceforth, CAEHL], Namur, Belgium, 56353-6. In it, he claimed that the Pope's reference to a "new theology" in his speech to the General Congregation of the Jesuit Order was the first time he had heard this term. See also Henri de Lubac to René d'Ouince, 13 December 1947, CAEHL, 74121: "we are dealing with...a recent system, a modern Scholasticism which is not even (and is very far from being) that of the great theologians of the past." See also Étienne Fouilloux, "Dialogue théologique (1946-1948)?" in *Saint Thomas au XXe siècle,* ed. by Serge-Thomas Bonino (Paris: Éditions Saint-Paul, 1994), 183 (on Congar); 194 (on de Lubac).

Parente, future Secretary of the Holy Office, to condemn works by two Dominicans—Chenu and Charlier—that had just been placed on the Index of Forbidden Books.[59] It was then redeployed in the postwar period against the Jesuit circle around Henri de Lubac, first by Pius XII in a 1946 address to the General Congregation of the Jesuit Order, and then in a forceful condemnation penned by the archconservative Dominican Fr. Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange.[60]

In the years since the Second Vatican Council, however, "nouvelle théologie" has lost this polemical charge and has become the standard term of reference that theologians and Church historians use to designate a group of figures including, but not limited to, de Lubac, Daniélou, Bouillard, Congar, Chenu, and Féret. It is, unfortunately, difficult to do without the term. *Ressourcement* does not capture the depth of the engagement with modern life and thought that is, I believe, absolutely central to this theological project. The "nouvelle théologie" does at least capture this impetus for renewal, as well as the innovation this movement effect by moving Catholic theology beyond the grip of Neo-Scholasticism. This is why I rely upon this term in the dissertation, even though I place it in inverted commas in order to indicate its contested status, and even though, as I have explain, I use the term to refer to a somewhat different group of figures than it usually designates.

The case of the theological tendencies opposed by the "nouvelle théologie" is rather more difficult. In today's parlance, "Neo-Thomism" usually designates a commitment to the work of Thomas Aquinas in particular, whereas "Neo-Scholasticism" also draws upon the early-modern commentaries on Aquinas and Scholasticism. De Lubac's circle was primarily opposed to the second of these tendencies, although they used a variety of terms to refer to it, including "Thomism," "Neo-

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[59] Pietro Parente, "Nuove tendenze teologiche," *L'Osservatore romano* (9-10 February 1942), 1.

[60] Pius' speech was published as "Il venerato Discorso del Sommo Pontifice alla XXIX Congregazione Generale della Compagnia di Gesù," in *L'Osservatore Romano* (19 September 1946), 1; Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, "La nouvelle théologie où-va-t-elle?" *Angelicum* 23 (1946), 126-45. The article, although dated 1946, only appeared in February 1947.

Thomism," and "Scholasticism." The fact that their critique also occasionally embraced the first of these tendencies adds a further layer of complication. I have therefore used "Neo-Scholasticism" in the more specific way outlined above, and "Thomism" as a broader umbrella term that encompasses both approaches.

I. Separation (1901-1939)

At the dawn of the twentieth century, the Catholic Church was locked in a global struggle against the intellectual and institutional foundations of modern life. From Latin America to Europe, the rise of nationalism and liberalism conspired to vitiate the temporal powers of the Church. Nowhere was this conflict more acute than in France, the traditional heartland of Catholic Europe, where "two Frances" were locked in a bitter conflict. Here, a century-long battle between the heirs of the French Revolution and the forces of royalism and Catholicism reached its peak when the Republican government launched a campaign to systematically dismantle the legal privileges of the Catholic Church, culminating in the separation of Church and state in 1905. This might seem like an unlikely setting for a major theological revival, but as Chapter 1 demonstrates, the turn-of-the-century anticlerical campaign in fact provided both the intellectual and institutional stimulus for a movement of theological renewal that would come to dominate the twentieth-century Church and inspire many of the transformations wrought by the Second Vatican Council.

Even more unlikely was the institution at the epicenter of this theological renewal: a small Jesuit seminary on the island of Jersey in the English Channel. This institution was a by-product of the Republic's campaign against Catholic religious orders, which drove tens of thousands of monks and nuns into exile and led to the foundation of new clerical houses of formation abroad. It was here, on the island of Jersey, that Henri de Lubac, Gaston Fessard, Yves de Montcheuil, and many of the other leading lights of twentieth-century Catholic theology received their religious formation in the 1920s. Marked by their experiences in the First World War, this generation of Jesuits was convinced of the need to develop new theological tools to bridge the abyss that had isolated the Church from the modern world and the needs of the masses. And yet, they found few resources for this project in the Neo-Scholastic theology they were taught at Jersey. This theological model achieved a virtual monopoly over Catholic orthodoxy from the nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century, and in France, was closely aligned with the royalist, anti-democratic politics of the Action Française. And yet, de Lubac and his fellow seminarians also perceived an unconscious alliance between Neo-Scholasticism and Republican anti-clericalism, for both were equally invested in the opposition between the Church and the modern world. Chapter 1 narrates the early efforts of de Lubac and his friends to build a theological alternative to Neo-Scholasticism capable of healing the breach between Catholicism and the demands of modern life.

And yet, as long as Catholic politics remained bound to the project of restoring the monarchy and the confessional state, the battle between the "two Frances" would continue. This stalemate was abruptly broken in 1926, when the Vatican condemned Charles Maurras and the Action Française. Chapter 2 traces the radical reorientation in Catholic political theology inaugurated by this condemnation. By breaking the monopoly of royalism in the political order and Neo-Scholasticism in the theological order, the condemnation opened the way for new political and theological alternatives no longer beholden to the goal of restoring the confessional state. The result was a new model of lay activism, known as "Catholic Action," that eschewed any compromise between the Church and political parties, accepting that party politics would henceforth take place in a secular key. This new approach to Catholic engagement in the temporal order drew theological sustenance from the ecclesiological models being developed by the "new theologians" like Henri de Lubac. Figuring the Church as the mystical body of Christ, these theologians argued that the Church was the only collective body capable of overcoming the excesses of both liberal individualism and totalitarian collectivism. In the process, they helped to redirect Catholic political theology away from its exclusive concern with the threat of liberal democracy, to an engagement with the challenge of totalitarianism. And yet, this should by no means imply that the advent of new threats in the form of fascism and communism necessarily reconciled Catholics to the virtues of liberalism. This is not a story, in other words, of a Church progressively making its peace with liberal democracy. Instead, de

Lubac and the “new theologians” fashioned a theological alternative to *both* totalitarianism and liberalism. Nor did this vision imply a retreat from the most pressing political questions of the day. Instead, Chapter 2 approaches this theological vision as a form of “counter-politics”—a way of accessing questions traditionally classified as “political” while engaging in a critique of politics itself. As we shall see in Part Two, this “counter-political” theology would eventually inspire de Lubac’s circle to take up the “spiritual resistance” to Nazism when the German army occupied France in 1940.

Chapter 1. Catholicism in the State of Exception: Anticlericalism, Exile, and the Birth of a "New Theology"

At 6:00 A.M. on the morning of June 30th, 1880, immediately following morning Mass, local gendarmes arrived at the Jesuit scholasticate of Laval to dissolve the institution and escort its 155 students and teachers off the premises. Splintering into small groups, they took shelter for several months in the homes of local laypeople, eventually making their way in groups of ten or fifteen to Saint-Malo, where they disguised themselves as Anglican clergymen and set sail for the English-Channel island of Jersey. In preparation for these events, their superiors had acquired the Jersey Imperial Hotel a month earlier, although the property was officially placed under the ownership of the British Jesuits because of a legal prohibition against foreign ownership of property on the island. Before making the purchase, however, the order sought permission from the Bishop of Southwark, under whose spiritual jurisdiction these islands fell. The Bishop initially refused, fearing that the presence of a Jesuit community would inflame the already strong anti-papist feeling on the island, but he eventually relented after a local Catholic curate intervened on behalf of the French Jesuits. And so, the Imperial Hotel was placed under the patronage of the Sacred Heart and renamed the Maison Saint-Louis. It would henceforth take in all Jesuit novices from the order's two northern French Provinces (Paris and Champagne) who, having completed their training at a novitiate and then a juniorate, were required to undertake three years of philosophical study and four years of theology at a scholasticate before becoming priests.[1]

The reason for this abrupt relocation was the proclamation of the first "Ferry decrees," which inaugurated the anticlerical legal campaign under France's Third Republic, culminating in the separation of Church and state in 1905. As a prelude to his legislative campaign to curtail the role of religious orders in the French education system, Jules Ferry's first decree unilaterally dissolved the Jesuit order. The 1901 Law on Associations would massively intensify this campaign against the religious orders—even as it expanded the freedom to associate for non-religious organizations—driving roughly 30,000 religious clergy into exile and resulting in the secularization of many more. Those who left established schools just beyond the borders of France, in Belgium, Spain, the Channel Islands, England, Italy, and Switzerland, while others joined the ranks of missionaries across the French Empire. Many religious orders would return to France after 1914, when the wartime *union sacrée* between Church and Republic brought a temporary halt to the implementation of anticlerical legislation. Others, however, like the Jesuit scholasticate on the island of Jersey, would remain in exile until 1940, when the German army invaded the island and the Vichy government finally repealed the most restrictive clauses of the 1901 law.

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[1] The above account is drawn from Jean Liouville, "Jersey," in *Les Établissements des Jésuites en France depuis quatre siècles*, vol. 2, ed. by Pierre Delattre (Wetteren, Belgium: Imprimerie De Meester Frères, 1953), 840-42. For an account of the confrontation between police and Jesuits on the same morning at the Paris residence on the rue de Sèvres, see Joseph Burnichon, *La Compagnie de Jésus en France: Histoire d'un siècle, 1814-1914*, vol. 4 (Paris: Beauchesne, 1922), 658-67.

But there is an irony to the anticlerical legislation of the Third Republic. The Jersey scholasticate-in-exile these laws helped to create would become the cradle for one of the most important movements of renewal in twentieth-century Catholic theology—what is often referred to as the "Nouvelle Théologie." Emerging in France during the 1930s and 1940s, it incurred Vatican censure in 1950 but would come to play a vital role in the theological reorientation wrought by the Second Vatican Council. Henri de Lubac, who was widely perceived as the face of this movement, trained at the Jesuit scholasticate on Jersey in the early 1920s, where he developed a close friendship and intellectual alliance with other future stars of French Catholic thought—including Gaston Fessard, Yves de Montcheuil, Robert Hamel, and René d'Ouince. It is to the friendships and shared experiences of this group during their time at Jersey—most forthrightly conveyed in their voluminous correspondence—that we must look to understand the intellectual origins of the

Nouvelle Théologie. In other words, I argue, the anticlerical campaign in France may have directly contributed to the vibrancy of French theology in the 1930s and 40s.

Indeed, it was precisely the experience of isolation and exile on the island of Jersey that inspired this group of young Jesuits to elaborate a theological vision capable of overcoming the growing gulf between the Church and French society. In doing so, de Lubac and his friends found themselves at loggerheads with both Republican and Church authorities. While the leaders of the Republic sought to expand the sovereignty of the state by asserting its jurisdiction over matters traditionally under the purview of the Church, the Vatican was in the process of expanding and centralizing its sovereignty over spiritual affairs throughout the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century. These processes were not necessarily at odds. In fact, the Neo-Scholastic model that became the official teaching of the Church in this period mirrored in rather striking ways the logic of secular Republicanism, even though it was developed precisely to counteract the forces of secularization. Despite their manifestly contradictory aims, Republicans and Neo-Scholastic churchmen could nevertheless agree upon the need for a strong separation between the temporal and spiritual orders, based upon a jurisdictional model of sovereignty, as well as the privileged role of reason in human affairs. These surprising parallels between the secular ideology of the French state and the neo-medieval theology of the Church were not lost on de Lubac's group. Accusing their superiors of articulating a "separated theology" that unwittingly colluded with the forces responsible for separating Church and state in France, this group of Jesuits began to develop a controversial new theology devoted to the reintegration of the natural and supernatural orders, faith and reason, the Church and the modern world.

This chapter places this Nouvelle Théologie in historical context by examining the political and theological crucible out of which it emerged. It begins by exploring the history of the Third Republic's anticlerical campaign and the regime of exception it imposed upon France's religious orders. The chapter then proceeds to examine the circumstances of exile resulting from this regime and explains how and why it served as a catalyst for theological renewal. From there, I move into a discussion of theological developments within the Church that emerged alongside and in response to anticlerical campaigns such as the one enacted by the Third Republic. The conflict between Neo-Scholasticism and Catholic Modernism set the terms for Catholic thought in this period. But far from a conflict between the forces of modernism and antimodernist reaction, as it has conventionally been understood, I approach this as a quarrel over the very meaning of "modernity" itself and how best to respond to it. Ultimately, the Neo-Scholastic approach would win out, affirming a strong separation between the natural and supernatural orders, as well as between the Church and the modern democratic polity, as the best means to protect the sanctity of the spiritual sphere from the forces of secularization. This theological conflict was far from a distant debate for Henri de Lubac and his friends during their years at the Jersey scholasticate. Here the Neo-Scholasticism of Pedro Descoqs and Gabriel Picard reigned uncontested, and de Lubac's circle would come to elaborate its distinctive theological vision largely in opposition to the worldview of their teachers. I discuss their intellectual formation at length in the fourth section of this chapter, before concluding with a methodological reflection on the significance of friendship and affective bonds for intellectual innovation.

La Guerre des Deux France

Born in the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian war and the Paris Commune, the new Republic was initially dominated by a conservative government of "Moral Order." By the end of the decade, however, Republicans had gained a majority in the two houses and were in a position to implement their project of *laïcité* (secularism). That this word continues to be used in its untranslated form is a testament to the very specific role the discourse of secularism has played in the history of

French republicanism. From Voltaire's "*écrasez l'infâme*" to the Revolution's Civil Constitution of the Clergy, anticlericalism has a long history in France and became associated with the republican form almost from its inception. But over the course of the nineteenth century, republican "free thinkers" had begun to articulate a more positive alternative civil religion of their own, grounded in a Positivist faith in science, uninterrupted historical progress, and a Comtean "religion of humanity."[2] The Church was perceived as the greatest enemy to these values, not only because of its association with the monarchist cause, but also because it promoted a blind submission to external authority and a devaluation of human nature through the doctrine of Original Sin. Such fears were borne out by statements such as Pius IX's infamous *Syllabus of Errors* (1864), a wide-ranging condemnation of most characteristically "modern" political and intellectual positions, from liberalism and democracy, to rationalism, naturalism, and socialism.

In order to combat the influence of such teachings, Jules Ferry, who became Minister of Public Instruction in 1879, targeted the school system as the privileged site for an ideological battle against the Catholic Church. The Church indeed relied heavily upon its network of schools, staffed primarily by monks and nuns, to reproduce its social power and the ranks of the faithful. Any move to secularize the French school system would therefore bring the government into direct confrontation with the religious orders ("*congrégations*"), denounced by the Republican minister Gambetta as a "multicolored militia without a homeland."[3] In contrast to the secular clergy, the implication was that these religious orders were somehow less French and more beholden to Rome—the irruption of a foreign power at the heart of the *patrie*.

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[2] For a more detailed recent account of this ideology, see Jacqueline Lalouette, *La République anticléricale: XIXe – XXe siècles* (Paris: Seuil, 2002).

[3] Quoted in John McManners, *Church and State in France, 1870-1914* (London, SPCK, 1972), 45.

The Society of Jesus was of course particularly vulnerable to such accusations because they dovetailed with a long history of conspiracy theories about the scourge of "Jesuitism," as well as the eighteenth-century conflict between Gallican Jansenism and the Ultramontane Jesuits, who supported the centralization of ecclesiastical authority in Rome. Indeed, the Jesuits were explicitly marked out as the primary target of Ferry's laws. When the Minister's first legislative attempt to curtail the power of the religious orders was blocked in the Senate, he issued two decrees on March 29th, 1880. One exclusively targeted the Society of Jesus for dissolution; the other gave non-authorized orders three months to request authorization from the state or face the same fate. The rationale for singling out the Jesuits was no doubt the prestige enjoyed by the Jesuit network of colleges. These furnished the order with immense social power because they recruited primarily from the upper echelons of French society and served as the main feeder schools for the nation's top military academies. As a result of the 1880 decrees, the order's 29 colleges were placed under the direction of laypeople and secular priests, or were dissolved. Eight colleges were founded in exile—mostly in Belgium—which produced a number of illustrious students, including both Charles de Gaulle and Georges Bidault. A Jesuit college was also established on the island of Jersey, where a young Yves de Montcheuil enrolled in 1914, his staunchly royalist father refusing to deliver his children into the grips of the secular republican school system.[4]

Scenes such as the one at the Laval scholasticate on the morning of June 30th were reproduced across France following the decrees, as roughly 6500 religious were evicted from their houses, often having to be escorted out by force in the company of distinguished members of the local laity in solidarity with their plight.[5] Many, either unable or unwilling to leave, remained in France and either joined the ranks of the secular clergy or simply continued to pursue their religious vocation illegally but in a more covert manner. Numerous legal loopholes were improvised to permit the *congrégations* to retain control over their schools and property, often by placing these under the nominal direction of devout laypeople, even as the orders remained their de facto administrators.[6] Meanwhile, Ferry pressed ahead with his project to reform the French school system, managing to pass major educational reform in 1882. Suspending the 1850 Falloux law, which had allowed for an alternative Catholic primary school system alongside the state-run system, the Ferry laws made French primary schooling free, *laïc*, and mandatory. Although framed in liberal terms, as a victory against the forces of reaction and their repressive pedagogical techniques, Catholic critics of the law were quick to point its manifestly illiberal aspect, infringing as it did on the family's right to choose how they wished their children to be educated.[7] In contrast, republicans framed the educational forms as liberating children from an authoritarian religious pedagogy—and here the Jesuit schools were explicitly fingered—which stifled the personality, privileging order over creativity and sacrificing individuality to the higher glory of the collectivity. But the new state curriculum designed to interpellate autonomous, liberal subjects inevitably ran up against the necessarily coercive nature of any project to form subjects, as well as the limits on individualism imposed by one's duty to the community and to republican values.[8] The war of *les deux Frances* was thus far more than an unequivocal battle between the forces of liberalism and reaction. Some Catholics turned the Republic's liberal discourse of rights and freedoms back against it, even as elements within the Church borrowed from the arsenal of anticlericalism to elaborate an internal critique of the Church's pedagogical methods and its response to modernity more broadly, as we shall see later on in this chapter.

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[4] Étienne Fouilloux, *Yves de Montcheuil: Philosophe et théologien (1940-1944)* (Paris: Médiasèvres, 1995), 9-10.

[5] Christian Sorrel, *La République contre les congrégations: histoire d'une passion française (1899-1914)* (Paris: Cerf, 2003), 44-5.

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[6] Dominique Avon and Philippe Rocher, *Les Jésuites et la société française, XIXe – XXe siècles* (Toulouse: Privat, 2001), 83. For a more detailed account of the plight of those religious who remained in France illegally, see Sorrel, *La République contre les congrégations,* 147-181.

[7] Judith Surkis, *Sexing the Citizen: Morality and Masculinity in France, 1870-1920* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), 24.

[8] Ibid., 21.

The anticlerical campaign inaugurated by the 1880 decrees and the Ferry education laws was still in its infancy, at this stage. Over the course of the decade, successive republican governments would expand these gains, further consolidating the secularization of the school system and extending it to the hospital system—another institution that drew heavily on religious orders for its staff—as well as removing chaplains from the military, depriving Catholic post-secondary institutions of the title of "University," restoring divorce to the civil code, and imposing a heavy tax burden on the *congrégations* remaining in France. But by the end of the decade, conservatives had made substantial electoral gains and many exiled religious judged the moment opportune to return to France and discreetly resume their work. Publication of the primary Jesuit journal *Études* resumed in 1888 and a number of the order's schools returned from exile, including the Province of Lyon's theologate, which came home from Wales to Fourvière in 1887. With the specter of Boulangisme threatening the very existence of the Republic, the government was forced to tone down its anticlerical rhetoric in an effort to court the Catholic vote. Pope Leo XIII seized upon this favorable conjuncture to undertake a policy of conciliation, appealing to French Catholics to rally behind the Republican form, if not its anticlerical legislative agenda, in his 1892 encyclical *Au milieu des sollicitudes*. Quoting St. Paul, he reminded Catholics of their duty to obey the established political regime:

> Hence it is that the Church, the guardian of the truest and highest idea of political sovereignty, since she has derived it from God, has always condemned men who rebelled against legitimate authority and disapproved their doctrines. And that too at the very time when the custodians of power used it against her...[9]

The Pope also deployed what is known as the "thesis-hypothesis" distinction in Catholic teaching on Church-state relations, where the "thesis" or ideal situation is the legal establishment of Catholicism and intolerance of other religions, and the "hypothesis" refers to a less ideal arrangement that is nevertheless deemed acceptable to the Church because the thesis is either impracticable or endangers public life. Such a pragmatic principle of exception, Leo argued, rendered "worthy of toleration a situation [the Republic] which, practically, might be worse."[10] The thesis-hypothesis distinction would have crucial repercussions for the subsequent history of Church-state relations in France, and would become deeply contentious during the debate on religious freedom at the Second Vatican Council.[11]

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[9] Leo XIII, *Au milieu des sollicitudes*, 16 February, 1892: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/leo_xiii/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_16021892_au-milieu-des-sollicitudes_fr.html, §16.

Despite the manifestly illiberal theological model underpinning it, Leo XIII's *Ralliement* breathed new life into a French Christian-democratic movement still in its infancy. It dovetailed with a portion of the burgeoning Social Catholic movement led by Albert de Mun and inspired by the Pope's groundbreaking social encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, issued the year before.[12] This movement will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter. But Leo XIII's encyclical also inspired an explicitly Catholic social-democratic movement known as the *Sillon* and led by Marc Sagnier, although it would be condemned in 1910 by Leo's successor, in the wake of the Modernist crisis. This "first wave" of Catholic democracy in France would prove abortive for other reasons, however. Not only were the vast majority of French Catholics far too deeply entrenched in their royalism and hostility to the Republic to countenance the Pope's call for a *Ralliement*, but almost immediately after he issued it the nation found itself embroiled in the Dreyfus Affair, which drove the "two Frances" further apart than ever before. The forces of Catholicism, anti-Semitism, and Royalism, backing the army, were now arrayed in a bitter struggle against Captain Dreyfus' primarily secular, republican defenders.

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[10] Ibid., §28.

[11] The most important critique of this model elaborated during the Council was voiced by the American Jesuit John Courtney Murray, whose work on the subject contains a lengthy re-evaluation of the legacy of Leo XIII: John Courtney Murray, *Religious Liberty: Catholic Struggles with Pluralism*, ed. by J. Leon Hooper (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1993).

[12] Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum*, 15 May, 1891: <http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/leo_xiii/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_15051891_rerum-novarum_en.html>.

Given the close connection between the Jesuit colleges and the upper echelons of the military, not to mention the central part the Assumptionist newspaper *La Croix* played in the anti-Dreyfusard campaign, it is not surprising that in the aftermath of the affair, the republican government of Waldeck-Rousseau turned its sights in earnest to limiting the power of France's religious orders. In 1901, it seized the opportunity provided by a broader law on civil associations to insert a specific clause concerning the *congrégations*, forcing them to apply for authorization from the state within three months or face dissolution and the liquidation of their property.[13] It further submitted the orders to a regime of state surveillance by requiring them to maintain a current and exhaustive inventory of their property, as well as detailed information about their members, which the local prefect could request at any moment. The law also took steps to limit the orders' ability to circumvent it by relying on a third-party intermediary from the laity. What is particularly significant about the Law on Associations, however, is that it was framed explicitly as a liberalizing move designed to expand the freedom of association in France, as it removed the requirement for all non-religious associations to seek authorization from the state. For Waldeck-Rousseau, responding to his critics, the exceptional status of the *congrégations* was in fact constitutive of the freedom of association itself:

> The association does not appear to me to be a concession from the political order; it seems to me to be the natural, primordial, free exercise of human activity...You have asked yourselves what could be obtained in terms of a maximum of immunity for the religious orders, and, out of this maximum of immunity for the religious orders, you have made a minimum of liberty for all associations.[14]

In other words, the freedom of association was inversely proportional to the freedom of religious associations, and this was not simply true at the more abstract level of republican discourse. As Jean-

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[13] Articles 13-18 delineated the particular regime to be applied to religious orders. The text of these articles is reproduced in Sorrel, *La République contre les congrégations*, 234-7.

[14] Speech delivered to the Senate on 6 March, 1883, quoted in Jean-Pierre Machelon, "La Liberté d'association sous la IIIe République: le temps du refus (1871-1901)," *Associations et champ politique: La loi de 1901 à l'épreuve du siècle*, ed. by Claire Andrieu, Gilles Le Béguec, and Danielle Tartakowsky (Paris: Sorbonne, 2001), 147.

Pierre Machelon has shown, successive republican governments had been trying for years to liberalize associational life in France, but the project had been stymied by the prospect of having to extend the same liberties to the religious orders.[15] The establishment of a regime of exception for religious orders thus served as the crucial precondition for the legal consecration of the freedom of association. As one deputy put it during the parliamentary debate over law, "the *congrégations* must die in order for the Republic to live."[16]

And yet, the 1901 law did not in itself seal the fate of the religious orders; it simply left their existence at the discretion of the state to decide on a case-by-case basis. But the following year's elections brought a much more leftwing government to power under Émile Combes, who would radicalize the anticlerical initiatives of his predecessors and take them to their logical conclusion. Many orders, including the Jesuits, refused out of principle to submit to a law that would deny their legal and spiritual autonomy, placing them under the sovereignty of the state and thus violating "the rights of the Holy Father, of the Church and of the Catholic conscience."[17] Those Jesuit schools that had quietly returned to France in the 1880s and 1890s were thus evacuated for a second time. The Lyon theologate abandoned Fourvière once again to take refuge at the Province of Paris' novitiate in Canterbury, eventually purchasing its own establishment at Ore Place, near Hastings, when the Canterbury house became overcrowded.[18] A young Teilhard de Chardin was among the novices displaced from Laval to Jersey in the aftermath of the law. He later recalled that the fathers had to disguise themselves in lay clothing provided by local well-wishers, but being ignorant of the fashions of the time, emerged dressed in an incongruous combination of sports coats and top hats.[19] Other orders instead opted for submission and began the onerous process for applying for state authorization.

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[15] Ibid., 142-3.

[16] Quoted in Nicolas Lucas, "L'Adoption de la loi 1901: le débat parlementaire," in Andrieu, Le Béguec, and Tartakowsky, *Associations et champ politique,* 176.

[17] Joint statement issued by the four provincials of the Society of Jesus on 26 July, 1901, quoted in Sorrel, *La République contre les congrégations*, 98.

[18] Louis Rosette, "Hastings," in Delattre, *Les Établissements des Jésuites en France,* 800-801.

The following year, in what many perceived as a misapplication of the 1901 law, the Combes ministry courted controversy by shutting down roughly 3000 unauthorized schools opened by authorized religious orders before 1901, provoking violent reactions across the countryside. In 1903, having rejected all but five of the orders' applications for authorization, the government initiated the process of systematically dismantling them, often having to evict them by force from barricaded houses of worship vigorously defended by the local laity. The most spectacular scenes occurred at the historic Grande Chartreuse monastery, where 5000 soldiers clashed with locals.[20] But the Combes administration did not stop here. The following year, it managed to pass major legislation that greatly extended the scope of the Law on Associations, proclaiming that "teaching of any order and any nature is forbidden in France to the *congrégations*" and imposing a ten-year timeline for the complete dissolution of all religious orders connected with the teaching profession.[21] Monks and nuns found in violation of this injunction would face possible prison sentences or fines. By this time, relations between the government and the Holy See had of course soured considerably, not least because Leo XIII had died in 1903 and his successor, Pius X, was far less open to dialogue with the Republic. In 1904, the French government broke off diplomatic relations with Vatican, severely threatening the Concordat that had governed relations between Church and state since the Napoleonic Era. It would be officially nullified the following year with the passage of the landmark Law of Separation, which legally separated Church and state in France. Vehemently attacked by Pius

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[19] McManners, *Church and State in France*, 132.

[20] Sorrel, *La République contre les congrégations*, 128.

[21] The text of this law is reproduced in ibid., 238-40.

X in his 1906 encyclical *Vehementer Nos*, the law put an end to the state subsidization of Church activities and any other privileges that would interfere with the state's religious neutrality. It consecrated the efforts of the previous Republican governments to delineate the specificity of the religious sphere by progressively decoupling it from the institutions of French social, educational, and cultural life with which it had long intermingled.

While the law of 1905 in many ways simply removed the privileged status accorded to the Catholic Church in relation to other religious groups in France, the regime inaugurated by the Third Republic's anticlerical legislation was far from neutral, and was in fact built upon a number of exceptions of its own. The constitutive status of the congregational exception in the 1901 Law on Associations is a classic example of this, but Republican legislators also saw fit to establish certain exceptions to the anticlerical legislation itself, particularly if the campaign against the Catholic Church clashed in some way with the state's diplomatic or pecuniary interests. As J.P. Daughton has shown, the campaign against the religious orders was specifically not applied in the nation's colonies, where missionaries and religious schools played a central role in spreading French values and supplying a cheap labour force for the imperial project.[22] "'Anticlericalism is not an item for export,'" Gambetta announced, even as critics on both sides of the religious question pointed out the manifest contradictions of such a policy.[23] The 1904 law against religious instruction in fact made an explicit exception for novitiates that trained religious clergy for the purposes of teaching in France's overseas schools. In addition to this colonial exception, the regions of Alsace and Moselle were exempted from the Laws on Association and Separation when they returned to French jurisdiction following the First World War, and they remain so to this day. In his work on the 2004 headscarf ban, Talal Asad argues that exceptions such as these constitute the enactment of state sovereignty, manifesting the state's power both to define the scope and nature of religion and to make exceptions to its own laws.[24] Such an argument draws upon Carl Schmitt's now famous political-theological claim that the "sovereign is he who decides on the exception."[25] This model certainly seems to fit the regional and colonial exceptions cited above, where state interests trumped a full application of the anticlerical laws, but what of a case like the 1901 Law on Associations? In many ways, it bears out the Schmittian critique of liberalism, for it reveals the constitutive illiberalism at its core—the way the achievement of the right to association was premised upon a denial of this selfsame right to the religious orders. But here it is not the godlike sovereign who steps in to abrogate the law; the exception is established in and by the very same law it violates, and indeed makes this law possible.

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[22] J.P. Daughton, *An Empire Divided: Religion, Republicanism, and the Making of French Colonialism 1880-1914* (Oxford: OUP, 2006); see also the discussion in Sorrel, *La République contre les congrégations*, 205-10.

[23] Daughton, *An Empire Divided*, 14; Sorrel, *La République contre les congrégations*, 205-6.

There are still further reasons to interpret the campaign against the religious orders as an exercise in the sovereign power of the nation-state. The Law on Associations also included articles limiting the scope of international organizations operating in France, and much of the distinction between the respective Republican attitudes towards secular and religious clergy is explained by the latter's status as international organizations "without a homeland," outside the disciplinary purview of the state. By making membership in such organizations incompatible with citizenship—Waldeck-Rousseau declared the religious vows of the *congrégations* to be "'illicit because contrary to public order'"—the Republic established its absolute sovereignty over the definition and allocation of French citizenship.[26] But in doing so, it also undercut the state's authority over these religious orders by driving them outside its borders, leading a number of Republican deputies to call for a more lenient approach so that the state might "'reserve for itself, over these *congrégations*, means of action and control which will escape us completely if they no longer have houses in France.'"[27] Seen in this light, the regime of exception applied to religious orders signaled less an affirmation than a breakdown of state sovereignty.

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[24] Talal Asad, "Trying to Understand French Secularism," in *Political Theologies: Public Religions in a Post-Secular World*, ed. by Hent de Vries and Lawrence Sullivan (New York: Fordham University Press, 2006), 494-526.

[25] Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*, trans. by George Schwab (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 5.

[26] "Proposition Waldeck-Rousseau, Martin-Feuillée et Margue relative au contrat d'association," (11 February, 1882), § 3, cited in Machelon, "La liberté d'association sous la IIIe République," 49.

This would become even clearer after the First World War, when hundreds of religious clergy were recalled from exile to serve in the military, the ecclesiastical exemption from military service having been annulled in 1889. In the interests of national unity and the war effort, Republicans were forced to suspend the implementation of anticlerical legislation. To this end, minister Malvy issued a "dépêche" to all local prefects, calling on them to "'suspend execution [of] dissolution or closure decrees and refusals of authorization taken in application of the 1901 law, as well as closures undertaken in execution of 1904 law, and all measures generally taken in execution of said laws.'"[28] Instead, the government now called for a *union sacrée* ("sacred union") between Church and state in the interests of national unity, further fueling the already powerful revival of religious feeling that gripped wartime France.[29] In the aftermath of the war and in recognition of the many religious who had died in the service of their country, most orders were allowed to quietly resume their activities in France without disruption. Indeed, they explicitly made use of their war record to hold off any further attempts to restrict their activities, as the government of the Cartel des Gauches threatened to do in 1924. In response, Paul Doncoeur—editor of *Études* at the time—had this to say:

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[27] Delcassé, quoted in Sorrel, *La République contre les congrégations*, 207.

[28] Quoted in Avon and Rocher, *Les Jésuites et société française,* 110-11.

[29] See Annette Becker, *War and Faith: The Religious Imagination of France, 1914-1930,* trans. by Helen McPhail (New York: Berg, 1998).

> No we will not leave. Not a man, not an elderly person, not a novice, not a woman will go back across the border—this, never!...We were not afraid of the bullets, nor of the gas, nor of the bravest soldiers of the Guard; we will not now fear the snipers of politics...We will all stay. We swear this on the tombs of the dead![30]

This did not mean that the *congrégations'* civil status or even their de facto right to exist were legally recognized by the state. The anticlerical laws of the fin de siècle remained on the books, but the state chose not to enforce them, in many cases because it did not have the power or public support to do so. The most excessive clauses of the 1901 and 1904 laws would not be repealed until the Vichy government came to power in 1940. Until then, the religious clergy remained in a legal limbo, at once falling under the laws of the Republic in their capacity as individual subjects, but outside the law insofar as they remained bound to a religious order. The exceptions surrounding religious orders, rather than affirming state sovereignty, show up its limits—the heterogeneities, silences, contradictions, and competing aims that characterize the legal authority upon which it is grounded. Rather than moving from a regime in which the Catholic Church represented the privileged exception to one of religious neutrality, the French state replaced one regime of exception with another and the clean separation it hoped to achieve between religion and the public sphere was never fully consecrated.

The Republic's Exiles

The anticlerical legislation of the Third Republic did not just fail to effect a clean break between Church and state. In what follows, I hope to show that it unintentionally provided an important stimulus for the extraordinary renaissance of Catholic theology in France during the 1930s and 1940s, which would have a major effect on the subsequent history of both France and of the Catholic Church. The key to this link lies in the story of the religious schools that went into exile as result of the Republic's campaign against the religious orders, and one school in particular: the Jesuit scholasticate on the island of Jersey.

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[30] Open letter to Herriot (October 1924), cited in Sorrel, *La République contre les congrégations*, 215.

According to one estimate, roughly 30,000 religious went into exile in response to the Law on Associations of 1901.[31] Preferring destinations that were francophone, Catholic, and close to France, they flocked above all to Belgium, but also to Spain, the Channel Islands, England, and to a lesser extent, Italy and the canton of Fribourg in Switzerland. Roughly 2000 left for Canada, bound for the French-speaking and fervently Catholic province of Québec, where the local clergy were in need of additional spiritual labor.[32] The exodus of religious orders from France also spurred a marked upswing in missionary vocations, in part due to colonial exemptions from the anticlerical campaign being waged in the metropole, but also feeding missions beyond the bounds of the French empire, particularly in China and the Middle East. The exiles' choice of destination was to an important extent limited by the political climates of their host countries, and especially the virulence and scope of local anticlerical sentiment. This problem, for instance, forced the Belgian episcopacy to impose limits on the flow of religious refugees across their border in 1903. Interestingly, the offer of asylum for exiled religious orders was usually sought from and accorded by the local bishop rather than the temporal authorities, so that the specific character and concerns of each host diocese largely determined the destination and concentration of France's religious-in-exile.[33]

This was certainly the case with Jersey. After failed attempts in 1828 and 1842 to gain permission from the local Jersey government—known as the "States"—to establish a college on the island, the Jesuit provincial of Paris instead chose to appeal to the Bishop of Southwark for authorization when the Ferry decrees forced him to seek out a new home for the province's scholasticate. The question of Jersey's legal status and sovereignty is itself an interesting one. As a self-governing Crown Dependency, the island does not fall under the jurisdiction of the British government (it is a member of neither the U.K. nor the E.U.). Its independent legal system derives from a combination of Norman customary law, English common law, and French civil law, and the primary language spoken on the island at the time of the Jesuits' arrival was Norman French. This liminal status—in particular, the island's close linguistic and physical proximity to France, in conjunction with its independent legal system—made Jersey an ideal destination for France's exiled Jesuits.

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[31] Sorrel, *La République contre les congrégations*, 183.

[32] Patrick Cabanel, "Le grand exil des congrégations enseignantes au début du XXe siècle: l'exemple des jésuites," *Revue d'histoire de l'Église de France* 81 (January-June 1995), 207-8.

[33] Ibid., 189. The details provided in the above paragraph are drawn primarily from Sorrel, *La République contre les congrégations*, 183-223.

But their stay was nevertheless troubled by scuffles with the local government, inspired by a combination of anti-Catholic and anti-French sentiment. There were several incidents of vandalism and harassment at the Maison Saint-Louis, including one involving a local farmer who attacked a group of scholastics out for an afternoon stroll, striking them in the face with his horsewhip.[34] In the mid-1880s, the Jersey States debated a bill to expel the Jesuits from the island, but it was defeated by three votes, on the grounds that it would constitute a violation of personal liberty and religious freedom. The legal campaign against the Jesuits was led by a local Anglican clergyman who justified it on political rather than religious grounds, denouncing the Jesuits as "'a political organization opposed to all constitutional government and social safety,'" who were conspiring to "'monopolize the youth and encourage anarchy.'"[35] Such animosity was relatively rare, however. The exiled Jesuits benefitted from the support of the Gladstone government, a majority of the local island notables, as well as the Queen's representative on Jersey, who chose to publicly manifest this support at the height of the legal campaign against the order, by touring the Maison Saint-Louis in 1883. Indeed, the King himself visited the scholasticate in 1921—an event the young Henri de Lubac enthusiastically recounted in a letter to his parents.[36] As time went on, local attitudes towards the Jesuits began to improve—in part because their presence was economically advantageous for the island—while the exiles did their part to show respect for their host country, taking an active part in the Queen's jubilee celebrations of 1887 and 1897. In 1900, however, anticipating a renewed anticlerical campaign in France, the Jersey States did push through legislation to prevent any further influx of religious communities from France, setting off a new wave of vandalism and anti-Jesuit sentiment on the island.[37]

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[34] Liouville, "Jersey," 843.

[35] "Jersey," *Letters and Notices* 85 (July 1885), 206; Liouville, 844. The internal journal of the British Society of Jesus, *Letters and Notices*, contains multiple references to the tensions between the French Jesuit community on Jersey and the local inhabitants. See, for instance, "Jersey—with the French Jesuits," *Letters and Notices* 84 (April 1884) and "A Breath of French Air," *Letters and Notices* 90 (November 1886). For a list of the references, see "Note on the French Jesuit Exiles in Britain," Archives of the Jesuits in Britain (London, United Kingdom), Ref 59.2.19.

Kicked out of their homeland, at odds with their new hosts, isolated on a tiny island off the coast of Normandy, how could the Maison Saint-Louis become the cradle for one of the most important movements of renewal in twentieth-century Catholic thought? I would argue that a constellation of factors surrounding the Jesuits' expulsion from France and the unorthodox circumstances of their presence on Jersey can help to explain how this unassuming Anglo-Norman island became such an intellectual hotspot. First, the enforced exile brought together Jesuits from different provinces and different nations who would otherwise not have studied together. Each of the order's four French provinces joined together with one other province to consolidate their houses of formation in exile. The Jersey scholasticate initially serviced both the provinces of Paris and Champagne, but in 1887, the Champagne contingent left for Enghien (Belgium) and was replaced by the philosophy students from the province of Lyon. This would have important consequences for the circle that formed at Jersey in the 1920s, as it included members of both the provinces of Lyon (de Lubac) and Paris (Montcheuil and Fessard), who would have pursued their studies at separate institutions if the order had remained in France. The exiled religious schools likewise boasted a much higher proportion of international students, serving to internationalize the order and expand the intellectual and linguistic horizons of the French students. In addition to this, from 1913 on Jersey boasted an extremely impressive library drawn from the collections of the closed Jesuit colleges in France, which attracted Jesuit scholars from across the world. This remarkable achievement was the work of Pedro Descoqs, who arrived to teach at the scholasticate in 1912 and, as we shall see, played a formative role in the experiences of de Lubac and his cohort at Jersey.

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[36] Henri de Lubac to his mother, 20 July, 1921, quoted in Chantraine, *Henri de Lubac. Tome II: les années de formation, 1919-1929* (Paris: Cerf, 2009), 153-4.

[37] Liouville, "Jersey," 850.

The isolation of the exiled communities also unexpectedly served as a major stimulus for intellectual production. In France, the Jesuit communities had accrued a number of pastoral commitments to the local population they served, such as youth ministries, which compelled both teachers and novices to divert time away from their studies. This was not the case for many of the exiled Jesuit schools, especially in the British Isles, where strict limits were often imposed on the exiles' evangelical and pastoral activities.[38] As a result, intellectual life took center stage and transformed institutions like the Maison Saint-Louis and Ore Place (Hastings) into premiere centers for French Jesuit intellectual production. Henri de Lubac fondly recalled the way this isolation imposed by exile produced a unique intellectual climate:

> What I believe I can say with greater truth is that anyone who did not live at Ore Place did not know in all its fullness the happiness of being a 'scholastic'. There we were really rather far from the world, away for a while from nearly all the responsibilities of the apostolate;

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[38] Rosette, "Hastings," 803; Jean-Claude Dhôtel makes the same point in his *Histoire des jésuites en France* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1991), 72.

> alone among ourselves, as if in a big ship sailing, without a radio, in the middle of the ocean. But what an intense life within that ship, and what a marvelous crossing![39]

Indeed, when the Provincial of Lyon considered returning the school from Ore Place to Fourvière in 1926, one of the principal disadvantages he saw to the move was the renewal of pastoral commitments it would entail, which would distract the scholastics from their studies. He issued a number of directives to the members of his province establishing strict limits on the time commitments such ministries could impose on the students, so as not to damage the intellectual prestige the school had acquired in exile.[40] The decision to return was not taken without regret. Aas one member of the community put it, "'we have never worked so well at the scholasticate as since we have been in England.'"[41]

While creating a favorable climate for intense study, the enforced isolation of exile cannot alone account for the extraordinary intellectual ferment at the Maison Saint-Louis in the 1920s. In this period, the intellectual and physical isolation of the scholasticate linked up with the wartime experiences of a new generation of Jesuits who came of age after the worst anticlerical excesses of the Third Republic. Born in the mid-to-late 1890s, this generation was quite literally in its infancy when the Law on Associations expelled the Jesuits from France for the second time in twenty years. Because of the recently-lifted ecclesiastical exemptions on military service, they were among the first generations of French priests and seminarians to see active military service when war broke out in 1914 and they were recalled from exile to serve as soldiers, chaplains, or nurses in the French army. Over the course of the war, a total of 9281 members of religious orders, 841 Jesuits, and 68 teachers and students from the Maison Saint-Louis were mobilized.[42] It is difficult to overstate the extent to which this experience marked the "curates with backpacks," as they were nicknamed. The leveling force of the trenches brought these young Jesuits into contact for the first time with a whole class of Frenchmen from whom their own socioeconomic background (the Society recruited heavily from the upper bourgeoisie and aristocracy) and the isolation imposed by their vocation had previously segregated them. They were astonished by the level of unbelief they observed among the lower orders of French society. It forced them to recognize the enormous gulf that had emerged between the Church and the masses, and the need for new apologetic and evangelical tools to bridge it.[43]

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[39] Quoted in Henri de Lubac, *At the Service of the Church: Henri de Lubac Reflects on the Circumstances that Occasioned His Writings*, trans. by Anne Elizabeth Englund (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1993), 15.

[40] Chantraine, *Henri de Lubac,* 616.

[41] Quoted in Rosette, "Hastings," 807.

This would be the guiding commitment for a whole generation of Jesuits, including Henri de Lubac, Gaston Fessard, Robert Hamel, and René d'Ouince—a dream that would run up against the isolation and intellectual sterility they encountered when they returned from the front to continue their training at the order's schools in exile. Hamel recognized that the experience of war set his generation radically apart from their teachers at Jersey and Ore Place, and in part accounted for their divergent intellectual commitments. "Instead of blaming them," he wrote to his friend Henri de Lubac, "let us do better. If the war hadn't come, with all the intellectual and social openings it created, would we be any more open-minded, and would we have understood the value of personal work and of recourse to the original texts...?"[44] Yves de Montcheuil was too young to fight in the war, but according to his friend René d'Ouince, the mandatory military service he performed from 1920 to 1922 "confronted him with the spiritual indigence of the Frenchmen of his generation."[45]

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[42] Sorrel, *La République contre les congrégations*, 211; Liouville, "Jersey," 851.

[43] See, for instance, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin's reflections on the spiritual significance of the wartime experience in his *Écrits du temps de la guerre (1916-1919)* (Paris: Grasset, 1992), esp. "La nostalgie du front."

[44] Robert Hamel to Henri de Lubac, 21 December, 1923, Centre d'Archives et d'Études Henri de Lubac [henceforth CAEHL], Namur (Belgium), 3794.

[45] René d'Ouince, "Les enfances religieuses du Père de Montcheuil," quoted in Fouilloux, *Yves de Montcheuil*, 11.

Despite "the urgent work to be undertaken" in order to rechristianize the masses, he found few resources for such work in the physical and intellectual isolation of the Jersey scholasticate. Here, students were "carefully locked away in a padded box so as not to be contaminated by the spirit of the times," to be "infused with the philosophy of another age and invited to thank God for possessing the absolute and definitive truth, while their contemporaries, brains sickened and stripped of good sense, lose themselves in chimeras."[46] The military experience of social engagement and integration brought into sharp relief for this generation of Jesuits the at once physical and intellectual isolation of their order. Moreover, the Republic and its anticlerical legislation were not exclusively to blame for this situation. As we shall see, these Jesuits-in-training increasingly came to view their order and their Church as in part responsible for its own isolation, by adhering exclusively to a pre-modern philosophical system that precluded any engagement with modern systems of thought or social concerns.

While the physical isolation of Jersey drove home for these young men the intellectual isolation of their religious formation, it also provided them with a certain degree of autonomy from the repressive regime of censorship and espionage imposed on the major clerical training institutions in the aftermath of the Modernist Crisis. This crisis will be discussed in further detail in the following section. It is no coincidence that the primary contributors to the postwar theological renewal in France had trained at exiled religious schools, and in particular, the Jesuit scholasticate of Jersey or the Dominican studium of Le Saulchoir. The latter went into exile at Kain (Belgium) in 1904, following the expulsions mandated by the Law on Associations, and would give birth to a new current of Neo-Thomism focused on the recovery of the "historical Thomas." Marie-Dominique Chenu, who presided over the institution's return to France in 1939, penned a famous manifesto for this new brand of Thomism that incurred the wrath of Rome and eventually forced its author's resignation. Placed on the Index in 1942, *Le Saulchoir, une école de théologie* was a testament to a rising generation of Dominican theologians who would play a signal role in the renewal wrought by Vatican II.[47]

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[46] *Three Jesuits Speak: Yves de Montcheuil, 1899-1944, Charles Nicolet, 1897-1961, Jean Zuppan 1899-1968*, trans. by K.D. Whitehead (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1987), 63; Yves de Montcheuil, "La philosophie, science de la destiné," reprinted in Fouilloux, *Yves de Montcheuil,* 47-65.

According to Étienne Fouilloux, this postwar renaissance in Catholic theology owes much to the context of exile and thus represents one of the greatest paradoxes of the Third Republic's anticlericalism. In an "unexpected taunt to the little father Combes," Fouilloux argues, "the exile to which he constrained the religious orders appears to have distinctly favored the growth of their intellectual influence within French Catholicism." Holed up in England or Spain, or even Canada, their schools and houses of study were "far-removed, materially and psychologically, from the eye of the storm...that shakes the great seminaries and Catholic Institutes with its full force during this period."[48] The storm in question is of course the Modernist Crisis, the defining crisis of the fin-de-siècle Church, and it will be discussed in the following section.

Modernity on Trial

While the French religious orders languished in physical exile, Joseph Komonchak has argued that, at an intellectual level, Catholic theology in this period was likewise "in a state of emigration or exile from the modern cultural world."[49] This self-enforced intellectual exile was the defensive reaction of a Church that felt beset on all sides by the forces of secular modernity. But it would be a mistake to view this official theology—known as Neo-Scholasticism—as a straightforward rejection of modernity, even though it sought to revive the pre-modern teachings of Thomas Aquinas and his commentators. Instead, I shall the conflict between Neo-Scholasticism and Catholic Modernism that dominated the fin-de-siècle Church was at base a conflict over the meaning of "modernity" and how best to respond to its challenges. Coinciding with the height of the anticlerical campaign in France, the Modernist Crisis represented a parallel development within the Church. As the Republic sought to expand its sovereignty over territorial France and excise its internal enemies, the Vatican deployed similar disciplinary strategies to expand its spiritual sovereignty by expelling the threat of Catholic Modernism—quite literally, through the power of excommunication—and affirming the monopoly of Neo-Scholasticism over Catholic orthodoxy. In doing so, the Church elaborated a metaphysics grounded in the primacy of reason and a strong separation between the natural and supernatural orders—a metaphysical vision that ultimately came very close to the logic of the secular Republic it was meant to combat.

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[47] See esp. the introductory materials in the most recent edition of this classic: Marie-Dominique Chenu, *Une école de théologie: le Saulchoir*, ed. by René Rémond (Paris: Cerf, 1985).

[48] Étienne Fouilloux, *Une Église en quête de liberté: La pensée catholique française entre modernisme et Vatican II (1914-1962)* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1998), 106. Sorrel makes the same point, 199.

[49] Joseph A. Komonchak, "Theology and Culture at Mid-Century: The Example of Henri de Lubac," *Theological Studies,* 51 (1990), 579.

It was not just in France that the Church experienced a systematic assault on its privileges during the late-nineteenth century. From 1848 on, the Church found itself caught between the Scylla of nationalism and the Charybdis of liberalism, as states across Europe and Latin America expanded their sovereignty over areas traditionally under Church jurisdiction—from marriage and education, to clerical appointments and even Church property.[50] While Bismarck waged his *Kulturkampf* in Prussia, Italian Unification left the Vatican stateless for the first time in over a thousand years. It is no coincidence that the very moment the Holy See ceded its territorial sovereignty to the advancing Italian army coincided almost exactly with a marked expansion of papal sovereignty in the spiritual sphere, culminating in the promulgation of the dogma of papal infallibility in 1870.

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[50] The best comprehensive account of this transnational process remains Roger Aubert's work in *History of the Church: Volume 8, The Church in the Age of Liberalism*, ed. by Hubert Jedin and John Dolan, trans. by Peter Becker (New York: Crossroad, 1981); see also Owen Chadwick, *The Secularization of the European Mind* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975).

Pius IX's *Syllabus of Errors* had already traced the intellectual origins of these secularizing political movements to the Enlightenment consecration of nature, reason, and human will, in order to underwrite a blanket rejection of the entire ideological edifice of the modern world. His successor Leo XIII took a different approach. He recognized that an effective Catholic response to the challenge of modernity would have to go beyond a negative stance of denunciation to provide a positive alternative to the Enlightenment worldview—one that could do battle on the very same terrain as its secular counterpart. This he found in the philosophical tradition of Thomas Aquinas and his Scholastic commentators. One of Leo's first acts as Pope was to enshrine Thomist philosophy as the foundation for all theological inquiry in his encyclical *Aeterni Patris*—issued just one year before the Ferry decrees of 1880.

What appealed to Leo XIII in the Thomist tradition was, above all, its synthetic nature and the primacy it placed on speculative reason. He traced the ills of the modern world to the moment when reason emancipated itself from revelation. When humans sought "to philosophize without any respect for faith," the inevitable result was "that systems of philosophy multiplied beyond measure, and conclusions differing and clashing one with another arose about matters even which are the most important in human knowledge."[51] By restoring reason to its role as the foundation and "steppingstone to the Christian faith," Leo hoped that the revival of Thomism would serve to counteract this corrosive intellectual pluralism. A theology constructed upon the "solid foundations" of a single philosophical system such as Neo-Scholasticism would be more unified, less prone to internal division, and capable of assuming the "nature, form and genius of a true science."[52] In this way, the unification of theology on the foundation of Thomism was analogous to the contemporaneous centralization of ecclesiastical authority in the person of the Pope. Moreover, by deploying reason in the service of faith, Leo aimed to re-appropriate the primary philosophical tool in the arsenal of secular modernity in order "to cut off the head of the boastful Goliath with his own weapon."[53] While affirming the ultimate superiority and autonomy of faith, Thomism endowed reason with a central apologetic role as the extrinsic "preamble to faith," tasked with proving the existence of God and the credibility of revelation prior to any act of faith. Moreover, in the realm of dogmatic theology, speculative reason served to organize theology on scientific grounds, unifying "in one body the many and various parts of the heavenly doctrines."[54] By framing Catholic theology in these highly rational and scientific terms, Leo XIII hoped to appeal to modern intellectual culture on its own terms, even as he called for a return to the pre-modern Thomist synthesis.

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[51] Leo XIII, *Aeterni Patris*, 4 August, 1879: <http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/leo_xiii/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_04081879_ aeterni-patris_en.html>, 24. It is important to note that Leo XIII is not single-handedly responsible for the nineteenth-century Neo-Scholastic revival. His encyclical simply enshrined a movement that had been gaining force in Italy from 1850 to 1870, due largely to the work of Joseph Kleutgen and Matteo Liberatore. On the nineteenth-century development of Neo-Scholasticism, see Gerald A. McCool, *Nineteenth-Century Scholasticism: The Quest for a Unitary Method* (New York: Fordham, 1989).

[52] Leo XIII, *Aeterni Patris,* §6.

Rather than a purely anti-modernist stance—as it was and is so often treated—the Neo-Scholastic revival led by Leo XIII thus rested upon a selective appropriation and definition of modernity. In an effort to provide a viable alternative to the challenge of the Enlightenment, Neo-Scholasticism ultimately echoed many of the rationalist presuppositions most closely associated with it, including its tendency to isolate reason from faith—as autonomous but complementary forms of knowledge—and the natural from the supernatural order. But while Neo-Scholastics were at home in the language of speculative reason, they were far less comfortable with the more subjectivist and historicist aspects of modern philosophy since Kant. In contrast to Kant's transcendental idealism, Neo-Scholasticism relied upon a realist metaphysics that moved from the sensible created world to an analogous knowledge of God's attributes, and conceived of Catholic dogma as a set of objective, intelligible, and immutable facts independent of the individual believer. In other words, this was a deeply ahistorical philosophy, and this was indeed central to the efficacy Leo XII attributed to it. The notion that a thirteenth-century philosophical system could speak to the intellectual needs of the modern world was premised on the assumption that, as the Thomist Maurice de Wulf put it, "the truth of seven hundred years ago is still the truth of today; that down through all the oscillations of historical systems there is ever to be met with a *philosophia perennis*."[55] This attitude was evident in the way *Aeterni Patris* tended to conflate the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas with that of other Scholastic Doctors like Bonaventure and later Scholastic commentators of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. For Leo, they all partook equally of the same philosophical wisdom, even though there were already important intellectual differences emerging in this period between Neo-Scholastics and Neo-Thomists committed to distinct figures and approaches within the tradition.[56] The encyclical glossed over these differences in order to present Neo-Scholasticism as a unified, transhistorical philosophical system uniquely suited to ground a truly scientific theology.

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[53] Ibid., §7.

[54] Ibid., §6.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, this model faced serious challenges from both subjectivist and historicist positions, in what came to be known as the "Modernist Crisis."[57] It is important to emphasize, however, that "Catholic Modernism" was by no means a coherent or self-conscious movement, and was instead retrospectively constructed as such by its critics—most notably by the encyclical that condemned it in 1907. Indeed, Darrell Jodock argues that "no such thing existed prior to the encyclical," which sought to weld together a disparate array of philosophical and theological positions in order to frame them as a united, concerted, and self-conscious attack on the Church.[58] It therefore conflated two elements of the "Modernist" challenge that were in fact quite distinct phenomena. These included, on the one hand, developments in historical criticism of the Bible associated primarily with Alfred Loisy, and on the other hand, the turn towards a more experiential, interior, practical orientation in theology and apologetics, identified with the work of George Tyrrell, Maurice Blondel, Lucien Laberthonnière, and Édouard Le Roy. What these disparate individuals shared, however, was a hostility to the prevailing Neo-Scholastic model, and this was in many ways the defining and unifying feature of Catholic Modernism.

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[55] Maurice de Wulf, *An Introduction to Scholastic Philosophy* (New York: Dover, 1956), 161.

[56] Gerald McCool, *From Unity to Pluralism: The Internal Evolution of Thomism* (New York: Fordham, 1989), 11.

[57] On the Modernist Crisis, see Gabriel Daly, *Transcendence and Immanence: A Study in Catholic Modernism and Integralism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980); Émile Poulat, *Histoire, dogme et critique dans la crise moderniste* (Paris: Casterman, 1962); David Schultenover, *A View from Rome: On the Eve of the Modernist Crisis* (New York: Fordham, 1993); Lester R. Kurtz, *The Politics of Heresy: The Modernist Crisis in Roman Catholicism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986); Marvin O'Connell, *Critics on Trial: An Introduction to the Catholic Modernist Crisis* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America, 1994).

The primary target of the campaign against Modernism was the French biblical scholar Alfred Loisy, who sought to place Catholic biblical exegesis on firmly historical-critical grounds independent of theological justification or apologetics. In his most famous work, *The Gospel and the Church* (1902), Loisy erected an argument against the liberal Protestant approach taken by Adolf von Harnack in *Das Wesens der Christentums* (1900). Harnack's project was to distil a pure essence from the Gospel that would be free of accretions from the (Jewish) historical context in which it was written and from the Tradition associated with the Catholic Church. Against such a vision of the Gospel "as an unconditioned absolute doctrine, summed up in a unique and steadfast truth," Loisy envisioned it as a "living faith, concrete and complex, whose evolution proceeds without doubt from the internal force which has made it enduring, but none the less has been…influenced by the surroundings wherein the faith was born and has since developed."[59] This claim was at once a rejoinder to Harnack's denial of any relationship between the Gospel and the institutional Church, as well as to the traditional Catholic claim that the doctrines and structure of the Church are explicitly mandated in the Gospel. Instead, Loisy affirmed that Catholic dogma develops and evolves over time in order to meet new needs and to spread the Gospel most effectively. Because the adaptation and evolution of Catholic dogma are "the indispensable conditions of its being, its preservation, its progress," Loisy further argued that the Church must adapt itself to the new conditions presented by modern life, in order to preserve the mission entrusted to it by the Gospel.[60] It is for this call to reform, for his efforts to historicize dogmas held to be eternally given in revelation, and to establish a historical-critical model of biblical scholarship independent from apologetics or doctrinal justification that Loisy has been labeled "'the father of Modernism.'"[61]

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[58] Darrell Jodock, ed., *Catholicism Contending with Modernity: Roman Catholic Modernism and Anti-Modernism in Historical Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 2.

[59] Alfred Loisy, *The Gospel and the Church*, ed. by Bernard Scott, trans. by Christopher Home (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), 87.

In 1904, the French philosopher Maurice Blondel penned an important rejoinder to Loisy's historical-critical method. *Histoire et dogme* took issue with both Loisy's "historicism," which submits dogma to the criteria of history, as well as Neo-Scholastic "extrinsicism," which submits history to the criteria of dogma. Blondel's aim in this essay was to distance himself from any association with the "Modernism" of Loisy, and their disagreement over the question of history thus militates against any attempt to conflate their thought under a shared banner. Historians are therefore divided over Blondel's relationship to Catholic Modernism. Although he escaped condemnation in 1907—largely due to his status as layperson rather than a priest—and repudiated many of the positions associated with Modernism, his work nevertheless had a major impact on the philosophical wing of this movement. It would also, as we shall see, play a defining role in the intellectual formation of the young Henri de Lubac and his friends.

This influence stems from Blondel's monumental and often incomprehensible 1893 dissertation *L'Action*, which he clarified somewhat in his 1896 *Letter on Apologetics*. The starting point for Blondel's work was a profound dissatisfaction with what he termed the "extrinsicism" of Neo-Scholastic philosophy—the strong separation it enacted between the natural and supernatural orders, and the frail apologetics it proposed in order to breach this gulf. Blondel instead argued for an apologetics grounded in the dynamism of human action, defined very broadly to include conscious life as a whole. He termed this approach the "method of immanence" because it takes the human subject as the point of departure for an understanding of transcendence, as against a modern "doctrine of immanence" that forecloses any such openness to the divine. At the heart of Blondel's "method of immanence" is an "avowal of our insufficiency" as human beings caught between a boundless will to achievement and the restricted means to achieve it.[62] Beneath each particular object willed by the human being ("willed will") lies a much deeper will for something beyond that object ("willing will") and which is the spiritual dynamism or driving force behind all human action. Within each immanent act of the human will, in other words, and making each of them possible, is a deeper will for the supernatural "one thing necessary" that lies utterly beyond our powers of achievement. It alone can reunite the two forms of the will,

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[60] Ibid., 16.

[61] Hubert Jedin and John Dolan, eds., *History of the Church. Volume IX: The Church in the Industrial Age* (London, Burns & Oates, 1980), 438.

> ...so that I may be able, in all fullness, *to will to will*. Yes, I have to will myself; but it is impossible for me to reach myself directly; from myself to myself there is an abyss that nothing yet has been able to fill.[63]

In other words, by beginning from the entirely immanent recognition of the inadequacy of human action, one can establish the necessary human exigency for the supernatural that is immanent to each of our acts. Moreover, the methodological corollary of this recognition of human heteronomy is a realization of the insufficiency of philosophy, which can only point to the human need for an

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[62] Maurice Blondel, *The Letter on Apologetics and History and Dogma*, trans. by Alexander Dru and Illtyd Trethowan (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994), 158.

[63] Maurice Blondel, *Action: Essay on a Critique of Life and a Science of Practice*, trans. by Oliva Blanchette (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 1984), 105.

"undetermined supernatural" and cannot "indicate the existence of the supernatural in actual fact," nor provide any positive knowledge of its attributes.[64]

This of course flew in the face of Neo-Scholastic apologetics, and Blondel was explicit about the futility of returning the Church to a thirteenth-century philosophy whose effect would be to "stop up all access to those who think in terms of our own time."[65] In other words, Blondel's dispute with Neo-Scholasticism turned at base upon a difference of opinion about how best to engage with modern culture on its own terms, in order to rechristianize it. For Blondel, this effort had to begin from an immanent starting-point, because this was "the very condition of philosophizing" in the modern world, but his Neo-Scholastic critics interpreted this stance as a full-fledged "doctrine" rather than a mere "method" of immanence, and they lambasted Blondel for falling into Kantian subjectivism.[66]

This accusation was perhaps unwarranted in Blondel's case, but there were others who took his turn to the subject much further and would eventually incur Vatican condemnation as Modernists. For instance, Blondel's closest disciple Lucien Laberthonnière articulated a "critical mysticism" that shared but also radicalized his master's hostility to Neo-Scholastic rationalism—which he attributed to the Aristotelian elements in the Thomist system—as well as his efforts to reintegrate transcendence and immanence.[67] The close relationship between the two men would eventually break down as Blondel increasingly retreated from his more radical positions in *Action*, while Laberthonnière continued to dig in his heels against the forces of integrism in the Church. In this attitude, and in his attempts to find a mystical "middle way" between transcendence and immanence, Laberthonnière was joined by Friedrich Von Hügel, who privileged a dim experience of the divine over the propositional, "reflex knowledge" of God so central to the Neo-Scholastic method.[68] His fellow Englishman George Tyrrell likewise stressed the role of lived experience in religion, arguing that "experiences are the substance of revelation," and are therefore prior to, and purer than, the abstract rationalism of theology.[69] The role of theology and of doctrine is thus "to fix and embody the inward sentiment begotten of contact with the Divine;" it is "of necessity couched in metaphorical language, and offers at best a sort of guidance from analogy."[70] Tyrrell thus approaches religion from the perspective of human need, arguing that the transcendent can only be apprehended by means of immanent human categories. The "universally proved value" of revelation and of the doctrines it inspires then lies in its "practical or 'regulative' truth…as a practical guide to the eternal life of the soul."[71] This practical understanding of dogma, known as "moral dogmatism," was shared by Laberthonnière and by the Bergsonian mathematician and philosopher Édouard Le Roy. Although we should be wary of conflating the diverse positions of these figures—and thus, simply reiterating the caricature drawn by the encyclical that condemned them—it is fair to say that all of these figures sought to redirect Catholic philosophy away from the abstract rationalism of the Neo-Scholastic model and towards the practical and experiential life of the human subject.[72]

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[64] Blondel, *Letter on Apologetics,* op. cit., 133.

[65] Ibid., 149.

[66] Ibid., 151-2.

[67] See Lucien Laberthonnière, *Le Réalisme chrétien et l'idéalisme grec* (Paris: Lethielleux, 1904).

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[68] For more on von Hügel, see Lawrence Barmann, *Baron Friedrich von Hügel and the Modernist Crisis in England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972).

[69] Quoted in Bernard Reardon, ed., *Roman Catholic Modernism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1970), 169. On Tyrrell, see David Schultenover, *George Tyrrell: In Search of Catholicism* (Shepherdstown, WV: Patmos Press, 1981); George Tyrrell, *Through Scylla and Charybdis, or, The Old Theology and the New* (New York: Longmans, Green, 1907); idem., *Christianity at the Cross-roads* (New York: Longmans, Green, 1910); idem., *Lex Orandi, or, Prayer and Creed* (New York: Longmans, Green, 1904).

[70] Quoted in Reardon, *Roman Catholic Modernism*, 138-9.

[71] Ibid., 121.

[72] These positions were in part indebted to the reception of American pragmatism within Catholic Modernist circles. See David Schultenover, ed., *The Reception of Pragmatism in France and the Rise of Roman Catholic Modernism, 1890-1914* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America, 2009). Kathleen Mulhern instead argues for the Modernists' debts to Pascal in *Beyond the Contingent: Epistemological Authority, a Pascalian Revival, and the Religious Imaginary in Third Republic France* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2011).

With the accession of Pius X to the throne of St. Peter in 1903, the reaction against these strands of Catholic Modernism came swiftly and thoroughly. Five of Loisy's works were placed on the Index that same year, and in 1907 the Vatican issued *Lamentabili Sane Exitu*, condemning 65 erroneous theses, 53 of which were drawn from the work of Loisy. Specifically targeted were his efforts to disconnect historical exegesis from theological presuppositions, as well as his developmentalist argument that "the organic constitution of the Church is not immutable. Like human society, Christian society is subject to a perpetual evolution."[73] That same year, Pius X issued an even stronger denunciation in his encyclical *Pascendi Dominici Gregis*, which (unfairly) painted Modernism as a concerted, unified, and deliberate attack upon the Church—as "the synthesis of all heresies...all the parts of which are solidly joined together so that it is not possible to admit one without admitting all."[74] The encyclical accused the Modernists of an "agnosticism" that refuses the role of rational argumentation in religious questions (especially of Scholastic deductive proofs for God's existence) and the possibility of an objective, immutable knowledge of revelation. The corollary of this agnosticism, Pius X argued, was a "vital immanence" that rooted all religion in an unmediated, subjective need for God "which man experiences within himself," and "to which all must submit, even the supreme authority of the Church."[75] Such "immanentism" necessarily relegated the role of the Church hierarchy and its dogmatic pronouncements to a secondary and derivative status, as well as undermining that absolute transcendence of the divine by claiming that religion "must be considered as both natural and supernatural."[76]

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[73] Pius X, *Lamentabili Sane Exitu*, quoted in Reardon, *Roman Catholic Modernism*, 247.

[74] Pius X, *Pascendi Dominici Gregis,* 8 September, 1907: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_x/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-x_enc_19070908_pascendi-dominici-gregis_en.html>, §39.

[75] Ibid., §7-8.

[76] Ibid.

The encyclical concluded by enumerating disciplinary measures designed to curtail the spread of Modernism, inaugurating a ruthless campaign of purges within Catholic seminaries and universities, an unforgiving censorship regime, and the uncontested monopoly of Neo-Scholasticism over Catholic orthodoxy. Both Loisy and Tyrrel were excommunicated in 1908, and Laberthonnière was forbidden from publishing. The use of espionage, of "secret vigilance committees," and the establishment of the Antimodernist Oath in 1910 meant that the work begun by the Modernists, particularly in the field of biblical scholarship, would not be taken up again in earnest until the Second Vatican Council.[77] These disciplinary excesses are strikingly reminiscent (and chronologically coincident) with the height of the Third Republic's anticlerical campaign, and it is worth considering both as parallel and connected assertions of sovereignty premised upon the identification and exclusion of internal enemies. In other words, we should see Church and state as jointly complicit in a growing disarticulation of the temporal and spiritual orders, with each body working to expand and centralize authority over its own sphere.

Given the excesses of the campaign against Modernism, it is worth considering why it provoked such a strong reaction. As Gabriel Daly has argued, the coherence attributed to the Modernist movement was almost entirely constructed by its opponents, and as a result, grouped together figures who often shared little more than a common critical attitude towards the prevailing Neo-Scholastic orthodoxy, with its emphasis on the objective and immutable validity of doctrinal truths and on the external rational conditions for the act of faith. George Tyrrell may therefore have been justified in arguing that, while *Pascendi* "'tries to show the Modernist that he is no Catholic, it mostly succeeds only in showing him that he is no scholastic.'"[78] This is consistent with the phrasing of the encyclical, which prescribes the study of Scholastic philosophy as the best antidote to the errors of Modernism, warning that "'there is no surer sign that a man is tending to modernism than when he begins to show his dislike for the scholastic method."[79] Modernist arguments for the historical development and mutability of the Church tradition tended to relativize the Scholastic system, implying that it might be out of step with the modern situation in which the Church found itself. More problematically still, the Modernist stress on the primacy of the experiential element in religion seemed to undermine directly the Church's "system of mediated transcendence which exalted the function of ecclesiastical authority in that mediation by removing all traces of immanence in the link between God and man."[80] Scholasticism instead safeguarded ecclesiastical authority by identifying the Catholic worldview with unchanging objective truth *tout court*, maintaining a rigid separation between immanence and transcendence, the natural and the supernatural. In this sense, the Modernist controversy may have been less a battle between the forces of modernism and anti-modernism, than a struggle between two different programs for the way the Church ought to respond to the challenges of modern life, both of which integrated different aspects of the modern intellectual heritage in order to engage it on its own terms. In other words, far more than an unproblematic contest between the forces of "modernity" and "anti-modernity" within the Church, this was a conflict over the very meaning of modernity itself.

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[77] Catholic scholarship on the Bible and early Christianity was regarded with a priori suspicion by the magisterium until the Second World War, when Pius XII's encyclical *Divine afflante spiritu* allowed for a partial reopening of this field of scholarship.

[78] Quoted in Gabriel Daly, *Transcendence and Immanence*, 205.

But there were also important political corollaries to the philosophical and theological differences at the heart of the Modernist Crisis. It is perhaps worth remembering that *Pascendi* was issued only two years after the Loi Combes separated Church and state in France, and the position one took on the problem of Modernism often went hand-in-hand with a particular attitude to the

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[79] Quoted in Daniel L. Donovan, "Church and Theology in the Modernist Crisis," *Proceedings of the Catholic Theological Society of America* 40 (1985), 146-7.

[80] Daly, *Transcendence and Immanence*, 149.

Republic. Julien Fontaine, writing two years after the encyclical, raised the specter of an emerging "sociological modernism"—the socio-political equivalent to the challenge posed by Modernism in the dogmatic realm. "'Its goal,'" Fontaine argued, "'is to ruin the social order by attacking the principles of natural law that sustain it, just as recently it attacked the principles of the faith...In the name of Christian fraternity, [sociological modernism] professes an egalitarianism that is incompatible with any hierarchy and any idea of authority and subordination.'"[81] Catholic Modernism thus drew disproportionately from the ranks of the *ralliés* who had embraced the Republic, and many, such as Blondel, also threw their weight behind the Christian-democratic *Sillon* movement. Meanwhile, the first decades of the twentieth century saw Neo-Scholastics align themselves ever more closely with the royalist movement of Charles Maurras, known as the Action Française.

There were important philosophical and theological reasons for this political divergence, and nowhere are these expressed with greater clarity than in the vigorous dispute between Maurice Blondel and Pedro Descoqs on the subject of the Action Française, waged across a series of books and articles between 1909 and 1914. This conflict will be parsed in greater detail in Chapter Two, but because its two protagonists would have such a formative influence on de Lubac and his friends during their time at Jersey, it is worth anticipating the crux of this politico-theological quarrel here. At base, this was a debate over the relationship between the natural and supernatural orders. For Blondel, the top-down, hierarchical model of political authority that attracted Descoqs to the Action Française was a corollary of his authoritarian understanding of the human-divine relationship and a realist metaphysics that conceived the human subject as the passive recipient of external stimuli. These in turn derived from Descoqs' Neo-Scholastic extrinsicism, which bifurcated the natural and supernatural orders. By treating the supernatural as something essentially external to human nature, Blondel argued, Descoqs made the divine gift of grace into something imposed upon us from without, in the form of an "'authority that addresses itself to a pure receptivity and a passive obedience.'"[82] In other words, the common denominator between this extrinsic theology of grace, a realist metaphysics, and authoritarianism in the political sphere was their shared emphasis on the passivity of the human subject. The result was "'a Catholicism without Christianity, a submissiveness without thought, an authority without love.'"[83] In contrast, Blondel's method of immanence privileged the dignity and agency of the human subject, underwriting the philosopher's commitment to a democratic and egalitarian politics.

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[81] Julien Fontaine, SJ, *Le Modernisme sociologique: Décadence ou régénération?*, quoted in Peter Bernardi, *Maurice Blondel, Social Catholicism, & Action Française: The Clash over the Church's Role in Society during the Modernist Era* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America, 2009), 17; 19.

And yet, this was more than just a battle between an anti-modern, anti-democratic political theology and a more humanist approach open to engagement with the modern world. One effect of Neo-Scholastic extrinsicism, Blondel argued, was to affirm an autonomous space for political affairs distinct from the dictates of religious faith or morality. This allowed Neo-Scholastics like Descoqs to bracket the atheistic and anti-Christian elements of Maurras' philosophy in the service of a pragmatic alliance over shared political aims. In doing so, Blondel claimed, Catholic supporters of the Action Française were guilty of philosophical "naturalism." They were complicit with Maurrasian positivism and denied any internal relationship between the natural and supernatural orders to the point of making nature into an "airtight compartment" sufficient unto itself. In doing so, moreover, they unwittingly upheld the very same distinction between the spiritual and temporal orders central to the secular Republicanism they despised. Blondel thus turned the charge of "Modernism" once laid at his door back against his Neo-Scholastic critics themselves, accusing them of holding "a Scholastic teaching which, under the cover of Aristotle and saint Thomas and in the service of the battle against modernism and immanentism, had developed and canonized another modernism, no less antichristian and even more immoral."[84] He supported this claim by citing a number of parallels between Action Française doctrine and the propositions condemned by the papal encyclicals against Modernism. As we shall see, Henri de Lubac developed a very similar diagnosis of Neo-Scholasticism and of the politics allied with it, thanks to his own close encounter with Pedro Descoqs at Jersey.

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[82] Maurice Blondel, "Monophorisme et Action Française," quoted in Peter Bernardi, *Maurice Blondel, Social Catholicism and Action Française*, 147.
[83] Quoted in Joseph Komonchak, "Theology and Culture Mid-Century," 596.

From Jersey to the Nouvelle Théologie

When Henri de Lubac, Gaston Fessard, Yves de Montcheuil, and Robert Hamel arrived at Jersey to undertake their philosophical studies in the early 1920s, they entered an institution dominated by the Neo-Scholasticism of Pedro Descoqs and Gabriel Picard (rector of the school from 1919 to 1924). In the 1880s, there had been a battle for control of the school's intellectual orientation between Thomists and Suarezians—those who adhered to the teachings of Saint Thomas' sixteenth-century Jesuit commentator, Francisco Suarez. But by the 1920s, the school had become a bastion of Suarezianism under the watchful eye of Descoqs and Picard, whom de Lubac once described as "savagely Suarezian." The Catholic historian and philosopher Étienne Gilson, a staunch Neo-Thomist who had little time for the Angelic Doctor's commentators, offered this humorous description of Descoqs' philosophical position:

> He was Suarezian. On the other hand, being a Jesuit, he submitted faithfully to the directives of the Holy See. He was therefore Thomist. The situation was not, however, unresolvable. Not being able to make Suarez into a Thomist, he did what was needed to make Thomas into a Suarezian.[85]

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[84] Quoted in Jacques Prévotat, *Les catholiques et l'Action Francaise: histoire d'une condamnation (1899-1939)* (Paris: Fayard, 2001), 445.

[85] Étienne Gilson, *Lettres de M. Étienne Gilson addressées au P. Henri de Lubac et commentées par celui-ci*, ed. by Henri de Lubac (Paris: Cerf, 1986), 155; 41.

According to de Lubac, these Suarezian commitments brought Descoqs into conflict with both the renewal currents in Thomist thought represented by Jesuits like Pierre Rousselot and Joseph Maréchal, as well as the integrist Dominican neo-Scholasticim of a figure like Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange—conflicts that were often just as bitter as Descoqs' quarrel with Blondel.[86] The arrival of de Lubac's cohort at Jersey in fact coincided with an intensification of the campaign against these currents of thought at the scholasticate, culminating in an order-wide ban on the teaching of Rousselot's work and the removal of Auguste Valensin, a close disciple and friend of Blondel's, from his teaching post at the Maison Saint-Louis. De Lubac would remain in close contact with Valensin, however, and it was he who in fact introduced de Lubac to the work of these forbidden philosophers and would supply the young scholastic with a steady stream of "racy" philosophical texts during his sojourn on Jersey. In fact, this would be one of the main conduits by which the controversial work of Blondel, Rousselot, Teilhard de Chardin, and others penetrated the isolated island scholasticate.

De Lubac and his friends were deeply disappointed by the narrowness of the Neo-Scholastic philosophical formation they received at Jersey, particularly after the experience of war had driven home to them the need for a Catholic philosophy capable of bridging the ever-widening abyss between Church and society. This they did not find in their teachers at Jersey. De Lubac later recalled that works of modern philosophy—even those written by Catholics—were a "semi-forbidden fruit" for the scholastics, as "any 'modern' author was a priori suspect, or at least 'guarded'; thus on Jersey, a recent work like that of Étienne Gilson on Saint Thomas Aquinas was shelved in a locked wall cupboard, which was opened only on holidays."[87] But these constraints did not just apply to modern philosophical works; the founding texts of Catholic thought, including the work of Thomas Aquinas and Augustine, were equally excluded from the curriculum. In accordance with the Neo-Scholastic bent of their Suarezian teachers, the focus was on Aquinas' early-modern commentators, at the expense of the work of the Angelic Doctor himself. This caused a great deal of consternation among de Lubac's group of friends, who enthusiastically read and discussed the work of Thomas Aquinas through their own extra-curricular initiative. [88]

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[86] See de Lubac's annotations in Maurice Blondel and Auguste Valensin, *Correspondance*, vol. 3, ed. by Henri de Lubac (Paris: Aubier-Montaigne, 1965), 165.

[87] De Lubac, *At the Service of the Church*, 65.

The biggest problem these students identified in their philosophical formation, however, was the intellectual narrowness and hostility to innovation they observed in teachers like Descoqs and Picard. Students at the Jersey scholasticate complained of the "'airtight cleavage between us and the teachers,'" whose attitude towards their students was consistently "'defensive and guarded, as if faced with an enemy coming to attack them and against which they must defend themselves.'"[89] They were particularly scathing about the rather pugnacious and polemical Descoqs, "whose combative teaching was a perpetual invitation to react," as de Lubac later recalled.[90] They nevertheless deeply respected the technical erudition of "old Pedro," and the tone their letters use when discussing him is more one of gentle mockery for his impossibly abstract and recondite philosophical concerns, than one of outright hostility.[91] De Lubac and his friends seem to have been much more kindly disposed towards their rector, Gabriel Picard—affectionately known as "Pic" in their letters—although his rigid sense of orthodoxy did lead Fessard to compare him to a soup merchant obsessed with arranging his bowls in careful, orderly rows, who is utterly put out when someone comes along to disturb the arrangement.[92] In other words, their teachers at Jersey primarily served this rising generation as a negative intellectual and pedagogical model against which to define themselves.

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[88] See, for instance, the letters from Robert Hamel to Henri de Lubac of 1 November, 1923 and 20 February, 1924, as well as de Lubac's letter to Hamel on 28 February, 1924, Archives Jésuites de la Province de France [Henceforth, AJPF], Vanves, France, Fonds de Lubac, 42/1.

[89] This statement comes from a 1919 investigation of the state of philosophical teaching in the order, quoted in Chantraine, *Henri de Lubac,* 121.

[90] De Lubac, *At the Service of the Church*, 42.

[91] For instance, de Lubac pokes fun at the obscure scholastic debates with which Descoqs is concerned in a sarcastic letter to Hamel, informing him that Descoqs has finally solved "this distressing problem: 'An Deus sit in spatio imaginario [Is God in imaginary space]'" 20 September, 1924, AJPF, Fonds de Lubac, 42/1.

Indeed, their reaction to the pedagogical techniques employed in the formation of future Jesuit priests was remarkably close to the Republican critiques of religious schooling articulated thirty years earlier. His years at Jersey convinced de Lubac that "'the Church and the [teaching] manuals for scholastic philosophy and theology are two separate things,'" and that the greatest obstacle facing Thomist philosophy was "'the deficiency of thought of those who have taught it and continue to teach it.'"[93] The emphasis on rote learning and conformity he observed in his classes at Jersey would also characterize the theological training he received at Ore Place.[94] The theologate moved back to Fourvière (Lyon) halfway through de Lubac's four-year program, in 1926. There is no greater testament to the frustrations de Lubac and his friends experienced with the closed intellectual environment there than the shorthand they employed to refer to it in their letters: "Loyasse," the name of the cemetery behind the school.[95] Such an attitude is substantiated by an anonymous document from the archives for the Province of Lyons, dating from the period de Lubac spent at the school, concerning the "Spirit of the Scholasticate of Fourvière." It complained that the school's superiors were teaching students that "'the Society's mission is to defend and conserve established positions, not to undertake new initiatives, that it must await the Pope's orders, etc.'"[96] Indeed, this report coincided with a scandal at the Fourvière theologate involving a close friend of de Lubac's, Marcel Méry. Méry was kicked out of the order after a critical essay he wrote on the exercise of authority in the Society, designed for the private benefit of de Lubac's intellectual circle, somehow made its way to Rome. This "first Fourvière affair" provoked profound distress and disillusionment within the circle of friends, inspiring a (justifiable) distrust of their superiors that would last for the rest of their careers.[97]

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[92] Gaston Fessard to Henri de Lubac, 15 October, 1923, AJPF, Fonds Fessard, 73/A.

[93] Henri de Lubac to Robert Hamel, 1 December, 1923, CAEHL, 3788.

[94] De Lubac's correspondence with his friends from Jersey is rife with complaints about the narrowness of their formation. See, for instance, Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, 6 February 1924 and Gaston Fessard to Henri de Lubac, 12 January 1924, AJPF, Fonds Fessard, 73/B.

[95] See, for instance, Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard 4 January, 1933. AJPF, Fonds Fessard, 73/C.

In response to the insufficiencies of the scholastic curriculum, de Lubac, Fessard, Montcheuil, Soras, Nicolet, d'Ouince, and Hamel developed their own parallel curriculum of readings that were banned from the official one. With Picard's permission they formed a semi-official independent study circle, or "*académie*," with each participant presenting a text or topic to the rest of the group on a weekly basis, followed by a discussion.[98] Readings included, not only the classics of modern philosophy—Descartes, Malebranche, Kant, Leibniz, Pascal, and Spinoza—but also the foundational Catholic texts of the medieval and patristic period: Augustine, Origen, Thomas, Bonaventure, etc. But the group was particularly drawn to more recent work by philosophers such as Maine de Biran and Octave Hamelin—Fessard sometimes referred to these two, respectively, as the Kant and Hegel of French thought—as well as Jules Lachelier, Henri Bergson and Alexandre Koyré.[99] But what would have by far the greatest impact on this group of friends were the innovations in Catholic thought wrought by Blondel, Maréchal, Rousselot, Guy de Broglie, and the controversial work of the Jesuit evolutionist, Teilhard de Chardin.

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[96] Quoted in Chantraine, *Henri de Lubac,* 618.

[97] On the Méry Affair, see the correspondence between Henri de Lubac and Gaston Fessard for 1930-1931, AJPF, Fonds Fessard, 73/C; Étienne Fouilloux also places a strong emphasis on this first Fourvière affair as an understudied precursor to the fuller condemnation of the postwar Fourvière Affair. See *Une Église en quête de liberté*, 180.

[98] The texts of these presentations and de Lubac's notes on the ensuing discussions are in the APJF, Fonds de Lubac, 52. De Lubac described the activities of the group in a letter to his mother on 1 December, 1921, quoted in Chantraine, *Henri de* Lubac, 163. See also Avon and Rocher, *Les jésuites et la société française,* 147.

[99] Gaston Fessard, "Une Phénoménologie de l'existence: La philosophie de M. Le Senne," *Recherches de Science Religieuse* (1935), 134.

It must be said that Picard and Descoqs, for all their rigid commitments and narrow curriculum, displayed a remarkable degree of flexibility in their respective capacities as rector and librarian, by allowing these students to pursue this rather unorthodox independent study. Thanks to this "truly parallel curriculum"—which would no doubt have been impracticable in a clerical training institution more closely controlled by the central ecclesiastical authorities—many of the innovative contributions that would make this group a leading force in postwar Catholic thought were already present in embryonic form in the discussions of their study circle at Jersey.[100] Under the somewhat ironic label "la Pensée," this group would continue its activities at Ore Place and then Fourvière, where most of its members continued on to their theological studies, finding a willing guide in the person of Joseph Huby. Above all, the activities of the Pensée group demonstrate the importance of a network of likeminded friends for the intellectual development of a thinker, especially in the absence of a supportive intellectual or institutional environment. What Fouilloux writes of Yves de Montcheuil—that he "built his personality on the margins, on friendships, on readings and an intense work of collaborative elaboration"—is just as true of all the other members of the Pensée group.[101]

It was through this collaborative reading that these young philosophers and theologians positioned themselves in relation to the defining currents of Catholic thought in this period, singling out those figures they wished to emulate while beginning to articulate their own distinct concerns and contributions. In terms of the internal conflict between different factions within the Thomist revival, and in the context of a scholasticate and order dominated by Suarezianism, Henri de Lubac recalled that at Jersey, "I had been put down severely as a Thomist (of a Thomism, it is true, revitalized by Maréchal and Rousselot). At the time this was called 'not holding the doctrines of the Society.'"[102] Repelled by the rationalist abstraction and realist epistemology of their teachers' Neo-Scholastic vision, which downplayed the role of human agency in knowledge, de Lubac and his friends sought out a neo-Thomist vision that allowed a greater role for faith, love, and the human subject. This they found in the controversial work of Joseph Maréchal and Pierre Rousselot. The latter had sought a corrective to Neo-Scholastic rationalism by stressing the relationship between love and intellect in knowledge acquisition, as well as the role that subjective consciousness of grace plays within the act of faith. This position earned Rousselot the charge of fideism, as Neo-Scholastic critics accused him of undermining the rational basis for faith. This move away from a sterile rationalism to a more vital, living faith would be an abiding concern for de Lubac and his friends, although it would manifest itself in different ways in their respective projects.[103] De Lubac gained free range of Rousselot's papers after his premature death in 1915 left them in the possession of Auguste Valensin. On his visits to France, the young scholastic would hole himself up in Valensin's study recopying Rousselot's unpublished texts and bring them back to Jersey to share with his friends.[104]

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[100] Fouilloux, *Yves de Montcheuil,* 18. De Lubac himself later recognized the importance of his rector's solicitude in this matter: "Through a praiseworthy exception, some of our masters at the time, who were quite strict in what they excluded from our reading, allowed us, though without encouraging us, to study the thought of the philosopher from Aix [Blondel]," *At the Service of the Church*, 19.

[101] Fouilloux, *Yves de Montcheuil*, 13.

It was also de Lubac who would bring the first volume of Maréchal's *Point of Departure for Metaphysics* back to Jersey. The Louvain philosopher's unorthodox blend of Thomas and Kant would inspire just as much admiration from de Lubac's group as vituperation of "an almost angry vivacity" from Descoqs.[105] Indeed, Fessard and de Lubac suspected that Descoqs and Picard were behind the denunciations that had gotten Maréchal's into trouble in Rome, and these sorts of "extremely petty" and backhanded "integrist maneuvers" infuriated their students.[106] As Hamel put it, in no uncertain terms, "they are afraid that Louvain will render Jersey and Vals obsolete...why do they both insist on charging against Fr. Maréchal without understanding him, since they refuse to read him."[107] In the battle between Suarezianism and a Neo-Thomism more open to modern thought, it was clear which side de Lubac and his friends had chosen. Yves de Montcheuil, who already considered himself something of a Kantian, explained the appeal of Maréchal's Transcendental Thomism in terms of its ability to rescue the subject from the passivity to which Neo-Scholastic realism confined it:

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[102] De Lubac, *At the Service of the Church*, 144.

[103] On the influence of Rousselot in de Lubac's work, see John M. McDermott, "De Lubac and Rousselot," *Gregorianum* 78 (1997). 735-59.

[104] Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, March 1923, AJPF, Fonds Fessard 73/A.

> For Maréchal…the material composite is intelligible and becomes an object of knowledge only by what the thinking subject adds to it. This brings into relief the error of those who think that to build a theory of knowledge, one must place oneself face to face with the world we perceive and ask how we are able to know such and such an object. In reality, this world is already in a very real sense the product of our knowledge. We have built it by knowing it; it is already enriched by everything that our knowledge adds to it...This conception also implies, by consequence, the thesis of Rousselot on the necessity of man to mediate the intelligibility of the material world."[108]

De Lubac agreed with his friend, but felt that Maréchal fell short of placing sufficient emphasis on the subject's freedom and personality, as well as the necessary element of mystery in any act of knowing.[109] To de Lubac, the Kantianism that was so appealing to Montcheuil in Maréchal's thought smacked a little too much of the rationalism he found so repellent in his teachers: "I am somewhat resentful of Maréchal for wanting too much to dissipate the mystery that bathes all of our knowledge...he too often sees with the bright light that dissects objects."[110] That de Lubac's friends fixated upon different elements in their common reading highlights the philosophical and temperamental divergences between the members of La Pensée, but what underwrote their common admiration for Maréchal and Rousselot was the resources their work afforded for elaborating a critique of the Neo-Scholastic paradigm of their superiors.

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[105] De Lubac, *At the Service of the Church*, 21n10; see also the account in Chantraine, *Henri de Lubac,* 183.

[106] Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, 19 February 1924, AJPF, Fonds Fessard, 73/B; Henri de Lubac to Robert Hamel, 9 March 1924, AJPF, Fonds de Lubac, 42/1.

[107] Robert Hamel to Henri de Lubac, 6 May 1924, AJPF, Fonds de Lubac, 42/1.

[108] Yves de Montcheuil to Henri de Lubac, 9 November, 1925, CAEHL, 48913.

[109] See, for instance, Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, 3 May, 1924, AJPF, Fonds Fessard, 73/B; Henri de Lubac to Yves de Montcheuil, 25 March, 1924, CAEHL, 48716-17.

It was this shared commitment that underwrote their dislike for Maritain, despite his popularity with a faction of their fellow-students at Jersey. Following his conversion in 1906, Maritain had become to poster-child for the integrist Neo-Scholasticism of his Dominican confessors, including Humbert Clérissac and Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange. Much like its Jesuit equivalent, this approach privileged the work of Thomas' early-modern commentators, although preferring Cajetan and John of St. Thomas to Suarez, and equally like its Jesuit equivalent, this was a philosophical model integrally allied with the politics of the Action Française. It is difficult to say whether de Lubac and his friends were more repelled by the political or the philosophical side of this equation, but the evidence points to the latter, as their contempt for Maritain was only slightly mitigated by his repudiation of the Action Française and his later democratic turn. Maritain's Neo-Scholasticism brought him into direct conflict with Blondel in the early 1920s, and this conflict was replicated in microcosm at Jersey, with de Lubac's circle lining up behind Blondel.[111] The Maritainian faction was led by his former student Michel Riquet—who would later play a major role in the Catholic Resistance, although entirely independently of the work of de Lubac's circle on behalf of the same cause—and who Fessard derisively dubbed "little Maritain."[112] The Jersey Blondelians were hostile not only to the substance of Maritain's theory of knowledge, founded as it was on the abstract concept, but especially to the way he defined any other model as inherently anti-intellectual and used this to tar Blondel with "the specter of Kant and of the practical reason." "What can one do," Montcheuil complained to de Lubac, "when to attach the name of a man one doesn't like to that of Kant constitutes in the eyes of many a sufficient and decisive refutation."[113] In addition to these under-handed argumentative tactics, they likewise resented the way Maritain implied that other approaches to Thomas, such as Maréchal's and Rousselot's, were somehow less authentically Thomist than his own. "The school to which Maritain has attached himself has no more than any other received the patent for a monopoly on the understanding and exploitation of the work of Saint Thomas," de Lubac complained.[114]

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[110] Henri de Lubac to Robert Hamel, 27 April, 1924, AJPF, Fonds de Lubac, 42/2.

[111] This controversy was played out across several works. Maritain gave a conference paper on "L'intelligence selon M. Maurice Blondel" at the Institut catholique de Paris (25 April, 1923) in response to Blondel's *Le procès de l'intelligence* (Paris: Bloud et Gay, 1922), which was itself a response to Maritain's *Théonas, ou les entretiens d'un sage et deux philosophes sur diverses matières inégalement actuelles* (Paris: Nouvelle librairie nationale, 1921). In the conference paper, which is reprinted in Maritain's *Oeuvres complètes* (vol. 3, 93-111), Maritain deployed a common neo-Scholastic critique of Blondel for confusing the distinct objects of philosophy and theology.

In addition to Blondel's quarrel with Maritain in 1923, the same year saw the philosopher from Aix debate a very different kind of interlocutor. De Lubac's circle followed very closely the letters exchanged between Blondel and Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, through the intermediary of their mutual friend Auguste Valensin, who supplied de Lubac with copies of the letters and a number of Teilhard's censored manuscripts to send back to his friends on Jersey.[115] Teilhard and Valensin had been close friends and intellectual allies, somewhat isolated within the conservative climate of the Maison Saint-Louis in 1903, along with Victor Fontoynont, who would become a major mentor of de Lubac's at Mongré and then Fourvière. Teilhard's controversial spiritual interpretation of evolution—he was a trained paleontologist and geologist, and in fact participated in the expedition that discovered Peking Man in the 1920s—made him distinctly unpopular with his superiors. Heavy censorship prevented him from publishing any works on religion from 1925 onwards and would not be lifted until his death in 1955. This has led to a mis-periodization of his influence, particularly within the Jesuit order, where a kind of samizdat system allowed his work to circulate remarkable widely from the 1920s on.

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[112] Gaston Fessard to Henri de Lubac, 25 February, 1923, AJPF, Fonds Fessard, 73/A; see the account of their confrontation in Chantraine, *Hneri de Lubac,* 209-210.

[113] Yves de Montcheuil to Henri de Lubac, 14 October, 1923, CAEHL, 48881.

[114] Quoted in Chantraine, *Henri de Lubac,* 337.

[115] Chantraine, *Henri de Lubac,* 322; see also Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, 26 November, 1923, AJPF, Fonds Fessard, 73/A.

De Lubac first met Teilhard at Jersey in 1922, and would go on to write five largely apologetic books about him (as would de Lubac's friend René d'Ouince), in addition to publishing large portions of his correspondence—including his exchange with Blondel.[116] For the young scholastic, Teilhard's work opened up vast horizons for a reformulation of the nature-supernature relationship, raising "questions that have always attracted me, and which, I hope, will become clearer and clearer: the religious desire, the call of the Supernatural, the divine response through the Incarnation...I sometimes see immense horizons opening up on these questions...the time to dream is now."[117] Here we can see, in embryo, the defining concerns of de Lubac's theological career and some of the earliest formulations of his famous thesis on the relations between the natural and supernatural orders, which would get both him and Teilhard jointly condemned in 1950. But already, de Lubac and Hamel expressed their shared reservations (also shared by Blondel) about Teilhard's overly optimistic view of human nature and tendency "to tether the supernatural to the natural."[118]

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[116] Henri de Lubac, *La pensée religieuse du Père Pierre Teilhard de Chardin* (Paris: Aubier, 1962); Henri de Lubac, *La prière du Père Teilhard de Chardin* (Paris: Fayard, 1964); Henri de Lubac, *Teilhard, missionaire et apologiste* (Toulouse: Prière et vie, 1966); Henri de Lubac, *L'Éternel Féminin, étude sur un texte du Père Teilhard de Chardin, suivi de Teilhard et notre temps* (Paris: Aubier, 1968); Henri de Lubac, *Teilhard posthume: réflexions et souvenirs* (Paris: Fayard, 1977); René d'Ouince, *Un Prophète en procès* (Paris: Aubier, 1970); Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *Lettres intimes à Auguste Valensin, Bruno de Solages, Henri de Lubac, 1919-1955*, ed. by Henri de Lubac (Paris: Aubier, 1972); Maurice Blondel and Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *Blondel et Teilhard de Chardin: Correspondance commentée,* ed. and annotated by Henri de Lubac (Paris: Beauchesne, 1965). De Lubac also discusses Teilhard's influence on his thought in *At the Service of the Church*, 103-12.

[117] Henri de Lubac to Robert Hamel, 18 December, 1923, CAEHL; For Hamel's opinion on Teilhard, see Robert Hamel to Henri de Lubac, 21 December, 1923, CAEHL, 3794.

[118] Robert Hamel to Henri de Lubac, 13 January, 1924, AJPF, Fonds de Lubac, 42/1.

"There is at times too much Bergson and not enough Pascal," de Lubac complained in reference to Teilhard's optimism, while expressing admiration for the privilege the evolutionist placed on unity.[119] This would become arguably the defining goal of de Lubac's own theological work.[120]

However, Blondel remained by far the greatest intellectual lodestar for this little group of friends sequestered on the island of Jersey. To them, Blondel's method of immanence pointed the way to a metaphysics of the subject that would both serve a much more effective apologetic purpose and help to overcome the bifurcation of philosophy and theology enacted by the neo-Scholastics. Montcheuil's debt to the philosopher of Aix is clear from a deeply personal letter of gratitude he wrote to Blondel in 1931:

> Since I have this opportunity, I cannot fail to tell you the personal gratitude I owe you. Your books, and especially *Action,* have been not merely an object of speculative study for me. They have helped me to formulate a correct idea of the domain of 'Christian philosophy' and of its exigencies in the domain of practical life, and I can say that they hold a large place in the conception I have slowly developed of the interior life. This is a debt that cannot be repaid, but cannot be forgotten either.[121]

Montcheuil would go on to co-write a controversial book on Blondel with Auguste Valensin, the publication of which unfortunately coincided with one of the many waves of anti-Blondelian feeling that periodically swelled up in Rome.[122] Montcheuil's enthusiasm also coincided awkwardly with Blondel's own conservative turn later in life and his concomitant retreat from some of the more controversial positions of *Action*, and this eventually led to an acrimonious break between the two men.[123] De Lubac met Blondel for the first time in 1923, and his account of the meeting to Fessard reveals a star-struck young disciple bonding with his master over their mutual contempt for the machinations of the neo-Scholastic orthodoxy.[124] For de Lubac, Blondel had come closer than anyone else to articulating a truly Catholic philosophy, and his influence on the young Jesuit has been well-documented by Antonio Russo.[125] His sentiments were closely shared by Hamel, who claimed that Blondel's work "alone allows philosophy to reconnect with Life...in this way, the synthesis of modern thought and Catholic thought is truly accomplished, although this does not mean that it cannot be further perfected."[126] "Blondel is our Hegel," Fessard would famously say, and given Fessard's lifelong fascination with the German philosopher, this is high praise indeed.[127]

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[119] Henri de Lubac to Robert Hamel, 14 December, 1923, CAEHL, 3793.

[120] This is the central unifying thread of de Lubac's work identified by Aidan Nichols in "Henri de Lubac: Panorama and Proposal," *New Blackfriars* 93 (2011), 3-33.

[121] Quoted in Fouilloux, *Yves de Montcheuil,* op. cit. 19.

[122] Auguste Valensin and Yves de Montcheuil, *Maurice Blondel* (Paris: Gabalda, 1934). Two of the letters from Montcheuil's exchange with the Jesuit Curia in Rome are reprinted in Fouilloux, *Yves de Montcheuil*, 69-78. For the rest see AJPF, Fonds Montcheuil, HMo51/1. For his notes on Blondel see HMo54/2.

[123] See, for instance, Yves de Montcheuil to Henri de Lubac, 1935, CAEHL, 48917.

It was through their communal reading and discussion of Blondel, that the Pensée group began to formulate many of the central theories and concerns that would define their careers as philosophers, activists, and theologians. What had brought these friends together in the first place was their shared distaste for the Neo-Scholastic worldview of their teachers and of the virtual stranglehold it had achieved over Church orthodoxy. In 1924, Montcheuil penned a trenchant critique of the Jesuit training system, which artificially separated between the study of philosophy and theology in accordance with a Neo-Scholastic logic. Reflecting on his own experiences at Jersey, he complained:

> Either [philosophy] is presented as aiming to establish a certain number of rational truths, the logical bases for the truths of faith, in which case one establishes a false notion of the relations between philosophy and theology...or it is presented as a purely formal science that has no real object because the real is studied by theology, in which case philosophy seems useless.[128]

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[124] Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, 16 March, 1923, AJPF, Fonds Fessard, 73/A.

[125] Henri de Lubac to Robert Hamel, 7 January, 1924, AJPF, Fonds de Lubac, 42/1; Antonio Russo, *Henri de Lubac: Teologia e dogma nella storia: l'influsso di Blondel* (Rome: Studium, 1990).

[126] Robert Hamel to Henri de Lubac, 17 April, 1924, AJPF, Fonds de Lubac, 42/1.

[127] Gaston Fessard and Gabriel Marcel, *Gabriel Marcel, Gaston Fessard: Correspondance, 1934-1971*, ed. by Henri de Lubac, Marie Rougier, and Michel Sales (Paris: Beauchesne, 1985), 39.

[128] This text, "Comment on devrait faire apprendre la religion dans la Compagnie," is reprinted in Fouilloux, *Yves de Montcheuil,* op. cit., 89.

In contrast, Blondel's method of immanence, instead of relying on an external set of propositions about God's existence, employed a purely philosophical starting-point within the human subject to demonstrate how any act of will necessarily implied within itself an apologetic, an affirmation of God's existence. In other words, philosophy could not be undertaken without reference to theology, nor could human affairs be thought outside the context of man's relationship to the divine.

This turn towards the subject enacted by Blondel, but also an important feature of the work of Rousselot and Maréchal, thus promised a means to reconnect philosophy and theology, while underwriting a more effective Catholic apologetics. De Lubac heartily affirmed that "Metaphysics must be the science of the subject" rather than a science of the object, as it had become under Neo-Scholasticism.[129] Indeed, he felt that even the most progressive Thomists such as Valensin and Maréchal remained beholden to a hidebound objectivist metaphysics. This was the substance of de Lubac's divergence from the position of Guy de Broglie—the neo-Thomist disciple of Rousselot fondly referred to as "Kiki" in de Lubac's correspondence with his friends—a disagreement that would foreshadow their later quarrel in the context of the crisis over the Nouvelle Théologie. De Lubac's main objection to de Broglie's 1924 article on the supernatural turned upon the way his objectivist metaphysics leveled out the specificity of the divine-human relationship by subsuming it within the general laws governing God's relations with the natural, created world.[130] This involved an unacceptable descent into naturalism, for de Lubac, because his reading of Blondel and of Augustine had committed him to the belief that, as Montcheuil so aptly put it, "[God] is not heteronomous to us; he is sufficiently transcendent to be immanent to us."[131] In fact, this divine immanence was itself the condition of possibility for apperception (the self's consciousness of itself *qua* consciousness), because no self-knowledge is possible without some knowledge of God.

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[129] Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, August 1924, AJPF, Fonds Fessard, 73/B.

[130] Guy de Broglie, "De la place du surnaturel dans la philosophie de saint Thomas," *Recherches de science religieuse*, 14 (1924): 193-246.

[131] Yves de Montcheuil to Henri de Lubac, 16 September, 1923. CAEHL, 48887.

Here we can already observe an early iteration of de Lubac's controversial thesis on the relations between the natural and supernatural orders, which would garner so much controversy when he published *Surnaturel* in 1946. Following Blondel and Augustine, he already felt that the supernatural calling always at work within the human subject vitiated the Neo-Scholastic dualism between the natural and supernatural orders, which reduced the human to a mere element of the natural world, governed by its laws but capable of supernatural elevation through an entirely unbidden gift of grace from God. De Lubac felt that the problem with such an approach, at least in its Broglian iteration, was that it tended to extend laws "that apply only to the material world...unduly to the spiritual world" of the human person and his or her relationship to God.[132] Overcoming the shortcomings of both the Neo-Scholastic and Broglian models would require resolving the impasse that Fessard identified in an essay he wrote on the relations between nature and the supernatural during his time at Jersey: "If the supernatural is gratuitous, which is to say that it exceeds the possibilities of human nature, how can it be obligatory, which is to say necessarily sought out by man as his only possible end?"[133] De Lubac would be the first of his friends to realize that resolving this problem would require a wholesale rejection of the theory of "pure nature" (the notion that human nature could have a purely natural and self-sufficient end, rather than being created with an innate desire for the beatific vision) established by Saint Thomas' commentators to safeguard the gratuity of grace. This would be the central argument of his *Surnaturel*, but he was already beginning to formulate it in the 1920s, as a result of his engagement with the work of Blondel, Augustine, Descoqs, Teilhard, and de Broglie.

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[132] Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, August 1924, AJPF, Fonds Fessard, 73/B.

[133] "Esquisse nature et surnaturel," AJPF, Fonds Fessard, 1/1. It is important to note the distinction between the Neo-Scholastic understanding of the nature-grace relationship, manifest in Descoqs' critique of Blondel, and Guy de Broglie's Neo-Thomist approach. While the first maintained a fairly strict separation between the natural and supernatural orders in order to maintain the gratuity of grace, de Broglie did not hold such a stark dualism because he affirmed that reason alone could establish certain truths about the supernatural order, such as the possibility of the beatific vision. See the account of the divergence between Descoqs and Guy de Broglie in Bernardi, op. cit., 226-229. Both models were unsatisfactory to de Lubac. On the role of de Broglie's work in de Lubac's formulation of his critique of pure nature, see his letter to Fessard, 29 March, 1929, AJPF, Fonds Fessard, 73/C.

Another red thread running throughout de Lubac's later work was his respect for the place of mystery in human life, and it likewise stemmed from his dissatisfaction with the central place afforded to rational speculation within Neo-Scholastic thought. Dismissing Descoqs' philosophical approach as a "science of God," Fessard and de Lubac co-authored their own "sketch" for a theory of knowledge that explicitly defined the task of philosophy in opposition to that of empirical science.[134] In response to the predictable criticisms of Picard and Descoqs, they defined the centerpiece of their philosophical project thus:

> There is, within all the particular problems that philosophy studies, a mystery. It is everywhere the same: and we aim to show that, insoluble in purely rational terms, its acceptance is nevertheless invincibly imposed within any act...[135]

Their understanding of philosophy took its starting point, in other words, from a shared commitment to "the mystery from which all of philosophy, like all of life, is suspended, and which...is the incomprehensible thing without which everything else would be incomprehensible."[136] Philosophy should therefore be defined in terms of the consciousness of our mysterious existence as free subjects who "do not possess ourselves because we have not yet made ourselves."[137] In this last statement, we can see the intellectual impetus that would eventually bring these Jesuits into dialogue with existentialism. Indeed, Fessard's greatest intellectual achievement during his years at Jersey was a thesis on Maine de Biran, an important forerunner for French existentialists like Merleau-Ponty, and the book would have an important impact on existentialist thought when Fessard finally managed to publish it in 1938.[138] This affirmation of the central place of mystery would also run throughout most of de Lubac's later work, from *Corpus Mysticum* to *The Mystery of the Supernatural*, much to the distaste of his Thomist readers. It is the same impulse that attracted him to Rousselot above the Kantian Maréchal, and it made him equally hostile to the positivism of both the secular Republicans and the neo-Scholastics.

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[134] Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, August 1924, AJPF, Fonds Fessard, 73/B.

[135] "Réponse aux objections du P. Gabriel Picard, Recteur," AJPF, Fonds Fessard, 1/1.

[136] Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, 21 January, 1924, AJPF, Fonds Fessard, 73/B.

[137] Henri de Lubac to Yves de Montcheuil, 13 February, 1924, CAEHL, 48707-8.

But perhaps the greatest lesson de Lubac and his friends took away from their experience at Jersey was the need for a new approach to apologetics capable of overcoming the extrinsicism of the Neo-Scholastic model and allowing for the possibility of a Catholic philosophy that could speak more directly to contemporary concerns. The extrinsic nature of Neo-Scholastic apologetics was a necessary corollary of the strong separation it enacted between the revealed truths of faith (dogma) and those of reason, or between theology and philosophy. By starting from this dualist position, the apologist was put in the unenviable position of having "to establish a completely extrinsic connection between the two, just as one builds a footbridge to connect separate banks."[139] Despite the best efforts of Neo-Scholastic apologists to make this flimsy "footbridge" of proofs as rationally-coherent and scientific-seeming as possible, it only served to heighten the separation between the natural and supernatural orders. The result, as de Lubac pointed out in his inaugural lecture as Professor at the Catholic University of Lyon in 1929, was a "separated theology" that "makes dogma into a kind of 'superstructure', believing that, if dogma is to remain 'supernatural', it must be 'superficial' and that, by cutting it off from all human roots, it is making dogma all the more divine."[140] At the very moment when the Church most needed to counteract its growing separation from French society—in its legal, territorial, spiritual or intellectual manifestations—such a "separated theology" only served to widen the abyss:

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[138] Gaston Fessard, *La méthode de réfexion chez Maine de Biran* (Paris: Bloud et Gay, 1938). The book was initially slated for publication in the *Archives de Philosophie*, co-edited by Descoqs, but Picard and Descoqs blocked it because of their concerns about the text's orthodoxy, further confirming for Fessard and de Lubac the backwardness of their teachers: see Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, 6 February, 1924, AJPF, Fonds Fessard, 73/B.

[139] Henri de Lubac, "Apologetics and Theology," in *Theological Fragments*, trans. By Rebecca Howell Balinksi (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1989), 93.

> Such a dualism, just when it imagined that it was most successfully opposing the negations of naturalism, was most strongly influenced by it, and the transcendence in which it hoped to preserve the supernatural with such jealous care was, in fact, a banishment. The most confirmed secularists found in it, in spite of itself, an ally.[141]

In other words, de Lubac argued that Neo-Scholasticism had become an unwitting accomplice in the secularization of French society, and this was due in no small part to its "unavowed rationalism, reinforced for a century by the invasion of positivist tendencies" into its apologetics.[142]

Blondel opened up the possibility of an alternative apologetic model, for his "method of immanence" demonstrated that the affirmation of God's existence was implicit within each and every act on the part of the subject, without having to rely upon an external set of rational proofs. The Penseurs realized that an immanent apologetics such as Blondel's could enable Catholic philosophy to speak more effectively to its secular counterpart, while reorienting it in a Christian direction. By starting from a shared, immanent point of departure (the subject), de Lubac argued, such an approach demonstrated that all philosophy "to be truly and integrally philosophy, must, in a certain way, be Christian…[because] philosophy, unable to give the total response to the problem of man and yet unable to disinterest itself in this response, cannot find its place of completion…except in revelation."[143] The best apologetic approach to the secular modern mind, in other words, was one of integration rather than defensive retreat. In a remarkable 1932 letter to Blondel, in which de

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[140] Ibid., 94-5.

[141] Henri de Lubac, *Catholicism: Christ and the Common Destiny of Man,* trans. by Lancelot Sheppard and Elizabeth Englund, with a preface by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1988 [1938]), pp. 166-7.

[142] Henri de Lubac, "Apologetics and Theology," op. cit., 93.

[143] Henri de Lubac, "On Christian Philosophy," *Communio* 19 (Fall, 1992), pp.486-7. Initially published in *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* 63 (1936): pp. 225-253.

Lubac adumbrated the central premise for his *Surnaturel*, the Jesuit credited Blondel with teaching him this crucial lesson on the need for a unifying apologetics, rather than one which drew boundaries between the natural and the supernatural, philosophy and theology, faith and reason, or the Church and the modern world: "'there is a fear of mixing, confusing; there must be a fear of not uniting enough...If the general life of humanity today too often withdraws from Christianity, it is perhaps because Christianity has too often been uprooted from the inner viscera of man.'"[144]

This was all the more urgent since Catholic thought had been evicted from the secular University of the Third Republic. "We absolutely must, with all our power, help Catholic thought to finally regain its influence...without brainwashing or insincere methods," de Lubac wrote to Fessard.[145] To do so would require the Church to incarnate itself more fully in modern intellectual life, so as to steer it in a more Catholic direction, rather than retreating into a protective intellectual ghetto:

> If there has been this break between Catholic thought and modern thought, this is because, for several centuries now, the Church is no longer at the forefront of intellectual movement: instead of holding ourselves at the heart of those centers from which new ideas shine forth, in order to force them, so to speak, to refract themselves through our prism before they spread out into the world, we are indolent spectators playing some old man's game in solitude. And when others come to warn us that the century is leaving us behind in order to run off to the idols, the anathemas we launch back are the subject of mockery for our enemies and of pain for our friends...[146]

But so long as Neo-Scholasticism dominated Catholic philosophy, de Lubac and his friends despaired of being able to heal this breach. "How can we hope to resurrect Catholic thought," de Lubac complained to Fessard, "when there are those who strive to deepen the ditch between what one calls 'Scholastic philosophy' and what one calls 'Modern thought,' a striving coupled with an absolute bias against understanding the latter?"[147] Even more significantly, the Neo-Scholastic doctrines these integrists sought to protect against the ravages of modernism were often relative latecomers to the Catholic Tradition. The irony, as de Lubac pointed out to Montcheuil, was that "the so-called 'traditional doctrine' that an army of fossilized professors brandishes with constant threats is not, for the most part, any more traditional than it is satisfying to the spirit."[148] Here we see an early iteration of an argument that will play a major role in de Lubac's later historical critiques of Neo-Scholasticism, and particularly his claim in *Surnaturel* that the theory of "pure nature" was an invention of the early modern period.

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[144] Maurice Blondel, cited in Henri de Lubac to Maurice Blondel, 3 April, 1932, in *At the Service of the Church*, op. cit., 185.

[145] Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, 10 March, 1924, AJPF, Fonds Fessard, 73/B.

[146] Robert Hamel to Henri de Lubac, 23 November, 1923, CAEHL, 3785.

This full-throated opposition to Neo-Scholasticism was also inextricable from the group of friends' growing hostility to the politics of the Action Française, for these two philosophies reigned hand-in-hand at Jersey.[149] Fouilloux argues that their attachment to Blondel helped to inoculate the "Penseurs" against the siren song of Maurrasisme, despite the predispositions most of them inherited from their conservative, royalist family backgrounds.[150] Alfred de Soras, for instance, admitted to his friend Montcheuil that he had "'in the past, due to family tradition, adhered to Maurras' movement,'" but that "'as I gradually grew more fully conscious of what is entailed in a life that is perfectly Catholic and devoted to the Church, I also felt more surely all that was narrow and stifling about the naturalism and nationalism of Maurras.'"[151] Hamel was similarly both attracted and repelled by the AF, although Maurras' positivism, atheism, and authoritarianism were what finally drove him away from the party.[152] Echoing Blondel's critique of Catholic Maurrasians as cleaving to an "authority without love," Hamel wondered:

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[147] Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, 10 May, 1924, AJPF, Fonds Fessard, 73/B.

[148] Henri de Lubac to Yves de Montcheuil, 1926 or 1927 (undated), CAEHL, 48781. De Lubac made a similar argument in another letter to Montcheuil on 23 September, 1925, pointing to the hypocrisy displayed by neo-Scholastics who accused Blondel of "modernism": "But why does one oppose authors like Blondel and Paliard, as 'moderns', to 'traditional thought'? They should instead be seen as contemporary representatives of the Catholic tradition, who, in the domain of philosophy, oppose erroneous doctrines. But how to make others understand this?...as soon as one holds a different opinion, one appears exaggerated, false, revolutionary!" CAEHL, 48777.

[149] The dominance of the AF at Jersey is borne out by a 1930 report on the "État d'esprit du Scolasticat de Fourvière," quoted in Chantraine, *Henri de Lubac*, 618. De Lubac also complained about the "thrall of the A.F. over so many" of his colleagues and professors at Ore Place: letter to Robert Hamel, 13 May, 1925, AJPF, Fonds de Lubac, 42/1.

[150] Fouilloux, *Yves de Montcheuil*, 21.

> How could Maurras—who has not understood Catholicism and has seen in it only a social order without God, without a soul, without love—have understood the people of France?...The challenge is not to create a clientele of passive disciples, who listen open-mouthed and repeat, but to arouse as much thought and life as possible, and in the process, constantly to refuse to tie oneself and others down."[153]

The Penseurs thus echoed a number of the elements of Blondel's dispute with Descoqs, but to the extent that their criticisms of Maurras aligned almost exactly with the faults they observed in the Neo-Scholasticism of their teacher, it is perhaps more appropriate to credit their rejection of the AF to this broader anti-Scholasticism, rather than to the specific influence of Blondel. For these young men, adherence to the Action Française was part and parcel of the rationalism, anti-modernism, and rigidity they so disliked in their teachers' Suarezianism. Both ideologies stressed a top-down model of authority and the existence of a fixed, objective order—whether in the spiritual or sociopolitical realm—at the expense of the dignity and agency of the human subject. This of course was difficult to square with the supernatural dignity de Lubac and his friends attributed to the human subject, stressing as they did "the infinity of our freedom, by which, above all, we are the image of God."[154] The Neo-Scholastic bifurcation of the natural and supernatural orders rendered the subject just as passive in the face of God's gratuitous gift of grace, as of the sociopolitical authorities.

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[151] Alfred de Soras to Yves de Montcheuil, 6 March, 1927, quoted in ibid.

[152] See Robert Hamel to Henri de Lubac, 23 June, 1925, AJPF, Fonds de Lubac, 42/1.

[153] Robert Hamel to Henri de Lubac, 16 March, 1926, CAEHL, 3898-9.

[154] Henri de Lubac to Robert Hamel, 24 February, 1923, CAEHL, 3754.

The irony, as de Lubac pointed out, was that the very same Catholics who turned to the Action Française out of hostility to secular Republicanism, were responsible for articulating the "separated theology" that led to a "separated religion, inevitable ally of *laïcisme*."[155] Given the shared Comtean genealogy of both Republicanism and the Action Française, this is perhaps not as outlandish a claim as one might think. While the love affair between Neo-Scholasticism and the Action Française alienated the "Penseurs" from both, it therefore did not lead them to a rapprochement with Republican democracy either. In the aftermath of the 1926 Vatican condemnation of the Action Française, they would develop a more coherent alternative model for an authentically Catholic social order—one that overcomes the separationist model of both Republicanism and Neo-Scholasticism, without devolving into theocracy. This will be the subject of the next chapter.

Towards an Intellectual History of Friendship

In stressing the formative role of their experiences at Jersey, I by no means wish to elide the extent to which the intellectual, spiritual, and social commitments of the "Penseurs" evolved and shifted between the early 1920s and their mature expression in the 1940s. While many of the elements of their innovative philosophical and theological contributions are already evident in embryonic form in their letters and essays as scholastics, these early formulations also differ in significant ways from their later iterations. Most obviously, de Lubac and his friends remained relatively bound within the constellation of philosophical positions available to Catholics in the 1920s. They were Blondelians, in other words, but had not yet gone beyond this to carve out a new intellectual identity that would be characteristically their own. They thus continued to identify as Thomists in this period—albeit in the tradition of Rousselot or Maréchal, and in opposition to the

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[155] Henri de Lubac to Robert Hamel, 26 July, 1928, CAEHL, 3924.

Suarezianism of their teachers. De Lubac would certainly never repudiate Saint Thomas, and would continue to articulate a critique of Neo-Scholasticism based on its divergence from the positions of the historical Thomas. Yet, it is clear that the Church Fathers would displace Thomas as the primary resource for his mature theological project of *ressourcement*, and would underwrite its distinction from the Modernism of Blondel. As a corollary, de Lubac moved away somewhat from the project of assimilating modern philosophy to Catholic theology, and towards the recovery of a more robust patristic theology that could better maintain both the traditionalism of the Church and its responsiveness to the new forces unleashed by modernization. In articulating a distinct identity from Blondel and Modernism, he and Fessard would also come to articulate a vision less premised on the centrality of the subject, which had been so crucial to their Blondelian thinking at Jersey, focusing instead on the social bond and the role of history in the life of the Church.

As their intellectual and political outlook evolved over the course of subsequent decades, the individual trajectories of the "Penseurs" would likewise begin to diverge. During their formative years at Jersey, however, their friendship was rooted in the solid foundation of a shared set of values, and especially a shared dissatisfaction with the integrist worldview of their instructors' generation. Their letters thus reveal a strong sense of shared mission to renovate the intellectual and spiritual life of the Church:

> Your letters bring me, each time, a renewed confidence...we must hope that we will eventually be able to accomplish some true work together. Then we will sketch out grandiose plans—and what is even better, with the help of others like Fr. Fessard, we will realize them. And ultimately it won't be much and it will be heavily criticized, but at least we will have done it for the good Lord. Others will continue it, will do more and better. This work is important, because it is of widespread significance and is very necessary...So what joy I find in your letters telling me of your enterprises, conversations, essays! I hope that the good Lord will give me the necessary strength to help you when the time comes...[156]

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[156] Henri de Lubac to Robert Hamel, 10 November 1923, CAEHL, 3782.

These words of support from de Lubac to Hamel reveal the extent to which the friends relied upon both the emotional support and intellectual affirmation of the group to compensate for their sense of alienation from the mainstream of the Church. "Our generation is not afraid of changing its habits; it fears only error," Hamel wrote to Lubac, defining what set them apart from their teachers at Jersey.[157] Theirs was "the cause of light," Lubac wrote, within a Church gripped by the resurgence of integrism, as Rome launched campaigns against Maréchal, Rousselot, Valensin, Bremond, Lagrange, and Teilhard in the early 1920s.[158]

Intellectual historians often establish links between particular thinkers based on similarities between their intellectual projects or their shared participation in a self-conscious movement, but the case of de Lubac's circle at Jersey points to the often overlooked role that friendship ties play in intellectual development. Recent work by historical sociologists on the formative role of friendship in spurring creative work helps to support this. By examining historical case studies such as the French Impressionists and the Fugitive poets, Michael Farrell has developed a theory for how and why such collaborative circles emerge that fits the profile of the Pensée group in a number of ways. Above all, he argues, "collaborative circles that develop innovative visions flourish in turbulent cultural environments, where two or more visions of a discipline, like high and low pressure fronts on a weather map, vie for centrality in a single place."[159] This could not be a more fitting description of Jersey in the early 1920s. Moreover, Farrell argues that such innovative circles are particularly likely to form amongst those who feel alienated from the established authorities in their field or are subject to sanctions from these authorities, but who are also deeply ambitious. They tend to be relatively young and at an early, transitional stage in their career, still studying or building an identity for themselves within their discipline.[160] "Once formed, a circle constitutes its own subculture," Farrell argues. "At the heart of the subculture is the shared vision of the members—a new theory and methodology that they introduce into their discipline," such as the alternative to Neo-Scholasticism de Lubac and his friends began to articulate at Jersey.[161] This portrait also fits with Thomas Kuhn's argument that paradigm shifts in scientific thinking are likely to be the work of relative outsiders to the field, "for obviously these are the men who, being little committed by prior practice to the traditional rules of normal science, are particularly likely to see that those rules no longer define a playable game and to conceive another set that can replace them."[162] Such insights can shed much-needed light on how innovations emerge within a deeply hierarchical and conservative institution like the Church, whose authority derives from precisely its claim to represent an unchanging set of truths.

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[157] Robert Hamel to Henri de Lubac, 28 November, 1923, CAEHL, 3787.

[158] Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, February 1923, AJPF, Fonds Fessard, 73/A.

[159] Michael Farrel, *Collaborative Circles: Friendship Dynamics and Creative Work* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 268. For more on the role of friendship in the development of religious thought, with a particular focus on interreligious friendships, see William Young, *Uncommon Friendships: An Amicable History of Modern Religious Thought* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2009).

It is particularly important to stress the role of affective bonds, and not just a shared intellectual agenda, in making possible these sorts of innovations. In order to possess the strength necessary to resist the pressure to conform to the dominant paradigm in their field and feel that they inhabit a safe space for creative experimentation, these innovators require both a reservoir of emotional support and critical feedback for their ideas. The connection between affective and intellectual community within de Lubac's circle is everywhere evident in their letters. For instance, writing to Hamel from Fourvière, he rejoiced to "have a whole band of friends here now, which makes the atmosphere of the house pleasant to breathe, and gives one a taste for work."[163] Hamel's letters likewise manifest the strong links between the affective and intellectual aspects of their friendship:

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[160] Farrell, *Collaborative Circles*, 278.

[161] Ibid., 270.

[162] Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962), 90.

[163] Henri de Lubac to Robert Hamel, 11 July, 1928, CAEHL.

> I am still under the spell of our long conversations from our vacation, when all three of us [de Lubac, Fessard, Hamel] found ourselves so alike...it would be better to say that we are friends, and that the little group Rev. Picard so feared will not have the nefarious effect he so dreaded.[164]

The project of intellectual renovation these young Jesuits sought to enact was thus inseparable from their close affective ties, and this was all the more important because of their physical as well as intellectual isolation. Banished from their homeland, cut off from their families (and, of course, unable to engage in romantic relationships), members of a subculture within the subculture of the Jesuit order, such affective bonds took on a heightened significance.

They were particularly important to a young Henri de Lubac, whose chronic lack of confidence frequently led him to despair of producing any worthwhile intellectual work. His voluminous correspondence with Fessard, Montcheuil, and Hamel allowed him to test out new ideas in a supportive setting and receive critical feedback, while his friends' distinct intellectual interests introduced him to new ideas and authors to which he might not otherwise have been exposed. Moreover, his own reading of Blondel and the other formative texts of the group's para-curriculum were of course filtered through his conversations with his friends. In their correspondence with one another, the friends could be far more honest in their evaluations of the dominant thinkers and movements of the day than they could have been in any published document, which would have been subject to ecclesiastical censorship and might have provoked sanctions from their superiors. These relationships also served an important editorial function. For instance, de Lubac read and edited virtually every single piece of writing Fessard produced well into the 1940s and 1950s, including multiple drafts of the same text. De Lubac's faith in his friend's intellectual potential was inexhaustible, as he constantly badgered Fessard to produce ever more publications. The two men would provide an immeasurable reservoir of support for one another during their never-ending troubles with their superiors, which began during their student days at Fourvière.[165] De Lubac would also take on the task of publishing most of Montcheuil's work after his untimely death in 1944. De Lubac paid tribute to the formative role these friendships played in his intellectual trajectory, writing to Fessard in 1935: "I increasingly realize that our Jersey adventure is more extraordinary than, in our candor, we truly realized…one must admit that we did not "educate" ourselves in the same way as all these other good and docile theologians."[166]

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[164] Robert Hamel to Henri de Lubac, 29 April, 1926, CAEHL, 3903.

In this way, many of the most important innovations in postwar Catholic theology and philosophy were present, albeit in embryonic form, in the correspondence between Lubac and his friends during and immediately after their time at Jersey. This is a testament to the extraordinary theological fecundity of the exile experience, and of moments of institutional crisis within the Church more generally. On the one hand, the isolation of exile was inscribed theologically in the extrinsicist Neo-Scholastic model, which in many ways mirrored the separationist discourse of the anticlerical Third Republic. As de Lubac recalled much later, '"there was a sort of unconscious conspiracy between the movement which led to secularism and a certain theology, and while the supernatural was *exiled* and proscribed, one began to think that the supernatural was thus placed beyond the reach of nature, in the realm where it must reign."'[167] The language of exile is crucial here, for it was also the experience of exile, particularly coming on the heels of the enforced social integration of the First World War, that brought into focus for de Lubac and his friends the precise relationship between Neo-Scholastic dualism and *laïcité*. This intellectual realization dovetailed with the material benefits and institutional restructuring brought about by exile—the merging of separate Jesuit houses of formation, the absence of distractions, and the presence of a buffer against the excesses of the Modernist Crisis—to produce the conditions for theological renewal. From the unlikely context of an isolated little Channel Island, caught between a Republic dominated by the forces of anticlericalism and a Church dominated by the forces of anti-modernism, a powerful movement to bridge the abyss between Church and world would emerge. In their experience of exile, these young Jesuits perceived a figure for the broader exile of the Church in the modern world. The 1930s would see the beginning of a homecoming.

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[165] On the concerns of de Lubac's Provincial about the orthodoxy of his group, as well as Fontoynont's defense of his student and friend, see Chantraine, *Henri de Lubac*, 660-72; On Fessard's delayed ordination, possibly due to doubts about his "theological and philosophical orthodoxy" expressed by Descoqs and Picard, see Gaston Fessard to Henri de Lubac, 1 April, 1934; 8 February, 1932; 25 July, 1932, AJPF, Fonds Fessard, 73/C.

[166] Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, 30 August, 1935, AJPF, Fonds Fessard, 73/2.

[167] Henri de Lubac, "Causes internes de l'atténuation et de la disparition du sens du Sacré," in *Theologie dans l'histoire II: Questions disputées et résistance au nazisme* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1990), 19-21. Emphasis added.

Chapter 2: From Royalism to the Mystical Body of Christ: The Interwar Revolution in French Catholic Political Theology

The anticlerical legislation that culminated in the separation of Church and state in 1905 shook the institutional and intellectual foundations of French Catholic theology to their core. As the previous chapter has shown, the legal assault on the religious orders formed a central plank of this anticlerical campaign. Driving roughly 30,000 monks and nuns into exile, this legislation meant that a new generation of theologians would receive their formation at religious houses in exile, such as the Jesuit scholasticate on the Channel-Island of Jersey.[1] It was here that, in 1920, a young Henri de Lubac developed a close personal friendship and intellectual alliance with a number of other young Jesuits who shared his distaste for the prevailing winds of Catholic theology. Together they began to articulate a Nouvelle Théologie that would profoundly reshape both French Catholicism and the broader Catholic Church. As the previous chapter has shown, the intellectual vibrancy of institutions like the Jersey scholasticate was a direct result of the Republic's anticlerical campaign and the enforced isolation it imposed on the exiled orders.

It was their time at Jersey that most forcefully convinced these young Jesuits of the sterility of the Neo-Scholastic model that had come to dominate Catholic theology since Leo XIII revived the teachings of Thomas Aquinas in 1879. With the condemnation of "Catholic Modernism" in 1903, Neo-Scholasticism's monopoly over Catholic orthodoxy was complete. When de Lubac and his friends arrived at the Jesuit scholasticate of Jersey in 1920, they entered an institution still dominated by the Neo-Scholasticism of Pedro Descoqs. Like all Neo-Scholastics, Descoqs was less interested in Thomas Aquinas than in his sixteenth-century commentators, who tended to foreground the Aristotelian elements in the Thomist corpus. As a result, he stressed the autonomy of the natural order—governed by the principles of natural law—from the supernatural realm of revealed truth. In part, this was an effort to protect the sanctity of the supernatural order by withdrawing it into a protected sphere immune from the encroachment of secularization. But de Lubac and his cohort perceived it in quite the opposite terms. By thus evacuating the supernatural from human affairs, they went so far as to claim that Neo-Scholasticism had become an unwitting accomplice in the secularization of the French state. The "separated theology" of Neo-Scholastics like Descoqs simply mirrored, and therefore intensified, the separation of Church and state enacted by the French Republic.

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[1] A scholasticate is an institution where Jesuits receive their philosophical training after completing their novitiate and juniorate, and before undertaking their theological studies at a theologate.

Against the rival dualisms of Neo-Scholastic theology and secular Republicanism, the first chapter discussed de Lubac and his friends' longing for a theological alternative that could bridge the growing divide between the Church and the modern world. The need for such an alternative had become clear to them from their experiences in the trenches of the First World War. Thanks to the anticlerical legislation that repealed the clerical exemption on military service, theirs were the first generation of clergy to see active military service during the war. The leveling effect of the trenches would have an incalculable effect on this group of young men, exposing them to a whole class of Frenchmen from whom their own socioeconomic background and the isolation imposed by their vocation had previously segregated them. They were astonished by the level of unbelief they observed among the lower orders of French society. It forced them to recognize the enormous gulf that had emerged between the Church and the masses, and the need for new apologetic and evangelical tools to bridge it.[2]

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[2] See esp. Robert Hamel to Henri de Lubac, 21 December, 1923, Centre d'Archives et d'Études Henri de Lubac [henceforth CAEHL], Namur, Belgium, 3794; the best resource on the Catholic experience during the war remains Annette Becker, *War and Faith: The Religious Imagination of France, 1914-1930,* trans. by Helen McPhail (New York: Berg, 1998).

As long as Church-state relations were defined by the mutual intransigence of the Neo-Scholastics and the Republicans, these efforts would come to naught. The wartime sacrifices of Catholic clergy and laymen inspired a period of relative détente when the Republic scaled back implementation of the anticlerical legislation, but the larger barrier lay in the fact that most Catholics had not fully accepted the separation of Church and state. From the moment this legislation went into effect, Catholics had thrown themselves behind the Action Française, the royalist movement led by Charles Maurras. The alliance between Maurras and French Catholics was by no means self-evident, however, as Maurras was himself a nonbeliever who adhered to the positivist philosophy of Auguste Comte. Accordingly, he sought to organize French society according to laws of "political physics" akin to those governing the natural world. But he happened to believe that such laws mandated a strongly hierarchical society under the authority of a king, and so he found a ready ally in Catholics who perceived the restoration of the monarchy as the surest path to the restoration of the confessional state. By 1920, under the influence of prominent representatives such as Jacques Maritain and Pedro Descoqs, Neo-Scholasticism had established itself as the "official theology" of the Action Française. Together, the Action Française and Neo-Scholasticism had come to define the politico-theological horizons of French Catholicism.

All that changed in December of 1926, when Pius XI condemned the Action Française and placed the works of Maurras on the Index of Forbidden Books. This event sent shockwaves through the French Catholic Church, for many Catholics of this generation viewed political support for the Action Française as something like a religious duty. The condemnation broke the unassailable identity between Catholicism and Royalism, reorienting Catholic politics away from an exclusive effort to reverse the separation of Church and state. But because Maurras' own royalist convictions stemmed from an atheist, positivist philosophy, the condemnation was also framed as an injunction against Catholic collaboration with atheist ideologies for the purposes of shared political goals. This was a stance that Pius would reaffirm with his condemnation of "Atheistic Communism" in 1937. In its stead, he promoted a new form of Catholic engagement in the temporal order—a movement that would spread Catholic values and social concerns while remaining above the fray of party politics. Known as "Catholic Action," it endowed the laity with a new role in reversing the process of secularization. The laity would henceforth be the "yeast in the dough" of the secular temporal order, leavening it with Catholic values and compensating for the dwindling temporal powers of the clergy across Europe. Catholic Action took a particular shape in the French context, where it was oriented towards the evangelization of specific classes that had hitherto proved recalcitrant to Catholic influence—most notably, the working classes. It was here that Catholic Action militants clashed most openly with Communists in a battle for the hearts and minds of the working poor.

These groundbreaking shifts in the political landscape of French Catholicism called for a new theological approach to the role of the Church in temporal affairs. The condemnation of the Action Française had dealt a severe blow to both the royalist movement and the Neo-Scholastic theology with which it was allied. Neo-Scholasticism had lost its monopoly over the intellectual life and political theology of the Church, and into this theological vacuum stepped a host of younger theologians who, like de Lubac and his friends, sought to bridge the gulf between the Church and modern society. This generation of thinkers unequivocally rejected the possibility of a return to the confessional state. Instead, they concentrated on establishing a political theology appropriate to the new realities of the secular political order—one that would enable Catholics to be *in* the secular public sphere but not *of* it. This required establishing a distinctly Catholic alternative to the dominant secular ideologies of the day: liberalism, communism, and fascism. Known as "personalism," this movement presented Catholicism as the only social force capable of transcending the excesses of liberal individualism and its collectivist alternatives, and it functioned as the politico-theological basis for the new Catholic Action movements.

Catholic personalists thus articulated one of the earliest variants of totalitarianism theory—the notion that Communism and Nazism share a common political form—and one of the earliest critiques of totalitarianism.[3] James Chappel has convincingly demonstrated this, but as I argue in the following chapter, Chappel's focus on Jacques Maritain as the face of Catholic personalism distorts both the nature of personalism and of anti-totalitarianism more broadly. In defining French personalism, most scholars have equated it with Maritain's vision of a "New Christendom" that would guarantee the dignity of the human person and preserve a robust civil society against the threat of collectivism. And yet, I argue, this model relied upon the very same Neo-Scholastic distinction between the natural and supernatural orders that had formerly justified Catholic support for the Action Française. Maritain's genius was to re-appropriate the apparently discredited Neo-Scholastic framework, eventually transforming it into the primary theological warrant for Christian democracy in the postwar period. By hitching their definition of Catholic personalism to this model, scholars have presumed that Catholic anti-totalitarianism derived from a defense of individual dignity and civil society.

This chapter recovers an alternative Catholic critique of totalitarianism that was in fact much more widespread than Maritain's and took as its starting point a very different kind of person. Figuring the Catholic Church as the "mystical body of Christ," theologians like de Lubac developed what I would call an "ecclesiastical personalism." For these theologians, the Church and not the individual human being was the pre-eminent person upon whom Catholics ought to focus in their efforts in order to combat both liberal individualism and totalitarianism. Proponents of this organicist, unitary vision of the Church as Christ's mystical body were deeply suspicious of Maritain's focus on the individual person and of his Neo-Scholastic distinction between the natural and supernatural orders. De Lubac and his friends had already pointed out the way this Neo-Scholastic tendency to erect a barrier between the natural and supernatural orders served as an "unconsciously accomplice of *laïcisme*," and they viewed Maritain's Neo-Scholastic personalism as a similarly inadmissible concession to the principles of secular politics.[4] The Catholic response to totalitarian ideologies could not emerge from a basically liberal defense of the individual or of civil society, they argued, but required a competing totalitarianism, albeit one that would empower rather than crush the human person. The totalitarian state, many French Catholics came to believe in the 1930s, could only be effectively challenged by a "totalitarian Church." Scholars have overlooked this powerful strand of Catholic anti-totalitarianism because it was elaborated within the field of ecclesiology—the theology of the Church—a field that most scholars have assumed to be, by definition, apolitical. Instead, I argue that ecclesiology can be read as a kind of *counter-politics* that rejects the very terms in which secular politics is conducted. Accordingly, this model can shed light on the limits of approaching theological movements in terms of political concepts whose genealogy is distinctly secular. Recovering the political stakes of this apparently apolitical theological discourse gives us a fuller understanding not only of how Catholics have engaged with the secular public sphere, but also of the roots of anti-totalitarianism more broadly.

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[3] This has been convincingly demonstrated by James Chappel in "The Origins of Totalitarianism Theory in Interwar Europe," *Modern Intellectual History* 8, 3 (2011), 561-590. Although the term was first employed in Italy in the 1920s, it achieved its canonical status during the Cold War, under the influence of Hannah Arendt, Raymond Aron, and Karl Popper. The literature on this subject is vast, but some of the most important contributions include Hans Maier, ed., *Totalitarianism and Political Religions, Volume 1: Concepts for the Comparison of Dictatorships* (New York: Routledge, 2005); Ian Kershaw, *The Nazi Dictatorship: Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation* (Baltimore, MD: Arnold, 1985); Abbott Gleason, *Totalitarianism: The Inner History of the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995). Although the Catholics I discuss here were beginning to develop their theory of totalitarianism in the 1930s, it would only reach mature expression during the war, as a result of their Resistance activities. This mature anti-totalitarian vision will be discussed in the subsequent chapter, but its roots are already evident here.

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[4] Henri de Lubac, "Remarques sur l'histoire du mot 'surnaturel,'" *Nouvelle revue théologique* 61 (1934), 364; Henri de Lubac to Robert Hamel, 26 July, 1928, CAEHL, 3924.

"Maurras has been condemned; will Thomas be next?"[5]

For a generation of Catholic intellectuals who had lived through the dual traumas of Church-State separation and the First World War, to be a Catholic was to be a partisan of the Action Française. Led by the charismatic Charles Maurras, the AF emerged as a political force in the polarized climate of the Dreyfus Affair, which proved particularly conducive to its nationalist, anti-republican message. Although himself a nonbeliever, Maurras recognized in the Catholic Church a useful ally in the struggle against the forces of republicanism, which were in the process of systematically dismantling the traditional privileges of the Church in France. In 1906, just one year after the Law of Separation, Maurras penned *Le Dilemme de Marc Sagnier*, dedicated to "the Catholic Church, Church of Order."[6] The work was a powerful paean to the "old and holy maternal figure of historical Catholicism," which stood as a bastion of order against the chaos of republicanism and a testament to the Roman origins of French civilization.[7] Referring to the fledgling Catholic pro-democracy movement led by Marc Sagnier, Maurras called upon French Catholics to make a choice between "the monarchical positivism of Action Française or the social Christianity of Sillon."[8] That choice would be effectively made for Catholics when, in 1910, Maurras' well-placed clerical supporters secured a condemnation of the Sillon from Rome. Henceforth, the AF would maintain a virtual monopoly on Catholic politics until its own condemnation in 1926. In the memorable words of Yves Simon—longtime friend of Jacques Maritain and future theorist of Christian Democracy—the Action Française exercised "an almost complete dictatorship over Catholic intellectual circles.

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[5] Charles Maurras, quoted in Jacques Prévotat, *Les catholiques et l'Action française: histoire d'une condamnation, 1899-1939* (Paris: Fayard, 2001), 445.

[6] Charles Maurras, *La démocratie religieuse: le dilemme de Marc Sangnier, la politique religieuse, l'action française et la religion catholique* (Paris: Nouvelle librairie nationale, 1921), 13.

[7] Ibid., 25; this passage is also quoted in Michael Sutton, *Nationalism, Positivism, and Catholicism: The Politics of Charles Maurras and French Catholics, 1890-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 98.

[8] Maurras, *La démocratie religieuse*, 13.

Whoever came out as a democrat in these circles was doomed to be the object of an ironical and scornful pity; he was looked down upon as a person behind the times, a survivor of another age."[9]

Despite their shared resistance to the ideology of the Third Republic, the alliance between Maurras and French Catholics was by no means self-evident. The most obvious barrier to cooperation was of course Maurras' agnosticism. As a disciple of Auguste Comte, Maurras shared the secular, positivist presuppositions of the Republican worldview. His was not the traditional Royalism of a romanticized Middle Ages, but an emphatically modern project to organize society according the principles of "political physics." For a Comtean positivist like Maurras, the social order exhibited the same law-like regularity as the natural order from which it stemmed. His "organizing empiricism" sought to uncover these laws, which he believed called for a rigidly-order and hierarchical society governed by a king. What attracted Maurras to the Catholic Church, therefore, was not its religious or ethical teachings, but its institutional form. Like Carl Schmitt, he was full of admiration for the hierarchical, centralized Church whose "religious essence, for its external admirers, corresponds to the most general notion of order."[10] Maurras' positivist stress on order took him very far from the traditional Catholic Royalism, with its romantic nostalgia for the medieval Golden Age of the Church, as well as from the "blood and soil" nationalism associated with fascism.

The shared positivist genealogy underwriting both *maurrassisme* and Republicanism was not lost on a few critics of the AF, but most Catholics did not give it much thought. The majority of Catholics who sympathized with the AF had not even read Maurras' work and were rather surprised to learn in 1926 of his agnosticism and the decidedly anti-Christian bent of his earlier writings. But the alliance between French Catholics and the Action Française was based on more than just ignorance, willful or otherwise. Instead, there were elements in the Maurrassian worldview, well beyond his obviously attractive political goals, that appealed to Catholics at the forefront of the Neo-Scholastic revival.[11]

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[9] Yves Simon, *The Road to Vichy, 1918-1939*, rev. ed., trans. by James A. Corbett and George J. McMorrow (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1988), 42.

[10] Maurras, *La Démocratie religieuse*, 18; see also Carl Schmitt, *Roman Catholicism and Political Form*, trans. By G.L. Ulmen (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1966).

First among these was Maurras' neo-classicism, which dovetailed with the strong Aristotelian inflection of Neo-Scholastic philosophy. Thomas Aquinas' early-modern commentators had stressed these Aristotelian elements at the expense of the Angelic Doctor's debts to Augustine. Neo-Scholastic theologians whose reading of Thomas was filtered through his early-modern commentators were therefore among the leading clerical defenders of the Action Française. They included de Lubac's teacher Pedro Descoqs—familiar to us from the previous chapter—as well as Dominicans like Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, Humbert Clérissac, and Thomas Pègues.[12] Neo-Scholastic theologians such as these could recognize themselves in Maurras' nationalist narrative, which figured France as the inheritor and defender of the great classical civilizations of Rome and Athens, against the onslaught of barbaric modern (and implicitly Protestant) philosophies imported from Germany—from cosmopolitan idealism (Kant) to nihilist irrationalism (Nietzsche). Maurras was well aware of this affinity between his own vision and the Neo-Thomist revival. In a 1924 article, he praised "'these doctrines of St. Thomas and of his master the Stagirite [Aristotle], which mount against the pale substitutes [*succédanés*] of Kantianism and Hegelianism first a critique, then a method, and finally a plan for reconstruction.'" "'There exists an inhuman Germanism,'" Maurras continued, "'that incessantly disturbs the world; we will never overcome it unless we once again return to civilizing our Europe through the teaching of Aristotle and St. Thomas.'"[13]

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[11] On the relationship between Neo-Scholasticism and the Action Française, see the magisterial work of Jacques Prévotat, *Les catholiques et l'Action française*, 441-8; On the specifically Dominican context, see André Laudouze, *Dominicains français et Action Française, 1899-1940: Maurras au couvent* (Paris: Éditions Ouvrières, 1989), ch. 5-7; On the Jesuit context and the role of Descoqs in particular, see Peter Bernardi, *Maurice Blondel, Social Catholicism, & Action Française* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1999).

[12] On Garrigou-Lagrange, see the sympathetic account of Richard Peddicord, *The Sacred Monster of Thomism: An Introduction to the Life and Legacy of Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange* (South Bend, IN: St. Augustine's Press, 2005). Garrigou-Lagrange was of course the leading force behind the Vatican condemnation of the Nouvelle Théologie in 1950. He wielded an extraordinary level of influence through his post at the Angelicum in Rome, and was an invaluable clerical ally for the AF. It was through his influence and that of Humbert Clérissac, OP that a young Jacques Maritain was drawn into the orbit of the Action Française, along with Massis. See Laudouze, *Dominicains français et Action Française,* op. cit. 23-7.

The advent of the Modernist Crisis solidified this alliance between Neo-Scholasticism and the Action Française, uniting them around a common theologico-political enemy in the form of so-called "Catholic Modernists," such as Blondel and Laberthonnière.[14] For their most vociferous critics, the democratic leanings of these "Modernists" were inextricable from their efforts to modernize Catholic theology and philosophy more broadly. The result was an ever closer association between the politics of royalism and the theological battle against "Modernism." As Jacques Maritain later recalled, the attraction the AF exerted on priests such as his own confessor, Humbert Clérissac, had everything to do with "the dangers that, in those days, "modernism" posed to the dogmatic formulae of the faith." For Clérissac, the fact "that the AF, from the outside, fought against its errors, that it denounced without fail the influence of a Bergson, the anti-intellectualism of a Blondel, of a Laberthonnière—all this endeared it all the more..."[15]

Henceforth, and until the 1926 condemnation, the forces of political and theological anti-modernism would be firmly aligned. Maurras' tirade against idealism and irrationalism is a testament to the surprisingly similar epistemological framework underwriting both his "organizing empiricism" and the Neo-Scholastic worldview. Although they obviously differed over the supernatural question of God's existence, both agreed that humans could arrive at an objective understanding of the natural order because it exhibited a rational structure that made it intelligible to human reason unaided by revelation. In other words, both agnostics like Maurras and Catholics could arrive at the same set of truths about the social organization dictated by natural law, even if they disagreed on the origin of that law. Maurras made this plain in *Le Dilemme de Marc Sagnier*, arguing:

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[13] Quoted in Michel Fourcade, "Feu la modernite? Maritain et les maritainismes," PhD diss., Université Paul Valéry (Montpellier III), 1999, 242. Consulted at the Cercle d'Études Jacques et Raïssa Maritain [henceforth, CEJRM], Kolbsheim, France.

[14] See the discussion of Maurras' quarrels with both Blondel and Laberthonnière in Sutton, *Nationalism, Positivism and Catholicism*, op. cit., ch. 4 and 5.

[15] Reported in Henri Massis, *Maurras et notre temps* (Paris: La Palatine, 1951), 169.

> A political philosophy can be "Christian first and foremost" without in any way contradicting our own. It is true that it looks to metaphysics and religion for justifications that we do not require. But what does it justify through this appeal to the supernatural? Natural laws. Now, if we grasp these same natural laws, if we formulate them in the same terms as this "Christian thought," we then have the right to say that this "Christian thought" agrees with us, as we do with it, on the particular terrain, defined, specified, and circumscribed by these laws.[16]

Pedro Descoqs had already made this point in the course of his 1909 polemic with Maurice Blondel on the possibility of a Catholic alliance with the Action Française. Because it would be a theological error to claim "that reason cannot attain certain truths of the natural order without the notion of God and the help of revelation," Descoqs argued that the clear opposition between Maurras and Catholics "in terms of dogmatic and moral speculation" did not imply an "irreducible opposition on the practical terrain."[17] Just as St. Thomas had selectively appropriated the rational truths of Aristotle's pagan philosophy in the service of a higher Christian synthesis, Descoqs argued, Catholics could successfully appropriate the "partial truths" discovered by the agnostic Maurras in the service of a truly Catholic politics.[18]

Critics of the Action Française and its Catholic apologists were quick to point out the extraordinary scission between the natural and supernatural orders implied by this approach. If agnostics and Catholics could agree upon the principles of social order because these are rooted in nature and intelligible to reason, what role is left for revelation and faith in the organization of temporal affairs? Not much, for Neo-Scholastics who maintained that the natural and supernatural ends of man are distinct, albeit hierarchically ordered. As we saw in the previous chapter, this dualism was a corollary of the Neo-Scholastic theology of grace that de Lubac would spend his life battling, and which Blondel had pejoratively termed "monophorism" in 1909. Rather than recognizing in human nature an innate drive or vocation for the supernatural, Blondel argued, Catholic supporters of the AF treated the supernatural as "purely extrinsic; it is superimposed not only as a gratuitous and superfluous intervention, but as a heavy yoke, contrary to the claims of nature and of reason: supreme and incomparable lesson of passivity."[19] This authoritarian understanding of grace, imposed from above on a passive human subject, was the theological equivalent of the top-down model of authority the Action Française advocated in the political arena. In other words, the common denominator between a Neo-Scholastic theology of grace and the political program of the Action Française was their shared emphasis on the passivity of the human subject. Spiritual and political authoritarianism, Blondel argued, went hand in hand.

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[16] Maurras, *La démocratie religieuse*, 6.

[17] Pedro Descoqs, *À travers l'oeuvre de M. Maurras* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1911), 147; 148.

[18] Descoqs, "Un cas de conscience," quoted in Bernardi, *Maurice Blondel, Social Catholicism, & Action Française*, 213-14.

Blondel's early diagnosis of the affinities between Neo-Scholasticism and Maurrassian royalism offers us crucial insight into what may, at first glance, seem like an unusual theologico-political alliance. It is not straightforwardly obvious how a theological vision that stressed the distinction between the natural and supernatural orders could underwrite a political project to restore the monarchy and re-establish the Church in France. Surely, this Restorationist discourse violated the autonomy of the temporal order to which Neo-Scholastics were so wedded? But we must recall that these priests inherited their political theology from the great early-modern Scholastic jurists—especially Bellarmine and Suarez—who saw no contradiction between the principle of state sovereignty in the temporal order and the model of the confessional state. Neo-Scholastics like Descoqs were very much rooted in this early-modern political theology, which equated temporal affairs with the role of the state and spiritual affairs with the jurisdiction of the Church. Each could claim sovereignty over its own sphere, which in the case of the Church, extended to cover "mixed matters" such as marriage, family life, and education. Both Church and state, moreover, were governed by analogous principles of centralized, hierarchical authority.

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[19] Marcel Breton [Maurice Blondel], "Les conclusions d'une expérience personelle," *Cahiers de la Nouvelle Journée* 10 (Paris: Bloud et Gay, 1927), 201; Blondel had already made this point in his 1909-1910 exchange with Descoqs, republished as: Testis [Maurice Blondel], *Une alliance contre nature: catholicisme et inégrisme, la semaine sociale de Bordeaux* (Brussels: Lessius, 2000).

This political theology, with its emphasis on distinct, but hierarchically ordered spheres, is the political equivalent of the Scholastic theology of grace, which treats the natural and supernatural ends of the human being as distinct but hierarchically ordered. In both cases, the relationship is one of analogy—a similarity in form rather than content, premised upon a strong separation between the elements under comparison. Imagine the natural and supernatural orders as two rooms in an apartment building that are superimposed upon each other. They are separate, belonging to different apartments, but share the same layout. Analogies such as these lie at the heart of Neo-Scholastic theology, beginning with the *analogia entis*, which allows human beings to know God analogically via the natural laws of his creation. It is precisely this analogical, formal relationship that Blondel pinpointed as the root of the alliance between Catholics and the Action Française. One need not believe in God, after all, to believe that both Church and state should be ordered hierarchically, with authority flowing down from a central figure. The result of this formal alliance, based on analogy rather than shared spiritual content, was, in Blondel's words, "a Catholicism without Christianity, a submissiveness without thought, an authority without love."[20] The power of this presumed analogy between ecclesiastical and temporal authority is evident from the account of Humbert Clérissac left by his disciple Jacques Maritain:

> [Father Clérissac] perceived with horror everything that the Church had been constrained to abandon since the Revolution...he saw where the blows to the notions of hierarchy, order,

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[20] Maurice Blondel, quoted in Joseph Komonchak, "Theology and Culture at Mid-Century: The Example of Henri de Lubac." *Theological Studies* 51 (1990), p. 596.

> which are essential to the life of the Church, had come from...as a result, he detested democracy as pure evil.[21]

For priests such as Clérissac, who saw themselves as the sacred defenders of Church authority—against both the pretensions of Catholic "Modernists" and the encroachments of the Republic—the papal condemnation of the Action Française was a humiliating blow. Their initial reaction was to question the scope of the condemnation and direct their energy towards securing a reconciliation between the Vatican and Maurras. But this foot-dragging merely intensified the Pope's resolve and led him to formalize his condemnation and place the journal of the Action Française and a number of Maurras' works on the Index of Forbidden Books. The movement's diehard clerical supporters were now left in the unenviable (not to mention, hypocritical) position of having to challenge the Pope's authority to issue such a condemnation. Recalcitrant AF supporters such as Marie-Albert Janvier and Thomas Pègues returned to their Neo-Scholastic arsenal, redeploying its dualist metaphysics to defend the autonomy of the temporal order against the infringement of the Vatican. Citing the encyclical *Immortale Dei* of 1885, which left Catholics free to determine their own political allegiances, Pègues argued that the condemnation in no way restricted the right of French Catholics "'to adhere fully to the movement of political doctrine and action that is the A.F.'"[22] The approach taken by these refractory Maurrassians, in other words, was to decouple the spiritual and political principles of the AF—just as Descoqs had—and claim that the condemnation targeted the former but not the latter. Indeed, they argued, the Pope had no authority to condemn political movements like the Action Française. This would represent an inadmissible violation of the autonomy of the temporal order, "'a domain that entirely escapes papal infallibility.'"[23]

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[21] Reported in Henri Massis, *Maurras et notre temps*, 168.

[22] Quoted in Landouze, *Dominicains française et Action Française*, 100.

[23] Consultation on the condemnation organized by the professors of the Institut Catholique de Toulouse, and led by Canons Bareille and Maisonneuve, as well as Fr. Cathala, quoted in Laudouze, *Dominicains française et Action Française*, 90.

Pius XI was quick to point out the hypocrisy exhibited by these died-in-the-wool supporters of the Action Française who, in their bitter battles against Catholic "Modernists" and the Sillon, had been the first to champion the authority of Rome. Frustrated with their obstinacy, the Pope chastised them for preaching a "'revolt against the very same authority that they themselves are pleased to proclaim as the highest, most necessary, and indispensable one.'"[24] "'What are they suggesting?'" asked one Jesuit critic of the AF, "'that papal power can be exercised legitimately...in certain cases (condemnation of the Sillon, of *l'Avenir*), but not in the case of the AF...?'"[25] Maurice Blondel—an isolated critic of the Action Française well before the condemnation made this a fashionable position; a suspected "Modernist" left out in the cold by the Neo-Scholastic ascendancy—found himself vindicated in 1926. He would pen three strongly worded essays defending the condemnation, as well as collaborating with fellow Catholic democrats to produce an issue of the *Cahiers de la Nouvelle Journée* devoted to the subject.[26] Reiterating many of the critiques he had already developed in his famous 1909 lecture on *Catholicisme social et monophorisme*, Blondel's argument against the Action Française and its Neo-Scholastic defenders was twofold. First, and in direct response to the position taken by some recalcitrant priests, he unequivocally rejected the notion that the political goals of the AF could be disentangled from the anti-Christian philosophy of Maurras. Second, he reiterated his critique of Neo-Scholastic metaphysical dualism, blaming it for enabling the dangerous alliance between "pseudo-thomism" and the positivism of the Action Française.

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[24] Quoted in Prévotat, *Les catholiques et l'Action française*, op. cit., 449.

[25] Albert Bessières, quoted in Prévotat, *Les catholiques et l'Action française*, 452.

[26] "Un grand débat catholique et français," *Cahiers de la nouvelle journée* 10 (Paris: Bloud et Gay, 1927).

Pius XI had condemned the Action Française as a form of "political, doctrinal, and practical modernism."[27] It was not without a certain palpable glee that Blondel could cite this papal pronouncement and turn the charge of "Modernism" once laid at his door by Neo-Scholastics like Pedro Descoqs, back against his opponents themselves. Resurrecting the critique of Neo-Scholasticism he had already developed in 1909, Blondel lambasted the "'Scholastic teaching which, under the cover of Aristotle and Saint Thomas and in the service of the battle against modernism and immanentism, had developed and canonized another modernism, no less antichristian and even more immoral.'"[28] The "modernism" to which Blondel refers here is the error of "naturalism"—condemned by both *Pascendi Dominici Gregis* and the *Syllabus of Errors*—which treats the natural order as a "'fortified enclosure and entrenched camp in which the creature...becomes more or less his own god.'"[29] The sin of "naturalism" was a corollary, Blondel argued, of the alliance between Maurrassian positivism and a Neo-Scholastic metaphysics that bifurcated the natural and supernatural orders. A number of Neo-Scholastic defenders of the AF—including Descoqs and Maritain—had recognized the "insufficiencies" of the Maurrasian worldview, but treated these as merely "partial truths" whose limitations could be overcome by integrating them into the higher truth of the Thomist worldview. Others had endeavored to redeem the political aims of the Action Française by disentangling them from Maurras' own agnosticism and positivism. This kind of selective appropriation of Maurrassianism was anathema to Blondel and his followers. "Thomism cannot enter into an active alliance with the Maurrassian theses," they argued, "without first suffering certain murderous slippages, without which the rapprochement would be impossible."[30] "Therefore," Blondel continued, "it is not the Scholastic theses which enlighten and complete the Maurrassian doctrines, but rather the reverse; and it is St. Thomas who collapses into Aristotle, Aristotle into Comte."[31] One could not simply bracket the problematic aspects of Maurras' worldview and selectively appropriate only those elements consonant with Catholic teaching. Instead, Blondel affirmed that the intellectual system of the Action Française exhibited "clear and contagious depravities" that would poison any effort at Catholic appropriation.[32] As we shall see, Blondel's refusal to disentangle the political goals of the AF from its philosophical presuppositions, his refusal to countenance any strategic collaboration with a non-Christian ideology for the purpose of achieving common practical goals, would form the core of Catholic anti-totalitarian discourse in the 1930s and 1940s.

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[27] "Lettre de S.S. Pie XI à S. Ém. le Cardinal Andrieu," (January 5, 1927), quoted in Jacques Maritain, *Primauté du spirituel*, in *Oeuvres complètes*, vol. 3 (Fribourg, Switzerland: Éditions Universitaires Fribourg, 1984), 833.

[28] Quoted in Jacques Prévotat, *Les catholiques et l'Action Francaise*, op. cit., 443.

[29] Blondel is here quoting Pius IX's *Syllabus of Errors* in "Conclusions d'une expérience personnelle," *Cahiers de la nouvelle journée*, op. cit., 184.

Blondel and his disciples were very explicit about the dangers lurking behind Catholic alliances with non-Christian ideologies such as Maurrassian positivism. The particular danger in the case of the Action Française was its tendency to exacerbate some of the worst excesses of Neo-Scholastic theology—in particular, its dualist, authoritarian, and scientist tendencies. Blondel was quick to highlight the shared intellectual orientation of positivists and theologians who conceived of their work as a rigorous science. For these theologians, who already tended to affirm a strong separation between the natural and supernatural orders, the notion of a natural order governed according strict positivist principles seemed a fitting corollary to a supernatural order governed by the rigorous principles of Neo-Scholasticism. But the effect of abandoning the natural order to a philosophy that was both atheist and strictly determinist, was to vitiate the possibility of any robust role for the supernatural within the natural order. When the natural and supernatural orders are thus reduced to “airtight compartments,” with the supernatural “only able to enter into the natural by repression or oppression,” the only remaining link between the two is God’s gratuitous act of grace.[33] But because nothing in the natural order can be said to prepare the way for this gift or ennoble the human being to receive it, grace becomes something entirely extrinsic, “like the favor tossed by a prince upon the object of his good humor.”[34] In other words, the political authoritarianism of the Action Française necessarily entails an authoritarianism in the spiritual order, trapping the individual person between “a political and social determinism” and a “supernatural supplement” that are “equally external, equally imposed.”[35] What is lost in this “new theology of grace” is the “total dynamism of the human being,” who is an active agent rather than a passive subject in both the political and spiritual realms.[36]

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[30] Étienne Gallois [Paul Desvignes], "Empirisme organisateur et pseudo-thomisme," *Cahiers de la nouvelle journée,* op. cit., 95.

[31] Marcel Breton [Maurice Blondel], "Les Conclusions d'une expérience personelle," 205.

[32] Quoted in Prévotat, *Les catholiques et l'Action Française*, op. cit., 444.

Jacques Maritain and the Theory of Indirect Power

Blondel’s reaction to the condemnation of the Action Française surprised no one. It simply reiterated many of the critiques he had already developed in the course of his 1909 exchange with Pedro Descoqs. The other leading defender of the condemnation was a much more unlikely figure. Jacques Maritain was, in 1926, a young professor of philosophy at the Institute Catholique and the undisputed star of the French Catholic revival that had produced several waves of high-profile conversions among writers and intellectuals during the height of the Republic’s anticlerical campaign.[37] Jacques and his Russian-Jewish wife Raïssa underwent their own conversion in 1906, just one year after Church and state were legally separated in France. Through their spiritual director Humbert Clérissac, they were immediately inducted into a world in which Neo-Scholastic theology went hand in hand with support for the Action Française. In her memoirs, Raïssa Maritain chalked up this youthful dalliance with the AF to the influence of Clérissac, whose "advice and influence was absolutely prevalent over our minds." She and Jacques simply accepted his authority on political matters, which "were for us, at the time, without real importance. For Jacques ascribed importance only to metaphysics and theology and I...felt myself entirely a stranger to political problems."[38] Biographers and scholars who are invested in Maritain's later iteration as the foremost Catholic defender of human rights and democracy have accepted this account all too readily.

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[33] Gallois [Desvignes], “Empirisme organisateur et pseudo-thomisme,” 101.

[34] Ibid., 100.

[35] Ibid., 98.

[36] Ibid., 101. The use of the term “nouvelle théologie” is highly significant, given that this was the pejorative label used to condemn de Lubac’s circle in the late 1940s.

But there is good reason to remain skeptical of Raïssa's narrative, written in an apologetic voice at the height of the Second World War, when many AF supporters were engaged in open collaboration with the occupying power. In fact, Maritain had been one of the leading intellectual forces behind the pro-AF *Revue Universelle*, whose mission he defined as follows:

> It will be, on the one hand, a platform for the ideas of the Action Francaise in the political order; on the other hand, a platform for Christian thought, and in particular Thomist thought, in the philosophical order.[39]

In his capacity as editor of the journal's philosophy section, Maritain strove to establish Neo-Thomism as the official philosophy of the Action Française, for both shared the same enemy: "'false liberal dogmas,'" whether in their theological or political iterations.[40] Blondel was quick to recall this when, in the aftermath of the condemnation, Maritain painted himself as its preeminent defender.[41] Blondel likewise reminded Catholics that Maritain had initially defended the "partial truths" of the Maurrassian worldview in *Une opinion sur Charles Maurras.* Written during the early stages of the Vatican campaign against the Action Française, the book was an attempt to reconcile the warring sides and forestall a full condemnation. Indeed, Maritain, who had by then become a close friend of Charles Maurras', worked actively with other clerical defenders of the AF to try to negotiate this reconciliation. Maritain's decision to come out in support of the condemnation and to break off ties with his old friends at the AF should therefore be viewed as an act of obedience rather than the expression of a sincerely held belief that in the movement's fundamentally anti-Christian nature. Maritain's correspondence from this period with Charles Journet, his close friend and intellectual ally, is full of discussions about how to prevent or minimize a full-scale condemnation. "Alas," Maritain sighs, after reading Pius XI's first public letter against the Action Française, "What can we do now? We can't be seen to be contradicting the Pope."[42]

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[37] On the "conversion vogue" in fin-de-siècles France, see the masterful study of Frédéric Gugelot, *La conversion des intellectuels au catholicisme en France (1885-1935)* (Paris: CNRS, 1998); on the role of the Maritains within this Catholic Revival, see Stephen Schloesser, *Jazz Age Catholicism: Mystic Modernism in Postwar Paris, 1919-1933* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005); on the conversion and intellectual life of Raïssa Maritain in particular, see Brenna Moore, *Sacred Dread: Raissa Maritain, the Allure of Suffering, and the French Catholic Revival (1905-1944)* (South Bend, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 2012).

[38] Raïssa Maritain, *Les grandes amitiés* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1962), 338-9.

[39] Quoted in Fourcade, "Feu la modernité," 232.

It took Maritain a full year to begin to reconcile himself to the condemnation, break off his ties with Maurras, and suspend his involvement with the *Revue Universelle*. Seeking guidance on how to proceed, Maritain requested an audience with Pius XI in September of 1927. It was in the course of this audience that the Pope charged Maritain with spearheading the campaign to defend the condemnation and explain the doctrinal errors of the Action Française to the French public. To this end, he would oversee the publication of three collaborative works drawing contributions from a number of high-profile Thomist theologians: *Pourquoi Rome a parlé* (1927), *Le joug du Christ* (1928), and *Clairvoyance de Rome* (1929).[43] The choice of Maritain—a layperson with no training in theology—was somewhat unorthodox, but Pius XI recognized that Maritain's fame and his past adherence to the Action Française made him an invaluable ally in the campaign against it. Maritain's most significant response to the condemnation predates both his papal audience and the official explanatory works it inspired. Rather than a robust critique of Maurrasian positivism and the theology with which it was associated, *Primauté du spirituel* set itself the more modest goal of defending the Pope's right to condemn the Action Française.

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[40] Ibid., 235.

[41] Prévotat, *Les catholiques et l'Action française*, 444.

[42] Jacques Maritain to Charles Journet, 9 September 1926, *Journet - Maritain, Correspondance,* vol. 1 (Fribourg, Switzerland: Éditions Universitaires Fribourg, 1996), 406.

The theory of "indirect power" Maritain developed to this end would become the key tool in the arsenal of Thomists who supported the condemnation. Its main purpose was to counteract the most common objection raised by the AF's clerical defenders—the claim that the condemnation constituted an inadmissible incursion into the political arena, which fell outside the Pope's properly spiritual jurisdiction. Citing a principle developed by the Scholastic jurists Bellarmine and Suarez, Maritain argued that the Pope possessed an "indirect" power over temporal matters that also affect the spiritual order:

> There are indeed two complementary aspects to the doctrine of indirect power. On the one hand, it implies the distinction between the two power and the sovereignty of the civil authority in its own domain...On the other hand, this same doctrine of indirect power affirms the general subordination of the temporal to the spiritual, and consequently, the right of the latter to bring to bear certain restrictions on the sovereignty of the civil authority, when this is necessary because of a connection to the good of souls.[44]

Maritain is here reaffirming the Neo-Scholastic doctrine that the temporal and spiritual authorities are autonomous and sovereign in their own spheres, even though the former is ultimately subordinate to the latter. The Vatican condemnation of the Action Française can, in other words, be explained as an exercise in the pontiff's indirect authority over political matters, given that the salvation of French Catholic souls is at stake.

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[43] These collaborators included the Jesuits Jules Lebreton and Paul Doncoeur, as well as the onetime rival of de Lubac's circle at Jersey, Michel Riquet. See the discussion of Maritain's papal audience and the ensuing publications in Prévotat, *Les catholiques et l'Action Française*, op. cit., 415-22.

[44] Maritain, *Primauté du spirituel*, 803.

The theology underwriting the theory of "indirect power" was further fleshed out in a 1929 article by the Swiss theologian Charles Journet, who was among Maritain's closest friends and frequently took upon himself the task of supplying the theological heft for Maritain's philosophical positions. In "La pensée thomiste et le 'pouvoir indirect,'" Journet touted the Scholastic roots of the theory and used the Aristotelian substance-accident distinction to explain it how the temporal order could be at once autonomous—boasting its own distinct end—as well as subordinate to the spiritual order in certain cases. The domain of indirect power, he argued, covered all things that are "*spiritual by accident*, or *on occasion*; in other words, those things which, being *directly* and by their nature, temporal, become spiritual *indirectly*, in certain circumstances under which the spiritual good of souls is at stake."[45] For Journet, the distinction between "that which is *spiritual* by *nature*" and that which is temporal by nature but becomes spiritual by accident, can alone explain how "the State is at once a sovereign power and subordinate one."[46] This subordination is not "*absolute*, or *essential*," but only "*relative*, or *accidental*," concerning the temporal "*in view* of the spiritual."[47] Crucially, however, the indirect power that the Church thus exerts over the temporal order is "a power of *jurisdiction* and not of mere *persuasion*."[48] The Church is truly sovereign when it pronounces upon such questions and can even go so far as to depose a monarch or government when the salvation of souls is at stake. And yet, this should not lead us to devalue the natural order and neglect its autonomy, for as St. Thomas taught, "'the divine law that comes from grace does not destroy the human law that comes from natural reason.'"[49] Ultimately, Journet hoped that the temporal powers would voluntarily subordinate themselves to the jurisdiction of the Church, transforming themselves into instruments of an expanding Christendom.

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[45] Charles Journet, "La pensée thomiste et le 'pouvoir indirect,'" *Revue Intellectuelle* (15 April, 1929), 633.

[46] Ibid., 651.

[47] Ibid., 651; 653.

[48] Ibid., 659.

It is rather remarkable how closely this theology of "indirect power" hews to the model once offered by Descoqs in defense of the Action Française. As a good Suarezian, Descoqs was very much a proponent of the doctrine of "indirect power," and had mobilized this principle in his exchange with Blondel, as proof of the compatibility between Catholic teaching on Church-state relations and the goals of the Action Française. In *À Travers l'oeuvre de Charles Maurras*, Descoqs had anticipated Journet by stressing that the spiritual and temporal powers each retain "autonomy in its own sphere." But he also qualified the autonomy of the temporal order over matters that impinged upon the salvation of souls:

> Temporal prosperity and the functioning of the social organism cannot remain indifferent to the eternal salvation of individuals. To the extent that they at least have contact with this end, the legislation and political statutes of a country will be subject to the religious authority.[50]

For Descoqs, the Scholastic political theology of "indirect power" was compatible with support for the Action Française because although Maurras sought to order society according to natural law and without reference to supernatural principles, he nevertheless upheld the institutional Church's traditional jurisdiction over "mixed matters" that affected salvation (education, marriage, family life).

In other words, the Neo-Scholastic political theology of "indirect power" could be employed to underwrite a commitment to the Action Française, as well as to repudiate such a commitment. This is highly significant because it underscores the extent to which theological positions can be selectively appropriated to underwrite a range of different political programs. In particular, it helps to illuminate the trajectory of Jacques Maritain, who in the 1940s and 1950s, would come to repurpose the same Neo-Scholastic theology that had once drawn him into the orbit of the Action Française as the "official theology" of Christian democracy. This politico-theological mutability is particularly pronounced in the case of Thomism because of the emphasis it places on natural law and the autonomy of the temporal order. Depending upon what one tales to be the precise content of natural law, such a theology can be used to underwrite a pragmatic collaboration between Catholics and nonreligious or even atheist political ideologies of various stripes. As we shall see, over the course of the 1930s and 1940s, Thomists would align their theology with a variety of political movements ranging from Marxism, to Fascism, to Christian Democracy.

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[49] This passage is from the *Summa Theologiae,* II-II, q.10, a.10, quoted in ibid., 636.

[50] Pedro Descoqs, *À Travers l'oeuvre de Charles Maurras*, 117; 118. See also the discussion of Descoqs' political theology and its longer history in Bernardi, *Maurice Blondel, Social Catholicism, & Action Française*, 253-55.

From Indirect Power to Catholic Action

That both the Neo-Scholastic supporters and critics of the Action Française shared a common political theology was not lost on Henri de Lubac. As we saw in the previous chapter, the influence of Blondel and de Lubac's vexed relationship to his teacher Pedro Descoqs, had transformed the young Jesuit into an uncompromising critic of Neo-Scholasticism. Just as de Lubac had perceived an unconscious correspondence between the metaphysical dualism of the Neo-Scholastics and the logic of *laïcité*, he now took issue with the secularizing implications of the indirect power thesis developed by Journet and Maritain. For de Lubac, the problem lay with the jurisdictional model of Church-state relations that had informed Catholic political theology since Bellarmine and Suarez. "Why should the authority of the Church in temporal matters," de Lubac asked, "be represented as a 'jurisdiction over the temporal?'"[51] The very notion of the temporal and spiritual orders as competing "jurisdictions" places them on the same, temporal level, as if they were competing territorial states. This is because the jurisdictional approach to sovereignty is precisely the model used to adjudicate the legal boundaries between sovereign nation-states. The danger with applying this model to conflicts between temporal bodies and the Church, is that it tends to reduce the Church to a visible institution on the same order as the nation-state. Moreover, modelling the relationship between the spiritual and temporal orders on the jurisdictional terms that govern relations between states forces us to divide up human affairs into competing, exclusive sovereignties—one falling under the purview of the state; the other, under the Church. But this sort of neat division is manifestly impossible, de Lubac points out, for "the supernatural is not separate from nature and the spiritual is everywhere mixed in with the temporal, such that the Church has...authority over everything, without having to step outside of its role."[52]

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[51] Henri de Lubac, "Pouvoir de l'Église en matière temporelle," *Revue des sciences religieuses* 12 (July 1932), 337. The article is a rejoinder to the book-length version of the Journet article cited above: Charles Journet, *La Juridiction de l'Église sur la cité* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1931).

But a dualist, jurisdictional model of sovereignty cannot allow for this, leading to obfuscations like the theory of "indirect power." For de Lubac, this theory is a contradiction in terms that ends up reaffirming the direct power of the Church over temporal affairs, even as it claims to respect the autonomy of the temporal order. If the Pope acts upon the temporal order for the purpose of securing a spiritual end, this is no less a *direct* act upon the temporal order, whether or not the motive behind it is a spiritual one. "Indirect power, understood in this way, is therefore in reality a direct power over the temporal," de Lubac reasoned.[53]

And yet, this critique of the theocratic pretensions underwriting the theory of "indirect power" would appear to contradict de Lubac's earlier claim that the jurisdictional model of Church-state relations tends to "temporalize" or secularize Church authority. In fact, de Lubac argues that it is precisely by arrogating to the Church some form of jurisdiction—direct or indirect—over temporal affairs, that the Neo-Scholastic approach unwittingly tends to secularize Church authority.

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[52] Ibid., 346.

[53] Ibid., 332-3.

By reducing Church authority to a form of jurisdiction, such a model treats this authority as no different than the kind that states wield over their people:

> Believing that they [Neo-Scholastics] are legitimately extending the influence of the Church, they would expose it (if this were possible) to the loss of a sacred authority, by reducing it...to the rank of the powers of this world. Treating the civil authority as a pure instrument of the spiritual authority degrades the Church just as much as it humiliates the State.[54]

Instead, de Lubac affirms a *qualitative* distinction between the Church's spiritual authority and the form of authority possessed by states, such that there can be no real contradiction or conflict between the two. Rather than seeking to carve out a legitimate jurisdiction for the Church within the temporal order, in the manner of Journet or Maritain, de Lubac argues that the Church can only achieve a truly universal authority if it ceases to think and act like a state:

> The authority of the Church is entirely spiritual. It possesses power over consciences alone. This is not, to tell the truth, a restriction. It is not a question of closing the Church off from any terrain of human thought or action; there is none, as profane as it might seem, in which, one way or another, faith and morals are not implicated. Christianity is universal, it has happily been said, not only in the sense that all men have Jesus Christ as their Savior, but also in the sense that *all of man* has its Savior in Jesus Christ...the Church is thus also Catholic in this latter sense that *nothing which is human can remain foreign to it.*[55]

This brief passage contains, in embryo, an entire revolution in Catholic political theology and theology of grace. Neo-Scholastic political theology, whether in its pro- or anti-AF iterations, was inextricable from a theology of grace that stressed the autonomy of the natural order and the extrinsic manner in which grace is gratuitously bestowed upon us from above. Instead, de Lubac stressed the internal dynamism of human nature, in which grace is already at work, infusing and raising up the natural order from within:

> It is from the inside that grace takes up nature and, far from degrading it, lifts it up to make it serve its ends. It is from the inside that faith transforms reason, that the Church influences the State. Messenger of Christ, the Church has not come to place the State under its tutelage;

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[54] Ibid., 342.

[55] Ibid., 342-3.

> on the contrary, she ennobles it, inspiring it to become a Christian state, and thereby, to become more human.[56]

This ideal of a fully incarnated Church would become the animating principle for the Catholic Action movements that emerged in the wake of the condemnation of the Action Française, heralding a new approach to Catholic engagement in the worldly affairs. As de Lubac and many others now realized, the era of the Church's privileged place in the French state—of its special jurisdiction over education, marriage, the family, etc.—was now definitively at an end. In no uncertain terms, de Lubac told Catholics to "renounce the dream of a return, pure and simple, to the institutions of the past," and the model of Church-state relations that underwrote these.[57] Indeed, he suggested that the Separation of Church and state might even prove to be a blessing in disguise if the Church emerged from it with "a purified notion of spiritual authority."[58] The jurisdictional model of Church-state relations was now dead, and it fell to a new generation of Catholic theologians and philosophers to replace it.

The Yeast in the Dough: Catholic Action and the New Lay Apostolate

Henri de Lubac was by no means alone in rejecting the theory of "indirect power" put forward by Maritain and Journet to justify the condemnation of the Action Française. Indeed, there is strong evidence to suggest that the author of the condemnation himself rejected this interpretation and even rebuked Maritain on the subject.[59] *L'Osservatore Romano*—the official Vatican mouthpiece—publicly demurred from Maritain's interpretation of the condemnation as an exercise in "indirect" temporal power, affirming in no uncertain terms that the condemnation constituted "an exercise, pure and simple, in direct power over the spiritual."[60] This argument was consistent with one of the primary apostolic missions of the papacy of Pius XI—a new approach to Catholic engagement in worldly affairs, known as "Catholic Action."

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[56] Ibid., 343-4.

[57] Ibid., 352.

[58] Ibid., 349.

[59] Prévotat, *L'Action française et les catholiques française*, op. cit., 460.

The context for this innovation was Mussolini's rise to power and the restrictions it placed on Catholic political action in Italy, as well as the broader tide of secularization sweeping across Europe. Casting about for a new way to rechristianize the masses without falling afoul of the Fascist government—as the Christian-Democratic Partito Popolare Italiano did in 1925—Pius XI encouraged the formation of a Catholic social movement that would stand "over and above all problems of purely material and political concern."[61] The idea was to mobilize the laity and endow them with a new role in the apostolate of the Church, by means of a network of gender-specific, parish-based organizations whose goal was to re-infuse Italian society with Christian values. And yet, these organizations fell under strict, centralized clerical control, relegating the role of the lay apostolate to a "secondary, an auxiliary force in aiding...the apostolate carried out by the ecclesiastical hierarchy."[62] Despite their professedly apolitical mission, the precise line between the promotion of "Christian values" and outright political activism was never entirely clear when it came to these new organizations. Pius XI deliberately hedged this question, by distinguishing between "*piccola politica*"—the conventional realm of party politics—and the "*grande politica*" that would be the purview of Catholic Action. "'Though not engaging in party politics,'" the Pope announced, "'Catholic Action is preparing the terrain for the making of good politics, of *grande politica*, is preparing the terrain to shape the political conscience of citizens in a Christian and Catholic manner.'"[63] In this way, Pius sought to maintain an avenue for some form of Catholic politics in Mussolini's Italy, while inaugurating a new approach to Catholic engagement in temporal affairs that would spread across Catholic Europe.

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[60] "Il Primato dello spirituale," *L'Osservatore Romano*, 22 October, 1927.

[61] Quoted in Gerd-Rainer Horn, *Western European Liberation Theology: The First Wave (1924-1959)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 41.

[62] *Manuale de Azione Catolica*, quoted in ibid., 40.

Pius XI delivered this major speech on the temporal mission of Catholic Action the very same year that he handed down his condemnation of the Action Française. In the eyes of Maurras' supporters, this was far from a coincidence. It signalled that the true motivation behind the condemnation lay in an effort to open the way for the Catholic Action model to be exported to France. Intended or not, this was indeed one of the most significant effects of the condemnation. But nature and goals of Catholic Action in France differed substantially from the Italian model. In its French incarnation, Catholic Action drew upon a native tradition of social Catholicism that had emerged in response to Leo XIII's great nineteenth-century social encyclical, *Rerum Novarum*.[64] Led by Albert de Mun and René de La Tour du Pin, this early brand of social Catholicism was steeped in a paternalist tradition of *noblesse oblige* that was not always friendly to democracy and differed markedly from later incarnations of Catholic activism. However, it did produce a slew of Catholic organizations that aimed in various ways to evangelize the working classes and supply a Catholic response to the social question. These included de Mun's Association Catholique de la Jeunesse Française (f. 1886), the Jesuit Action Populaire (f. 1903), and the Semaines Sociales (f. 1904).[65] The goal of the latter two organizations was emphatically pedagogical—to study and spread the social teachings of the Church, a task that took on new urgency now that the Third Republic had evicted the clergy from the nation's classrooms. In 1905, the year that Church and state were officially separated, the president of the Semaines Sociales announced: "to perfect the knowledge of Christian morality in our own consciences and to prepare us to make the social importance of Christian dogmas better known to people outside: this is our objective."[66] Maurice Blondel quickly emerged as the movement's *maître-penseur*—delivering his famous critique of the AF at its 1909 session in Bordeaux—and Henri de Lubac would also become closely involved with it during the 1930s.[67]

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[63] Quoted in ibid., 43.

[64] On this early variant of social Catholicism, see Paul Misner, *Social Catholicism in Europe: From the Onset of Industrialization to the First World War* (New York: Crossroad, 1991); on the French context in particular, see Jean-Marie Mayeur, *Catholicisme social et démocratie chrétienne: principes romains, expériences françaises* (Paris: Cerf, 1968) and Bernardi, *Maurice Blondel, Social Catholicism, & Action Française*, op. cit., ch. 1.

[65] On the Action Populaire, see Paul Droulers, *Politiques sociale et christianisme: le Père Desbuquois et l'Action Populaire* (Paris: Éditions Ouvrières, 1981); on the Semaines Sociales, see Bernardi, *Maurice Blondel, Social Catholicism, & Action Française*, ch. 1.

This fledgling social Catholicism was deeply embattled under the papacy of Pius X, particularly after the Vatican condemned its democratic wing, the Sillon, in 1910. When the Action Française met the same fate in 1926, social Catholics saw their stock rise considerably. They also benefitted from an unexpected surge of Catholic activism in response to the election of the Cartel des Gauches in 1924, which threatened to revive the politics of anticlericalism and undo the postwar détente between Church and state. In response, the much-decorated General Castelnau mobilized a mass movement of Catholics known as the Fédération Nationale Catholique and, leaning on the wartime heroism of Catholics like himself, successfully put a stop to the new government's anticlerical overtures.[68] Flushed with success, French Catholics threw themselves into organizational life, producing a veritable alphabet soup of new Catholic Action groups in the space of a few years. Given their strong native tradition of social Catholicism, the French were not content to simply import the model developed by Pius XI, and found themselves drawn instead to the "specialized" model of Catholic Action pioneered by Joseph Cardijn in Belgium. Cardijn himself drew upon the French tradition of social Catholicism in formulating his project for a branch of Catholic Action that would specifically target young Catholic members of the working class—what would become the Kristene Arbeidersjeugd/Jeunesse Ouvrière Catholique [KAJ/JOC] in 1924. This model was precisely what Abbé Guérin of the working-class parish of Clichy had been searching for, in his efforts to counteract the corrosive effects of rampant dechristianization and the siren song of Communism. Guérin founded his own JOC branch in 1926, and the model would soon spread to other parishes in France's industrial heartland.[69]

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[66] Henri Lorin, "La Semaine sociale: son caractère—son objectif—sa méthode," quoted in Bernardi, *Maurice Blondel, Social Catholicism, & Action Française*, op. cit., 10.

[67] See the correspondence between Henri de Lubac and Gaston Fessard from this period in the Fonds Gaston Fessard, Archives Jésuites de la Province de France [AJPF], Paris, 73/C and 73/2.

[68] See Philip Nord, "Catholic Culture in Interwar France," *French Politics, Culture & Society* 21, 3 (Fall 2003), 3.

The innovation of the JOC was its exclusive focus on the working class and on youth, in particular. As Susan Whitney has shown, the Catholic Church in France turned to youth as the central tool for the evangelization of the working class in this period.[70] This youth orientation was consistent with the Church's traditional focus upon primary schools as sites of evangelization—an avenue that was of course no longer open to the French clergy in this period. To make matters worse, the French Communist Party [PCF] had begun to develop its own campaign of youth evangelization under the aegis of the Jeunesse Communiste [JC]. In contrast to the trade union style of the JC, the JOC targeted younger workers—those around the age of 13 who had just left primary school to enter the workforce—and preached a cooperative approach to industrial relations. Rather than encouraging workers to strike for better wages, the JOC sought to cushion the boys' transition into the workforce. "'Before we can convert Christians in the workshops,'" one JOC slogan proclaimed, "'we must make the workshop Christian.'"[71] To this end, the organization provided practical services such as job training and job placement programs, educational opportunities, a savings bank, and even leisure activities. But it also preached a strong moral message of chastity, propriety, temperance, and hard work. Above all, *jocistes* were to remain outside the arena of conventional politics and they were expressly forbidden from affiliating with a political party.

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[69] On the JOC, see Paul Debès and Émile Poulat, *L'appel de la J.O.C., 1926-1928* (Paris: Cerf, 1986) and Susan B. Whitney, *Mobilizing Youth: Communists and Catholics in Interwar France* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009).

[70] Ibid., 80-83.

[71] Quoted in Michel Launay, "La J.O.C. dans son premier développement," in *La J.O.C.: regards d'historiens*, ed. by Pierre Pierrard, Michel Launay, and Roland Trempé (Paris: Éditions Ouvrières, 1984), 43.

Much like the earlier social Catholic movements of the nineteenth century, pedagogy lay at the heart of this enterprise. *Jocistes* were taught the organization's distinctive "see, judge, act" technique to evaluate their surroundings and respond in a manner calculated to promote Christian values—a markedly more "active" approach than the traditional methods of Catholic catechism. The idea was to produce a "New Man," just as the Communists sought to do. As one of the movement's chaplains put it, "'the Jocist school remakes its man from head to toe; it dismantles, examines, reassembles, and readjusts every hour of every day; it offers him precise, understandable formulas for every difficulty he encounters.'"[72] Power in the French Catholic Action movements was somewhat more decentralized than in the Italian case, although local clergy retained control over the organization's ideology, regulations, and spirituality. By and large, though, Catholic Action attracted chaplains whose apostolate had been crucially shaped by the experience of the First World War. Like de Lubac's circle, they were the first generation of priests to be drafted into the military, and the experience of the trenches brought them face to face with the material and spiritual degradation of a class of people with which they had never previously mixed. It should therefore come as no surprise that all of de Lubac's friends from Jersey were actively involved in Catholic Action.

The JOC model proved so successful that, in 1929, the Young Communists identified it as their "'most dangerous adversary.'"[73] That same year, a new set of specialized Catholic Action organizations was formed to minister to young students (Jeunesse Étudiante Chrétienne) and agricultural laborers (Jeunesse Agricole Chrétienne). In addition, female equivalents of these organizations—the JOCF, JECF, and JACF—sprang up to target young women working in these respective sectors. Gender thus played a crucial role within the Catholic Action movement, as the Church worked to overcome its perceived "feminization" over the course of the nineteenth century—a process that went hand in hand with its progressive eviction from the public sphere.[74] The articulation of a new public role for the Church under the aegis of Catholic Action thus required a new "muscular" Catholicism to go along with it. JOC chaplains instilled in their charges a new vision of Catholic masculinity designed to compete with its Communist counterpart, which was grounded in revolutionary activism. The strength of *Jociste* militants instead derived from their chastity and moral virtue, by which they became men "who are stronger than others, who are afraid of nothing, who triumph over difficulty."[75] The challenge of developing a complementary vision of femininity for the JOCF militant proved much more complicated, for the idea that young women could and should be active members of the industrial workforce and lay apostles was difficult for most clerics to accept. The Catholic Action movement therefore played an important role in transforming the theology of the family in this period, from a patriarchal model of conjugal relations to one based on complementarity. Both de Lubac and Montcheuil served as chaplains for the JECF, where they met Germaine Ribière, who would become crucial ally in their wartime resistance activities. Hamel, for his part, was very closely involved with the Action Populaire, while Fessard and de Lubac continued to play an active role in the Semaines Sociales throughout the 1930s.

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[72] Fr. Ranson, quoted in Whitney, *Mobilizing Youth*, 93.

[73] Whitney, *Mobilizing Youth*, 104.

The apolitical stance of the new Catholic Action movements was severely tested by the election of the Popular Front—an unprecedented coalition of Communists, Socialists, and Radicals—in 1936. The election results and the reunification of the country's main trade union spurred a massive wave of strikes across the country and the JOC/JOCF found themselves caught in the middle.[76] On the one hand, the clergy and even the Pope looked to Catholic Action militants as "the means best calculated to save these, Our beloved children, from the snares of Communism."'[77] For these anxious clerics, the victory of the Popular Front and the ensuing strikes signalled that France was on the verge of falling prey to a Communist revolution, a fear exacerbated by the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War two months later. On the other hand, the *jocistes* did not wish to abandon their working brothers and sisters. Instead, they chose to participate in the strikes, but in order to offset the influence of the Communists and steer the movement in a more moderate, more Christian direction. Consistently advocating arbitration and practical solutions to the concerns of the working poor, JOC militants denounced the politicization of the strike movement by Communist "agitators." Sympathizing with the strikers' demands, they dissented from the tactics used to achieve them and consistently sought to depoliticize and moderate the strikers' message. The JOC thus positioned itself as the champion of concrete benefits for workers, in contrast to the conventional party politics favored by their Communist competitors. As one 1936 JOC slogan put it, '"an overcoat is much warmer than a speech."'[78] Catholic Action groups thus sought to participate in the strikes while remaining above the political fray.

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[74] The historiography on the "feminization" of religion in the nineteenth century is vast. For an overview, see Caroline Ford, "Religion and Popular Culture in Modern Europe," *Journal of Modern History* 65 (March 1993): 152–75.

[75] Cardijn, quoted in Whitney, *Mobilizing Youth,* 99.

If the polarized climate of the Popular Front severely tested the movement's apolitical resolve, this was further exacerbated by the overtures the Communist Party had begun to make to left-leaning Catholics. The move was part of the Comintern's new strategy to battle fascism in Europe through broad electoral coalitions with other parties on the Left—a policy which led to the electoral victory of the Popular Front in France. In the weeks leading up to the 1936 election, PCF leader Maurice Thorez sought to broaden the coalition by extending an "outstretched hand" to Catholics who shared the Communists' concern with the plight of the working poor. In a now famous radio broadcast, Thorez offered to "extend a hand to you, Catholic, worker, employee, artisan, peasant...because you are our brother and you are burdened with the same concerns."[79] This was not simply a last-ditch effort to secure Catholic votes in the 1936 election, however. Thorez and other party members continued their appeal to Catholics in the pages of *L'Humanité* throughout 1936 and 1937, calling upon Catholics and Communists to set aside their theoretical differences in favor of practical collaboration on their shared goal of social justice.[80] Some Catholics, such as Robert Honnert, accepted this call to practical cooperation and the distinction it presupposed between theory and practice, philosophy and politics. Recognizing the "very deep, if not irreducible latent opposition" between Catholicism and Communism, Honnert nevertheless affirmed that "one and the other agree in desiring all that the old world refuses us: security for all workers."[81] The language of practical cooperation echoed rather strikingly the logic deployed by Maurras and his Catholic defenders to justify a purely political alliance between Catholics and agnostic positivism, in the service of restoring the monarchy. Coming only ten years after the condemnation of the AF, the PCF's "outsretched hand" thus served as an important test case for the possibility of Catholic collaboration with atheist political ideologies.

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[76] On the Catholic response to the Popular Front see René Rémond's classic *Les catholiques, le communisme et les crises, 1929-1939* (Paris: Colin, 1960) and Whitney, *Mobilizing Youth,* op. cit. , ch. 7.

[77] Pius XI, *Divini Redemptoris* ["On Atheistic Communism"] (19 March, 1937): http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_19031937_divini-redemptoris_en.html, §66.

[78] Quoted in Whitney, *Mobilizing Youth*, 222.

As John Hellman has shown, the "outstretched hand" elicited a wide variety of Catholic attitudes towards Catholic-Communist collaboration, ranging from utter irreconcilability to full-fledged syncretism.[82] One of the most philosophically rigorous responses came from the pen of Gaston Fessard, Henri de Lubac's close friend from Jersey. In a series of articles published in the Catholic press and ultimately a full-length book, Fessard articulated an uncompromising critique of the approach taken by Honnert—a "practical collaboration" between Communists and Catholics that bracketed their philosophical and religious differences. Just as Blondel had refused to decouple the politics of the Action Française from the agnostic philosophy underwriting it, Fessard asserted that any pragmatic collaboration between Catholics and Communists would be vitiated by the utter "incompatibility of the attitudes prescribed to the Catholic by the Gospel and the Spirit of Love, and to the Communist by Marxism and the materialism of class warfare."[83] No compromise is possible because one cannot selectively appropriate any particular element of the Communist worldview without implicitly adopting all of it; even in "the smallest fact, the totality of the system is implicated."[84]

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[79] Maurice Thorez, Address on Radio-Paris, 17 April, 1936, reprinted in *L'Humanité* (April 18, 1936), 8.

[80] See, for instance, "La position du parti communiste après la victoire du Front populaire," *L'Humanité*, 10 May, 1936. On the policy of the "outstretched hand" and the Catholic response, see Francis J. Murphy, "'La Main Tendue:' Prelude to Christian-Marxist Dialogue in France, 1936-1939," *The Catholic Historical Review* 60, 2 (1974), 255-270; Piotr Kosicki, "Between Catechism and Revolution: Poland, France, and the Story of Catholicism and Socialism in Europe, 1878-1958," Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 2011, 154-60; René Rémond, *Les crises du catholicisme en France dans les années trente* (Paris: Cana, 1979), ch. 7.

[81] Robert Honnert, "Foi et Révolution," *Europe* 161 (15 May, 1936), 55-56.

Because Fessard views the political goals of Communism as inextricable from the philosophy of Marxism-Leninism, the Jesuit devotes much of the book to an examination of the finer points of this philosophical system. But rather than focusing on the obvious problem of Marxist atheism and the materialist philosophy of history, Fessard instead fixates on the problem of language. The real danger with Marxism, he argues, is that it refuses any objective or transcendent standard of truth beyond that which advances the cause of the class struggle at any given moment. This utilitarian, fundamentally relativist morality makes it impossible for Catholics to trust the real motivations behind overtures like the "outstretched hand." But it also vitiates the possibility of any accord over shared goals or values, Fessard argues, because "in order to understand one another, one must speak the same language and employ words with the *same meaning*."[85] If Catholics joined hands with Communists to fight for "liberty" or "justice," for instance, how could they be sure that their Communist allies meant the same thing by these words? "For the Catholic, for any loyal man, the meaning of words is determined by truth," Fessard argued, but "for the Communist, 'morality is entirely subordinate to the interests of the struggle of the proletariat' (Lenin), and consequently, words take on the meaning that best serves the interests of the party, without any regard for truth."[86] This moral relativism, which Fessard explicitly likened to "Hitlerian morality, which is entirely subject to the interests of the race," vitiated the possibility of a dialogue grounded in sincerity and good faith.[87]

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[82] John Hellman, "French 'Left-Catholics' and Communism in the Nineteen-thirties," *Church History* 45, 4 (1976), 507-523.

[83] Letter from Gaston Fessard to Pierre Vaillant-Couturier, in Gaston Fessard, *La main tendue: le dialogue catholique-communiste est-il possible?* (Paris: Grasset, 1937), 34. This letter was a reply to Vaillant-Couturier's response to Fessard's earlier critique of the Honnert article cited above, published in *Études* 229 (20 December, 1936).

[84] Fessard, *La main tendue,* 12n1.

But Fessard did not entirely foreclose the possibility of any future dialogue between Catholics and Communists. Instead, the Jesuit developed a powerful immanent critique of Marxist-Leninist materialism, turning Marx against Lenin in order to recover a variant of Marxism capable of entering into meaningful dialogue with Catholicism. In doing so, Fessard revealed his own deep engagement with nineteenth-century German philosophy. Indeed, this work contains the first systematic analysis in French of Marx's 1844 manuscripts, which were virtually unknown in France at the time and would play a crucial role in the PCF's turn towards "Marxist Humanism" after the war.[88] A central protagonist in the French Hegelian revival of the 1930s, Fessard privileged the "young Marx" of the 1844 manuscripts, who had not yet repudiated Hegel's philosophy of history in favor of full-blown materialism. It was Lenin, he argued, who had foreclosed the possibilities opened up by the young Marx, re-orienting Marxism towards a more robust atheism and "fatally reducing historical materialism to a vulgar materialism."[89] But Fessard still hoped that Communists might reclaim this lost heritage within their own tradition and return to a philosophy of history that did not necessarily imply atheism:

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[85] Gaston Fessard, "La main tendue...? Ce que M. Thorez a omis de dire aux communistes et aux catholiques," *La Croix* (3 novembre, 1937).

[86] Ibid.

[87] Fessard, "La main tendue...?" *Études,* op. cit., 762.

[88] See *Gabriel Marcel, Gaston Fessard: correspondance, 1934-1971*, annotated by Henri de Lubac, Marie Rougier, and Michel Sales (Paris: Beauchesne, 1985), 137; see also Hellman, "French 'Left-Catholics' and Communism in the Nineteen-thirties," 523.

> Renouncing the negation of God, choosing a truly spiritualist interpretation of historical materialism, would allow the Communist the possibility of speaking the same language as the Catholic and confronting the contribution that Marxism could bring to the well-tested doctrines of the Church.[90]

But until this day came, when Communists renounced their atheism and historical materialism to enter into dialogue with Catholics on shared terms, Fessard warned that any collaboration would poison the religious faith of those who entered into it. The "outstretched hand" would become a "closed fist." In closing, Fessard therefore endorsed Catholic Action as the only vehicle for Catholics to avoid fatally compromising their own values while continuing to engage in meaningful action on behalf of social justice[91]

Fessard's warning would receive official endorsement when Pius XI issued a major papal encyclical "On Atheistic Communism" (*Divini Redemptoris*) in 1937, in part in response to the "outstretched hand" of the PCF. The intended target was evident from passages that explicitly prohibited Catholic-Communist collaboration:

> See to it, Venerable Brethren, that the Faithful do not allow themselves to be deceived! Communism is intrinsically wrong, and no one who would save Christian civilization may collaborate with it in any undertaking whatsoever. Those who permit themselves to be deceived into lending their aid towards the triumph of Communism in their own country will be the first to fall victims of their error.[92]

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[89] Fessard, *La main tendue*, 112.

[90] Ibid., 145.

[91] Fessard, "La main tendue...?" *La Croix*, op. cit.

[92] Pius XI, *Divini Redemptoris*, §58.

Just over ten years after the condemnation of the Action Française, Pius XI had once again intervened to forbid Catholics from entering into a political alliance with a party whose ideology was explicitly anti-Christian. The symmetry between the two condemnations is unequivocal, as both insist upon the indissoluble bond between the practical goals and philosophical premises of a political movement. Five days later, Pius issued a companion encyclical against National Socialism—*Mit Brennender Sorge*—which rebuked the Third Reich for systematically violating its Concordat with the Holy See and warned Christians of the idolatry implicit in Nazi ideology:

> God, this Sovereign Master, has issued commandments whose value is independent of time and space, country and race. As God's sun shines on every human face so His law knows neither privilege nor exception...None but superficial minds could stumble into concepts of a national God, of a national religion; or attempt to lock within the frontiers of a single people, within the narrow limits of a single race, God, the Creator of the universe...[93]

Scholars and commentators have made much of the differences in tone, language, and circulation between these two encyclicals, which together endowed the anti-communist encyclical with much greater force.[94] Nevertheless, and despite revelations from the recently-opened archives of Pius XI of an aborted project for a more forceful condemnation of the Third Reich, the two encyclicals set the terms for a growing Catholic discourse against totalitarianism.[95] When de Lubac, Fessard, Montcheuil and others launched themselves into the underground networks of occupied France, these encyclicals would provide much-needed ammunition for their works of "Spiritual Resistance."

Personalism: From the New Christendom to the Mystical Body of Christ

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[93] Pius XI, *Mit Brennender Sorge*, 14 March, 1937, §10-11: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_14031937_mit-brennender-sorge_en.html.

[94] See, for instance, Étienne Fouilloux, *Les Chrétiens français entre crise et liberation, 1937-1947* (Paris: Seuil, 1997, ch. 1.

[95] See Hubert Wolf, *Pope and Devil: The Vatican's Archives and the Third Reich* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2010), ch. 5.

For Catholic theologians and philosophers working in the aftermath of the condemnation of the Action Française, the key concern of the 1930s was how to elaborate a theory of Catholic Action that would avoid the dangers condemned by Pius XI, first in 1926 and then in 1937. In both cases, Pius prohibited any collaboration between Catholics and atheist political ideologies on both the right (Action Française) and the left (Communism). How could Catholics play an active role in temporal affairs without engaging in these sorts of compromises with secular party politics? In other words, how could Catholic Action work within the terrestrial city without being corrupted by it? This question exercised all of the major Catholic intellectuals of the day, and scholars have tended to group their rather diverse responses to it under the conveniently amorphous label of "personalism." This label is not necessarily inaccurate. It was an actor's category that most of the philosophers and theologians in question employed to describe their own work. But the danger arises when one yokes this label to a single approach or philosophy that comes to stand in for, and therefore silence, the extraordinary diversity of Catholic thought in this period.

Many scholars, even as they recognize the plurality of approaches contained within the category of personalism, have come to identify it above all with the work of Jacques Maritain. Samuel Moyn, for instance, traces the origins of the postwar human rights discourse to Maritain's personalism, pointing to the philosopher's role in drafting the 1949 United Nations Declaration of Human Rights.[96] For Moyn, the crucial shift in Catholic discourse comes in 1937, when Pius XI's encyclical against Communism reorients Catholic social teaching towards a defense of the dignity of the human person—a shift that would be consecrated in the postwar turn to Christian Democracy.[97]

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[96] Samuel Moyn, "Personalism, Community, and the Origins of Human Rights," in *Human Rights in the Twentieth Century*, ed. by Stefan-Ludwig Hofman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 85-106.

[97] The revelant passage from the encyclical is the following, from section 10: "Communism, moreover, strips man of his liberty, robs human personality of all its dignity, and removes all the moral restraints that check the eruptions of blind impulse. There is no recognition of any right of the individual in his relations to the collectivity; no natural right is accorded to human personality, which is a mere cog-wheel in the Communist system." Pius XII's Christmas message of 1944 is the other crucial moment in this turn towards democracy and human dignity.

James Chappel likewise seeks the origins of totalitarianism theory in the anti-statist personalism of Maritain and his German disciple, Waldemar Gurian.[98] The portrait of interwar Catholic personalism that emerges from these accounts is a remarkably individualist and secular one. Maritain's personalism, years after his break with the Action Française, remained rooted in the Aristotelian categories of his Neo-Scholastic formation. As such, it retained much of the dualism of this vision, with its strong distinction between the natural and supernatural orders, deriving its definition of the human person from the categories of natural law rather than the teachings of the Gospel. The political upshot of Maritain's personalism was a stress on pluralism and decentralization—what Chappel has termed "civil-society Catholicism"—that could be mobilized to underwrite the Catholic turn to democracy in the postwar period.[99]

In what follows, I argue that this approach was a minority position among Catholic theologians and philosophers of the period, most of whom were just as hostile to totalitarianism but derived their critique from very different theological sources. Because these figures did not present their social thought in recognizably secular terms, but rather in the form of ecclesiology, their work has too easily been dismissed as apolitical. In fact, many of these philosophers and theologians explicitly figured their contribution in terms that were irreducible to the realm of secular politics. But this does not mean that such robustly theological work has no bearing on political affairs, for it led many of these figures to take a leading role in the "Spiritual Resistance" to fascism during the war. Instead, I argue that ecclesiology can itself be read as a counter-politics, as an alternative to secular politics that refuses the very categories we conventionally use to make sense of the political. The critique of totalitarianism, in other words, need not emerge from a defense of the individual or of civil society against the totalizing pretensions of the state. Instead, one of the most powerful variants of Catholic anti-totalitarianism was just as hostile to individualism and to a pluralist model of civil society.

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[98] James Chappel, "The Origins of Totalitarianism Theory in Interwar Europe."

[99] James Chappel, "Slaying the Leviathan: Catholicism and the Rebirth of European Conservatism, 1920-1950," Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 2012, ch. 4.

Before turning to this "ecclesiastical personalism," however, let us first examine the approach taken by Maritain. Ten years after the condemnation of the Action Française brought an end to his collaboration with Maurras, Maritain reinvented himself as a leading philosopher of Catholic Action. His enormously popular *Integral Humanism,* published in 1936, signalled a new direction in Maritain's thought and foreshadowed his later embrace of democracy and human rights. Echoing de Lubac's response to the AF crisis, Maritain exhorted Catholics to abandon once and for all the dream of a return to the medieval alliance of throne and altar. That era was unequivocally at an end, Maritain argued, and a new approach to temporal affairs was required in order to fit the changed historical circumstances in which Catholics now found themselves. Instead of longing for a restoration of medieval Christendom, Maritain therefore invited Catholics to build a "new Christendom...which would correspond to the historical climate of the epoch into which we are entering."[100] This is a highly significant statement, because it moves beyond the thesis-hypothesis model identified in the previous chapter, which established a single ideal type for Church-state relations (the confessional state) and treated any other form as necessarily less than ideal. Maritain instead argued for the equal legitimacy of the "old" and "new" Christendoms, as the Christian regimes best suited to their respective historical circumstances.

While Maritain's approach thus recognizes the need for an "updated" conception of Christendom under the pressure of changed historical circumstances, his is actually a strangely ahistorical model. This is because it remains firmly rooted in the Aristotelian substance-accident and form-matter distinctions so central to the Neo-Scholastic worldview. For Maritain, the relationship between the "old" and "new" Christendoms is one of *analogy*, not of historical change or evolution. Explicitly citing both Aristotle and St. Thomas for support, Maritain explains the relationship between these two varieties of Christendom thus:

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[100] Jacques Maritain, *Integral Humanism*, in *The Collected Works of Jacques Maritain*, ed. by Otto Bird and trans. by Otto Bird, Joseph Evans, and Richard O'Sullivan, vol. 11 (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1996), 236.

> It is not in a *univocal* manner that such a conception can be realized in the different ages of the world, but in an *analogous* manner. Here we see the primary importance of the idea of analogy for a sane philosophy of culture. It is from this principle of analogy, which dominates the whole of Thomistic metaphysics...that it is important for us to draw inspiration here...Should a new Christendom, in the conditions of the historic age we are entering, while incarnating the *same* principles (analogical), be conceived according to a type *essentially* (specifically) distinct from that of the medieval world? To this question I reply in the affirmative. I think that a new age of the world will allow the principles of any vitally Christian civilization to be realized in terms of a new concrete *analogue*.[101]

Medieval Christendom is to the historical context of the Middle Ages as the New Christendom is to the modern world. The only element of continuity, the only link between these two contexts, is a formal, analogical one. In this way, Maritain remains beholden to the same analogical thinking as those Neo-Scholastic theologians who had supported the Action Française on the grounds of the analogy between papal authority in the spiritual order and monarchical authority in the temporal order.

Having established this analogy, Maritain goes on to explain what this New Christendom appropriate to a modern historical context would entail. For Maritain, while medieval Christendom rested upon a sacral conception of the temporal order, treating is as a function of the spiritual order, the "same principles, analogically applied" to the modern world "would entail a Christian secular conception and not a Christian sacral conception of the temporal order."[102] In other words, the new Christendom would allow for the autonomy of the temporal order and the "*holy freedom* of the creature" who inhabits it.[103] But this defense of the freedom of the person is not to be confused with the abstract individualism so central to French Republicanism. Instead, Maritain is at pains to distinguish the human "person" from the atomized "individual" conceived by Rousseau. Rousseau's individual is entirely abstract and interchangeable; its essence remains unchanged by its relationship to other people or to God. The concept of the "person" instead recognizes that humans are both spiritual beings and social beings, embedded in multiple overlapping communities (family, class, nation, church, etc.). The political model most appropriate to the New Christendom is one that enables these aspects of the human person to thrive—one, in other words, that allows for a robust civil society and respect for the spiritual freedom of the person. "In place of the predominance of the movement towards unity, so typical, it seems to me, of the Middle Ages," Maritain therefore invokes the Thomist principle of "subsidiarity" to argue for a decentralized, pluralist polity.[104] "Civil society is made up not only of individuals, but of particular societies formed by them," he argues, "and a pluralist body politic would allow to these societies the greatest autonomy possible."[105] In other words, Maritain is arguing for a political model that avoids the excesses of both French Republicanism and totalitarian collectivism, and one can already see how this stress on civil society, personal freedom and pluralism will lead Maritain towards a fuller embrace of democracy and human rights in the 1940s.

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[101] Ibid., 239-40.

[102] Ibid., 255.

But given that the New Christendom is to be a fundamentally secular order, what are the available avenues for robustly Catholic action within it? Because the New Christendom recognizes the autonomy of the temporal order, it is through the action of individual Christians acting in the temporal order that spiritual values are brought to bear on it. The Church retains the right to pronounce on certain questions that affect the temporal order because they inhabit a third plane "of the *spiritual as joining the temporal*."[106] Maritain thus reiterates the position he put forth in *Primauté du Spirituel*, while modifying it to allow a greater space for elements that in some way mediate between the two orders. But Neo-Scholastic dualism remains the operating principle, for Maritain still begins from a distinction between the temporal and spiritual order, and only afterwards does he erect a bridge between them.

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[103] Ibid.

[104] Ibid.

[105] Ibid., 256.

This dualism equally underwrites the famous distinction Maritain makes between the modalities of Christian action appropriate to each sphere:

> If I turn toward men to speak to them and to act in the midst of them, let us say therefore that on the first plane of activity, on the plane of the spiritual, I appear before them *as a Christian as such*, and to this extent I engage Christ's Church; and that on the second plane of activity, on the plane of the temporal, I do not act *as a Christian as such*, but I should act *as a Christian*, engaging only myself, not the Church...[107]

It is "as a Christian" [*en chrétien*] and not "as a Christian as such" [*en tant que chrétien*] that the individual layperson engages in temporal affairs. Catholic Action, on the other hand, is confined to the realm of spiritual affairs and the "third plane" in which they interact. In other words, Maritain continues to cleave to a characteristically Neo-Scholastic separation between the natural and supernatural orders, allowing for an autonomous natural order governed by the principles of natural law and oriented towards a natural end. It is this autonomy that allows believers to cooperate with non-believers for "*a common practical task*" in the temporal order, without sharing "*a common doctrinal minimum*."[108] In other words, Maritain remains remarkably close to the political theology that had informed the alliance between Neo-Scholasticism and the Action Française, with its stress on analogy and the disaggregation of spiritual and temporal affairs. As a result, Maritain can allow little space for Catholic action in the temporal order except through the agency of individual Catholics who inhabit it. Hence the emphasis he places on civil society and the freedom and dignity of the person. The personalist model set forth in *Integral Humanism* thus brings into focus the precise continuities between the Neo-Scholasticism of the Action Française and the future Neo-Scholasticism of Christian Democracy.

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[106] Ibid., 340.

[107] Ibid., 338.

[108] Ibid., 282.

Philosophers and theologians who dissented from the Neo-Scholastic worldview—and there were a growing number of them in this period—evidently could not accept Maritain's personalist vision and its politico-theological consequences. First among these was the longstanding critic of Neo-Scholasticism, Maurice Blondel. In an essay published two years before *Integral Humanism*, the philosopher of Aix offered a pungent critique of the dangers he perceived in the growing enthusiasm for personalism. In particular, Blondel took issue with the distinction between the "person" and the "individual" that Maritain had already established in the 1920s as part of his critique of Republicanism, while he was still a partisan of the AF. For Blondel, there was little to prevent personalism from devolving into the very individualism it was meant to combat:

> An extreme danger is born here, as soon as the person takes itself for an end in itself, as the supreme and absolute end, in an isolation that would revive and even exaggerate all the inconveniences, errors, perversions signalled by the critique of the abusive notion of the individual.[109]

In other words, the turn towards the "person," for all its vaunted recognition of the spiritual and social aspects of the human being, nevertheless took its starting point from the discrete consciousness of the individual. For Blondel, this gave rise not just to a distorted view of the nature and end of the human being, whose spiritual dynamism constantly projects it beyond itself, towards other beings and God. It also rested upon a distorted understanding of the divine personality, which is triune rather than unitary. In many ways, this article reveals the aging philosopher's growing conservatism in this period, reinforced by Blondel's sense that his intellectual star was being eclipsed by a younger generation with different political and philosophical solutions to the problems of the day. But his diagnosis of the way in which "this personalism which, at base, too easily canonizes selfishness" captures the dissatisfaction many Catholics felt with the personalist model provided by Maritain.[110]

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[109] Maurice Blondel, "Les équivoques du 'personnalisme,'" *Politique* 8, 3 (March 1934), 196.

Many younger theologians and philosophers who shared Blondel's distaste for the Neo-Scholastic categories and individualist focus of Maritainian personalism found an alternative model in the unorthodox ideas of the Jesuit palaeontologist Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. As we saw in the previous chapter, Teilhard's iconoclastic Christian evolutionism found an enthusiastic audience in de Lubac's circle at Jersey, and his works continued to circulate in *samizdat* form throughout the 1930s. Indeed, Teilhard was at the height of his intellectual production during these years. The same year that Maritain's *Integral Humanism* came out, Teilhard published his own personalist manifesto, *esquisse d'un univers personnel*, and followed this up with perhaps his most famous work, *Le phénomène humain*, written between 1938 and 1940.[111]

While Maritain's personalism centred on the individual human being, the central person in Teilhard's account was not the individual human creature, but the universe itself. The Jesuit was, first and foremost a palaeontologist, and as such, he embraced the science of evolution. But for Teilhard, the physical evolution of the animal species (the biosphere) was only the first step in a fundamentally spiritual process that had birthed human consciousness (the noosphere) and would culminate in the advent of a fully personal universe embodied by Christ, who is the Omega Point of evolution itself. In other words, evolution should be understood as the progressive

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[110] Ibid., 198.

[111] Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, "Esquisse sur un univers personnel," 1936, Fonds Teilhard de Chardin, AJPF, 8/3; Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *Le Phénomène humain (*Paris: Seuil, 1970).

"personalization" of the universe, culminating in the person of Christ. A crucial step in this process is the advent of the human person, who, "by his apparition on Earth, marks one of these decisive changes of state within Evolution."[112] But even though the individual person is superseded by a more universal personality, this does not mean that the individual is simply absorbed into this greater whole and thereby loses its individuality. Instead, Teilhard argues that the unification of consciousness proceeds in proportion to the differentiation and personalization of the discrete human consciousnesses that compose it:

> ...the concentration of a conscious Universe would be unthinkable if, at the same time as *all* of Consciousness, it did not gather within itself *every* Consciousness: each one remaining conscious of itself...each becoming all the more itself, and therefore more distinct from the others, the more it approaches the Omega. Not only conservation, but exaltation of the elements through their convergence.[113]

This unity produced through the personalization of the universe is more than just the aggregate of the discrete human persons within it. This is because Christ himself

> ...is the center of centers. He does not constitute himself through the aggregation of inferior I's. He does not destroy them, but saves them by centering them upon himself. The union realized in him must be at its maximum; it must no longer know obscurity, nor the mutual incongruity of parts which enter into contact through the foundations of themselves, each interiorized to the other.[114]

In other words, only in and by the divine personalization of the universe, can individuals become at once fully persons and fully united to other persons.

The law and driving force behind this evolutionary process of personalization, according to Teilhard, is love. This is because human persons cannot give themselves to some impersonal higher force, but only to a universe that "takes on a face and a heart," becoming a personal being and thus an object of human love.[115] The precondition and model for this universal love is of course the love between a man and a woman. By uniting two individuals without annihilating their distinct personalities, this kind of love is the figure for more universal forms of love that underwrite social movements and, eventually, unity in Christ. Conjugal love, in other words, "must serve to differentiate the two beings it brings together." This kind of love is integral to the evolutionary irruption of the human person because, "through the woman, man escapes the isolation into which his perfection threatened to enclose him." This is proof, Teilhard concludes, of "the necessary synthesis of the masculine and feminine principles in the edification of the human person."[116] By defining conjugal love in terms of complementarity, Teilhard departs rather markedly from the patriarchal model to which most Neo-Scholastic theologians continued to cleave, which asserted the analogy between the authority of the father over his family, of the king over his nation, and of the Pope over his Church.[117] Fessard's conception of the male-female dialectic as one of the motors of history is no doubt indebted to Teilhard, but it should be noted that both retain an extraordinarily essentialist and instrumental vision of femininity.[118]

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[112] Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, "Essai sur la personne," (undated; circa 1936), Fonds Teilhard de Chardin, AJPF, T.TdC. 8/3, 2.

[113] Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *Le Phénomène humain,* 262-3.

[114] Teilhard de Chardin, "Essai sur la personne," 3.

It is this dual emphasis on love and personalization that leads Teilhard to reject both totalitarianism and the anarchic individualism of liberal democracy. While the mass societies of Communist and Fascist regimes may appear to be manifestations of the growing trend towards cosmic unity, Teilhard warns that they should not be confused with the truly personal societies that will prepare the way for the full unity of the Omega Point. Such societies enhance rather than suppress the human persons who inhabit them. Because of the "impersonal, material character of the Red 'Omega,'" Teilhard argues, "Communism ends up, to all intents and purposes, suppressing the person...and making man into a termite."[119] The surest sign that the resulting society is not an authentically personal one is that relations between the individual persons within it are governed by coercion rather than love. On the other hand, liberal democracies tend too far in the opposite direction, with "each monad jealously falling back on itself." "The age of tepid pluralisms is definitively past," Teilhard concludes.[120] The palaeontologist thus arrives at the very same anti-totalitarian, anti-liberal stance as Maritain, albeit for very different philosophical reasons.

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[115] Teilhard de Chardin, *Le Phénomène humain*, 268.

[116] Teilhard de Chardin, "Essai sur la personne," 4.

[117] The classic expression of this model is Louis de Bonald's counterrevolutionary tract, *On Divorce*, trans. by Nicholas Davidson (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1992). In it, Bonald points to the legalization of divorce under the Revolution as both symptom and cause of its anarchical approach to political authority.

[118] See, for instance, Teilhard de Chardin's "L'Éternel féminin," reprinted in Henri du Lubac, *The Eternal Feminine: A Study on the Poem of Teilhard de Chardin*, trans. by René Hague (New York: Harper&Row, 1971).

This being the case, one might well wonder why Teilhard's work held such a powerful appeal for a generation of Catholics. The answer, I believe, lies in its wholesale rejection of the characteristic features of Neo-Scholasticism: its dependence on medieval or early-modern categories, its strong separation between the natural and supernatural orders, and the privilege it placed on ahistorical speculative reason. Teilhard's evolutionist model altogether refused any separation between the natural and supernatural realms, attributing an extraordinary spiritual agency to the natural world. It is of course for this reason that Teilhard was forbidden from publishing, as there was more than a little pantheism to his worldview. In particular, his optimistic vision of the unstoppable cosmic progress that culminates in divine unity earned him the charge of Pelagianism—the heresy of denying original sin—for the way it seemed to transform grace into a law of nature rather than a gratuitous gift from God. In other words, Teilhard represents the polar alternative to the Neo-Scholastic vision of an autonomous natural order with its own distinct end. For Teilhard, grace already works within nature to call it ever upwards until it takes on the form of divine personhood. The evolutionary logic underpinning this process obviates the need for the analogical thinking so central to Neo-Scholasticism. For Teilhard, the human person is not analogous to the divine person, but instead participates in the Universal Person and is in fact constituted as a person by this very participation. Few at the time would adopt Teilhard's cosmic evolutionism wholesale, however, and many of his closest intellectual allies were deeply critical of the pantheist tendencies in his work.[121] But the sheer dynamism and novelty of his approach made a profound impact on a rising generation of Catholic theologians. The influence of his iconoclastic vision is palpable in their work, guiding their response to the dominant theological and political challenges of the day.

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[119] Quoted in Jean-Yves Calvez, *Chrétiens penseurs du social: Maritain, Mounier, Fessard, Teilhard de Chardin, de Lubac (1920-1940)* (Paris: Cerf, 2002), 128; 127. On the political implications of Teilhard's work, see Pierre-Louis Mathieu, *La Pensée politique et économique de Teilhard de Chardin* (Paris: Seuil, 1969).

[120] Quoted in Calvez, *Chrétiens penseurs du social*, 131.

From the Cosmos to the Church

First among the disciples and defenders of Teilhard de Chardin was Henri de Lubac, whose first book, *Catholicisme: les aspects sociaux du dogme,* found a wide and enthusiastic reception when it was published in 1938. Casting about for alternatives to the sclerotic Neo-Scholasticism he had been taught at Jersey, de Lubac finally found the resources he needed in the forgotten texts of the Church Fathers. This project of *ressourcement*, a return to the sources of the Catholic tradition that had been overshadowed by the dominance of Thomism, would be the defining principle of his life's work. In *Catholicism*, he pointed to the resources in this overlooked Patristic tradition that could furnish contemporaries with a better understanding of the Church and of the appropriate Catholic response to the challenges of modern life. From beginning to end, the book is a resounding affirmation that, in its dogma, scripture, sacraments, ecclesiology, and eschatology, "Catholicism is essentially social."[122]

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[121] See, for instance, the exchange between Gaston Fessard and Teilhard de Chardin in Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 48/D. Fessard feared that the universalism would swallow up the specificity of the Church and that his vision of a cosmic Christ would overshadow the singularity of the historical Incarnation. See also the correspondence on this subject between de Lubac and Hamel: Robert Hamel to Henri de Lubac, 13 January, 1924, AJPF, Fonds de Lubac, 42/1; Henri de Lubac to Robert Hamel, 14 December, 1923, Centre d'archives et d'études Henri de Lubac [CAEHL], 3793.

Perhaps the central plank in this claim is an understanding of ecclesiology that would gain tremendous popularity over the 1940s, thanks in large part to de Lubac's work: the Pauline vision of the Church as the "mystical body of Christ." For de Lubac, the Incarnation is not just a discrete moment in the past when Christ was embodied in human form, but also implies a continuing process by which humans come to embody Christ:

> He incorporated himself in our humanity, and incorporated it in himself...In making a human nature, it is *human nature* to which he united himself, enclosed in himself, and it is the latter, whole and entire, that in some sort he uses as a body.[123]

The influence of Teilhard's cosmic personalism is unmistakable, but de Lubac deftly weaves it into the fabric of more orthodox Patristic and Pauline reflections on the nature of the Church. Such an understanding of the Church as "Christ spread abroad and communicated" gives rise to a paradox, because it treats the Church as "both the way and the goal" of salvation; as both a particular sect and the universal human community that will be incorporated in Christ.[124] For de Lubac, this is a productive tension that militates against the tendency to reduce the Church to its visible, institutional form. The "mystical body" ecclesiology thus offers a salutary alternative to the juridical understanding of the Church associated with Bellarmine, which treats Church and state as analogous "perfect societies," each self-sufficient in its own sphere. It was precisely this model that de Lubac had already rejected in the context of the condemnation of the AF and the debate over "indirect power." In departing from this ecclesiological model, de Lubac again rejects its authoritarian implications, in favour of a more organic, participatory model:

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[122] Henri de Lubac, *Catholicism: Christ and the Common Destiny of Man*, trans. by Lancelot C. Sheppard and Elizabeth Englund, foreword by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1988), 15.

[123] Ibid., 38-9.

[124] Ibid., 48; 73.

> The Church which is the Body of Christ, is not merely that strongly hierarchical and disciplined society...the Church is for us the sacrament of Christ; she represents him, in the full and ancient meaning of the term; she really makes him present...so that the Catholic is not only subject to a power but is a member of a body as well, and his legal dependence on this power is to the end that he may have part in the life of that body.[125]

Conceiving of the Church as the "mystical body of Christ" thus allows for a more open, ecumenical ecclesiology that does not restrict salvation to the Church's present institutional form.[126]

When de Lubac figures the Church in this way, as the "sacrament of Christ," he has something very precise in mind. Reviving a discourse central to the ecclesiology of the Church Fathers but which was lost over the course of the Middle Ages, de Lubac argues for the centrality of the sacrament of the Eucharist in the constitution of the Church. The close connection between these two forms of the body of Christ was clear to the Church Fathers, who "unhesitatingly understood that by their reception of the Eucharist they would be incorporated the more in the Church. They could see a profound identity between the mysteries of the 'real presence' and of the 'mystical body.'"[127] In other words, the sacrament of the Eucharist does not simply involve a communion between Christ and the individual Christian who consumes his physical body. Rather, the Eucharistic celebration literally enacts the Church, which is also, in a very real sense, the Body of Christ. In other words, the primary significance of the Eucharist is to incorporate us into the broader community that is the mystical body of Christ. To this "social" understanding of the nature of sacraments, de Lubac adds a "social" model of salvation. Again, he argues that we must return to the Patristic sources for direction, for the Fathers understood that "the salvation of the individual could only be obtained within the salvation of the community."[128] How could it be otherwise when we are all called to be members of the Mystical Body of Christ? Necessarily, de Lubac concludes, the Kingdom cannot arrive "as long as all the elect are not all gathered together in Christ and the whole world brought by him to the summit of its perfection."[129] In other words, salvation is not a question of the individual's relationship to God, nor is it the exclusive privilege of those who are already members of the Catholic Church. De Lubac's model thus marks an absolute departure from the Neo-Scholastic tendency to define the Church in hierarchical, exclusive, and legalistic terms.

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[125] Ibid., 76.

[126] De Lubac's formulation of the "mystical body" ecclesiology is almost identical to the model put forth by his friend Yves de Montcheuil in *Aspects of the Church*, trans. by Albert J. LaMother (Chicago: Fides, 1955).

[127] Ibid., 99-100.

[128] Ibid., 125.

In the final portion of *Catholicism*, de Lubac draws out the implications of his theology for the dominant social and political concerns of the day. First, he blames the Aristotelian inheritance of Neo-Scholasticism for fostering a theological turn towards the individual. In an unmistakable reference to Maritain's method of "distinguishing in order to unite," de Lubac bemoans the logical tendency that "begins by separating, 'defining,' isolating objects in order afterward to connect them again artificially."[130] Not only does this approach lead to an impoverished understanding of history, de Lubac hints that it might have much more troubling political consequences. He even suggests, citing a 1935 article by Philippe de Régis, that "'perhaps Marxism and Leninism would not have arisen and been propagated with such terrible results if the place that belongs to collectivity in the natural as well as in the supernatural order had always been given to it.'"[131] Instead, de Lubac suggests that the personalist model he shares with Teilhard provides a much more effective weapon against totalitarianism. In defending this approach, de Lubac counters the charge of crypto-totalitarianism that some personalists had laid at Teilhard's door, accusing the Jesuit evolutionist of stifling the individuality of the person.[132] Instead, de Lubac provides theological weight to Teilhard's evolutionary claim that the unification and differentiation of the universe proceed in proportion to each other. For de Lubac, the example of the Trinity offers the greatest proof that "the distinction between the different parts of a being stands out the more clearly as the union of these parts is closer."[133] Just as God is composed of three persons whose unity preserves their distinction, "true union does not tend to dissolve into one another the beings that it brings together, but to bring them to completion by means of one another."[134] Instead of "distinguishing in order to unite," as Maritain would have us do, we must first "unite in order to distinguish."[135]

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[129] Ibid., 126.

[130] Ibid., 307.

[131] Quoted in ibid., 309.

[132] One later example is Bruno Charbonneau, *Teilhard de Chardin, prophète d'un âge totalitaire* (Paris: Denoël, 1963).

By thus refusing the Neo-Scholastic tendency to proceed from distinctions—in particular, a distinction between the natural and supernatural orders—de Lubac suggests that his own "integral humanism" provides a stronger alternative to the secular humanisms of the day. First and foremost, it refuses the notion of an autonomous natural order or a part of the human person that would remain untouched by the transfiguring call of the supernatural. For de Lubac, this theological truth has the political benefit of foreclosing the temptation to cooperate with secular ideologies for purely natural ends, because it does not admit of a distinction between the natural and supernatural ends of the human person. Such a model instead infuses the natural, social activities of the human person with a new urgency, for "it is the Eternal found at the heart of all temporal development which gives it life and direction. It is the authentic Present without which the present itself is like the dust which slips through our hands."[136] This supernatural end, by making the human person present to itself and present to others, is the only authentic grounds for social action. Without it, social movements such as Communism simply treat "the man of today as a mere instrument for the purposes of the man of tomorrow."[137] Only a transcendent destiny can call into being a "New Man" capable of overcoming the inevitable contradictions between the individual and society that arise when one seeks to build the Kingdom of God on earth. By firmly rooting the mystical body of Christ in the sacrament of the Eucharist, moreover, de Lubac's ecclesiology resists any effort to appropriate or translate it into the terms of a secular political project.

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[133] Henri de Lubac, *Catholicism,* op. cit., 328.

[134] Ibid., 330.

[135] Ibid.

[136] Ibid.., 362.

The Totalitarian Church

By the late 1930s, the "mystical body of Christ" had become the defining principle of French Catholic ecclesiology.[138] It provided a much-needed alternative to the ecclesiastical model once championed by partisans of the Action Française, complementing and making sense of the trajectory of the French Church since the condemnation. Indeed, as Gerd-Rainer Horn argues, it became something like the "official theology" of Catholic Action.[139] A raft of articles published in the 1930s and 1940s testify to this, but none more eloquently than Marie-Dominique Chenu's Catholic Action manifesto, "Dimension nouvelle de la Chrétienté."[140] Dedicated to "the chaplains of the JOC," Chenu's article appears at first blush to endorse Maritain's call for a "New Christendom" adapted to the modern reality of mass society. But the Dominican's Christological focus, his sense of history, and his understanding of the relationship between the natural and supernatural orders are much closer to de Lubac's. For Chenu, the Incarnation "did not happen once and for all in a corner of

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[137] Ibid., 358.

[138] The years between 1920 and 1940 witnessed an explosion of works on the mystical body theology. Some of its most notable exemplars include: Émile Mersch, *Le Corps mystique du Christ* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1933); Karl Adam, *Das Wesen des Katholizismus* (Augsburg: Haas & Grabherr, 1924); Palémon Glorieux, *Pour la formation religieuse de nos militants. Au centre de notre enseignement. Corps mystique et apostolat* (Paris: Librairie de la jeunesse ouvrière, 1934); For an overview, see Louis Bouyer, "Chronique d'histoire de la théologie contemporaine: où en est la théologie du corps mystique?" *Revue des sciences religieuses* 22 (1948): 313-33; J. Eileen Scully, "The Theology of the Mystical Body of Christ in French Language Theology, 1930-1950," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 58 (1992), 58-74.

[139] Horn, *Western European Liberation Theology*, 72-6.

[140] Marie-Dominique Chenu, "Dimension nouvelle de la chrétienté," *La Vie intellectuelle* 53 (25 December 1937), 325-351.

Judea," but instead *continues* in and through the Church.[141] If the temporal life of the human person is fundamentally social, this is all the more true of its spiritual life, for "the Incarnation accomplishes itself in the "mystical body" of Christ."[142] Catholic Action is thus "Incarnation continued" in the context of modern capitalist society. It is "the yeast thrown back into the dough," the leavening agent that penetrates a particular sector—worker, student, peasant, etc.—in order to bring it into the mystical body of Christ.[143] In other words, "the doctrine of the mystical body of Christ is the richest food for the JOC and its peers."[144]

For Chenu, as for de Lubac, this doctrine means that nothing within the human person can escape the transfiguring power of the supernatural. There can be no truly autonomous region of the natural order; no distinct natural end for the human person:

> If God incarnates himself in order to divinize man, he must take *everything* in man, from the top to the bottom of his nature...it is all of man, according to his resources and with all of his works, that is assumed by grace. Divine life does not infuse itself in our life through an elimination of its human content or a reduction of its native structure, but through a *totalitarian* elevation to the supernatural plane.[145]

The use of the term "totalitarian" is of course highly significant, and Chenu deploys it to underscore the extent to which no arena of human action is immune from the penetrating light of grace. Catholics had been wringing their hands for decades over the astronomical rate at which the working classes were leaving the Church, and they frequently blamed the "antichristian" nature of the factory milieu for this state of affairs. But Chenu argues that there is no milieu so unchristian as to be immune from the transformative power of Catholic Action. It is only by going down into the factory that the factory can be brought to Christ, or as Pius XI put it, "'the worker must be the apostle of the worker.'"[146] Thanks to the actions of the JOC, the working-class milieu is no longer "*as such* refractory the presence of Christ," and labor is transformed into a vehicle of evangelization.[147] For Chenu, this reveals the superiority of Catholic Action to the traditional methods of Catholic engagement in temporal affairs—party politics. Parties, such as the Action Française or the Communist Party, merely serve an "external" function, whereas Catholic Action "is a slice of the internal life of Christendom, growing the mystical Body."[148] In other words, Catholic Action is a stage of the historical Incarnation that progressively incorporates all that is human into Christ.

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[141] Ibid., 327.

[142] Ibid., 329.

[143] Ibid., 338.

[144] Ibid., 339.

[145] Ibid., 331. Emphasis mine.

Chenu remained committed to certain aspects of Maritainian personalism, due in large part to the admiration for Thomas Aquinas that he shared with Maritain, but the fact that Chenu's theological reading of Catholic Action sounds much closer to de Lubac's tells us a great deal about the status of Thomism in the 1930s. The condemnation of the Action Française had definitively broken the Neo-Scholastic monopoly on orthodoxy and, in the process, it revealed deep fractures in what Étienne Gilson famously called "the large Thomist family."[149] Just as the condemnation had rehabilitated "social Catholics" like Blondel, it also opened up new avenues for an embattled minority of "historical Thomists." In addition to Gilson, Chenu and his student Yves Congar were the face of this movement, which sought to return to the "historical Thomas" rather than reading him through the lens of his early-modern commentators, as the Neo-Scholastics did. The effect of focusing exclusively on the Thomist corpus was to recover its powerful Augustinian and Platonic inflections, which the "baroque theology" of the commentators had downplayed in favour of its Aristotelian elements.[150] Because of this impulse to return to the "authentic" Thomas, the work of Chenu and Congar is usually treated as a subset of the *ressourcement* project advocated by de Lubac and other theologians who would later be identified with the "nouvelle théologie."[151] There are of course very significant differences between the Dominican and Jesuit wings of this project, most notably over the privileged place of Thomas Aquinas, but their shared historical sense and Augustinian bent accounts for their convergence on a number of key theological and political questions. In particular, it accounts for their common refusal of the Neo-Scholastic separation between the natural and supernatural orders—a position that is evident in Chenu's article on Catholic Action and which distances his approach from Maritain's "New Christendom."

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[146] Quoted in ibid., 342.

[147] Ibid., 347. Chenu here adumbrates his "theology of labor": see John Hughes, *The End of Work: Theological Critiques of Capitalism* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2007), ch. 1.

[148] Ibid., 344.

[149] Étienne Gilson, *Le philosophe et la théologie* (Paris: Fayard, 1960), 216.

Chenu's approach also found an echo in the work of a far more obscure member of the "nouvelle théologie"—the Jesuit Henri Rondet, who would become a colleague of de Lubac's after the war. Rondet explained the significance of the "mystical body" ecclesiology for Catholic Action in an address to the JECF in 1943. Citing de Lubac's social model of salvation, he credited the doctrine of the "mystical body" with "rescuing us from the murderous individualism of the 19th century, according to which each person struggled to achieve his own salvation in isolation."[152] But the advantage of the "mystical body" theology was that it also provided a powerful alternative to the rising specter of totalitarianism, by treating the Church as the only authentic totalitarianism. In "L'Église totalitaire," a provocatively-titled essay from 1934, Rondet effectively blamed the rise of totalitarian states on Protestant ecclesiology.[153] The "invisible church" of Protestantism, because it lacks the "visible" element central to Catholic ecclesiology, looks to the state to provide this visible form. This is of course a reference to "German Christianity," the nationalist religious discourse embraced by some proponents of National Socialism. Rondet suggests that Catholic ecclesiology avoids this trap because its visible incarnation in the supranational Church institutions prevents it from ever being identified with a single nation or state. The Church's brand of totalitarianism thus allows for distinctions within the unity of its body, just as the limbs of the body of Christ have distinct functions but are part of his organic unity:

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[150] This term is Chenu's.

[151] On the relationship between the Dominican and Jesuit wings of the nouvelle théologie, see Jürgen Mettepenningen, *Nouvelle Théologie—New Theology: Inheritor of Modernism, Precursor of Vatican II* (New York: T&T Clark, 2010); Étienne Fouilloux, *Une Église en quête de liberté: la pensée catholique française entre modernisme et Vatican II (1914-1962)* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1998).

[152] Henri Rondet, "Église et corps mystique," *Aider* (December 1943), in Fonds Henri Rondet, AJPF, 10/8.

> Totalitarian Church: at once spiritual and terrestrial unity of all the peoples...unity that does not aim at the disappearance, but instead the maintenance of differences of race, culture, color...in order to make their value understood, to give them their place in the harmony of the whole.[154]

The Church is authentically totalitarian, in other words, because it alone can reconcile the individual ends of each human person with the ends of all persons. Just as the ends of a body and those of its limbs cannot be at odds, "In the Church, mystical body of Christ, the Frenchman will be a better Frenchman inasmuch as he is a better Catholic."[155] Finally, the Church is truly totalitarian because it encompasses even those who are not yet members of its visible body. As the mystical body of Christ, the Church "pours out the grace of Christ into every soul of good faith, even those who are unaware of it, even those who, in good faith, fight it."[156]

Here we see the stakes of ecclesiastical personalism reach their fullest expression. Against the twin evils of totalitarianism and liberal individualism, the doctrine of the "mystical body of Christ" erects its own totalitarian mystique—one based on love rather than coercion, empowering rather than stifling the human person. For proponents of this model, the challenge of the totalitarian state could only be met by a rival totalitarianism; the "mystiques" of Communism and Fascism could only be met by a rival mysticism; the "total politics" of Schmitt could only be met by a total ecclesiology. We are very far here from the "civil-society Catholicism" scholars have identified as the official philosophy of Catholic Action. Such a model certainly applies to Maritain, but as I have tried to show, this was by no means the only or even the dominant French Catholic response to the challenges of the 1930s. The very concept of "civil society" is a secular model derived from Aristotle, denoting a society of free individuals living under the rule of law and oriented towards a common natural good. But, of course, most of the figures we have examined were deeply opposed to the colonization of Catholic theology by Aristotelian categories under the aegis of Neo-Scholasticism. For them, Catholic Action was not simply a way to infuse Catholic values into civil society through the agency of individual Catholic laypeople; it was a stage in the progressive construction of the mystical body of Christ. They did not reject totalitarianism because it infringed upon the rights and dignity of the individual person, but because it violated the unity and sanctity of Christ's person.

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[153] "L'Église totalitaire," in Fonds Rondet, AJPF, 12/5.

[154] Ibid., 4.

[155] Ibid., 16.

[156] Ibid., 90.

In other words, the "mystical body" theology demonstrates that resistance to totalitarianism need not emerge from a basically liberal defense of the human person and civil society. Maritain's distinction between the individual acting "as a Christian" and the individual acting "as a Christian as such" would of course have been anathema to people like Teilhard and de Lubac. Their holistic, organicist vision of Christ's mystical body refused any such distinction between the natural and supernatural ends of the person, which mapped all too readily onto the classic liberal distinction between the public and private spheres. Specifically designed to be inassimilable to a political ideology, ecclesiastical personalism shows up the difficulties implicit in any effort to describe a theological concept in political terms derived from a secular context. The "mystical body" theology was deeply apolitical and even anti-political. It was specifically conceived as a reaction to the political compromises of the Catholic dalliance with the Action Française and to the juridical definition of the Church associated with Neo-Scholasticism. But it was just as hostile to any form of religious escapism, of quietist retreat into the (implicitly feminine) private sphere. Instead, the theology of the "mystical body" refused the defining categories of secular politics itself—its understanding of sovereignty, the limits of the political, and the distinction between the public and private spheres.

Towards Vichy

French theologians and philosophers seeking to articulate the nature and limits of Catholic engagement in public life faced a particular set of challenges in the 1930s. The separation of Church and state and the condemnation of the Action Française necessitated a rethinking of the traditional approach to Church-state relations inherited from the great early-modern jurists. No longer could Church and state be conceived as analogous "perfect societies" with distinct jurisdictions and ends, negotiating their respective spheres the way two states might negotiate a shared border. The rise of the new lay apostolate and specialized Catholic Action movements inspired theologians to think through the relations between the temporal and spiritual orders in ways not exhausted by the interaction between Church and state. Maritain's "New Christendom" and the "mystical body" theology were two such efforts to elaborate a personalist approach to Catholic Action that could successfully compete with both the secular individualism of the Republic and the growing threats posed by Communism and Fascism. As I have tried to show, the first of these models largely retained the Neo-Scholastic metaphysics that had once served the Action Française, but redeployed it to defend human dignity and civil society against the encroachment of totalitarian ideologies. In other words, the Neo-Scholastic model that had once underwritten Maurrassian royalism would be redeployed in the postwar period as the "official philosophy" of Christian democracy. The second model, however, could not be so easily harnessed to a political project, since it was rooted in a personalist ecclesiology constituted in and through the celebration of the Eucharist.

These debates testify to the remarkable vitality of French Catholic theology and philosophy in the mid-1930s. But this optimism was short-lived, and the new approaches to Catholic social engagement that were developed in this period would soon face their greatest test. Three events in 1939 brought the Catholic renaissance inaugurated by the condemnation of the Action Française to a definitive close. In February of that year, Pope Pius XI died and was succeeded by his Secretary of State, Eugenio Pacelli. It soon became clear that Pius XII's had a very different temperament and vision for the Church's role in European public life. As if to signal this change in outlook, one of the Pope's first acts was to lift the condemnation of the Action Française issued by his predecessor. This would of course have a significant impact on the trajectory of French politics after the country fell under German occupation in 1940. Pétain's National Revolution, with all its political compromises, could count on significant support from the Action Française. Catholics who had only begrudgingly submitted to the 1926 condemnation now felt themselves vindicated, and when the Vichy regime began to roll back much of the anticlerical legislation enacted under the Third Republic, it was easy for many to forget the difficult lessons of the 1920s and 1930s. The separation of Church and state no longer seemed as irreparable; the dream of restoration no longer seemed like a romantic yearning for a bygone era.

But it was not just died-in-the-wool royalists who lined up behind Pétain in 1940. By deploying the anti-individualist language of personalism and the rhetoric of a "spiritual revolution," Pétain managed to recruit heavily from the ranks of Catholic Action.[157] Vichy and the Occupation thus drove a wedge through the Catholic personalism of the 1930s. Once again, the debates over collaboration and the legitimacy of the Vichy regime would center upon the admissibility of Catholic cooperation with antichristian ideologies and the limits of Catholic political action. Once again, these political debates would be carried out obliquely, through the realm of ecclesiology, as well as eucharistic and biblical theology. Indeed, these theological domains proved particularly fruitful avenues for communicating political dissent in the context of state censorship and political persecution. As a result, it was precisely the proponents of the counter-political ecclesiology of the "mystical body"—most notably, de Lubac and his friends Fessard and Montcheuil—who would emerge as the leaders of the "spiritual resistance" to Fascism.

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[157] John Hellman makes much of this, frequently reading the intellectual debates of the 1930s as a rehearsal for fascism: *The Knight-Monks of Vichy France: Uriage, 1940-1945* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993); *Emmanuel Mounier and the New Catholic Left, 1930-1950* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983).

II. Resistance (1940-1944)

When war broke out in 1939, priests were once again called up to serve in the military, as they had during the First World War. Henri de Lubac's service in that conflict had left him with a piece of shrapnel lodged in his ear, which rendered him unfit to serve in 1939. But his two closest friends, Gaston Fessard and Yves de Montcheuil, were not so lucky. Their military service was rather short-lived, however, because in June of 1940, the French forces surrendered to the German army. Shortly after Marshal Pétain announced the armistice and the creation of a new French State under his authority, Montcheuil wrote to de Lubac from his garrison. He had few illusions about "the honorable façade of an old and impotent Pétain," predicting that the new regime would try to appropriate the Church's "vocabulary of sacrifice, effort, and discipline" for its own rather less lofty aims. He hoped, nevertheless, that the Catholic hierarchy would manage to see through this gesture:

> I hope that our spiritual leaders will not allow themselves to be compromised and that authorized voices will know to speak clearly and firmly. We will perhaps have occasion to know what it means to take a risk in order to ensure the freedom of the word of God. This will be the moment to prove that everything we said before the war was more than the sterile chatter of people living in security.[1]

These words are chillingly prophetic. In August 1944, Montcheuil was executed by the Gestapo while serving as a chaplain amidst the young resistance fighters, the *maquisards*, battling to liberate the country from the German forces. It was not by chance that Montcheuil found himself in their ranks. While the Catholic hierarchy and the vast majority of the faithful embraced Pétain and his National Revolution as a heaven-sent redemption from the secular ills of the Third Republic, Montcheuil, de Lubac, Fessard, and their fellow Jesuit Pierre Chaillet led an embattled Catholic resistance to Nazism and the collaborationist government of Marshal Pétain.

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[1] Yves de Montcheuil to Henri de Lubac, 3 July 1940, Centre d'Archives et d'Études Henri de Lubac [henceforth, CAEHL] (Namur, Belgium), 48934.

At first they confined their protests to the "licit" channels of official publications subject to state censorship. But in the face of increasingly restrictive censorship on two fronts—from both the French State and their religious superiors—they chose to move underground and publish anonymously. Thus was born the remarkable clandestine journal *Témoignage chrétien* ("Christian Witness"), denounced by the Church hierarchy as the work of "theologians without a mandate" because it was published without ecclesiastical *imprimatur*. As its authors never ceased to reaffirm, the journal's aims were of a spiritual rather than a political nature. It sought to educate the French people about the crimes committed throughout Europe in the name of National Socialism and the duty incumbent on all Christians to resist it, even when the victims of the Nazi "New Order" were not Christians. As its name suggests, this was an ecumenical, but also a transnational enterprise. De Lubac and Chaillet stacked up testimony from Popes, from Catholic bishops across Europe, but also from Protestant and Jewish leaders, in order to counteract official propaganda and demonstrate that Nazism and Christianity were fundamentally irreconcilable.

John Milbank has drawn a connection between this wartime engagement and the postwar travails of the Nouvelle Théologie. He argues that de Lubac and his friends' "*political* opponents—Catholic Rightists supporting the Vichy regime and collaborating with the occupying Germans—were also their *theological* opponents."[2] This is by and large true. It should come as no surprise that the Neo-Scholastic partisans of the Action Française, emboldened by the Vatican's decision to lift its condemnation of the movement in 1939, were amongst the most enthusiastic partisans of the National Revolution. Consequently, the charges that de Lubac and his friends leveled against Vichy's clerical supporters echoed those they had developed against the Action Française in the 1920s—

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[2] John Milbank, *The Suspended Middle: Henri de Lubac and the Debate concerning the Supernatural* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005), 3. Emphasis in original.

most notably, concerning the dangers of collaborating with an unchristian regime simply because it shared the Church's penchant for authority and hierarchy.

But Milbank's statement misses a crucial dimension of this story, for Catholic politics so often defies the logic of the Right-Left spectrum, itself derived from a secular political context. Vichy did not just recruit from the ranks of the traditional French Right; it also rallied a sizeable segment of the interwar Catholic Action movement in which de Lubac and his friends had been enthusiastic participants. The war thus forced them to reconsider the movement's theological foundations, including the mystical body ecclesiology they had helped to elaborate. They were particularly troubled by the way that many lay and clerical veterans of Catholic Action now invoked the movement's mission to incarnate Catholic values in the temporal order as a means to justify the politics of "presence"—the notion that Catholics should work within the structures of the National Revolution in order to orient it in a Catholic direction. Where de Lubac's circle had once stressed the importance of Catholic engagement in temporal affairs, they now sought to balance this focus on incarnation with a healthy dose of eschatology. And yet, their turn to eschatology did not imply a retreat from politics, even if they ceaselessly maintained that their resistance work was strictly apolitical, or rather, "supra-political."

The story of *Témoignage chrétien* and the spiritual resistance therefore forces us to expand our definition of the scope and nature of the political in order to recognize that even the most otherworldly and apolitical discourses can have powerful political effects. As they had before the war, these theologians turned to ecclesiology—the theology of the Church—as a kind of counter-politics that refused secular political distinctions between public and private, Church and state, Right and Left, the spiritual and the temporal, salvation history and human history. If these theologians unequivocally opposed Nazi anti-Semitism and defended the dignity of the human person, they did not do so for liberal reasons. Historians often present the politics of wartime France as a battle between the forces of fascism and defenders of liberal democracy, but de Lubac and his friends were hostile to both, and indeed they blamed the rise Nazi totalitarianism in part on the excesses of liberal individualism. Instead, they sought to counter the biopolitical pretensions of the Vichy regime and the Third Reich—each of which deployed the biological life of its population in the service of its political goals—with a kind of *biotheology* organized around the life and body of Christ. Replacing the mystical body ecclesiology of the interwar period with a new ecclesiology founded upon the Eucharist, they looked to the universal promise of membership in the "true" body of Christ, which would come at the end of time but was already enacted here and now in the Eucharist, to ground an alternative order of bodies. Each body, regardless of whether it belonged to a Christian or not, thus became a potential member of the body of Christ.

Chapter 3 introduces the history of the spiritual resistance, situating it in the context of the National Revolution and the variety of Catholic responses it elicited. It follows the story of de Lubac's circle as they exhausted the avenues for licit resistance and eventually moved underground to publish *Témoignage chrétien*. Chapter 4 builds upon this account by delving deeper into the theological supports for the spiritual resistance, examining how theology both determined the resistance activities of these actors and was also reshaped by these activities. In the process of negotiating an alternative to both totalitarianism and liberal democracy, I show how these theologians transformed the fields of biblical theology, ecclesiology, and Catholic teaching on Judaism in ways that would have a profound effect on both postwar France and the postwar Church.

Chapter 3. The Weapons of the Spirit: Catholic Theology and the Resistance to Nazism

On June 25th, 1940, Marshal Pétain took to the airwaves to communicate the terms of the armistice that would divide France into a northern Occupied Zone, administered directly by the German army, and a Free Zone to be governed by Pétain's new government, eventually headquartered at Vichy. In his speech, Pétain offered no less than an explanation for France's humiliating defeat and a program for the physical and spiritual regeneration of the nation. More than just a lack of military preparation, the hero of Verdun blamed the defeat on the moral "laxities" of the Third Republic, which had promoted a "spirit of pleasure" at the expense of the "spirit of sacrifice." To counteract the effects of this moral failure, Pétain enjoined his listeners to embark on the difficult work of "intellectual and moral revival," thanks to which "a new order is beginning."[1]

Known as the National Revolution, this order was a positive ideological project with distinctly French roots and not simply a German import or a mere caretaker regime.[2] It was also a deeply divided project founded on an unholy alliance between Catholics and anticlericals, Maurassian nationalists and pro-German collaborationists, proponents of state planning and decentralizing corporatists. "Neither Right nor Left," what this motley crew shared was a distaste for the "decadence" of the Third Republic.[3] How one defined this of course differed substantially. For many Catholics, it was the Republic's commitment to *laïcité* that had sealed its defeat, while those on the Left blamed the corrosive effects of capitalism and the Right bemoaned the triumph of anarchic individualism over the principles of discipline, duty, and authority. However one defined the ills of the Third Republic, all could agree that it was to blame for France's humiliating defeat at the hands of the Germans. Indeed, for many, the defeat was no less than a divine punishment for the sins of the Republic, for which the nation must now atone in order to redeem itself. Seen from this perspective, Pétain was the providential man sent to lead the nation in this collective act of penance, or as the Bishop of Marseille put it, "'God is at work through you, M. le maréchal, to save France.'"[4] Against the "spirit of pleasure" that had led France astray, Pétain trumpeted the virtues of sacrifice and hard work; against the Republican onus on individual rights, he privileged the duties stemming from membership in the "natural" communities of family, profession, and nation; against the "false idea of the natural equality of men," he promised "a social and hierarchical regime."[5]

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[1] Philippe Pétain, "Appel du 25 juin 1940 (mardi)," in *Discours aux Français: 17 juin 1940 – 20 août 1944*, ed. by Jean-Claude Barbas (Paris: Albin Michel, 1989), 66.

[2] Robert Paxton has done more than anyone to debunk the notion that Vichy programs were "imported into the country by the tanks of the invader," which dominated historical accounts of the war years until the 1970s. See esp. *Vichy France: Old Guard and New Order, 1940-1944* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001 [1972]), 138-9; 142-3.

[3] Zeev Sternhell, *Neither Right nor Left: Fascist Ideology in France,* trans. by David Maisel (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).

Far from a coherent political program, the National Revolution was thus a rather vague project of moral and physical regeneration, but this is precisely what accounted for its appeal. Pétain, the hero of Verdun, seemed to transcend political parties, presenting himself as the father of the nation and addressing his speeches to "my children."[6] This has led Francine Muel-Dreyfus to attribute the power of the National Revolution to its capacity to win "forms of adherence to the regime that were not necessarily political but that had political effects."[7] From a Catholic penitential discourse of redemptive suffering to medical fantasies of a purified social body, Vichy was able to mobilize a variety of pre-political commitments to its dual project to revive France in both body and soul. But whether grounded in the imprescriptible authority of Providence, nature, or health, these pre-political discourses had very real political effects.

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[4] Quoted in Paxton, *Vichy France,* 149.

[5] Philippe Pétain, "Message du 10 octobre 1940 (jeudi)," in *Discours aux Français*, 89; these principles are most clearly expressed in Pétain's *Principes de la communauté*, reprinted in the same volume, 363-5.

[6] See, for instance, "Message du 24 décembre 1940 (mardi)," in ibid., 102-3; Paxton refers to Pétain as a "paternal substitute for politics," in *Vichy France*, 186.

[7] Francine Muel-Dreyfus, *Vichy and the Eternal Feminine: A Contribution to a Political Sociology of Gender*, trans. by Kathleen A. Johnson (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), 5.

Nowhere was this clearer than in the regime's approach to women and the family—an arena in which Catholics, demographers, and lawmakers could join hands to transform women's bodies into key instruments of national regeneration. For Pétain, the causes of the defeat were simple: "too few children, too few weapons, too few allies."[8] Too many women had succumbed to the siren song of interwar liberalism, abdicating their childrearing responsibilities to seek work or education outside the home. And yet, the family was the "essential cell of society" and thus "the greatest guarantor of recovery." "A sterile country is a mortally wounded country," Pétain warned.[9] The Vichy regime therefore set about extending the provisions of the 1939 Family Code, offering financial incentives to stay-at-home mothers and large families, while severely restricting access to employment for married women. In addition, the regime forbade divorce during the first two years of marriage and proclaimed abortion a "crime against society, the state, and the race," making it a capital offence punishable by death.[10] Alongside these legal mechanisms of biopolitical control, Vichy promoted a veritable cottage industry of think tanks devoted to the population question, deploying the latest statistical tools to improve the quality and quantity of the national stock and educate women about their demographic and familial responsibilities.[11] This pseudo-scientific natalism found its spiritual complement in the cult of motherhood promoted by the regime's Catholic supporters. The regime actively promoted Marian devotions and pilgrimages, while the clergy preached the virtues of feminine suffering, self-sacrifice, and maternal devotion—virtues which endowed women with a privileged place in expiating the sins of the defeated nation.[12] What these medical and spiritual discourses shared, Muel-Dreyfus argues, is a vision of the "eternal feminine" grounded in the "natural" inequality between men and women, which served to naturalize other forms of inequality and fed a broader "obsession to 'sanitize' the social body."[13] The bodies and souls of women became the privileged vehicles for Vichy's program of national regeneration, marking the confluence of its biopolitical and theological pretensions.

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[8] Philippe Pétain, "Appel du 20 juin 1940 (jeudi)," in *Discours aux Français*, 60.

[9] Philippe Pétain, "Allocution du 25 mai 1941 (dimanche)," in ibid., 133. This speech was given on the occasion of the first Mother's Day celebrated under the regime, an occasion it used to promote its pro-natalist policies and the cult of motherhood.

[10] Muel-Dreyfus, *Vichy France and the Eternal Feminine,* 283. On the regime's approach to women, see also Miranda Pollard, *Reign of Virtue: Mobilizing Gender in Vichy France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

[11] See esp. Muel-Dreyfus, *Vichy and the Eternal Feminine*, ch. 8; Philip Nord, *France's New Deal: From the Thirties to the Postwar Era* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), 115-130.

If the National Revolution approached women's bodies and souls as instruments for the regeneration of the French nation, others were simply deemed inassimilable to the national body. Of the roughly 300,000 Jews living in France in 1939, half had been born outside France, many of them refugees from the persecutions of the Third Reich. This influx of Jewish refugees from Central and Eastern Europe stoked the flames of French xenophobia and anti-Semitism to such an extent throughout the 1930s that Vichy's response to the "Jewish problem" elicited few protests. On October 3rd, 1940, the French State issued its first *Statut des Juifs*, excluding Jews from public-service employment and "'professions that influence people,'" including education and the press.[14] A second *Statut*, issued the following year, went even further, limiting access to most professions and higher education. In October of 1940, the government endowed prefects with the power to intern "foreign" Jews and others deemed a risk to national security, and by the end of the year, roughly

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[12] On the Catholic contribution to the discourse on women and the family at Vichy, see Muel-Dreyfus, *Vichy and the Eternal Feminine,* chapters 2 and 5; W.D. Halls, *Politics, Society, and Christianity in Vichy France* (Oxford, Berg, 1995), 258-64; Pollard, *Reign of Virtue,* passim.

[13] Muel-Dreyfus, *Vichy and the Eternal Feminine*, 11.

[14] Julian Jackson, *France: The Dark Years, 1940-1944* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 150; see also chapter 15. The pathbreaking work on Vichy's Jewish policy remains Michael Marrus and Robert Paxton, *Vichy France and the Jews* (New York: Basic Books, 1981).

60,000 people were interned in French camps.[15] In March of 1941, Pétain created a special *Commissariat général aux questions juives* and appointed Xavier Vallat, a prominent Catholic and supporter of the Action Française, to administer it. As we shall see, Vallat weaved together the theological anti-Judaism of the Church and the biomedical lexicon of modern racism, warning of "'the mortal danger that the Jewish abscess constituted'" to the weakened body of the nation, and of the need "'for us to take the scalpel in hand.'"[16] The Final Solution reached France a year later, when 13,000 Jews from the Occupied Zone were corralled at the Vélodrome d'Hiver and then carted off to concentration camps in the East. Vichy would hand over a further 10,000 Jews from its own territory, leading several bishops to break their long silence and issue public protestations. Despite this complicity in the worst crimes of the Third Reich, however, Robert Paxton and Michael Marrus have stressed the distinctly French roots of Vichy anti-Semitism.[17] Owing more to cultural and national chauvinism than to scientific racism, the Jewish policy of the French State was by no means a German import, but an emphatically indigenous mélange of Maurrassian anti-Semitism, Catholic anti-Judaism, and a more general xenophobia that preferred "French" to "foreign" Jews. Lawmakers at Vichy needed little encouragement from the Occupier to legislate the spiritual and racial exclusion of Jews from—or at best their inferiority within—the body of the nation.

The pride of place accorded to "natural" communities in the National Revolution was by no means limited to the nation and the family, but also extended to the ostensibly organic solidarity that united members of the same profession. Indeed, the first article of Pétain's *Principes de la*

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[15] Ibid., 151.

[16] Quoted in Henri de Lubac, *Christian Resistance to Anti-Semitism: Memories from 1940-1944*, trans. by Elizabeth Englund (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1990), 54. Vallat's anti-Semitism nevertheless paled in comparison to the virulent racism of his pro-Nazi successor, Darquier de Pellepoix. On the CGQJ, see Laurent Joly, *Vichy dans la 'Solution finale': histoire du commissariat général aux questions juives, 1941-1944* (Paris: Grasset, 2006).

[17] Marrus and Paxton, *Vichy France and the Jews* and Paxton, *Vichy France* did more than any other work to undermine the notion that Vichy's Jewish policy was a German imposition.

Communauté—his answer to the 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen—subordinated the rights of the individual to "the communities that surround him: the family that raises him; the profession that nourishes him; the nation that protects him."[18] Statements such as these found an eager ally in Catholic corporatists like François Perroux, who argued for the need to replace the artificial antagonisms of the class system with an economy run by more organic, cooperative corporations of workers and employers engaged in the same industry or profession.[19] This was precisely what Vichy undertook to do when it established a set of *Comités d'organisation* charged with regulating resource allocation, production, and pricing in their respective industries. The language of organic corporatism—hearkening as it did to a medieval economic order—privileged the modern vestiges of that order, such as artisans and peasants. "The soil doe not lie," Pétain was fond of saying, and the generous subsidies he offered to small farmers were proof of his conviction that the secret to national regeneration lay in a return to the land. The peasantry was to be "the keystone of the corporatist edifice," in which each industry functioned like an organ within the greater body of the nation.[20] As one corporatist put it, "there is *one Body that is the nation*. All its parts are only organs that live on its soil and from its blood."[21] As in the human body, these organs were not necessarily of equal importance, but nature nevertheless ensured a spontaneous harmony between their respective functions and interests.

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[18] Philippe Pétain, "Principes de la Communauté," reprinted in *Discours aux Français*, 363. Such a statement is evidence of the affinity between the Nation Revolution and the more communitarian wing of Catholic personalism.

[19] Perroux expressed these ideas in his *Capitalisme et communauté de travail* (Paris: Liège, 1938) and was a founding member of the Économie et Humanisme group. See James Chappel, "Slaying the Leviathan: Catholicism and the Rebirth of European Conservatism, 1920-1950," PhD diss., Columbia University, 2012, ch. 5; 250-1; Nord, *France's New Deal*, 38-9; 94-100; 113-14; Denis Pelletier, *Économie et humanisme: de l'utopie communautaire au combat pour le tiers monde, 1941-1966* (Paris: Cerf, 1996).

[20] Pnilippe Pétain, "Message du 17 juin 1942 (mercredi)," in *Discours aux Français*, 264.

[21] Not surprisingly, this comes from the pages of a medical magazine debating the merits of corporatism, quoted in Muel-Dreyfus, *Vichy and the Eternal Feminine,* 262.

The political metaphor of the body did a remarkable amount of ideological work for the French State. It served to justify an authoritarian regime in which "'the brain directs'" and the "'the feet must obey its orders,'" conceived not as a an aggregate of equal individuals, but of unequal communities that, like organs, possessed distinct functions within the hierarchy of the national body.[22] Such a metaphor naturally justified the regime's excesses, figuring France as a body sickened by defeat, the depravities of the Third Republic, and the incursion of foreign elements. In this context, the Marshal took on the role of a "'physician who watches at the bedside of France'" and administers a necessarily stiff remedy, just as "'a deep wound calls for a tight, durable—and uncomfortable—bandage.'"[23] An army of demographers, social scientists, doctors, hygienists, and statisticians descended on Vichy to lend their "expertise" to the task of regenerating the ailing national body through the bodies of its citizens. First among these was the Carrel Foundation for the Study of Human Problems, which dedicated itself to the "systematic construction of civilized man in the totality of his corporal, social, and racial activities.'"[24] Such an "Anthropotechnics" did not limit itself to the management of the physical body, however.[25] As the regime's Secretary for Family and Health proclaimed, "the new order will take care of spiritual health as much as of physical health. Moral health will be protected from the countless viruses that threaten it.'"[26] In other words the biopolitics of the National Revolution addressed itself to both the body and soul of the nation and its citizens—and therefore entailed a kind of political theology as well. In this respect at least, it shared something of the at once biological and theological pretensions of the Third Reich. By identifying its sphere of action with the pre-political space of the body and the soul, Vichy was able to marshal support from across the ideological spectrum.

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[22] Émile Sergent, *La Formation intellectuelle et morale des élites*, quoted in Muel-Dreyfus, *Vichy and the Eternal Feminine*, 263.

[23] Gustave Thibon, *Retour au réel*, quoted in Muel-Dreyfus, *Vichy and the Eternal Feminine*, 256.

[24] Quoted in Jackson, *France: The Dark Years*, 327. Under the Fondation's influence, the French State demanded that all engaged couples obtain a prenuptial certification of their genetic fitness from a doctor. On the activities of the Fondation, see Nord, *France's New Deal*, 114-17, 124-30; Muel-Dreyfus, *Vichy and the Eternal Feminine,* 262-4; 297-304. On the history of eugenics in France more broadly, see Anne Carol, *Histoire de l'eugénisme en France: les médecins et la procréation, XIXe – XXe siècle* (Paris: Seuil, 1995).

[25] Alexis Carrel, "La science de l'Homme," quoted in Muel-Dreyfus, *Vichy and the Eternal Feminine,* 264.

[26] Serge Huard, *L'Éducation et la santé,* quoted in ibid., 261.

The Politics of "Presence"

From the foregoing, it should come as no surprise that the Pétain regime, particularly in its heady early days, found a powerful ally in the Catholic Church. The National Revolution—with is promise of moral and spiritual regeneration, its neo-medieval corporatism, and the pride of place it accorded to the family and traditional gender roles—found a kindred spirit in the Church. But the affinities between the two were not purely rhetorical or ideological. By rolling back the most excessive elements of the anticlerical legislation enacted under the Third Republic, the Vichy government achieved a degree of Church-state harmony not seen since the 1870s.[27] In September of 1940, the French State allowed religious orders to resume their teaching activities and reversed the excesses of the 1901 Law on Associations. The new government also returned any Church property that had been seized in 1905 and remained unsold. Under the ministry of Jacques Chevalier, public school manuals were purged of their republican bias and religious instruction briefly added to the curriculum.[28] Chevalier justified this measure in remarkably secular terms, however, presenting the "duty toward God" as an indispensable support to the duty to family and *patrie*. The measure met with stiff resistance from the teacher's union—as well as Catholics critical of the regime—and Chevalier's successor quickly replaced it with scheduled free time in the curriculum for voluntary religious instruction. By way of recompense, the Church was granted limited state subsidies for its network of parochial schools.

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[27] This is Robert Paxton's contention in *Vichy France,* 150.

[28] On the regime's policy on the congregations and religious instruction, see, respectively, Michèle Cointet, *L'Église sous Vichy, 1940-1945: La repentance en question* (Paris: Perrin, 1998), ch. 2 and 3; Paxton, *Vichy France*, 150-2; On these questions and the subsidization of Catholic schools, see Nicholas Atkin, *Church and Schools in Vichy France, 1940-1944* (New York: Garland, 1991).

If many Catholics interpreted the defeat as divine punishment for the anticlerical laws of the Third Republic, measures such as these reinforced Pétain's reputation as a "providential man" sent to redeem France. The Marshal inspired a tremendously powerful cult of personality within the Church, owing to his image as a supra-political father figure and hero of the First World War, in which so many clergy had served.[29] Church services frequently culminated in prayers for "'our beloved leader'" and his "'work of national salvation,'" while the Marshal's portrait adorned the walls of religious houses and schools "'at the head of the beds, between the images of the Sacred Heart and of the Holy Virgin.'"[30] He was even immortalized in stained glass in Lyon's Basilica. Catholic support for the *maréchal* persisted even after most had become disillusioned with the failures of the regime, which were blamed on the "unscrupulous politicians" who surrounded Pétain—especially his anticlerical deputies, Laval and Darlan.[31] Most Catholics could therefore agree with Archbishop Gerlier of Lyon when he infamously declared that "Pétain is France; and France, today, is Pétain"—words he would later come to regret.[32]

What is most striking about Catholics allegiance to the regime is the extent to which it defied traditional divisions between Right and Left. Predictably, Vichy drew some of its strongest support from Catholic partisans of Charles Maurras' nationalist and royalist movement, the Action Française.

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[29] See Fouilloux, *Les Chrétiens français entre crise et libération, 1937-1947* (Paris: Seuil, 1997), 123-4; Paxton, *Vichy France*, 186; Cointet, *L'Église sous Vichy*, ch. 1.

[30] Mgr Martin, Bishop of Puy and Louis Cruvillier, quoted in Renée Bédarida, *Les Catholiques dans la guerre, 1939-1945: entre Vichy et la Résistance* (Paris: Hachette, 1998), 72; 71.

[31] Gabriel Marcel to Gaston Fessard, 24 August 1940, in *Gabriel Marcel – Gaston Fessard, Correspondance (1934-1971)*, ed. and ann. by Henri de Lubac, Marie Rougier, and Michel Sales (Paris: Beauchesne, 1985), 190.

[32] Quoted in Henri de Lubac, *Christian Resistance to Anti-Semitism*, 168-9n4. De Lubac recounts a conversation between Gerlier and Jean Lacroix to this effect, towards the end of the Occupation; see also Sylvie Bernay, *L'église de France face à la persécution des Juifs, 1940-1944* (Paris: CNRS, 2012), 247.

Emboldened by Pius XII's decision to lift the Vatican condemnation of Maurras in 1939, many were all too happy to dance on the grave of the defunct Republic and looked to Vichy for the providential restoration of the Church's lost privileges. Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, for whom Neo-Thomist theology and the politics of the Action Française were virtually inseparable, is a case in point. In 1941, he wrote to his erstwhile disciple, Jacques Maritain, extolling the virtues of the new regime. "I am entirely with the Marshal," he enthused, "I see in him the Father of the *patrie*, blessed with a good sense verging on genius, and a truly providential man."[33] By then, Maritain's own politics had evolved considerably and he had become a fierce critic of the new regime, albeit from exile in America—a position Garrigou-Lagrange attributed to "deviations" in Maritain's Thomist philosophy.[34] Other Neo-Thomists of a Maurrassian persuasion were equally keen to draw parallels between their theological commitments and the principles of the National Revolution—especially its cult of authority, hierarchy, and order, rooted in an appeal to the unchanging dictates of natural law. Perhaps the most infamous case of this political theology in action was the way in which the regime deployed Thomist theology to justify its anti-Semitic legislation, which will be discussed in detail later in this chapter. Father Gillet—Master General of the Dominican Order and a key player in the negotiations leading to the lifting of the Vatican ban on the Action Française—was widely suspected of having supplied the French State with the theological ammunition it needed to justify these laws.[35]

It should come as little surprise that such arch-enemies of the Republic as these would rally behind the National Revolution, but what is much less obvious is why so many of the traditional enemies of the AF—left-leaning Catholics and leaders of the interwar Catholic Action movements—would do the same. The positions of Gustave Desbuquois, Paul Doncoeur, and Emmanuel Mounier offer some clues to the regime's appeal for Catholics by no means friendly to the Action Française. It was the rhetoric of moral and spiritual renewal that spoke most forcefully to these figures, who hoped that the National Revolution might inaugurate Péguy's dream of a moral and mystical revolution. The celebrated Catholic poet was claimed with equal fervor by both proponents and opponents of the National Revolution, no doubt because his own politics were so idiosyncratic—a heady mixture of philosemitism, socialism, nationalism, and anti-modernism.[36] In 1942, Doncoeur penned a paean to the dead poet—*Péguy, la Révolution et le sacré*—that portrayed him as the heir to Joan of Arc's legacy and appropriated both in the service of the National Revolution.[37] Doncoeur, a longtime Scout leader, truly believed that "'the National Revolution has no other essential goal than to restore in our people the meaning and respect of the sacred'" and would culminate in the advent of a neo-medieval Christendom.[38] Mounier likewise conflated the National Revolution with Péguy's mystical revolution, wholeheartedly sharing the regime's contempt for the decadence of the Third Republic, albeit for rather different reasons. Like many Catholics whose politics were broadly anti-capitalist, he perceived strong affinities between the regime's corporatism and the tradition of Social Catholicism. These figures would break with the regime in 1941, when it became clear that its corporatist policies overwhelmingly favored business interests.[39] From then on, they became staunch opponents of the regime, but their initial equivocation is a testament to the limited usefulness of the Right-Left spectrum in making sense of Catholic politics.

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[33] Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange to Jacques Maritain, 25 March 1941, quoted in Fouilloux, *Une Église en quête de liberté: la pensée catholique française entre modernisme et Vatican II (1914-1962)* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1998), 113.

[34] Ibid.; see also Jacques Maritain to Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, 12 December 1946, *Oeuvres complètes de Jacques et Raïssa Maritain*, Tome IX (Fribourg, Switzerland: Éditions Universitaires Fribourg, 1990), 1104.

[35] The Vatican nuncio to Vichy expressed this suspicion to his superior at the Vatican Secretariat of State: Mgr. Valerio Valeri to Cardinal Maglione, 30 September 1941, in *Actes et documents du Saint Siège relatifs à la seconde guerre mondiale*, vol. 8 (Vatican City: Vatican Library, 1974), 296. De Lubac echoes these suspicions in *Christian Resistance to Anti-Semitism*, 88. For Gillet's role in the negotiations between Maurras and the Vatican, see André Laudouze, *Dominicains français et Action française, 1899-1940: Maurras au couvent* (Paris: Éditions Ouvrières, 1989), ch. 11.

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[36] On these conflicting appropriations of Péguy, see Julian Jackson, *France: The Dark Years*, 4-6; see also David Carroll, *French Literary Fascism: Nationalism, Anti-Semitism, and the Ideology of Culture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995), ch. 2.

[37] Paul Doncoeur, *Péguy, la Révolution et le sacré* (Lyon: l'Orante, 1942). De Lubac would pen a vigorous critique of this work for encouraging a neo-pagan understanding the sacred. It appeared in the *Cahiers de notre jeunesse* in February 1943, and is reprinted in Henri de Lubac, *Résistance chrétienne au nazisme,* ed. by Renée Bédarida and Jacques Prévotat (Paris: Cerf, 2006), 319-20.

[38] Paul Doncoeur, "Péguy et la Révolution," *Cité nouvelle* 24 (25 January 1942), quoted in Philippe Rocher, "*Cité Nouvelle,* 1941-1944: les jésuites entre incarnation et eschatologie," *Chrétiens et sociétés* 2 (1995), para. 86.

Catholic Action had initially been conceived as an apolitical alternative to the "*politique d'abord*" ("politics first") advocated by the Action Française. Some therefore perceived a kinship between the apolitical rhetoric of the National Revolution and the Catholic Action mission to "incarnate" the Church in the temporal order. Popularly known as the politics of "presence," those who took this position sought to penetrate the new order in order to channel it in a more Catholic direction. This was certainly Mounier's logic in continuing to publish *Esprit* under the new regime, arguing for the need to "'profit from the verbal similarities between our values and the publicly proclaimed values in order to introduce...the content we desire.'"[40] It was also the approach adopted by Gustave Desbuquois, founder of the Jesuit branch of Catholic Action, *Action populaire*. Desbuquois explicitly counseled Catholic Action militants to "'enter into the new regime,'" on the grounds that "'the spiritual and the supernatural cannot refuse to penetrate this as any political form.'"[41] For the Jesuit, this policy followed from the incarnationist spirituality of Catholic Action (discussed in the previous chapter), which approached the Incarnation not as an isolated event, but as an ongoing process in which Catholics took part by infusing the temporal order with their values. For Desbuquois, this meant that the National Revolution and Catholic Action should be conceived as "'two complementary sectors'" operating in tandem to cure the moral and spiritual ills of the fallen nation. "'Catholic action must effectively act in conjunction with the National Revolution,'" he argued, "'like a radioactive body on a specified tumor.'"[42] Desbuquois thus justified the politics of "presence" by framing it in explicitly spiritual and apolitical terms, and therefore as consistent with the professed mission of Catholic Action.

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[39] On the pro-business orientation of the Vichy regime, despite Pétain's anti-capitalist rhetoric and the presence of high-profile syndicalists in his government, see Paxton, *Vichy France,* 213-16.

[40] Quoted in Jackson, *France: The Dark Years*, 344; see also Bédarida, *Les catholiques dans la guerre*, 59.

[41] Gustave Desbuquois, "Notes manuscrites," July 1940, quoted in Rocher, "*Cité Nouvelle*," para. 11.

But not all of the movement's leaders drew the same connection between its incarnationist discourse and the aims of the National Revolution. As we shall see, many derived precisely the opposite political conclusions from this theological vision. In many ways, it was precisely because the injunction to "incarnate" Catholic values in the temporal order was so vague that Catholic Action was able to recruit as effectively as it did in the interwar period. By 1942, its ranks had swelled to include at least 380,000 members, but the war brought to the surface substantial political, tactical, and theological fissures.[43] These manifested themselves in the divided response of the various Catholic Action organizations to the overtures of the new regime. The *Jeunesse agricole chrétienne* and the Scouts were most favorable to the new order, attracted by its "return to the land" policies, emphasis on discipline, and the leadership roles accorded to Scout leaders within the regime's youth movements. At the other end of the spectrum, the "spiritual resistance" recruited heavily from the *Jeunesse éudiante chrétienne* and, in fact, the women's branch of the organization played a particularly important role in the resistance network of the Lyon Jesuits, many of whom had served as spiritual advisors to the JECF before the war. The *Jeunesse ouvrière chrétienne* and the broader *Association catholique de la jeunesse française* were more divided, and all were wary of the possibility that the regime might impose a "jeunesse unique," abolishing independent Catholic Action organizations in favor of a unified youth movement under the aegis of the state. Most of these groups would turn against the regime when it imposed the *Service de travail obligatoire* in February of 1943, drafting all men between the ages of 20 and 23 to work in German factories. But until that point, Catholic Action remained divided over how to interpret the duty to incarnate Christianity in the temporal order, and thus over the appropriate attitude to adopt with regards to Vichy.[44]

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[42] Quoted in Muel-Dreyfus, *Vichy and the Eternal Feminine*, 56.

[43] The source of this figure is Thomas Kselman, "Catholicism, Christianity, and Vichy," *French Historical Studies* 23, 3 (Summer 2000), 518; see also Halls notes large discrepancies in the wartime membership numbers, with some placing the figure closer to 700,000. See W.D. Halls, *Politics, Society and Christianity in Vichy France* (Oxford: Berg, 1995), 288.

The French episcopacy was not so divided—at least not publicly. When the Assembly of Cardinals and Archbishops (ACA) met for the first time after the defeat, it initially adopted a cautious line, seeking to remain above the political fray while reminding Catholics of St. Paul's injunction to respect the established temporal authority. But by July of 1941, the ACA had moved from this position of cautious reserve to a more forthright endorsement of the regime:

> We wish that, without indenture [*inféodation*], a sincere and complete loyalty be practiced towards the established authority. We venerate the head of State and... encourage our faithful to take their place at his side in the work of recovery that he has undertaken in the three domains of the family, work, and the fatherland, with the aim of achieving a strong, united, coherent France.[45]

The duty to obey the established order was one of the key theological justifications deployed in the service of the new regime, but it had actually been affirmed most forcefully by Leo XIII when, as we saw in Chapter 1, he called upon French Catholics to rally to the Republic in 1892. In other words, the French hierarchy deployed the very same theological rationale that was designed to reconcile Catholics to a democratic government to enjoin Catholics to rally behind Pétain's authoritarian French State. Moreover, while support for the regime amongst the Catholic laity and lower clergy dwindled dramatically by 1943, the episcopacy did not substantially revise its 1941 position and remained stubbornly Pétainist until the bitter end. This was something the regime's Catholic critics found difficult to forgive, and when Mgr. Théas asked Gaston Fessard to write a report for the Pope on the actions of the episcopacy under the Occupation, he made no secret of his disappointment with the lack of leadership exhibited by the ostensible shepherds of the French flock. In the bishops' haste to secure Catholic obedience to the new regime, he argued that caveats such as "'without indenture' seemed entirely forgotten. 'Complete loyalty to the established authority' became 'obedience without reservation'" and "the Catholic conscience was delivered defenseless to every order that emanated from Vichy." Even as the hierarchy claimed to confine its directives to purely doctrinal questions rather than party politics, Fessard argued that they "amounted to the French Church siding with Vichy." In this context, it was left to isolated theologians like himself to remind Catholics of the difference between "a legitimate and illegitimate regime—in short, true and false authority."[46]

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[44] This account of Catholic Action organizations is indebted to Bédarida, *Les Catholiques dans la guerre,* 72-6; Nicholas Atkin, "*Ralliés* and *résistants*: Catholics in Vichy France, 1940-44," in *Catholicism, Politics and Society in Twentieth-Century France*, ed. by Kay Chadwick (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000), 99; Halls, *Politics, Society and Christianity,* 287-310.

[45] Quoted in Bédarida, *Les Catholiques dans la guerre*, 52. De Lubac advances a much more positive reading of this document in his memoir: *Christian Resistance to Anti-Semitism*, 71-3. A report widely attributed to him that dates from the immediate postwar period is much more scathing towards the episcopacy, however: "Les évêques de France sous l'occupation," *Revue des deux mondes*, February 1992, in the Fonds Henri de Lubac, Archives Jésuites de la Province de France [AJPF], dossier 5. On the role of the bishops under the Occupation, see also Jacques Duquesne, *Les catholiques français sous l'occupation*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Grasset, 1986); Jackson, *France: The Dark Years*, 268-71; Cointet, *L'Église sous Vichy*, 28-38; Atkin, "Ralliés and résistants," 100, 106-7.

Historians eager to prosecute the wartime compromises of the Church have made much of these episcopal pronouncements, as if they represent the position of the French Church *tout court*. In doing so, they tend to elide both the diversity of positions within the Church, as well as the extent to which these evolved over the course of the war. Nor was Catholic resistance to Vichy and Nazism exclusively (or even primarily) the work of Christian Democrats. Appreciating this, however, requires moving beyond the democracy-fascism binary that structures much contemporary scholarship on the war and which, grounded as it is in the logic of secular politics, cannot make sense of those who understood their intervention as a religious rather than a political act. This is a major lacuna of the scholarship that seeks to unearth a specifically French fascist tradition in order to account for the appeal of the Nation Revolution. Both Zeev Sternhell and John Hellman have located its origins in the so-called "non-conformist" personalists of the interwar period whose politics were "neither Right nor Left," but anti-liberal, spiritualist, and communitarian.[47] By defining this group negatively, these historians cast a blanket responsibility for the excesses of the National Revolution on a set of figures who often shared little more than a distaste for Third-Republic liberalism—a group that includes Vichy's most vocal Catholic critics. Understanding why anti-liberal Catholics stood at the forefront of the spiritual resistance to fascism requires moving beyond secular political categories that root anti-totalitarianism in a commitment to liberal democracy, or indeed, any other political program.

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[46] Gaston Fessard, "Note sur la situation actuelle de l'Église de France," November 1944; "La théorie du 'Prince-Esclave' et 'Le rôle de l'Episcopat francais sous l'occupation," 1 July 1945, in Fonds Gaston Fessard, AJPF, Dossier 3/22 ("Politique Religieuse: Consulation pour Mgr. Théas").

In fact, most Catholics who resisted the new order did not conceive of this as a political act at all. Historians have begun to investigate the role that ostensibly apolitical commitments, such as aesthetic or gender discourses, played in shoring up the National Revolution.[48] Francine Muel-Dreyfus, for instance, argues that one of the central ideological supports for the new regime was a naturalized gender binary embraced by both Catholics and medical "experts," which reinforced the other "natural" inequalities central to Vichy ideology. For Muel-Dreyfus, whether Catholic intellectuals supported or resisted the new order is less significant than their unanimous adherence to this gender ideology which, "in the eyes of the country placed the Church in its entirety within the sphere of influence of the National Revolution. This is a very political consequence of the collective identification with a cause presented as apolitical."[49] Muel-Dreyfus is right to stress the political efficacy of apolitical discourses—particularly because the National Revolution was itself framed as a supra-political project. But by tarring all Catholics with the brush of collective responsibility, she obscures the multivalent political possibilities contained within these sorts of apolitical discourses, which can function just as easily as powerful vehicles for resistance and critique. For both Hellman and Muel-Dreyfus, what religious actors *thought* they were doing in articulating a critique of Nazism or of Vichy is ultimately less significant than what they shared ideologically with the new order. If we attend instead to the specifically religious and theological rationales behind the Catholic resistance, however, it becomes clear that the most forceful critics of a particular ideology are often those whose work looks or sounds most like it. If Catholics did not turn to liberal-democratic principles in order to combat the biopolitical and pseudo-religious ideologies of Vichy and the Third Reich, this was because they found the resources they needed for this critique in their own "biotheology."

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[47] Sternhell, *Neither Right nor Left*, 229; 287-93; John Hellman, *Knight-Monks of Vichy France*, passim; On "non-conformism," see also Jean-Louis Loubet del Bayle, *Les Non-conformistes des années trente: une tentative de renouvellement de la pensée politique française* (Paris: Seuil, 1969).

[48] See, for instance, Carroll, *French Literary Fascism*; Sandrine Sanos, *The Aesthetics of Hate: Far-Right Intellectuals, Antisemitism, and Gender in 1930s France* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012); Pollard, *Reign of Virtue*; Brenna Moore, *Sacred Dread: Raïssa Maritain, the Allure of Suffering, and the French Catholic Revival* (1905-1944) (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 2013).

[49] Muel-Dreyfus, *Vichy and the Eternal Feminine*, 44.

Reading Between the Lines: Theology and Censorship

With Paris under German occupation, Lyon became the new center of Catholic life in wartime France. Catholic Action organizers, demobilized clergy, the editorial boards of Catholic journals, and those fleeing persecution in the newly-acquired territories of the Third Reich streamed into the city, gathering together the leading lights of the Catholic intelligentsia. The Jesuit journal *Études,* like every other periodical, was dissolved with the defeat and the order now had to choose whether it would acquiesce to the censorship regime imposed by the French State in order to continue publishing. Ultimately, it chose in the affirmative, and the new publication took the Vichy-friendly title "*Cité nouvelle*," reflecting the politics of "presence" favored by its editor-in-chief, Gustave Desbuquois. Nevertheless, it drew regular contributions from some of the regime's fiercest critics, many of whom would serve on the front lines of the spiritual resistance, including de Lubac, Montcheuil, Fessard, and Jules Lebreton. In 1940, these figures still hoped that they could offset the Pétainism of the editorial team and outmaneuver the Vichy censor in order to make their anti-Nazi message heard. The apolitical language of theology proved a particularly useful vehicle for such an endeavor, precisely because it was less likely to arouse the suspicions of the censor. In this way, theology became a key political tool precisely because it was apolitical. But in order to see this, it is necessary to read between the lines of these texts in order to glimpse what the censor missed and recover the political messages encoded within them. This is all the more true because such works were subject to a *double* regime of censorship—at once governmental and ecclesiastical—requiring approval at the level of the Jesuit order and the episcopacy. By late 1941, these dissenters found themselves increasingly squeezed on both sides of this censorship regime and the muffled voice of "licit" resistance was soon silenced altogether.

Gaston Fessard had been warning Catholics against the twin dangers of Nazi and Communist totalitarianism since the mid-1930s—most notable in *Pax Nostra* (1936) and *Épreuve de force* (1939). He presented them as the logical outgrowths of liberalism, which decoupled state from society, *homo politicus* from *homo economicus*.[50] But after 1940, Fessard could no longer profess this anti-totalitarianism openly and was forced to couch it in much more vague, eschatological language in order to outwit the censor. One of the earliest examples of this strategy is a sermon Fessard gave on the third Sunday of Advent in 1940, at the church of Saint-Louis in Vichy. The sermon is particularly interesting because a censored version of it was later published in *Cité nouvelle*, and a comparison between the two texts reveals how theology could serve as a powerful political tool in the context of censorship.

Fessard initially appeared to adopt the rhetoric of the National Revolution, blaming France's defeat on the decadence of the Third Republic. But he was quick to clarify that the democratic ideology of the Republic was not to blame for this state of affairs, and was only the symptom of a broader decadence brought on by the secularization of public life since the Middle Ages. The current crisis was not specific to France, in other words, but stemmed from the rationalist ideology at the heart of modern Western civilization, which "accustomed peoples to search for the meaning of their history in the limits of the here and now."[51] Nazism and Communism, for Fessard, emerged as a reaction to this rationalist ideology but were also products of its evacuation of the supernatural. "From the rationalist ideology common to the West, two new mystiques were born," he argued, "that of the Race and the People; that of Labor and the Classless Society."[52] The censored version of the text suppressed the second half of this statement, with its more overt references to Nazism and Communism, referring only to "to new mystiques, both daughters of the rationalist ideology reigning in the West."[53] Later in the sermon, Fessard once again compared the cult of the Race to that of Labor, but only the first of these references was suppressed.[54] The Vichy censor evidently sought to transform Fessard's anti-totalitarian discourse into an anti-communist one, as the following passage makes clear (censored passages are denoted by a strike-through):

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[50] Gaston Fessard, *Pax Nostra: Examen de conscience international* (Paris: Grasset, 1936); *Épreuve de force: réflexions sur la crise internationale* (Paris: Bloud et Gay, 1939); see also Michèle Aumont, *Philosophie sociopolitique de Gaston Fessard, S.J., "Pax Nostra"* (Paris: Cerf, 2004).

> [Hope] will put us on guard against appeals which seek to drag us ~~either~~ into the venture of the communist apocalypse, ~~or in the service of a triumphant Will to power~~. With her help, we will discern behind the mask of Class, ~~as well as behind that of Race,~~ our eternal enemy.[55]

The censor likewise removed a passage in which Fessard blamed the war on the alliance between the two ideologies—a clear reference to the Molotov-Ribentropp pact—and even suppressed his reference to Pius XI's twin 1937 encyclicals against Communism and Nazism.[56]

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[51] Gaston Fessard, "Conférence de Vichy," 15 December 1940, in *Au temps du prince-esclave: écrits clandestins, 1940-1945*, ed. by Jacques Prévotat (Paris: Critérion, 1989), 40.

[52] Ibid., 41.

[53] Ibid, n2.

[54] Ibid., 43-4.

[55] Ibid., 52.

[56] Ibid., 42; 52. These encyclicals are discussed in chapter 2.

Because Fessard was unable to denounce Nazism, and to a lesser extent Communism, by name, he encoded his critique in the language of eschatology instead. Although both of the "two mystiques" offer an account of the meaning of history that might appeal to the French people in its current crisis, he insists that neither of these ideologies "escapes from the rationalism that engendered them," because neither can supply the ultimate answer to the mystery of human history.[57] This is because the key to human history is not immanent to it, but lies in the history of salvation, which will bring about "the universal reconciliation of man with God and men amongst themselves, whatever be their tribe, their language, their nation, so that there appears only the glorious Presence of God who is all things to all people."[58] Fessard here deploys eschatology as an oblique critique of the racism of the Third Reich and the French State. But his eschatological language should also be read as a rejoinder to the rhetoric of incarnation deployed by the regime's Catholic supporters.

By turning from incarnation to eschatology, however, Fessard is certainly not advocating *attentisme* or a retreat from temporal affairs. Because salvation history is not like the linear time of human history, and is instead omnipresent within each moment of human time, Fessard maintains that bearing witness to one's eschatological destiny in no way implies an escape from the contemporary historical crisis. In fact, salvation history provides the best interpretive grid to make sense of the current moment, because "he who renders himself contemporary to the history of salvation sees the history of salvation become contemporary to his own human history."[59] It is through the Church, and especially through the sacrament of the Eucharist, that we achieve this and become agents of our own profane history, he argues, orienting it towards the Parousia (Second Coming). "How, then," Fessard concludes, "can the lessons we must draw from this Christian anticipation of salvation not have a bearing on the political and social spheres through which our personal destiny must accomplish itself?"[60] Far from implying a retreat from political affairs, the demands of eschatology lay an even heavier burden upon us to work here and now towards the salvific vision of a reconciled humanity.

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[57] Ibid., 46n5. In the original sermon, this passage was much stronger and more explicit in forbidding any collaboration between Catholics and the "opposing mystiques of Race and Class," which are "each as false as the other" and tend to reduce human history to the natural history of "beasts or that of ants." Ibid., 45-6.

[58] Ibid., 47.

[59] Ibid., 49.

Fessard reaffirmed this position in "Custos, quid de nocte?" published in *Temps Nouveau* in December 1940. In it, he reminded Catholics of the eschatological promise of a "glorious Humanity in which all will be members of a single body, living of the same life," and in which "there will be neither Jew nor Gentile, neither man nor woman, neither master nor slave."[61] Here, Fessard deployed the Pauline theology of the mystical body of Christ as an implicit critique of racism, presenting this eschatological future as an alternative to the "the narrow and petty future embraced by human politics," by militating against the "insidious appeals of the watchmen of despair, of selfishness, and of a base servility."[62] Although the Vichy censor suppressed more overt references to the injustices of the occupier and the servility of collaborators, the above passages are a clear, if coded, indictment of Vichy defeatism. Once again, Fessard presented the eschatological vision of the mystical body as something that imposes grave temporal responsibilities on the Christian in the present moment, for "this mysterious Presence of the new Humanity, mystical Body of Christ, depends upon you *now* in order to become more and more real, *hic et nunc*."[63]

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[60] Ibid., 50-1.

[61] Gaston Fessard, "Custos, quid de nocte?" 27 December 1940, in *Au temps du prince-esclave*, 58; 59.

[62] Ibid., 59; 60.

[63] Ibid., 59. Emphasis added.

Fessard's analysis quickly found an echo in the work of his closest friend, Henri de Lubac, who articulated a similar account of the causes of the defeat in a lecture he gave at Uriage, the school designed to train future Vichy cadres, in October 1941.[64] John Hellman has made much of de Lubac's presence at the school, suggesting that it lent moral weight to the National Revolution, but the content of the Jesuit's remarks make clear that they were written with precisely the opposite effect in mind.[65] Like Fessard, de Lubac initially appeared to endorse the Vichy narrative blaming French defeat on the decadence of the Republic, but also like Fessard, de Lubac insisted that "we are not only dealing with a crisis of liberalism or of democracy," but with a much broader crisis of European civilization rooted in secularization.[66]

Recalling the social Catholic vision he advocated in his first book, de Lubac blamed this crisis on the progressive privatization and individualization of Christianity since the Renaissance—a process aided and abetted by Christians themselves. The effect of evacuating Christianity from public life was to open the door to rationalism in intellectual life and liberalism in the political order. But these secular ideologies could not offer a viable replacement to Christianity, de Lubac declared. Instead, they inspired an "*absolute* hunger and thirst, because they are a hunger and thirst *for the Absolute*."[67] As a result, Europeans were left at the mercy of the "two totalitarianisms," "enemy brothers" against whom a privatized Christianity and an impotent rationalism were equally powerless.[68] In sum, de Lubac concluded, *"rationalism has expelled mystery"* and "*myth takes its place*."[69]

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[64] On Uriage, see Hellman, *Knight-Monks of Vichy France*; Bernard Comte, *Une utopie combattante. L'École des cadres d'Uriage, 1940-1942* (Paris: Fayard, 1991).

[65] Hellman, *Knight-Monks of Vichy France*, 6-7; 50-1; 55. Hellman reads this particular lecture as an endorsement of the National Revolution, but a careful reading clearly belies this interpretation.

[66] Henri de Lubac, "Explication chrétienne de notre temps," 1 October 1941, in *Résistance chrétienne au nazisme*, 128.

[67] Ibid., 131. Emphasis in orginial.

[68] Ibid., 132. The word "totalitarianism" managed to pass the censor.

[69] Ibid., 132. Emphasis in original.

Figuring Nazism and Communism as replacement religions that are "at once the antipode and the caricature" of Christianity, de Lubac's analysis strongly echoed Eric Voegelin's notion that totalitarian ideologies constitute "political religions" and anticipated Raymond Aron's postwar work in the same vein.[70] The Jesuit's critique of liberalism and rationalism must be read in this context, not as a political endorsement of the National Revolution, but as a much broader theory of secularization that is also a theory of the origins of totalitarianism.

If the crisis facing France is fundamentally a spiritual one, de Lubac argued, it requires a remedy of the same nature. Here de Lubac returned to the personalist ecclesiology he had already begun to develop in the interwar period, in order to distinguish his own communitarian vision from both the National Revolution and the Third Reich. Granting that the family and the nation are the natural outgrowths of the human need for community, de Lubac warned that that they nevertheless cannot exhaust the spiritual needs of the human person:

> So that the person finds her complete fulfillment, so that she arrives at a full interiority, at the full possession of herself, she must be enfolded into a vaster and deeper community, a community of a different nature—no longer simply terrestrial, as the family and the nation are, but a community that is essentially eternal, as the person herself is. Such is the Church, this Church which the Apostle Paul called the "Body of Christ" and which we still commonly designate the "mystical Body of Christ."[71]

De Lubac here recapitulates his interwar counter-politics, presenting the Church—the mystical body of Christ—as the only authentic human community, because it alone reconciles the aspirations of the individual with the unity of the human race, and indeed, "realizes and exalts the one through the other."[72] Purely human communities instead tend to privilege either the individual or the community, devolving into anarchic liberalism or totalitarianism:

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[70] Ibid., 132. See Eric Voegelin, *Political Religions*, trans. by T.J. DiNapoli and E.S. Easterly (Lewiston, NY: Mellen Press, 1986); Raymond Aron, *The Dawn of Universal History: Selected Essays from a Witness of the Twentieth Century,* trans. by Barbara Bray, ed. by Yair Reiner (New York: Basic Books, 2002): 161-202.

[71] De Lubac, "Explication chrétienne de notre temps," 141. The last sentence of this passage anticipates de Lubac's critique of the "mystical body" designation in *Corpus Mysticum*, much of which had already circulated in article form but would not be published until 1944.

> Either the person is crushed by a system that makes of men a society of termites, or on the contrary, the human community and the national communities of which it is composed are dislocated by an anarchic liberalism...we oscillate between individualism and a so-called "mass" civilization, between social oppression and libertarian explosions...[73]

Once again, de Lubac turned to the Church as the only form of human community capable of overcoming the shortcomings of secular political projects.

The Jesuit concluded his talk by putting the students on guard against a purely instrumental use of Christian rhetoric by those in power. "It is not enough to pronounce the name of 'God' to truly believe in him," he warned, "behind this word, a pagan idol may still be hiding."[74] This is no doubt a reference to the National Revolution and Pétain's lip service to Catholic values, but in case his auditors retained any doubts about the target of this warning, de Lubac reminded them that all "'national revolutions'" depend for their survival on the "respect for the person."[75] More pointedly, he warned his listeners to "be especially wary...of a certain form of anti-Semitism which is nothing more than an anti-Christianity and which, by that very fact, contributes more directly to our own destruction by ripping out our soul."[76] From this it should be clear that, although de Lubac invoked the rhetoric of personalism in vogue at Uriage, he did so precisely in order to channel it into a critique of Nazism, anti-Semitism, and the excesses of the National Revolution. If the mystical body of Christ alone can reconcile the freedom of the human person with the unity of the human race, he maintained, Catholics are obligated by their participation in this body to reject, here and now, any political order that violates these principles.

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[72] Ibid., 140. As we saw in Chapter 2, this position is heavily indebted to the work of Teilhard de Chardin.

[73] Ibid., 143.

[74] Ibid., 143.

[75] Ibid., 144-5.

[76] Ibid., 136.

While de Lubac and Fessard were battling the Vichy censor to communicate their anti-collaborationist message, their friend Montcheuil was engaged in a similar combat against the even more restrictive censorship regime of the Occupied zone. In the pages of *Construire*, the Parisian sister-journal to *Cité nouvelle*, Montcheuil amplified de Lubac's warning against the hollow, purely instrumental use of Catholic rhetoric on the part of the French State. Without ever mentioning Chevalier, Vichy, or the National Revolution by name, Montcheuil elaborated a powerful critique of the educational reforms enacted by the new regime, which as we have seen, added instruction on the "duty to God" to the public school curriculum. Montcheuil was fiercely critical of the way in which temporal authorities deployed the "idea of God" as a means to ensure the obedience of their subjects, especially "in the hour of crisis":

> An education founded upon such an idea may produce submissive citizens, but it will not form moral beings. Obedience to the legitimate authority is certainly one of man's duties...But it does not define morality...To promote God because of his 'utility,' as great as one imagines it to be...would be to make the State and its functions into an absolute end and allow it to subordinate everything to itself, even spiritual realities...It would be better to ignore God than to think of him as one's auxiliary.[77]

Montcheuil here denounces the French State's instrumental approach to religious instruction, revealing it to be a mere means to secure the obedience of its citizens. At issue, he argues, is not just the end to which this instruction is yoked, but the way in which it is carried out. Chevalier's claim that the idea of God can be demonstrated on purely rational grounds comes in for severe criticism, because proving the *fact* of God's existence is not equivalent to demonstrating its rightfulness,

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[77] Yves de Montcheuil, "Dieu et la vie morale," *Construire* 6 (1941), reprinted in *Mélanges théologiques* (Paris: Aubier, 1951), 144. Gabriel Marcel, Jean Lacroix, and Emmanuel Mounier authored a similar critique of the education reforms: "Dieu à l'école," *Esprit* (February-April 1941).

Montcheuil argues.[78] He goes on to deploy this fact-right distinction to authorize the right to resist an illegitimate regime, offering a corrective to the Pétainist episcopacy's overwhelming insistence on the duty to obey the established authority:

> The refusal to submit before the fact of a domination that is not at the same time a right is a requirement of every spiritual being, a requirement that we Christians need not doubt because we recognize that it has been instilled in us by God himself. In other words, it is not enough to demand obedience to the supreme Being; one must demonstrate its moral character.[79]

This critique of a moral education founded on the primacy of obedience to God thus serves as a pretext for Montcheuil's much more extensive assault on the French State's authoritarian tendencies and his endorsement of the Christian duty to resist injustice. Without ever mentioning Chevalier or the French State by name, Montcheuil thus uses the tools of moral philosophy to challenge the regime's instrumental use of religion and undercut its legitimacy more broadly.[80]

Montcheuil would also pen a fierce attack on Nietzsche's "anti-Christian" philosophy, conceiving it as a proxy for Nazism—a strategy favored by de Lubac as well.[81] Over the course of the war, de Lubac would author five articles on atheist philosophers from Nietzsche to Proudhon, which would later form the basis for his immensely popular *Drama of Atheist Humanism*, published in 1946.[82] In these pages, de Lubac developed his twin theories of secularization and totalitarianism, demonstrating how the nineteenth-century philosophies of atheist humanism invariably degenerated into anti-humanist totalitarianism. All this emerged from the necessities of wartime censorship, but by the end of 1941, the French State had begun to severely restrict even these limited avenues for licit resistance. Victor Dillard wrote to de Lubac in December 1941 to inform him that the censor had rejected his latest article in its entirety, and even pastoral letters from the bishops and the broadcasts of Radio-Vatican were severely restricted.[83] In August of that year, *Esprit* and *Temps nouveau* were disbanded. But these restrictions might not in themselves have forced the Jesuits underground if they had not been matched by parallel restrictions from their religious superiors.

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[78] Montcheuil, "Dieu et la vie morale," 148-9; 155-6. Montcheuil's critique of a religious instruction premised on the rational deduction of God's existence is also a critique of Neo-Scholastic rationalism, with its apologetics founded on the rational "preamble" to faith. This position owes much, no doubt, to Montcheuil's intellectual debt to Blondel.

[79] Ibid., 149.

[80] In case there is any doubt that Chevalier is the target here, Montcheuil opens the article with an extended meditation on Bergon's distinction between a "morality of pressure" and a "morality of aspiration." Chevalier was a leading disciple of Bergson, and this seems like a clear attempt to turn the master's work against the disciple.

[81] Yves de Montcheuil, "Nietzsche et la critique de l'idéal chrétien," *Cité nouvelle* (25 June 1941). This line of critique echoed the 1934 Barmen Declaration and other Christian critiques of Nazism and the German Christian movement within Germany.

[82] On these articles, see Rocher, "Cité Nouvelle," 106.

On April 25th, 1941, de Lubac communicated his concerns about the Church's response to the Occupation and the new French State directly to his Jesuit superiors. In a long letter, he identified Nazism as the greatest threat currently facing Christianity and warned that Vichy ideology played directly into the hands of the Nazi occupier, while rigid censorship made it difficult to alert people to this danger. Given this "tragic situation," de Lubac demanded, "how can one not be stunned to perceive so few signs of concern in Catholic and even ecclesiastical milieus? The Nazis wish to lull our vigilance to sleep, and almost everything seems to indicate that they are succeeding."[84] Duped by the euphoria of the National Revolution and the Church's newfound privileges, the hierarchy had failed to provide even "the most modest warning" against the excesses of the new order.[85] In its undue concern "not to cause problems for the government" and to safeguard its own institutional privileges, de Lubac implied that the Church had betrayed its mission:

> Shouldn't we also be reminded that laws can be contrary to Christianity even if they do not attack the institutions or men of the Church? Just as the official honors the latter may receive do not necessarily coincide with a Christian revival, so it is not just when our own

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[83] Victor Dillard to Henri de Lubac, 12 December 1941, Fonds Henri de Lubac, AJPF, dossier 21. Desbuquois also refused to publish the article in *Cité nouvelle*, even though he recognized that it was "purely religious" in content. See Gustave Desbuquois to Henri de Lubac, 14 December 1941, in the same dossier.

[84] Henri de Lubac, "Lettre à mes supérieurs," 25 April 1941, AJPF, dossier 21, 6.

[85] Ibid., 7.

> personnel begins to suffer that Christian morality and the faith itself are in peril. Every time that charity and justice are harmed...the Church is thereby harmed.[86]

To illustrate this, de Lubac anticipates the claim he would make at Uriage and on many occasions thereafter, identifying the rising tide of anti-Semitism as an attack on Christianity itself, both in its doctrine and its Scripture. In light of all this, de Lubac exhorts his superiors to speak out against the spiritual dangers of Nazism and promote a "deepened and more integrally lived Christianity," instead of one that prioritizes obedience and institutional self-preservation.[87]

De Lubac's appeal did not have the desired effect. In lieu of a direct response, the Assistant General of the order, Norbert de Boynes, issued a circular letter to all French Jesuits that reaffirmed the very position de Lubac had so vehemently attacked. In a statement clearly directed against de Lubac's circle, Boynes warned that the activities of a few bad apples in the order threatened to derail the sensitive ongoing negotiations between the Church and the French State over the status of the religious orders and the Catholic youth movements. Instead, the Assistant General commanded Jesuits to choose "respect for authority and obedience" over "a critical, rebellious spirit," setting an example through their submission to the laws of both Church and state.[88] This he justified on the grounds that a priest's purely religious vocation necessarily precludes any engagement in politics, for "the monk who devotes himself to politics compromises not only his apostolate, but also his ascension towards divine union."[89] And yet, in the very same breath, Boynes affirmed that Vichy was the only "legitimate government" of France and lauded the virtues of the *maréchal*, who "promotes the return to a Christian culture." Support for the new regime thus constituted a specifically *religious* duty for all Jesuits:

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[86] Ibid., 9.

[87] Ibid., 10.

[88] Norbert de Boynes (Assistant General) to the Jesuits of France, 12 July 1941, Fonds Henri de Lubac, AJPF, dossier 21, p. 2.

[89] Ibid., 4.

> What must our attitude be, as members of the Society [of Jesus]? We must first of all accept the established government and obey it in everything that is not contrary to the law of God...we must even use our influence where we can to lead souls, if necessary, to practice the obedience that all, especially Catholics, owe to the head of State...for the same supernatural reasons, we must in no way promote dissidence.[90]

In taking this position, Boynes claimed that he was merely "recalling the duties imposed on all Catholics" by their faith. He thus reaffirmed the position with which de Lubac had taken issue in his own letter, demanding submission rather than opening a dialogue.

There is little doubt that de Lubac perceived the circular letter as a personal attack, and he vigorously defended himself against it in a letter to his Provincial superior dated two weeks later. De Lubac's letter vigorously protested against what he perceived to be a conflation of his theological and political positions, arguing that his superiors had mistakenly assumed that "the religious concerns I shared with my Superiors in an instinct of confidence were only a screen, hiding a resentment of a political order; in reality, it is 'democracy' which I am supposedly mourning."[91] De Lubac rejected this characterization in no uncertain terms and affirmed his unequivocal agreement with the Assistant's statement that "it is not our place to get involved in politics, but to concern ourselves with the Kingdom of God by remaining always on the most purely spiritual plane possible."[92] It was for this very reason that he had communicated his concerns to his superiors, de Lubac insisted, because he recognized Nazism as a specifically *religious* threat. Turning Boynes' words back against him, de Lubac instead accused his superiors of applying the duty to remain above politics selectively and inconsistently:

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[90] Ibid., 5-6.

[91] Henri de Lubac to Joseph du Bouchet (Provincial of Lyon), 24 July 1941, Fonds Henri de Lubac, AJPF, dossier 21, 1.

[92] Ibid., 3.

> If, contrary to the affirmations of principle contained in the Rev. Fr. Assistant's letter, a *wholly religious* action were...to be declared a political and subversive action; if everything a priest can say or do to put souls on their guard against anti-Christian Hitlerism were to be automatically, if absurdly, interpreted as 'opposition to Marshal Pétain,'...it is impossible for me, in conscience, to consent to what would be today, in my eyes, a grave sin of omission...I do not think it would be enough for me...to act solely in accord with my immediate Superior.[93]

This was a bold affirmation of the primacy of personal conscience over the duty to obey—one that would increasingly inflect the theologian's ecclesiological vision over the course of the war. Here, de Lubac signaled his intention to disobey the orders of his superiors, on the grounds that these directives were politically rather than religious motivated, while justifying his disobedience by framing it as a religious rather than a political act. In other words, *both* the regime's clerical supporters and its critics justified their position in strictly doctrinal terms, while accusing the other side of playing politics. This is evidence not only of a fundamental disagreement about the nature of the political and the Church's relationship to it, but also suggest the extent to which the very claim to remain above politics itself performed crucial political work.

"A New Spiritual Front"

By late 1941, de Lubac and his friends faced increasingly restrictive censorship from both the French State and their religious superiors. It is in this context that they chose to move their resistance underground so as to elude both of these censors. But their licit resistance activities should not be interpreted as a failure; nor did they cease in 1941. The pressures of censorship enabled these Jesuits to clarify the precise relationship between their theological vision and the requirements of the present moment, and it forced them to distinguish their own understanding of the causes of defeat and the duty to incarnate Catholic values in the temporal order from the pro-Pétainist discourse dominating Catholic circles in this period. This in turn would reshape their postwar theological vision in crucial ways—particularly in the arenas of ecclesiology, anthropology, and Eucharistic theology. But in 1941, these theologians were casting about for a way to get around the state and ecclesiastical censors, and it was their friend Pierre Chaillet who furnished them with the opportunity to do so.

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[93] Ibid.

Chaillet was a fellow Jesuit from the Province of Lyon, who had studied at Jersey only a year or two after Fessard, de Lubac, and Montcheuil, and had spent the 1930s traveling between Lyon, Rome, Germany, and Austria. His stint in Central Europe convinced him early on of the dangers of Nazism, and in 1939 he wrote a book on the *Anschluss*, denouncing it as a step in the "gigantic enterprise of dechristianization undertaken by National Socialism."[94] After the French defeat, the work was quickly placed on the "Otto list" of books forbidden by the occupying power, along with Fessard's *Épreuve de force*. Like Fessard, Montcheuil, and de Lubac, Chaillet's hostility to Nazism owed much to his ecclesiological vision. He was as a leading expert on the ecclesiology of Johann Adam Möhler and the nineteenth-century Tübingen school, which accounts for his many sojourns in Central Europe. The Tübingen theologians, writing in the age of Hegelian idealism and German Romanticism, drew upon the Church Fathers to elaborate a vision of the Church as an organic body that evolves over time. A shared appreciation for Möhler's ecclesiology, and its ecumenical possibilities in particular, brought Chaillet into close collaboration with Yves Congar during the 1930s, over a new translation of Möhler's *Die Einheit in der Kirche*. In his correspondence with the Dominican, Chaillet expressed his full solidarity with Congar's efforts to "bring theology back into contact with the living realities of the great collective consciousness of the Church, body of Christ," and the translation was conceived as part of a broader project to "replace the Counter-Reformation juridical ecclesiology with an ecclesiology of the Mystical Body."[95] In other words, Chaillet's Möhlerian ecclesiology dovetailed nicely with the mystical body ecclesiology that Congar, Chenu, and de Lubac's circle were developing in the 1930s.

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[94] Pierre Chaillet, *L'Autriche souffrante* (Paris: Bloud et Gay, 1939), 120; On Chaillet's role in the resistance to Nazism, see Renée Bédarida, *Pierre Chaillet: témoin de la résistance spirituelle* (Paris: Fayard, 1988); Kathleen Harvill-Burton, *Le Nazisme comme religion: quatre théologiens déchiffrent le code religieux nazi (1932-1945)* (Lévis, QC: Presses de l'Université de Laval, 2006), ch. 5.

Just as de Lubac and his friends conceived this new ecclesiology as a weapon against the rising tide of totalitarianism, Chaillet derived the resources for his critique of Nazism from Möhler's ecclesiology. He conveyed this most forcefully in a 1938 article on "The Freedom of the Church." In it, he argued that the position of the contemporary Church confronted with the rise of totalitarianism was analogous to that of the pre-Constantinian Church under the Roman Empire. According to Möhler, the early Church bore witness to its eternal vocation in the face of pagan persecution by at once heroically affirming its independence from the state, while also refusing to retreat into a purely privatized faith without social repercussions. It is this "intimate connection" between the interior and exterior aspects of faith that defines the Church's mission to "bear witness, without fear and without reproach," and thereby to continue the Incarnation through time.[96] Chaillet thus reads Möhler as a forerunner to the personalist ecclesiology in vogue in the 1930s:

> Moehler tells us that, by a mysterious and admirable law, the individual is interlaced, so to speak, with humanity as a whole; the personality develops itself all the more as it seems to absorb itself in the whole; man only finds, only realizes himself in humanity.[97]

If this sounds very similar to de Lubac's mystical body ecclesiology, Chaillet took from it a comparable lesson about the responsibilities of the Church in the face of totalitarianism. The mystique of the Church cannot be "enlisted or simply aligned" with political ideologies, particularly when these "present themselves with the totalitarian pretensions of a mystique." Instead, it is paradoxically by remaining detached from politics proper that the Church engages most effectively in temporal affairs, bearing witness to its eternal mission. Even though this might "appear necessarily on the purely temporal plane like an escapist doctrine...it is in fact a doctrine of radical dissatisfaction and overcoming."[98] Like Fessard and de Lubac, then, Chaillet transforms the eschatological vocation of the Church into a kind of critical counter-politics—one better suited than any secular ideology to do battle with totalitarianism.

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[95] Pierre Chaillet to Yves Congar, 20 August, 1936, Archives Dominicaines de la Province de Paris [ADPP], Paris, France, Fonds Yves Congar (V-832), 500; Yves Congar, quoted in Renée Bédarida, "Le Père Pierre Chaillet: de la théologie de Möhler à la Résistance," in *Spiritualité, théologie et résistance: Yves de Montcheuil, théologien au maquis du Vercors*, ed. by Pierre Bolle and Jean Godel (Grenoble: Presses Universitaires de Grenoble, 1987), 52.

[96] Pierre, Chaillet, "La liberté de L'Église," *La Vie intellectuelle* 57 (June 1938), 172; 173.

[97] Ibid., 182.

This shared counter-political theology would provide the theoretical basis for the spiritual resistance to Nazism in France, led in large part by these three Jesuits—Fessard, Chaillet, and de Lubac. Mobilized in 1939 and dispatched to Hungary on a secret mission, it took Chaillet six months to make his way back to Lyon after the defeat, traveling via Turkey and Syria. When he arrived in the city towards the end of December 1940, he was severely disappointed with the extent to which the intoxicating spirit of the National Revolution had penetrated even the most progressive Catholic milieus, such as Mounier's *Esprit* circle. "I called in vain upon our friends to put an end to a politics of presence in the gears of the National Revolution," he later recalled, but "the illusions of presence were not ready to yield to the exigencies of refusal...the detestation of Hitlerism was unable to counterbalance the bourgeois and Christian confidence of the myth of the Marshal."[99] But he did find likeminded allies amongst his fellow Jesuits at Fourvière.

Since his arrival in Lyon, Chaillet had been casting about for opportunities to warn the public about the spiritual dangers of collaboration, authoring small pieces on this subject for Henri Frenay's resistance journals. In 1941, just as the state was shuttering a number of Catholic journals, Frenay decided to split the political and spiritual wings of the clandestine resistance. *Combat* would become the mouthpiece for the first, while Frenay offered Chaillet funds, a printer, and an all-important supply of paper to establish its spiritual equivalent.[100] Louis Cruvillier, a former Catholic Action militant who had distributed the now-defunct *Temps nouveau*, provided the necessary distribution network, staffed largely by veterans of Catholic Action.[101] The name Chaillet chose for his clandestine journal reflected his Möhlerian vision of an ecumenical commitment to bear witness to Christian values against the compromises of collaboration: "*Témoignage chrétien*." At precisely the moment when the pressures of both state and ecclesiastical censorship had become too burdensome for de Lubac and his friends, Chaillet's journal offered them the opportunity to circumvent both censorship regimes by publishing anonymously and clandestinely. De Lubac would share the editorial functions with Chaillet and author numerous contributions of his own, while it fell to Fessard to pen the very first issue. Published in November 1941, "France, Take Care Not to Lose Your Soul" is widely regarded as the text that launched the spiritual resistance.

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[98] Ibid., 187.

[99] Pierre Chaillet, "Rapport du Pere Chaillet, S.J. sur Témoignage Chrétien et l'Amitié Chrétienne – 1941-1942," Fonds Pierre Chaillet, AJPF, Dossier 1/1.

The text itself was composed in July 1941, but Fessard was unable to secure a publisher for it at the time. In October of that year, Fessard returned to Paris, leaving the manuscript in the hands of his friend Chaillet, who decided to make it the flagship issue of his new clandestine journal. The first *Cahier du Témoignage chrétien* debuted in November with a print run of 5000 copies, a figure that climbed to 30,000 when the journal reprinted the essay a year later.[102] Unburdened from the weight of censorship, Fessard's article is a much more forceful and direct critique of Nazism, even as it remains a strictly spiritual critique of the way the ideology enslaves, not just the body of France, but also its soul.

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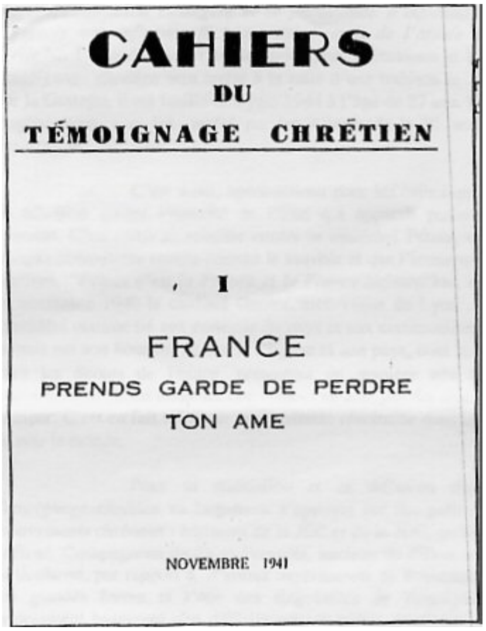
[100] Ibid.; see also the account in Renée Bédarida, *Les armes de l'esprit: Témoignage chrétien (1941-1944)* (Paris: Éditions Ouvrières, 1977), 52-3; Bernard Comte, "Jésuites lyonnais résistants," in *Les jésuites à Lyon: XVIe – XXe siècle*, ed. by Étienne Fouilloux and Bernard Hours (Lyon: ENS Éditions, 2005), 199.

[101] On the logistics of distribution, see Bédarida, *Les Armes de l'Esprit,* ch. 4, 5, 11; see esp. p. 277.

[102] Bédarida, *Les armes de l'esprit*, 288.



CAHIERS
DU
TÉMOIGNAGE CHRÉTIEN

I

FRANCE
PRENDS GARDE DE PERDRE
TON AME

NOVEMBRE 1941

Figure 1: "France, Take Care Not to Lose Your Soul" (1941)

Fessard begins by quoting extensively from Nazi ideologues such as Hitler and Rosenberg, in order to demonstrate the "inherently *anti-Christian character of the mystique that inspires Nazism*."[103] Echoing de Lubac, Fessard approaches Nazism as a pseudo-religion rather than a properly political ideology. "Before being a political regime," he explains, "National Socialism is a *Weltanschauung*, a worldview as totalitarian and intolerant as a religion because founded on a mystique." As a result, "no conciliation, no distribution into zones of influence is possible between Christianity and Nazism: one of the two must disappear."[104] Founded upon the idols of blood and race, the neo-pagan Nazi mystique is fundamentally at odds with the dignity of the person and the unity of the human race affirmed by Christianity. But what makes Nazi totalitarianism even more dangerous than its Communist counterpart is that, while the latter conducts its anti-religious persecution openly, the Nazi equivalent is "insidious, hidden, and devious," co-opting Christians from within. To show this, Fessard quotes extensively from Nazi ideologues who seek to Aryanize and virilize Christianity by stripping it of its "negative" virtues—humility, sacrifice, love, and suffering—dismissed as "Jewish imports."[105] Even though Nazi leaders often pay lip service to Christianity, Fessard warns that this language merely serves as a Trojan horse implicating Christians in an "idolatrous cult" that divinizes the *Volk* and thus vitiates Christianity from within.

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[103] Gaston Fessard, "France, prends garde de perdre ton âme," in *Au temps du prince-esclave*, 67. Emphasis in original.

[104] Ibid., 70.

After demonstrating how this process operates in theory in the works of prominent Nazi propagandists, Fessard goes on to examine how it has been carried out in practice in the various countries occupied by the Germans, before assessing its inroads in France. In each of these locations, the occupier's strategy is essentially the same. The aim is first to seduce Christians in the occupied nation with the illusion of a "shared goal, whose equivocal nature conceals itself under honest words and appearances."[106] In the French case, this shared project was the National Revolution—the promise of a religious revival at the expense of Republican *laïcité*. Fessard warns that although this might seem like a worthy project, the superficially religious rhetoric of the Vichy regime in fact serves to enlist Christians into an unwitting collaboration with the pagan ideology of the occupier. "To the extent that the Catholic is duped by this equivocation and embarks on this path without seeing where it leads," Fessard cautioned, "he is compromised and 'begins to lose his soul.'"[107] The result is that French Christians are co-opted into carrying out the Nazis' anti-Christian agenda, while those who protest are censored or intimidated into silence. Fessard's primary goal was thus to dispel the widespread illusion that Vichy remained substantially independent from the occupying power and its ideology. In case this message remained at all unclear, Fessard asserted in no uncertain terms: "COLLABORATION WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF THE MARSHAL =

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[105] Ibid., 79.

[106] Ibid.

[107] Ibid., 84.

COLLABORATION WITH THE NEW ORDER = COLLABORATION WITH THE TRIUMPH OF NAZI PRINCIPLES."[108]

As this text suggests, the primary mission of the *Cahiers* was a pedagogical one. The goal was to educate people about the spiritual dangers of collaboration and the fundamental incompatibility between Nazi ideology and the teachings of the Church. To this end, large portions of each issue were given over to listing quotations from both Nazi ideologues (one issue was titled "The racists in their own words") and from the Church hierarchy. In keeping with its editors' transnational and ecumenical vision of the Church, *Témoignage chrétien* framed this as a struggle that transcended national and confessional borders, and it therefore drew upon the anti-Nazi pronouncements of bishops across Europe, as well as Protestants such as Karl Barth and Pastor Marc Boegner, spiritual head of the French Protestant community. The journal also reported what the official press could not—the systematic persecutions being carried out in the territories of the Third Reich, including in 1943, an early account of the extermination of Jews underway in Poland. The idea, in other words, was to offer an antidote to "a press that has been enslaved or bought," by providing "the facts, naked, concise, and confirmed."[109]

But this was more than just an injunction to bear witness to the truth and to Christian values against the distortions of the collaborationist press. What Chaillet and his team articulated here was no less than a new model for Catholic pedagogy. If many of Pétain's Catholic supporters hoped that the new regime might restore the Church's traditional privileges in the education sector, which had been dismantled under the Third Republic, I would argue that *Témoignage chrétien* offered an alternative approach to pedagogy—one not limited to the confines of the classroom. Rather than relying on the school system to inculcate religious obligations, in accordance with Chevalier's initiative, these theologians sought to form critical consciences by providing their readers with the necessary tools to make an informed Christian judgment. In other words, *Témoignage chrétien* sought to implement the pedagogical approach for which Montcheuil had called in his critique of the Vichy education reforms. Moral education "does not consist in obtaining a behavior," Montcheuil argued, "but in guiding the knowledge and love of true values, in making them respected because they deserve to be. Citizens who are formed in this way will certainly be uncomfortable for regimes that wish to overstep their rights, but they will be loyal and intrepid servants to those that acquit themselves of their rightful task."[110] Such an approach sought to disentangle Catholic pedagogy from the dream of restoring confessional education (and with it, the confessional state), but is also performed a certain amount of political work for these theologians. It allowed them to carve out a space for legitimate clerical engagement in temporal affairs without intervening directly in politics.

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[108] Ibid., 92. Capitalization in original.

[109] [Pierre Chaillet], "Défi," *Cahiers du Témoignage chrétien,* XIII-XIV (January-February 1943), reprinted in *La résistance spirituelle, 1941-1944: Les Cahiers clandestins du Témoignage chrétien*, ed. by François and Renée Bédarida (Paris: Albin Michel, 2001), 222; 216.

But the pedagogical gesture, with its appeal to the primacy of personal conscience, also served to justify the priests' decision to publicly depart from both the directives of their superiors and the official position of the French Church. It is important to recall that because the Jesuit authors of *Témoignage chrétien* published anonymously and clandestinely, they did so without acquiring the mandatory *nihil obstat* and *imprimatur* from their superiors. They were therefore careful to insist that their work in no way implicated or spoke for the Church as a whole, but merely reflected the commands of their own consciences. And yet, they relied upon the pronouncements of the hierarchy—whether French, Roman, or otherwise—to authorize these claims. This contradiction is evident in the way the theologians described the journal's mission:

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[110] Montcheuil, "Dieu et la vie morale," *Construire* 6 (1941), reprinted in *Mélanges théologiques* (Paris: Aubier, 1951), 144.

> If we do not have the ability to speak in the name of our Churches, we can, however, recall the authentic witness of the Churches of which we are members...because our personal Witness as Christians is the faithful echo of the judgment of our hierarchical superiors.[111]

The author at once claims to speak only from personal witness, while also invoking the authority of the magisterium to support his position. What this feint is meant to conceal, I would argue, is a fairly radical affirmation of the legitimacy of personal initiative at the expense of hierarchical authority, deploying the latter merely as a strategic weapon to shore up the author's claims.

This was certainly how it was interpreted by the French bishops. They rightly perceived that the journal drew upon the pronouncements of prelates outside France precisely because they vindicated its position and undermined that of the French episcopacy. The Assembly of Cardinals and Archbishops was therefore quick to denounce *Témoignage chrétien* as the work of "theologians without a mandate," of "guerrillas [*francs-tireurs*] more or less in revolt against the authority of the Church."[112] De Lubac responded to this attack in the September 1943 issue, invoking the mystical body theology as a weapon against the French episcopacy:

> The Church is one; there are no closed compartments within it; an active and living solidarity unites each church with all of the churches, each Christian with all of his brothers in Christianity. In the universality of its charity, its solicitude knows no selfish withdrawal into the frontiers of the nation. 'We are all one body in Christ,' says St. Paul.[113]

This is a powerful affirmation of the supra-national and ecumenical unity of the Church, but it also constitutes an unmistakable challenge to the preeminence of hierarchical authority. By reading the Church as the transnational, ecumenical body of Christ, de Lubac underscored the horizontal solidarity that binds all Christians rather than the vertical structures of Catholic hierarchy.

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[111] "Antisémites," *Cahiers du Témoignage chrétien,* VI-VII (April-May 1942), reprinted in *La résistance spirituelle*, 119. The author is most likely Chaillet.

[112] The ACA communiqué on *Témoignage chrétien* appeared in *La Croix* on 10 April 1943, and is quoted in de Lubac, *Résistance chrétienne au nazisme*, 420.

[113] Henri de Lubac, "Le scandale de la vérité," *Courriers du Témoignage chrétien*, 3 (September 1943), reprinted in *La résistance spirituelle*, 358.

If *Témoignage chrétien* articulated the theory behind the spiritual resistance, *Amitié chrétienne* put these ideals into practice.[114] Once again, this was an inter-confessional initiative under the patronage of Cardinal Gerlier and Pastor Boegner, in which Catholics, Protestants, and Jews worked together to provide material assistance to those fleeing Nazi persecution. Chaillet played a leading role in this organization, which quickly evolved with the intensification of the anti-Semitic campaign into "the screen for an important clandestine service in favor of the victims of racial persecution," secretly funded by leading Jewish organizations.[115] The operation included a "laboratory" for manufacturing false papers that produced over 30,000 identity cards and 50,000 ration cards in three years.[116] In addition to furnishing Jewish refugees and deportees with false documents and financial support, *l'Amitié chrétienne* developed an extensive network capable of smuggling people across the border into Spain or Switzerland, or hiding them in Catholic convents and schools. A key ally of Chaillet's in both this endeavor and *Témoignage chrétien* was a young woman, Germaine Ribière, who became a close disciple of Montcheuil's during his pre-war stint as chaplain to the JECF, when she served on its national steering committee. In his postwar report to his superiors, Chaillet praised her role as the "unflagging agent" of the rescue effort, called upon to carry out the most dangerous operations on behalf of the clandestine spiritual resistance, which earned her the nickname "Joan of Arc."[117] During the summer roundups of 1942, she and *l'Amitié chrétienne* helped to spirit away over a hundred Jewish children bound for the German death camps. When the regional prefect returned for the children two days later, Chaillet and his colleagues—with Cardinal Gerlier's backing—

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[114] Chaillet certainly conceived their relationship in these terms, writing in the November 1944 issue of *Témoignage chrétien*, "'on the level of thought and action...L'Amitié chrétienne and *Témoignage chrétien* were, under the occupation, the active symbols of this unity,'" quoted in Bédarida*, Les armes de l'esprit*, 131.

[115] Chaillet, "Rapport," 4.

[116] Bédarida, *Les armes de l'esprit*, 132-3.

[117] Chaillet, "Rapport," 4; De Lubac also praises her efforts in *Christian Resistance to Anti-Semitism*, 141.

refused to hand them over, and they were secretly dispersed to local families.[118] As a result of this episode, Chaillet was placed under "résidence surveillée" at a psychiatric hospital in Privas. But he was nevertheless was able to steal away to work on the November issue of *Témoignage chrétien*, which published the first major protests of the French bishops and Protestant leaders against the roundups.

In November 1942, the Germans invaded the "unoccupied" zone, adding a new element of danger to these clandestine activities. Chaillet immediately went underground, but was captured in a Gestapo raid on the *Amitié chrétienne* headquarters in January 1943. Fortunately, his captors did not recognize him and he was released the same day, while Ribière managed to warn away those who arrived to pick up their false papers the next day, by disguising herself as a cleaning lady and spending the day cleaning the building's stairwell.[119] That same month, the Gestapo seized the upcoming issue of *Témoignage chrétien* as it lay on the presses, although it would be reprinted and distributed that summer. The journal had already lost its primary distributor, Louis Cruvillier, a year earlier when he was arrested with 47 other members of the *Combat-Témoignage chrétien* network, but he managed to flee to Switzerland, where he served as a an important international go-between for the French resistance. By the end of 1943, de Lubac was forced to leave Fourvière and go into hiding. Fessard only narrowly eluded the Gestapo the following year, with the help of his friend René d'Ouince, who was imprisoned in Fessard's stead.[120] Despite these setbacks, the print runs of *Témoignage chrétien* continued to grow from 5000 to 40,000 copies per issue, and with the German invasion of the southern zone, the journal extended its distribution network to Paris in April 1943. It was around this time that the *Courriers du Témoignage chrétien* were launched as a companion to the *Cahiers*, immediately tripling their circulation.[121] Under the leadership of André Mandouze—a layman and veteran of the left-leaning Catholic journal *Sept*—the *Courriers* aimed to bring the message of the spiritual resistance to a wider readership. Not only did they boast a higher print run, they were shorter, less abstract and more attentive to the practical demands of spiritual resistance in a rapidly evolving political climate. If this collaboration brought the message of *Témoignage chrétien* to a new audience, however, it also set the stage for a bitter battle over the journal's post-war editorial line.

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[118] This episode is reported in Chaillet's "Rapport," 5; Bédarida, *Les armes de l'esprit*, 134.

[119] The anecdote is again reported in Bédarida, *Les armes de l'esprit*, 135-6, as well as the Service des Émissions vers l'Étranger report, "L'Homme du jour: le père Chaillet," 15 January 1946, in Fonds C-PA ("Documents historiques sur la Compagnie"), AJPF, 619.

[120] This is reported in the list of Jesuits mobilized, incarcerated, deported, or killed during the war, compiled in the Fonds C-PA ("Documents historiques sur la Compagnie"), AJPF, 619. D'Ouince was incarcerated from March to April, 1944.

The Politics of Theology

If Nazism was first and foremost a religious phenomenon, as de Lubac and his cohort insisted, it could only be fought with the "weapons of the spirit." Again and again, these theologians prefaced each of their resistance works with a disclaimer, assuring readers that "the problems it addresses are of a purely religious and theological order" and that the authors "do not engage in politics."[122] The pages of these texts are rife with statements such as these, and yet to many a contemporary observer (and indeed to the Gestapo), the activities of these priests seem manifestly political. In the context of the war, in other words, even the refusal of the political constituted a powerful political act. When everything becomes politicized, as it did under the Third Reich and Vichy, the very claim to remain above politics becomes a political tool.

This was true at the most practical level, because it enabled these theologians to circumvent wartime censorship by encoding a critique of Nazism and the policies of Vichy in the apolitical language of theology. But we should not conclude from this that de Lubac and his friends framed their cause in apolitical terms for purely strategic reasons. Instead, their approach was the logical extension of their pre-war vision of a Church in the world but not of it, engaged in the life of the City but refusing to collaborate with atheist political ideologies like the Action Française. In light of the way in which the discourse of incarnation that underpinned the interwar Catholic Action movement was deployed in support of Vichy, however, de Lubac and his friends also sought to revisit and clarify the role of the Church in the temporal order. Against the rhetoric of "presence" and "incarnation," they placed the onus instead on eschatology. In part, the goal was to highlight the difference between a true incarnation of Christian principles and the material privileges accorded to the Church under Vichy. "There are Christians today who would like to save the *material* first," de Lubac warned, "but what is all that worth in the eyes of God if it is not the incarnation of the spirit of His Son? It is a long way, alas, from "Crucifixes everywhere" on the walls of schools and courtrooms to "Christ everywhere" in the hearts of real Christians."[123] These words were clearly directed against those, such as Doncoeur and Desbuquois, who looked to the state to reintroduce the sacred into public life—to "inject [God] into its institutions and, through them," into "the intimacy of consciences."[124] In their haste to incarnate Christianity in the temporal order, de Lubac argued, these priests mistook the external trappings of piety for an authentic revival and undermined the very faith they sought to protect. Instead, as Fessard had stressed in his Vichy sermon, de Lubac maintained that the only way to make Christianity "present" in the here and now was precisely to look beyond the present. As Montcheuil put it, "the infinite viewpoint of the Kingdom of God" is not "a path to evasion, but rather a new dimension given to life and to duty."[125]

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[121] For these figures, see *La résistance spirituelle*, 400-4.

[122] Henri de Lubac, et. al., *Israël et la foi chrétienne,* 7; Pierre Chaillet, "Témoignage chrétien," *Cahiers du Témoignage chrétien* I (November 1941), in *Cahiers et Courriers clandestins du Témoignage chretien, 1941-1944*, vol. 1 (Paris: 1980), 28.

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[123] Henri de Lubac, "L'Antisémitisme et la conscience chrétienne," *Cahiers du Témoignage chrétien,* VI-VII (April-May 1942), reprinted in *Résistance chrétienne au nazisme,* 363-4.

[124] Gustave Desbuquois, "France neuve, les vérités retrouvées," *Cité nouvelle*, 1 (10 January, 1941). Doncoeur made a similar argument in *Péguy, la Révolution, et le sacré.*

This attitude should not, in other words, be read as a disavowal of the commitment to Catholic engagement in the temporal order that de Lubac and his friends articulated during the first enthusiasms of Catholic Action. For it was precisely this commitment to the supernatural demands of eschatology that, far from requiring a retreat from public affairs, inspired them to organize and lead the spiritual resistance against the Third Reich. Eschatology, in this context, was not apolitical, but *counter*-political—a means to resist the totalizing pretensions of the political under Nazi ideology. Only one community could lay claim to totality, for these theologians, and that was the Church. Montcheuil made this clear in his contribution to a volume on Möhler edited by Chaillet in 1939:

> Christianity is, to employ a contemporary expression, totalitarian, but not in the same way as ideologies that impose identical solutions upon everyone and therefore suppress personal freedom and autonomy. It [Christianity] binds its faithful, who thenceforth no longer belong to themselves and must no longer think, will, or do anything but by it and for it. But because it exercises its control from within...it increases and cultivates human liberties.[126]

Montcheuil here echoes Rondet's vision of a "totalitarian" Church that enhances personal freedom rather than suppressing it, as totalitarian ideologies do. Such a model necessarily refused the traditional boundary between the public and private spheres; between the realm of religion and that of politics. Recall that de Lubac blamed the rise of totalitarianism in no small part on the privatization of Christianity in the modern world, and he shared the conviction of Bruno de Solages that the Church judges "'the whole of human life, public as well as private.'"[127] For de Lubac, it is because Christianity affects "all of life, social life as much as individual life," that it respects no division of spheres. Consequently, the battle in which these theologians found themselves engaged during the war "is purely about religion. But it is also about total religion."[128]

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[125] Yves de Montcheuil, "La loi d'amour, insatisfaction du chrétien," *Cité nouvelle*, 33 (10 June 1942).

[126] Yves de Montcheuil, "La liberté et la diversité dans l'unité," *L'Église est une: hommage à Moehler,* ed. by Pierre Chaillet, quoted in Bédarida, "Le Père Pierre Chaillet," 59.

[127] Solages affirmed this in the opening speech of the 1942 school year at the Institut Catholique de Toulouse, of which he was the rector. De Lubac cites it in an appendix to his memoir, *At the Service of the Church*, 236.

Distinctions between private and public, religion and politics, Right and Left, which are themselves born of secular modernity, cannot make sense of the political activities of these theologians. Neither they, nor indeed their political opponents, structured their activities in these terms. De Lubac's memoirs confirm this, insisting that "it was not any tendency toward the right or the left which determined the action of men like Chaillet, Fessard or de Montcheuil."[129] But if they did not conceive of their resistance work as a political act, it nevertheless did have political effects, and these effects only become visible if we dispense with a presumptively secular definition of the political. What made theology political in the context of the war was precisely its capacity for critique—its ability to disrupt the logic of totalizing political ideologies and warring nation-states. The next chapter examines precisely how it did so.

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[128] De Lubac, "Un nouveau 'front' religieux," 18; 20.

[129] De Lubac, *Christian Resistance to Anti-Semitism*, 18n4.

Chapter 4. The Body of Christ Confronts the Body Politic: Eucharist, Bible, and the Critique of Biopolitics

If pre-war Catholic politics was dominated by the conflict between the Action Française and Catholic Action, between those who had made their peace with the separation of Church and state and those who dreamed of restoring the confessional state, the war dramatically reshaped this political landscape. The National Revolution drove a wedge through the Catholic Action movement, leaving its members divided over the question of whether Catholics could incarnate their values in the institutions of Vichy France without compromising these values in the process. De Lubac and his friends felt this crisis particularly acutely because they had played such a critical role in elaborating the theological supports for Catholic Action, and in particular, the mystical body ecclesiology. That this theological model had not immunized Catholic Action militants against the siren song of the National Revolution prompted de Lubac's circle to re-examine several of its theological positions during the war, in an effort to refine those that had lent themselves to misuse or misinterpretation. And yet, these theologians did not simply break with their previous work, nor did the experience of the war leave them any more convinced of the virtues of liberalism. Instead, as this chapter will argue, they continued to articulate a position that was both anti-Nazi and anti-liberal. Thus, they elaborated a critique of anti-Semitism without embracing liberal pluralism; they defended the right of legitimate resistance without appealing to the principle of popular sovereignty; and they articulated a human rights discourse that did not derive from the pre-eminent dignity of the individual. By delving deeper into the theological foundations of the spiritual resistance, the first part of this chapter shows how de Lubac's circle deployed the resources of theology to carve out an ideological space that was both anti-fascist and illiberal.

This chapter thus leaves behind the narrative focus of the previous chapter, which introduced the variety of Catholic responses to Vichy and the German occupation—including both the licit and illicit activities of the Lyon Jesuits—to move into a more analytic register. If the previous chapter showed how theological commitments in part determined the political choices that Catholics made under the occupation, this chapter instead attends to the way these events themselves reshaped Catholic theology in profound ways. If the resistance activities undertaken by de Lubac and his allies flowed logically from their pre-war theological commitments to Catholic humanism, anti-totalitarianism, and the mystical body ecclesiology, the events of the war also forced them to clarify and refine these positions. The result was a number of theological innovations, particularly in the fields of ecclesiology, anthropology, and biblical theology, that would come to define the postwar Church. Theology, in other words, is not some rarefied, recondite activity undertaken far from the chaos of the City. It is a product of the messy, unpredictable terrain of historical and political life. It is this messy, contingent process of negotiation that this chapter seeks to recover.

The Theoretical Foundations of the Spiritual Resistance

One might well expect that the events of the war and the French Church's complicity with Vichy might have inspired de Lubac and his friends to reconsider their previous hostility to liberalism. And yet, as Chapter 3 explained, these theologians did not perceive liberal democracy as the natural enemy of totalitarian ideologies. As we have seen, their theory of totalitarianism was above all a theory of secularization—one that attributed the rise of the fascist and communist "mystiques" to the privatization of religion under liberal regimes. Consequently, these Jesuits did not look to liberalism for the resources they needed in their battle against the Third Reich and those in France who collaborated with it. Instead, they drew their weapons from the arsenal of Catholic theology, extending but also revising elements of their pre-war theological vision in response to the unfolding political situation. What follows is a detailed exploration of the theoretical foundations of the spiritual resistance designed to demonstrate how this movement refused the opposition between liberalism and totalitarianism that has structured the secular imagination of twentieth-century European politics.

Human and Christian Rights

A central feature of the spiritual resistance to Nazism was that it did not limit itself to defending the interests of Christians and their Churches—an approach associated with the politics of "presence" and clerical support for Vichy—but instead deployed theological resources to defend the rights of those within and without the Church alike. To this end, the authors and supporters of *Témoignage chrétien* presented themselves as the pre-eminent defenders of a universal human dignity imperiled by the racist and totalitarian ideology of the Nazis. It was from this crucible that the first whispers of a Catholic human rights discourse began to emerge, largely from the pen of Jacques Maritain, who spent the war in exile in America. The war sealed Maritain's remarkable political evolution from early partisan of the Action Française to foremost theorist of Christian democracy, thanks to two works in which he first articulated a defense of human rights and democracy grounded in Christian principles.[1] Samuel Moyn in fact cites Maritain and the *Témoignage chrétien* theologians, whose summer 1942 cahier bore the title "Rights of Man and Christian," as the earliest exponents of a human rights model not bound to the sovereignty of the nation-state—one that only became widespread in the 1970s.[2] There is no question that Maritain and his disciples shared the Lyon Jesuits' hostility to Nazism and anti-Semitism. As we shall see, he and his wife Raïssa, a Jewish convert to Catholicism, were amongst the most articulate critics of anti-Semitism, and several of

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[1] Jacques Maritain, *Christianity and Democracy; and, The Rights of Man and Natural Law*, trans. by Doris C. Anson (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1986). These two texts were initially published in 1943 and 1942, respectively.

[2] Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), ch. 2. On *Témoignage chrétien* specifically, see 55; 233. See also, Samuel Moyn, "Personalism, Community, and the Origins of Human Rights," in *Human Rights in the Twentieth Century*, ed. by Stefan-Ludwig Hofman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 85-106.

Maritain's texts circulated clandestinely in France during the war.[3] Although the war thus fostered a rapprochement between de Lubac's and Maritain's circles, it is nevertheless important not to conflate the positions of these two groups or assimilate their vision to a liberal human rights discourse that would have been anathema to de Lubac's circle in particular. As we shall see in Chapter 4, if both Maritain's and de Lubac's circles could agree on the pre-eminent dignity of the human person, they did so for very different theological reasons, and if these differences mattered little in the face of the Nazi menace, they re-emerged with even greater force after the war.

Nevertheless, de Lubac and his friends were painfully aware that the personalist vision they had articulated prior to the war, with its anti-individualist onus on the organic unity of the Church, bore more than a passing resemblance to the communitarian rhetoric of Vichy and the Third Reich. As a result, Montcheuil worried that the personalist critique of individualism might unwittingly play into the hands of the enemy. "We cannot forget," he warned, "that totalitarianism as well as personalism is anti-individualist. Consequently, the critique of individualism ought not to be made in such a way that, seized with dizziness or panic, we would throw ourselves into totalitarianism as the only means to escape the misfortunes born of individualism."[4] Recognizing that Catholics were particularly susceptible to this calculation, Montcheuil was at pains to stress that the very idea of the individual derives from Christian revelation, in which "the value and originality of each person is affirmed in the strongest manner given that each has an eternal destiny and a unique role in divine history." This idea is, moreover, "essential to the notion of the mystical body."[5] That Montcheuil grounded his defense of the individual person in the doctrine of the mystical body is highly significant, because it indicates the divergence between his personalism and the liberal understanding of human rights. For Montcheuil, the value of the individual derives less from any value inherent to the individual than from his or her membership in the body of Christ, and this is why he continued to blame the rise of totalitarianism and the French defeat on the excesses of individualism, even as he warned against the "dangers of a false critique of individualism."

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[3] See esp. Brenna Moore, *The Allure of Suffering*, ch. 3; Richard Crane, *The Passion of Israel: Jacques Maritain, Catholic Conscience, and the Holocaust* (Scranton, PA: University of Scranton Press, 2010).

[4] Yves de Montcheuil, "Dangers d'une fausse critique de l'individualisme," undated, Fonds Yves de Montcheuil, Archives Jésuites de la Province de France [Henceforth AJPF], Vanves, France, H Mo 55, 1.

[5] Ibid.

This is consistent with the defense of human dignity put forward in the pages of *Témoignage chrétien*. In the issue devoted to anti-Semitism, de Lubac sought to elicit Catholic concern for the rights of those outside the Church by effectively identifying the Christian with the human person *tout cour*t:

> This distinction [between man and Christian] is no doubt arbitrary: the Christian is man re-created, re-established in Christ, and nothing that is human can be foreign to him. Everything that affects man, everything that wounds his honor, his dignity, his reason, his sense of justice, affects and wounds the Christian at the same time. One can even say it affects the Christian first of all, because Christianity is not a layer of varnish applied to the surface of man; it is the heart of his heart and the soul of his soul, such that it would be easier for him to give up being a man than to give up being a Christian.[6]

This is a remarkable affirmation of the identity between the Church and the human race, one that is paradoxically advanced in defense of the dignity of *Jews*. Strange as this may seem, it follows from de Lubac's ecclesiology, which identified the mystical body of Christ not with the existing membership of the Church, but with all past, present, and future members of Christ. This helps to explain why he and Chaillet chose the title "Right of Man and Christian" for the fifth issue of *Témoignage chrétien*—no doubt a reference to the 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen. As so many commentators—including Moyn—have pointed out, the "and" in the 1789 Declaration serves less to conjoin two distinct entities than to establish the first as a subset of the second, yoking the rights of man to the sovereignty of the nation-state.[7] Much the same could be said of the Catholic formulation. It is because Christ is sovereign over all human beings, calling all of them to be members of his body, that the human person is possessed of inalienable rights. This notion that the rights of the human person derive from a collective and ecclesial, rather than individual, source is in evidence throughout the cahier. "The Church cannot be unconcerned with the fate of man wherever his inviolable rights are unjustly harmed," the authors argue, precisely because "when one member suffers, the whole body suffers with him."[8] In other words, this model cannot be assimilated to a secular liberal discourse that derives human rights from the nature and dignity of the individual.

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[6] Henri de Lubac, "L'Antisémitisme et la conscience chrétienne," *Cahiers du Témoignage chrétien*, VI-VII (April-May 1942), reprinted in *La résistance spirituelle*, 144.

Sovereignty, Authority, and Legitimate Resistance

If this Catholic vision of human rights is very far from the individualist model that has become so central to liberal discourse since the 1970s, it is nevertheless just as committed to a critique of the sovereign nation-state. As we have seen, the theologians of *Témoignage chrétien* very explicitly framed their struggle in transnational terms, not only because they faced a foe unconcerned with national boundaries, but above all because of the supranational nature of the Church itself, considered in the broadest, most ecumenical terms. If these theologians leaned on the supranational unity of the Church, this was in no small part because they could not rely on the wartime pronouncements of the French episcopacy to authorize their struggle and had to look farther afield, drawing testimony from the German, Dutch, Polish, Greek, Serbian, Norwegian, and Belgian churches. But it was also because these theologians sought to affirm the solidarity that united Christians of all nations in the very same "front of spiritual resistance against Hitlerian dictatorship, the invisible and invincible Front of souls."[9] The mystical body ecclesiology was of course central to this vision, albeit increasingly without the modifier "mystical" attached to it. "There is not a German Church and a French Church," Montcheuil argued, "there is the Catholic Church, which is one because it is the body of Christ in the world. To interfere with the Church in any one of its parts is to interfere with it as a whole. The Church in France cannot be silent when the Church in Germany is persecuted."[10] For de Lubac as well, the transnational mission of *Témoignage chrétien* flowed implacably from the mystical body theology:

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[7] Moyn, *The Last Utopia*, 25-6; See also Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. By Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), 126-7.

[8] Quoted in Bédarida, *Les armes de l'esprit,* 122.

> "We are all one body in Christ," St. Paul tells us..."If one member suffers, all of them suffer. If one member is honored, all of them take part in its joy." It is in order to obey this primordial law of unity that, in these sinister times of division and of forbidden zones, it is more than ever necessary to recall that Christ is not divided. Everything that affects Christian courage, Christian suffering, in whichever country it occurs, is of vital interest to the Christians of France.[11]

De Lubac here affirms the pre-eminence of the universal Church over the narrow interests of the nation-state with characteristic vigor. Such statements not only uphold the transnational solidarity of the Catholic Church against an equally transnational enemy; they also constitute an unmistakable challenge to the preeminence of hierarchical authority. By reading the Church as the transnational, ecumenical body of Christ, they underscore the horizontal solidarity that binds all Christians rather than the vertical structures of Catholic hierarchy.

If de Lubac and his allies tended to emphasize these horizontal networks, this is no doubt because they found themselves in the position of having to disobey both their religious superiors and the "established authority" at Vichy. In order to justify this position, they foregrounded the elements of the tradition that encouraged resistance to an unjust temporal regime, as a corrective to the ubiquitous affirmations of the "duty to obey the established authority" emanating from the French hierarchy. From Switzerland, Maritain's disciple Charles Journet recalled the teachings of Thomas Aquinas on the duty to resist tyranny, while de Lubac reminded Christians that the principle of obedience to the established authority never trumps one's primary duty to God, and that Christians therefore possess a "limited but *real right to judge, and sometime to resist.*"[12] Mgr. Bruno de Solages—a fierce critic of Nazism and postwar defender of the Nouvelle Théologie—conveyed this sentiment even more explicitly, reminding the students of the Institut Catholique de Toulouse that "the sovereignty of the State is not absolute. It has limits, the very limits of...the moral law. Any decision contrary to conscience is, by nature, null and void."[13] But there were those who went still further, arguing that the government of the Marshal was neither "established" nor an "authority"—in other words, that it was neither sovereign nor legitimate, but merely a screen for the nefarious aims of the occupier.

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[9] Pierre Chaillet, "Notre combat," *Cahier du Témoignage chrétien,* II-III (December 1941-January 1942), reprinted in *La résistance spirituelle*, 79.

[10] Yves de Montcheuil, "Collaboration," undated, Fonds Yves de Montcheuil, AJPF, H Mo 55, 3. This passage, along with many of Montcheuil's resistance writings, were published posthumously in *l'Église et le monde actuel* (Paris: Éditions du Témoignage chrétien, 1945), 102.

[11] Henri de Lubac, "Le scandale de la vérité," *Courrier du Témoignage chrétien*, 3 (September 1943), reprinted in *La résistance spirituelle*, 358.

One of the most powerful, if idiosyncratic, meditations on this subject came from the pen of Gaston Fessard. Known as the "Slave-Prince Treatise," it was written at the behest of Cardinal Suhard in the fall of 1942 and circulated widely in the form of a much-abbreviated six-page summary.[14] In the longer version, Fessard brought his distinctive Catholic Hegelianism to bear on the problem of collaboration and the legitimacy of Vichy. Following Leo XIII, Fessard looked to the common good as the basic criterion of legitimacy in the temporal order, both at the national and international level. There are three hierarchically ordered components to the common good, he argued: material survival, justice and law, and the higher values or historical vocation of the community. The effect of the defeat and subsequent armistice was to split the first and the third of these elements of the French common good, such that the country was forced to choose between material survival and its higher ideals, between its body and its soul. For Fessard, war is thus akin to the struggle to the death in Hegel's *Phenomenology*, in which the combatant who chooses survival submits to the other's mastery and becomes his slave. This is what happened when France signed the armistice in 1940 and chose survival over the values that had led it to war, Fessard argues. Consequently, the political regime that emerged from the armistice cannot lay claim to full legitimacy, because it remains at least partially enslaved to the victor of the war. Pétain, he implies, is a "slave-prince":

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[12] Charles Journet, "Résistance," 12 November 1943, *Exigences chrétiennes en politique* (Paris: Egloff, 1945), 409-416; Henri de Lubac, "Collaboration et service de travail obligatoire," *Courrier du Témoignage chrétien* 1, May 1943, reprinted in *La Résistance spirituelle,* 342. Emphasis in original. The relevant passages from the *Summa Theologiae* on tyranny are II-II, q. 64, a. 3; Ia, q. 81, a. 3, ad. 2; II-II, q. 42, a. 2; and on unjust laws, I-II, q. 96, a. 4.

[13] Solages conveyed this in his opening speech of the 1943 school year, at the Institut Catholique de Toulouse, of which he was rector. It is quoted in Henri de Lubac, *At the Service of the Church: Henri de Lubac Reflects on the Circumstances that Occasioned his Writings*, trans. by Anne Englund (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1993), 236.

[14] The immediate impetus for the work was the publication of a collaborationist pamphlet by a prominent professor at the Institut Catholique in Paris, which had received the imprimatur of the archdiocese of Paris. This had angered Fessard, and Suhard invited him to send along his thoughts on the current situation, but Fessard never received a response to his treatise from the archbishop. Fessard therefor lamented that "'my work had served no purpose, since after November 1942 as before, the 'legitimacy of the established authority' continued to be affirmed...by the entire

> To recall with one word this fundamental paradox, we will henceforth call this government the Slave-Prince. This government is indeed only a prince for having from the beginning consented to slavery before the victor; and yet, precisely to the extent that he consents to remain a slave, he can never become a prince...from this paradoxical situation, it necessarily results that this government finds itself radically prevented from attaining the genuine legitimacy of a government of right.[15]

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hierarchy." This letter is quoted in *Le Régime de Vichy et les Français,* ed. by Jean-Pierre Azéma and François Bédarida (Paris: Fayard, 1992), 449.

[15] Gaston Fessard, "La conscience catholique devant la défaite et la révolution," undated, Fonds Gaston Fessard, AJPF, Dossier 2/17, 32-33. Stefanos Geroulanos argues that this text is, above all, a Hegelian rejoinder to Carl Schmitt, but the archival evidence militates against this reading. Not only do Schmittian categories play no substantial role in Fessard's analysis, there is little archival evidence to suggest anything more than that Fessard had read a number of Schmitt's works. It would be premature to deduce from this that the jurist was a central interlocutor for Fessard's wartime works, particularly given the clear preponderance of other influences such as Hegel, St. Paul, Loyola, Marcel, Aquinas, etc. C.f. Stefanos Geroulanos, "Heterogeneities, Slave-Princes, and Marshall Plans: Schmitt's Reception in Hegel's France," *Modern Intellectual History* 8, 3 (November 2011), 531-60.

Given all this, Fessard argues that "the half-free Head of State is owed only a half-obedience," and that the duties of the French people to the Vichy government are therefore limited.[16] To the extent that the slave-prince secures the survival of the nation or works to restore the other elements of the common good, he deserves obedience; but to the extent that he positively denies the higher values of the national or international common good (for instance, by serving the anti-Christian ideals of his German master), he can and should be resisted. "In other words," Fessard argues, "the slave-prince deserves respect and obedience in his capacity as prince and not in his capacity as slave."[17]

But Fessard recognizes that this attitude of "half-obedience" is not as straightforward as it might seem, given that the occupation has rent apart the lower and higher elements of the common good and set them at odds with one another. Precisely because the slave-prince has chosen slavery in order to secure the material survival of the country, he cannot *also* defend its higher ideals, and it therefore falls to his people to fulfill this higher element of the common good. In other words, the scission of France's common good "can only be healed to the extent that the slave-prince and the citizens consciously adopt inverse and complementary attitudes." "The more the slave-prince is reduced to going down the path of 'collaboration,'" Fessard concludes, "the more his people must anchor themselves in an obstinate resistance."[18] The Jesuit thus ascribes to the citizens of France an explicit duty to "move, in all *security of conscience*, from resignation to a passive and active *resistance*" at both the domestic and international levels.[19] And yet, Fessard stresses that this is an *exceptional* duty occasioned by the scission of the common good under the occupation, which erects a barrier between the head of the nation, who normally mediates the common good of the nation, and the members of the national body. Fessard's endorsement of the temporary right to resist when the "established authority" is neither sovereign nor legitimate is thus by no means an endorsement of the principle of popular sovereignty.[20] This is significant because one might otherwise interpret the Catholic defense of legitimate resistance under Vichy as a sign that Catholics had reconciled themselves to the principles of democratic government. And yet, Fessard's model derives the right to resist from a higher duty to the common good, and not from the democratic principle that all authority flows from the people. Once again, the Catholic resistance arrived at a practical position that at first appears to be basically liberal, but in fact is anything but.

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[16] Ibid., 36.

[17] This comes from the six-page version of the text, reprinted as "Tract dit du prince esclave," in Fessard, *Au temps du prince-esclave*, 106.

[18] Ibid., 107.

[19] Ibid., 108. Emphasis in original.

Totalitarianism and Ersatz Religion

The questions of sovereignty and of legitimacy were of course inextricable in the case of Vichy, for a regime enslaved to the Nazi occupier was by definition illegitimate in the eyes of the spiritual resistance. The real target of their critique, in other words, was the ideology of the occupier. As we saw in chapter 2, de Lubac's circle had begun to formulate a critique of totalitarianism during the 1930s, but the war compelled them to develop a much more sophisticated account of the triangular relationship between Nazism, Communism, and Christianity. Both de Lubac and Fessard, as we have seen, expounded this theme in their licit and clandestine writings, but de Lubac developed a much more detailed account of totalitarianism in a speech he gave in the spring of 1942 to the JOC activists of the Grenoble region, which he circulated clandestinely and later revised in 1946.[21] In it, he expanded on the claim he had advanced in his speech at Uriage, that totalitarian ideologies constitute a fundamentally religious rather than a political phenomenon, thereby anticipating a key dimension of the postwar scholarship on totalitarianism. In many ways, de Lubac argued, the two ideologies are fundamentally at odds. Against the elaborate rational architecture of Communist theory, Nazism cleaves to an irrational, vitalist vision of social life rooted in the philosophy of Nietzsche, Heidegger, and the German Romantics. Against Communism's progressive theory of history, with its dialectical overcoming of class hierarchies, Nazism cleaves to a far more pessimistic vision in which the perpetual battle between opposing races is simply mitigated by the domination or destruction of the weaker race.

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[20] In fact, Fessard treats popular consent as the *sign* rather than the *source* of a government's legitimacy: "Indeed, if the communion of wills manifests the achievement of the common Good...the division of hearts and spirits within a nation is the sign either of a legitimacy in the midst of being lost, or of a legitimacy not yet perfectly achieved." Fessard, "La conscience catholique devant la défaite," 9.

[21] On the origins of this text, "Les fondements religieux du nazisme et du communisme," see the introduction by Jacques Prévotat in de Lubac, *Résistance chrétienne au nazisme*, 196-200. Both the 1942 and 1946 versions of the text are reprinted in this volume, and unless otherwise noted, my citations refer to the 1942 version.

Despite these differences—and this is a vast simplification of a much more detailed inquiry into the philosophical roots of each ideology—de Lubac argues that they are fundamentally alike in the challenge they pose to Christianity. This is because "at the base of their two constructions is a critique of religion" that "precedes all of the economic, social, and political critiques instituted by each," such that the genealogy of each ideology can be traced back to the atheist humanism of Feuerbach and Nietzsche, respectively.[22] And yet, he argues, Communism and Nazism do not so much negate religion as continue it by other means. Herein lies the defining feature of totalitarianism for the Jesuit: "both of them are complete, 'totalitarian' systems...in the sense that they present themselves as a complete conception of the world and of existence, and as a complete form of salvation. As such, they are therefore genuine 'religions,' albeit 'replacement religions.'"[23] De Lubac here makes a crucial and early contribution to the discourse on "political religions" more often associated with the work of Eric Voegelin and Raymond Aron. But this claim also served the additional purpose of justifying the project of "spiritual resistance" in which de Lubac was engaged.

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[22] De Lubac, "Les fondements religieux du nazisme et du communisme," *Résistance chrétienne au nazisme*, 202. De Lubac here quotes Marx' claim that "'the critique of religion is the first condition of all critique.'" (ibid.)

[23] Ibid.

If Nazism was fundamentally a religious rather than a political scourge, it necessarily had to be fought on its own religious terrain. This is crucial because it placed priests like de Lubac, who would ordinarily be prohibited from intervening in politics, at the very vanguard of the resistance.

If both Communism and Nazism represent religious alternatives to Christianity, de Lubac insisted that they did so in very different ways. As we have seen, the totalitarianism discourse that de Lubac and his friends articulated during the war was far from balanced, largely because they were wary of the particular appeal that Nazi anti-communism exercised over would-be Catholic collaborators. Amplifying Fessard's argument in "France, prends garde," de Lubac therefore argued that the frank atheism of the Communist who confronts religion with the weapons of demystification was in fact far less dangerous than the "more direct anti-Christianity" of Nazi neo-paganism, which exhibits "the intolerance of a religion confronted with a rival."[24] And yet, despite this discrepancy, de Lubac warned that Christians tend be far more attuned to the threat posed by Communism, not least because the conservative world with which the Church has historically aligned itself perceives economic threats more readily than religious ones:

> If someone wishes to wrest our faith from us, we are immediately on our guard, ready to react...but if someone seeks to corrupt our faith while reassuring us by maintaining an artificial backdrop (and if need be, by disbursing certain material advantages), we risk allowing ourselves to be lulled to sleep, and the anti-Christian tactic finds in us a secret complicity.[25]

In other words, Nazism and Communism constitute very different forms of ersatz religion, and de Lubac therefore devotes the bulk of his speech to probing the one that poses the greater threat.

In the process, he identified what has subsequently become a key debate in the historiography on Nazism, for de Lubac here pinpoints what is peculiar (and in his view, peculiarly dangerous) about this ideology—its at once anti-Christian and crypto-Christian character. Historians have long debated whether Nazism constitutes a "political religion" that replaces Christianity with its own neo-pagan cult of the *Volk*, or a "religious politics" that preserves and coopts Christianity by "Aryanizing" it.[26] In fact, both of these elements coexisted somewhat uneasily within the ideological family of National Socialism, and for de Lubac, they were simply two complementary weapons in the service of the Reich's over-arching campaign against Christianity. The first articulates a discrete religion that is formally analogous but unalterably opposed to Christianity, "replacing it with a neo-pagan cult, replacing its God with a pagan God, its morality with a pagan morality, its sacraments with pagan sacraments."[27] Most troublingly for the Jesuit, these neo-pagans conceived "the very idea of the Reich...in the image of the mystical Body in Christianity (the *corpus diaboli* being the Jewish race)."[28] De Lubac identifies this approach above all with the German Faith Movement led by Wilhelm Hauer and conceived in opposition to Christianity.

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[24] Ibid., 227.

[25] Ibid., 235.

And yet, de Lubac maintains that it is not all that different from the second weapon in the anti-Christian arsenal of National Socialism, which is to "paganize Christianity itself, to corrupt it from within, by the invention of a 'Nordic Christianity.'"[29] Here, de Lubac takes on the German Christians. In seeking to Aryanize Christ and strip Christianity of its Jewish inheritance, he argues, they have reduced it to a husk of hollow rituals, "emptied of everything that constitutes its essence, amputated especially from its universalism."[30] For de Lubac, the effects of the neo-pagan and the German Christian discourse are therefore the same, and of course both were famously hostile to Catholicism. Both, he argues, reinforced a third Nazi strategy to reduce the existing Churches to "domesticated, toothless, inoffensive" institutions "at the orders of the State," and to denounce any "living Catholicism which refuses to render unto Caesar all that belongs God" as so much "political Catholicism."[31] In de Lubac's analysis, then, National Socialism presented a particularly formidable challenge precisely because it paradoxically worked both to suppress as well as to coopt and instrumentalize Christianity in the service of its own anti-Christian ends—a strategy that was all the more destructive for being less overt.

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[26] This distinction is articulated by Richard Steigmann-Gall in, "Nazism and the Revival of Political Religion Theory," *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 5, 3 (December 2004): 376-96. Leading examples of the "political religions" discourse include: Fritz Stern, *The Politics of Cultural Despair: A Study in the Rise of the Germanic Ideology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974); Hans Maier, *Politische Religionen: die totalitären Regime und das Christentum* (Freiburg: Herder, 1995); More recent scholarship tends to focus on the interaction between Nazism and Christianity, most prominently exemplified by the German Christian movement. See, for instance, Doris Bergen, *Twisted Cross: The German Christian Movement in the Third Reich* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Susannah Heschel, *The Aryan Jesus: Christian Theologians and the Bible in Nazi Germany* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008). Steigmann-Gall instead attends to the Christian commitments of the Nazi Party leadership in *The Holy Reich: Nazi Conceptions of Christianity, 1919-1945* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

[27] De Lubac, "Fondements religieux du nazisme et du communisme," 228.

[28] Ibid., 289. This passage is taken from the 1946 revision, which expands upon a passage written in shorthand in the original.

[29] Ibid. This passage is likewise comes from the 1946 revision, simply because the phrasing is more felicitous, albeit very similar to the original (c.f. 229).

If Nazism was first and foremost a religious phenomenon, as de Lubac insisted, then it could only be fought with the "weapons of the spirit." If anti-Christianity was the common denominator holding together the disparate factions within National Socialism, then it could only be fought with Christian weapons. In other words, by framing Nazism and Communism as political religions, de Lubac maintained that the subversion of traditional religion, rather than the suppression of individual liberty or the abrogation of democratic governance, was the defining feature of totalitarianism. In other words, he replaced the opposition between liberalism and totalitarianism so fundamental to twentieth-century secular politics, with an opposition between Christianity and totalitarianism. The choice confronting Europeans in the 1940s, he implied, was not between totalitarianism and liberal democracy, but between true religion and ersatz political religions.

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[30] Ibid., 229.

[31] Ibid., 231. The charge of "political Catholicism" was meant to imply allegiance to the Catholic Center Party.

A Virile Christianity?

This has important implications for how we evaluate the gender politics of the spiritual resistance, for which the opposition between fascist gender politics and liberal feminism is a wholly inadequate analytic framework. Critics such as Muel-Dreyfus tend to gloss over the political ambivalence of religious commitments—the way they function to resist as well as to support the dominant gender ideology. She argues that the political differences between clerical supporters of Vichy and the theologians of *Témoignage chrétien* mattered little because "the crusade to return women to the home and to keep them there was unanimously accepted by the clergy...and in the eyes of the country placed the Church in its entirety within the sphere of influence of the National Revolution."[32] This presumes that the apolitical values of the Church, and its discourse on gender in particular, always by definition served the same political purpose. And yet, a closer examination of the gendered rhetoric of the spiritual resistance suggests a more complicated story.

One of the key features of Nazi ideology—embraced by both its neo-pagan and German Christian wings—was its contempt for the "effeminate" qualities that Christianity had purportedly inherited from Judaism, including the virtues of sacrifice, love, humility, charity, and the defense of the weak. This critique provoked much hand-wringing amongst French Catholics humiliated by the defeat and sensitive to the perceived (and quite real) "feminization" of the Church since the nineteenth century. Catholic journals published roundtables on the question "Has Christianity de-virilized man?" and calls for a "shock Christianity" capable of producing "virile souls" rose up from both the partisans of Vichy and the ranks of the Catholic resistance.[33] For the latter, the vision of a heroic, forceful Christianity offered an antidote to the Nazi critique of Christian meekness as well as to the virtues of submission and obedience preached at Vichy, and it served as a rallying cry for those who believed themselves to be engaged in a spiritual war.

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[32] Muel-Dreyfus, *Vichy and the Eternal Feminine*, 43-4.

[33] "Le christianisme a-t-il dévirilisé l'homme?" *Jeunesse de l'Église*, 2-3 (1943-1944); Louis Beirnaert, *Pour un christianisme de choc* (Paris: Éditions de l'Orante, 1942); see also Emmanuel Mounier, *L'Affrontement chrétien* (Neuchâtel: Cahiers du Rhône, 1945).

And yet, this overdetermined rhetoric of muscular Christianity by no means amounted to a straightforward endorsement of naturalized gender roles or the confinement of women to the domestic sphere, as Muel-Dreyfus suggests. In the first place, many of these priests did not accept the distinction between the private and public spheres upon which this gendered division of labor is premised. In the second place, the "heroic Christianity" they had in mind was very far from the "virile Christianity" promoted by the German Christians, and indeed sought to invert many of its gendered tropes. In a 1943 article in *Cité nouvelle*, for instance, de Lubac issued a stern warning to Catholics who lamented that "our Christianity has become insipid," that "it is effeminate...a feeble and inefficacious religion."[34] All too easily, he warned, these "reproaches against *our* Christianity turn into critiques of Christianity itself," as denunciations of "the negative manner in which we often practice Christian virtues" slip into critiques of the "'negative virtues' that make the Christian."[35] De Lubac was wary of the way in which the language of muscular Christianity played into the hands of the enemy and, in the process, served to *weaken* rather than fortify Christianity. "What we need," he argued, "is not a more virile, or more efficacious, or more heroic, or stronger Christianity; it is to live our Christianity more virilely, more efficaciously, more strongly, more heroically, if need be. But to live it as it is."[36] De Lubac here re-appropriates the language of virility, but ties it to precisely the "negative" and "effeminate" qualities disavowed by the enemies of Christianity. For de Lubac, the strength of Christianity lies in "the strength of charity" and the power of love:

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[34] Henri de Lubac, "Le combat spirituel," *Cité nouvelle* 65 (25 December 1943), reprinted in *Résistance chrétienne au nazisme*, 346.

[35] Ibid., 347.

[36] Ibid., 348.

> Above all, this [Christian] heroism does not consist in speaking constantly of heroism and babbling about the virtues of strength...It consists, first of all, in resisting with courage...Kindness and goodness, gentleness towards the weak, pity—yes, pity—towards those who suffer, the refusal of perverse means, the defense of the oppressed, obscure devotion, resistance to lies, the courage to call evil by its name...this is what Christian heroism will save. It will show that all this 'slave morality' is a morality of free men, and one that alone makes men free.[37]

I would argue that this discourse of Christian heroism and strength be understood, not as an extension of the virilizing rhetoric deployed by the Nazis and their Vichy allies, but as a counter-discourse that re-appropriates this rhetoric in the service of the more ostensibly "feminine" virtues of love, self-sacrifice, purity, and Christian fidelity. In place of the Aryan Christ, these figures looked to Joan of Arc for inspiration, as indeed, did many of their opponents who supported Vichy.[38]

We should therefore not be surprised to note, along with the prominent role that women like Germaine Ribière and Marie-Rose Gineste played in the spiritual resistance, that fully one-third of the national committee of *Témoignage chrétien* militants and an even greater proportion of the *Amitié chretiénne* staff were women.[39] This is by no means to suggest that the movement's clerical leaders were feminists. But if they were very far from embracing the values of secular, liberal feminism, it does not follow that their work simply reinforced repressive gender norms or that the women who participated in the movement were mere victims of ideology. As Saba Mahmood and Brenna Moore have persuasively shown, understanding the complex gender politics of religious worldviews requires moving beyond liberal feminist models of agency which presume that women are either victims of oppression or empowered agents, but never both at once.[40] Instead, the Catholic women and men of the spiritual resistance refused *both* the sexist categories of Nazi ideology and the individualist premises of liberal feminism.

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[37] Ibid., 349-50.

[38] See, for instance, Jean Daniélou, "Péguy, poète national," *Cité nouvelle*, 10 (25 May, 1941). Because of Péguy's admiration for Joan of Arc, she was appropriated by both Pétainists and resisters in much the same way as Péguy himself. Doncoeur's *Cahiers du Cercle de Sainte Jéhanne* provided the competing perspective.

[39] The list of *Témoignage chrétien* militants, which includes 10 women and 20 men can be found in the Fonds Henri de Lubac, AJPF, dossier 5; Bédarida (who was herself a prominent militant in the movement before becoming a historian) describes the staff of *Amitié chrétienne* in *Les armes de l'esprit*, 129-30; Marie-Rose Gineste was charged with secretly copying Mgr. Théas' letter of protest concerning the 1942 roundups of Jews, and according to Bédarida, she distributed the letter to each church in the diocese by bicycle, so that it could be read out simultaneously in the whole of the diocese. See *Les armes de l'esprit*, 126.

The Mystery of Israel

No aspect of the spiritual resistance manifested this double refusal of both fascist and liberal ideology more acutely than the Catholic critique of anti-Semitism in both its Nazi and Vichy iterations. As with most other dimensions of the spiritual resistance, this critique did not emerge fully-formed in the 1940s. Instead, it grew out of prewar theological efforts to chip away at the Church's traditional anti-Judaism—what Jules Isaac called "the teaching of contempt"—which held that the Jews were condemned to wander the earth as a punishment for denying Christ.[41] The war added new urgency to this critique, because it forced theologians to confront the possibility that the anti-Jewish tradition could be coopted to serve an even more virulent ideology—racist anti-Semitism. If this was true of the Third Reich, as historians have shown, it was still more so in the case of Vichy, which explicitly presented itself as the inheritor of medieval Christian anti-Judaism, even as its laws defined Jews in racial terms.[42] In doing so, Vichy adopted a specifically theological prerogative—the ability to decide not only who belonged to the body of the nation, but also who belonged to the body of the Church. Faced with the regime's conflation of anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism, Catholic critics sought to disentangle the two traditions, even as their critique of anti-Semitism also implied a more covert critique of anti-Judaism.

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[40] Saba Mahmood, *Politics of Piety*; Brenna Moore, *Sacred Dread.*

[41] Jules Isaac, *L'enseignement du mépris.* Paris: Fasquelle, 1962.

[42] Saul Friedlander's notion of "redemptive anti-Semitism" is an important case in point: *Nazi Germany and the Jews: Volume 1, the Years of Persecution (1933-1939)* (New York: HaperCollins, 1997); see also Uriel Tal, *Religious and Anti-Religious Roots of Modern Anti-Semitism* (New York: Leo Baeck Institute, 1971); Susannah Heschel, *The Aryan Jesus.*

For these theologians, anti-Semitism was by definition a form of anti-Christianity, because if Christianity were truly the fulfillment of the divine promise extended to the Jews, any assault on the promise constituted an attack on its fulfillment. Christians thus retained a special solidarity with the Jewish people because of their shared biblical heritage—one that was not abrogated by the Jewish refusal to recognize Christ, as the anti-Jewish tradition implied. This solidarity stemmed not only from the special relationship between Judaism and Christianity, these theologians argued, but also from the fact that *all* human persons are called to be members of Christ's body, from which they derive an unassailable human dignity. Racism was anathema to the Christian tradition because, as de Lubac had argued in *Catholicism*, "the unity of the Mystical Body of Christ...supposes a previous natural unity, the unity of the human race."[43] In other words, the Catholic resistance to anti-Semitism did not derive from a defense of the independent value of the Jewish tradition or of natural human rights, considered apart from their relationship to Christianity. These theologians remained firmly committed to a supersessionist understanding of the Judeo-Christian relationship, with conversion as its ultimate goal. But we should not conclude, as John Connelly has done, that such a commitment "robbed them of the language with which to speak unequivocally in favor of Jews during the Holocaust."[44] To say this is to judge these priests against the standards of a liberal pluralist worldview that may well be commonplace today, but would have been entirely foreign to them. I therefore argue that we cannot make sense of the Catholic critique of anti-Semitism by means of the categories and standards of secular liberal politics. And yet, to recognize this is by no means to defend the normative validity of the Catholic position, but rather to acknowledge the complexity of wartime politics and refuse the rather anachronistic choice between liberalism and totalitarianism that underwrites so much of the scholarship on the war.

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[43] Henri de Lubac, *Catholicism: Christ and the Common Destiny of Man*, trans. by Lancelot C. Sheppard and Elizabeth Englund (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1988), 25.

[44] John Connelly, *From Enemy to Brother: The Revolution in Catholic Teaching on the Jews, 1933-1965* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), 9.

Dispensing with these categories allows us to recover a tradition that rejected anti-Judaism without embracing religious difference—one that predated the war and in which de Lubac and his allies played an important role. As one might expect, the field of biblical theology was a key arena for these debates, even though it had been virtually off-limits to Catholics since the Modernist Crisis. The book that had launched the crisis was Alfred Loisy's historicist account of the Gospel, which, as we saw in Chapter 1, was specifically written to counteract Adolf von Harnack's efforts to isolate the Gospel from its Jewish context.[45] In the 1920s and 1930s, a number of theologians began to venture once again onto this forbidden terrain, examining the historical origins of the Gospel and its relationship to the Old Testament. Among them were several of de Lubac's colleagues and mentors, including his longtime advisor Victor Fontoynont, whose fascination with the Greek Fathers led him to delve further into the relationship between the Greek and Jewish sources of the Gospel. The group also included Abbé Jules Monchanin, a scholar of Hinduism who organized an ongoing dialogue on the common heritage of Christians and Jews in the face of growing anti-Semitism during the 1930s. Under their influence, de Lubac developed a keen appreciation for the Jewish sources of the Christian tradition, arguing in *Catholicism* that the two Testaments "formed one body, and to rend this body by rejecting the Jewish books was no less a sacrilege than to rend the body of the Church by schism."[46] De Lubac's appointment at the Catholic University of Lyon likewise brought him into contact with Abbé Joseph Chaine, who held the chair in Old Testament studies there, and had long worked to promote the use of biblical criticism in Catholic theology. In 1940, they were joined by Joseph Bonsirven, a Belgian Jesuit who had fled the German invasion and taken refuge at the Jesuit scholasticate of Fourvière, where de Lubac and Fontoynont both lived. Bonsirven was perhaps the leading Catholic expert on Second Temple Judaism and the Jewish sources of the Christian tradition, which earned him the intense suspicion of his superiors.[47] Since 1927, he had also authored a regular column on contemporary Judaism in *Études*. But Bonsirven, like de Lubac, remained bound to a kind of soft supersessionism that conceived of Christianity less as the abrogation of the Jewish covenant than as its completion. "Jesus comes not to destroy, but to complete," de Lubac claimed, "because, inheriting Israel, Jesus transforms it into the Church."[48]

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[45] Von Harnack had an important influence on German Christians such as Gerhard Kittel. See Heschel, *The Aryan Jesus,* 184.

[46] De Lubac, *Catholicism,* 177. He also argues that Christianity owes its social model of salvation to Judaism (61).

Acknowledging the Jewish sources of the Christian tradition is one thing, but recognizing the value of Judaism after the coming of Christ is quite another. In the 1930s, a number of philosophers and theologians turned to this much more thorny question, looking to Paul's Letter to the Romans for guidance. In *Pax Nostra* (1936), Fessard's first major work, he made the relationship between pre- and post-Incarnation Judaism a centerpiece of his idiosyncratic theology of history, weaving together insights drawn from Hegel and St. Paul. History, for Fessard, is driven by a series of dialectics—including the man-woman and master-slave dialectics—that operate at both the individual and social level to raise us from particular communities to universal unity in the mystical body of Christ. As one commentator has argued, these lesser dialectics within Fessard's framework are ultimately governed by the Jew-Gentile dialectic, which manifests itself in very different ways before and after the coming of Christ.[49] Drawing on Paul's Letter to the Ephesians, Fessard argues that just as Christ abolished the distinction between Gentile and Jew in the unity of his body, each individual must repeat this process within his or her person. This requires merging one's inner Gentile and Jew so as to become a Christian "person" in whom the particular and the universal coincide—a "me" who is also "an irreplaceable part of an organic whole: the mystical Body of which Christ is the Head and we are the members."[50]

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[47] Bonsirven's most significant works include *Sur les ruines du Temple: le judaïsme après Jésus-Christ* (Paris: Grasset, 1928); *Le judaïsme palestinien au temps de Jésus-Christ* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1934); *Les idées juives au temps de Notre-Seigneur* (Paris: Bloud et Gay, 1934); *Juifs et chrétiens* (Paris: Flammarion, 1936); *Exégèse rabbinique; exégèse paulinienne* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1939).

[48] Henri de Lubac "Le fondement théologique des mission," January 1941, reprinted in *Résistance chrétienne au nazisme*, 46-6.

[49] Frédéric Louzeau, *L'Anthropologie sociale du Père Gaston Fessard* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2009), 415-419.

And yet, the advent of Christ does not do away with the Gentile-Jew dialectic, but instead reverses it. "Just as the opposition between the Jew, the chosen people, and the Gentile, a stranger to this promise, dominates and explains all of history *before Christ*," Fessard explains, "the opposition between the converted Gentile and the rejected Jew illuminates all of it *after Christ*."[51] Henceforth, he claims, the mission of the Jewish people is a fundamentally "negative" one, in the Hegelian sense of this word, for they are providentially destined to remain dispersed and radically opposed to Christianity. But this negation is also the precondition for a second and final reconciliation of the Jew-Gentile dialectic with the Second Coming of Christ (Parousia), as Paul anticipates in his Letter to the Romans.[52] Lest his reader interpret any of this as a warrant for anti-Semitism, Fessard hastens to add that the Jew and Gentile should be understood here as "historical essences," as figures for certain tendencies that exist within all societies and all individuals. Consequently, the appropriate response to the post-Incarnation dialectic between the "converted Gentile" and the "unbelieving Jew" is to learn to recognize this as "an opposition that is immanent to myself" and part of the process of "becoming-Christian."[53] And given that Fessard's primary concern in this work is to shed light on current events, he also presents the Jew-Gentile dialectic as the key to understanding the struggle between pacifism and nationalism in 1930s Europe, accounting for the way these positions tend to reverse places when taken to their extreme.

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[50] Gaston Fessard, *Pax Nostra: Examen de Conscience International* (Paris: Grasset, 1936), 44.

[51] Ibid., 211. Emphasis in original.

[52] Romans 11:15-32.

[53] Fessard, *Pax Nostra*, 309-10.

Jacques Maritain developed a similarly ambivalent account of the "mystery of Israel" in his 1937 essay *Impossible Antisemitism*, and once again, St. Paul plays a central role in the story. Much like Fessard's account, Maritain's exhibits a tension between idealization and abjection that was central to the prewar philosemitic discourse on Judaism. Drawing upon the central trope of the anti-Jewish tradition, Maritain claims that because the Jews "chose the world" over Christ, their "punishment is to be held by their choice;" to be "prisoners and victims of this world," without ever fully belonging to it.[54] But for Maritain, as for Fessard, this fate also endows the Jewish people with a crucial, if negative, role in human history. "Like a foreign body, like an active leaven introduced into the heap," Maritain maintains that Israel "stimulates the movement of history" because it "does not allow the world to rest," teaching it instead to remain unsatisfied without God.[55] But this vocation to "irritate, to exasperate the world" also elicits a misplaced ire that accounts for the perpetual persecution of the Jewish people. Maritain insists that this burden is a temporary one, however, and supports this claim with a passage from St. Paul: "For God has bound everyone over to disobedience so that he may have mercy on them all" (Rom. 11:32). And despite the vestigial anti-Judaism dogging much of Maritain's analysis, the practical conclusions he draws from it are of a very different tenor. Recalling the distinction he articulated in *Integral Humanism* between the sacral temporal order of the Middle Ages and its secular modern analogue—the "new Christendom"—Maritain argues that modern regimes should be "*pluralist* and *personalist*," respecting religious difference rather than seeking to do away with it as the medieval Church did. He concludes:

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[54] Jacques Maritain, *L'Impossible antisémitisme* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1994), 78.

[55] Ibid., 81.

> We believe that, contrary to the medievalist Hitlerian parody, a pluralism founded on the dignity of human persons, and which, on the basis of the complete equality of civil rights...would grant to the various spiritual families entering into the *convivium* of the temporal city, their own ethico-juridical status on mixed questions (straddling the spiritual and temporal), would represent...the organic attempt to regulate the Jewish question best-suited to our historical climate.[56]

This is a strikingly liberal position, one that anticipates Maritain's later evolution towards democracy and human rights during the war. But it is also strikingly at odds with the remarkably *illiberal* tenor of the discussion of the "mystery" of Israel that precedes it.

If Fessard's and Maritain's analyses remain deeply ambivalent and partially bound to the tropes of the anti-Jewish tradition, the war radicalized the theological discussion of Judaism. In 1941, de Lubac's mentor Fontoynont published a commentary on Paul's Letter to the Romans that moved well beyond the limits of the pre-war philosemitic discourse. To the question of whether God had repudiated the Jewish people, Fontoynont replied with an unequivocal "no," even though, as with Fessard and Maritain, this position remained contingent upon the "final conversion of Israel." Fontoynont likewise echoed them in ascribing a providential role to the Jewish people, turning to St. Paul to show that Jewish refusal to recognize Christ was in fact what had allowed the Gentiles to enter the divine covenant. If the "apostasy" of the Jews "was fecund for the salvation of the world," he continued, "how much more so will it be the day that they return to us with the 'plenitude' of Christianity?"[57] The "apostasy" of Israel had therefore not invalidated its covenant with God, because "the gifts of God are irrevocable."[58] Here, however, Fontoynont went even further:

> Israel's place awaits it, and it is superior to our own. [Israel] possesses rights that we do not have, and our own rights come to us from it. Paul will use the image of the transplant, reversing it to adapt it to his subject, because here it is the trunk that gives its superiority to

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[56] Ibid., 97.

[57] Victor Fontoynont, "La destinée du peuple juif. Le Chapitre XI de l'Épitre aux Romains," *Rencontres* 4 (December 1941), reprinted in "Les théologiens lyonnais et la persécution contre les juifs," *Les Cahiers de l'Institut Catholique de Lyon,* 25 (1994), 29. Fontoynont here paraphrases Rom. 11:12-15.

[58] Ibid., 31. The relevant passage from Paul is Rom. 11:29.

> the branches. This trunk of the cultivated olive tree is the Israel of the promise, the Israel of the Patriarchs. The Jews are its natural branches. We, stock of the wild tree, we have taken their place on the trunk of the cultivated olive tree. One day they will take this place back, the first place. We must not forget it and treat them as if they were damned.[59]

Writing in the wake of Vichy's anti-Semitic legislation, Fontoynont was explicit about the contemporary relevance of Paul's teaching. His words "oblige us to speak of them [the Jews] only with respect," for as St. Bernard warned, "'if you mistreat them, you risk wounding the Lord in the apple of his eye.'"[60] Fontoynont's exegesis thus furnished Catholic critics of anti-Semitism with an important theological weapon, but it also indicates the kind of soul-searching the war inspired with regards to the anti-Jewish tradition within the Church.

This soul-searching was provoked in no small part by the way Vichy lawmakers—particularly Catholic Maurrassians such as Xavier Vallat, who headed the General Commissariat on Jewish Questions—mobilized the Christian anti-Jewish tradition in the service of the regime's anti-Semitic campaign. Anxious to secure Catholic support for the legislation and offset any possible religious objections, the regime articulated its own theological justification for the anti-Semitic legislation. This is evidence of the way in which modern secular states, far from ejecting theology from public life, tend to take on a theological prerogative of their own in the act of defining the role of religion in the public sphere.[61] In August 1941, two months after the second Statut des Juifs, Pétain instructed his ambassador to the Vatican, Léon Bérard, to take the temperature of the Church hierarchy. A month later, Bérard report back to Pétain that "nothing ever told to me at the Vatican suggests, on the part of the Holy See, any criticism or disapprobation of the legislative acts and rules in question."[62] The ambassdor did affirm the "essential, irreducible" incompatibility between scientific racism and the teachings of the Church on the unity of the human race, recalling the Vatican condemnation of Nazi ideology in *Mit Brennender Sorge*, but he also claimed that Pius XI had qualified the principle of human unity by recognizing that "'within this universal family there is a place for specific races, for even more specialized nationalities.'"[63] In other words, Bérard sought to differentiate between French anti-Semitism and the excesses of Nazi racism, arguing that Church teaching was compatible with the first but not the second.

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[59] Ibid., 30. This commentary is based on Rom. 11:17-24.

[60] Ibid., 32.

[61] Talal Asad makes a similar case about the contemporary French Republic and its efforts to ban "conspicuous religious signs" such as headscarves from the public sphere. See Talal Asad. "Trying to Understand French Secularism," in *Political Theologies: Public Religions in a Post-Secular World*, ed. by Hent de Vries and Lawrence Sullivan (New York: Fordham University Press, 2006), 494-526.

To add further theological weight to this claim, Bérard claimed that a precedent for the anti-Semitic legislation of the French State could be found in the work of Thomas Aquinas. He pointed, in particular, to a passage from the *Summa Theologiae* (IIa IIae, q. 10, a. 9-12), which he paraphrased thus:

> One must be tolerant towards the Jews when it comes to the exercise of their religion...On the other hand, while proscribing all politics of oppression towards the Jews, St. Thomas nevertheless recommends taking suitable steps to limit their action in society and restrict their influence. It would be dishonorable to allow them, within a Christian state, to govern and therefore to submit Catholics to their authority. From this it follows that it is legitimate to deny them access to public service, and it is equally legitimate to admit them to universities and liberal professions only in a fixed proportion.[64]

Bérard here invokes the anti-Jewish practices of the medieval Church to legitimize the racist measures of a modern secular state. Moreover, to guard against the possibility of any future objections from the Church, Bérard hedges his bets by deploying another weapon from the Thomist arsenal—the thesis-hypothesis distinction. Ironically, as we saw in Chapter 1, this theory had been developed by Leo XIII as a means to reconcile Catholics to the Republic, but it was redeployed during the war to defend a very different kind of regime. Bérard uses it here to argue that, even if the

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[62] "Rapport au maréchal Pétain de Léon Bérard," 2 September 1941, reprinted in *Le Monde juif* (October 1946), 2.

[63] Bérard here quotes a sermon by Pius XI to the students of the Seminary of Propaganda on 29 July 1938, in ibid.

[64] Ibid., 3.

Vichy anti-Semitic laws do not correspond to the Catholic ideal on this question (the thesis), the Church will consent to them as a less-than-ideal "practical arrangement," (the hypothesis).[65] In making this argument, the ambassador defended the autonomy of the temporal order in much the same terms as Neo-Scholastic theologians had used in their 1926 dispute with the Vatican over the Action Française. In this way, Vichy elaborated a Thomist political theology that lent sacred authority to its racism—one that Vallat would continue to invoke at his trial following the war.

In his memoirs, de Lubac makes much of this text, for it confirmed his suspicion that Vichy's political theology was the work of his longtime adversaries—Neo-Scholastic partisans of the Action Française. Like the Vatican nuncio to Vichy, de Lubac suspected that the Master General of the Dominican order had supplied Bérard with the necessary Thomist bonafides for his report. The Jesuit recalled that during the war he had encountered many a Catholic Maurrassian at his university library in Lyon, where they mined the Thomist sources for "a little bouquet of texts capable, as they thought, of strengthening Pétain and encouraging Vallat in their saving work."[66] What angered de Lubac above all was the "totally anachronistic" way in which these Maurrassians claimed the mantle of the medieval Church for their anti-Semitic agenda. Vallat, for instance, would later maintain that "'all the measures contained in the French legislation of the new state...were formerly taken at the request of those very religious authorities whom the Jews of 1942 now claim tacitly disapprove of the actions of the Marshal's government in this regard.'"[67] In other words, Vichy ideologues sought to coopt the traditional anti-Judaism of the Church, while differentiating their program from the more scientific racism of the Nazis.

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[65] Ibid., 4.

[66] Henri de Lubac, *Christian Resistance to Anti-Semitism*, 90. The suspicions of nuncio Valeri, who seems to have been flabbergasted by the report, are communicated in a letter to then Vatican Secretary of State, Cardinal Maglione dated 30 September 1941, in *Actes et documents du Saint Siège*, 296. Gillet had played a central role in negotiating the lifting of the 1926 Vatican condemnation of the AF.

[67] Quoted in de Lubac, *Christian Resistance to Anti-Semitism*, 89.

De Lubac sought to counteract both of these goals and, along with many veterans of the pre-war philosemitic discourse, developed an arsenal of theological weapons to combat the anti-Semitic political theologies of both Vichy and the Third Reich. In the first place, he maintained a sharp distinction between medieval Catholic anti-Judaism and modern anti-Semitism, arguing that the latter "could only germinate in a dechristianized milieu" because racism would have been foreign to the medieval worldview.[68] While de Lubac recognized that medieval Jews were subject to a special civil status "including both restrictions and privileges," as well as to violence and persecution at the hands of the Christian population, he claimed that neither "have anything to do with the recent phenomenon of doctrinaire anti-Semitism," which "can never be anything but a more or less veiled form of anti-Christianity."[69]

In making this argument, de Lubac found an unexpected ally in Charles Journet, the Swiss Neo-Scholastic and disciple of Maritain with whom he had sparred over the Action Française crisis. Journet had embraced Maritain's vision of a "New Christendom" that decoupled Thomism from the socio-political order of the Middle Ages and reconciled it to the secular, pluralist political order that now prevailed. Consequently, he was just as eager as de Lubac to denounce the neo-medievalist dream of the Vichy legislators. Like the Jesuit, he denied that medieval anti-Judaism was racist, because it extended the same civil status to Christian converts. But he also disputed the dream of a medieval golden age, recognizing that medieval Christendom was not "the perfect implementation of the Gospel principles at the level of social and political life." Finally, rehearsing Maritain's reasoning in *Integral Humanism*, he argued that the medieval system of ghettos emerged from the logic of a sacral order which presupposed the temporal authority of the Church and therefore yoked citizenship to religious belonging. In other words, these anti-Jewish measures would have no place in a secular regime like the French State, for "if one wishes to revive the ghettos, all the rest of it would have to be revived as well."[70] Both Journet and de Lubac, then, relied on a narrative of historical rupture that divorced Catholic anti-Judaism and modern anti-Semitism—one that also dispensed them from having to defend the anti-Jewish tradition.

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[68] "Conclusion," *Israël et la foi chrétienne*, 152. Bédarida confirms that de Lubac is the author of this statement in *Les armes de l'esprit,* 119. This claim was at the core of many secular critiques of Nazism as well, but has since been discredited by historians who have pointed, in particular, to the blood purity laws of medieval Spain. See, for instance, David Nirenberg, "Was there Race before Modernity? The Example of 'Jewish' Blood in Late Medieval Spain," in *The Origins of Racism in West*, ed. by Miriam Eliav-Feldon, Benjamin Isaac, and Joseph Ziegler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 232-264.

[69] Ibid., 153.

In other words, Maritain's and de Lubac's circles found common ground on the Jewish question, and the war thus witnessed a brief rapprochement between the two groups, even as it highlighted the political distance that now separated Maritain from his fellow Neo-Scholastics. With Journet in Switzerland and Maritain in North America, however, their impact on the French conversation was somewhat limited, although several of Maritain's texts did circulate in clandestine form during the war. De Lubac assisted in this effort by publishing excerpts from Maritain's *L'impossible antisémitisme* and the article by Journet cited above, along with the testimony of Church leaders from a variety of nations and confessions, in the April-May 1942 issue of *Témoignage chrétien* devoted to the problem of anti-Semitism. If de Lubac and the Neo-Scholastics could agree on little else, they were equally convinced that anti-Semitism posed a formidable threat to both Christianity and the dignity of the human person. Both Maritain and de Lubac turned the anti-Semitic rhetoric of pathology on its head, figuring anti-Semitism itself as an "infectious disease" that contaminates the Christian conscience with "an inherently anti-Christian doctrine" and, in doing so, "puts us on the path to apostasy."[71] Maritain likewise diagnosed Christian anti-Semitism as "a pathological phenomenon" that arises when Christians refuse their "own responsibilities before history" and lay the blame for their misfortunes elsewhere—a pathology than "always turns, in the end, against Christianity itself."[72] Journet echoed this sentiment, asking, "how can one hate the promise without hating the fulfillment? How can one hate the Old Testament without hating the New?"[73] If anti-Semitism was a direct affront to Christianity, this was not least because it violated the dignity of the human person and the unity of the human race affirmed in the Gospel. "Everything that afflicts man," de Lubac maintained, "afflicts and wounds the Christian at the very same time."[74] Against the racial taxonomy at the heart of both Vichy and Nazi ideology, he and Journet turned to Fessard's favorite passage from St. Paul: "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28).

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[70] Charles Journet, "Antisémitisme," *Nova et vetera* (July-September 1941), reprinted in Journet, *Exigences chrétiennes en politique* (Paris: Egloff, 1945), 162-4.

[71] Henri de Lubac, "L'Antisémitisme et la conscience chrétienne," *Cahiers du Témoignage chrétien,* VI-VII (April-May 1942), reprinted in *La résistance spirituelle,* 146.

But what were the theological grounds for claiming that anti-Semitism amounted to anti-Christianity? It fell to the theologians who had argued most strenuously before the war for the close historical bond between the Israelites and the "New Israel," to supply the theological rationale for the resistance to anti-Semitism. Wartime displacements had united these figures together under the same roof, or rather two neighboring roofs—Fourvière and the Catholic University of Lyon—and it is no coincidence that the earliest and most forceful Catholic denunciations of anti-Semitism emerged from their walls. It was Chaine who, in the wake of the second Statut des Juifs in June 1941 and the continuing silence of the episcopacy, suggested to his colleagues at the Catholic University that they issue their own public protest. The ensuing declaration, which he co-authored with de Lubac, Bonsirven, and Louis Richard, condemned the law as an exercise in collective scapegoating that bore all the markers of German influence. Against it, the theologians appealed at once to the universal principle of human dignity, and to the special status of the Jewish people, recalling their pre-war theology:

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[72] Quoted in ibid., 153.

[73] Journet, "Antisésmitisme," 161.

[74] De Lubac, "L'Antisémitisme et la conscience chrétienne," 144.

> The Church cannot forget that the Israelites are the descendants of the people who were the object of the divine election of which she is the culmination, of those people from whom Christ, our Savior, the Virgin Mary and the apostles sprang; that they have in common with us the books of the Old Testament...[that] we, like they, are sons of Abraham, and that the blessing promised to his descendants is still upon them, to call them to recognize in Jesus the Christ who was promised to them.[75]

Above all, however, the theologians took issue with the law's ethno-racial categorization of Jews, because it usurped the Church's theological prerogative to police its own boundaries. This is because the law refused to recognize as a Christian any Jew who had converted after the date of the armistice or had more than two Jewish grandparents. In establishing this racial taxonomy, the French State arrogated to itself a specifically *theological* privilege, and arguably the Church's central privilege—the capacity to determine who belonged to it and who did not. The Lyon theologians condemned this usurpation both explicitly and implicitly, for even their choice to refer throughout the text to "*israélites*" rather than "*juifs*" implies a religious rather than a racial definition of Judaism. The "Chaine Declaration" would have been the first public protest by the Catholic clergy against Vichy anti-Semitism, but the priests' colleagues and superiors feared that it might provoke the authorities to close the university and would, in any case, never pass the censor.[76] As a result, the document circulated clandestinely but never became the official cry of Catholic conscience its authors intended it to be.

Undeterred, the four theologians found another means to publicize their position. It was though the intercession of Charles Journet in 1942 that they managed to publish a more expansive meditation on the theological reasoning behind the Chaine Declaration in Switzerland, whence it was smuggled into France. Bearing the title *Israel and the Christian Faith*, the volume recapitulated much of the pre-war discourse on philosemitism and biblical theology, framing the question of Christian-Jewish relations around the mystical body theology. Citing the Gospel of John, the introduction reminded readers that Christ died "'not only for his people, but to reunite all of the dispersed children of God in a single body.'"[77] The conclusion likewise affirmed that, in spite of its current dispersal, "Israel remains the chosen people, whose rejection is merely provisional," and that, "at the same time as this signifies for us a duty, [it] already places, between Israel and us Christians, a first bond of solidarity."[78] The solution to the so-called "Jewish problem," in other words, was the eventual incorporation of the Jewish people into the mystical body of Christ. This sentiment of course is very far from a liberal-pluralist embrace of religious difference as a good in itself, which theologians like John Courtney Murray would advocate in the 1960s and was already implicit in Maritain's call for a "pluralist and personalist" regime. And yet, this did not make the Lyon theologians any less vigorous defenders of the civil rights and dignity of Europe's persecuted Jews, even if they did so with an eye to the eventual conversion of the Jewish people. It was possible to oppose anti-Semitism for fundamentally illiberal reasons.

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[75] "Draft of a Declaration of the Catholic Theology Faculty of Lyons," 17 June 1941, quoted in full in Henri de Lubac, *Christian Resistance to Anti-Semitism,* 67-8.

[76] De Lubac has a rather more charitable reading of the reasoning of these colleagues and superiors, in *Christian Resistance to Anti-Semitism*, 61-2. For a less charitable reading, see Atkin, "*Ralliés* and *résistants*," 108

In his own contribution to the volume, de Lubac turned his sights on the relationship between Judaism and Christianity posited by Nazi ideologues. Distinguishing between the neo-pagan and German Christian wings of the movement, de Lubac showed how the first treated Christianity as an extension of Judaism in order to vilify both, while the latter instead sought to "Aryanize" Christianity by disarticulating it from its Jewish heritage. In much the same way, he argued, French Pétainists and German Nazis either treated Catholicism as the least Judaized of the Christian confessions (Action Française) or the most Judaized (German Christians). For de Lubac, these contradictions left no doubt that Nazi ideology was fundamentally self-serving and equally hostile to Christianity in all of its iterations. "Isn't one of the arts of a well-orchestrated campaign to employ the most diverse means—if need be, the most contradictory—and make them contribute to the same end?" de Lubac asked.[79] What united these apparently incompatible elements of Nazi ideology was a shared contempt for the "negative" elements of the Christian tradition, ostensibly inherited from Judaism—including asceticism, humility, self-sacrifice, and a concern for the rights of the weak. But what would remain of the Christian faith, de Lubac demanded, if these elements were torn from it? One cannot attack the Jewish sources of the Christian tradition without destroying Christianity itself.

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[77] "Avant-Propos," in *Israél et la foi chrétienne*, 8.

[78] Ibid., 151-2. The author of these lines is de Lubac, according to Bédarida, *Les armes de l'esprit,* 119.

This was something Nietzsche had understood well, and it was to his critique of Judeo-Christian "slave morality" that de Lubac therefore turned in order to account for the genesis of National Socialism. Like his Nazi readers, the Jesuit argued, Nietzsche perceived an inextricable bond between the two religions. He figured Christianity as an "'immense act of vengeance perpetrated by the Jews against the splendor of the ancient world,'" one that replaced "the heroic morality of the Greeks" with a "morality of resentment, morality of the weak and of slaves."[80] Consequently, de Lubac concluded, when Nazi propaganda demands that we "choose between 'Europe' and 'Judea,' let us understand: the choice that is being presented is between Christianity and paganism."[81] Faced with the Nazi dichotomy between "the pagan, healthy and virile" and "the Jew, feminine and morbid," the Christian is necessarily on the side of the Jew.[82]

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[79] Ibid., 33.

[80] Ibid., 24-6.

[81] Ibid., 20.

[82] Ibid., 16.

De Lubac thus embraced the Nazi claim that Christianity is "Judaized" through and through, simply reversing the normative valence attached to this relationship. "These adversaries are often right, he acknowledged, "when they see in many points of [Christian] doctrine a contribution owed to Israel...therefore, the defense of Christ would be incomplete if it did not extend to those who prepared his coming, and to the whole order of things which He himself proclaimed He had come not to abolish but to accomplish."[83] It is here that de Lubac expands upon the precise theological relationship between the two testaments, the source of the solidarity that binds Christians to Jews in the contemporary crisis. At a moment when both Christianity and Judaism are under attack, he warns, it is all the more vital for Christians to insist on the unity of the two testaments:

> From one to the other of our two Testaments, we will maintain the indissoluble link, ultimately always interpreting the Old by the New, but also always founding the New on the Old...there is for us but one Scripture...which is sacred to us as a whole. We will not allow anyone to harm it any more than we would allow them to harm the Church. We will not allow anyone to harm it any more than we would allow them to harm the Eucharist.[84]

De Lubac here anticipates a key claim of his second book, *Corpus Mysticum* (1944), which established an analogy between the Eucharist-Church relationship and the one that binds the two testaments. In making this claim, he was no doubt emboldened by the promulgation in 1943 of *Divino Afflante Spiritu*, the encyclical that reopened the field of biblical and historical criticism to Catholics, for whom such scholarship had been off-limits since the Modernist Crisis. Issued only a year after the Lyon theologians published their Swiss volume, the encyclical may well have been conceived, at least in part, as a recognition of their efforts and a reaction against the German Christian project to purge the Old Testament from the Christian canon. Biblical theology, in other words, was far from an abstract, politically irrelevant field in the 1930s and 1940s. Nor, for these theologians, did the solidarity between Christians and Jews cease because the latter did not recognize Jesus as the

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[83] Ibid., 31.

[84] Ibid., 37.

Messiah. Instead, they insisted that the biblical ties between the two faiths should put Christians at the forefront of the resistance to anti-Semitism. As de Lubac put it, re-appropriating the biopolitical language of the Third Reich, "all of this [the Jewish tradition] has become our flesh. We will not allow it to be wrested from us."[85]

Biopolitics and Biotheology

Biblical theology was not the only theological domain to be revitalized by the Catholic confrontation with Vichy and the Third Reich. This conflict also transformed the field of ecclesiology, in which de Lubac and his allies were already household names by the time the war broke out. As we saw in Chapter 2, they had been the leading theorists of the mystical body ecclesiology that animated Catholic Action—a project they explicitly conceived in opposition to the Neo-Scholastic vision of the Church as a "perfect society," which had informed Catholic support for the Action Française. From the foregoing, it should be clear that Vichy benefitted enormously from the entrenched Maurrassian sympathies of both the Catholic laity and clergy; hence the high-profile role that Catholic partisans of the AF like Xavier Vallat and Raphaël Alibert played in Pétain's government. The Neo-Scholastic notion that the Church and state were analogous, hierarchically-ordered societies, each self-sufficient in its own order, accorded with the values of the regime, for both could agree that a hierarchical social order was inscribed in natural law. De Lubac and his friends were of course far from surprised to see their erstwhile theological opponents rally behind the new regime, but they also could not ignore that a number of their pre-war allies had drawn a connection between the incarnationist spirituality of Catholic Action and the principles of the National Revolution. As a result, the war forced de Lubac's circle to revisit the mystical body ecclesiology and consider how it could have been appropriated to serve political ends that seemed to them so foreign from its initial inspiration. And yet, this did not induce them to retreat from the collectivist premises of their pre-war ecclesiology or make any concessions to liberal individualism. Instead, they sought to forestall any political appropriation of Catholic ecclesiology by reframing it around the central mystery of the Eucharist. This Eucharistic ecclesiology would eventually find expression in the documents of the Second Vatican Council. But in the context in which de Lubac articulated it, in the midst of the war, it should be read as a counter-political alternative to the biopolitical projects being enacted in both Germany and France. In other words, this ecclesiology should be read as a *biotheology*—one that looked to the life and body of Christ as the best weapon against the divinization of the ethno-national body.[86]

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[85] Ibid., 38-9.

Biotheological motifs functioned to quite different political effect in Germany and in France, and de Lubac's circle kept one eye trained on each of these contexts. As John Connelly has shown, the mystical body theology was susceptible to a particularly virulent political appropriation in Germany, where it dovetailed with the Reich's vitalist discourse of blood, race, and organic belonging. Some German theologians, particularly those steeped in the interwar liturgical movement, which sought to inject vitality into the Mass by framing it as a celebration of communal union, found it difficult to disentangle the corporate aspirations of the Church from those of the Reich. A case in point is the Tübingen theologian Karl Adam, who had contributed an essay to the Franco-German collaborative volume Chaillet had edited on Möhler in 1939.[87] In 1924, Adam had made a name for himself as an early exponent of the mystical body ecclesiology with *The Spirit of Catholicism.* Already in this work, Adam stressed the unity and universalism of the mystical body of Christ, but he also recognized that "the Body of Christ, if it be a true body, must have members and organs" and is therefore "of its nature differentiated."[88] He would take this principle much further in a 1933 essay on "German Nationality and Catholic Christianity," in which he welcomed Hitler as the savior of the national body. Although Adam did not deny the universality of the Church, he did argue that one necessarily enters it through the particularity of an ethno-national community—one he identified with "blood purity." The Church is "'the true mother of all national-racial identity,'" he argued, and it thrives when it "'carefully observes the blood-given determinations of a race or people.'"[89] Church and *Volk* are thus "'organically linked'" for Adam; "'they belong together as the natural and supernatural orders.'"[90] The corporeal metaphors of *völkisch* ideology and the mystical body theology fuse together here, and by figuring the body of Christ organologically, Adam seeks to square the circle between Catholic universalism and national or even racial particularity. He was by no means alone in drawing such a connection between the mystical body theology and the racial politics of the Third Reich, but as Robert Krieg has shown, this ecclesiology could just as easily be deployed *against* Nazi ideology, as it was by Romano Guardini and Engelbert Krebs.[91]

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[86] I have devised the term "biotheology" to denote a theological counterpoint to "biopolitics," the deployment of human life and the body by the juridico-political apparatus. This includes the notion that the political or ethnic community itself constitutes a body. In this respect, "biotheology" is an instance of the "counter-political" role this dissertation attributes to theology more broadly.

[87] Chaillet, ed., *L'Église est une*. Congar and Montcheuil also contributed pieces. Nothing in the correspondence between Chaillet and Congar concerning the volume's publication suggests that they were aware of Adam's sympathies with Nazism, even though Chaillet spent some time in Tübingen during this period.

If the mystical body theology was susceptible to a *völkisch* appropriation in the German context, it possessed rather different political implications in Vichy France. Few drew a direct line from the mystical body theology to the National Revolution, but the incarnationist discourse of Catholic Action, with which this theology had been aligned prior to the war, did encourage some Catholics to rally behind the new regime. Louis Bouyer, a leading voice in the Nouvelle Théologie, drew the conclusion that the excesses of the prewar theology of the mystical body were to blame.

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[88] Karl Adam, *The Spirit of Catholicism,* trans. By Dom Justin McCann (New York: Crossroad, 1997), 36-7.

[89] Karl Adam "Deutsches Volkstum und katholisches Christentum," quoted in Robert Anthony Krieg, *Karl Adam: Catholicism in German Culture* (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 1992), 119.

[90] Ibid.

[91] See the discussion in Robert Krieg, *Catholic Theologians in Nazi Germany* (New York: Continuum, 2004), 164-70.

Writing after the war, he worried that, in its desire to incarnate Christianity in temporal milieus such as the university or the factory floor, the Catholic Action movement had inadvertently secularized the notion of the mystical body. It became little more than the product of this work of incarnation—one in fact premised upon a false understanding of incarnation:

> To penetrate human realities with a divine virtue, but in such a way as to leave their relatively autonomous humanity intact, impregnating them with charity while respecting their own structure, is not at all incarnation; it is 'divinization,' which is to say that it is the exact opposite.[92]

In Christ's case, these two processes were not at odds, because the Word incarnated itself in human form precisely in order to divinize it. But Bouyer warned about the risks of applying this logic to temporal institutions. "Why then would the State, the totalitarian State," he demanded, "not lay claim, given all this, to the supreme benefits of this universal divinization of the human, all too human?"[93] We should not be surprised, he concluded, that "during the first wave of totalitarianism, so many non-mediocre young Christians, even so many directors of Catholic Action, were able to pass so quickly from Christ to the new idols."[94] While Bouyer certainly goes too far in identifying Catholic Action with outright collaborationism, he does capture something of the logic that led Desbuquois, Mounier, Doncoeur, and others to believe that by penetrating the structures of the National Revolution, Catholics could channel its spiritual aims in a Christian direction, transforming the state into an auxiliary of the mystical body of Christ. What they shared with someone like Adam, in other words, was a tendency to immanentize the body of Christ, to yoke it to the material bodies of nation and state. For Bouyer, the problem was that interwar theologians had framed the mystical body theology in opposition to the visible structures of the hierarchical Church, in part to promote a greater role for the laity. This had left it vulnerable to political misappropriation. The solution, he argued, lay in reconnecting the mystical body ecclesiology to the visible corporate structures of the Church.

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[92] Louis Bouyer, "Où en est la théologie du corps mystique?" *Revue des sciences religieuses* 22 (1948), 324.

[93] Ibid., 326.

[94] Ibid.

This was also, not surprisingly, the approach taken by Pius XII in his 1943 encyclical *Mystici Corporis Christi*, which endorsed the mystical body ecclesiology while anchoring it firmly in the authority of the Catholic hierarchy. Like Adam, the pope figured the Church as a corporate body "constituted of organs, that is of members, that have not the same function and are arranged in due order."[95] But for Pius, this internal differentiation refers to the hierarchy of offices that extends from the papacy down to the laity, not to the various nations of the world. To guard against a more horizontal conception of the mystical body ecclesiology circulating at the time, Pius stresses again and again that the Church is called the "mystical body of Christ" because he is its head. It is through this head—of which the Pope is of course the visible representative on Earth—that the supernatural gifts of the Savior flow into the rest of his body, for "as supernatural gifts have their fullness and perfection in Him, it is of this fullness that His Mystical Body receives."[96] This allows the Pope to reconcile the mystical body ecclesiology with the Neo-Scholastic model of the Church as a "perfect society," invoking the former as the source and guarantor of the latter's perfection. In other words, Pius deploys the mystical body ecclesiology as a bolster for, rather than an alternative to, the visible, juridical Church. "The juridical mission of the Church," he maintains, "[derives its] supernatural efficacy and force for the building up of the Body of Christ from the fact that Jesus Christ, hanging on the Cross, opened up to His Church the fountain of those divine gifts, which prevent her from ever teaching false doctrine and enable her to rule...through divinely enlightened pastors."[97]

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[95] Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis Christi* (29 June, 1946): http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xii/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_29061943_mystici-corporis-christi_en.html, §16.

[96] Ibid., §48.

[97] Ibid., §31.

Figuring the Church as the mystical body of Christ possesses yet another advantage, "in view of modern errors," Pius argues, because "this name enables us to distinguish it from any other body, whether in the physical or moral order."[98] Here, the Pope presents the mystical body ecclesiology as a counterpoint to other human communities conceived in corporeal terms, and it is precisely the *lack* of analogy between the mystical body of Christ and the human body that now becomes significant:

> In the natural body the principle of unity unites the parts in such a manner that each lacks in its own individual subsistence; on the contrary, in the Mystical Body the mutual union, though intrinsic, links the members by a bond which leaves to each the complete enjoyment of his own personality.[99]

It is difficult not to read this as a critique of totalitarianism, and of the Third Reich in particular. What allows the Church to treat its members as more than just means to the ends of the community, Pius suggests, is that the body on which it is modeled is *not* a human one. The bonds that unite it are *not* merely natural. In making this claim, the Pope thus echoes the anti-totalitarian ecclesiology that de Lubac and others like him had been developing since the 1930s.

But by the end of the war, this approach no longer seemed entirely adequate to de Lubac. Nor, given his hostility to the Neo-Scholastic model and his differences with the hierarchy over Vichy, was he inclined to accept the new encyclical's paean to the Church as juridical society. Instead, building upon an insight he had developed before the war, de Lubac turned to the Eucharist to ground the reality and visibility of the Church in his second work, *Corpus Mysticum*, published in 1944. De Lubac opens his account with the ecclesiological model upon which Pius XII relies in his encyclical—the notion that the Church is "*one mystical body, of which the head is Christ*," which was enshrined in the 1302 papal Bull, *Unam Sanctam*.[100] Although this might seem like a familiar expression, de Lubac points out that it was in fact unknown to both St. Paul and the Church Fathers, who instead referred to the Church quite simply as the "body of Christ." More than a matter of semantics, de Lubac will demonstrate that this this shift in terminology possessed far-reaching political and theological ramifications.

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[98] Ibid., §60.

[99] Ibid., §61.

[100] Quoted in Henri de Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum: The Eucharist and the Church in the Middle Ages,* trans. by Gemma Simmonds (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006), 3.

To do so, de Lubac returns his readers to a moment when the relationship between the three bodies of Christ—the historical body of Jesus of Nazareth, the sacramental body of the Eucharist, and the ecclesial body—was conceived in fluid and dynamic terms. In particular, de Lubac foregrounds the strong relationship between the Eucharist and the Church (the second and third bodies) envisioned by the Church Fathers. They understood that the mystery and significance of the Eucharist lay in its power to enact the Church, by incorporating the faithful with each other in and through their incorporation in Christ. As de Lubac memorably puts it, "literally speaking, therefore, the Eucharist makes the Church...by its hidden power, the members of the body come to unite themselves by becoming more fully members of Christ."[101] Far from an individual communion with the divine, the sacrament of the Eucharist thus involves an inescapably social dimension.

According to de Lubac, when the term "mystical body" was initially used in the ninth century to distinguish one of Christ's three bodies, it in fact designated the Eucharist rather than the Church. This made sense, he suggests, because it highlighted the mystical potency of the sacrament, its ability to signify, and thereby enact, the Church. But, by a "curious exchange of positions," the term "mystical body" ceased to refer to the sacramental body of Christ and came instead to designate the Church by the mid-twelfth century.[102] This transformation was in large part the result of a new focus on the problem of Eucharistic presence, and in particular, a need to stress the "real presence" of Christ in the Eucharist, in opposition to Berengarianism. Henceforth, the sacramental body would be conceived as the "true" body of Christ and ever more closely identified with the historical body of Christ in order to underwrite sacramental realism. But the effect of identifying the first and second bodies in this way was to dissociate the second and third bodies—the Eucharist and the Church—whose mystical interpenetration had been so central to the Patristic vision. In other words, the triple body of Christ was now reduced to a binary that set the "true body" over against the "mystical body," the Church. In itself, this transformation might not have been damaging. But de Lubac sees it as part of a much broader process of conceptual impoverishment that abandoned the more rich and inclusive formulations of the Church Fathers in favor of the sharp analytical distinctions of Neo-Scholasticism, between spiritual and real, mystical and true, signifier and signified, substance and accident. Set over and against the "true" body of Christ, the "mystical" ecclesial body came to seem rather less real or substantial—a "moral exhortation" to unity, rather than its literal enactment.[103] As a result, something of the social dimension of the sacrament was lost.

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[101] Ibid., 88.

[102] I prefer this translation of "curieux chassé-croisé" to the official Simmonds translation, which has rendered it "curious cross-country route," ibid., 73.

The path to restoring ecclesial solidarity, for de Lubac, does not lie in a reaffirmation of the visible structures of the Church hierarchy, as it does for Pius XII. The Jesuit had already warned, in his speech at Uriage in 1941, that the "visible and temporal aspect" of the Church "is but partial and transitory," and that "the Church is nothing other...than the community of persons, the society of men assembled in Christ."[104] In *Corpus Mysticum*, he went even further, arguing that it was actually the attempt "to assimilate the 'mystical body' with the 'visible body'" during the fourteenth century, that left the Church vulnerable to the forces of secularization.[105] To show this, de Lubac returns to the formulation from *Unam Sanctam* with which he opened the book—namely, that the Church is "*one*

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[103] Ibid., 245.

[104] De Lubac, "Explication chrétienne de notre temps," 141.

[105] De Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum*, 116.

mystical body, of which the head is Christ." He reads this model as a transparently theocratic bid on the part of Boniface VIII to subsume rival secular powers within the unity of the mystical body of the faithful and position himself as its rightful head, in his capacity as Christ's vicar on earth. Although this was meant to expand the power of the Church, de Lubac suggests that its effect was actually to reduce the Church to a sociological or juridical body akin to the state:

> This mystical body would now be thought of not only in terms of the analogy with the natural human body, but also in terms of the analogy with human society...in thus applying to the juridical and social order a word whose resonances were entirely 'mystical' and spiritual, [the papal theologians around Boniface VIII] mark a sort of degeneration of the *mystical body*, exposing ecclesiastical power to the resentment of secular rulers and to the polemics of their theologians.[106]

The effect of this slippage from the mystical body to the juridical-visible body—from *the* mystical body of Christ, to *a* mystical body with Christ as its head—is that henceforth the Church's secular rivals will appropriate and secularize the term "mystical body" to hallow their own institutions, conceived as separate entities existing alongside the mystical body of the Church. By reducing the mystery of the Church to a juridical concept, de Lubac argues, the theocratic pretensions of the fourteenth-century papacy in fact reduced the Church to the level of the secular body politic. As de Lubac put it to the Uriage cadres, "the clericalization of the State is, inevitably, the state-ization [*étatisation*] of the Church."[107]

This was a theme that de Lubac first raised in relation to the Action Française crisis of the 1920s, as we saw in Chapter 2, and he does not hesitate to apply it now to the political context of the 1940s. In the conclusion to the 1949 edition of *Corpus Mysticum*, de Lubac suggests that the imperative to revive the ecclesiology of the Fathers has taken on new urgency in light of what he calls "the tragic needs of our time." The "dialectical antitheses" of Neo-Scholastic theology have left

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[106] Ibid., 114-115.

[107] De Lubac, "Explication chrétienne de notre temps," 146.

Catholics with few resources in the face of these challenges, he implies, and what is needed now is a *ressourcement*—a return to the Patristic sources of the tradition. Only by rediscovering the sacramental origins of the Church affirmed in these sources can Catholics avoid the temptation to naturalize the mystical body of Christ:

> We need to relearn from our Fathers...the unity of the 'three bodies' of Christ. Such an assessment seems to impose itself all the more because without it the very strength of the corporate aspirations which can currently be felt at the heart of the Church, and which are in particular driving the liturgical movement, cannot be without peril. Here or there, it could degenerate into a naturalist impulse...the Eucharist does not offer us some human dream; it is a *mystery of faith*.[108]

De Lubac is referring here to the tendency among some Catholics of this period to identify the communal aspirations of the Church too readily with the goals of collectivist political projects or the bonds of earthly communities. But the reference to the liturgical movement may also suggest a more specific critique of German Catholics—perhaps even of Adam himself—and the way that the vitalist and communal impulses of renewal movements there tended to dovetail with the ideology of National Socialism.

De Lubac had also expressed this sentiment in his contribution to a volume on the subject of community edited by the corporatist François Perroux in 1942, feeling perhaps that some Catholic Pétainists could benefit from the same advice. Once again, de Lubac invoked the Patristic teaching on "the links between the sacramental communion and the Christian community, in the very unity of Christ" as a bulwark against the impulse to "'build some chimerical refuge' in a future colored at the whim of our imagination"—perhaps a reference to the National Revolution.[109] He was even more explicit in a talk he gave that same year on "The Social Significance of the Mass." Once again, de Lubac deplored the focus on obedience and authority that attracted so many Catholics to

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[108] De Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum*, 260-1. Emphasis in original.

[109] Henri de Lubac, "Communauté chrétienne et communion sacramentelle," *La Communauté française. Cahiers d'études communautaires,* reprinted in de Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum,* in *Oeuvres complètes,* vol. 5 (Paris: Cerf, 2009), 397.

Vichy, reminding his listeners that "Catholic unity is not a purely external unity," that of "a good government, well-hierarchized and sufficiently centralized," but an interior unity effected through the sacraments.[110] If there is "one point that it is particularly important to emphasize today," he concluded, it is this doctrine:

> By preaching with insistence the meaning and purpose of the Eucharistic mystery, we are combatting in a direct and effective manner one of the principal errors of the present day...Everywhere, men are searching for a communitarian doctrine, a communitarian spirituality. We possess that spirituality. It is the doctrine of the Church on herself. But we know it only too poorly.[111]

Now it is not straightforwardly obvious, particularly to the secular reader, how the idea that the Eucharist makes the Church could be conceived as an effective bulwark against Nazism or the excesses of Vichy. Sacramental ecclesiology might well seem like a retreat from politics, rather than an effective political tool, but in fact it was both of these things. As we have seen, de Lubac was attentive to the way in which even the most anti-Christian elements in the Nazi Party drew an analogy between the body of the nation and the mystical body of the Church, so that "the idea of the Reich itself is conceived after the fashion of the idea of the mystical body in Christianity."[112]In *Corpus Mysticum*, he expanded on this critique, situating this Nazi political theology within a broader genealogy of secular political appropriations of the mystical body ecclesiology, which extended all the way back to the fourteenth century. Given all this, de Lubac's efforts to revive a vision of the Church rooted in the sacramental unity of the three bodies of Christ should be read, at least in part, as an effort to resist the logic of political theology, which presupposes an analogy between the Church and secular collective bodies. For de Lubac, the fact that the Church is *the* body of Christ and is continuously enacted in and by the sacrament of the Eucharist sets it apart from any other social or political body and guards against the temptation to translate its aims into secular political terms. In other words, it is the *uniqueness* of Christ—considered in his at once historical, sacramental, and ecclesial manifestations—that provides the best safeguard against the politico-theological temptation to naturalize the ecclesial body. It was this principle of uniqueness that De Lubac, Montcheuil, and Fessard constantly reaffirmed in their wartime writings. "There is but one being that we have the duty to follow blindly, and it is Christ," Montcheuil warned, as a corrective to the prevailing cult of the leader, while de Lubac recalled the "savage exclusivism" of the "unique God."[113] For these theologians, the notion of the mystical body still slipped too easily into an analogy with other kinds of bodies, whether the natural human body or the collective body of the nation. What the sacramental ecclesiology recalled was that the body of which the Church partakes is *not* a human body composed of differentiated organs. It is instead the very same body that hung on the Cross, that is consumed in the Eucharist, and that will come again. As such, it bears no secular or natural analogue.

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[110] Henri de Lubac, "La portée social de la messe. Rapport présénté auxJournées nationales de Lyon (avril 1942), reprinted in de Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum* (2009), 389.

[111] Ibid., 390.

[112] De Lubac, "Les fondements religieux du nazisme et du communisme," 289.

For de Lubac, this tripartite structure of the body Christ, which the Eucharist re-presents, is proof that the sacramental mystery is essentially a *temporal* rather than a *spatial* one. According to the Church Fathers, he argues, the Eucharist is at once "memorial, anticipation, presence."[114] It recalls the sacrifice of the historical Christ, while anticipating the coming of the Kingdom of God, and it makes both of these times present in the here and now:

> From the Body of Christ immolated at Calvary to the Body of Christ reassembled in heaven, the Eucharist occupies in some sense the entire interim. It is like the passage from one to the other; like the confection of the second by the first.[115]

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[113] Yves de Montcheuil, "Le racisme allemand," in Fonds Yves de Montcheuil, AJPF, H Mo 55, 4; Henri de Lubac, "Réflexions sur l'idée de Dieu," *Cité nouvelle,* 26 (25 Feburuary, 1942), quoted in Rocher, "*Cité nouvelle*," para. 111.

[114] De Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum* (2006), 55.

[115] De Lubac, "The Social Significance of the Mass," 387.

In other words, it is the peculiar power of the Eucharist to disrupt secular, linear time by knitting together both the past and the not-yet-present time of eschatology within the present moment.[116] The Eucharistic is, therefore, less a *thing* than an *action*—an insight that de Lubac felt had been overshadowed by the overweening emphasis on sacramental realism since the eleventh century.

Many of his readers took this to be a veiled critique of the doctrine of "real presence," and indeed, the Jesuit did not disguise his contempt for the Aristotelian categories underpinning the theology of transubstantiation, such as the substance-accident distinction. De Lubac unfavorably contrasted the spatial and static quality of such "dialectical antitheses" to the "symbolic inclusions" of the Church Fathers, with their temporal dynamism.[117] In doing so, he echoed Montcheuil's much more forthright critique of "real presence" then circulating in unpublished form, which would eventually become fodder for the postwar campaign against the Nouvelle Théologie. In these controversial pages, Montcheuil took issue with the way the notion of "real presence" tended to presuppose a spatial understanding of the body of Christ, as if it were a natural body like any other:

> What must be denied is that, with regards to the body of Christ, one could ask the question: where is it?...The body of Christ resurrected has no positional relationship to the world of bodies; otherwise, it would be a part of our world and would no longer be a heavenly body. To be obliged to think of it as a 'glorious body,' a resurrected body, is no longer to have the right to place it in relation to the bodies of our experimental world in terms of the same relations that these bodies possess amongst each other...The glorious body of Christ cannot be localized. It defies the categories of location.[118]

The danger with the concept of "real presence," Montcheuil suggests, is that it invariably implies "physical presence," and the effect of applying spatial concepts derived from the world of natural bodies to the body Christ is that something of the scandal, of the alterity of this body is lost.

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[116] This observation is beautifully made by William Cavanaugh in *Torture and Eucharist: Theology, Politics, and the Body of Christ* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1998), 222-29.

[117] De Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum* (2006)*,* 226.

[118] Yves de Montcheuil, "La présence réelle," Fonds Gaston Fessard, AJPF, dossier 4/21bis, 2-3.

Montcheuil's critique of the spatial logic implicit in the doctrine of "real presence" recalls de Lubac's critique of the spatial logic of jurisdiction that has governed the Church since the days of Boniface VIII, leading it to think and act increasingly like a state. In both cases, the supra-temporal character of core elements of the faith is jeopardized by the shift from a temporal model shot through with eschatological time, to a spatial one derived from the secular world of natural bodies and nation-states. This leads us back, once again, to the realm of the political, and from "real presence" to the politics of "presence." For de Lubac and his friends, the politics of "presence" derived from a faulty understanding of incarnation—one that conflated physical presence within the structures of the National Revolution with the act of making the values of the Church "present" in the temporal order. Instead, they argued, the only way to achieve this goal was to bear "Christian witness" to our common destiny the "true" body of Christ, and in the process, to begin to make that body present in the here and now. This was the vision Fessard had advanced in his earliest acts of "licit" resistance. The history of salvation is omnipresent in each moment of linear human time, he argued. The Eucharist "makes us contemporary to this salvation history, and, by making us relive it, teaches us at the same time to play in the very midst of our own profane history the role that will permit us to orient it to its destiny, to the Presence of God, who is all things to all people."[119] This Eucharistic theology should thus be read as a continuation of the Jesuits' pre-war efforts to theorize a temporal role for the Church that refused both the spatial logic of separate spheres (private and public; Church and state), as well as the alternative tendency to identify the aims of the Church with those of a secular political project. Once again, they found the solution in a counter-politics founded upon the priority of the Church as a site of communal belonging whose totalizing demands disrupted the totalizing pretensions of secular forms of belonging rooted in race, nation, or state.

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[119] Fessard, "Conférence de Vichy," 50.

In his account of the ecclesiological implications of the Pinochet regime's widespread use of torture in Chile, William Cavanaugh has developed a very similar account of the counter-political implications Eucharistic ecclesiology. Cavanaugh approaches torture as "a kind of perverse *liturgy*," in which "the body of the victim is the ritual site where the state's power is manifested in its most awesome form."[120] But it is also more than this, for it constitutes "an attack on rival social bodies, an attempt to atomize and disappear them."[121] Torture, then, is an ecclesiological problem. Because it aspires to "disappear" the Church, Cavanaugh argues that it cannot be fought with a human rights discourse grounded in the primacy of the individual, given that the goal of state torture is precisely to individualize, to atomize the social body. Instead, Cavanaugh looks to the Eucharist as the means to resist the "fragmenting discipline of the state" by reincorporating the faithful into an alternative body, the body of Christ—one that relies upon "an economy of pain and the body which stands directly counter to that of torture."[122]

If we apply this logic to the sacramental ecclesiology articulated by de Lubac and his friends—and Cavanaugh's work owes much to their influence—we can glimpse what one might call its *biotheological* imperative. If the Third Reich and the Vichy government were driven by the logic of biopolitics, enacting their fantasies of a "pure" and "healthy" national body in and through the bodies of their subjects, the sacramental ecclesiology established a competing order of bodies. Rather than inscribing the human body in a set of biological hierarchies, as these regimes did, the sacramental ecclesiology inscribes them instead within the eschatological futurity of the body of Christ. Because the precise contours of this body cannot be known within the present and are not identical to the contemporary boundaries of the Church, each person is potentially a member of the body of Christ. Such an ecclesiology thus attributes the dignity of human bodies not to their natural or biological essence, but to their transcendent destiny in the community of Christ's body. It erects what Cavanaugh calls a "counter-body" to the body of the nation-state. If both the French and German regimes figured certain groups as pathogens within the national body, these theologians instead figured Nazism and anti-Semitism as a "virus" or "poison" infecting the body of Christ.[123] If, as Giorgio Agamben has argued, National Socialism was founded upon the politicization of "bare life"—a life that can be killed but not sacrificed—the Eucharistic ecclesiology was founded instead upon a life that can be sacrificed but not killed.[124] This is a mystery continuously re-enacted in and through the Eucharist. By re-presenting the historical sacrifice, it incorporates human bodies into the immortal body of Christ, for as Montcheuil recalled, the Eucharist operates "not only with regard to the human soul, but also with regards to its body, which it works incessantly...to make a glorious body."[125] Against the politicization of life under Vichy and the Third Reich, in other words, these theologians responded by theologizing it. This was a battle that could not be fought with the resources of a secular, liberal humanism, they argued, because totalitarianism was itself a historical outgrowth of this very humanism, which had forced the Church out of the public sphere and left individuals naked before the state. Like Agamben and Cavanaugh, these theologians thus perceived a hidden kinship between liberal democracy and totalitarianism. Against the individualism of the former and the biopolitical violence of the latter, they anchored their resistance in the alternative community formed by the Eucharist, through which "the Kingdom irrupts into time and 'confuses' the spiritual and the temporal."[126]

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[120] Cavanaugh, *Torture and Eucharist*, 30.

[121] Ibid., 70.

[122] Ibid., 229; 17.

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[123] This rhetoric recurs throughout the documents of the spiritual resistance, but it is particularly pronounced in Montcheuil's "Le racisme allemand," which figures Nazism and anti-Semitism as a "disease" and a "poison," noting the irony that many in France "would like to pass them off as the remedies to our illness or the manifestations of a return to health." (6)

[124] Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer,* Part 3.

[125] Montcheuil, "Présence réelle," 5.

Towards the Liberation

1944 was a bittersweet year for de Lubac's circle. It saw the liberation of France and the publication of *Corpus Mysticum*, but it also brought the death of Yves de Montcheuil at the hands of the Gestapo. The key turning point in the war had come just over a year earlier, in February 1943, when the French State imposed the *Service de Travail Obligatoire*, conscripting all men between the ages of twenty and twenty-three to serve in the German labor force—in other words, to provide material support to the German war effort. If the roundups of Jews the previous summer had stirred a few consciences and elicited public condemnations from several bishops, and the German invasion of the unoccupied zone in November had given the lie to Vichy sovereignty, the STO well and truly decimated the regime's support. Many Catholic Action militants chose the *maquis* over deportation to Germany, particularly after the ACJF leadership denounced the measure and Cardinal Liénart went so far as to proclaim that Catholics were not obligated in conscience to comply.[127] De Lubac went even further in the inaugural *Courrier du Témoignage chrétien*, published in May of 1943. In it, he asserted that all Christians were bound by their faith and their patriotic duty to *refuse* the draft and to help other refractory draftees to escape and organize themselves.[128] Fellow Jesuit Victor Dillard took a different approach. Along with a number of other priests, he disguised himself as a worker in order to accompany the STO deportees to Germany and minister to their spiritual needs there. He was eventually found out by the Gestapo and dispatched to Dachau, where he died in 1945. But out of this initiative, the worker-priest movement was born.[129]

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[126] Cavanaugh, *Torture and Eucharist*, 206.

[127] See Atkin, "*Ralliés* and *résistants*," 109; Halls, *Politics, Society, and Christianity*, 311-14.

[128] Henri de Lubac, "Service obligatoire du travail," *Courriers du Témoignage chrétien*, 1 (May 1943), reprinted in *La Résistance spirituelle,* 348.

De Lubac's article on the STO engaged *Témoignage chrétien* more than ever in the practical concerns of the temporal order, in keeping with the mission of the new *Courriers du Témoignage chrétien* to provide a more practical and accessible companion to the *Cahiers*. There were some fears that the new journal would compromise the apolitical line of the movement, given the rather more left-leaning political orientation of its lay editor, André Mandouze. But, as it turned out, the concerns of Mandouze and the Jesuits of *Témoignage chrétien* were very much aligned in this period. As we have seen, de Lubac and his allies did not apply the logic of totalitarianism symmetrically during the war, largely because they did not wish to play into the hands of those who invoked anti-communism to justify collaboration with the Germans. In the very same issue of the *Courriers* on the STO, de Lubac denounced this campaign, on the grounds that Nazism constituted a much graver threat to the Christian conscience than Communism, because it was "*more present, more immediate, more close*."[130] Montcheuil went even further in one of his last texts, which appeared in the November 1943 *Courrier*. He welcomed the fact that Christians and Communists were united in a shared struggle to liberate the nation from the Nazi yoke, and while he maintained that the two remained irreducibly opposed at the level of doctrine, he also acknowledged "all that is just, human, and expansive in the aspirations to which Communism seeks to respond."[131] Praising the concern for social justice and equality at the heart of the Communist enterprise and criticizing Catholics who opposed it out of self-interest, Montcheuil perceived in the movement "less something to destroy than something to save from itself."[132] Such statements harmonized very well with Mandouze's desire to orient the new journal to a working-class audience. In the interests of "maintaining close contact with the popular classes, to which it especially addresses itself," Mandouze announced that the *Courriers* would include a regular "Worker's column," and he was at pains to insist that "the Church is not an ally of a certain bourgeois class...nor of capitalism."[133]

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[129] The classic work on the worker-priest movement remains Émile Poulat, *Naissance des prêtres-ouvriers* (Paris: Casterman, 1965). For more on this movement, see chapter 5.

[130] Henri de Lubac, "Collaboration," *Courriers du Témoignage chrétien*, 1 (March 1943), reprinted in *La Résistance spirituelle*, 341. Emphasis in original.

[131] Yves de Montcheuil, "Communisme," *Courriers du Témoignage chrétien,* 5 (November 1943), reprinted in *La Résistance spirituelle,* 370.

By 1944, with the Liberation close at hand, Nazism no longer seemed like such a clear and present threat, depriving *Témoignage chrétien* of the common enemy that had welded together these disparate individuals and interests. Well before Allied troops landed at Normandy, de Lubac, Chaillet, Montcheuil, and Germain Ribière expressed concerns that Mandouze was dragging the *Courriers* onto political terrain that was beyond its purview as an organ of the spiritual resistance. But it was not until the Liberation that the definitive break came. If the lay and clerical members of the team could agree on the need to resist Nazism with the "weapons of the spirit," they could not agree on a post-war line for the journal. For its Jesuit founders, the project of *Témoignage chrétien* had been first and foremost a negative and critical one, in keeping with their belief that the appropriate temporal role for the clergy was to denounce political ideologies that violated the principles of Catholic faith, and not to advocate for positive political programs. But their lay counterparts at the *Courriers* were of a different mind, for they perceived a natural continuity between the journal's wartime mission and the ongoing battle for social justice, pledging "to bear witness *before the people, with the people, and for the people*."[134]The Catholic philosopher Jean Lacroix, who joined the team in 1944, explained the journal's postwar predicament thus:

> The Occupation was a time when bearing witness [*témoignage*] and politics were identical...to resist was, above all, to bear witness. For four years, we lived in what might be called an

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[132] Ibid.

[133] Quoted in Bédarida, *Les armes de l'esprit*, 173.

[134] *Courriers du Témoignage chrétien*, 13 (August 1944), quoted in Bédarida, *Les armes de l'esprit*, 269.

> infra-political stage...It was therefore a question, not of pursuing a given politics, but of recovering the conditions for all possible politics...As strong as [*Témoignage Chrétien*'s] position was during the Occupation, it was correspondingly difficult at the Liberation.[135]

At issue was not simply a difference of opinion over the appropriate scope of Catholic political engagement, but also a fundamental disagreement about which political force constituted the gravest threat to Christian values now that Nazism had been defeated. Fessard immediately turned his sights on the Communist Party, then enjoying an enormous boost in popularity thanks to its resistance credentials. Rebranding itself as the *parti des 75000 fusillés*, the PCF had even made inroads amongst Catholics. In the spring of 1945, Fessard reminded his readers that French Communists had all too readily placed the interests of the Party over those of the *patrie* when they fell into line behind the Nazi-Soviet pact in 1939. If, by "a happy coincidence," the interests of Party and *patrie* had coincided since 1941 to bring Communists into the ranks of the resistance, Fessard warned that this loyalty might well be short-lived and that the Party's policies might one day lead the country "back into a slave-prince state."[136] He expanded upon these reflections in "France, Take Care not to Lose Your Freedom," the anti-communist companion piece to his "France, Take Care not to Lose Your Soul," which had launched the spiritual resistance to Nazism. When Fessard offered the piece to *Témoignage chrétien*, it provoked a bitter quarrel within the editorial team, ultimately forcing Chaillet to abandon the journal he had founded and set up an independent series, the *Éditions du Témoignage chrétien*, in order to publish Fessard's controversial essay. Mandouze and the lay editors at *Témoignage chrétien* would henceforth take the journal in a very different direction, enlisting it in the great postwar experiments of the Catholic Left. The Jesuits who had led the struggle against Nazism did not simply abandon the public sphere with the end of the war, however, for the Liberation brought them new political and theological adversaries. What would emerge front and center in these struggles was the question of the human—its nature and its ends—as Marxists, Catholics, and Existentialists battled to stake an exclusive claim to the banner of humanism.

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[135] Jean Lacroix, "Les catholiques et la politique," *Esprit* (June 1945), quoted in Comte, *L'Honneur et la conscience,* 282.

[136] Gaston Fessard, "Avant-propos pour les Cahiers de la IVe République," in *Au temps du prince-esclave,* 127.

III. Renewal (1944-1950)

On Christmas Day, 1943, Henri de Lubac put the finishing touches on a work that would become his most spectacular commercial and popular success when it was published a year later: *The Drama of Atheist Humanism.* Written at the height of the German occupation, the book recapitulated the totalitarianism theory de Lubac had developed in the course of his resistance writings. Nazism and Communism, he argued, constituted "replacement religions" that had arisen as a backlash against the secularization of public life under nineteenth-century liberalism. As if to acknowledge the characteristically French roots of Vichy and the National Revolution, however, de Lubac paired this critique of Nazism and Communism with a critique of the positivist tradition so central to French nationalism. Thus, the book was designed to attack what de Lubac perceived to be the three most dangerous political ideologies of his day: Nazism, Communism, and the Action Française. But because he was writing under the strict censorship regime of the Occupation, the Jesuit was forced to encode his political critique as a religious and philosophical one. To do this, he adopted a genealogical approach, tracing the political ideologies he despised back to their philosophical roots in nineteenth-century atheism. The book was thus structured as an attack on the three primary representatives of this philosophical tradition: Auguste Comte, Ludwig Feuerbach, and Friedrich Nietzsche, each of whom served as a proxy for one of the three political ideologies de Lubac opposed. This was a political critique disguised as a theory of secularization. In other words, it was an instance of "counter-politics."

Whether in the form of the Nietzschean "superman," of Feuerbach's critique of theology as an alienated anthropology (to which Marx was deeply indebted), or Comte's efforts to replace Christianity with a positivist and scientific "religion of humanity," de Lubac argued that all of the violence and inhumanity of the twentieth century could be traced back to these variants of nineteenth-century atheist humanism. By retracing the genealogy of how these three humanist traditions came to be appropriated in the service of totalitarian and exclusionary ideologies, he sought to demonstrate that the attempt to emancipate man from God had only plunged him into more intractable forms of slavery, and that the death of God invariably brought with it the death of man. Despite the many differences between positivist, Marxist, and Nietzschean humanisms, de Lubac insisted, "their common foundation in the rejection of God is matched by a certain similarity in results, the chief of which is the annihilation of the human person."[1] In this way, he drew a connection between the right-wing political ideologies he and his friends had spent the war and the pre-war period opposing, and the one they would devote their energies to combatting in the postwar period: Communism. Although these might seem like opposing political forces, what they shared, he insisted, was the misguided belief that humanism presupposed atheism. "It is not true," he concluded, "that man cannot organize the world without God. What is true is that, without God, he can ultimately only organize it against man. Exclusive humanism is inhuman humanism."[2]

Although de Lubac had written these lines with the context of the German occupation in mind, his emphasis on the question of humanism ensured that the book would transcend this moment. This was because the Liberation brought with it a veritable cultural obsession with humanism—what historians now refer to as the "humanist moment"—which ensured that *The Drama of Atheist Humanism* would achieve its greatest success after the last German boots had left French soil.[3] "Nowadays, everybody is a humanist," quipped the Communist writer Pierre Naville in

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[1] Henri de Lubac, *The Drama of Atheist Humanism*, trans. by Anne Englund Nash (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1995), 12.

[2] Ibid., 14.

[3] On the "humanist moment," see Michael Kelly, *The Cultural and Intellectual Rebuilding of France after the Second World War* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 127-54; Edward Baring, "Humanist Pretensions: Catholics, Communists, and Sartre's Struggle for Existentialism in Postwar France," *Modern Intellectual History* 7, 3 (2010), 581-609; Stefanos Geroulanos, *An Atheism that is not Humanist Emerges in French Thought* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010), 209-221.

1945, and he was not far from the truth.[4] The end of the war brought with it an urgent need to unite the various ideological families of postwar France in the service of national reconstruction, and the language of humanism proved sufficiently capacious to perform this task. It provided the ideological cement for the coalition between the Catholic, Socialist, and Communist parties, known as *tripartisme*, which governed the country from 1944 to 1947. As soon as the war was over, each of these constituencies rushed to lay claim to the mantle of humanism, in what Michael Kelly has aptly described as "a series of 'me too' gestures."[5] Socialists like Robert Verdier and Léon Blum maintained that theirs had always been the true party of humanism, while the Communists had to work a little harder to make this claim. The result was a raft of works by Communist intellectuals from Henri Lefebvre to Roger Garaudy, which found in Marx' early writings on alienation the resources for a Marxist humanism that departed from strict "scientific" materialism.[6] Not to be outdone and anxious to exorcise the ghost of the Church's wartime record, Catholics were quick to put in their own bid for the mantle of humanism. Leading the charge were the partisans of an emerging Catholic Left, led by the lay intellectuals at *Esprit* and *Témoignage chrétien,* as well as Christian democrats who drew upon the Catholic human rights discourse that Jacques Maritain had begun to develop during the war.[7]

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[4] Naville made this comment in response to Sartre's famous attempt to appropriate the language of humanism in the service of his own existentialist philosophy. It is quoted in Jean-Paul Sartre, *Existentialism is a Humanism*, trans. by Carol Macomber (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), 62.

[5] Michael Kelly, *Cultural and Intellectual Rebuilding of France*, 150.

[6] On Marxist humanism see Mark Poster, *Existential Marxism in Postwar France: From Sartre to Althusser* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975), ch. 2. The list of works on Marxist humanism is too voluminous to cite here, but the most salient examples include Henri Lefebvre, *Le matérialisme dialectique* (Paris: Alcan, 1939); Georges Friedmann, *Machine et humanisme* (Paris: Gallimard, 1946); Auguste Cornu, *Karl Marx et la pensée moderne* (Paris: Éditions sociales, 1948). A number of these works were in fact written by Catholics, such as Pierre Bigo, *Marxisme et humanisme: introduction à l'oeuvre économique de Marx* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1953). The countervailing position to Marxist humanism was represented by the journal *La Pensée*, which placed the onus on a scientific materialism. See, for instance, René Maublanc, "Le rationalisme en face des mystiques," *La Pensée* 5 (October 1945), 63-74.

[7] See Jacques Maritain, *Christianity and Democracy, and The Rights of Man and Natural Law,* trans. by Doris C. Anson (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1986). On the theological foundations of Maritain's human rights discourse, see Miguel Vatter,

The "humanism moment" exceeded the limits of postwar French politics, however. It found its intellectual complement in the *tripartisme* of postwar French philosophy, which pitted Catholicism, Marxism, and existentialism against one another. What these philosophical debates revealed was that the humanist lexicon functioned as more than just a unifying framework for a nation rebuilding in the wake of war. It could just as easily serve as a stick with which to beat one's philosophical, theological, and political enemies. Thus, when Jean-Paul Sartre announced in October of 1945 that existentialism, too, was a humanism, he was in fact responding to Catholic and Marxist critics who claimed precisely the opposite. The first accused Sartre of moral nihilism, of celebrating the worst features of human nature; the second dismissed existentialism as a "bourgeois humanism" that ignored the dehumanizing economic constraints on human freedom.[8] In like manner, while Catholics like de Lubac argued that atheist humanism was a contradiction in terms, the Communist Pierre Hervé reversed the charge and quipped that the notion of Catholic humanism was "as contradictory as atheist Catholicism."[9]

This was not, however, a battle in which Marxists, Catholics, and existentialists confronted each other as unified blocs. Instead, the shared vocabulary of humanism concealed rifts between Marxist humanists and the more strictly materialist and scientistic Marxism associated with the journal *Pensée.* Existentialists, on the other hand, were internally split along both religious and political lines. There were those, such as Sartre and Merleau-Ponty, who identified to varying degrees with Marxism, but there were also Christian existentialists radically opposed to any such alliance, as

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"Politico-Theological Foundations of Universal Human Rights: The Case of Maritain," *Social Research* 80, 1 (Spring 2013), 233-60; John P. Hittinger, "Jacques Maritain and Yves R. Simon's use of Thomas Aquinas and his Legacy," in *Thomas Aquinas and his Legacy,* ed. by David A. Gallagher (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1994).

[8] See the account of the Catholic and Marxist critiques of existentialism in Jonathan Judaken, "Sisyphus' Progeny: Existentialism in France," in *Situating Existentialism: Key Texts in Context,* ed. by Jonathan Judaken and Robert Bernasconi (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 91-8.

[9] Pierre Hervé, *La Libération trahie* (Paris: Grasset, 1945), 63; 62. Both are quoted in Baring, "Humanist Pretensions," 586-7.

well as figures like Camus who shared Sartre's atheism but not his politics. These internal divisions within the Marxist and existentialist camps are well-documented, but historians, when they do in fact acknowledge the role that Catholics played in postwar French intellectual and political life, have tended to treat them as a single, unified bloc. Even the work of Edward Baring and Stefanos Geroulanos, which has done more than most to restore Catholics to their rightful place in the intellectual history of the twentieth-century France, tends to gloss over the differences between Catholics who often shared little more than a common faith and a willingness to engage with secular thought.[10]

In fact, as the following chapters will show, the postwar French Church (or at least that segment of it which emerged from the war with its reputation intact) was split between two broad groups: those open to some form of engagement with Marxism and those more interested in a dialogue with existentialist philosophy. The first sought to establish a practical alliance with centrist or leftwing political movements regardless of their religious views; the second refused any such political collaboration but saw no harm in engaging with the dominant philosophical movements of the day. Both sought to bridge the abyss between the Church and the modern world, but the first expressed this missionary zeal in the form of a social apostolate oriented towards the working class, while the second was more properly an intellectual apostolate. The first argued for the need to "incarnate" Catholic values in the temporal order, while the second invoked the countervailing demands of "eschatology" and the need to retain a critical distance from secular politics. Behind these differences, of course, was a longstanding dispute over political theology that had pitted Thomists against the circle of Jesuit theologians increasingly known as the "nouvelle théologie," and which included Henri de Lubac, Gaston Fessard, Jean Daniélou, Teilhard de Chardin, and Henri Bouillard. It was a theological difference, moreover, which found expression in conflicting approaches to the humanism question.

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[10] Baring, "Humanist Pretensions;" Geroulanos, *An Atheism that is not Humanist.* Baring, although attentive to the significant contributions that Catholics made to French phenomenology, tends to assume that all Catholics identified with the MRP. Both he and Geroulanos elide the differences between the Thomists and the "nouvelle théologie."

No one expressed this split more clearly than the young Jesuit Jean Daniélou, the rising star of Catholic theology in postwar France. Appointed Chair of Christian Origins at the Institut Catholique de Paris in 1943, Daniélou had taken a rather different path to the priesthood than his mentor de Lubac. He had studied at Jersey ten years after de Lubac and his friends, when the intellectual climate of the institution had relaxed considerably. But he was also an *agrégé*, with a Grande École formation under his belt and a doctorate from the Sorbonne. In the process, he had established close ties with some of the leading lights of the French intellectual scene and was thus uniquely well-placed to facilitate a new dialogue between Catholic theologians and secular philosophers. This new rapprochement between theology and philosophy at the heart of the secular Republic would be one of the most unexpected features of postwar French intellectual life, and also one of the most overlooked by historians.

When the Jesuit journal *Études* sought to publish an overview of postwar French intellectual life in 1945, the task therefore fell to Daniélou. Not surprisingly, he identified Marxism, existentialism, and Catholicism as the three main intellectual "families," but he also argued that each of these groups was internally divided between a "materialist" and a "spiritualist" pole. In other words, he maintained, the primary division in French intellectual life was a metaphysical one, pitting Marxist humanists against "vulgar materialists," and atheist existentialists against their religious counterparts. In the case of the Church, this division took the form of a split between "two great currents" pulled apart by the conflicting demands of incarnation and eschatology.[11] The first of these currents, which Daniélou labeled "humanist socialism," included both "the Christian democratic family" associated with Maritain and the *Mouvement républicain populaire* (MRP), as well as the variety of figures that the following chapter will group together under the umbrella of "Left Catholicism."[12] Against this more materialist current in postwar Catholic thought, Daniélou identified a second, competing force in the form of "Christian existentialism." In this group, he included not just Catholics like himself, de Lubac, and Gabriel Marcel, but also Orthodox theologians such as Nikolai Berdyaev and Vladimir Lossky, and Protestant theologians working in the tradition of Karl Barth. What this motley crew shared was a debt to Kierkegaard—the father of Christian existentialism—and the "eschatological expectation...that all men will be gathered together in the unity of Christ."[13]

Daniélou's taxonomy is significant because it suggests a major split within what might broadly be construed as the progressive wing of French Catholicism, such that Catholics who had worked together in the ranks of the Resistance now found themselves divided along political and theological lines. But his framework also suggests the possibility that the postwar divisions within the Catholic Church can shed light on the broader fault lines that structured French intellectual and political life outside the Church as well. What emerges from an analysis of the major debates in postwar Catholicism is a picture, not of three major blocs—Catholics, Marxists, and existentialists—battling for intellectual dominance, but of a set of individuals and groups who straddled more than one of these families. As we shall see, the divisions within each of these families were often greater than the ones between them.

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[11] Jean Daniélou, "La Vie intellectuelle en France: communisme, existentialisme, christianisme," *Études* (September 1945), 249.

[12] Ibid., 249-50. "Left Catholicism" is Gerd-Rainer Horn's term and designates a range of intellectual, apostolic, and political movements broadly oriented to the Left and engaging questions of social justice and economic inequality. See the discussion in *Left Catholicism: Catholics and Society in Western Europe at the Point of Liberation, 1943-1955,* ed. by Gerd-Rainer Horn and Emmanuel Gerard (Leuven: KADOC/Leuven University Press, 2001), 7-44.

[13] Ibid., 251.

This only becomes apparent when one approaches them not only through the categories of secular politics and philosophy, as historians have done until now, but also through the lens of theology. Politics played an important mediating role in these postwar configurations, but they were not simply determined by a choice for or against Communism, for instance. Instead, the choice between theism and atheism was at least as significant a factor. For Catholics, in particular, the divisions of the postwar period were the extension of a longstanding theological dispute about the relationship between the natural and supernatural orders—one which held important implications both for their postwar political choices and for their approach to the humanism question. But these theological positions also crystallized in and through the postwar Catholic engagement with secular humanism, in turn inflecting the contemporaneous dispute raging within the Church over the "nouvelle théologie." The postwar "humanist moment," then, was far from a straightforward competition between Catholics, Communists, and existentialists, each claiming to be the authentic heir to the humanist tradition. In order to grasp this, one need only consider the closing section of de Lubac's *Drama of Atheist Humanism.* Having demonstrated that the atheist humanism of Nietzsche, Feuerbach, and Comte found its logical conclusion in, respectively, the concentration camp, the Gulag, and the National Revolution, de Lubac turns in the final portion of his book to a figure who offers a way out of the impasse of atheist humanism. But the hero of de Lubac's narrative is neither Christ nor even a Catholic; it is Dostoyevsky.

Chapter 5. The Drama of Atheist Humanism I: Hegel, Marx, and the Catholic Left

In 1941, Gaston Fessard had penned the manifesto which would launch the "spiritual resistance" to Nazism in France: *France, Take Care not to Lose Your Soul!* Five years later, in a dramatically altered political landscape, he published its sequel. The opening lines of *France, Take Care not to Lose Your Freedom!* made explicit the connection between the two texts. "In July 1941," he wrote, "we denounced the danger with which Nazism, under the cover of Vichy, threatened the French soul...now, eighteen months after the Liberation, we must signal a new peril which, under the cover of the Resistance, threatens France: *Communism*."[1] The formal similarities in the title and structure of the two texts were deliberate. Fessard wished to show the implacable "parallelism" and "inherent likeness, beyond any surface opposition" between Communism and Nazism, which meant that Communism "currently threatens our country every bit as much as Nazism did in 1941."[2] In other words, Fessard had elaborated a classic theory of totalitarianism—one that derived the equivalence between Communism and Nazism from their shared anti-Christian foundation. As a result, he presented his critique of Communism as a religious rather than a political intervention, just as he and the other theologians of *Témoignage chrétien* had framed their wartime resistance as a "spiritual" and emphatically not a political project. In other words, Fessard's theory of totalitarianism constituted a form of "counter-politics," allowing him to argue that the Catholic critique of Communism was simply the logical corollary to the Catholic critique of Nazism.

But, as in the case of the "spiritual resistance" to Nazism, the very claim to remain above politics performed a certain amount of political work for Fessard. The claim that Communism and

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[1] Gaston Fessard, *France, prends garde de perdre ta liberté* (Paris: Éditions du Témoignage chrétien, 1946), 9.

[2] Ibid., 11; 10.

Nazism were equally anti-Christian and that Catholics were therefore under a specifically religious obligation to resist both was by no means obvious to many French Catholics in 1946. By then, a sizeable Catholic Left had sprung up in the country, stoked by *tripartisme* and the bonds formed between Catholics and Communists in the ranks of the Resistance, and it included many of Fessard's erstwhile companions from *Témoignage chrétien*. For these Catholics, such as André Mandouze, the logical extension of the "spiritual resistance" to fascism was not anti-communism but anti-capitalism. They translated their wartime struggle against the forces of the Right into new projects of working-class solidarity and were willing to work with Communists who did not share their religious views in order to achieve these shared practical goals.

This parting of ways between Catholics who had fought together in the ranks of the Resistance was by no means simply, or even primarily, a political split. From the perspective of the Jesuits who had launched *Témoignage chrétien*, including Fessard, Chaillet, and de Lubac, the postwar Catholic Left relied upon precisely the same theological logic that had informed the Catholic alliance with the forces of the Right before and during the war. This was the classic Thomist distinction between the natural and supernatural orders, grounded in the anthropological distinction between the natural and supernatural ends of the human person. This theological model provided the metaphysical foundation for an autonomous temporal order, allowing Catholics to work with political movements, regardless of whether these movements shared their religious beliefs, to advance a set of shared goals in the temporal order. This was precisely the logic, as we have seen, which was used to justify a pragmatic alliance first with the Action Française and then with Vichy, and de Lubac and his friends pointed out that it was precisely the same logic which Catholics were now deploying in the service of political projects on the Center and Left. Thus, as de Lubac recalled in his memoirs, these political differences between Right and Left belied a more fundamental theological continuity:

> I have known a traditionalist Thomism à la Bonald, a Thomism as patron of 'l'Action française', a Thomism as the inspiration of Christian Democracy, a progressivist and even a neo-Marxist Thomism...I have more than once observed a 'Thomism' that was scarcely more than a tool in the hands of the government, the rallying point of a party...this still makes it difficult for me to be very loud in proclaiming that I am a Thomist.[3]

In keeping with their theological resistance to any separation between the spiritual and the temporal orders, or between the natural and supernatural ends of the human person, de Lubac, Fessard, Chaillet, and Daniélou strenuously resisted any compromise between Catholics and the forces of the Left. Instead, in keeping with the approach that had inspired their resistance activities, they argued that the Church should play a purely *negative* and *critical* role vis-à-vis secular political ideologies, precisely because even a purely practical collaboration with these movements contained dangerous implications for one's faith. The role of the Church, they insisted, must be a *counter-political* one. The battle between these Jesuits and partisans of the Catholic Left was thus the extension of a longstanding conflict over political theology between Thomists and their critics. What the postwar debate over Communism revealed, however, was that this politico-theological dispute was also internal to the "nouvelle théologie" itself, pitting Thomist Dominicans against the more Augustinian Jesuits.

Manifestly, then, this was a disagreement between Catholics open to an engagement with political and socio-economic problems, and those who sought to remain above the political fray. This was certainly how it was often portrayed by those on both sides of the issue. But as was the case with the "spiritual resistance" to fascism during the war, the claim to remain above politics itself performed siginificant political work. During the war, it had allowed the priests of *Témoignage chrétien* to justify their denunciation of Vichy and Nazism as a purely religious intervention—a crucial resource at a time when political dissent had been effectively silenced. The same was true of the postwar debate over Communism. Thus, when Fessard presented Communism and Nazism as two sides of the same anti-Christian coin, claiming that he opposed them both for theological rather than political reasons, the ostensibly apolitical language of theology both masked and justified what was effectively a political choice. The very claim to remain above politics was itself politically powerful in this instance, for what could be more powerful than a priest telling Catholics that they bore, not just a political, but a specifically *religious* duty to oppose Communism? It is often assumed that effective political action requires a positive project, such as a political party or movement might propose, but the theological critique of Communism and Nazism is a testament to the political power of critique. Counter-politics, in other words, is not a retreat from the political, but a way of accessing it from a different angle—in this case, a theological one. For Fessard, it was doubly useful. It allowed him to condemn Marxist philosophy as utterly incompatible with Christianity, while nevertheless maintaining that Hegelian philosophy was compatible with, and even conducive to, theological reflection. This was crucial because, as we shall see, Fessard was a key figure in the revival of Hegelianism in France, and the leading representative of Catholic Hegelianism in particular.

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[3] Henri de Lubac, *At the Service of the Church: Henri de Lubac Reflects on the Circumstances that Occasioned his Writings*, trans. by Anne Elizabeth Englund (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1993), 144.

Hegel Resurrected

To understand the roots of the postwar debate over Marxism, then, we must first return to the 1930s and to the rediscovery of Hegel in France. Intellectual historians have rightly looked to the Hegelian revival, associated above all with the work of Alexandre Kojève and Jean Hyppolite, as the moment when French philosophy shook off the weight of its Cartesian and neo-Kantian heritage, which defined human nature in fundamentally atemporal, individual, and rational terms. Closely aligned with French Republicanism, this tradition had come under attack during the 1930s as intellectuals became increasingly dissatisfied with the "decadence" of the Third Republic. When Alexandre Kojève—a Russian émigré who had studied with Karl Jaspers before coming to Paris—

took over the Hegel seminar at the École Pratique des Hautes Études in 1933, French intellectuals were thus casting about for alternatives to the liberal idealist tradition. Filtered through Kojève's idiosyncratic interpretation, Hegel provided them with a vision of human consciousness that was both socially and historically constituted—one that did not exist for all time as a fixed nature or essence, but was instead progressively *made* in the process of encountering other beings and acting upon the world around it. What Hegel offered, in other words, was an anthropology defined as *anthropogenesis*. It is because of this innovation that historians have looked to the Hegelian revival as the crucible for postwar developments in French philosophy, from Marxism and existentialism, to psychoanalysis and post-structuralism. And indeed, the attendance list for Kojève's seminar reads like a "who's who" of postwar French thought: including avant-garde writers like Georges Bataille and Raymond Queneau; Heidegger's French translator, Henri Corbin; the psychoanalytic theorist Jacques Lacan; and the leading lights of French philosophy, from Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Raymond Aron, to Emmanuel Lévinas and Eric Weil.

What is less often recalled, however, is that Catholics were at the forefront of the Hegelian renaissance in France and profoundly shaped the philosopher's French reception in ways that have been almost entirely ignored by historians. Michael Roth, whose *Knowing and History* remains the standard reference work on French Hegelianism, divides the bulk of its attention between Kojève, Hyppolite, and Weil, as well as the more high-profile participants in Kojève's seminar between 1933 and 1939, who are listed in an appendix to the book. The one name, however, that appears more frequently than virtually any other name on this list—attending every session except the very first—is that of Gaston Fessard, whom Roth mentions only once in passing in the body of the text.[4] And yet, when, during the final session of the seminar, Kojève selected two of people to offer a response to his approach, he chose Raymond Aron and Gaston Fessard. In fact, Kojève told Fessard that "amongst my listeners, you were, without any doubt, one of the most competent and perhaps the only one who, like me, took the [*Phenomenology of Spirit*] 'seriously.'"[5] Nor was Fessard the only Catholic drawn to Hegel in this period; he was simply the most famous of a proliferating group of Catholic Hegelians disenchanted with the ahistorical rationalism of Thomist theology, including Jesuits like Henri Rondet and Henri Niel. That historians have largely ignored these figures owes much to their tendency to read French Hegelianism through the lens of Marxist and existentialist categories, and therefore, to miss the theological questions at the heart of the Hegelian revival in twentieth-century France.[6] In what follows, I instead approach French Hegelianism above all as a movement divided between theistic and atheistic interpretations of Hegel—albeit laden with political implications—which set the terms for the postwar debate over humanism. In other words, the twentieth-century French reception of Hegel in many ways reiterated the battle between "Left" and "Right" Hegelians a century earlier.[7]

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[4] Michael Roth, *Knowing and History: Appropriations of Hegel in Twentieth-Century France* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988).

No two figures exemplified these competing positions better than Fessard and Kojève. Many readers will no doubt be familiar with Kojève's anthropological reading of Hegel, which one of his students described as "'the intellectual *ménage à trois* of Hegel, Marx and Heidegger.'"[8] Above all, Kojève concerned himself with the problem of recognition, which he conceived as the key to anthropogenesis—the process by which the self-conscious subject emerges in and through historical time. This concern led Kojève to fixate upon Hegel's master-slave dialectic, elevating it from a passing phase in Hegel's phenomenology, to the very lynchpin of human history. What drives this process, for Kojève, is the human desire for recognition from another being desirous of the very same recognition, because "man is human only to the extent that he wants to impose himself on another man, to be recognized by him...it is on recognition by this other, that his human value and reality depend."[9] The process of becoming a fully self-conscious human being is therefore inescapably social.

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[5] Alexandre Kojève to Gaston Fessard, 26 June 1935, quoted in *Gabriel Marcel – Gaston Fessard: Correspondance (1934-1971)*, ed. and ann. by Henri de Lubac, Marie Rougier, and Michel Sales (Paris: Beauchesne, 1985), 84.

[6] See, for instance, the account of Kojève in Poster, *Existential Marxism,* ch. 1; or in Ethan Kleinberg, *Generation Existential: Heidegger's Philosophy in France, 1927-1961* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005), ch. 3.

[7] Warren Breckman and John Toews have both demonstrated the centrality of theological questions to the nineteenth-century disputes over Hegelianism. See Warren Breckman, *Marx, the Young Hegelians, and the Origins of Radical Social Theogy: Dethroning the Self* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999); John Edward Toews, *Hegelianism: The Path Toward Dialectical Humanism, 1805-1941* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1980). On the role of theological questions in the twentieth-century reception of Hegel, see Peter Eli Gordon, *Rosenzweig and Heidegger: Between Judaism and German Philosophy* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2003), ch. 2.

[8] Aimé Patri, quoted in Poster, *Existential Marxism,* 34.

But it is also necessarily violent, because these competing desires for recognition cannot initially be squared. Consequently, "the 'first' anthropogenetic action necessarily takes the form of a fight: a fight to the death between two beings that claim to be men, a fight for pure prestige carried on for the sake of 'recognition' by the adversary."[10] Only the combatant who is willing to sacrifice the animal part of his nature, his very instinct for survival, can master his opponent and achieve the recognition he desires; whereas the combatant who chooses self-preservation over freedom is relegated to the status of a slave. Here Kojève adds his distinctive interpretation to this Hegelian dialectic, arguing that the slave in fact emerges from this conflict in a better position than the master, who has risked his life for something that "is not recognition properly so-called" because it is granted under duress by a being who is less than human.[11] Not only this, but the master is henceforth dependent on the labor of the slave and therefore lacks the one tool by which the slave can succeed where the master has failed and raise himself to the level of a human subject. This is the ability to work, to transcend and transform the world that confronts him as a brute given, for "in transforming the world by this work, the Slave transforms himself too, and thus creates the conditions that permit him to take up once more the liberating fight for recognition."[12] "Laborious slavery," Kojève therefore concludes, "is the source of all human, social, historical progress. History is the history of the working Slave."[13]

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[9] Alexandre Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, assembled by Raymond Queneau, ed. by Allan Bloom, and trans. by James H. Nichols (New York: Basic Books, 1969), 13.

[10] Ibid., 11-12.

[11] Ibid., 19.

The political implications of this statement were not lost on Kojève's audience, and his account of the master-slave dialectic was widely interpreted as an allegory for the class struggle when it became public in 1947 with the publication of Raymond Queneau's notes on the seminar. Historians have largely echoed this interpretation, portraying Kojève first and foremost as a Marxist reader of Hegel. Stefanos Geroulanos has recently cast doubt on this narrative, however, by foregrounding the centrality of theological categories within Kojève's work and his significant debts to the orthodox theologian Vladimir Soloviev, in particular.[14] These two positions need not necessarily be at odds, however. Geroulanos is right to point out that when one examines Kojève's own writing (rather than Queneau's second-hand report), religious and theological questions do indeed take center stage. What they reveal is a man who conceived of himself as the inheritor of the "Left" Hegelian tradition and locked in a struggle against Hegel's Catholic interpreters. Although this was first and foremost a theological conflict, it did have important political implications that set the terms for the postwar debate between Catholics and communists.

In the 1930s, the most famous of these interpreters was Gaston Fessard. The Jesuit's lifelong interest in Hegel dates to 1926, and he attributed it in large part to his "disappointment" with the

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[12] Ibid., 29.

[13] Ibid., 20.

[14] Stefanos Geroulanos, *An Atheism that is not Humanist Emerges in French Thought*, ch. 3.

Neo-Scholastic philosophy he and de Lubac were taught at Jersey in the 1920s.[15] If their Suarezian teachers approached philosophy as a "summa of atemporal truths," what attracted Fessard to Hegel was his "sense of the historical and sociological development of all things."[16] It was this historical sensibility which was lacking from the dominant Neo-Scholastic theology of the day and which, as we saw in Chapters 1 and 2, accounts for these Jesuit's fascination with the work of Blondel and Teilhard de Chardin. In fact, Fessard frequently commented on the "striking analogy" between Hegel to Blondel, and set himself the task of "correcting each by the other." [17] For the Jesuit, it was not simply a question of using Hegel to expand the limited horizons of contemporary Catholic theology, for he recognized that the broader intellectual and political culture, from the work of Martin Heidegger and Henri Bergson to the prognostications of Communist intellectuals, was equally consumed with questions of time and historical development. "Today, we are in the presence of a new perspective: the discovery that time and history penetrate all knowledge, natural as well as supernatural," Fessard argued. This new historical consciousness placed Hegel's Catholic readers "in a situation analogous to that which Saint Thomas experienced when Arab philosophy introduced him to Aristotle," Fessard claimed, for the genius of Aquinas was to decouple the "elements of truth" in Aristotle from the "errors of Avicenna and Averroes," the Arab commentators through whom Europeans had rediscovered Aristotle in the twelfth century.[18] What this rather elaborate analogy indicates is that Fessard wished to do for Hegel what Thomas had done for Aristotle: to "return to the source" behind the distortions of its subsequent interpreters—in this case, Marx and the Left Hegelians—in order the better to combat these interpreters. In the process, Fessard hoped to reconcile Hegelianism with Catholic theology in order to develop, as Thomas had done, a "new dogmatic synthesis" that would "render Christianity useful to contemporary man."[19]

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[15] For Fessard's account of his introduction to Hegel, see "Originalité de la philosophie de Hegel et sa signification actuelle" (1947?), Fonds Gaston Fessard, Archives Jésuites de la Province de France [henceforth, AJPF], Vanves, France, 29/G, p. 1; see also Michel Sales, *Gaston Fessard (1897-1978): génèse d'une pensée* (Brussels: Culture et Vérité, 1997), 121.

[16] Fessard, "Originalité de la philosophie de Hegel," 1; 6.

[17] Ibid., 2; Gaston Fessard to Henri de Lubac, 19 October 1934, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 73/C.

[18] Fessard, "Originalité de Hegel," 8; Sales makes much of this analogy in *Gaston Fessard (1897-1978),* 120-1. Averroes was famously condemned by the Church for his "two truths" doctrine—the notion that the truth of faith and the truths of reason could conflict with one another. Critics of the Action Française had used the analogy with Averroes in the 1920s to disparage Catholic followers of Maurras who justified their support for the atheist politician on the grounds that political and religious questions ought to be kept entirely separate. Defenders of the AF instead argued, as Fessard does here, that they were simply following Thomas' example in seeking to "baptize" Maurras in the same way that Thomas had "baptized" Aristotle.

In order to do this, Fessard sought to "correct" the limitations of Hegel's dialectic with the Jew-Gentile dialectic he had derived from St. Paul, discussed in Chapter 4. For the Jesuit, the addition of this second dialect served to complicate rather than replace the master-slave dialectic that had been so central to Fessard's resistance writings, and which, following Kojève, he conceived as the central dynamic in Hegel's *Phenomenology*. For the Jesuit, the Jew-Gentile dialectic added a vertical dimension to the anthropocentric (and rather violent) account of the emergence of human consciousness implicit in the struggle between master and slave. The Pauline dialectic instead raised this encounter beyond the level of a purely immanent struggle for recognition between human beings, and endowed the incarnation of Christ—who had reconciled Jew and Gentile in his person—with a central role in the drama of anthropogenesis. Fessard had first elaborated this dialectic in his 1930s works *Pax Nostra* and *La Main Tendue,* and it is therefore not surprising that these works occasioned his first major dispute with Kojève. The two men had been in correspondence since 1934, when each discovered that the other was working on a French translation of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* at the very same time.[20] Jean Wahl—whose own theistic and Kierkegaardian reading of Hegel was one of the earliest expressions of French Hegelianism in twentieth-century France—had approached Fessard in 1930 and asked him to translate the

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[19] Ibid.; Gaston Fessard, "Hegel, peut-il être baptisé?" (1961), Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 19.1/b, 12.

[20] See esp. the correspondence between Fessard and de Lubac between 1934 and 1936 in Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 73/C and 73/2.

Phenomenology. Although Fessard managed to complete a sizeable portion of the translation, his superiors soon put a stop to the project and made clear their disapprobation for his newfound philosophical interest. Repelled by the pantheist and historicist dimensions of Hegel's thought, they worried that Fessard's concern "to explain without refuting" Hegel was tantamount to endorsing his work.[21] This helps to explain why Fessard held off on publishing any explicit commentary on Hegel until many decades later, and much of this substantial body of work on this subject in fact remains unpublished. Nevertheless, when Fessard learned in 1934 that Kojève had begun his own translation of the *Phenomenology*, he was furious.[22] Although Fessard had initially hoped that the two might collaborate on the project, it soon became clear that their radically divergent interpretations of the text would make any such partnership impossible.

This difference of opinion first became apparent when Kojève reviewed the two works from the mid-1930s in which, as we saw in Chapter Two, Fessard articulated his unique synthesis of Hegel and St. Paul. Although the outbreak of the Second World War prevented the review from ever being published, it nevertheless reveals the fundamental point of contention between the two men—one Kojève wasted no time in pointing out. He read the two works as transparent attempts to draw "modern man" back into the arms of the Church by "making Catholicism profit from the philosophical efforts of Hegel and Marx," something Kojève could not allow to go unchallenged. Identifying himself as a "'Hegelian' and 'Marxist,' which is to say, atheist," Kojève agreed with Fessard that "the theism-atheism problem" constitutes the "center of gravity" of the philosophical and political questions raised by the Jesuit's work.[23] For Fessard, Christianity represents the Hegelian synthesis of Gentile and Jew, such that "any attempt to 'overcome' Christianity leads in fact to a relapse into either the 'Gentile' attitude of subordination to Nature and the empirical given in general, or into the 'Jewish' attitude of eternal and sterile negation." Subtly shifting the terms of Fessard's dialectic, Kojève instead argues that "the entire effort of Hegel, integrally accepted on this point by Marx, aims to prove that that the Gentile thesis and the Judeo-Christian (or 'bourgeois') antithesis can and must be *aufgehoben*." But because the *Aufhebung* always preserves the memory of that which it overcomes, Marx and Hegel can never fully exorcise the ghost of Christianity, and instead inaugurate a "post-Christian synthesis...that is essentially atheist and irreligious."[24] Kojève therefore agrees with Fessard that the Marxist ideal of human liberation "could only be formed on the basis of Christian anthropology." But he insists that, for both Marx and Hegel, the ultimate goal was to decouple this anthropology from the theology to which it was attached, so that man could become a find of finite God.[25] This conflation of Marx and Hegel is of course characteristic of Kojève's Left-Hegelian approach—one that in many ways approximates Feuerbach's anthropology. But it should also be read as a way to disrupt the distinction between Hegel and Marx that was central to Fessard's project. For if Marx's atheism made his philosophy fundamentally irredeemable from a Catholic perspective, Fessard wished to argue that the same was not true of Hegel.

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[21] See the letters from Fessard's superior and the ecclesiastical censor, preventing the publication of a commentary on Hegel that Fessard had penned in 1930: Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 29/E.

[22] See Gaston Fessard to Henri de Lubac, 23 July 1934 and 8 November 1934, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 73/C.

[23] Alexandre Kojève, Review of *Pax Nostra* and *La Main Tendue*, reprinted in *Gabriel Marcel – Gaston Fessard: Correspondance*, 510.

When Kojève invited Fessard and Raymond Aron to offer a response during the final session of his seminar at the EPHE, it became clear that the question of Hegel's relationship to religion had emerged as the central controversy of French Hegelianism. In the course of the seminar, Aron and Fessard had bonded over their shared distaste for the Marxist commitments coloring Kojève's interpretation of Hegel.[26] What they objected to, in particular, was his account of

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[24] Ibid., 510-511.

[25] Ibid., 515.

[26] See Raymond Aron, *Mémoires* (Paris: Julliard, 1983), 523, and *Gabriel Marcel – Gaston Fessard,* 84n4.

Hegel's phenomenology as a closed anthropological circle in which humans could achieve absolute knowledge and build a "universal, homogeneous state," understood by most of Kojève's interpreters as a reference to Marx' classless society. Anticipating his later theory of totalitarianism, Aron objected that the idea of absolute knowledge in both its Hegelian and Marxist iterations was simply a "theological myth" and "a secularized transposition of the forms of Christian reflection."[27] Instead of cleaving to the mythical ideal of a universal state, Aron maintained that the future was necessarily open-ended. But Kojève retorted that to say this was to mimic Hegel's own later retreat from the universalist promise of the *Phenomenology* in favor of the particularity of the Prussian state.

Fessard, for his part, argued that absolute knowledge was indeed a worthwhile ideal, as long as one recognized that it could not be achieved on earth and through human agency alone. Explicitly likening the ideal of the universal, homogeneous state to the mystical body of Christ, Fessard argued that the irruption of the transcendent into time via the Incarnation was the indispensable precondition for the attainment of absolute knowledge. In this sense, divine agency does not "suppress man's freedom," as Kojève assumes, but rather "makes possible the (freedom of man)-God."[28] Although Fessard and Aron thus differ widely on the religious question, they were both equally opposed to Kojève's Marxist and atheist reading of Hegel. In the postwar era, this led them to develop a very similar theory of totalitarianism in order to counteract the Marxist enthusiasms of the postwar period. But already in 1939, by the end of Kojève's celebrated seminar, two very different interpretations of Hegel had emerged in France, and they rather strikingly echoed the politico-theological disputes between Right and Left Hegelians in nineteenth-century Germany.

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[27] This, it should be noted, is Fessard's account of Aron's position and of Kojève's reaction: Gaston Fessard, "Notes preparatoires a une intervention au cours de la derniere 'Lecon' d'A. Kojeve a l'École des Hautes Études 5e session (mai 1939)" Fonds Fessard, 29/E, p. 5; see Aron's own account of his relationship to Kojève in *Mémoires*, 94-101.

[28] Fessard, "Notes préparatoires," 6.

These conflicts re-emerged with even greater force after the war, when the publication of the notes on Kojève's seminar dovetailed with the postwar surge in the prestige of the PCF. Kojève considerably clarified both the theological and political stakes of the dispute in the course of a lengthy review essay on the work of Henri Niel, which appeared in the inaugural issue of Georges Bataille's journal *Critique,* in 1946. By then, Niel had emerged as Hegel's leading Catholic interpreter in France, due in part to the ecclesiastical roadblocks preventing Fessard from publishing on the subject. Kojève's essay on "Hegel, Marx, and Christianity" was evidently directed as much against Fessard as Niel, however, and it suggests that Kojève imagined the battle for the soul of French Hegelianism was above all a battle between Hegel's Catholic and atheist interpreters. As in his review of Fessard's pre-war works, Kojève immediately identified the crux of the disagreement: Niel's theistic reading had profoundly misconstrued what was in fact a "radically atheist philosophy."[29] Rather than simply denying the theistic tendency to interpret *Geist* as God, Kojève instead argued that both of these terms denote the same entity for Hegel: "Man understood as the totality of his historical evolution carried out within nature," or to put it in more overtly Heideggerian terms, "Man-in-the-world."[30] By 1946, the existentialist vogue was in full swing and Kojève here deploys it against his Catholic critics, arguing that humanity is defined by a radical negativity. Only by constantly negating himself and the empirical world that confronts him does the human being rise to the level of self-consciousness, Kojève explains, and it is this foundational process of negation that Hegel has in mind when he uses the word "transcendence." Evidently, this idea of negation is incompatible with a Christian understanding of God, and so Kojève argues that "Hegel's metaphysical anthropology maintains the fundamental categories of Christian theology," such as "transcendence," but transfers them to man instead. Transforming Hegel into a

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[29] Alexandre Kojève, "Hegel, Marx et le christianisme," *Critique* 1 (1946), 340.

[30] Ibid., 340; 345.

Feuerbachian *avant-la-lettre*, Kojève credits him with the realization that "theology was always an unconscious anthropology."[31]

This fundamental divergence over the question of Hegel's theism manifests itself in the very different ways that Niel and Kojève approached the Hegelian corpus. Against Kojève's emphasis on the violent master-slave dialectic, Niel instead privileged the "dialectic of love" that results in the birth of a child; against Kojève's exclusive concern with the problem of recognition, Niel instead stressed the role of mediation, which finds its highest expression in Christ. Like most theistic accounts of Hegel, this relied upon a shift in focus from the more historicist and anthropocentric *Phenomenology* to Hegel's later work on *Logic*, in which Hegel develops the concept of mediation, and which allows for a more robustly metaphysical interpretation of the Hegelian system.[32] Instead, Kojève insists in his review essay that "the evolution of Hegel's thought ends at the moment he discovers (in 1800) the dialectic of Recognition."[33] This is important because the master-slave dialectic in fact constitutes only one, very early stage of the development of consciousness traced in the *Phenomenology*. And yet, in order to deploy this concept in the service of Marxist politics, Kojève must argue that it is *the* fundamental and ongoing conflict of human history. It is here that Kojève provides us with the clearest expression of his political philosophy. The victory of the master over the slave constitutes the birth of political life, he argues, "because the man who is recognized by others in his human dignity and reality, is by that very fact recognized politically: he is a Citizen

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[31] Ibid., 345.

[32] Fessard similarly privileged Hegel's *Logic*, describing it as an "exposition of the thought of God before the creation of nature and the finite spirit." See Gaston Fessard, "Pourquoi je ne suis pas hégélien," Conference Paper (17 January, 1958), Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 19/1b: 12. The question of the relative value of, and relationship between, Hegel's *Phenomenology* and his *Logic* was at the heart of Fessard's dispute with Kojève. See Fessard, "Notes préparatoires."

[33] Kojève, "Hegel, Marx et le christianisme," 351.

(*Bürger*) of the State formed by those who recognize him and whom he recognizes in turn."[34] Like Marx, Kojève maintains that this liberal political order comes into being at the very same moment as private property, for the struggle for recognition is also a struggle for the recognition of property rights. "History," Kojève concludes, " is thus a more or less uninterrupted series of external wars and bloody revolutions." But because it is born of the desire for recognition, history will necessarily come to an end at the moment when universal human recognition is achieved. At this point, "man will be perfectly satisfied by the fact of being a recognized citizen of a *universal and homogeneous* State, or, if one prefers, a classless society encompassing the whole of humanity."[35]

That Kojève offers the clearest expression of his Marxist politics in an article devoted to refuting Catholic Hegelianism should come as no surprise, for theology and politics were just as intertwined for Hegel's twentieth-century interpreters and they were for his nineteenth-century disciples. On the one hand, Niel argued that Christ was the key to understanding Hegel's concept of mediation, and with it his entire philosophy. On the other, Kojève insisted that "the Christ Hegel has in mind is not Jesus," but rather *himself*—the man who was able to incorporate the history of consciousness into his own consciousness in order to reveal the meaning of history once and for all. In other words, Kojève concludes, Hegel's atheism is a "'transchristian' atheism," which "maintains the idea of Christ but applies it to an actual man 'conceived in sin' and radically mortal."[36] This means that there can be nothing fundamentally new after Hegel; if his death brought with it the emergence of "a left and a right Hegelianism, that is also *all* there has been since Hegel."[37] Kojève goes so far as to claim that all political and intellectual developments since the death of Hegel are reducible to the quarrel between Right and Left Hegelianism, of which his own dispute with the Catholic interpreters is merely a case in point. But because "the work of a Hegel interpreter" is also "a work of political propaganda," because the battle between the two schools of Hegelianism will ultimately by decided in the realm of practical action, Kojève is confident that the Left Hegelians will emerge victorious. The stakes, he insists, could not be higher, "for it may well be that the future of the world...depends in the final analysis on the way in which one interprets today the writings of Hegel."[38]

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[34] Ibid., 353.

[35] Ibid., 355-6.

[36] Ibid., 363.

[37] Ibid., 365.

Fessard got a chance to respond to this challenge in 1947, when he reviewed both the newly published text of Kojève's Hegel seminar and Hyppolite's doctoral thesis on the *Phenomenology*.[39] Hyppolite had by then completed the project abandoned by both Fessard and Kojève, when he published his translation of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* between 1939 and 1941. Refusing to come down on one side or other of the politico-theological dispute within French Hegelianism, Hyppolite would play a leading role in mediating between Catholic and secular intellectual circles in the postwar period. Thus, while Fessard professed great admiration for Hyppolite's erudite scholarship on Hegel, he also chided his friend for "refus[ing] to choose between the Hegelian right and left."[40]

Instead, Fessard devoted the bulk of his energies to refuting Kojève's approach and responding to his latest salvo against Niel. Once again, it is Kojève's vision of "a perfectly and consciously atheist Hegel" that elicits the Jesuit's sharpest scorn, but it is also clear that this is no longer an internecine dispute between rival Hegelians. Instead, Fessard suggests that the postwar drama of atheist humanism, in both its Marxist and existentialist variants, can be traced to Kojève's atheist misreading of Hegel:

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[38] Ibid., 366.

[39] Jean Hyppolite, *Génèse et structure de la Phénoménologie de l'esprit de Hegel* (Paris: Aubier, 1946).

[40] Gaston Fessard, "Deux interprètes de la Phénoménologie de Hegel: Jean Hyppolite et Alexandre Kojève," *Études* 255 (December 1947), 369.

> Mr. Kojève makes the master-slave dialectic the essential piece of the whole *Phenomenology*, and after having explained that the radical finitude of man alone can allow us to understand history, he does not hesitate to see Hegel as he who consciously "identified himself with Christ," but in order to reveal to humanity both the inexorable void to which it is destined and the futility of Christianity. In this perspective, where Hegel becomes, not only Feuerbachian and Marxist, but also Heideggerian *avant-la-lettre,* it is undeniable that a significant aspect of the influence of Hegelianism is explained and illuminated.[41]

And yet, Fessard rather gleefully points out that Kojève's efforts to "Marxicize" Hegel are ultimately self-defeating, precisely because "if it is true that Hegel was already 'Marxist,' then all of the critiques Marx directed against Hegel lose their meaning."[42] The Jesuit was only too happy to note that many Marxists had repudiated Kojève's "pseudo-Marxist existentialism" for this very reason and rallied instead behind a theistic reading of Hegel—one vindicated by Niel's recent translation of Hegel's early theological writings. But Fessard was not content simply to demonstrate that Hegel's was a theist philosophy; he also sought to "correct" the limitations of Hegel's theology (which was, after all, a *Protestant* theology) with his own Jew-Gentile dialectic.[43] Fessard, in other words, responded to Kojève's attempts to "Marxicize" Hegel by "Catholicizing" him instead. Doing so, he hoped, would force both Marxism and Hegelianism to "open themselves to a critique that easily reveals their fundamental errors," but would also enable them "to restore a full actuality to the historical as well as eternal truths of Christianity."[44] For Fessard, then, the synthesis of Catholicism and Hegelianism offered the best alternative to the atheist philosophies of the postwar period, but also to the continuing dominance of ahistorical theologies like Neo-Scholasticism.

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[41] Ibid., 370

[42] Ibid., 371.

[43] The French Catholic Hegelians frequently attributed Hegel's limitations to his Protestantism. Fessard, for instance, argued that Protestant subjectivism had prevented Hegel from effecting a true synthesis between the subjective and objective—something that the Catholic idea of the Church as the mystical body of Christ could alone achieve. See Fessard, "Pourquoi je ne suis pas hégélien"; Fessard, "Hegel, peut-il être baptisé?"; and Sales, *Gaston Fessard (1897-19780)*, 122.

[44] Ibid., 373.

In this way, the postwar encounter between Marxism, existentialism, and Catholicism can be traced back to the formative struggle for the soul of Hegelianism in 1930s France. This was not only because Kojève weaved insights from both Marxist and Heidegger into his reading of Hegel, but also because both Marxists and existentialists traced their intellectual genealogy to two of Hegel's most important interlocutors: Marx and Kierkegaard. But above all, it was the all-important religious question that provided the element of continuity between these two sets of debates—a question that twentieth-century French thought had itself inherited from nineteenth-century Germany. Fessard made this clear in an unpublished essay devoted to demonstrating how postwar Marxism and existentialism had emerged out of Hegelianism. "Historically," he explained, "it was the interpretation of [Hegel's] religious philosophy that caused the Hegelian school to rupture into its two branches—right and left. As we shall see, today it is once again the same question that is at the center of all these problems."[45] If the battle between for Hegel's soul between Catholics and atheists had begun to die down by 1947, the battle for Marx' soul was just beginning.

Catholics, Communists, and the Postwar Order

Precisely because the Church and the political Right had been intertwined for so long, the Liberation opened up an extraordinary political vacuum within the French Church by effectively removing the right as a viable political option, at least for a brief time. As with the Action Française crisis in 1926, the effect was to empower the progressive forces within the Church. The "Left

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[45] Gaston Fessard, "Hegel et la philosophie contemporaine," Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 29/3, p. 11.

Catholicism" that reached its high water mark in postwar France, however, was far more radical, more widespread, and more varied than its 1930s iteration, discussed in Chapter 2.[46] It included a remarkable range of activities, from social-democratic party politics to radical new experiments in a working-class apostolate, as well as a range of intellectual positions from a renewed attention to the Catholic social justice tradition to full-throated endorsement of the Communist Party program. This was by no means an exclusively French phenomenon. In Italy, it found particularly radical expression in the *Sinistra Cristiana* movement and, to a lesser extent, in the *Dossetiano* wing of the Christian-Democratic movement.[47] Belgium, the birthplace of specialized Catholic Action, instead shared many of the apostolic initiatives developed in France to minister to the working classes.[48] And in Poland, *Dziś i Jutro* called for a fully-fledged Catholic-Socialist international.[49] Many of these movements emerged out of the resistance to fascism, when Catholics and Communists had fought side-by-side, and many drew at least in part on the intellectual and apostolic innovations of French Catholics.

In France, this resistance fervor produced the first Catholic party to garner significant popular support, even if it eschewed the markings of a confessional party. Where earlier iterations of a Christian Democratic party had met with limited electoral success, the MRP was able to capitalize on the dissolution of the right in the aftermath of Vichy. Consequently, Catholic voters who would traditionally have voted for more conservative parties flocked to the MRP, giving it 25% of the vote in the elections of October 1945 and 28% the following spring. This is rather remarkable given the leftwing tone of the party's inaugural Manifesto, which spoke (albeit vaguely) of revolution and called for "an economy directed by a State freed from the moneyed powers, as well as the nationalization of key industries."[50] Sentiments such as these reflect the MRP's strong trade union base, as well as the bonds forged between Catholics, Communists, and socialists in the ranks of the resistance. The result was a string of coalition governments formed by the MRP, the Socialists (SFIO), and the Communists (PCF), which lasted from the Liberation until 1947. And yet, this initial moment of opening to the left proved short-lived, due to the widening gulf between the MRP leadership—staffed with such stalwarts of the resistance as Georges Bidault, François de Menthon, and Pierre-Henri Teitgen—and the party's far more conservative electoral base.[51] As a result, the MRP began a steady drift to the center that culminated in its break with the PCF and the collapse of *tripartisme* in 1947. Thenceforth, the MRP would position itself within a centrist coalition against the PCF on the left and the RPF, the Gaullist party formed in 1947, on the right. This reconfiguration of Catholic party politics was further reinforced by the existence of two much smaller parties catering to the Catholic Left. Both *Jeune république*, a holdover from the interwar period, and the *Union démocratique et socialiste de la résistance*, the representative of the non-Communist resistance, were dissident leftist parties which cleaved to a vision of social democracy attractive to many Catholics.[52] But these parties never achieved anything like the electoral success of the MRP.

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[46] On this term, see note 661.

[47] On these movements, see Gerd-Rainer Horn, *Western European Liberation Theology: The First Wave (1924-1959)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 120-174; Antonio Parisella, "Christian Movements and Parties of the Left in Italy (1938-1958)," in *Left Catholicism*, 142-173; Nicola Antonetti, *L'ideologia della sinistra cristiana: i cattolici tra Chiesa e communismo (1939-1945)* (Milan: Angeli, 1976).

[48] See Ibid., 116-119; 214-227; Jean-Louis Jadoulle, "The Milieu of Left Wing Catholics in Belgium (1940s-1950s)," in *Left Catholicism,* 102-117.

[49] See Piotr Kosicki, Between "Catechism and Revolution: Poland, France, and the Story of Catholicism and Socialism in Europe, 1878-1958," Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, November 2011, ch. 5.

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[50] "Le Manifeste du M.R.P." (25-26 November 1944), reproduced in Pierre Letamendia, *Le Mouvement républicain populaire. Le M.R.P.: histoire d'un grand parti français* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1995), 65.

[51] See Jean-Claude Delbreil, "Les formes politiques de la démocratie chrétienne en France au vingtième siècle," in *Catholicism, Politics and Society in Twentieth-Century France*, ed. by Kay Chadwick (Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 2000), 135; see also idem., "The French Catholic Left and the Political Parties," in *Left Catholicism,* 45-63.

[52] Ibid., 58-60.

The vibrancy of Left Catholicism in postwar France found expression largely beyond the realm of party politics, then. It spawned new apostolic initiatives that extended but significantly radicalized the efforts of the interwar Catholic Action movement to evangelize the industrial proletariat. These yearnings found expression in the wildly popular *France, pays de mission?* Commissioned by Cardinal Suhard in 1942 and authored by two JOC chaplains, Henri Godin and Yvan Daniel, the book was a dramatic indictment of the abyss separating the Church from the working masses. As a result, the authors warned, "there are entire reaches of human activity...within the proletariat of our great cities, where the Gospel is not being preached, indeed where it cannot be preached."[53] Catholic Action had done little to bridge this gulf, hamstrung as it was by "the current conditions governing the priesthood" and the focus on the parish as the primary unit of Christian life.[54] What was needed, the authors argued, was a more basic kind of missionary community, a "base community" that would be "deeply anchored in the working-class milieu" and operate alongside the parish—what would become the model for the "base ecclesial communities" (CEBs) developed by Latin American liberation theologians in the 1950s and 1960s.[55]

In order to implement this new evangelical approach, Godin and Daniel called for the formation of a clergy independent of the parish—a call soon answered in the form of the Mission de Paris, launched by Cardinal Suhard in July 1943. The mission was reinforced by the new pedagogical approach pioneered at the Mission de France seminary Suhard had established a year earlier, where "Marx was studied alongside St. Thomas" in order to prepare priests for the demands of the domestic missionary field.[56] These projects would implement the blueprint set forth by Godin and Daniel to recalibrate priestly duties and prioritize "first of all evangelization, then the dispensation of the sacraments."[57] Such a missionary vocation, they argued, proceeded directly from the logic of the Incarnation and amounted to a "renewal of the gesture of Christ, who took form and came into this world to save it."[58] Their approach thus stood in stark contrast to the Eucharistic ecclesiology being developed contemporaneously by de Lubac and his friends, with its eschatological orientation and emphasis on the centrality of the sacraments.

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[53] Godin and Daniel, *La France, pays de mission?* (Paris: Éditions Abeille, 1943), quoted in Horn, *Western European Liberation Theology*, 229.

[54] Ibid., 227.

[55] Ibid., 230. On the CEBs, see Todd Hatch, *The Rebirth of Latin American Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), ch. 7; Ondina E. González, *Christianity in Latin America: A History* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 249-54.

The incarnational solidarity invoked by Godin and Daniel soon found much more radical expression at the Mission de Paris, where some began to feel that true solidarity with the working class required priests to share in the conditions of their labor. Thus was born the controversial "worker-priest" movement.[59] It owed much to the context of the war, when priests and seminarians were included, whether by choice or not, in the ranks of the young French men drafted to work in German factories under the *Service du travail obligatoire*. Emboldened by this experience and the example of priests like the Dominican Jacques Loew, who became a dockworker in Marseille in order to observe the conditions of the working poor, some began to argue that priests were called by the very logic of the Incarnation to be "'a worker amongst the workers, just as Christ was a man amongst men.'"[60] But as these priests became increasingly engaged in the life and labor of the working class, they were also drawn into the Communist-dominated trade unions and participated in the strikes of 1947 and 1950. As a result, the movement aroused growing suspicion from the Vatican, fearful that the worker-priests were being distracted from their sacerdotal vocation and had fallen prey to the seductions of Communism. With the death of Cardinal Suhard in 1949, the worker-priests lost their most powerful defender, and by 1954, the Mission de Paris had closed its doors and French priests were forbidden from engaging in factory labor.

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[56] Horn, *Western European Liberation Theology*, 243.

[57] Ibid., 231.

[58] Godin and Daniel, *France, pays de mission?*, 18.

[59] The classic work on this subject remains Émile Poulat, *Naissance des prêtres-ouvriers* (Paris: Casterman, 1965); see also Oscar Arnal, *Priests in Working-Class Blue: The History of the Worker-Priests (1943-1954)* (New York: Paulist Press, 1986); Horn, *Western European Liberation Theology,* ch. 5. On the Dominican involvement with the worker-priests, see François Leprieur, *Quand Rome condamne: dominicains et prêtres-ouvriers* (Paris: Cerf, 1989); *Prêtres-ouvriers: 50 ans d'histoire et de combats*, ed. by René Poterie and Louis Jeusselin (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2001).

[60] Quoted in Philippe Chenaux, *L'Église catholique et le communisme en Europe (1917-1989)* (Paris: Cerf, 2009), 191.

And yet, the worker-priests never numbered more than about one hundred in France. Far more widespread was the *Mouvement populaire des familles*, which began as an offshoot of the Catholic Action movement catering to members of the *Jeunesse ouvrière chrétienne* who had come of age. The movement gathered steam under Vichy, as its vision of the family as "the basic building-block of society" harmonized with the ideology of the National Revolution.[61] The MPF initially focused its efforts on helping working-class families to secure their most basic material needs—housing, heating, food, and assistance for the families of POWs—in the midst of wartime scarcity. As a result of these efforts, the MPF emerged from the war as the primary Catholic social movement in Francophone Europe, boasting 158,000 members in France alone.[62] What began as a relatively traditional charitable operation, however, soon underwent a marked radicalization in the context of the Liberation, when housing and nutrition became potent political issues. In this context, the MPF aligned itself with the Communist-dominated trade unions and increasingly dropped the religious references from its publications. As the Jesuit advisor to the Belgian MPF explained, "the MPF draws its program and its action from that powerful current of working class emancipation which is gripping the popular masses today," a program that "must be directed by the workers for the workers," rather than by the Church.[63] As in the case of the worker-priests, then, the imperative of working-class solidarity increasingly conflicted with, and indeed trumped, the apostolic impetus that had initially given birth to the MPF. In this respect, the apostolic and social movements of the postwar French Church mark a clear departure from the goals of interwar Catholic Action, even if they emerged from its ranks.

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[61] Fourth National Council of the *Ligue ouvrière chrétienne*, quoted in Bruno Delbiez, "Left-wing Catholicism in France from Catholic Action to the Political Left: The *Mouvement Populaire des Familles,*" in Horn and Gerard, *Left Catholicism*, 72. On the MPF, see also Horn, *Western European Liberation Theology*, ch. 4; Denis Pelletier and Jean-Louis Schlegel, eds., *À la gauche du Christ: les chrétiens de gauche en France de 1945 à nos jours* (Paris: Seuil, 2012), 142-7; 163-6.

[62] Horn, "Left Catholicism," 38.

These apostolic initiatives were supported and reinforced by a new willingness on the part of Catholic intellectuals and theologians to engage in a sympathetic dialogue with Marxism.[64] Leading this new wave were laypeople such as André Mandouze, who had joined *Témoignage chrétien* in 1943 and took over the editorial reigns of the journal after the Liberation, as well as Emmanuel Mounier and Jean Lacroix at *Esprit*. This might come as something of a surprise, given Mounier's earlier fascination with the National Revolution, but it must be recalled that Mounier was above all anti-liberal and anti-capitalist. As the 1940s progressed, he drew *Esprit* ever further to the left, holding fast to the possibility of a fruitful dialogue between Catholics and Communists, for Communism contained "certain truths capable of being detached from that which we do not accept."[65]

In addition to these lay voices, a number of Dominican priests quickly singled themselves out as the vanguard of the Catholic intellectual engagement with Communism. These included Maurice Montuclard, who in 1936 launched Jeunesse de l'Église as a project to renovate the

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[63] Philippe de Soignie, *Mystique chrétienne et ascension ouvrière,* quoted in Horn, "Left Catholicism," 39.

[64] For a summary of these intellectual movements, see Michael Kelly, "Catholicism and the Left in Twentieth-Century France," in *Catholicism, Politics, and Society,* 153-9; Frédéric Gugelot, "Intellectuels chrétiens entre marxisme et Évangile," in *À la gauche du Christ,* 203-226.

[65] Emmanuel Mounier to Gaston Fessard, 22 January 1949, reprinted in "Correspondance Mounier-Fessard," *Études* (March 1949), 392. On the leftward trajectory of *Esprit,* see Michel Winock, *Histoire politique de la revue Esprit (1930-1950)* (Paris: Seuil, 1975); Goulven Boudic, *Esprit, 1944-1982: métamorphoses d'une revue* (Paris: IMEC, 2005). Jean Lacroix played an important role in this shift and sought to open a dialogue with Communism in such works as *Socialisme?* (Paris: Éditions du Livre Français, 1946).

Church's theological and apostolic tools in order to open them up to the working class.[66] Its most famous adherent was Louis Althusser, who was a leading voice for Catholic-Communist dialogue before his break with the Church in the early 1950s.[67] Another leading example of the Dominican engagement with the Left was Économie et Humanisme, launched by Henri Desroche and Louis-Joseph Lebret in 1941. It was a religiously-inspired economic think-tank with a communitarian ethos, which would later become a significant force in development theory and Third-Worldism.[68] Finally, and most importantly, Marie-Dominique Chenu and several other of the Dominicans usually associated with the "nouvelle théologie" also became increasingly vocal defenders of Catholic engagement on behalf of the working class—a position Chenu would theorize in his *Theology of Labor* in 1955.[69] Underlying these various manifestations of Left Catholicism, as Gerd-Rainer Horn and Philippe Chenaux have shown, was a commitment to the Thomist distinction between the spiritual and temporal orders. And although Jacques Maritain never involved himself in these movements, Catholics on the left frequently invoked his *Integral Humanism* in order to justify working with Communists towards shared political goals despite their differences in the spiritual order.[70]

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[66] See Thierry Kieck, *Jeunesse de l'Église, 1936-1955: aux sources de la crise progressiste en France* (Paris: Karthala, 2004).

[67] On Althusser's involvement with Jeunesse de l'Église, see Yann Moulier Boutang, *Louis Althusser: une biographie,* vol. 1 (Paris: Grasset, 1992), 276-341.

[68] See Denis Pelletier, *Économie et humanisme: de l'utopie communautaire au combat pour le Tiers-Monde (1941-1966)* (Paris: Cerf, 1996). Desroche wrote a controversial apologetic on Marxism in 1949, titled *Signification du marxisme* (Paris: Éditions Ouvrières, 1949).

[69] Marie-Dominique Chenu, *Pour une théologie du travail* (Paris: Seuil, 1955). These theologians, especially Chenu and Féret, played a particularly important role in the worker-priest movement. See Marie-Dominique Chenu, "Le sacerdoce des prêtres-ouvriers," *La Vie intellectuelle* (February 1954), 175-181; Leprieur, *Quand Rome condamne,* passim. On Chenu's theology of labor and relationship to the Mission de France, see Christophe Potworowski, *Contemplation and Incarnation: The Theology of Marie-Dominique Chenu* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), ch. 4.

[70] Montuclard, it should be noted, was an important exception to this rule, as he firmly rejected any Church-world dualism.

“France, Take Care Not to Lose Your Freedom!”

We are now in a position to understand the furor that Gaston Fessard unleashed when he published an uncompromising attack on the Communist Party in 1946, at the moment when the fellow-feeling between Catholics and Communists was at its height. Fessard had fired the opening salvo of the Christian resistance to fascism in the form of “France, Take Care not to Lose your Soul,” published as the inaugural *Cahier du Témoignage chrétien* in 1941. As we have seen, the editorial board of the clandestine resistance journal began to fracture almost as soon as Allied boots had landed on French soul. No longer united by the pre-eminent goal of battling Nazism, a split emerged between those who believed that the journal’s anti-fascist stance should translate into a postwar program of solidarity with the working class, and those who believed that such a program would violate the journal’s pre-eminently spiritual mission. The split tended to pit the Jesuits who had founded the *Cahiers*—Pierre Chaillet, de Lubac, and Fessard—against the laypeople who had come on board in 1943 to launch the *Courriers du Témoignage chrétien*. But it was not until late-1945, when Fessard brought the manuscript for *France Take Care Not to Lose Your Freedom* to *Témoignage chrétien*, that these differences reached a point of no return.

Fessard was entirely explicit about the connection between his two “France, prends garde” texts—the first directed against Nazism, the second against Communism and the French Communist Party in particular. It was precisely because of the “inherent likeness, beyond every surface opposition” between Communism and Nazism that Fessard felt the need to warn the people of France about the dangers of an ideology that “currently threatens our country every bit as much as Nazism did in 1941.”[71] The structure of Fessard’s anti-Communist tract therefore replicated that of his celebrated resistance pamphlet, although it was roughly ten times longer than its anti-fascist equivalent.

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[71] Gaston Fessard, *France, prends garde de perdre ta liberté* (Paris: Éditions du Témoignage chrétien, 1946), 11; 10.

The first half of the text, devoted to theoretical questions, constitutes an elaborate rejoinder to postwar Communist intellectuals who presented the PCF as the patriotic and humanist party *par excellence* and maintained that they were open to working with Christians. But Fessard did not simply approach these questions from the perspective of Catholic theology. Instead, he mobilized the logic of the dialectic he had learned from Hegel in order to elaborate a "truly immanent" critique of Marxism based on its own principles.[72] This might seem curious given the Jesuit's claim that no element of the Marxist system escapes the poison of atheism—that "intrinsic perversion" which vitiates Marxism from within and ensures that the activities of the Communist, even when directed towards the most laudable of ends, produce the very opposite of their intended effect. But just as the venom of a snake can be used to create its own anti-venom, Fessard's goal was to "use the poison of the Marxist dialectic itself...against the venom of atheism."[73] To do this, he deployed a dialectical method derived from Hegel's *Logic,* according to which every concept taken to its extreme invariably passes into its opposite. Using this logic, Fessard successively shows how the Communist Party's apparent openness to Christianity invariably degenerates into anti-Christianity, its patriotism into treason, and its humanism into inhumanity.

A closer examination of Fessard's rejoinder to Marxist humanism illustrates how this method functioned in practice. The Jesuit was responding first and foremost to Communist intellectuals such as Roger Garaudy, who turned to Marx's early writings on alienation in order to move beyond a strict materialism and present Communism as the authentic heir to the humanist tradition. Fessard was particularly concerned that some Christians had been seduced by this logic, which prevented them from grasping that Communism was just as corrosive to the dignity of the human person as Nazism. To demonstrate this, Fessard returned to precisely these early writings, in which Marx had described the end of history as the "resolution of the conflict between man and nature and between man and man."[74] Fessard pointed out that this "mystique" of the end of history, upon which Garaudy and others sought to build a Communist morality, was palpably at odds with the claim advanced by other Communists (and indeed by Marx himself, in his later writings) that Marxism constituted a rational system grounded in "'the continuous progress of science and technology.'"[75] Fessard here points to a key tension within the postwar PCF between proponents of Marxist humanism and those who favored a stricter materialism and who would eventually win out after 1947. But he also reiterates one of the key elements of his pre-war critique of Kojève's atheist Hegelianism: the tension between a faith in indefinite progress and notion of an end of history. "Communism," he argues, "can be either the true end of man's conflicts with man and with nature, or a continuous progress toward their resolution, but it cannot be both at the same time."[76] Unable to secure the link between historical progress and the reconciliation that would come at the end of history, Communism simply projected this end into an ever-receding future, while using it to justify all manner of violence, deceit, and inhumanity in the present. "By launching man in pursuit of a constantly receding limit," Fessard concluded, "Marxist humanism proves itself incapable of truly liberating him."[77]

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[72] Ibid., 21.

[73] Ibid., 17.

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[74] Karl Marx, "Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844," in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, ed. by Robert Tucker (New York: Norton, 1978), 84.

[75] Fessard, *France, prends garde,* 132. Fessard is here citing René Maublanc, the editor of the Communist journal *La Pensée.*

[76] Ibid., 135.

[77] Ibid., 136.

This inability to square the logic of historical progress with the end of history followed implacably, Fessard claimed, from the atheism of the Marxist worldview. It lacked what the Christian possessed in the form of the Incarnation and the sacraments—a nexus between historical time and the end of history; between material nature and human spirit. If Communism, like Nazism, "takes on the appearance of a religion" resembling Christianity, this is because Christianity alone can resolve the dialectical tensions within Marxism itself.[78] But as long as the Communist denied this logic and cleaved to his atheism, he would never be able to achieve the reconciliation between man and nature that Marx had promised and the mystical body of Christ would fulfill. Absent this realization, Fessard maintained, the reconciliation between man and nature that Communism promised would invariably degenerate into man's absorption within an impersonal, inhuman nature. For Fessard, this was evident in the way Marxist rationalism yoked human perfectibility to scientific progress and approached the human being as a scientific object like any other. By treating "human history as a fragment of natural history," the effect was "definitively to reduce man to the level of an animal or a thing."[79] In contrast to the Christian who approaches history as "the double movement by which God becomes man in order for man to become God," then, "for the communist, on the contrary, it is '*nature* (which) *becomes man*' in order for man to become nature."[80] The result of this inversion, Fessard concluded, was to sanction all manner of inhumanity in the name of Marxist humanism. Once Christ has been rejected as the only means to the divinization of the human race, "man must choose for himself another means within 'nature' to realize his project of a Humanity-

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[78] Ibid., 144.

[79] Ibid., 156.

[80] Ibid., 150.

God. We already know where this has led for those who chose the master Race. The result must be the same for those who prefer the messianic Class," Fessard warned.[81]

In addition to showing how Marxist humanism invariably negates itself, Fessard devoted the bulk of the book to undermining the PCF's much-vaunted patriotic claims. Having appointed itself the official party of the "patriotic resistance," PCF support was at an all-time high when Fessard wrote *France prends garde*. Drawing upon his own resistance credentials, the Jesuit was therefore keen to remind his compatriots that the Communists had only entered the resistance after Hitler invaded the Soviet Union in 1941 and abrogated the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact. For the Jesuit, this was proof that the loyalty of the Communist rested above all with the Soviet Union—the country in which Socialism was incarnated—and not with France. Far from being the party of the "patriotic resistance," in other words, the PCF would always subordinate French interests to those of the Soviet Union. Here, Fessard revives the concept of the "slave-prince" he had used to denounce the false legitimacy of the Vichy regime during the war. It was precisely because Pétain could not lay claim to full sovereignty and instead remained beholden to the occupying power, Fessard had argued in 1942, that the French people could legitimately resist his regime. In 1946, the Jesuit applied this very same logic to the PCF, arguing that "between its members and the regime in Moscow there exists a relationship of dependence at least as close as the one that linked the government of Vichy to the regime in Berlin."[82] In both cases, Fessard concluded, the rhetoric of patriotism hides a reality that is anything but patriotic.

But coming, as it did, at the height of the postwar Catholic opening to the Left, Fessard's book scandalized and alienated many of his erstwhile allies from the spiritual resistance. Nowhere was this conflict more painfully pronounced than within the editorial team of *Témoignage chrétien* itself, when Chaillet decided to publish Fessard's book through the newly established Éditions du Témoignage chrétien in October 1945. The decision met with stiff resistance from the younger members of the editorial staff that had taken charge of the journal following the liberation. Led by André Mandouze, they objected that the work in question "would not fail to put us in complete contradiction" with the journal's existing editorial line, which was committed to bridging the abyss between the Church and the working class—a project Fessard's polemic would certainly undermine.[83] The disagreement quickly sharpened into a conflict between those, like Fessard, who refused to compromise on the incompatibility between Church doctrine and Communist ideology, and those who felt that the particular historical conjuncture and the interests of evangelizing the working class required a more charitable attitude, particularly given how many Communists had fought valiantly in the ranks of the resistance. This split took shape largely along generational lines, pitting the Jesuits who had founded *Témoignage chrétien* against "a certain number of laypeople who, though no doubt less competent on the terrain of doctrine, are, because of our estate, in greater contact with temporal realities."[84] They worried that Fessard's anticommunist tract would unwittingly play into the hands of the journal's political enemies and reinforce the longstanding association between the Church and right-wing politics. Fessard, on the other hand, warned that by taking too soft a position on Communism, the Church risked repeating the mistake "that we are reproached for having made in the case of fascism."[85] While Mandouze accused Fessard of placing himself "on terrain that is no longer Christian, but political," Fessard characterized his approach as a "Christian and spiritual anticommunism with political effects," and maintained that "no Christian witness [*témoignage chrétien*] can avoid this politics...precisely because the act of bearing witness takes place within a history."[86] Turning Mandouze's accusation back against its author, Fessard accused him and his allies of conflating religion and politics by placing *Témoignage chrétien* exclusively on the side of the working class.

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[81] Ibid., 166.

[82] Ibid., 271.

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[83] André Mandouze, *Mémoires d'outre-siècle. Tome I: d'une résistance à l'autre* (Paris: Éditions Viviane Hamy, 1998), 157. Mandouze, in his memoirs, claims that this postwar line represented the authentic legacy of Yves de Montcheuil's resistance writings.

[84] André Mandouze, "Notes à l'usage de quelques Pères sur la question du communisme," undated, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, dossier 3.24/2. On the nature of these divisions, see also Gaston Fessard to Pierre Chaillet, 20 November, 1945, ibid.

[85] Quoted in Frank Emmanuel to Gaston Fessard, 16 November, 1945, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, dossier 3.24/2.

Ultimately, both sides lost out. Fessard's book was shelved in response to the objections of his critics, while the conflict convinced Mandouze that the journal no longer reflected his own desire for "a constructive coexistence with the Communists."[87] In November 1945, he stepped down from his position as editor-in-chief of *Témoignage chrétien* and took up a teaching post in Algiers. Meanwhile, Fessard revised his manuscript and with Mandouze no longer holding up its publication, the publishing house associated with the journal released the book in May of 1946. It elicited an immediate backlash from those within the organization who had sided with Mandouze and who objected in particular to the book's dedication to "the memory of the executed and the deported who died in Germany, and to all the militants of the clandestine teams of *Témoignage chrétien*." Following the book's publication, disgruntled editors and militants addressed a collective letter to Fessard and Chaillet objecting to such an appropriation of their wartime struggle. The authors expressed their respect for Fessard's first *France prends garde* and his contribution to the struggle against Nazism, but declared "with great sadness that we must now part company. Since *France, Take Care Not to Lose Your Freedom,* there no longer exists within the team at *T.C.* the unity that we had found during the Resistance."[88] This split within the ranks of the former spiritual resistance was the first in a set of increasingly bitter conflicts within the postwar French Church over the "Communism question."

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[86] Mandouze, "Notes à l'usage de quelques Pères"; Gaston Fessard, "Reflexions sur la note à l'usage de quelques Pères de A. Mandouze," Fonds Fessard, AJPF, dossier 3.24/2.

[87] Mandouze, *Mémoires d'outre-siècle*, 158.

Fessard's book provoked far more than an internecine dispute within the ranks of *Témoignage chrétien;* it quickly drew fire from both Catholic and non-Catholic intellectuals alike. As one might expect, *France prends garde* was pilloried in the Communist press, where the Jesuit was held up as an apologist for Pétain and for a collaborationist Church that is "always the best line of defense (because the most hypocritical) for social conservatism."[89] Rallying to the defense of Marxist humanism, *Action* denounced Fessard for privileging the interests of the nation over those of the human race, and for embracing an anti-Communism that is "the ultimate fortress of capitalism" and invariably "leads to fascism."[90]

The most interesting response from the Marxist perspective came from the pen of Alexandre Kojève, who reviewed *France prends garde* in the same issue of *Critique* in which he had offered a lengthy rejoinder to Catholic Hegelianism. Giving credit where it was due, Kojève praised Fessard for his deep understanding of Marxism, which far exceeded that of the Communists themselves. "If he had wished," Kojève pointed out, "the author would certainly be by far the best theorist of Marxism in France."[91] But what he could not allow was Fessard's attempt "to exploit the

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[88] Fonds Fessard, AJPF, dossier 3.24/2. The letter was signed by François Bédarida, Marie-Louise Blum, Françoise Chauvet, Marcel Colin, Suzanne Duchemin, William Lapierre, Micheline Lechat, André Mandouze, Renée Mély, Jean Peyraube, Sarthoulet. See also the account of this split in Renée Bédarida, *Pierre Chaillet: témoin de la résistance spirituelle* (Paris: Fayard, 1988), 260-264.

[89] Article in *La Pensée,* July-September 1946, preserved in Fonds Fessard, AJPF, dossier 3.24/4. Pierre Hervé leveled a similar charge against Fessard and the Church's wartime record in *L'Humanité,* 12 June 1946.

[90] Marcel Moiroud, "Lettre ouverte au R.P. Fessard, auteur de *France, prends garde de perdre ta liberté,*" *Action* (15 July 1946) preserved in Fonds Fessard, AJPF, dossier 3.24/4.

[91] Alexandre Kojève, "Christianisme et Communisme," *Critique* (1946), 308.

Hegelian discovery of the dialectic in the service of Christianity."[92] In this way, the debate between Kojève and Fessard over Communism replicated the terms of the battle between Catholic and atheist Hegelianism. In the case of Marxism, however, the two philosophers could happily agree that it was atheist through and through. But what irritated Kojève was the fact that Fessard had claimed to use the dialectic against Marxism itself and in the service of Catholic apologetics. In response to the Jesuit's claim that atheism put the Marxist philosophy of history irretrievably at odds with itself, Kojève retorted that "the dialectic is bound to finitude" and to "the decisive, definitive, and irreducible value of historical action."[93] Such a model, by definition, precluded both the idea of Christ's resurrection and the transhistorical claims of the Christian faith. "The notion of a Christian or theological dialectic," Kojève concluded, "is therefore a contradiction in terms."[94] Jean Hyppolite, who shared with Fessard a more theistic reading of Hegel, naturally responded rather differently to *France prends garde.* He instead congratulated Fessard on "the beautiful pages you devote to the problem of the Humanism (Transcendence and Incarnation) which Marxism wishes to be and which leads ultimately to a fall back into nature...all of this derives from the ambiguity of Hegel's *Phenomenology*."[95] The theological battle between France's "right" and "left" Hegelians thus found its logical extension in the postwar debate over Communism.

But, as the internal dissensions within the ranks of *Témoignage chrétien* suggest, this was far more than an age-old quarrel between Catholics and irreligious Communists. It also brought to the surface a growing tension within the progressive wing of the postwar Church. *France, prends garde* rapidly drew fire, not only from Communists and their fellow-travelers, but also from the leading voices of the postwar Catholic Left, including Marie-Dominique Chenu and the *Esprit* team. Mandouze was the first to respond, signaling the reasons for his departure from *Témoignage chrétien* in an editorial for *Temps présent*. Rehearsing the substance of his disagreement with Fessard, Mandouze bemoaned the way certain Catholics had transformed the merely "provisional and methodological atheism" of Marxist philosophy into a pretext "preventing [Catholics] from associating for *practical* purposes with this movement of the liberation of beings and this call for justice which are at the very heart of communism."[96]

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[92] Ibid., 308.

[93] Ibid., 308-9

[94] Ibid., 309.

[95] Jean Hyppolite to Gaston Fessard, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, dossier 3.24/3.

Mounier made a similar argument when he reviewed Fessard's book in the pages of *Esprit*. Like Mandouze, Mounier insisted that the atheism of the Communist Party should not prevent Christians from "adopting the majority of its political and economic positions and establishing practical alliances with it."[97] Despite its "radically anti-Christian inspiration," Mounier maintained that the true enemy was the "germ" of atheism and not "the bearer of germs." "A Christian can therefore contribute even a broad collaboration to the communist program," Mounier concluded, but he must do so "obliquely" and remain vigilant about the danger to his faith.[98] Mounier therefore disputed Fessard's claim that "atheism can only be a permanent source of inhumanity."[99] He remained open to the possibility of a genuine Marxist humanism that would move beyond strict materialism and allow a space for human freedom and subjectivity, such as Sartre sought to elaborate. In arguing for the legitimacy of Catholic collaboration with an atheist political system, however, Mounier and Mandouze reiterated many of the arguments that supporters of the Action

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[96] André Mandouze, "Le jeu de cache-cache," *Temps présent* (21 December 1945), preserved in Fonds Fessard, AJPF, dossier 3.24/4.

[97] Emmanuel Mounier, "Récents critiques du communisme," *Esprit* (October 1946), 476.

[98] Ibid.

[99] Ibid., 478.

Française had made in the 1920s. By distinguishing the theoretical atheism of the Communist Party from its laudable practical goals, they sought to carve out an autonomous space for political action that would be independent of doctrine. And much as Catholic royalists had responded to the Vatican condemnation of the AF in 1926, Mounier denounced Fessard for drawing "political judgments...that are not the purview of the theologian."[100]

The publication of *France prends garde* thus brought to the surface emerging tensions within the postwar French Church between those who, like Mounier, Mandouze, Lacroix, and Chenu, were open to some engagement with leftwing politics, and those who refused any such collaboration. The Jesuit wing of the "nouvelle théologie," including de Lubac, Chaillet, and Jean Daniélou, found themselves in the latter camp. But even they had some reservations about Fessard's polemic. Daniélou and Chaillet both expressed "reservations about the text," specifically concerning its tone and timing, as well as about the "excessive parallel" Fessard had established between Nazism and Communism.[101]

De Lubac had communicated precisely the same objections to Fessard upon reading the first draft of *France prends garde,* sparking a quarrel that nearly destroyed their friendship.[102] It was not that de Lubac disagreed with the substance of Fessard's critique, as he never ceased to reaffirm, but that he objected to the way Fessard had gone about it and feared that the sharp tone of the work would alienate some readers and perhaps even play into the hands of the Right.[103] But beyond these stylistic questions, de Lubac did also disagree more fundamentally with Fessard's claim that Communism constituted as great a threat to Catholic values as Nazism had. De Lubac reminded his friend that Communism was very far from imposing the kind of autocratic regime and rigid censorship that the Nazis and their collaborators had recently imposed on France. And at least the Communists were inspired by lofty goals, in contrast to the "at once anti-Christian and anti-human" aims of the Nazis, who had worked to "corrupt the Christian faith from within."[104] But Fessard took this as proof that de Lubac had sided with his critics, and as the negative reactions to *France prends garde* poured in, he grew increasingly hurt by this apparent act of disloyalty on de Lubac's part. "Given how much I have come to value your approval for many years now," Fessard wrote to his friend, "how could I not suffer" when "your criticisms seemed to be...of the same nature as those made by Lacroix, Mounier and in general the [*Esprit* group]." "Having encountered such little consideration and understanding" in the wake of *France prends garde,* "it pained me to lose, or believe I had lost, yours."[105] De Lubac firmly denied any such "community of thought" with the *Esprit* circle and reassured his friend that "I have always been in profound agreement with you on all of the essentials," insisting that his critique of *France prends garde* was intended solely to strengthen it.[106] But this had been their first major disagreement over current events and it would persist through the 1940s.

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[100] Ibid., 477.

[101] Jean Daniélou to Henri de Lubac, 15 October, 1945; see also Pierre Chaillet to Henri de Lubac, 10 October, 1945. Both are quoted in Bédarida, *Pierre Chaillet*, 261-2.

[102] The quarrel has been expertly charted by Frédéric Louzeau in "Gaston Fessard et Henri de Lubac: leur différend sur la question du communisme et du progressisme chrétien (1945-1950)," *Revue des sciences religieuses* 84, 4 (2010), 517-543.

[103] See Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, 12 August, 1945; 14 December, 1945; 26 January, 1946; 31 January, 1946, 6 March, 1948, in Fonds Fessard, AJPF, dossier 73/2-3.

Despite this disagreement, de Lubac's own position on Communism did not differ substantially from Fessard's. De Lubac communicated this position in a lecture at the 1947 Semaines Sociales, which was reproduced in *Études* and then expanded to form part of his 1950 work, *Mystical Confrontations*. In it, de Lubac situated Marxism within a much broader historical process, through which “a new kind of man is being constituted, transforming at one stroke the idea that man has had more or less up to now of himself, of his history, of his destiny.”[107] It is this notion of a “New Man” that the Marxist seeks to monopolize, de Lubac warned, even though it in fact comes to him originally from St. Paul, via Hegel. Here, de Lubac adopts Fessard’s argument that the ideal of a reconciled humanity put forth in Marx’ 1844 manuscripts is nothing other than the Pauline ideal of the body of Christ, which fails to recognize itself as such. As a result, and precisely because it seeks to inaugurate this ideal within historical time, Marxism had “denied the very conditions for it and changed it into a contradictory ideal.”[108] Citing *France prends garde*, de Lubac insisted that Marx’ secularized Christian eschatology rested upon a contradiction. On the one hand, its rested upon a dialectical model of history, conceived as progressive and driven by contradiction, and on the other, it maintained that this history would one day come to an end. “If it is truly a matter, as [the Marxists] claim, of a final end, the clashes of the dialectic are incapable of procuring it,” de Lubac pointed out, because the dialectic “always reverses itself anew...and there is no reason for this movement in a broken line to stop.” Consequently, the dialectic cannot give birth to “definitive harmony” and “universal reconciliation” because “the nondialectical will never come from it...all that claims to be definitive thus appeals to a principle that is not dialectical, a Yes that is not merely the No of a No.”[109] Christian eschatology, on this analysis, is actually far more realistic than the utopian vision of a historical dialectic that simply comes to an end of its own accord and resolves all forms of alienation without recourse to any external agency.

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[104] Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, 12 August ,1945, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, dossier 73/2.

[105] Gaston Fessard to Henri de Lubac, 21 January, 1948, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, dossier 73/3.

[106] Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, 15 January, 1948 and 26 January, 1948, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 73/3.

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[107] This essay from *Affrontements mystiques* is translated and reprinted in the English edition of *The Drama of Atheist Humanism,* and it is this version which is cited here: Henri de Lubac, “The Search for a New Man,” in *The Drama of Atheist Humanism,* trans. by Anne Englund Nash (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1995), 402.

[108] Ibid., 434.

[109] Ibid., 442-3.

This impasse within Marxist philosophy held important implications for the humanism then in vogue amongst Communist intellectuals. Returning to an argument he had made in *Catholicism*, de Lubac pointed out that Marx' radical historicism prevented him from offering a robust account of what a reconciled humanity would actually look like—one capable of justifying the sacrifice of human life in the present. What Marxism could offer was a vision of history in which an unending parade of human generations successively passed away, each called upon to sacrifice itself for the greater good of its successors. The effect, de Lubac argued, was to instrumentalize "real persons" in the service of a "chimerical Humanity" that is nothing but a screen for an impersonal "'super-society without heart or face.'"[110] Marxist humanism, constantly deferred and "postponed in its achievement, thus comes to disappear in thought itself."[111] Just as Fessard had done in *France prends garde*, de Lubac thus sought to show how Marxism's humanist pretensions invariably degenerate into, and are used to justify, the worst forms of inhumanity. And not surprisingly, he looked to Christianity as the only force capable of redeeming the current yearning for a "New Man," precisely because it did not confine itself to a purely immanent horizon. For the only "New Man" capable of overcoming alienation is the "'New Man' whom Saint Paul described, immortal and incorruptible, which presupposes the whole mystery of the Man-God" and which cannot be the product of a purely immanent or natural process.[112] What is required is the "irruption of a wholly different principle" into historical time, one that is "neither an advance, a discovery, further progress, but a passage beyond all progress—and without which all progress still leaves man his misery."[113]

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[110] Ibid., 448. De Lubac is here quoting Teilhard de Chardin.

[111] Ibid.

[112] Ibid., 467.

[113] Ibid., 466.

Jean Daniélou echoed these sentiments very closely the following year, in a succession of "dialogues" he published on the subject of Marxism, existentialism, Protestantism, Judaism, and Hinduism.[114] The theologians devoted by far the longest of these essays to Marxism and to refuting Marxist humanism in particular. Like Fessard, Daniélou returned to the young Marx in order to explain the genesis of Marxist humanism, but also to show how the vision of human agency that emerges from these early works is at odds with the strict materialism and historical determinism of Marx' mature philosophy. Unlike Fessard, however, Daniélou granted that Marxism had not been a wholly negative force. By recalling that man "is an essentially social being," Marx and his successors had helped Christians to rediscover the social dimension of their own faith, which had become obscured in Marx' own day by the triumph of individualism.[115] Daniélou likewise acknowledged that Marx was right to insist on the importance of material well-being, without which no spiritual life is possible. But in the process, he argued, Marx merely "defines the conditions for a universal humanism; not this humanism itself."[116] Unburdened by the moral relativism, materialism and atheism that "radically compromised" Marxist humanism, Christianity alone could provide the key to this universal humanism precisely because it was not bound to historical time and to a particular political project. Turning Marx' base-superstructure model on its head, Daniélou argued that, "for [the Christian] economic reality is nothing but the superstructure, the epiphenomenon—and that reality itself, the infrastructure, is the edification of the Kingdom of God."[117] As a result being "engaged in a different history," the Christian stands in a critical relationship to all political and economic formations, judging them solely in terms of whether they foster or mutilate human dignity.

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[114] Jean Daniélou, *Dialogues avec les marxistes, les existentialistes, les protestants, les juifs, l'hindouisme* (Paris: Le Portulan, 1948).

[115] Ibid., 46.

[116] Ibid., 42-3.

[117] Ibid., 61.

In making this claim, Daniélou was very clearly intervening in the contemporary battle for humanism that pitted Catholics against Communists and existentialists. In fact, he explicitly framed the essay as a rejoinder to Pierre Hervé, the Communist intellectual who had opined that "'religious humanism seems to me as contradictory as atheist Catholicism.'"[118] The Jesuit instead distinguished this atheist definition of humanism, which treats the relationship between man and God as one between competing sovereigns, from a more robust humanism that "guarantees the value of man and exalts it by opening it onto the divine infinite."[119] "The acceptance of God in no way destroys the greatness of man," Daniélou concluded. Instead, "if there is something that is demeaning for man, it is to be subordinated to that which is inferior to him. Thus, to subordinate the human person to nature or society is to degrade it. But the dignity of man in no way requires that there be nothing above him."[120] It is a petty humanism indeed, Daniélou remarked, which cannot tolerate any greatness outside of man and is driven by resentment and jealousy of God's power.

Ultimately, then, Daniélou and de Lubac arrived at a remarkably similar evaluation of the limits of Marxist humanism as Fessard had put forward in *France prends garde*, even if they couched this evaluation in far less polemical language and acknowledged that Marxism had some redeeming features. Above all, the three Jesuits were concerned to warn Catholics about the dangers of working with the Communists, even if only for the purposes of shared practical goals. Addressing "certain Christians [who] think they can reconcile a theoretical Christianity with a practical Communism," Daniélou reminded them that Marx had always maintained the interdependence of theory and praxis.[121] If some Catholics had fallen into this trap, de Lubac suggested that it was precisely because

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[118] Ibid., 34.

[119] Ibid.

[120] Ibid., 64.

[121] Ibid., 54.

Marxism claimed to constitute a kind of science. This helped to fuel the misapprehension that "the believer can adopt it entirely, adopt at least all that, in it, relates to the 'temporal,' even if it means extending it, or correcting it, if need be, on the level of metaphysics." "This is nevertheless a great error," de Lubac insisted, likening it to the error that Maurras' followers had made in believing they could adopt his social and political program without taking on board his atheism in the process.[122] Repeating the argument he had made against the Action Française in the 1920s and Nazism in the 1930s and 1940s, de Lubac now affirmed that it was impossible to isolate atheism from the other elements of the Marxist worldview. "Marxism is a complete doctrine," he insisted; "its 'temporal' program is wholly permeated by its spiritual negations."[123] This emphasis on the unity of theory and practice, the spiritual and the temporal was the logical extension of these theologians' longstanding aversion to any collaboration between Catholics and secular political ideologies. But as the controversy over *France prends garde* had shown, this position put them at odds with an increasingly militant strain of Left Catholicism that included many of their erstwhile allies in the resistance to fascism.

Christian Progressivism

By the time de Lubac and Daniélou had weighed in on the Communist question, the political situation in and beyond France had evolved considerably. By 1947, the Cold War had begun in earnest as the United States launched the Marshall Plan and the Soviet Union established the Cominform in order to bring Europe's Communist parties more fully into line with Soviet policy. These events substantially reconfigured the French political landscape as well, deflating the optimistic spirit of the resistance that had infused post-Liberation politics. As Marshall Plan aid flowed into France and the PCF was forced to abandon its Marxist humanism in favor of a more orthodox Stalinism, France's political constituencies were increasingly forced to line up behind one or the other of the two great powers. The days of *tripartisme* were now definitively over, not least because Pius XII had placed the Church squarely on the side of the Western powers. Far from bringing an end to experiments in Catholic-Communist collaboration, however, these events instead served to polarize the debate between a mainstream core within the French Church and an increasingly radical minority that remained more committed than ever to working this the PCF.

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[122] De Lubac, "The Search for a New Man," 437.

[123] Ibid., 438.

The *Union des chrétiens progressistes* (UCP) became the face of this increasingly embattled minority, drawing together the most radical elements within the larger family of postwar Left Catholicism.[124] This group rose to notoriety in 1947 with the publication of its manifesto—the most unambiguous call yet for Catholic-Communist collaboration. André Mandouze, fresh from his break with *Témoignage chrétien*, provided the movement with much of its intellectual inspiration. He clarified his position in a 1948 article titled "Grasping the Outstretched Hand," a clear reference to the "outstretched hand" that Thorez and the PCF had extended to Catholics in the 1930s. Far from collapsing Communism and Christianity into one another, Mandouze merely sought to "collaborate closely with Communists in political combat."[125] In order to justify this pragmatic alliance with the PCF, Mandouze leaned heavily upon the distinction between the spiritual and temporal orders, defending the Catholic's freedom to make his or her own political choices and not "'take orders from the representative of God where Caesar's domain is concerned.'"[126] Mandouze likewise distinguished Marxist doctrine from the political praxis of the Communists, insisting that "if one can be progressivist without necessarily subscribing to Marxist doctrine, one cannot engage in a progressivist politics without the help of the Communists."[127] Nevertheless, he made clear that the "progressivist Christians" were Christians first and foremost, with "progressivist" functioning here as an adjective rather than a noun. Mandouze's position found a sympathetic echo from the *Jeunesse de l'Église* circle, and to a lesser extent, from *Esprit.* Mounier himself maintained an ambivalent relationship to the UCP. Sympathetic to their aims, he diverged from them on the question of whether Catholics should actually join the PCF. Nevertheless, he maintained that "the fact of being Christian" did not necessarily preclude "all definite, lucid collaboration with the Communists," just as they had achieved in the ranks of the Resistance. If the position of the "progressivist Christians" was politically open to question, Mounier concluded, it was above reproach on religious grounds.[128]

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[124] On the UCP see Yvon Tranvouez, *Catholiques et communistes: la crise du progressisme chrétien, 1950-1955* (Paris: Cerf, 2000); idem, *Catholicisme et société dans la France du XXe siècle: apostolat, progressisme et tradition* (Paris: Karthala, 2011), 137-53 and 171-86; Philippe Chenaux, "Les Crises du progressisme chrétien," in *L'Église catholique et le communisme*, 181-204; Kosicki, "Between Catechism and Revolution," ch. 7;

[125] André Mandouze, "Prendre la main tendue," *Les Chrétiens et la politique* (Paris: Éditions du Temps Présent, 1948), 41. See Mandouze's account of his relationship to the UCP in *Mémoires d'outre-siècle*, 188-194.

Gaston Fessard, as one might expect, viewed the matter rather differently. Far from inspiring him to moderate his position, the cool reception garnered by *France prends garde* only confirmed Fessard's conviction that a sizeable portion of the French Church had been seduced by the siren song of Communism and inspired him to redouble his efforts to combat it. As the Communist party line had moved away from the humanism question after 1947, and towards a more deterministic philosophy of history, Fessard's critique had evolved with it. By 1948, he had fixated upon the way that the party appealed to the "tide of history" to vindicate Communist ideology and anoint itself as the voice of "progress." In order to dispel this notion, the Jesuit gave a talk on the question "Does Communism move in the direction of history?" at the *Centre catholique des intellectuels français* in March

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[126] André Mandouze, "Rome ou Moscou?" quoted in his *Mémoires d'outre-siècle*, 189.

[127] Mandouze, "Prendre la main tendue," 71.

[128] Emmanuel Mounier, "Les Chrétiens progressistes," *Esprit* (November 1948), 644.

1948, which targeted the position of the *Esprit* circle in particular and was followed by a vigorous debate between Mounier, Lacroix, Hyppolite, Louis Althusser, Jean Beaufret, and Étienne Borne.[129] The birth of "Christian progressivism" later that year poured considerable fuel on this ongoing controversy, and it was Fessard's damning article on the subject, which appeared in the January 1949 issue of *Études*, that provoked a second major quarrel amongst Catholics on the subject of Communism.

Fessard's article targeted not only his nemesis, André Mandouze, but also Mounier—whom Fessard had long blamed for the postwar Catholic fascination with Communism—treating them as little more than extensions of each other and of "Christian progressivism" more broadly. Above all, Fessard sought to dispel the notion advanced by Mandouze and defended by Mounier, that it was possible for Catholics to engage in a purely practical alliance with Communists for political purposes, without thereby endangering their faith. One line in particular from a recent article by Mandouze aroused the Jesuit's ire. "'We must fiercely oppose,'" Mandouze had averred, "'any overstepping of boundaries by which the Vatican would be tempted onto terrain that does not belong to it,'" for its authority is "'infallible to the extent that it is exclusively spiritual.'"[130] Such a phrase, for Fessard, recalled both the argument advanced by those who had refused to submit to the Vatican condemnation of the Action Française in 1926, as well as the Nazi strategy of invoking the specter of "political Catholicism" in order to silence opposition to the regime. Even though the act of separating spiritual and doctrinal questions from the realm of political praxis appeared to shore up the sanctity of the Church and protect it from contamination by the political, Fessard argued that it had precisely the opposite effect. What becomes of Catholic social teaching, he asked, when we accept Mandouze's distinction between Catholic doctrine and the methods of "economico-political action"?[131] Who decides where the boundary between the two ought to fall and when it has been transgressed? It is ultimately the Marxist dialectic, Fessard argued, to which Mandouze turns in order to determine when the Pope has "overstepped" his legitimate purview. Far from maintaining a distinction between the theological and the political, then, Mandouze instead elevates the Marxist dialectic into a theological tool. In this way, he resembles the Catholic followers of Charles Maurras, who believed that their leader's atheism "would in no way rub off on the consciences of the faithful," and that they could embrace his "politique d'abord" while remaining the most irreproachable of Catholics.[132] "The 'progressivism' of our Christians would thus take us twenty years backwards," Fessard concluded, for it constitutes an "AF of the extreme left."[133]

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[129] Fessard had initially hoped to publish this talk as an article in *Études*, but René d'Ouince refused it for its overly polemical tone (a position shared by de Lubac). It was later published as part of Fessard's *De l'actualité historique* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1960). A full text of the talk and the ensuing debate can be found in Fonds Fessard, AJPF, dossier 11.

[130] André Mandouze, "Rome ou Moscou?" quoted in Gaston Fessard, "Le Christianisme des chrétiens progressistes," *Études* (January 1949), 74; 76.

In order to offset this tendency, Fessard advanced his own theological vision of the dynamic relationship between theory and practice, the spiritual and the temporal. He reminded readers that the spiritual authority of the Church extended not just to questions of individual faith, but also to social questions, precisely because salvation was far from an individual affair. Here, Fessard invokes yet again the eschatological vision of the body of Christ that will incorporate all past, present, and future Catholics at the end of time, but he now encodes this ecclesiology in a typically Marxist vocabulary. If the Church defines man as an inescapably social being, he reasoned, this is because "all men are destined to form a single body, that of the New Man, at the end of history—this is what underwrites the jurisdiction of the Church over all of the temporal and obliges it to have a social doctrine."[134] As in de Lubac's essay, the "body of Christ" is now reinvented as the "New Man," in an effort to compete with Marxist humanism on its own terrain. For Fessard, the social teaching of the Church, which flows from the social nature of salvation, endows it with a power that is "properly, but not exclusively, spiritual."[135] If it does not possess a fully developed program for political and economic action, as Marxism does, it nevertheless fulfills an important critical function vis-à-vis political ideologies, by determining whether they advance or hinder human progress towards the end of history and the advent of the "New Man." More explicitly than he ever had before, Fessard here defines the approach that had informed his own counter-political activities since the 1920s. Rather than endorsing a positive political program, the role of the Church and of the theologian was to offer a "a rule of discernment that is effectively able to reveal, in light of the practical options, the falsity of an ideology and its true cause."[136] This critical function, no less effective than a positive political program, was something Mandouze had sacrificed when he abandoned the social teaching of the Church in favor of the Marxist dialectic:

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[131] Ibid., 75.

[132] Ibid., 90.

[133] Ibid.; Gaston Fessard to Henri de Lubac, 22 November, 1948, Fonds Fessard AJPF, dossier 73/3.

> As soon as social man was no longer dependent on the Church, the body of Christ would become, in Mandouze's eyes, a spiritual reality with an exclusively spiritual magisterium. In this way, the Church found itself totally disincarnated...while the Marxist dialectic was called in...as a last resort, to judge the Church itself.[137]

In seeking to disentangle Catholic doctrine from the arena of social or political action ostensibly governed by the Marxist dialectic, Fessard concluded that the "progressivist Christians" had instead subordinated the Church to the sovereignty of the dialectic.

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[134] Fessard, "Le Christianisme des chrétiens progressistes," 77.

[135] Ibid., 78.

[136] Ibid., 78.

[137] Ibid., 81.

As in 1946, Fessard's words drew a fiery response from a range of voices associated with the Catholic Left. Not surprisingly, the Jesuit came in for particularly vigorous criticism in the pages of the UCP's own journal, where Fessard was pilloried as a crypto-fascist. What is particularly interesting about this response, however, is the role it ascribed to Fessard's Hegelianism. Fessard's article had approvingly cited Raymond Aron's recent analysis of totalitarianism, *Le grand schisme*—a book Fessard reviewed in glowing terms later in the very same issue of *Études*. The two veterans of Kojève's Hegel seminar had found common cause over the problem of totalitarianism since the late-1930s, for both conceived of Nazism and Communism as parallel pseudo-religions.[138] After the war, this position drew Aron into the ranks of the *Rassemblement du peuple français*, the center-right Gaullist party established in 1947. *Le grand schisme* constituted a frankly partisan defense of the RPF and its vision for a strong executive branch.[139] In his review of the book, Fessard stopped short of endorsing the RPF himself, but he did heap praise upon the "penetration and objectivity of [Aron's] judgment of our political, economic, and intellectual situation," and suggested that the "progressivist Christians" could learn much from his book.[140] Indeed, Fessard went so far as to argue that Aron, although not a Christian himself, had offered a more robust defense of Christian values than any "Christian progressivist" ever had. The latter made much of this review, for it appeared to suggest that Fessard's critique of Christian progressivism owed more to his own political commitments than to any properly theological concern. Dismissing his critique as a mere "theology of the RPF," they accused Fessard of doing precisely what he had accused them of doing: yoking the universal truth of Christianity to a particular political ideology.[141] Moreover, because Aron and Fessard shared a common fascination with Hegel, these "progressivists" suggested that Hegelianism served as the quasi-official philosophy of the RPF, and would help smuggle fascism back into France under the aegis of a "'democracy with a reinforced executive.'"[142] The quarrel between "right" and "left" Hegelians in the 1930s thus re-emerged at the heart of the postwar Catholic debate over Communism. And the question of Fessard's Hegelianism would loom increasingly large for the Jesuit's theological and political opponents.

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[138] See Gaston Fessard to Henri de Lubac 19 June 1939, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, dossier 73/2.

[139] Raymond Aron, *Le Grand Schisme* (Paris: Gallimard, 1948).

[140] Gaston Fessard, "À propose du 'Grand Schisme' de Raymond Aron," *Études* 260 (January 1949), 106.

[141] Jean Verlhac and Maurice Caveing, "Une opération R.P.F.: l'article du R. P. Fessard," *Position* (March 1949), preserved in Fonds Fessard, AJPF, dossier 5/28.

It was certainly at the heart of Mounier's rejoinder to Fessard, communicated in a series of letters that were eventually published in the March 1949 issue of *Études*. The editor of *Esprit* was particularly incensed about being tarred with the brush of Christian progressivism, given his deeply ambivalent relationship to the UCP and to Communism more broadly. What infuriated Mounier in particular was Fessard's method of decoupling the ostensibly "objective" meaning of his opponent's statements from the "subjective intensions" informing them, in order to show his interlocutor that, "in reality, he is saying the opposite of what he believes he is saying."[143] Fessard had of course used this approach in *France prends garde* to demonstrate how the humanist intentions of the Communist could produce the most inhumane of consequences, and he relied upon much the same technique to argue that the Christian intentions of the "progressivists" did not prevent them from adopting "objectively" atheist positions. Mounier attributed this logical sleight-of-hand to Fessard's "frenzied Hegelianism," which tended to "denature" even the most "simple and clear affirmations in order to reverse their meaning."[144] Deriving as it did from "the excesses of the Hegelian dialectic," Mounier suggested that Fessard's approach was in fact not so very different from the Marxist hermeneutic itself.[145]

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[142] Ibid.

[143] Mounier and Fessard, "Correspondance," *Études* 260 (March 1949), 390.

[144] Ibid., 393.

Fathers Maydieu and Serrand, the Dominican editors of the left-leaning Catholic journal *La Vie intellectuelle,* developed a very similar but much more detailed rejoinder to Fessard's article. Without endorsing the position of the "progressivist Christians," these theologians sought to dispel what they perceived to be the theological errors underwriting Fessard's critique—errors they attributed to the Jesuit's preference for the Hegelian dialectic over the orthodox Thomist teaching on the relationship between spiritual and temporal affairs.[146] In his article, Fessard had derived the authority of the Church over social questions from its eschatological role as the institution which "makes present *hic et nun*c the End of history," and therefore judges social or political movements from the perspective of whether they advance or hinder this eschatological goal.[147] Maydieu and Serrand pointed out that such an argument in fact conflated two quite distinct eschatological realities: the body of Christ that will come at the end of time, and the Church that exists within time and prepares the way for this eschatological coming. Fessard, they argued, had conflated the end of history with the path or means to this end—two realities which Thomism had scrupulously distinguished in order to preserve the distinction between the natural and the supernatural orders; between "the New Man that emerges from baptism" and "the New Humanity that emerges from the Parousia."[148] Such a distinction, the Dominicans argued, was necessary in order for the Church to “maintain a sense of its limits” and to recognize that “certain temporal determinations” of an economic, political, or juridical nature fall beyond its purview.[149]

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[145] Ibid., 390.

[146] On Maydieu, see Tranvouez, *Catholiques et communistes,* ch. 11. Serrand, writing under the pseudonym "Christianus," was the primary editorialist for *La Vie intellectuelle.*

[147] Fessard, "Le Christianisme des chrétiens progressistes," 82-3.

[148] J. Maydieu and Z. Serrand, "À Propos des chrétiens progressistes," *La Vie intellectuelle* (March 1949), 206.

But this distinction also imposed a heavy responsibility upon the Christian laity, requiring them to develop their own theoretical tools in order to carry out their temporal duties. Such tools could not simply be derived directly from the principles of Catholic theology, but instead required a “method of action based on experience and drawing upon a conceptualization that considers the temporal ends and ways of knowing natural to man.”[150] Here, Maydieu and Serrand reiterate the classic Thomist distinction between the natural and supernatural ends of the human person, between the ends of temporal and of spiritual life, in order to carve out an autonomous space for Christian activity in the political order. In doing so, they explicitly rejected Fessard’s vision of the Church’s role in temporal affairs. Because, for Fessard, no area of human life lay beyond the drama of salvation, the Church had an important negative, critical role to play in temporal affairs, denouncing ideologies that endangered human salvation. But for Maydieu and Serrand, it was not enough for Catholics to limit themselves to playing the role of “opponents and protesters” in the temporal order.[151] Such an approach was of course necessary during the German occupation, but the Liberation had launched a debate over whether Catholics ought to confine themselves to this purely critical function or instead work towards a “positive project.”[152] Maydieu and Serrand were evidently partisans of this second approach and recognized that, in order for Catholics to carry out this new role in public life, they would need to look beyond the Christian tradition for their ideological resources. After all, Fessard’s meditations on nature and grace or the end of history could not

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[149] Ibid., 207-8.

[150] Ibid., 216.

[151] Ibid., 212.

[152] Ibid.

"supply the Christian citizen with the norms for determining whether to affiliate with the MRP rather than the RPF."[153] Although the Dominicans did not specify the particular norm or "method of action" capable of providing more effective guidance on such questions, their essay did establish a theological justification for ascribing this role to Marxism.

And yet, Maydieu and Serrand did not endorse the position of the "progressivist Christians" either. The problem with the UCP, in the eyes of the Dominicans, was that it had not sufficiently disentangled its religious identity from its political program, and instead claimed to be "progressivist" precisely *because* it was Christian. In other words, the Dominicans suggested that Fessard and the "progressivist Christians" were not as far apart as either imagined, for both were guilty of "mixing theological considerations with economico-political preferences or references."[154] That Fessard and the "progressivist Christians" could converge on any point might seem impossible, Maydieu and Serrand acknowledged, until one considered their shared debts to Hegel. Against Fessard's theistic reading of Hegel, the Dominicans instead maintained that Hegel's God was less "the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob" than a pantheist world-spirit immanent to human history.[155] And consequently, turning Fessard's own critique of the "progressivist Christians" back against him, they argued that his reliance on Hegel made him the unwitting "champion of an implicit atheism. For the God he thus defends [is] deprived of the transcendence which separates him from everything that is human."[156] In the eyes of these Thomists, then, Fessard's tendency to confuse theology with politics, and the natural with the supernatural, were evidence that he had been corrupted by Hegel's pantheism. And precisely because Marxism likewise owed its inspiration to

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[153] Ibid., 213.

[154] Ibid., 217.

[155] Ibid., 216.

[156] Ibid., 217.

Hegel, they argued, one should not be surprised to note the convergence between Fessard's position and that of the "progressivists." Indeed, Maydieu and Serrand wondered whether "the danger of Marxism does not come first and foremost from Hegel, from the impossibility of such a dialectic to recognize the transcendence of Revelation in relation to the whole human order."[157] In response, Raymond Aron quipped that "if he had wanted to become a Christian, [Maydieu and Serrand's] article would have dissuaded him from doing so," for it simply abandoned Christianity to the superior force of Marxist analysis.[158]

By 1950, then, Catholic intellectual life found itself increasingly polarized between two competing positions—a split that in many respects reiterated the earlier quarrel between the "right" and "left" wings of French Hegelianism. On one side stood the various stalwarts of Left Catholicism, which included not only the *Esprit* group, Mandouze, and the "progressivist Christians," but also a sizeable Dominican contingent: Montuclard of Jeunesse de l'Église, Lebret and Desroche of Économie et Humanisme, Maydieu and Serrand of *La Vie intellectuelle,* as well as Chenu, Féret, and the theologians associated with the Dominican wing of the "nouvelle théologie." Many of these figures drew upon the Thomist distinction between the natural and supernatural orders in order to justify a practical alliance with Marxism, considered merely as a social-scientific tool or method of analysis for dealing with political problems.[159] On the other side, stood "right" Hegelians like Raymond Aron and the Jesuits of the "nouvelle théologie," for whom Communism constituted a totalitarian, anti-Christian "political religion" in which theory and practice, atheism and the goal of working-class emancipation could not be disassociated. Nor, for these Jesuits, could the spiritual authority of the Church and the demands of temporal action be decoupled in the way their Thomist critics demanded. Instead, just as they had argued against the Action Française in the 1920s and against Nazism in the 1930s and 1940s, they maintained that the Church still had an important role to play in public life—albeit a *negative* and *critical* role. Although the Church and its clerical representatives were not permitted "to say concretely what must be done," Fessard explained that they were nevertheless bound to pronounce upon "what must not be done" and to offer a "method for arriving at a concrete decision."[160] The Church could not simply wash its hands of political questions, for it bore the responsibility of denouncing any ideology which ran counter to the ends of human salvation. And precisely because of this, these Jesuits argued that Catholics could not simply bracket their faith when they entered the public sphere, or engage in a practical alliance with secular parties and ideologies without considering the implications these movements possessed for their faith.

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[157] Ibid., 224.

[158] Gaston Fessard to Henri de Lubac, 2 May, 1950, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, dossier 73/3.

[159] Both Gerd-Rainer Horn and Yvon Tranvouez have likewise stressed the centrality of the Thomist distinction between the spiritual and temporal orders to postwar Left Catholicism. See Horn, "Left Catholicism," 24-27; Tranvouez, "Left Catholicism and Christian Progressivism in France (1945-1955)," in *Left Catholicism*, 91-101.

In light of this aversion to any engagement with movements of Marxist inspiration, it may seem strange that Fessard and other Catholics saw little contradiction between their faith and their Hegelianism. But for Fessard, there were two crucial differences between Hegel and Marx. In the first place, Hegel was far less overtly tied to a particular political movement. In the second place, as we have seen, Fessard and the other "right" Hegelians maintained that his was a robustly theistic philosophy. Whereas "every utterance of the Marxist dialectic is fundamentally corrupted by atheism," Fessard insisted that the Hegelian dialectic could be salvaged through synthesis "with a dialectic of the Word Incarnate," and he explained that everything he had written over the past twelve years had been "inspired by this conviction, in which St. Paul and Ignatius are far more my guides than Hegel."[161] And yet, Fessard's distinction between Marxism, the atheist political ideology, and Hegelianism, the theistic philosophy, cannot simply be taken at face value. Fessard and his fellow Jesuits were irrevocably opposed to any collaboration with modern political projects, but they were nevertheless firmly committed to an engagement with modern philosophy and, in particular, with Hegelianism and existentialism. Consequently, they were committed to the notion that these movements were basically theistic (or at least capable of being read as such) and that they inhabited a philosophical realm that was "safe" for theologians because removed from politics. And yet, it should be pointed out that such a distinction was manifestly at odds with the critique these Jesuits had leveled against a variety of various political ideologies. For they had always denied that it was possible to disarticulate the practical aims of a political movement from the philosophy underpinning it. Thus, the agnosticism of Maurras could not be separated from the political program of the AF; nor could Marxist philosophy be disentangled from the actions of the Soviet Union. Fessard reliance on just such a distinction to separate "good" Hegelianism from "bad" Marxism allowed him not just to condemn the latter, but also to justify his own theological reliance on Hegel. The distinction between politics and philosophy, in this case, was designed to make modern philosophy "safe" for theology.

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[160] Gaston Fessard to Émile Rideau, 7 February, 1949, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, dossier 5/28.

From the perspective of Fessard's critics, however, this sort of Catholic-Hegelian syncretism seemed far more corrosive to the Catholic faith than any purely practical collaboration between Catholics and leftist parties. If these Thomists insisted upon the distinction between the spiritual and temporal orders, between Marxist political economy and Catholic doctrine, it was precisely in order to draw upon both while preventing their cross-contamination. Whatever their engagements in temporal affairs, theologically they remained firmly anchored in the orthodoxy of the Thomist system. From their perspective, Fessard's synthesis of Hegel and St. Paul seemed like a dangerous intrusion of modern philosophy into the sacrosanct realm of theology. As Chapter 7 will show, this was precisely how the Vatican would view it as well. Consequently, while Fessard accused the Left Catholics of endangering the faith through their engagement with Communism, they retorted that Fessard's Hegelianism made him guilty of precisely the same crime. The result was an increasingly bitter conflict between those Catholics open to working with modern political movements, and those who eschewed such collaboration but remained open to an engagement with modern philosophy.

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[161] Gaston Fessard to Fr. Delanglade, 7 February, 1949, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, dossier 5/28.

This politico-theological disagreement increasingly took the form of a quarrel between Jesuits and Dominicans. This was in part because of the prominent role that Dominicans continued to play at the forefront of Left Catholicism. Even after Cardinal Suhard forbade French Catholics from joining the PCF in 1949, effectively pulling the rug out from under the "progressivist Christians," a number of Dominicans fought on in the ranks of the increasingly embattled Catholic left. In 1950, they published a manifesto calling for Christians to sign onto to the Communist-led Stockholm Appeal to ban nuclear weapons, launched in response to the announcement that the United States had detonated a thermonuclear weapon. The manifesto, "Christians Against the Atomic Bomb," was signed by all the leading lights of Left Catholicism, including the Dominicans (Chenu, Féret, Desroche, Montuclard) and laypeople like Mandouze, Lacroix, and Ella Sauvageot.[162] But the Manifesto and the Appeal itself elicited nearly universal disapprobation from even the most left-leaning of Catholic journals, including *Esprit, Témoignage chrétien* and *La Vie intellectuelle*. In response, the most radical signatories linked up with veterans of the now-defunct UCP to launch a new journal, which would be the voice of the Catholic far left: *La Quinzaine*.[163] Marie-Dominique Chenu, with whom de Lubac's circle had shared a distaste for Neo-Scholastic theology and a commitment to Catholic Action in the 1930s, became a spiritual advisor to the journal and also continued to write in defense of the worker-priests even after the hierarchy had intervened to put an end to the experiment.[164] By the time he wrote his *Theology of Labor* in 1955*,* Chenu and the other Dominicans associated with the "nouvelle théologie" thus found themselves at the opposite end of the political spectrum to their Jesuit counterparts. And at the same time as the Dominican experiments in Left Catholicism were being systematically dismantled by the Vatican, the Jesuits were embroiled in their own theological war with Rome that would culminate in their formal censure in 1950.[165]

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[162] On this episode, see Philippe Chenaux, *L'Église catholique et le communisme*, 182-190.

Historians and theologians have tended to conflate these two branches of postwar French Catholicism, approaching their respective condemnations as two different aspects of the same Vatican reaction against modernizing tendencies within the Church.[166] But from the foregoing, it should be clear that these two wings—one Jesuit, anti-Communist, and Hegelian; the other Dominican, left-leaning, and scrupulously Thomist—were very much at odds in the postwar period. Moreover, each accused the other of providing ammunition to their enemies in Rome and provoking a condemnation. After Fessard wrote a critical piece on Henri Desroche and his Économie et Humanisme group, for instance, a number of Dominicans rallied behind their brother and signed a petition in his defense. The petition blamed Fessard's tendency to distort his interlocutor's position squarely on his Hegelianism, complaining that no dialogue was possible with this "Hegelian theologist."[167] For Fessard, this was simply "proof of the impossibility in which Thomism places its disciples to reflect the slightest bit upon history" and of the extent to which Dominicans rally together to protect their own. As Chenu, Congar, and Féret increasingly distanced themselves from their Jesuit counterparts for their ostensible role in provoking the Vatican backlash against Left Catholicism, de Lubac, Daniélou, and Fessard complained that these Dominicans remained remarkably silent on the witch-hunt of which they themselves were currently victims at the hands of the Dominicans in Rome and Toulouse.[168] It fell to a layperson, Jean Lacroix, to point out that these internal divisions within the progressive wing of the French Church only played into the hands of their mutual enemies. Writing to the editor of *Études* after the polemic between Fessard and Maydieu/Serrand, Lacroix warned:

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[163] On *La Quinzaine,* see Tranvouez, *Catholiques et communistes,* chs. 3, 4, 9 and idem., "Guerre froide et progressisme chrétien: La Quinzaine (1950-1953)," *Vingtième siècle* 13 (January 1987), 83-93.

[164] See Chenu, "Le Sacerdoce des prêtres-ouvriers," *La Vie intellectuelle* (February 1954): 175-181.

[165] Montuclard, who had launched Jeunesse de l'Eglise in 1936, had his works placed on the Index in 1952 and was defrocked in 1953; the UCP was shut down in 1951; *La Quinzaine* was suppressed in 1955; and the Dominican wing of the "nouvelle théologie" fell afoul of the Roman authorities in 1954.

[166] See, for instance, Hans Boersma*, Nouvelle Théologie and Sacramental Ontology: A Return to Mystery* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Jürgen Mettepenningen, *Nouvelle Théologie—New Theology: Inheritor of Modernism, Precursor of Vatican II* (London: T&T Clark, 2010).

> Such a polemic could have disastrous consequences for both sides...*La Vie intellectuelle* will be suspect as "communizing;" *Études*, and specifically Fr. Fessard, as Hegelians and partisans of a "nouvelle théologie" whose origin will quickly be denounced and is already sought at Fourvière. And this most authentically Christian and most liberating work will be threatened, restricted or stopped...Is this what *Études* is seeking?[169]

Lacroix was absolutely right, of course, but at a moment when both sides were increasingly on the defensive and consumed by their own troubles with Rome, his words fell on deaf ears.

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[167] Gaston Fessard to Henri de Lubac, 5 February, 1950, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, dossier 73/3. See also Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, 6 February, 1950 and Gaston Fessard to Henri de Lubac, 28 February, 1950. The latter recounts that Congar refused Daniélou's dinner invitation as a result of this article, lest he encounter Fessard there. The article in question is Gaston Fessard, "Le communisme va-t-il dans le sens de l'histoire?" *Psyché* 21-22 (July-August 1948), 844-872.

[168] See esp. Gaston Fessard to Henri de Lubac, 28 February, 1950, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, dossier 73/3.

[169] Jean Lacroix to René d'Ouince, 17 March, 1949, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, dossier 5/28. Émile Rideau echoed this sentiment in a letter to Fessard in which he warned that the "progressivist Christians" were not the Jesuits' greatest enemy and that only the forces of political and theological conservatism stood to gain from this polemic. See Rideau to Raymond Jouve, Gaston Fessard, and René d'Ouince (undated), Fonds Fessard, AJPF, dossier 5/28.

Chapter 6. The Drama of Atheist Humanism II: Existentialism, Human Rights, and the Politics of History

In 1948, Gaston Fessard presented his intervention in the postwar "humanism" debate at a conference on "Humanism and Existentialism" attended by Raymond Aron, Gabriel Marcel, and Jean Hyppolite, among others. Only Christianity, Fessard insisted, could overcome the contradictions of atheist humanism in both its Marxist and existentialist guises. On the one hand, Christians could agree with the existentialist critique of Marxist humanism, on the grounds that nature alone could not achieve the reconciliation of humanity, just as Fessard had argued in *France prends garde*. And, on the other hand, Christians could agree with the Marxist critique of existentialist humanism, because human freedom alone could not effect this reconciliation either.[1] But Fessard made it clear that Christianity did not oppose these philosophies in equal measure. "Faced with the opposition between Marxist Humanism and atheist existentialism," he maintained, "Christianity, or at least the Christian, claims to establish a true humanism and *to give existentialism free reign*."[2] It was less a question of establishing a Christian alternative to both Marxism and existentialism, in other words, than of deploying and perfecting the insights of existentialism in the service of Christianity. This was because, despite the current dominance of Sartre and *Les Temps modernes*, Fessard insisted that existentialism need not be an atheist philosophy. In fact, tracing its origins back through Kierkegaard to the French spiritualist tradition, he maintained that atheist existentialism was only a recent deviation from what was first and foremost a religious philosophy.

Fessard was not the only person to make this claim in 1940s France. He was but one representative of a vibrant strand of Christian existentialism in postwar France, which has been almost entirely ignored in a historiography dominated by the atheist existentialism of Sartre and his colleagues at *Les Temps modernes*.[3] And yet, in his map of postwar French intellectual life, Jean Daniélou identified Christian existentialism as one of the two dominant strands of Catholic thought—the other being the "humanist socialism" that Daniélou associated with both the Catholic Left and Christian Democracy.[4] Christian existentialism, in Daniélou's analysis, thus served as the primary alternative to the movements traced in Chapter 5. He identified it above all with the work of Gabriel Marcel, who had become Fessard's spiritual disciple in 1934, and the newly established journal *Dieu Vivant*, for which Daniélou served as theological advisor. Far from an exclusively Catholic movement, Daniélou identified Christian existentialism as an ecumenical project drawing together Protestants influenced by Karl Barth or Oscar Cullmann and the many Russian Orthodox theologians exiled in Paris following the Revolution, as well as a group of intellectuals who had come to Catholicism as part of the wave of conversions in early-twentieth century France, known as the *renouveau catholique*.[5] It was one of the primary goals of *Dieu Vivant* to bring these voices into dialogue with Catholic theologians such as de Lubac and Fessard, and with developments in secular philosophy. What united these disparate strands of Christian existentialism, Daniélou argued, was a shared insistence upon "eschatological expectation, with its triple character of a judgment taken by God upon every human reality, the transfiguration of man and the cosmos through the

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[1] See Fessard's notes for his presentation on 27 October, 1948 in Fonds Fessard, Archives Jésuites de la Province de France [Henceforth, AJPF] (Vanves, France), dossier 4/23bis.

[2] Ibid. Emphasis added.

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[3] See, for instance, Gary Gutting, *French Philosophy in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), whose section on existentialism consists of chapters on Sartre, de Beauvoir, and Merleau-Ponty. Mark Poster's *Existential Marxism in Postwar France: From Sartre to Althusser* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975) and Ethan Kleinberg's *Generation Existential: Heidegger's Philosophy in France, 1927-1961* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005) are likewise silent on the Catholic reception of phenomenology in France.

[4] Jean Daniélou, "La Vie intellectuelle en France: communisme, existentialisme, christianisme," *Études* (September 1945), 249-50.

[5] On the renouveau catholique, see Frédéric Gugelot, *La conversion des intellectuels au catholicisme en France (1885-1935)* (Paris: CNRS, 1998); Brenna Moore, *Sacred Dread: Raïssa Maritain, the Allure of Suffering, and the French Catholic Revival* (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 2013); Hervé Serry, *Naissance de l'intellectuel catholique* (Paris: Découverte, 2004).

Resurrection, and the gathering together of all men in the unity of Christ."[6]

This emphasis on eschatology was the defining feature of the theological engagement with existentialism on the part of the Jesuits associated with the "nouvelle théologie." It provided these theologians with a crucial corrective to the limitations of phenomenology, by integrating its insights about the individual subject into the broader framework of the history of salvation, which was above all a social affair. Such an existential eschatology could thus provide a more effective answer to the challenge of Marxism, as Fessard explained in his presentation at the 1948 conference on "Humanism and Existentialism":

> I believe there is room for a Christian existentialism oriented more fully toward a consideration of the social and the historical, and which would better oppose Marxist humanism. It would quite simply identify, within the Christian mysteries and dogmas, the conditions for a true understanding of Nature and of human History, and through this, for an authentic act of Freedom with an eye to a reconciled humanity.[7]

Here, Fessard established the blueprint for a theological anthropology that would transcend the limitations of both the atheist humanisms of the day. But it also served as a counterpoint to the dominant Catholic humanism of the day—the Thomist anthropology underwriting Jacques Maritain's human rights discourse.

In this way, existential eschatology allowed these theologians to develop a different kind of anthropology—one which refused the choice between humanism and anti-humanism. These two terms have defined the scholarship on postwar French thought, but derived as they are from the context of secular philosophy, they cannot make sense of the theological anthropology developed by Fessard, de Lubac, Daniélou, and Teilhard de Chardin. In opposition to the Thomist vision of a static human nature grounded in natural law, which provided the foundation for an emerging Catholic human rights discourse, these theologians instead articulated a dynamic anthropology. Like the existentialists, they defined the human being not as an essence, but as a process, driven by a negativity or lack that was constitutive of human life itself. Such a model certainly bears a resemblance to the anti-humanist discourse that gathered steam in France following the publication of Heidegger's famous "Letter on Humanism." But the eschatological dimension of this theological anthropology gave it an entirely different complexion. For these Jesuits, the negativity at the heart of human life was the very marker of human dignity itself. It was the presence of the supernatural at the heart of human nature; the ontological élan calling us towards participation in divine life; the sign that human life is embedded in both the time of human history and the time of eschatology. In this way, the theological anthropology developed by these Jesuits, which found its highest expression in de Lubac's *Surnaturel,* refused both the distinction between humanism and anti-humanism deployed by secular philosophers, and the distinction between the natural and supernatural orders so central to Thomism.

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[6] Jean Daniélou, "La Vie intellectuelle en France," 251.

[7] Fessard's notes for his presentation on 27 October 1948 are preserved in Fonds Fessard, AJPF, dossier 4/23bis

This is crucial because it accounts for the political, or rather counter-political, significance of this anthropological vision. Where Thomists like Maritain relied on the distinction between the natural and supernatural ends of the human person in order to articulate a vision of human nature defined by a set of rights and capable of being inscribed in secular law. De Lubac and his friends, however, were highly suspicious of any effort to inscribe human life in legal and political categories. After all, this had been precisely the impulse behind the biopolitical projects undertaken by both the Vichy regime and the Third Reich. By placing the supernatural at the heart of human nature, these Jesuits instead sought to articulate a theological anthropology that could not be codified into law or operationalized to serve a political project. In other words, their contribution to the postwar humanism debate was very much the logical extension of the counter-political stance they had adopted during the war.

This continuity was likewise evident in their postwar reflections on the problem of history, which were inseparable from their anthropological vision, precisely because they defined human life in dynamic terms. Just as they had during the war, these theologians turned to the theme of eschatology as a critical reminder that all temporal institutions and political projects were ultimately only relative to the fullness of the Kingdom. But this time, they directed their critical energies against the historical model which underwrote both the liberal and Marxist faith in progress. Against this linear, continuous concept of time, these theologians and the journal *Dieu Vivant* looked instead to the discontinuous temporality at the heart of both Christian eschatology and phenomenology. Such a temporality, by inscribing the eschatological event at the heart of the historical present, required that the Christian be both engaged in, and critical of, the institutions and projects of temporal life. Taken together, this existential eschatology and the anthropology that went along with it constituted a powerful theological rejoinder to both liberalism and Marxism. Rather than addressing these ideologies at a more overtly political level, these Catholics sought to undermine the anthropology and the philosophy of history upon which they relied—what one might call their "para-political" foundations. This was, in other words, a paradigmatic case of counter-politics.

The story of this existential eschatology and the anthropological vision with which it was aligned is historically significant for three reasons. First, it contributes to the broader intellectual history of postwar France by dethroning the status of Sartre and atheist existentialism within the historiography, as well as by questioning the value of the humanist/anti-humanist dichotomy.[8] But it also contributes to the history of theology by placing de Lubac's *Surnaturel* in the context of the postwar humanism debate and the phenomenological tradition, whereas it has largely been read through the lens of internal theological debates about Thomism and Augustinianism.[9] But the story of this theological approach to subjectivity and time is also historically significant in an entirely different sense. The historical model it attacks is also the one upon which the historical discipline was founded. It thus affords an opportunity to reflect critically upon the normative and political assumptions built into the concepts of human agency and historical time that continue to underwrite the work of historians.

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[8] The humanism/anti-humanism categorization is a fixture of twentieth-century French intellectual history. It is central, for instance, to Edward Baring's analysis in "Humanist Pretensions: Catholics, Communists, and Sartre's Struggle for Existentialism in Postwar France," *Modern Intellectual History* 7, 3 (2010), 581-609, as well as to Stefanos Geroulanos, *An Atheism that is not Humanist Emerges in French Thought* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010).

The Battle for the Soul of Existentialism

Catholics and Marxists were not the only two constituencies battling to lay claim to the banner of humanism in the immediate postwar period. Not to be outdone, Jean-Paul Sartre announced, in a celebrated speech at the Club Maintenant on October 29th, 1945, that existentialism too was a humanism. As Edward Baring has shown, the immediate context for Sartre's talk was the election, eight days earlier, of a coalition between the Socialists, Communists, and the Catholic MRP.[10] And consequently, Sartre's talk was not simply an attempt to articulate an existentialist humanism over and against both the Marxist and Catholic equivalents. Instead, it was intervention in the conflict between Communism and Catholicism in postwar France—part of Sartre's increasing concern to align existentialism with Marxism and against Catholicism, which would find its fullest expression in his *Critique of Dialectical Reason* (1960).

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[9] Much of the recent theological scholarship on *Surnaturel* is written from a Thomist perspective and is highly critical of de Lubac's thesis, echoing many of the points raised at the time of the initial controversy. In this vein, see esp. Lawrence Feingold, *The Natural Desire to See God According to St. Thomas Aquinas and his Interpreters* (Ave Maria, FL: Sapientia, 2010); Steven A. Long, *Natura Pura: On the Recovery of Nature in the Doctrine of Grace* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2010). A more balanced account, but one that still considers *Surnaturel* from the perspective of its relationship to Thomism is *Surnaturel: A Controversy at the Heart of Twentieth-Century Thomistic Thought,* ed. by Serge-Thomas Bonino, trans. by Robert Williams and Matthew Levering (Ave Maria, FL: Sapientia, 2009). The leading representatives of an Augustinian reading of *Surnaturel* are David Grummett, "De Lubac, Grace, and the Pure Nature Debate," *Modern Theology* 31, 1 (January 2015), 123-46; Bernard Mulcahy, *Aquinas's Notion of Pure Nature and the Christian Integralism of Henri de Lubac: Not Everything is Grace* (New York: Lang, 2011). My own view aligns with the latter school, but I also believe that de Lubac's Augustinianism is modified by the influence of the concept of deification, which de Lubac likely derived from his reading of the Greek Fathers. On this theory, see Adam G. Cooper, *Naturally Human, Supernaturally God: Deification in Pre-Conciliar Catholicism* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2014), 151-68; John Milbank in *The Suspended Middle: Henri de Lubac and the Debate Concerning the Supernatural* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005), 16. For a good overview of this latest round in the theological debate over *Surnaturel* and the "pure nature" theory, see Christopher M. Cullen, "The Natural Desire for God and Pure Nature: A Debate Renewed," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 86, 4 (2012), 705-30.

[10] Edward Baring, "Humanist Pretensions." The following discussion of Sartre is much-indebted to Baring's account.

In the speech at the Club Maintenant, Sartre famously elaborated a response to both the Marxist and Catholic critiques of existentialism. The first charged him with articulating an individualist, "bourgeois philosophy" that consigned man to "a state of quietism and despair."[11] The second, advanced most famously by Jeanne Mercier in the pages of *Études,* instead accused Sartre of embracing an overly pessimistic view of humanity and of interpersonal relations in particular.[12] In response to his Marxist critics, Sartre sought to align himself with the humanist turn within postwar French Marxism, by elaborating a critique of rigid historical materialism. Just as Fessard would argue in *France prends garde,* Sartre denounced materialism for reducing the human being to the status of a physical object like any other, devoid of historical agency. Instead, Sartre sought to restore human agency while avoiding the charge of bourgeois humanism. To do this, he dispensed with the liberal notion that human beings are "essences," defined by a pre-existing human nature, and instead argued that "man is constantly in the making" and is "nothing other than his own project...nothing more than the sum of his actions."[13] In order to offset the Marxist critique that such a philosophy merely imprisoned the individual within his own subjectivity and forestalled the possibility of a collective political project, Sartre maintained that individual freedom was indissociable from a collective project of human liberation. "In creating the man each of us wills ourselves to be," he explained, "there is not a single one of our actions that does not at the same time create an image of man as we think he ought to be."[14] And consequently, "I am obliged to will the freedom of others at the same time as I will my own."[15] In this way, Sartre held out the possibility that existentialism and Marxism could be aligned.

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[11] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Existentialism is a Humanism*, trans. by Carol Macomber (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 17. On the Communist reaction to Sartre, see Poster, *Existential Marxism*, 109-34.

[12] See Jeanne Mercier, "Le Ver dans le fruit," *Études* (February 1945), 238-40.

[13] Sartre, *Existentialism is a Humanism*, 52;

His true target, then, was less the Marxists than the Catholics, and Catholic existentialism in particular. Sartre acknowledged the existence of two rival strands of existentialism: a religious one indebted to the work of Kierkegaard and represented by such figures as Karl Jaspers and Gabriel Marcel, and an atheist one drawing inspiration from Nietzsche and Heidegger. And yet, he sought to demonstrate that only the second of these strands constituted an authentic existentialism. He insisted that religious belief was absolutely incompatible with the core existentialist principle that humans are fully free and responsible for their choices, unconstrained by any external agency or pre-determined moral principles. In other words, religious faith was, for Sartre, the archetypal form of "bad faith." And because his brand of existentialism has become so canonical, historians and philosophers have tended simply to adopt Sartre's account as their own and assume that existentialism, at least in postwar France, presupposed atheism.[16] But the very fact that Sartre was so concerned to make this argument should give us pause, and indeed, scholars have increasingly begun to attend to the powerful strain of religiously-inflected phenomenology in France, which in fact predated Sartrean existentialism.[17]

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[14] Ibid., 24.

[15] Ibid., 49.

[16] This has meant that the *Temps modernes* circle (Sartre, de Beauvoir, and Merleau-Ponty) and Camus have dominated the scholarly discussion of French existentialism. See footnote 3 above.

[17] See, esp. Baring, "Humanist Pretensions" and *The Young Derrida and French Philosophy, 1945-1968* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), ch. 2; See also the discussion of Christian existentialism in Jonathan Judaken, "Sisyphus' Progeny," passim. See also the debate between Dominique Janicaud and his interlocutors in *Phenomenology and the "Theological Turn": The French Debate* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2000).

As Baring has shown, the pre-war French engagement with phenomenology and existential philosophy was almost entirely dominated by Catholics, and particularly the "Philosophie de l'Esprit" group around René le Senne and Louis Lavelle.[18] But above all, it was Gabriel Marcel whose name became synonymous with Christian existentialism, despite his own discomfort with that term. Marcel, who had converted to Catholicism in the 1920s, broke with the idealist tradition in French philosophy in order to devote his attention to the concrete problem of human existence. His *Journal métaphysique*—published in 1927, the very same year as Heidegger's *Being and Time*—eschewed systematic thinking in order to explore the "ontological mystery" that reveals the limits of human understanding. Following Kierkegaard, Marcel found in human finitude, not the despair, nihilism, and absurdity that Sartre deduced from it, but a source of hope and faith in a supra-human agency. And where Sartre approached the inter-subjective relationship as one of mutual objectification and conflict, Marcel instead found in the human encounter with the divine the grounds for "our capacity to open ourselves to others" in a mutually enriching way.[19] Given the existence of this longer Christian existentialist tradition in France, when Sartre announced in 1945 that existentialism was incompatible with religious faith, Mounier retorted that "historically, existentialism is more often synonymous with Christian philosophy, transcendence, and humanism, than atheism and despair."[20] And to prove this, he drew an "existentialist tree" (Figure 2) that emphasized its religious genealogy and confined Sartrean atheism to a single, isolated branch.

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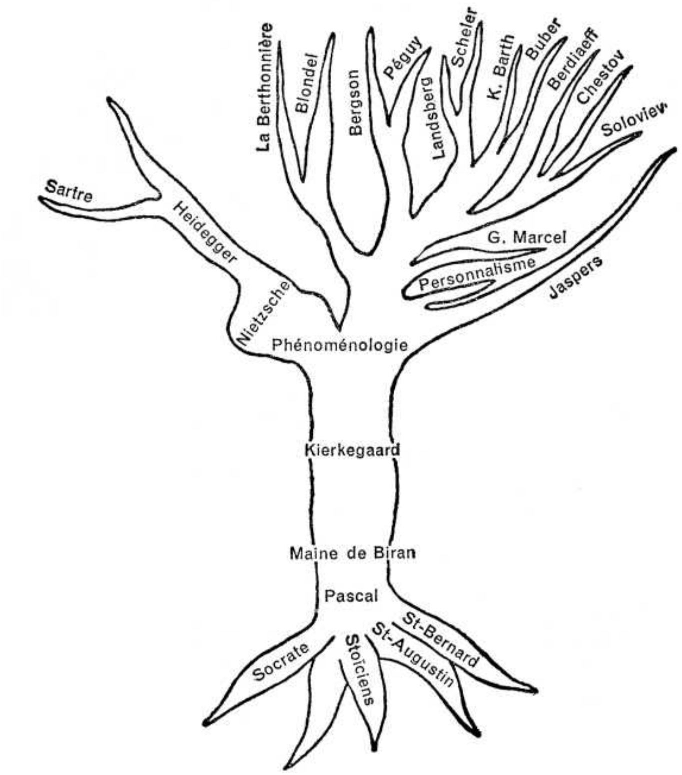
[18] Baring, "Humanist Pretensions," 595-98.

[19] Gabriel Marcel, *Philosophy of Existentialism,* trans. by Manya Harari (New York: Citadel, 1956), 100.

[20] This passage comes from the special issue of *Esprit* Mounier edited on existentialism in December of 1945. It is quoted in Baring, "Humanist Pretensions," 597.


La Berthonnière
Blondel
Bergson
Péguy
Landsberg
Scheler
K. Barth
Buber
Berdiaeff
Chestov
Soloview
Sartre
Heidegger
Nietzsche
G. Marcel
Personnalisme
Jaspers
Phénoménologie
Kierkegaard
Maine de Biran
Pascal
Socrate
Stoïciens
St-Augustin
St-Bernard

L'arbre existentialiste

Figure 2: "The Existentialist Tree." Emmanuel Mounier, *Introduction aux existentialismes* (Paris: Denoël, 1947).

The specifically theological engagement with existential phenomenology in France likewise predated Sartre. As early as 1932, the Thomist Society, under the leadership of Maritain and Chenu, devoted its annual "study day" to the question of phenomenology, attracting an international roster of guests that included Edith Stein, Alexandre Koyré, and Étienne Gilson.[21] That same year, Yves de Montcheuil published an article in the *Nouvelle revue théologique* on the phenomenology of René le

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[21] The text of this conference is available in *La Phénoménologie: journées d'études de la Société thomiste* (Juvisy: Cerf, 1932). The correspondence between Maritain and Chenu on the subject of this meeting indicates that they had also invited Emmanuel Levinas and Gabriel Marcel: Chenu to Maritain, 8 July, 1932, at the Cercle d'Études Jacques et Raïssa Maritain [Henceforth, CEJRM], Kolbsheim, France. See also the description of the event in Christian Dupont, *Phenomenology in French Philosophy: Early Encounters* (New York: Springer, 2014), 279-94.

Senne. His friend Gaston Fessard soon followed suit, devoting two long essays to the philosopher, whose *Obstacle et valeur* he dubbed "the first work of French phenomenology."[22] Fessard himself drew inspiration from many of the branches of the "existentialist tree," having spent the bulk of his time at Jersey reading Augustine, Bergson, and Blondel and writing his thesis on Maine de Biran. In 1934, he came into contact with another branch of this tree, when Jean Wahl introduced him to Gabriel Marcel. Following his conversion in 1929, Marcel had initially been drawn to the circle around Maritain, but he grew increasingly dissatisfied with the group's Thomist commitments. "I will never be able to subscribe to such a philosophy," he complained to Fessard in 1934, for its "fundamental lack of humility, peremptory and pedantic doctrinalism exasperate me."[23] That same year, Marcel asked Fessard to become his spiritual director, and thus was born a very close intellectual and spiritual friendship that lasted until the Jesuit's death in 1978. Fessard envisioned Marcel as the inheritor of a specifically French phenomenological tradition in which Blondel, Biran, and Pascal—and not Jaspers or Heidegger—were his precursors.[24] This was of course the very tradition with which Fessard himself identified, and consequently, he looked to existentialism as something that could breathe new life into Catholic theology and "restore youth and a new vigor to the most traditional of views."[25]

Like most Catholics, Fessard's postwar engagement with existentialism was framed by the context of Sartre's speech at the Club Maintenant. Precisely because Sartre had sought to align existentialism more closely with Marxist politics and against Catholicism, Catholics approached this as both a political and theological conflict pitting leftist and atheist existentialism against its Christian counterpart. In *France prends garde,* for instance, Fessard had assimilated atheist existentialism with Communism in order to undermine both. Here, he argued that if the Communists were to recognize the contradiction within the Marxist theory of history—between rationalism and mysticism, between continuous progress and the end of history—they would be forced to acknowledge themselves "prisoners of an absurd world, condemned to the infernal despair of J-P Sartre's existentialism."[26] The proof of this hidden kinship between Communism and atheist existentialism was that "after being born in Germany at the very moment when the crest of the Hitlerian wave was getting ready to submerge everything," the very same atheist existentialism "appears today *chez nous* at the crest of the Communist wave."[27] What Fessard was referring to, of course, was Heidegger's infamous relationship to National Socialism. And he did not hesitate to suggest that the pessimism and nihilism of Heidegger's thought was "an excellent propaedeutic to induce people both to recognize Hitler as their savior and cheerfully sacrifice their finitude to him."[28]

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[22] Yves de Montcheuil, "Une Philosophie du devoir," *Nouvelle revue théologique* (June 1932); Gaston Fessard, "Une Phénomenologie de l'existence: la philosophie de M. Le Senne," *Recherches de science religieuse* (April-June 1935), 131.

[23] Gabriel Marcel to Gaston Fessard, 1 August, 1934, in *Gabriel Marcel—Gaston Fessard: correspondance*, 69; On the circumstances of Marcel's break with Maritain, see the same volume, 74-82

[24] See Fessard's review of *Existentialisme chrétien*, an edited volume devoted to Gabriel Marcel, in *Études* (October 1947), 122-24.

[25] Gaston Fessard, "L'Exisentialisme et ses problèmes," (undated), in Fonds Fessard, AJPF, dossier 4/23.

Given the strict analogy Fessard perceived between Nazism and Communism, he was convinced that Sartre was guilty of precisely the same inducement vis-à-vis the PCF. Precisely because Sartre's "nauseous vision of the world is born of a spirit who has penetrated the truths of Marxism and remains faithful to its lie," Fessard reasoned, his work constitutes the highest fulfillment of the contradictions within the Marxist philosophy of history, which stem from its atheism.[29] It fell to Kierkegaard, the father of theistic existentialism, to furnish the solution to the impasses of atheist existentialism and Marxism. Unlike Sartre, Kierkegaard took the absurdity of human existence as a point of departure rather than an endpoint. For the Danish philosopher, "this 'absurd' is the means to a fulfillment of the Promise which exceeds all that his reason could imagine" and requires a leap of faith like the one Abraham took when he agreed to the "absurd" demand to sacrifice his son.[30] The choice Fessard presented his reader was clear: either the atheist alliance of Marxism and Sartrean existentialism, or a theistic existential philosophy capable of overcoming the shortcomings of its atheist counterpart.

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[26] Fessard, *France, prends garde de perdre ta liberté*, 135.

[27] Ibid., 137.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid., 138.

Daniélou arrived at a very similar categorization of the philosophical options available in postwar France. A month before Sartre proclaimed existentialism a humanism, Daniélou had already mapped out the coordinates of postwar intellectual life in an article for *Études*. Although he identified Communism, existentialism, and Christianity as the dominant movements in postwar France, Daniélou eschewed these categories in favor of classifying intellectuals according to "metaphysical belief," precisely because all of these "contemporary trends have both a materialist face and a spiritualist face."[31] And the examples he used to illustrate this were precisely the divergence between Sartre and Marcel within the existentialist family, as well as the opposition between Fessard and the Communist intellectual Pierre Hervé, both of whom were "masters of the Hegelian-Marxist dialectic, but made dramatically different uses of it."[32] Like most Catholics, then, Daniélou treated Sartrean existentialism as a deviant strain that had distorted Kierkegaard's philosophy and kept only its negative elements—a sense of despair untransfigured by faith.[33] It was only because Sartre viewed the relationship between God and man as a question of sovereignty that he perceived an opposition between existentialism and religious faith. But Daniélou maintained that Sartre's atheism was not in fact warranted by his own existentialist premises, for as Kierkegaard had shown, to "reject the primacy of essence over existence" is "no reason to deny that an Existence precedes our existence."[34] What Sartre had failed to recognize, then, was that human freedom and divine agency were in no way at odds, and that "the God of Christianity, far from being an obstacle to human freedom, is the living source of all profound spiritual liberty."[35] Daniélou thus approached Sartre's philosophy as a deviation from the authentically theistic existential tradition—one that had more in common with atheist Marxism than with the Christian phenomenology of Gabriel Marcel or Karl Barth.

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[30] Ibid., 165.

[31] Jean Daniélou, "La Vie intellectuelle en France: communisme, existentialisme, christianisme," *Études* (September 1945), 241; 242.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid., 246. Daniélou never missed an opportunity to reaffirm this point. See, for instance, "Les Catholiques face au marxisme et à l'existentialisme," *Travaux et documents du CCIF* (May 1946), 62, preserved in Fonds Jean Daniélou, AJPF, dossier 47/2; Daniélou, *Dialogues,*100.

If Daniélou and Fessard tended to conflate atheist existentialism with Marxism, however, this was in no small part because Sartre's circle did so as well. Nowhere was this clearer than in the dispute between Daniélou and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Sartre's collaborator at *Les Temps modernes*. In fact, this exchange did not even begin as a disagreement over phenomenology at all. Instead, it began when Merleau-Ponty intervened on behalf of Pierre Hervé in his dispute with Daniélou over Communism. Like Sartre, Merleau-Ponty was at this point a "fellow-traveler" of the PCF and conceived of his political engagement as the logical extension of his existentialist commitments. In his response to Daniélou, then, the philosopher attacked the Church from the perspective of both his political and his philosophical commitments. Anticipating themes that his student Marcel Gauchet would later explore, Merleau-Ponty argued that Christianity was fundamentally torn between the logic of transcendence and the logic of incarnation; between the religion of the Father and that of the Son.[36] The former devalued the world and any action within it, inspiring a conservative, escapist politics. But the Incarnation changed all this by reintroducing the divine into this fallen world and redeeming it as a theater of human action. "The political ambiguity of Christianity" derives from the opposition between these two logics: "in line with the Incarnation, it can be revolutionary. But the religion of the Father is conservative."[37] And yet, Merleau-Ponty was at pains to show that the logic of the Father invariably trumps that of the Son and that Christians will never lead the revolution, precisely because they believe that this world will ultimately pass away. Consequently,

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[34] Daniélou, *Dialogues*, 103.

[35] Ibid.

> the Christian bothers the established authorities because he is always elsewhere and because they can never be sure of him. But for the same reason, he worries the revolutionaries: they never feel that he is entirely with them. He is a bad conservative and an unreliable revolutionary.[38]

"Faith," in other words, always trumps "good faith," because it yokes believers to a pre-determined set of principles and prevents them from making a free political choice based on the concrete needs of the moment. And yet, Merleau-Ponty nevertheless maintained that adherence to the Communist Party did not imply the same sort of "bad faith" because it allowed a greater space for critique and personal choice, and therefore did not violate the core principles of existentialism. If the beliefs of the individual Communist did clash with a Party decision, however, this was because "the solutions he proposes are premature or historically false."[39]

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[36] The politico-theological significance of incarnation and transcendence would be central to the theory of secularization Gauchet develops in *The Disenchantment of the World: A Political History of Religion*, trans by Oscar Burge (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997).

[37] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "Foi et bonne foi," *Les Temps modernes* 5 (February 1946), 777.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid., 780.

Daniélou was quick to point out the contradiction between the philosopher's approach to Christianity and his faith in the Communist Party. In response to Sartre's and Merleau-Ponty's attempts to yoke existentialism to Marxist politics, Daniélou insisted that Sartre's "*gauchissement*"—a term that denotes both a movement to the left and a distortion—of the existentialist tradition owed to "influences that have nothing to do with existentialism itself and instead relate, much like Marx's atheism, to the old tradition of Feuerbach."[40] In other words, Daniélou did not dispute the affinity between atheist existentialism and Marxism, but instead denied that either of these movements remained true to the principles of existential philosophy. Merleau-Ponty had wrongly assumed, he argued, that Christianity was above all a theology of essences, as the Thomist emphasis on natural law and speculative reason might suggest. But "Christianity is not tied to a philosophy of essences," Daniélou retorted, and "there is a Christian existentialism that refuses, just like non-Christian existentialism, the primacy of essence over existence; of nature over freedom."[41] What Daniélou evidently had in mind here was the tradition with which he and the other architects of the "nouvelle théologie" identified. This tradition understood that the "Christian condition is not a nature but a vocation"—one that depends upon a "freely-made decision" to respond to the call of the divine and play "a historical role in the establishment of his Kingdom."[42] When considered from this "eschatological perspective," Daniélou maintained, the apparent conflict between incarnation and transcendence melts away in favor of a recognition that "God made himself man only in order to make man God."[43] "For the Christian," in other words, "transcendence and incarnation are part of a single order of reality, which is radically opposed to the political reality." This was something

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[40] Jean Daniélou, "Transcendance et Incarnation," *Dieu Vivant* (1946), 95.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Ibid., 95; 93; 95.

[43] Ibid., 92.

Merleau-Ponty could not grasp because his political theology had emptied "religious reality...of its own content and assimilated to the political reality by virtue of purely formal analogies."[44]

Daniélou thus used his response to Merleau-Ponty, not just to discredit atheist existentialism and the Marxist politics with which it was allied, but also to elaborate a coded theological critique of Thomism. There were important reasons for him to do so in 1946, because by then several Thomist philosophers had sought to appropriate the existentialist moment for their own purposes. The historian Étienne Gilson, for instance, argued that "Thomism is not *another* existential philosophy; it is the *only* one," for it was "already interpreted as a doctrine centering upon existence at a time when the existential philosophers were not yet born."[45] Maritain has made a similar point as early as 1943.[46] What these philosophers had in mind when they labeled Thomism an "existentialism," however, differed quite dramatically from the meaning the "new theologians" ascribed to this term. In the first place, the Thomists did not seek to lay claim to an "authentic" existentialism that predated its atheist appropriation and descended from the likes of Pascal or Kierkegaard. Instead, Gilson and Maritain presented Thomism as an *alternative* to the entire modern existentialist tradition, in both its theist and atheist iterations.

As a result, their vision for an authentic existential philosophy departed rather markedly from some of the key tenets of modern existentialism (in the conventional sense). Gilson recognized this himself when he acknowledged that there was "assuredly nothing Thomist" about Marcel's formulations, and that it was difficult to link Thomism to the modern ontologies descended from

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[44] Ibid.

[45] Étienne Gilson, *L'Être et l'essence*, quoted in Judaken, "Sisyphus's Progeny," 96 (emphasis mine); Étienne Gilson, "Le thomisme et les philosophies existentielles," *La Vie intellectuelle* 13 (June 1945), 145.

[46] Maritain likewise argued that "Thomism is the only authentic existentialism" in his *Court traité de l'existence et de l'existant* (Paris: Hartmann, 1964 [1947]), 9.

Kierkegaard because of the Danish philosopher's aversion to objective, systematic knowledge.[47] Consequently, Gilson sought less to existentialize Thomism than the reverse. He believed that Thomism could provide a healthy antidote to some of the excesses of existentialism, including its overweening emphasis on non-rational ways of knowing, subjective experience, and the primacy of existence over essence.[48] Maritain agreed, noting that modern existentialism had lost its way when it abandoned all "intelligible nature or essence."[49] In other words, these Thomists were not concerned to rescue the modern phenomenological tradition from its atheist deviation, as Daniélou and Fessard were, but rather to replace the entire edifice with a Thomist one. The "new theologians" were at pains to point this out and to present themselves as the authentic heirs to the modern existentialist tradition, above and beyond both its atheist and its Thomist distortions.[50]

More than anything else, it was the Catholic debate over Heidegger's phenomenology that crystallized these theological divisions between Thomists and the "nouvelle théologie." Initially, as Fessard's scathing remarks in *France prends garde* attest, French Catholics had simply conflated Heidegger and Sartre as the leading exponents of atheist existentialism. Heidegger's famous "Letter on Humanism," in which the philosopher firmly distanced himself from Sartrean existentialism, changed all this. Not only did the "Letter" reject Sartre's anthropocentrism, which was of course distasteful to Catholics, but it also opened the way for a possible theistic reading of Heidegger's phenomenology. Disavowing the atheist position of Sartre and company as "rash" and "an error in procedure," Heidegger placed new philosophical weight on the concept of the "holy" [*das Heilige*] and increasingly characterized his own position as "waiting for God."[51] And yet, Thomists like Gilson remained profoundly skeptical of Heidegger, alienated by his non-rational, esoteric style and his commitment to moving beyond metaphysics.[52] The reaction of the Jesuit theologians was rather different. Fessard and de Lubac had in fact helped to introduce Heidegger to a Catholic audience in 1940, when they published an overview of his work by the German theologian Karl Rahner in the journal they co-edited.[53] Moreover, Fessard was part of the team responsible for translating Heidegger's "Letter on Humanism" into French in 1947 and interpreted the text as proof that Heidegger's was definitively not an atheist philosophy.[54] Henri Bouillard, a fellow Jesuit and leading voice in the "nouvelle théologie," shared this position. One of the leading French authorities on Karl Barth and Martin Heidegger, Bouillard had paid a visit to Heidegger at Todtnauberg in 1947, and the meeting definitively convinced him that Heidegger's was in no way a nihilist or an atheist philosophy, and instead possessed important resources for the Catholic theologian.[55]

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[47] Gilson, "Le thomisme et les philosophies exisentielles," 149.

[48] As Gilson explained, "If it is urgent to recall, with Kierkegaard, that he who thinks exists, it is no less urgent to remember that he who exists thinks. Our experience of existence thus includes the thought we have about it, and the intervention of objective knowledge is no doubt required on this point, in order for phenomenology to accede to the level of ontology" (ibid., 153).

[49] Maritain, *Court traité*, 15.

[50] Fessard's review of Joseph de Tonquedec's *Une philosophie existentielle: l'existence d'après Jaspers* exemplifies his objections to the Thomist approach to existentialism. Fessard criticizes Tonquédec for simply "measuring the philosophy he attacks [Jaspers'] against his own traditional Thomism, as one compares a copy to the model. The critique remains extrinsic." The review appeared in *Études* (November 1945), 268-70.

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[51] Martin Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," in *Basic Writings,* ed. by David Farrell Krell (New York: Harper, 2008), 253; see George Kovacs, *The Question of God in Heidegger's Phenomenology* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1990), 252.

[52] See the discussion in Dominique Janicaud, *Heidegger en France*, vol. 1 (Paris: Albin Michel, 2001), 140-143.

[53] This article was mistakenly attributed to Hugo Rahner, Karl's brother: "Introduction au concept de philosophie existentiale chez Heidegger," *Recherches de science religieuse* 30 (1940), 152-171. Rahner's Heddegerian Thomism is without a doubt one of the most important contributions to twentieth-century Catholic theology. On Heidegger's influence on Rahner and Catholic theology in Germany, see Judith Wolfe, *Heidegger and Theology* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 157-62; 186-93; Jack Arhur Bonsor, *Rahner, Heidegger, and Truth: Karl Rahner's Notion of Christian Truth, The Influence of Heidegger* (Lanham, MD: The University of America, 1987): Thomas Sheehan, *Karl Rahner: The Philosophical Foundations* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1987), ch. 8.

[54] On Fessard's role in the translation, see Roger Munier's letters to Fessard, collected in Fonds Fessard, AJPF, dossier 33; see also Janicaud, *Heidegger en France*, 145. Fessard's own position can be deduced from his essay on "Heidegger et l'Existentialisme" (p. 12) and the many theistic accounts of Heideggerian philosophy (e.g., by Henri Birault and J.B. Lotz), all of which are preserved in the Fonds Fessard, AJPF, dossier 33. Heidegger also appears to have given Fessard one of the only original copies of his 1927 lecture on "Theologie und Philosophie," which was only published in 1970. See, for instance, the letter from Frans Vandenbussche on this text and the text itself, in the same fond.

According to Bouillard, the philosopher was anxious to dispel the misconceptions associated with the atheist reading of his work. In the first place, the conversation convinced Bouillard that Heidegger's vision of man as a "being-towards-death" [*Sein zum Tode*] did not constitute "a philosophy of despair" or "a nihilist philosophy," but simply indicated that man is "a being who has a relationship to death."[56] The Jesuit then asked Heidegger point-blank whether "Being" designated God in his framework, to which the philosopher responded that "Being is absolute and unconditioned," but that philosophy is incapable of determining whether or not it is God because "God is unknowable to the philosopher...one can only know him if he reveals himself."[57] Bouillard agreed that "the proof of God is not philosophical, but theological" and therefore concluded that Heidegger's attitude to religion had been misunderstood. "Heidegger is not an atheist," the Jesuit maintained, for he did not "oppose theology as such, but only a 'naturalist theology.'"[58] He concluded that the philosopher "has been totally misunderstood" by both his French interpreters, such as Sartre and de Waehlens, and by Protestant theologians such as Rudolf Bultmann. Both of these groups had read Heidegger's thought in anthropological terms—a misreading Bouillard attributed to the fact that Heidegger had "expressed his metaphysics in a psychological language" and that the "general interest tends more towards anthropology than towards metaphysics."[59] Like

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[55] See Bouillard's account of his visit on 20 September, 1947, Fonds Henri Bouillard, AJPF, dossier 2/40bis. After he was stripped of his teaching position at Fourvière amidst the crisis over the "nouvelle théologie," Bouillard would go on to write a dissertation on Barth at the Sorbonne in 1957.

[56] Bouillard's report on his visit to Heidegger, 20 September 1947, Fonds Henri Bouillard, AJPF, dossier 2/40bis.

[57] Ibid.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Ibid.

Fessard, then, Bouillard emerged from his meeting convinced that Heidegger's was not an atheist philosophy and that it yielded important resources for Catholic theology.

Catholic Theology between Humanism and Anti-Humanism

We are now better poised to understand how the Jesuits of the "nouvelle théologie" mobilized existentialist insights to develop their own Christian humanism—one distinct from both its atheist competitors and from parallel efforts on the part of Thomist theologians and philosophers. It was during this period that Jacques Maritain developed his groundbreaking Thomist theory of human rights, which would have a major impact on the Church's broader reorientation towards democracy and human rights in the postwar period. Underwriting Maritain's Catholic human rights discourse was a peculiarly Aristotelian and Thomist understanding of human nature, for he argued that these rights are guaranteed by "*what things are* in their intelligible type or essence, or by what the nature of man is."[60] In other words, Maritain's human rights discourse relied upon an essentialist understanding of human nature rooted in the unchanging dictates of natural law and intelligible to human reason without the aid of revelation.

This Thomist anthropology was worlds away from the dynamic anthropology developed contemporaneously by Fessard, de Lubac, Daniélou, and Teilhard de Chardin. Their approach instead shared much with the negative anthropology of existentialism—the notion that the human subject is not a fixed essence, but instead constitutes itself through an ongoing process of self-transcendence, or negation. The "new theologians" likewise envisioned the human person as a process rather than a nature or essence, driven by a kind of negativity or lack at the heart of human nature. For these Jesuits, such a negativity was nothing other than the call of the divine within us and the dynamism to which it gave rise was a testament to the eschatological horizon that defines and orients human life. In some respects, then, these theologians drew upon the anti-humanist tradition associated with the phenomenology of Heidegger and his French disciples. But because they transformed the negativity at the heart of the human into a marker of human dignity and the precondition for human elevation toward the divine, their anthropology cannot be adequately described as anti-humanist. Instead, the existential eschatology these theologians articulated refused the very terms of the secular philosophical debate between humanism and anti-humanism. It likewise refused the separation between the natural and supernatural orders underpinning Maritain's anthropology and human rights discourse. Instead, de Lubac's circle articulated a theological anthropology that resisted the legal and political deployment of human life, whether in the form of a human rights discourse such as Maritain's, or in the biopolitical projects advanced by Vichy and the Third Reich. In this sense, the theological anthropology articulated by these Jesuits was yet another plank in their ongoing counter-political project.

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[60] Jacques Maritain, *Man and the State* (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1998 [1951]), 96-7. Emphasis in original.

For these Jesuits, phenomenology provided Catholic theology with a useful set of resources for illuminating the interconnected problems of time and anthropology. What the existentialists had understood, Fessard believed, was the need to ground humanism not in any essential or natural quality inhering in man, as the Thomists did, but rather in "the freedom that raises him above all of nature."[61] The fundamental insight of existentialism was to grasp the dynamic, temporal quality of the human person who "ceaselessly overcomes what he is" in each free choice he makes. It is in and through each of these free acts that we not only transcend and create ourselves, Fessard maintained, but also draw closer to God. "This transcendence of the spirit in relation to itself, this transcendence that is immanent to the spirit and identical to the temporality of the spirit," he concluded, is what "grounds and safeguards the true transcendence of God in relation to man."[62] Fessard here transforms the existentialist and Kojèvian understanding of human freedom as a constant process of negation and self-overcoming, into a warrant for a very different kind of transcendence. One might well imagine these interlocutors protesting that such an approach simply sacrificed human freedom to a higher power, but Fessard insisted that divine and human freedom were not mutually exclusive, and indeed, that the second depends upon the first. This is because the process of "becoming human" in and through each of our freely chosen acts is inseparable from what Kierkegaard called the process of "becoming Christian." It is precisely at the moment "when I affirm myself intensely and irreducibly" that it is Christ who in fact acts within me, as "the origin of the free act by which, in temporalizing myself, I respond to his call and thus achieve authentic personhood."[63] Grace, in other words, is the true source of human freedom. Anthropogenesis cannot be achieved through human agency alone, as atheist existentialism maintained, and instead requires the mediation of the divine person.

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[61] Gaston Fessard, presentation at conference on Humanism and Existentialism at the Institut d'Études Italiennes, 27 October, 1948, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, dossier 4/23bis.

But precisely because salvation was not simply a question of the individual's relationship to God, Fessard felt the need to develop the insights of phenomenology into a theology of history. The existentialists had been right to "begin from an analysis of man as a temporal being," but precisely because of this fact, it must also be "a reflection on history in the most conventional sense of the term," and consequently, "a reflection on the meaning of history."[64] Fessard explained just what such a reflection would entail in a 1947 article on "Theology and History," which appeared in the pages of *Dieu Vivant*. Here, Fessard argued that the insights of existentialism provided an alternative approach to history than the one offered by "philosophies of essence" such as Thomism and by philosophies or theologies of history concerned with the succession of historical stages or events. Instead, phenomenology pointed the way to a "reflection on history" that would also be a dynamic and dialectical anthropology. Such a "reflection on history," Fessard explained, "tends of itself to constitute an *ontology* in which the human reality [*la réalité humaine*] is no longer envisaged solely from the perspective of a timeless nature, but, on the contrary, as an *essentially historical* nature."[65] This "ontology of historical man" would thus entail an "*analysis of the structures of man's historical being*."[66] Atheist existentialism could offer few resources here, Fessard insisted, because what in fact structures human historical being is "*the dialectic in virtue of which this being can engender itself to supernatural life*, which is to say, to *become christian*."[67] It was here that Christian existentialism could offer particularly fruitful resources.

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[62] Gaston Fessard, "Reflexions en conclusion des classes sur Hegel et Heidegger," 29 May 1943, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, dossier 29/G, p. 3.

[63] Ibid., 5.

[64] Gaston Fessard, "Note sur l'histoire chez Heidegger," 29 March, 1960, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, dossier 33.

At this point, Fessard turned to his own theological fusion of Hegel and St. Paul in order to bridge the gap between the phenomenological time of individual self-overcoming and the "objective" time of history and salvation. Returning to the Jew-Gentile dialectic he had developed in 1936 (discussed in Chapter Four), Fessard insisted that St. Paul's references to Jews and Gentiles should not be read as designating actual historical groups or events. Instead, they must be read as "existential attitudes that characterize the various positions of man before God," and therefore as "'historical categories' whose interplay...defines the *becoming-Christian* of each man and of humanity as a whole, in relation to the Second Coming, the end of history."[68] Fessard thus defined the Gentile-

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[65] Gaston Fessard, "Théologie et histoire: à propos du temps de la conversion d'Israël," *Dieu Vivant* 8 (1947), 60. Emphasis in original. Fessard's use of "réalité humaine" here is no doubt a reference to Heidegger, given that this was the prevailing French translation for "dasein" at the time.

[66] Ibid, 58. Emphasis in original.

[67] Ibid. Emphasis in original.

[68] Ibid., 49.

Jew dialectic as the very motor of human historical being, both in terms of the individual human person who inhabits history and in terms of the historical drama that encompasses the whole human race. Because this division is built into very structure of our historical being, Fessard insisted, "it cannot cease until the day when the New Man, having attained his perfect stature, will fully and definitively unite these two peoples in his total mystical Body."[69] In other words, human life within history can only ever be a dynamic process of "becoming-Christian" and never the state of "being-Christian." This was something Fessard felt that Thomism, with its essentialist categories, had failed to grasp. For the Jesuit, however, the dynamic structure of human historical being was the very mark of our supernatural vocation. "One cannot *be* Christian in the way one is French or English," he reminded his Thomist interlocutors, for "being-Christian must never be conceived in the manner of a *natural* reality." This is because "the genesis of this being is essentially supernatural. This is what Kierkegaard wanted to make understood when he said: we never *are*—in the full sense of the word—Christian, but must always *become it*."[70] Only when history itself comes to an end with the Parousia can we fully be-Christian, Fessard insisted, but this eschatological horizon is precisely what structures our entire existence as historical beings. The two contemporary Christian thinkers who had best understood this, he felt, were Gabriel Marcel and Teilhard de Chardin.

Although Teilhard de Chardin showed little interest in existentialism himself, it is significant that Fessard invoked him here. Indeed, Fessard told de Lubac that he had envisioned this article in large part as a defense of Teilhard, who was facing increasingly steep opposition in Rome.[71] In 1946, Teilhard de Chardin had returned to Paris after spending twenty years in China, and his friends hoped that the Roman authorities might finally sign off on the publication of his *Phénomène humain.*

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[69] Ibid., 50.

[70] Ibid., 53. Emphasis in original

[71] See Gaston Fessard to Henri de Lubac, 7 November, 1946 and Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, 2 August, 1946, AJPF, 73/3.

But the crisis over the "nouvelle théologie" soon put an end to these hopes and Teilhard de Chardin was forced to turn down the offer of a Chair at the Collège de France. Despite his own indifference towards existentialism, the fact that Fessard invoked Teilhard de Chardin and Gabriel Marcel in the same breath is an indication of the affinities between Teilhard's anthropology and the "ontology of historical man" that Fessard sought to develop with the insights of phenomenology. As we saw in Chapter Two, Teilhard de Chardin's work as a paleontologist had led him to conceive of evolution as a cosmic process of anthropogenesis or "hominization," as he put it. For Teilhard, the physical evolution of the animal species (the biosphere) was only the first step in a fundamentally spiritual process that had birthed human consciousness (the noosphere) and would culminate in the advent of a fully personal universe embodied by Christ, who is the Omega Point of evolution itself. In other words, evolution should be understood as the progressive "personalization" of the universe, through which each human person becomes more fully conscious of his or her personhood by being incorporated into the whole. What Teilhard shared with Fessard, then, and with Christian existentialism as well, was an understanding that the human being is a *process* rather than an essence or a nature, and that it will only fully become itself at the end of time.

Implicit in the dynamic anthropology developed by these theologians was a sense that human beings are never fully self-sufficient or identical to themselves, that a certain negativity persisted at the heart of the human. In this respect, their anthropology was sometimes difficult to distinguish from the anti-humanism that prevailed amongst many of their secular counterparts. This became particularly clear during a 1944 "Debate on Sin" between the ex-Surrealist (and ex-Catholic) writer Georges Bataille and Jean Daniélou. The ensuing discussion brought together the leading lights of postwar French thought—Sartre, de Beauvoir, Merleau-Ponty, Albert Camus, Gabriel Marcel, Maurice Blanchot, Pierre Klossowski, Jean Paulhan, Michel Leiris, Maurice de Gandillac, Jean Hyppolite, Louis Massignon, and Marcel Moré—and it was eventually published in the pages of

Dieu Vivant.[72] The debate focused upon a talk by Bataille, drawn from what would become *On Nietzsche*, in which he applied a Nietzschean "transvaluation of values" to the problem of sin. By violating the integrity of beings, Bataille argued, sin is precisely what makes possible a communication between them, and therefore partakes of a higher morality than the moral law that forbids it. And while Bataille acknowledged that the state of openness and disaggregation achieved by the sinner resembled that of the mystic, he felt that the latter ultimately steps back from the abyss by taking refuge in the logic of salvation and the closure of the divine being, whereas the sinner "leaves the wound gaping."[73]

The substance of Daniélou's rejoinder was to demonstrate that Bataille's position was not quite as incompatible with Christianity as he might think. In the first place, the Jesuit denied that the mystic achieved anything like the self-possession and spiritual comfort Bataille imagined. "No one is less comfortable than the mystic, whom God perpetually disturbs and prevents from withdrawing into himself," Daniélou insisted. In fact, the mystique "realizes in ecstasy that total decentering of self which is effectively what we are all tending towards, and which renders one totally communicable to others."[74] Nor was this state of disaggregation particular to the extreme case of the mystic. Indeed, Daniélou pointed out that there was a kind of kinship between sin and grace more generally. By establishing a "tragic duality" within the soul that alienates it from itself, sin actually serves a salvific function "inasmuch as it manifests the fact of self-possession, reveals it as guilty, and thereby opens the way for grace."[75] But Daniélou was also keen to demonstrate that sin was by no means the only way to achieve this form of self-dispossession necessary for communication. He insisted that sanctity likewise required one to accept "as the normal condition of the soul," a "total dispossession, by which it appropriates nothing and relies entirely upon God."[76] Daniélou thus sought to demonstrate that religious faith, and Christianity in particular, was by no means incompatible with the radical self-dispossession Bataille sought. In fact, it was a requirement for union with the divine. The debate between Bataille and Daniélou thus revealed a rather unexpected affinity between a certain Augustinian strain in postwar Catholic theology and the anti-humanist tenor of much secular philosophy from the same period.

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[72] "Discussion sur le péché," *Dieu Vivant* 4 (1945), 83-133. The initial speech and ensuing discussion are reproduced in their entirety in Georges Bataille, *Discussion sur le péché,* ed. by Michel Surya (Paris: Lignes, 2010).

[73] Ibid., 93.

[74] Ibid.

[75] Ibid., 93-4.

This affinity found its most robust theological expression in the work of Henri de Lubac, and in his controversial *Surnaturel*, in particular. But de Lubac had already begun to address these themes in his work on atheist humanism, where he elaborated a theological alternative to both humanism and anti-humanism. His 1947 essay "The Search for a New Man," for instance, opened with the question of whether there is such thing as a Christian humanism, and although he resisted this particular label, the essay was devoted to demonstrating that Christianity alone can guarantee human dignity. It therefore spends considerable time refuting the dominant atheist humanisms of his day, which presume that God must "die in order for man to live" and tend to treat the human being as an object.[77] Here, de Lubac has in mind not just Marxist materialism, but also Comtean positivism and Nazi biopolitics, and he is at pains to show how this form of objectification denies the internal life of the human person, a "deadly negation" which can only yield slavery and violence rather than emancipation. In its stead, de Lubac sought to articulate a theological anthropology that would resist this sort of objectification, which is the precondition for any political deployment of human life.

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[76] Ibid., 95.

[77] Henri de Lubac, "The Search for a New Man," reprinted in Henri de Lubac, *The Drama of Atheist Humanism,* trans. by Anne Englund Nash (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1995), 400.

What these humanisms have missed and Christianity has understood, according to de Lubac, is that the defining feature of human existence is precisely that which eludes objectification and abstraction. "Those who say to us: here is man, never show us anything but the traces of man's passage," he insisted, echoing the classic existentialist dictum that man is "the being which is what it is not and and is not what it is."[78] And indeed, de Lubac pointed to Marcel and Jaspers as examples to be emulated, for they had broken with "a stifling objectivism" and turned to the mystery of faith in order to recover a "total image of man."[79] These existentialist philosophers had understood that man is defined first and foremost by a lack, or what de Lubac calls "a wound," which is not "an obstacle to his greatness: it is, on the contrary, the (intolerable) sign of it."[80] This wound is the call of the divine within us, and it manifests itself as "an essential dissatisfaction," "the presentiment of another existence," which prevents us from ever being satisfied with purely terrestrial structures, projects, and ideologies.[81] It is what compels us, not only to combat injustice in this world, but also to raise our gaze beyond the horizon of terrestrial existence. To do away with this unease, this wound, would be to destroy man himself. And de Lubac therefore does not hesitate to affirm that even if an earthly messianism such as Marxism were capable of satisfying this yearning and thereby putting an end to all human striving, the effect would be to reduce man to the level of a thing. Atheist humanism, by seeking to stifle the anxiety that drives us towards God, can offer little more than an ersatz liberation in which man appears "to free himself only in order to fall back...into a harder slavery."[82] True liberation can only come at the end of time and anthropology therefore cannot be separated from eschatology, in de Lubac's formulation. It is the call of this eschatological future which accounts for both the negativity or lack at the heart of human life, as well as its unique dignity, because it is precisely what raises humans above the level of purely natural beings.

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[78] Ibid., 426; Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, trans. by H.E. Barnes (New York: Washington Square Press, 1992 [1943]), 174.

[79] De Lubac, "The Search for a New Man," 426.

[80] Ibid., 456.

[81] Ibid., 457.

[82] Ibid., 430.

De Lubac articulated the theological rationale for this anthropology in *Surnaturel*, his most famous and most controversial work—the book that was perhaps most responsible for the eventual condemnation of the "nouvelle théologie." If *The Drama of Atheist Humanism* laid out de Lubac's critique of the dominant atheist humanisms of his day, *Surnaturel,* published two years later, presents something like a theological alternative to these humanisms. In it, de Lubac argued against the theory—dear to the Thomists of his day—of a possible state of "pure nature" in which human beings would be oriented towards an exclusively natural end and possess everything needed to achieve it. De Lubac traced the genealogy of this concept to the importation of Aristotelian categories into Catholic theology by early-modern Scholastics such as Cajetan. Initially, the notion of a state of "pure nature" had been introduced as a purely abstract tool to facilitate theological discussion, a "convenient fiction" rather like the idea of a "state of nature" in political theory.[83] Its primary function had been to safeguard the gratuity of grace—the principle that grace is a gift freely bestowed by God and in no way owed to humans—by demonstrating that grace is not built into the very definition of human nature; that it is possible to conceive of human life in purely natural terms, without reference to a supernatural end. But the effect of this intellectual exercise was to treat grace as something external and "super-added" onto an already complete human nature. Consequently, de Lubac argued, the theory of "pure nature" had slowly hardened from a mere fiction into a descriptor of *actual* human existence, underwriting a theological distinction between the natural and supernatural ends of human life. Henceforth, an entire sphere of human action—political, ethical, intellectual, social—would be conceived in purely natural terms, without reference to a supernatural end. But in thus securing the autonomy of the natural order, de Lubac warned that the "pure nature" theory had functioned as an "unconscious accomplice" in the secularization of intellectual, social, and political life more broadly.[84]

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[83] Henri de Lubac, *Surnaturel: études historiques* (Paris: Lethielleux, 2010 [1946]), 107. David Grummett makes this comparison to the "state of nature" in "De Lubac, Grace, and the Pure Nature Debate," 131.

Through a painstaking genealogical reconstruction of this theological development, de Lubac sought to demonstrate that the concept of "pure nature" marked a significant departure from the teachings of the Church Fathers and Thomas himself, who instead affirmed that humans are created with a desire for the beatific vision that inheres within our very nature. By placing this desire at the foundation of what it means to be human, de Lubac pointed once again to the constitutive lack at the heart of human nature:

> This desire is in us, yes, but it is not *of* us, since it can only be satisfied by mortifying us. Or rather, it is so much in us that it *is* us, and it is we who do not belong to ourselves: *non sumus nostri*. Our own nature is not our own. And because the truth of our being is to be, in a sense, alienated from ourselves, we awaken to ourselves by feeling ourselves *bound*.[85]

This sounds remarkably similar to the anti-humanist rhetoric that would increasingly pervade secular philosophy after Heidegger's "Letter on Humanism" appeared a few months later, or indeed, to a certain kind of Protestant anthropology. But in fact, de Lubac envisioned this negativity at the heart of the human as the very source of human dignity; as that which raises us above every other element of the natural order and indicates that we are made to participate in divine life. It is what makes it impossible to even conceive of human life in purely natural terms. This desire for the beatific vision, while it "is essentially in our nature and expresses its foundation," is thus also "something of God," and this means that "there can be only one end for man: the supernatural end."[86] Contemporary

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[84] Henri de Lubac, "Remarques sur l'histoire du mot 'surnaturel,'" *Nouvelle revue théologique* 61 (1934), 364; see also De Lubac, *Surnaturel,* 153;

[85] De Lubac, *Surnaturel,* 488-9. Emphasis added in first two cases only.

[86] Ibid., 487; 493.

Thomist theologians had lost sight of this, de Lubac believed, because they remained beholden to the notion of a "pure nature." They tended to overemphasize the distinction between the natural and supernatural ends of the human person, and the concomitant autonomy of the temporal order.

In making this argument, de Lubac may well have had the work of Jacques Maritain in mind, whose contemporaneous human rights discourse bore all the markers of the Thomist approach de Lubac opposed. By the end of the war, this erstwhile partisan of the Action Française had repurposed his Thomism in the service of Christian democracy and human rights, and he would eventually play an important role in drawing up the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. Maritain's innovation was to ground human rights in the natural law tradition so central to Thomism, but which had long been considered an obstacle to the rights tradition. Based upon an anthropology derived from Aristotle and Aquinas, Maritain argued that human rights necessarily follow from the nature of human beings inscribed in natural law:

> ...there is no right unless a certain order...is inviolably required by *what things are* in their intelligible type or essence, or by what the nature of man is, and is cut out for: an order by virtue of which certain things like life, work, freedom are due to the human person.[87]

Because natural law proclaims that humans are ordered toward certain ends by virtue of their very essence as human beings, they are necessarily owed the right to fulfill these ends. This argument is based on an Aristotelian metaphysics, filtered through the sixteenth-century Thomist commentators, which affirms that an essence must possess everything it needs to achieve the ends prescribed by its own nature. By grounding human rights in natural law, of which God is ultimately the author, Maritain avoids the charge of relativism and of divinizing human will. But because natural law is also intelligible to human reason unaided by revelation, this means that non-Christians can apprehend it and appreciate its binding force as well.

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[87] Maritain, *Man and the State*, 96-7. Emphasis in original. For alternatives to Maritain's natural-law derivation of human rights, see Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 1981) and Leo Strauss, *Natural Right and History* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1950).

This is critical because, as we saw in Chapter Two, Maritain firmly upheld the Thomist distinction between the temporal and spiritual orders. He had accepted that "the modern age is not a sacral, but a secular age" and that "temporal society has gained complete differentiation and full autonomy" from the spiritual order.[88] What was needed, in this context, was a "*civic or secular* faith" capable of transcending confessional differences and appealing to both Christians and non-believers.[89] Maritain believed that human rights and respect for the dignity of the person could perform this unifying function within a pluralist society, because even though the true source and justification for these rights came from God, they were intelligible to all human beings by virtue of their humanity:

> Thus it is that men possessing quite different, even opposite metaphysical or religious outlooks, can converge...provided that they similarly revere, perhaps for quite diverse reasons, truth and intelligence, human dignity, freedom...We must therefore maintain a sharp and clear distinction between the human and temporal creed which lies at the root of common life and which is but a set of *practical conclusions* or of *practical points of convergence*—on the one hand; and on the other, the *theoretical justifications*, the conceptions of the world and of life, the philosophical or religious creeds which found, or claim to found, these practical conclusions...[90]

This distinction between theory and practice, between spiritual and temporal commitments is very similar to the logic invoked, as we have seen, by those Catholics who sought to open a dialogue with the Communists. It should therefore come as little surprise that postwar Left Catholicism was deeply indebted to Maritain's understanding of the relationship between the temporal and spiritual orders, not least because so many of these Catholics were Thomists.[91]

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[88] Ibid., 159.

[89] Ibid., 110. Emphasis in original.

[90] Ibid., 111. Emphasis in original.

[91] Gerd-Rainer Horn makes much of this debt in "Left Catholicism," 24-30. So does Philippe Chenaux in *L'Église catholique et le communisme*, 196-204. Marie-Dominique Chenu, for instance, acknowledged his debt to Maritain in *Théologie du travail*, 35 and in his correspondence with Maritain, held at CEJRM. Maritain also had a significant influence on Italian Left Catholicism. See, for instance, A. Ardigò, "Jacques Maritain e 'Cronache Sociali' (ovvero Maritain e il dossettismo)," in *Il pensiero politico di Jacques Maritain,* ed. by G. Galeazzi (Milan: Massimo, 1974), 195-202.

Far from a mere political disagreement, what this suggests is that the split within the postwar French Church was above all a *theological* one concerning the nature of the human person and the relationship between spiritual and temporal affairs. For Thomists, whatever their political affiliation, de Lubac's theological anthropology was unacceptable because it abolished the proper distinction between the natural and supernatural ends of the human person. And this was a problem because this distinction was precisely what secured the autonomy and integrity of *both* the natural and supernatural orders. By denying that human life possessed a distinct natural end alongside its supernatural one, de Lubac seemed "simultaneously to compromise the legitimate domain of the secular and the contrasting suprisingness and gratuitousness of the divine works of freedom."[92] According to the Aristotelio-Thomist definition of nature, such as the one underwriting Maritain's human rights discourse, to argue that an absolute desire for the beatific vision inheres within human nature would imply that grace is somehow *owed* to us by virtue of our nature—in other words, that it is our *right.*[93] In this way, de Lubac's argument appeared to severely limit God's sovereign independence. But his Thomist critics complained that it *also* had the effect of undermining human freedom and the autonomy of the natural order. For these theologians, one of the great virtues of the Thomist system had been to carve out a realm of human life possessing its own independent value apart from the Church. De Lubac's Augustinianism threatened to undermine all this. By reducing human life to an exclusively supernatural end, the Jesuit seemed to deny any autonomous value to the wide range of human activities, including politics, performed with a purely natural end in view. He had thus vitiated the basis for Maritain's human rights discourse, which rooted human dignity in those aspects of our nature discernable to Christians and non-Christians alike.

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[92] John Milbank, *The Suspended Middle: Henri de Lubac and the Debate Concerning the Supernatural* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005), 20. The Thomist critique of *Surnatural* is explored in greater detail in Chapter 7.

[93] On the centrality of this metaphysics to the Thomist critique of the nouvelle théologie, see John Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1990), 219. Milbank makes a similar argument in greater detail in *The Suspended Middle* and it was central to the Thomist critique of Surnaturel during the Fourvière crisis. See, for example, Charles Boyer's critique in "Nature pur et surnaturel dans le "Surnaturel" du Père de Lubac," *Gregorianum* 28 (1947): 379-95.

From de Lubac's perspective, however, the Thomist effort to expand the value and dignity of human life by endowing it with a distinct natural end had precisely the opposite of its intended effect. To define human nature in purely natural terms, he argued, was to imprison rather than to empower it. The "pure nature" theory, even in its hypothetical form, had reduced man to a being "amputated from his transcendent finality and the superior faculties by which he is constituted...in the image of God."[94] Such a being could only experience grace as an external "invading force that replaces all natural activity and reduces the one it liberates to a new slavery."[95] Instead, de Lubac insisted that grace is "not external to the spirit, but internal; not disaggregating, but consolidating; not compelling, but liberating."[96] This was precisely what the Thomist inheritors of the "pure nature" theory could not see because they already presumed what would become the foundational logic of modern atheist humanism—that human freedom and dignity were basically at odds with a radical dependence on the divine; that to empower human nature was necessarily to limit the scope of the supernatural. *Surnaturel* thus applied what de Lubac had argued in *The Drama of Atheist Humanism* to the realm of theology, by showing how the logic of humanism invariably degenerates into anti-humanism and that a humanism premised upon the notion of a distinct natural end for human life is no humanism at all.

This might seem like a relatively abstract theological debate, but it had significant political implications. Maritain's anthropology allowed for a vision of human dignity and rights that, although it derived from Catholic theology, did not require any reference to the supernatural and could thus be encoded in a secular legal framework. By translating his theological anthropology into a legal framework, Maritain sought to protect the human person from the violence of the state, in the context of the systematic and spectacular disregard for the sanctity of human life displayed so recently by the Third Reich. But, for the very same reason, de Lubac was highly suspicious of any effort to inscribe human life within a legal or political framework, given that this had been precisely the impulse behind the Vichy and Nazi biopolitics. What gave human life its dignity, from his perspective, was precisely that which eluded the political and could not be codified in legal categories. But this was precisely what the theory of "pure nature" had vitiated. By disarticulating human nature from its supernatural end, this theory had reduced man to a mere "*animal politicum*" for whom "laws, ordinances, magistracies are made," and who must "contribute his part to the good functioning of the City, without a view to the beyond."[97] The characteristic feature of the supernatural, on the other hand, was precisely that it lay "outside the categories of law...which play such a great role in the treatises concerning the state of pure nature."[98] De Lubac's an anti-foundationalist and dynamic anthropology—which he shared with Gaston Fessard, Jean Daniélou, and Teilhard de Chardin, but also with Christian existentialists like Gabriel Marcel—thus defied inscription within a legal or political framework, whether it be the discourse of human rights or something rather more menacing. By placing the supernatural at the heart of the human, de Lubac's anthropology also made it impossible to bracket religious commitments in order to arrive at a pragmatic compromise with non-believers on political questions. In this way, *Surnaturel* represented the logical extension of his circle's longstanding refusal to translate theological concepts into political ones, insisting upon the theologian's purely *critical* role vis-à-vis political ideologies.

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[94] De Lubac, *Surnaturel,* 107.

[95] Ibid., 69.

[96] Ibid., 70.

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[97] Ibid., 107-8.

[98] Ibid., 494.

Existential Eschatology and the Politics of History

What should by now be clear is that within the postwar debates amongst Christians, Marxists, and existentialists, the "humanism" question was invariably bound up with the problem of time and history. For Marxists and existentialists, as much as for the "new theologians," human life was fundamentally temporal in its structure, and the postwar debate on humanism was thus necessarily *also* a debate about the structure of historical time. Nowhere was this clearer than in the theological anthropology articulated by de Lubac, Fessard, Teilhard de Chardin, and Daniélou, for whom the eschatological horizon of history structured human life at the most basic level. If, for these theologians, there was a basic dynamism or negativity at the heart of the human being, this was because it could only truly become itself when history came to an end and it was incorporated into the body of Christ. Yoking anthropology to eschatology in this way was crucial because it allowed these theologians to avoid the individualist premises of both Sartrean existentialism and a human rights framework. If, as de Lubac argued, each individual possesses an inalienable desire for the divine, this is because "a Future is being prepared in which all are invited to collaborate," in which "the salvation of each is a function of the salvation of all."[99] Defining human nature in eschatological terms thus allowed these theologians to root the individual's relationship to God in the collective history of human salvation. On the other hand, as we saw in Chapter 5, eschatology also provided a weapon against the Marxist philosophy of history and those who sought to reconcile it with a Catholic theology of history. In this way, the postwar turn to eschatology was the logical extension of the counter-political discourse these Jesuits had developed during their wartime struggle against fascism. At a time when Catholics invoked the duties of incarnation and a providential reading of human history to legitimize the Vichy government, these theologians appealed to a different kind of history in order to underwrite their resistance activities: the history of salvation. In the postwar period, drawing upon the insights of phenomenology and reacting to the specter of Communism, they developed these reflections on time and history into a generalized counter-political tool that could be wielded against both their political and their theological opponents.

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[99] De Lubac, "The Search for a New Man," 452-3.

De Lubac and his friends were by no means the only ones with the end of the world on their mind in the late-1940s. If the liberation was a moment of optimism for some, there were many who found little reason to rejoice given the catastrophic events of the war, the onset of a new global conflict between the two world powers, and the possibility of nuclear annihilation. In 1945, then, the End Times were very much on the minds of many Christians. No publication expressed this particular strain of the postwar Christian imagination better than *Dieu Vivant.* It was the brainchild of two Catholic laymen—Marcel Moré and Louis Massignon—and Jean Daniélou. Massignon was a Catholic convert and scholar of Islam whose vision of a shared Abrahamic tradition linking Christianity, Judaism, and Islam would have a significant impact on the Second Vatican Council.[100] Moré had initially been drawn to *Esprit* and Christian Democracy, but the war had convinced him, just as it had convinced de Lubac and his friends, of the need to correct an excessive Catholic concern for "incarnation" with a renewed attention to the eschatological dimensions of the faith.[101] This insight grew out of the regular meetings Moré hosted at his home during the war, which brought together Catholic laypeople and priests, secular intellectuals, Protestants, and Orthodox theologians such as Vladimir Lossky and Nikolai Berdyaev.[102] It was at one such meeting, for instance, that the famous "discussion on sin" between Bataille and Daniélou had taken place. These inter-confessional meetings were the crucible out of which *Dieu Vivant* emerged in 1945. Although lay Catholics edited the journal, its committee of readers was deliberately inter-confessional and included a Protestant (Pierre Burgelin), an Orthodox theologian (Lossky), a secular intellectual (Hyppolite), and a Catholic (Gabriel Marcel). In addition, however, a "vigilance committee" staffed by Catholic clergy was tasked with ensuring the journal's compliance with Church teaching.[103] In his capacity as leader of this committee and go-between with the office of the Archbishop of Paris, Daniélou sat in on the meetings of the editorial board and served as the journal's "theological advisor."[104]

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[100] On Massignon's influence on Vatican II, see Anthony O'Mahoney, "Catholic Theological Perspectives on Islam at the Second Vatican Council," *New Blackfriars* 88 (July 2007): 385-98; Neal Robinson, "Massignon, Vatican II and Islam as an Abrahamic religion," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 2, no. 2 (1991): 182-205. On Massignon's relationship to Daniélou, see Marie-Thérèse Bessirard, "Louis Massignon et le Père Daniélou," in *Louis Massignon et ses contemporains*, ed. by Jacques Keyrell (Paris: Karthala, 1997).

[101] On Moré's "conversion" from incarnation to eschatology, see Étienne Fouilloux, "Une vision eschatologique du christianisme: *Dieu Vivant* (1945-1955)," *Revue d'histoire de l'Église de France* 57 (1971), 51.

[102] On the composition of these meetings, see Madeleine Davy to Jean Daniélou, 7 November, 1941, Fonds Jean Daniélou, AJPF, 49/B. They appear to have involved about 30 men and 7 or 8 women.

The mission of *Dieu Vivant,* as explained in the opening editorial of the first issue, was twofold: to foster ecumenical dialogue and to advance "an eschatological conception of Christianity."[105] Invoking the idolatrous doctrines of Nazism, Communism, and capitalism, the editorial announced the creation of *Dieu Vivant* "at a moment which makes one think of the darkest pages of the Apocalypse."[106] Precisely echoing the terms in which the Jesuits of *Témoignage chrétien* had framed their battle against Nazism during the war, the editors of *Dieu Vivant* insisted that "the battle we must wage today is above all spiritual."[107] Its target must be the "great idolatry of our times" identified by de Lubac: atheist humanism. This humanism "divests man of his divine aspect" in order to set him up as a false God, just as it sacralizes society at the expense of the Church.[108] Albeit the product of anti-Christian ideologies, the editors of *Dieu Vivant* warned that this "dubious" humanism had been aided and abetted by the current enthusiasm for "incarnation" within the Church.

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[103] The structure of the journal is explained in its "organizing statement," signed by Massignon, Moré, Daniélou and Flamand (the publisher) and preserved in Fonds Daniélou, AJPF, 49/B. It seems that they had initially hoped to secure the collaboration of Berdyaev and a representative of the Jewish community for the committee of readers. The "vigilance committee" also initially included the Dominican Henri-Marie Féret and the Oratorian Louis Bouyer. On their role, see the correspondence between Féret and Daniélou in the Archives Dominicaines de la Province de Paris [Henceforth, ADPP], V-810 (Henri-Marie Féret), 303/3 and Marcel Moré to Mgr. Beaussart, 15 February, 1945, Fonds Daniélou, AJPF, 2/3. See also the explanation of the journal's structure in Fouilloux, "Une vision eschatologique," 49.

[104] Fouilloux, "Une vision eschatologique," 49.

[105] "Liminaire," *Dieu Vivant* 1 (1945), 9.

[106] Ibid., 5.

[107] Ibid.

The problem was that the contemporary Church had lost sight of its eschatological roots. The early Christians had lived as if the Parousia were imminent, but when several centuries had passed and it had not arrived, they "entered into relations with the State" in order to "render their existence less precarious."[109] Thus began the long era of Constantinian Christianity, when the Church "relied upon political and social institutions" for its security, growing comfortable in what was meant to be only a temporary earthly home. It was this Constantinian temptation which led contemporary Christians to "seek salvation in social institutions, to aspire to peace and happiness here below" by Christianizing human civilization. And here, the editors of *Dieu Vivant* evidently had in mind both Left Catholicism and the Maritainian vision of a "New Christendom," which Daniélou had grouped together under the label of "humanist socialism" in his map of the postwar intellectual landscape.[110] These Christians had forgotten that "it is not by political and social means that the 'Revelation' of Christ is accomplished," as if inserting "a few good Christian virtues...into social relations would change anything at all of the march of History."[111] As a result of this "penchant for Constantinianism," Christianity had degenerated from "a living faith to nothing more than a social structure."[112] But, as the Jesuits of *Témoignage chrétien* had remarked during the war, the secularization of modern political institutions in recent years had in some sense liberated the Church to return to the critical role it had played vis-à-vis the worldly powers before it threw in its lot with the Roman Empire. By recovering the eschatological mindset of the pre-Constantinian Christians, by regaining something of their discomfort and dissatisfaction with earthly life, the editors of *Dieu Vivant* hoped that the Church might return to being a thorn in the side of secular ideologies and social structures. But in order to do this, Christians had to give up the comforting notion that the apocalypse was a distant event set off in the remote future and realize that "the End Times have begun, that they began with the Resurrection of Christ."[113]

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[108] Jean Daniélou, "Transcendance de Dieu," *Dieu Vivant* 12 (1951), 21; "Liminaire," *Dieu Vivant* 5 (1946), 9.

[109] "Liminaire," *Dieu Vivant* 1 (1945), 9.

[110] Jean Daniélou, "La Vie intellectuelle en France: communisme, existentialisme, christianisme," *Études* (September 1945), 249-50.

[111] "Liminaire," *Dieu Vivant* 2 (1945), 8; "Liminaire," *Dieu Vivant* 5 (1946), 9

[112] "Liminaire," *Dieu Vivant* 2 (1945), 10; "Liminaire," *Dieu Vivant* 1 (1945), 6.

In order to transform their relationship to the political institutions of this world, in other words, Christians had to divest themselves of a characteristically secular notion of time. This vision of time as a linear series of moments proceeding from past to future in an unbroken chain—what Walter Benjamin described as "homogeneous, empty time"—was of course the very foundation for both a liberal and a Marxist account of history.[114] But the time of eschatology resisted this logic. "Considered from an eschatological perspective," the editors of *Dieu Vivant* explained, "the *instant* is not a mere passage between the past and the future, but the living presence of eternity."[115] The eschatological event was not locked in some distant future but had, in a sense, already occurred "on the day of the Ascension, when Christ introduced, with his resurrected Body, the entire cosmos into Heaven."[116] To live eschatologically, then, was not to passively await some future event, for the very notion of "waiting" implied a linear model of time. Nor did it require a retreat from the drama of human history, because "eschatological time is already inserted into our historical time."[117] Instead, it heightened one's responsibilities in the here-and-now, because "the true eschatology is the present life of the Christian and demands from him a total engagement."[118]

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[113] Ibid., 9.

[114] Walter Benjamin, "On the Concept of History," in *Selected Writings,* vol. 4 (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2003), 395.

[115] "Liminaire," *Dieu Vivant* 1 (1945), 10. Emphasis in original.

[116] "Liminaire," *Dieu Vivant* 2 (1945), 8.

This was precisely the temporal logic that de Lubac, Fessard, and Montcheuil had deployed to underwrite their "spiritual resistance" to fascism during the war. They had appealed to the eschatological prospect of a higher community, the mystical body of Christ, as a means to relativize human political institutions and projects such as the National Revolution, but also to prevent *attentisme* and the temptation for Christians to retreat from their temporal responsibilities. To do this, they had appealed to the non-linear structure of salvation history, which is omnipresent in each moment of linear time. It is this *actuality* of the eschatological future, they argued, which underwrites the responsibilities of the Christian in the present moment. In the process, they developed a sacramental vision of time, grounded in the power of the Eucharist to make present both the past event of Christ's sacrifice and the future coming of the communal body of Christ.[119] Thus, in his 1941 Vichy sermon, Fessard had argued that the Eucharist "makes us contemporary to this salvation history, and, by making us relive it, teaches us at the same time to play in the very midst of our own profane history the role that will permit us to orient it to its destiny," which infinitely surpasses "the narrow and petty future embraced by human politics."[120] But of course the corollary of this logic is the notion, dear to *Dieu Vivant* as well, that "there is no true human community outside of the

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[117] Ibid., 10.

[118] Marcel Moré to Jean Daniélou, 3 September 1951, Fonds Daniélou, AJPF, 2/3. Moré contrasts this eschatological vision to the one adopted by Christian progressivists who "evacuate thus 'hic et nunc eschatology' in favor of an eschatology that considers only the supraterrestrial."

[119] On the centrality of this sacramental vision of time for the "nouvelle théologie" more broadly, see Hans Boersma's excellent analysis in *Nouvelle Théologie and Sacramental Ontology: A Return to Mystery* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), ch. 6.

[120] Gaston Fessard, "Conférence de Vichy," 15 December 1940, in *Au temps du prince-esclave: écrits clandestins, 1940-1945*, ed. by Jacques Prévotat (Paris: Critérion, 1989), 50; Gaston Fessard, "Custos, quid de nocte?" 27 December 1940, in ibid., 59.

Church." Hence the journal's goal of promoting unity between the divided Christian Churches, but also of extending a hand to the other "sons of Abraham."[121] *Dieu Vivant* thus represents, in many respects, the logical extension of the counter-political eschatology that de Lubac's circle had developed during the war in order to steer Catholics away from collaboration with Vichy and the German authorities. Only now it was redeployed in order to steer Catholics away from collaboration with the Communists.

In articulating this critique of the Marxist philosophy of history, the journal found itself drawn into the orbit of that other great force in postwar French intellectual life: existentialism. This preference was clear not only from the presence of Gabriel Marcel on the journal's committee of readers, but also from the content of its articles. The journal devoted at least sixteen articles to existentialist philosophy (and only two to Marxism), focusing on a wide range of authors from Kierkegaard to Camus, and Nietzsche to Sartre.[122] Evidently, the onus was on Christian, or at least theistic existentialism, which had been overshadowed in France by the dominance of Sartre and the *Temps modernes* crew. To counteract this, *Dieu Vivant* carried translations of German works of or about religious existentialism by Karl Jaspers, Martin Buber, Karl Barth, and Erik Peterson, as well as discussions of the theistic implications of Heidegger's involving between Marcel, Merleau-Ponty, Bataille, Gandillac, Wahl, and Koyré.[123]

The journal's opening mission statement drew a direct connection between the eschatological temporality outlined above and the insights of existentialism, both of which opposed the "the myth of progress" at the heart of the Marxist philosophy of history.[124] Fessard clarified this link between eschatology and existentialism in his article on "Theology and History," pointing out that "the Christian who awaits the Parousia and the philosopher of the absurd can agree on at least one thing: they emphasize the image of discontinuity that history affords."[125] Louis Massignon echoed this sentiment, arguing that, "for men of the absolute, there is—and let us call this our Christian existentialism—only the present."[126] The editors of *Dieu Vivant* thus presented Christian eschatology as the only legitimate heir to the phenomenological approach to time. Without it, existentialism could only degenerate into an impotent nihilism, reducing history "to an indefinitely vain game of equally illusory 'projects.'"[127] Only by restoring a sense of the eschatological end that gives meaning to these earthly endeavors, could one establish an effective alternative to the misguided progressivism of both liberals and Communists.

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[121] "Liminaire," *Dieu Vivant* 1 (1945), 10-11.

[122] This is according to Étienne Fouilloux' calculation in "Une vision eschatologique," 66. See, for instance, Hans Urs von Balthasar, "Kierkegaard et Nietzsche," *Dieu Vivant* 1 (1945), 53-80.

[123] Karl Jaspers, "L'homme se produit lui-même," *Dieu Vivant* 9 (1947), 77-102; Karl Barth, "Le problème de la religion en théologie," *Dieu Vivant* 9 (1947), 47-74; Erik Peterson, "Existentialisme et théologie protestante," *Dieu Vivante* 10 (1948), 45-48; Martin Buber, "Le message hassidique," *Dieu Vivant* 2 (1945), 13-33; "Autour de la philosophie de l'existence," *Dieu Vivant* 6 (1946), 121-126. See also Gabriel Marcel, "Autour de Heidegger," *Dieu Vivant* 2 (1945), 89-102.

It was precisely this existential eschatology which Fessard had sought to articulate in "Theology and History," published in the eighth issue of *Dieu Vivant*. In it, as we have seen, Fessard argued that the theology of history cannot be a mere account of the succession of historical events in the manner of a Marxist philosophy of history—and here Fessard invoked *Dieu Vivant*'s earlier critique of "Constantinian" Christianity. Instead, he argued for an "ontology of historical man" based upon the complementary insights of existentialism and eschatology. In making this argument, Fessard was responding in particular to an essay by Henri-Marie Féret that had appeared in an earlier issue of *Dieu Vivant*. Féret was a Dominican priest close to Chenu, whose political commitments he shared as a supporter of the worker-priest movement and signatory of the Stockholm Appeal. In

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[124] "Liminaire," *Dieu Vivant* 1 (1945), 10. See also Enrico Castelli, "L'univers existentiel de l'histoire," *Dieu Vivant* 15 (1950), 51-62.

[125] Fessard, "Théologie et histoire," 40.

[126] "Liminaire," *Dieu Vivant* 10 (1948), 12.

[127] "Liminaire," *Dieu Vivant* 1 (1945), 10.

1943, he had written a book that used the book of Revelations to develop a progressive account of the stages of the history of the Church leading up to the Apocalypse.[128] Prior to this final conflagration, Féret predicted that there would be a thousand-year reign of Christian civilization on earth characterized by peace and justice. The Dominican's progressive "theology of history" was thus explicitly designed as a theological answer to the Marxist philosophy of history—one that would endow the goal of building a more just society with a role in the history of salvation. Faced with the recent rise of secular philosophies of history capable of inspiring political action on a mass scale, Féret insisted that Christians must be able to provide their own account of "the historical evolution in which [Christians] must insert their action."[129]

Such an approach evidently flew in the face of the existential eschatology advanced by *Dieu Vivant*, and the Dominican was taken to task in its pages by both Fessard and his fellow Jesuit Joseph Huby. The latter responded by invoking the journal's distinctive vision of eschatological time, conceived not as something that will come at the end of a linear succession of events, but as already present within each moment of human history:

> The task of Revelations is not to inform us about the "progressive development" of the Church and the "successive stages" of this development, but to make us grasp through faith the contemporaneity of the Judgment of God to the events of history, the presence of eternity at the heart of historical time.[130]

Fessard expanded on this idea of eschatological contemporaneity, having chastised Féret for looking to Scripture to explain and predict the unfolding of historical events out of a misplaced "jealousy" for a Marxist philosophy of history. A true theology of history, Fessard insisted, does not consist in predicting the future succession of events, but in analyzing the "structures of human historical being," which are properly eschatological because they are "*lived by* [the human being] *as contemporary*."[131] What Fessard had in mind here, of course, were the "existential attitudes" or "historical categories" which defined his dynamic anthropology, and which he derived from a combined reading of St. Paul and Hegel. They included the Jew-Gentile dialectic, which defines the process of "becoming-Christian," and the master-slave dialectic, which had been so central to Fessard's analysis of the Pétain regime (the "slave-prince"). But now Fessard added a third couplet, the "man-woman" dialectic, likewise derived from Paul's Letter to the Galatians: "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free man, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28).

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[128] Henri-Marie Féret, *L'Apocalypse de Saint Jean* (Paris: Corréa, 1943). The essay in question from *Dieu Vivant* was "Apocalypse, histoire et eschatologie chrétienne," *Dieu Vivant* 2 (1945), 117-134. The article was a response to a critique of his book by Joseph Huby: "Apocalypse et histoire," *Construire,* 15 (1944), 80-100.

[129] Quoted in Fessard, "Théologie et histoire," 45.

[130] Joseph Huby, "Autour de l'Apocalypse," *Dieu Vivant* 5 (1946), 128-9.

The man-woman dialectic took on a crucial role in Fessard's critique of the Marxism. Given the centrality of the master-slave dialectic to Kojève's Marxist reading of Hegel, Fessard was no doubt aware that his own reliance on the master-slave dialectic as the primary category social and political life left him with few resources to combat such an appropriation. Thus, beginning in the late-1940s, he introduced the idea that the man-woman dialectic interacted historically with the master-slave dialectic to explain both the genesis of social life out of the family unit and the possibility of forms of governance based on reciprocity rather than violence.[132] Where the master-slave dialectic was driven by violence, the man-woman dialectic transmuted this violence into love and reciprocity. And it did so through the model of the conjugal bond, with the reproductive union of maternity and paternity engendering a new principle in social and political life: fraternity. This amorous dialectic gave Fessard a weapon against those who deployed the master-slave dialectic to justify the principle of class struggle and the necessity of a violent revolution. But it also served a broader counter-political role for him, allowing him to argue that the divisions of earthly life can never be fully overcome until the end of time. This was because, where the political and economic divisions represented by the master-slave dialectic were properly historical, and thus might one day come to an end; the division between men and women was "natural," or more precisely, it was the nexus between nature and society.[133] "Having originated at the first moment of history," Fessard insisted, "this opposition cannot be definitively overcome until the last," and consequently, "the same must be true of the other oppositions" of the social and political order.[134] What the ubiquity of gender divisions reveals, then, is the impossibility of ever fully overcoming the divisions of social and political life within historical time, just as individual person will remain internally divided until Christ comes again to heal the divisions within and between human beings.

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[131] Fessard, "Théologie et histoire," 58; 62. Emphasis in original.

[132] Fessard introduced this new dialectic in Gaston Fessard, "Le Mystère de la société: recherches sur le sens de l'histoire," *Recherches de science religieuse* 35 (1948), 5-54; 161-225. This became the basis for *Le mystère de la société: recherches sur le sens de l'histoire*, put together posthumously by Michel Sales (Brussels: Culture et Vérité, 1997).

But Fessard did not dispense entirely with the philosophy of history; after all, he remained a Hegelian in some sense. Instead, he sought to square historical time with eschatological time, just as he had during the war, so as not to devalue completely the arena of temporal affairs. But for the Jesuit, the dialectics that structured social and political life could not be thought outside the logic of the universal history of salvation, of which Christ is the pivot, and which embraces and encompasses all of the other struggles and divisions of human history. Thus, he argued that the these divisions could in fact be progressively overcome in the here-and-now in and through the process of "becoming-Christian." By "bearing witness to the New Man who lives in him," which is to say Christ, the Christian "is capable of overcoming *hic et nunc* both the political and religious divisions of the international order and to guide humanity onto the path by which they can be effectively surmounted within history."[135] In this way, Fessard sought to hold together two competing temporalities: the linear, continuous time of historical becoming and the discontinuity and contemporaneity of eschatological time. The Hegelian and the existentialist in Fessard might seem at odds here, but the Jesuit sought to balance them both in order to combat the millenarian historical narrative of Marxism without devaluing historical striving and the responsibilities of temporal engagement. This was precisely the same balancing act Fessard and the theologians of *Témoignage chrétien* had tried to strike during the war, in order to argue against those who invested the National Revolution with religious significance without endorsing *attentisme* in the process. It was in many ways the defining paradox of the counter-political gesture.

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[133] Here, Fessard's significant debts to the structuralist anthropology of Claude Lévi-Strauss become clear, although he would only fully develop them in the 1960s. Like Lévi-Strauss, Fessard invoked the universality of the incest taboo as the nexus between nature and culture, or in Fessard's formulation, between the family and social unit.

[134] Fessard, "Théologie et histoire," 57.

Daniélou explored this predicament—the conflicting imperatives of eschatological detachment and temporal engagement—at considerable length in a series of articles in both *Dieu Vivant* and *Études,* which formed the basis for his book-length study on the theology of history: *Essai sur le mystère de l'histoire*. Like Fessard, Daniélou's primary target was the Marxist philosophy of history and those Catholics who sought to reconcile it with the theology of history. He fixated in particular on the work of Maurice Montuclard, the Dominican priest who had been a mentor to Louis Althusser and a key architect of the dialogue between Marxism and Catholicism. Montuclard sought to endow human history and socioeconomic progress with its own redemptive value, which the Church must recognize and penetrate. The problem with this approach, Daniélou pointed out, was that it actually served to reinforce the distinction between spiritual and temporal affairs, as if "history belongs to human society, while the Church, as a supra-temporal entity, acquires historical status" only by "incarnating" itself in the institutions of human society.[136] In other words, this was a classic example of the kind of "Constantinian" Christianity criticized by *Dieu Vivant*. Instead, the Jesuit argued that history is not something which takes place outside of the Church, because "Christianity itself is the archetype of the historical process" and the source of historical consciousness itself.[137]

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[135] Ibid., 62.

[136] Jean Daniélou, *The Lord of History: Reflections on the Inner Meaning of History*, trans. by Nigel Abercrombie (London: Longmans, 1958), 93.

Here, Daniélou echoed the argument put forward by Karl Löwith a year earlier, to the effect that the modern concept of historical progress is merely a secularized form of Christian eschatology.[138] But Löwith, a Protestant, was deeply critical of this process and indeed of any confusion between the history of salvation and the realm of profane, empirical history. Daniélou therefore associated his position with that of Karl Barth and condemned both for going "rather too far in the direction of pessimism when they make an impassible gulf between sacred and profane history."[139] The result, he argued, was a basically "gnostic" dualism, which robbed profane history of any value whatsoever and justified an escapist withdrawal from the struggles of temporal life. This approach evidently lay at the opposite extreme from Montuclard's optimistic and faith in human progress. And yet, as Daniéou pointed out, both could agree that the realm of human or profane history was in some sense distinct from that of salvation.

Daniélou sought to articulate an alternative to both of these positions—one that would endow the struggles of profane history with redemptive value without yoking Christianity to a particular political form in the process. Against these two approaches, he insisted that there could be "no autonomous secular order" of human history independent of "the order of Christ and his Church."[140] "Salvation History," he explained, "constitutes the total history within which profane history is situated, which is only a part of it and plays a particular role within it."[141] But this did not mean that there was a straightforward continuity between the two, as if the progress achieved here below could somehow hasten the arrival of the Kingdom of God. Instead, Daniélou explained that Christianity and human history were bound together by a paradox:

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[137] Ibid., 94.

[138] Karl Löwith, *Meaning in History: The Theological Implications of the Philosophy of History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949).

[139] Daniélou, *The Lord of History*, 106.

[140] Ibid., 32.

> On the one hand, Christianity falls within history. It emerged at a given point in the sequence of historical eventuation...But on the other hand, history falls within Christianity: all secular history is included in sacred history, as a part, a prolegomenon, a preparatory introduction.[142]

For this very reason, Christianity "requires, always, both an incarnation and a detachment."[143] Because Christianity falls within history, it cannot retreat from the struggles of profane history. But because history falls within Christianity, it cannot be "identified with any of the types of culture in which it is successively embodied." This is just as true of "the Christianity of the bourgeois" as it is of the Marxist alternative, Daniélou insisted, and it follows from the fact that the Church occupies a fundamentally different time from that of political institutions.[144] If Christianity falls within history, but history also falls within Christianity, he argued, this is because the Church occupies two distinct temporalities. It is the sacrament through which "the next world...is present here and now in mystery," through which "the thing that is beyond history exists now in historical fact."[145] For this reason, "the Christian belongs at once to a world that has ceased to be, and to a world that is not yet;" to the time of human history and to the time of the Kingdom; to a present which is already in some sense past and a future which is already in some sense present.[146]

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[141] Jean Daniélou, "Christianisme et histoire," *Études* (September 1947), 179.

[142] Daniélou, *The Lord of History*, 24.

[143] Ibid., 25.

[144] Ibid., 25-6.

[145] Ibid.

[146] Ibid., 16.

This double temporality is crucial for Daniélou's counter-political vision. On the one hand, the Church achieves its eschatological vocation in and through historical time, which is the medium for "the progressive building-up in love of the incorruptible body of Christ which shall go through the fire of judgment."[147] And thus, Christians cannot simply withdraw from the struggles of human history and dismiss this world as irredeemably fallen, which was the position Daniélou attributed to some Protestants. On the other hand, because the Church is the irruption of eschatological time within human history, because it already participates in the Kingdom to come, it cannot be yoked to any passing political form. Its role, in other words, is to be *engaged* but also *independent* and *critical* vis-à-vis the institutions of temporal life—a function that derives from its mission to bear witness to the coming of the Kingdom here below. Thus, Daniélou concludes, "the Church and temporal society can never enjoy the harmonious relationship of two parallel organizations, where one might be the other's complement and crown. They are two successive periods of history, in dramatic conflict."[148] This was something that "Constantinian" Christianity had overlooked. But now that the age of politico-ecclesiastical alliances was coming to an end, the Church could finally regain its role as a critical, disruptive force, "an army of martyrs, in the midst of a heathen society."[149]

History as Critique

One of the aims of *Dieu Vivant* had been to introduce French audiences to leading religious thinkers whose work was not widely known or available in French. One of these authors was the German theologian Erik Peterson, who became a regular contributor to both *Dieu Vivant* and

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[147] Ibid., 12.

[148] Ibid., 16.

[149] Ibid., 77.

Recherches de science religieuse, the theological journal edited by de Lubac and Fessard.[150] Peterson, who had converted to Catholicism in 1930, is perhaps most famous for his critique of Carl Schmitt's political theology. In *Monotheism as a Political Problem*, published in 1935, Peterson turned to the Church Fathers (particularly the Cappadocians) in order to demonstrate how the trinitarian theology of the Church precluded the sort of politico-theological analogy Schmitt aimed to draw between monarchy and monotheism.[151] But Peterson went even further, arguing that the eschatological vocation of the Church meant that the very concept of a Christian political theology was a contradiction in terms. This was because the time of eschatology is not the time of political institutions and can never be identified with any earthly political formation, whether of the right or the left. Consequently, as Augustine had insisted, Christians would always be both insiders and outsiders to any temporal community.

What Peterson shared with Daniélou, Fessard, and de Lubac, then, was a keen awareness of the politics of time. All of them were irrevocably opposed to any effort to translate theological concepts into political, legal, or socioeconomic ones—whether on the right (Schmitt), center (Maritain), or left (Féret and Montuclard). And all of them found in the time of eschatology a key resource for combatting the logic of political theology in its various guises. Crucially, however, they did not view the imperatives of eschatology as *a*political, but rather as *counter*-political; as warranting an engagement with, rather than a retreat from, the demands of temporal life. This was so for two reasons. First, as de Lubac never ceased to reaffirm, salvation is an inescapably social affair in which "the salvation of each is a function of the salvation of all...that all this would have no effect on the temporal plane is not possible."[152] Second, these theologians cleaved to what one might call a sacramental vision of time, which did not place the eschatological event outside of history or in some ever-receding future, but at the very heart of the historical present. In his book on the paradoxes of the Christian faith, a portion of which appeared in *Dieu Vivant*, de Lubac argued that "eternity, which is beyond the future, is not exterior to the present like the future."[153] This meant that eschatology "does not tear us away from the present," but instead binds us to it even more closely than "those who have only an earthly future in view...for this future as such is entirely exterior to the present."[154] For de Lubac and his friends, then, eschatological time—by which the "past" of the Incarnation and the "future" of the Parousia are sacramentally present in each moment of historical time—offered a powerful rejoinder to modern historicism. And they were keenly aware that the problem of history was a political problem. Like Walter Benjamin, they turned to the non-linear "now-time" of eschatology in order to articulate a critique of the secular, continuous, progressive time at the heart of both the Marxist and liberal projects.[155]

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[150] See, for instance, "Le martyr et l'église," *Dieu Vivant* 5 (1946), 17-31; "Le traitement de la rage par les Elkésaites d'après Hippolyte," *Recherches de science religieuse* 34 (1947), 232-238; "Existentialisme et théologie protestante," *Dieu Vivant* 10 (1948), 45-8; Le problème du nationalisme dans le Christianisme des premiers siècles," *Dieu Vivant* 22 (1952) 87-97; "L'Église," *Dieu Vivant* 25 (1953), 99-112.

[151] Erik Peterson, *Der Monotheismus als politisches Problem: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der politischen Theologie im Imperium romanum* (Leipzig: Hegner, 1935).

But this "homogeneous, empty time" is also the time of the historian, or at least of a certain kind of historian. This was something Benjamin had understood, and thus his "Theses on the Concept of History" also furnish a critique of historical empiricism—the notion that the past is an object temporally remote from the present and capable of being known as such. Instead, Benjamin asks the historian to attend to the way certain moments from the past suddenly become recognizable and contemporaneous to the historian's present, when "what has been comes together with the now in a flash to form a constellation," unleashing critical and transformative possibilities that had previously been foreclosed.[156] De Lubac, Daniélou, and Fessard certainly did not share the revolutionary politics Benjamin attached to such a historical model, but their work was very much alive to precisely the sorts of "constellations" he had in mind. In their effort to resist the logic of political theology and divest the Church of its long historical entanglement with worldly authority, these Jesuits and their fellow contributors at *Dieu Viva*nt ceaselessly returned to the historical past of the early Church. To these theologians, the vision of a small, beleaguered Church surrounded by heathens seemed strangely contemporary at a moment when the forces of secularization had decimated the power and prestige of the Church. Moreover, because the Church Fathers had been the first to grapple with how to retain the Church's independence from temporal authority, in the form of the Roman Empire, their work seemed strangely topical. This was precisely why Peterson turned to these sources for theological ammunition against Carl Schmitt. As we shall see in Part Four, the notion that the work of the Church Fathers possessed uncanny affinities with modern thought, and indeed seemed somehow *more* contemporary than the Scholastic theology that had succeeded it, was a key premise of the *ressourcement* project.

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[152] De Lubac, "The Search for a New Man," 452-3. De Lubac was in fact rather critical of *Dieu Vivant* for not stressing the interdependence between the social and the eschatological enough. See, for instance, Marcel Moré to Henri de Lubac, 5 June, 1946, Centre d'Archives et d'Études Henri de Lubac [CAEHL], Namur, Belgium, 73917.

[153] Henri de Lubac, *Paradoxes of Faith*, trans. by Paule Simon and Sadie Kreilkamp (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1987), 85.

[154] Ibid., 93.

[155] See Walter Benjamin, "On the Concept of History," in *Selected Writings,* vol. 4 (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2003), 389-400.

Led in large part by de Lubac and Daniélou, this effort to return to the Patristic sources of the Catholic tradition, which had been overshadowed by the dominance of Thomas Aquinas and Scholasticism, consisted in making these sources available in translation and publishing new historical studies of Patristic theology. This was no mere exercise in historical reconstruction, however. It was animated above all by the present political and theological concerns of its authors. *Corpus Mysticum*, for instance, was far more than a neutral attempt to explain the ecclesiology of St.

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[156] Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, trans. by Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 1999), 462. On the theologico-political dimension of Benjamin's critique of historicism, see Stéphane Mosès, "The Theological-Political Model of History in the Thought of Walter Benjamin," trans. by Ora Wiskind, *History and Memory* 1, 2 (1989), 5-33.

Paul and the Church Fathers. It was also a theological critique of Scholasticism and a political critique of the tendency, to which some Catholics had yielded during the war, to conflate the communal impulse at the heart of the Church with collectivist political projects. *Surnaturel* took a similar genealogical approach as *Corpus Mysticum*, using the tools of historical scholarship to demonstrate how Scholastic theology had deviated from the teachings of the Church Fathers and introduced innovations that left the contemporary Church vulnerable to the forces of secularization. Although ostensibly about the very distant past of the Catholic Tradition, both of these books were more properly about the historical present in which de Lubac was writing. They were, to use a more "contemporary" term, "histories of the present," which deployed the tools of historical genealogy to interrogate how the present state of the Church had come to be and disable the position of de Lubac's contemporary theological opponents.

This approach is thus strangely in tune with a more recent post-structuralist critique of historicism, and indeed, one of de Lubac's closest disciples—even, for a period of time, his next-of-kin—was none other than Michel de Certeau.[157] For de Lubac, it should be recalled, the Tradition was a living thing; even its oldest resources were not locked in a dead historical past, but could be returned to and reactivated at any moment. It could never be fully grasped with the tools of historicism. This was a sentiment echoed by the editors of *Dieu Vivant*, who proclaimed that "the true past, far from being an inert object, only acquires its true meaning and full structure through the present engagements of the concrete man oriented towards the future."[158]

Herein lies the connection between the Jesuits' approach to historical scholarship and their critique of political ideologies founded upon a vision of continuous, progressive time. Both relied upon a sacramental, non-linear model of time defined by the contemporaneity of the past history of the Church and the future of eschatological fulfillment. History, defined in this way, was a crucial resource in the critique of progressivist political theologies.[159] But it was also a resource in the critique of the privileged status of Scholastic theology in the contemporary Church, for this privilege was based on the notion that Thomas Aquinas had superseded the Church Fathers by integrating their insights into his own more "scientific" system. History provided proponents of *ressourcement* with a weapon against this model. Not only could it be used to show that St. Thomas had not been entirely faithful to the Fathers—something that is implicit in both *Corpus Mysticum* and *Surnaturel*—but it could also be used to demonstrate that, rather than *the* scientific form of theology, Thomism was simply *a* theological school bearing the markings of the particular historical context in which it was born. In addition to its function as a resource for political and theological critique, history served yet another critical function for these Jesuits. By invoking the authority of the Scriptures and the Patristic sources of the Tradition, the *ressourcement* project also offered an implicit critique of the centralized and hierarchical structures of authority in the Church. It is to this critique that Part Four turns, moving from questions of secular politics to Church politics, and from France to Rome.

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[157] On the relationship between de Lubac and de Certeau, see François Dosse, *Michel de Certeau: le marcheur blessé* (Paris: La Découverte, 2002), 47-58 and Brenna Moore, "How to Awaken the Dead: Michel de Certeau, Henri de Lubac, and the Instabilities of the Past and the Present," *Spiritus* 12 (2012), 172-9. The two eventually fell out in the 1960s when de Certeau sided with the students in 1968, but as Moore shows, this rupture had much to do with their increasingly divergent approaches to history.

[158] "Liminaire," *Dieu Vivant* 1 (1945), 10.

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[159] On the political power of these sorts of "untimely" reflections, which disrupt the presumption of a linear chronology, see Wendy Brown, "Untimeliness and Punctuality: Critical Theory in Dark Times," in *Edgework: Critical Essays on Knowledge and Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 1-16; Gary Wilder, *Freedom Time: Negritude, Decolonization, and the Future of the World* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015). Although Wilder is primarily concerned with Aimé Césaire and Léopold Senghor, he points to postwar Christian personalism as an example of precisely the sort of "untimely" thought he has in mind. He focuses in particular on the contribution of Teilhard de Chardin, who bore a significant influence on Senghor's Christian socialism (see esp. 231-3).

IV. Controversy (1946-1954)

In April 1946, Jean Daniélou published an article in *Études*, titled "The Present Direction of Religious Thought." Although the ostensible goal of the essay was to provide a snapshot of the major movements and new directions in the intellectual life of the French Church, it was in fact much more than this. Critics quickly identified the article as a declaration of war on Thomism and Scholastic theology, which had long enjoyed a virtual monopoly over Catholic orthodoxy, and thus as nothing short of a "manifesto" for a "new theology."[1] These fifteen pages in *Études* thus inadvertently provided the spark for what would be the greatest theological conflict to rock the Church since the Modernist Crisis. When it came to a close in 1950, Henri de Lubac and five other Jesuits from Lyon would find themselves stripped of their teaching and editorial positions and publicly condemned by the Vatican.

Daniélou's article drew an explicit connection between the developments in postwar French politics and philosophy traced in Part Three, and the impetus for theological renewal led by Jesuits like de Lubac, Fessard, Henri Bouillard, Teilhard de Chardin, and Daniélou himself. First among these was the project of *ressourcement*—the effort to return to the Biblical and Patristic sources of the tradition, which had been overshadowed by the dominance of Scholasticism and the assumption that the work of Thomas Aquinas had successfully integrated all of the major insights of the Church Fathers.[2] At the forefront of the Patristic renewal were two collections produced by French Jesuits: "Sources Chrétiennes" and "Théologie." The first, launched by Daniélou and de Lubac in 1942, published translations and new editions of lesser-known works by the Greek and Latin Fathers of the Church, in order to make these sources available to a wider audience. "Théologie," edited by Henri Bouillard and the Jesuits of the Fourvière scholasticate in Lyon, published contemporary works of theology that drew their inspiration from the Patristic sources, including de Lubac's *Corpus Mysticum* and *Surnaturel,* Fessard's *Autorité et bien commun,* as well as works by Daniélou and Yves de Montcheuil. It was Bouillard himself who provided the series with its first installment in 1944: *Conversion et grâce chez saint Thomas d'Aquin*—the book which, along with de Lubac's *Surnaturel*, would do more than anything to elicit a condemnation from Rome.[3] These efforts to recover sources of the tradition that had been overlooked or overshadowed in contemporary theology found an echo in parallel efforts by Dominicans like Chenu and Congar to return to the teachings of the "historical Thomas," obscured by the accretions of "baroque" Scholasticism. They also linked up with broader movements of renewal in the fields of liturgy and biblical theology that were by no means exclusive to the French Church.[4] Nevertheless, as the terms "ressourcement" and "nouvelle théologie" suggest, this was first and foremost a French story—one that would put a severe strain on relations between the French Church and the Roman authorities in the years to come. And, as this conflict took shape, it also became clear that it was above all a story about French Jesuits in particular.

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[1] This was how it was described by the Dominican Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, for instance. See Étienne Fouilloux, *Une église en quête de liberté: la pensée catholique française entre modernisme et Vatican II (1914-1962)* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1998), 283.

[2] The literature on *ressourcement* is vast, but the most important work to date is *Ressourcement: A Movement for Renewal in Twentieth-Century Catholic Theology*, ed. by Gabriel Flynn and Paul D. Murray (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); Jürgen Mettepenningen, *Nouvelle Théologie—New Theology: Inheritor of Modernism, Prescursor of Vatican II* (London: T&T Clark, 2010); Hans Boersma, *Nouvelle Théologie and Sacramental Ontology: A Return to Mystery* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Fouilloux, *Une église en quête de liberté,* 220-227.

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[3] Henri Bouillard, *Conversion et grâce chez saint Thomas d'Aquin* (Paris: Aubier, 1944). The book was based on Bouillard's doctoral work at the Gergorian in Rome. On the controversy surrounding it, see Étienne Fouilloux, "Henri Bouillard et Saint Thomas d'Aquin (1941-1951)," *Recherches de science religieuse* 97 (2009), 173-183; James Hanvey, "Henri Bouillard: The Freedom of Faith," in *Ressourcement,* 263-77.

[4] On the liturgical reivival, see Keith F. Pecklers, "*Ressourcement* and the Renewal of Catholic Liturgy: On Celebrating the New Rite," in *Ressourcement*, 318-332; Aimé-Georges Martimort, "Le mouvement liturgique en France de la fin du XIXe siècle à la veille du IIe concile du Vatican," *Bulletin de littérature écclésiastique* (October-December 1995), 259-73; John R.K. Fenwick and Bryan D. Spinks, *Worship in Transition: The Liturgical Movement in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Continuum, 1995). On the revival of biblical studies, see Benedict Viviano, "The Renewal of Biblical Studies in France 1934-1954 as an Element in Theological *Ressourcement,*" in *Ressourcement*, 305-17. There were two main branches of the biblical revival. The Dominican Marie-Joseph Lagrange was a pioneer of historical criticism, founding the École Biblique in Jerusalem and the *Revue biblique.* On Lagrange, see Bernard Montagnes, *The Story of M.-J. Lagrange: Founder of Modern Catholic Bible Study* (New York: Paulist Press, 2006). The other major approach to biblical studies was the spiritual exegesis pioneered by Henri de Lubac and Jean Daniélou in works such as de Lubac's four-volume *Exégèse médiévale: quatre sens de l'écriture* (Paris: Aubier, 1959-64) and Daniélou, *Sacramentum futuri: étude sur les origines de la typologie biblique* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1950). See Susan K. Wood, *Spiritual Exegesis and the Church in the Theology of Henri de Lubac* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998).

The project of *ressourcement* and the renewed interest in the Patristic sources of the Tradition was, as we have already seen, more than just an antiquarian project. It also implied a particular approach to biblical theology—one that privileged the spiritual and symbolic methods of exegesis adopted by the Church Fathers over a literalist reading of Scripture. This approach was a key resource for theologians like de Lubac and Daniélou who wished to stress Christianity's debts to Judaism, because it allowed them to demonstrate the various ways in which the Old Testament had symbolically anticipated and prefigured the New. In addition, the project of *ressourcement* provided the basis for a dialogue with the other Christian Churches, based upon the shared sources of the Christian tradition. Most notably, because of these Jesuits' particular interest in the Greek Fathers, it allowed for a rapprochement with the Orthodox tradition through the mediation of its many representatives, such as Lossky and Berdyaev, who had taken refuge in Paris following the Russian Revolution. This may well explain why such typically Orthodox themes such as *theosis*—the "deification" of the human being through grace—play such a significant role in the work of the "new theologians," and in particular in de Lubac's *Surnaturel*.[5] These two elements of *ressourcement*—spiritual exegesis and ecumenical dialogue—formed the central planks of *Dieu Vivant*'s mission, just as they had been central to the resistance vision of *Témoignage chrétien*, which no doubt explains why the Jesuits in question played such a central role in both.

In his *Études* article, Daniélou pointed to all of these initiatives as evidence of a new spirit of renewal that had taken hold in the postwar French Church, born of a desire to overcome "the rupture between theology and life."[6] What many French Catholics had recognized, Daniélou believed, was that a "living theology" must be able to "respond to the experiences of the modern soul" by taking into account new developments in intellectual life more broadly.[7] What this meant in the French context, of course, was an engagement with the two great philosophies of the postwar moment: existentialism and Marxism. Both of these had had a salutary effect on Christian thought, Daniélou argued, for the first had forced it to confront the problem of subjectivity and the second that of history. In the process, however, they had revealed the limitations of the regnant Scholastic theology, which was ill-equipped to deal with either of these problems. The categories of subjectivity and of historicity "are foreign to Scholastic theology," he wrote, because "its world is the immobile world of Greek thought." This world "has no place for history" and, "by defining reality in terms of essences rather than subjects, it loses sight of the dramatic world of persons...which transcend all essence and are distinguished only by existence."[8] Faced with these inadequacies, French Catholics had taken new initiatives to fill the lacunae of Scholastic theology, and Daniélou pointed in particular to the work of Teilhard de Chardin on the theology of history and to Christian existentialists like Gabriel Marcel.

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[5] On the concept of deification in *Surnaturel*, see Adam G. Cooper, *Naturally Human, Supernaturally God: Deification in Pre-Conciliar Catholicism* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2014), part 3; John Milbank, *The Suspended Middle: Henri de Lubac and the Debate Concerning the Supernatural* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005), 16. On de Lubac's relation to Orthodox Christianity, see Paul McPartlan, *The Eucharist Makes the Church: Henri de Lubac and John Zizioulas in Dialogue* (Fairfax, VA: Eastern Christian Publications, 2006).

[6] Jean Daniélou, "Les Orientations présentes de la pensée religieuse," *Études* (April 1946), 6.

It was here that the theological project of *ressourcement* took on particular significance, according to Daniélou. If Scholastic theology proved unable to address the questions of history and subjectivity so central to contemporary thought, he pointed out that there were other sources in the Tradition better suited to the task. Although it predated Thomas Aquinas and Scholastic theology by roughly a thousand years, Daniélou argued that the work of the Church Fathers seemed in many ways far more contemporary, because "one finds in it precisely a certain number of categories which are those of contemporary thought and which Scholastic theology had lost."[9] In particular, what made the work of the Fathers seem like "the most modern nourishment for the men of today" was the central place it accorded to history, which was so "foreign to Thomism." It was de Lubac who had best understood this, Daniélou maintained, and no book had done more to "re-establish the connection between the historical vision of the Fathers and that of our contemporaries" than *Catholicism*.[10] The other aspect of Patristic theology which rendered it uniquely "contemporary" was the emphasis on the irretrievably *social* dimension of salvation, particularly in the work of the Greek Fathers, "for whom salvation is above all conceived as the salvation of humanity."[11] This social orientation was of course also central to de Lubac's vision, but Daniélou found it at work in Teilhard de Chardin's cosmology and in the revival of the mystical body ecclesiology as well.

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[7] Ibid., 7.

[8] Ibid., 14.

[9] Ibid., 10.

Daniélou did not stop here, however. In pointing to the elective affinities between the Patristic tradition and contemporary philosophy, he went so far as to suggest a connection between the *ressourcement* project and Catholic Modernism (discussed in Chapter One), which had been condemned by the Vatican in 1903. Courting controversy, Daniélou insisted that the Modernist movement had been correct in "the problem it posed," if not "the solution it proposed."[12] The Modernists had been right to react against the "rationalized theology" of their day, which had become "mummified" and "fixed in its pedantic form," having "lost contact with developments in philosophy."[13] In reacting against this state of affairs, however, Modernism had erred too far in the opposite direction, producing a backlash in the form of a hyper-rational Neo-Thomism and crippling restrictions on the field of biblical studies in particular. Daniélou went so far as to suggest that this Neo-Thomism was little more than a "*garde-fou*"—a reference to the guardrails on bridges that prevent suicides. Although it had provided a temporary safeguard against the excesses of Modernism, it could not offer a long-term solution to the "legitimate demands" that had given rise to the movement. "'Modernism will not be eliminated,'" Daniélou concluded, quoting Yves de Montcheuil, "'as long as we have not developed a theological method that satisfies the exigencies out of which Modernism was born.'"[14] The current demand for a "living" and "engaged" theology being felt at the heart of the French Church was simply the most recent manifestation of these exigencies, he insisted, and it was this yearning to bridge the abyss between theology and contemporary philosophy which stood at the core of the *ressourcement* project.

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[10] Ibid., 10-11.

[11] Ibid., 11.

[12] Ibid., 6.

[13] Ibid.

Daniélou's argument that the theological commitment to "return to the sources" of the Tradition was inextricable from the desire to bring theology into closer dialogue with modern thought, paradoxical as it might seem, is crucial to understanding the crisis over the "nouvelle théologie." It might otherwise be difficult to understand how a theological movement defined primarily by an enthusiasm for the Church Fathers could be condemned as "modernist." Indeed, these theologians never ceased to reaffirm that, if any theology deserved to be called "new" or "modern," it was precisely that of the Neo-Scholastics and Neo-Thomists. The primary goal of all three works at the heart of this controversy—*Corpus Mysticum, Surnaturel,* and *Conversion et grâce*—had been precisely to demonstrate that a number of Neo-Scholasticism's core tenets were at odds with the teachings of both the Church Fathers and, indeed, the Angelic Doctor himself. But this claim to be "more Thomist than the Thomists" and more traditional than the traditionalists was only one side of the story of *ressourcement.*[15] Equally central to this project, as Part Three has shown, was an effort to bridge the gap between theology and contemporary philosophical movements such as existentialism and Hegelianism. It was this aspect of the project which the movement's critics would fixate upon, particularly as this shifted from an internal French theological debate to a Franco-Roman conflict involving the Jesuit Curia and the Vatican.

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[14] Ibid., 7.

[15] In 1949, Henri de Lubac had joked in a letter to Fessard that the "anti-Thomist" essay Fessard was currently writing (which his superiors would forbid him from publishing) was "no doubt more Thomist than many 'Thomisms!'" See Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, 30 September 1949, Fonds Gaston Fessard, Archives Jésuites de la Province de France [Henceforth, AJPF], Vanves, France, dossier 73/3.

And yet, the two sides of what critics increasingly began to call the "nouvelle théologie"—the Patristic revival and the engagement with modern philosophy—could not be disentangled, as Daniélou's article made clear. This placed the movement's critics in the awkward position of having to argue against it on two fronts: condemning it as both overly archaic and unduly modern. But these critics rightly perceived that the common denominator between these two apparently contradictory dimensions of the Jesuits' project was a powerful critique of Scholasticism. Daniélou's article in *Études*, containing no less than twelve disparaging comments about Thomism, made this abundantly clear.[16] This was crucial because it meant that the campaign against the "nouvelle théologie" drew support from a range of different theologians who often shared little more than a commitment to the pre-eminent status of Thomas Aquinas within the contemporary Church. These included Maritain and his Dominican disciples in Toulouse, who brought the resources of the Thomist tradition to bear on the challenges of modern life, but it also included fiercely anti-modern "integrists" like Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange. That the conflict over the "nouvelle théologie" was centrally a conflict over the status of Thomism is significant for yet another reason. It explains why the Dominicans conventionally associated with the "nouvelle théologie" and the project of *ressourcement*, such as Chenu and Congar, were not substantially targeted by this postwar campaign. They were, after all, committed Thomists. While these priests would have their own difficulties with Rome a few years later, along with several other Dominicans associated with the Catholic Left in France, it is crucial not to conflate the two condemnations. They corresponded to the two distinct movements of renewal in postwar French Catholicism traced in Part Three, which, as we have seen, were often very much at odds. The conflict over the "nouvelle théologie" which began in 1946 with the "Fourvière Affair" and culminated in 1950 with the encyclical *Humani Generis*, was thus above all a dispute about the status of Thomism and the structure of authority in the Church. Its targets were a "school" of French Jesuits that included Daniélou, Bouillard, Teilhard de Chardin, Montcheuil, Rondet, Fessard, and Henri de Lubac, who was increasingly singled out as their "ringleader."

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[16] This is Fouilloux's tally in "Dialogue Théologique? (1946-1948)," in *Saint Thomas au XXe siècle,* ed. by Serge-Thomas Bonino (Paris: Éditions Saint-Paul, 1994), 161.

Chapter 7. The Nouvelle Théologie on Trial

The whispers began almost as soon as the war ended. By the end of 1945, the first rumors reached de Lubac's ears that he and his colleague Henri Bouillard, a professor at the Jesuit scholasticate of Fourvière in Lyon, were under suspicion in Rome. Their friend Rondet, the prefect of studies at Fourvière, had just received a letter from a Jesuit colleague in Rome, who informed him that the so-called "Fourvière school...is in the hot seat."[1] The man behind this campaign, it was rumored, was none other than the Dominican Fr. Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange—erstwhile mentor to Jacques Maritain, longtime partisan of the Action Française, and staunch Pétainist. From his position at the Angelicum pontifical university in Rome, it appeared that Garrigou-Lagrange was busily gathering reports on the activities of several French Jesuits in view of a denunciation. De Lubac quickly shared the news with his friend Fessard. "The Dominican integrist party," he reported, "is spreading the word that we at Fourvière are a hotbed of modernism."[2] By the beginning of 1947, there were rumors that the Holy Office was preparing "a sort of Syllabus"—a reference to Pius IX's famous anti-modernist *Syllabus of Errors*—against what was now being called the "new theology" emanating from Fourvière.[3] By the time this Syllabus arrived in the summer of 1950, in the form of the encyclical *Humani generis*, de Lubac and several of his colleagues had already been relieved of their teaching posts and sent into exile.

Much about this condemnation remains unclear, given that the records for this period from the Holy Office and the Jesuit General Curia are not yet available. And yet, it is possible to reconstruct a partial picture of the so-called "Fourvière Affair," which consumed the Catholic

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[1] René Arnou to Henri Rondet, 23 January, 1946, Centre d'Archives et d'Études Henri de Lubac [Henceforth, CAEHL] (Namur, Belgium), 73932.

[2] Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, 6 January, 1946, Fonds Gaston Fessard, AJPF, 73/3.

[3] Henri de Lubac to Bernard de Gorostarzu, 2 January, 1947, CAEHL, 73981.

Church from 1946 to 1950, from the personal notes and correspondence of the targeted priests. What they reveal are the stark geographical, theological, and political fractures that had emerged within the postwar Church. This was a conflict that pitted Jesuits against Dominicans, Thomists against Augustinians, reformers open to an engagement with the modern world against conservative "integrists," and a French Church jealous of its independence against Roman authorities anxious to assert their central authority. Beneath the many layers of the "Affair," though, this was at base a conflict over the nature and distribution of authority within the Church. It was a question of Church politics, in other words.

Church politics is of course never fully distinct from secular politics. It was no coincidence, then, that many of the same priests with whom de Lubac and his friends had clashed over Vichy during the war were now leading the campaign to secure their condemnation. The most vigorous and indeed vicious condemnations of the "nouvelle théologie" tended to come from the pen of arch-conservatives like Garrigou-Lagrange or the Polish Fr. Bochenski. But some of the Jesuits' harshest critics (albeit firmly opposed to any condemnation) were also those who had been most supportive of their wartime resistance efforts—notably, Jacques Maritain and his French Dominican disciples. It would therefore be inadequate to suggest, as John Milbank has done, that the Jesuits' "*political* opponents—Catholic Rightists supporting the Vichy regime and collaborating with the occupying Germans—were also their *theological* opponents."[4] But this is not to say that the wartime activities of de Lubac and his colleagues had nothing to do with their postwar travails. The resistance activities of the Lyon Jesuits did not just defy the "established authority" of Vichy; they also constituted an act of insubordination against the leaders of the Church, and to many in Rome, this was far more serious. By disobeying a direct order from the Jesuit superiors not to publicly oppose the Vichy government, by publicly criticizing the position of the French episcopacy, by publishing the *Cahiers du Témoignage chrétien* without ecclesiastical *imprimatur,* de Lubac and his colleagues had mounted a powerful challenge to the principle of hierarchical authority in the Church. And this, more than anything else, accounted for their postwar fall.

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[4] John Milbank, *The Suspended Middle: Henri de Lubac and the Debate Concerning the Supernatural* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005), 3.

This conflict over Church authority took several forms. It took geographical form as a struggle between a French Church with a long history of Gallican independence, and Roman authorities—from the Pope and the Holy Office, to the superiors of the Jesuit Order, to theologians teaching at Roman institutions—anxious to reassert their at once political and theological sovereignty over the Church. Overlaid upon this transnational struggle for authority were important political and theological differences between French theologians, who were at the center of the postwar movements of renewal in the Church, and their far more conservative Roman counterparts. But the "Fourvière Affair" was more than just a conflict between France and Rome. In fact, it began within France, as a conflict between Dominicans and Jesuits over the privileged, and indeed exclusive, status that Thomas Aquinas and Scholastic theology had acquired within Catholic theology. It was not simply that de Lubac and his colleagues preferred Patristic theology to Scholasticism. Instead, what they opposed more fundamentally was the notion that any one intellectual system could achieve a monopoly over Catholic theology. Against critics who condemned them for departing from Thomism, these Jesuits defended the need for "theological pluralism" and "freedom of research" within theology, which could not be limited by the monopoly of any one school or system. In making such an argument, they elaborated a distinction between theology, the realm of free discussion, and doctrine, which was not open to discussion, insisting that the Roman authorities could legitimately intervene in the second but not the first. Even the theological debate at the center of the Fourvière Affair, in other words, was pre-eminently a debate about the distribution of authority within the Church.

This was precisely how the Pope perceived it as well. In the Lyon Jesuits' critique of Scholasticism, in their appeal to the authority of the Patristic and Biblical sources of the Tradition, *Humani generis* rightly identified a profound challenge to the authority of the contemporary Magisterium—the central teaching authority of the Church in Rome. This challenge to the principle of hierarchical authority was evident not only in the wartime activities of the Lyon Jesuits, but also in their irreverent attitude towards their teachers at Jersey, and it found its theoretical expression in the mystical body ecclesiology they had developed in the 1930s and 1940s, which tended to downplay the hierarchical, juridical dimension of the Church. Their *ressourcement* project, which deployed history as a critical force against the theological monopoly of Thomism and the overweening authority of the Roman Magisterium, simply extended this longstanding project to decenter the structures of spiritual authority within the Church. If de Lubac and his friends were not particularly radical in the realm of secular politics, then, the same could not be said of their Church politics.

Opening Salvo

The opening salvo in what became known as the "Fourvière Affair" was fired in the summer of 1946 by Marie-Michel Labourdette and Marie-Joseph Nicolas—two Dominican theologians based at the St-Maximin studium in Toulouse. But even before they published their vigorous rejoinder to what they saw as a systematic assault on Thomism and the immutability of theological truth emanating from certain Jesuit circles, there were already indications from across the Alps that a storm was brewing. If the wartime activities of the Lyon Jesuits endowed them with a newfound prestige and public recognition in postwar France, they did not have the same effect in Rome. At war's end, the Jesuit order was led by none other than Norbert de Boynes, the loyal supporter of Marshal Pétain with whom de Lubac had crossed swords in 1941 over the order's response to Vichy and who had not forgotten the Jesuit's insubordination.[5] The sharp divergence between French and Roman attitudes towards the Lyon Jesuits emerged most clearly when Archbishop Saliège of Toulouse, whose support for the resistance during the war had recently earned him a promotion to the level of Cardinal, attended a reception at the French embassy to the Holy See in May 1946. Flushed with the optimism of the postwar French church and misjudging the climate in Rome, Saliège spoke glowingly of the work of renewal being undertaken by the Lyon Jesuits in order to bring theology into dialogue with contemporary thought. But his words found an icy reception, and the Vatican nuncio to France, Mgr. Roncalli (the future John XXIII), informed Saliège in no uncertain terms that the doctrine of the Fourvière Jesuits was widely held to be suspect.[6]

It should come as no surprise that stalwarts of the Right, such as Garrigou-Lagrange, de Boynes and Fr. Fillère, were among the first to mobilize against the Lyon Jesuits who had been responsible for the *Cahiers du Témoignage chrétien*. But the first salvo in the Fourvière affair did not come from these quarters. Instead, it came from the disciples of Jacques Maritain and Charles Journet—the Jesuits' erstwhile allies in the battle against Vichy anti-Semitism. The sense of mutual respect and fellow-feeling that emerged from this shared cause did not survive the end of the war, when the longstanding theological differences between the two groups reappeared all the more starkly. In May 1945, Journet complained to Maritain that de Lubac's circle was the animating force behind a new movement seeking to dispense with the rational categories of medieval theology in favor of a "return to the Greek Fathers," and "on the other hand, a formulation that would borrow from the register of Hegel and existentialism."[7] Maritain, who had recently been named the French ambassador to the Holy See, shared his Swiss friend's concerns about de Lubac and his role in this new movement. While acknowledging that the Jesuit "has a great deal of talent" and "writes beautiful books," Maritain complained that "these Jesuits, the more intelligent they are, the more they yield to the times and adapt to their weaknesses. What a mess."[8] The problem, he observed, was that Thomism had suffered a serious blow to its reputation by its association with Vichy. The French had "heard too many Thomists sing the praises of the Marshal," and Maritain feared that this would play into the hands of critics of Thomism such as de Lubac's circle. Consequently, when Maritain's disciple Labourdette informed him that he was drafting an article that would constitute a "declaration of war" against these Jesuits and their "anti-Scholastic offensive," the ambassador enthusiastically supported the idea.[9]

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[5] When de Lubac met with Maritain during his visit to Rome in the autumn of 1946, Maritain informed him that de Boynes had already disavowed Fourvière. See de Lubac's notes on his visit to Rome, CAEHL, 73945.

[6] See the letter on the subject from Saliège to de Lubac reprinted in Henri de Lubac, *At the Service of the Church: Henri de Lubac Reflects on the Circumstances that Occasioned his Writings,* trans. by Anne Elizabeth Englund (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1993), 237. The incident is also recounted in Étienne Fouilloux, *Une église en quête de liberté,* 280-1.

Meanwhile, Journet had been speaking out against the Jesuits of Fourvière to his colleagues and students at the seminary of Fribourg in Switzerland. When de Lubac found out about this from a friend at Fribourg, he confronted Journet, precipitating a bitter exchange in which the Jesuit accused Journet of "throwing suspicion on an entire mode of thought, to the point of an accusation of heresy!"[10] Although he denied having impugned de Lubac's orthodoxy, Journet did maintain his "profound disagreement" with the Jesuit's theological "movement"—a phrase that only angered de Lubac further because it implied that he was the ringleader of a self-conscious school.[11]

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[7] Charles Journet to Jacques Maritain, 25 May, 1945, in *Journet-Maritain. Correspondance*, vol. 3 (Fribourg, Switzerland: Presses Universitaires de Fribourg, 1996), 320.

[8] Jacques Maritain to Charles Journet, 24 June, 1945, in ibid., 324.

[9] Marie-Michel Labourdette to Jacques Maritain, 17 May, 1946, quoted in Étienne Fouilloux, "Dialogue Théologique?" 159-160. In his reply, also cited here, Maritain welcomed the project but also counseled Labourdette to avoid the appearance of denouncing the Jesuits to the Holy Office and calling for a condemnation.

[10] Henri de Lubac to Charles Journet, 27 June, 1946, CAEHL, 73923. For the letter that alerted de Lubac to Journet's accusations, see 73913.

[11] De Lubac cites Journet's response in a letter to Fessard on 30 June 1946, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 73/3.

Labourdette's "declaration of war," published in the *Revue thomiste* later that summer, reiterated his mentors' objections to the work of the Lyon Jesuits and transformed this from a private dispute to a public one.[12] The immediate trigger for the article, titled "La théologie et ses sources," was the publication of Daniélou's famous *Études* article celebrating the new directions in French theology, which Labourdette rightly read as a more or less explicit attack on Thomism. But Daniélou's piece was only the immediate occasion for a much broader critique of an entire theological method that the Dominican associated with the work of de Lubac, Bouillard, Fessard, Daniélou, Teilhard de Chardin, and Hans Urs von Balthasar. By linking together these diverse figures (only one of whom in fact taught at Fourvière), Labourdette played a key role in fleshing out the mythology of the "nouvelle théologie," even if this term did not itself appear in his article.

The primary targets of Labourdette's critique were the *Sources chrétiennes* and *Théologie* series, which he rightly identified as the lynchpins of the *ressourcement* movement. Behind these ostensibly neutral historical studies, the Dominican discerned an "evident depreciation of Scholastic theology" in favor of a return to the Patristic sources of the Tradition.[13] But Labourdette also discerned that this return to the sources was *also* a forward-looking project—one that looked to that the Patristic texts for resources with which to bridge the abyss between theology and modern thought, as Daniélou had argued in his *Études* piece. The problem with such an approach, Labourdette argued, was that it assumed that Patristic and Scholastic theology were equally valid systems of thought. In fact, the Scholastic system developed by Thomas Aquinas marked a qualitative shift in the practice of theology, for "precisely in the form that Saint Thomas gave it, Scholastic theology represents the truly *scientific* state of Christian thought."[14] It was no longer possible, in other words, to return to the pre-scientific theology before the great Scholastic synthesis; nor could anything radically new emerge to replace this synthesis. Henceforth, the work of the theologian consisted in a logical development of the principles set forth by Aquinas. And precisely because this system was not simply the product of a particular historical moment, it was could meet the intellectual challenges of the twentieth century just as easily as it had those of the thirteenth. "It is not as a closed system and according to 'categories' that are irremediably closed to the assimilation of new data that Scholastic theology encounters modern thought," Labourdette insisted; "we believe, on the contrary, that [Scholasticism] is a perfectly living form of thought, capable of entering into new problems, understanding them, and assimilating everything that is authentic within the most modern of doctrines."[15] Labourdette did not, then, object to the Jesuits' desire to engage with modern thought. He simply denied that this could be achieved outside of the Scholastic framework.

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[12] Fouilloux makes much the same point when he argues that "all of Labourdette's argumentation is already present in the private exchanges between men [Journet and Maritain] whom he had long considered mentors." See "Dialogue Théologique?" 158.

[13] In 1947, Labourdette, Nicolas, and Fr. Bruckberger re-published this article and the Jesuit response, along with several other essays and annotations in the form of a book. It is this version of the text that will be cited here: *Dialogue théologique. Pièces du débat entre 'La Revue thomiste' d'une part et les* R.R. P.P. *de Lubac, Daniélou, Bouillard, Fessard, von Balthasar, S.J., d'autre part* (Saint-Maximin: Les Arcades, 1947), 35, preserved in Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 4/21bis. The original appeared as "La théologie et ses sources," *Revue thomiste* 46 (1946), 353-71.

Here, Labourdette articulated the classic Maritainian vision of an "open Thomism," conceived as an ongoing scientific endeavor not limited to a particular historical moment. It should be clear, then, why he took exception to work such as Bouillard's and de Lubac's, which sought to read the Angelic Doctor and his Scholastic commentators in their historical context. To apply the historical method to theology was, for Labourdette, to relativize it and to "replace the metaphysical notion of speculative truth with the more modest one of historical truth, as the more or less complete expression of the mentality, the human experience of a period."[16] In other words, it was to "ruin, in effect, the notion of a theology that would also be a science," as Saint Thomas had envisioned it.[17] To illustrate this danger, Labourdette turned to the approach taken by Bouillard in *Conversion et grâce*—the first volume in the *Théologie* series published out of Fourvière. In it, Bouillard sought to distinguish the eternal truths of dogma and revelation from the contingent notions in which they are expressed, in order to disentangle the theology of grace developed by Thomas Aquinas from the Aristotelian categories in which he and his commentators had expressed it. If these categories had been appropriate to the intellectual world of the Scholastic theologian, they now seemed outdated in light of philosophical and scientific developments since the thirteenth century. For Labourdette, such an argument implied that "the notions in which Saint Thomas expressed his theology of grace constitute a theology that was true for its time, but is now false."[18] The effect was not only to downgrade the status of Thomism, but to deny the very possibility of "definitive gains" in theology—just as there are in scientific knowledge—that remain valid beyond the particular historical moment in which they are developed.[19] "This would perhaps not be worrying for a Hegelian understanding of history," the Dominican quipped, but "it is dangerous not just for theology, but for the Christian faith."[20] In other words, Labourdette charged Bouillard with embracing a typically modern form of historical relativism.

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[14] Ibid. Emphasis in original.

[15] Ibid., 36.

[16] Ibid., 43.

But the Dominican also identified a second typically modern form of relativism lurking in this approach, which he also attributed to the work of de Lubac, Fessard, Daniélou, and Balthasar. By distinguishing the eternal content of theology from the contingent concepts in which it is expressed, these Jesuits vitiated the basis for objective theological truth. In order to understand this accusation, it is important to recall that Labourdette cleaved to the realist epistemology typical of

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[17] Ibid., 45.

[18] Ibid., 51.

[19] Ibid., 64.

[20] Ibid., 50.

Neo-Scholasticism. According to this approach, concepts yield objective knowledge precisely because they participate in the extra-mental realities they represent, and therefore cannot be separated from these realities. To treat these concepts as subjective tools that merely represent an external reality would amount to nominalism, from this perspective. And this is precisely what Labourdette accused the Jesuits of embracing when they argued for the contingency of theological concepts. Such an approach amounted to "the complete evacuation...of the idea of speculative truth," approaching theology instead as "the expression of a 'living' reality within man" and as a "witness to a spiritual experience."[21] In other words, Labourdette accused the Jesuits of mounting a two-pronged attack on objective truth in theology, submitting it to the corrosive, relativizing effects of historicism and of subjectivism.

In his *Études* piece, Daniélou had celebrated the return to the Church Fathers because he argued that these texts offered superior resources for engaging with the dominant themes of contemporary philosophy—history and the subject—which had been overlooked in Scholastic theology. This was of course a clear reference to the two dominant forces in French intellectual life at the time: Marxism and existentialism, respectively. Labourdette turned Daniélou's celebration on its head, arguing that the turn to history and the subject in the work of these Jesuits was evidence of "the most unfortunate concordance, ratifying the most superficial points of encounter" between their work and the dominant philosophies of the day.[22] And it was one that the Dominican blamed squarely on their abandonment of the scientific theology developed by Saint Thomas, under the influence of the "powerful momentum of irrational philosophies" in vogue in postwar France and particularly evident in the work of Teilhard de Chardin.[23] But Labourdette's decision to structure his critique around the dual dangers of historicism and subjectivism, even if it did mirror the structure of Daniélou's article, also had the unfortunate effect of recalling the 1907 Modernist Crisis. As we saw in Chapter 1, the condemnation of Catholic Modernism had turned precisely on the dangers of historical relativism and subjectivism in theology. Consequently, Labourdette's article could also be read as a veiled accusation of neo-Modernism, which was indeed how his Jesuit interlocutors read it.

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[21] Ibid., 58; 39.

[22] Ibid., 59.

The same issue of the *Revue thomiste* in which Labourdette's article appeared also contained a review of de Lubac's *Corpus Mysticum* by Labourdette's colleague Nicolas, whom de Lubac had described in 1938 as the "young cockerel of the St-Maximin integrists."[24] Nicolas' review echoed many of the objections raised by Labourdette against the historical approach so central to the work of the Lyon Jesuits, and he rightly perceived that de Lubac, like Bouillard, deployed history as a theological weapon against Neo-Scholasticism. In *Corpus Mysticum* (and again in *Surnaturel*), de Lubac deployed history as a form of critique, to show up the relative historical novelty of certain Scholastic theological concepts and the extent to which these departed from the richer formulations of the Church Fathers. As a disciple of Maritainian Thomism, Nicolas of course objected to this narrative of decline, which saw in "the scientific form taken by theology in the Middle Ages" the "impoverishment of the doctrine of the Fathers."[25] This was not just a narrative of decline, but also a narrative of rupture, which figured Scholastic theology as a "beginning" and a "new mentality" distinct from that of the Fathers—a shift "from symbolism to dialectic," as de Lubac had put it.[26]

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[23] Ibid., 59. Initially, Labourdette blamed Teilhard for the importation of both Marxist and existentialist categories into Catholic theology, but he later revised this statement, identifying Teilhard with Marxism and Daniélou with existentialism instead. See ibid., 70 (note "t").

[24] Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, 19 December, 1938, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 73/2.

[25] Marie-Joseph Nicolas, "La théologie de l'Église," *Revue thomiste* 46 (1946), 388; 385.

[26] Ibid., 385. This is the title of the final chapter of *Corpus Mysticum*.

This troubled Nicolas for two reasons. In the first place, it violated the key Neo-Scholastic principle that Aquinas had successfully integrated all of the major insights of the Church Fathers, while raising theology to the level of a science. Consequently, Nicolas was keen to demonstrate that Thomism had "sacrificed nothing of the Patristic heritage," preserving but also deepening and adding to the Eucharistic doctrine of the Fathers.[27]

Second, Nicolas was appalled by what he perceived to be the relativism implications of the Jesuit's historical narrative. For even though he clearly preferred the Fathers' approach to the Scholastic theology that succeeded it, de Lubac nevertheless insisted that it was not a question of simply returning to this Patristic model, since it belonged to a historical moment that was now irretrievably gone. And although Scholasticism would appear to be the immediate beneficiary of such an argument, Nicolas readily perceived that the sword of historicism cut both ways. If the worldview of the Fathers now seemed so foreign to the modern imagination, then Scholasticism must also be "the expression of an outdated mentality," rather than the theology's truly scientific form.[28] "Let us admit clearly that we cannot accept so much relativism," Nicolas chided; "the life of the spirit may we be a life, but it does not evolve in the same way as a vegetable or an animal...through the indefinitely repeated cycle of birth, youth, maturity, and ageing."[29] In other words, the Dominican accused de Lubac of applying a supersessionist, Hegelian model to the history of theology—one that played directly into the hands of Marxist or existentialist philosophers who claimed that Christianity itself was outdated. Like his colleague Labourdette, then, Nicolas criticized the Jesuit both for nursing an "archaic" interest in the Church Fathers and for privileging the new above the old—a tension that can only be explained by the ambivalence of the *ressourcement* project itself. This would be an ongoing theme in the campaign against the Jesuits of Fourvière, who were accused of articulating a theology that was at once too "new" and too "old" in relation to medieval Scholasticism, just as the Jesuits alternately disparaged Scholasticism for being neither sufficiently traditional nor sufficiently modern.

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[27] Ibid., 387.

[28] Ibid., 389.

[29] Ibid., 386.

In a different context, de Lubac and his friends might well have read this critique in the *Revue thomiste* as a standard theological disagreement and responded in kind. As it happened, though, de Lubac received the offprint of the article while he was in Rome for the General Congregation of the Jesuit order in September 1946. Since his arrival ten days earlier, de Lubac had been flooded with rumors of a campaign against himself and the Jesuits of Fourvière being waged both within and outside the order.[30] Within the order, the strongest opposition seemed to come from Norbert de Boynes, the interim Father General with whom de Lubac had sparred over Vichy, as well as from Charles Boyer, a professor at the Gregorian. The situation seemed to improve when the Belgian Fr. Jean-Baptiste Janssens was elected to replace de Boynes as General of the order on September 15th. But two days later de Lubac and his allies suffered a major blow when the Pope addressed the Jesuit Congregation and warned:

> There has been much talk...about a 'new theology,' perpetually evolving as everything else evolves, perpetually on the move but never getting anywhere. If we suppose we ought to indulge that sort of thinking, what will become of our never changing Catholic dogmas, and the unity and stability of our faith?[31]

De Lubac later maintained that this was the first time he had heard the expression "new theology" and did not initially realize that it might refer to him.[32]

Two days later, he received Labourdette's article in the mail, and it became increasingly clear that the Pope's speech was being widely interpreted as a rebuke to the very same group targeted in the *Revue thomiste*.[33] Nor did it help that the text of the Pope's address was then made public in the pages of the *Osservatore romano*. De Lubac immediately questioned his various superiors as to the suspicions against him and Janssens assured him "that there is nothing, as far as the Pope or he himself is concerned, against Fourvière."[34] But the rumors flying around Rome were far less encouraging. Some reported that the Pope's incriminating remarks had been prepared by someone within the order, such as Boyer or de Boynes, whereas others insisted that they had come from outside. Again and again, friends warned de Lubac that Garrigou-Lagrange and Gagnebet, two Dominican professors at the Angelicum with considerable clout at the Holy Office, were preparing an all-out assault on the Jesuits of Lyon. In addition to inveighing against Bouillard in his courses, Garrigou-Lagrange had also been bending the Pope's ear on the subject of Fourvière. Gagnebet, for his part, had shared Labourdette's article with the Holy Father well before its publication. "We will get them!" the Dominican had reportedly announced.[35]

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[30] The following account is based largely on de Lubac's daily notes on his various meetings in Rome, which are preserved at CAEHL, 73945-73947 and included as an appendix to *At the Service of the Church,* 250-7.

[31] The address is reprinted in both Latin and English in de Lubac, *At the Service of the Church*, 248.

[32] See his "Examen de conscience théologique," 6 March, 1947, CAEHL, 56353.

The Reply

The skies continued to darken over Fourvière through the end of 1946. When the Jesuit response to Labourdette and Nicolas finally appeared in February 1947, rumors had reached Lyon that the Vatican was preparing "a sort of Syllabus [a reference to Pius IX's anti-modernist *Syllabus of*

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[33] See Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, 29 September, 1946, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 73/3. De Lubac was particularly vexed by an article by the Dominican Father Bochenski—"Les directives du Pape aux penseurs chrétiens," *La Liberté de Fribourg* (8 February 1947)—which interpreted the Pope's speech as a rebuke to a "new theology...strangely indebted to modernism" and professing "a radical and irrationalist evolutionism that amounted to the negation of all objective truth." The text is reproduced in CAEHL, 56242.

[34] De Lubac's notes on this meeting are reported in CAEHL, 73947.

[35] See the notes on October 2nd, 9th, and 19th in CAEHL, 73945-6. See also the letter from Garrigou-Lagrange to Nicolas on 3 June, 1946, quoted in Fouilloux, "Dialogue théologique?" 169.

Errors]...a portion of which would be devoted to a certain 'new theology.'"[36] "The storm is rising," a worried de Lubac confided to Fessard, informing him that Garrigou-Lagrange was waging a secret epistolary campaign to discredit them in both France and Rome and that his efforts "seem to be bearing fruit."[37] De Lubac communicated these anxieties to Bernard de Gorostarzu—the Assistant to the Father General, who acted as a go-between the French Jesuits and Fr. Janssens—asking the General to intervene with his Dominican counterpart in order to put a stop to the "sort of dictatorship that Fr. G-L seeks to exercise over the Church."[38] In response, the Assistant encouraged de Lubac to "counter-attack and to absolve the Order and its theologians of the compromises with theological error that are imputed to us."[39] This he did in February 1947, when the Jesuit reply to Labourdette and Nicolas appeared in the pages of *Recherches de science religieuse*—the journal de Lubac edited with Fessard.[40] Although the reply was unsigned and presented as a collective response from theologians targeted in the *Revue thomiste* article, in fact it was entirely de Lubac's work, albeit approved by Fessard, Bouillard, and Daniélou.

At the heart of this controversy was of course a disagreement over the relative merits of Patristic and Scholastic theology, even though neither side could explicitly present it as such. Thus, the Jesuit response firmly denied that their "exaltation of the Fathers came at the expense of the great Doctor [Aquinas]."[41] Instead, they simply sought to return to a more authentic Thomism than the one embraced by Neo-Scholastics like Maritain and Labourdette, with its early-modern accretions. Despite this claim to be more Thomist than the Thomists, the lion's share of the text was in fact devoted to dethroning Thomism from the privileged position Labourdette and so many others accorded to it. De Lubac chided the Dominican for writing off the first twelve centuries of Catholic theology, as if they bore no value except "insofar as the Thomist synthesis had siphoned off their substance. Given that this synthesis 'represents the truly scientific state of Christian thought,' why linger over its pre-scientific state?"[42] Such a blithe disregard for the entire Tradition prior to Aquinas was accompanied, de Lubac argued, by an equally restrictive attitude towards the role of theology after Scholasticism. If the Thomist synthesis is "definitive" and its categories eternally valid, as Labourdette maintained, "it must only be a question of adding a few ornaments or deducing a few consequences from it."[43] De Lubac thus sought to show up the narrowness of the Neo-Scholastic framework and the remarkably ahistorical premises informing it. To suggest that Thomism "lacks a certain sense of history" because of the intellectual context in which it was developed, he insisted, was not equivalent to dismissing it as obsolete; nor did pointing out the value of what preceded Thomas detract in any way from the greatness of the Angelic Doctor.[44] And yet, the Jesuit nevertheless *did* imply that the Church Fathers offered superior resources for the contemporary moment. If the Patristic texts were capable of speaking to the twentieth-century theologian, this was because of a "fraternal link which, across so many centuries and despite so many transformations in mental habits, make of the thought they transmit to us and the one we inhabit today, the expression of a single faith, such that...the Church Fathers sometimes appear closer to us than later theologies do."[45] Once again, de Lubac affirmed the paradoxical modernism of the *ressourcement* project against a Scholasticism that was both too modern and not modern enough.

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[36] Henri de Lubac to Bernard de Gorostarzu [Assistant to the Father General of the Jesuit Order], 2 January, 1947, CAEHL, 73981.

[37] Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, 2 January, 1947, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 73/3.

[38] Henri de Lubac to Bernard de Gorostarzu, 2 January, 1947, CAEHL, 73981

[39] Bernard de Gorostarzu to Henri de Lubac, 16 January, 1947, CAEHL, 73982.

[40] De Lubac had been appointed editor of the journal in June 1946, despite his objections that this publicity would only draw more negative attention to himself and to Fourvière. See his letter to his provincial superior on this subject, dated 7 June, 1946, CAEHL, 73919-20.

[41] The text of the reply is also reproduced in Labourdette, Nicolas, and Bruckberger, *Dialogue théologique,* 81.

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[42] Ibid., 84.

[43] Ibid., 85.

[44] Ibid., 87.

The Jesuit then turned his attentions to disputing the charge of relativism leveled against his circle by Labourdette and Nicolas. In the first place, de Lubac disputed the "slippery slope" logic deployed by the Dominicans. "If the historian must naturally insist upon the differences between one thinker and another, or between one period and another, he does not for all that deny the constants," de Lubac insisted.[46] And consequently, while he and his colleagues admitted that there is an element of relativity to all human thought, they nevertheless maintained that the truth of the faith "remains immutable across the centuries."[47] What they could not accept, however, was the Neo-Scholastic epistemology to which Labourdette adhered, which conceived of theology as a "science" built upon unchanging, "objective" concepts. "Catholic truth will always overflow its conceptual expression," de Lubac insisted, and "even more so its scientific formulation in an organized system."[48] It is for this very reason that the Church affirms "the freedom of theological schools within a single orthodoxy," because no one theological system can exhaust the mysteries of the faith within its conceptual apparatus.[49] The question of theological pluralism was thus inextricably tied to the question of epistemology, and the need for a plurality of theological schools followed from the limits that history imposed upon conceptual knowledge. No "one man, one school, one country, one religious order, can provide all of the notes that compose the great concert of the Church," de

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[45] Ibid., 86-7.

[46] Ibid., 97.

[47] Ibid., 83.

[48] Ibid., 92.

[49] Ibid.

Lubac insisted, in a dig at both St. Thomas and his Dominican champions.[50] The greatest danger currently facing the Church was not a "new theology," then, but the "'intellectualist' deformation which takes one system for the truth" and "conceives truth itself as a system," as the Thomists did.[51] Not only was this a misguided epistemology; it also threatened to silence theological debate within the Church. For the Jesuit, Labourdette's article and the machinations of Garrigou-Lagrange were thus part of the same campaign to return to "the bad old days of integrism."[52]

This was a charge that profoundly wounded Labourdette, who wanted nothing to do with Garrigou's inquisition. Indeed, behind the scenes of this public dispute, an effort to mediate between the Dominicans of St-Maximin and the Jesuits in question was underway. It was led by Mgr. Bruno de Solages, rector of the Institut Catholique de Toulouse, who was well-placed to act as a go-between. Solages had been a close ally of the Lyon Jesuits during the resistance and was highly sympathetic to their theological project—particularly to the work of Teilhard de Chardin. But he was also a friend of Nicolas' and identified as a Thomist, albeit in the tradition of Pierre Rousselot and Joseph Maréchal, whose work had made such an impression on de Lubac and his friends during their Jersey days. In January 1947, Solages proposed to publish a series of open letters between himself and Nicolas in the pages of the *Bulletin de littérature écclésiastique,* as a way to mediate the dispute between the Jesuits and the Dominicans. Here, he offered his own brand of Thomism as a middle ground between the two warring sides. As a disciple of Rousselot and Maréchal, Solages eschewed the Neo-Scholastic epistemology of the Maritainians at St-Maximin in favor of a more Kantian Thomism that acknowledged, as the Jesuits did, the gap between concepts and the reality they represent.[53] The relationship between concept and reality was an analogous rather than a direct one, Solages maintained. Because "every theological notion (or system) is analogous to the reality it seeks to express," no single theological system can claim a monopoly and "many theological systems thus express in an orthodox manner the same revealed truths."[54] Nevertheless, Solages maintained that Thomism came closer to this truth than any other system and thus deserved its pride of place in the Tradition. As he put it in a letter to de Lubac, "the study of St. Thomas remains essential, but...it must not lead us to neglect the rest of Christian thought."[55]

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[50] Ibid., 96.

[51] Ibid., 92.

[52] Ibid., 95.

Nicolas responded by disputing the analogical equivalence Solages asserted between different systems of thought, insisting that no analogy was possible, for instance, between Thomism and Hegelianism. "I believe, as you do, that Thomism is the truest of systems," Nicolas affirmed, but he also insisted that "it is the *only* true one."[56] This first effort at mediation thus concluded with each side digging in its heels. Alongside this public exchange, a stream of private correspondence between the interested parties met a similar fate, as the interlocutors reaffirmed their existing positions.[57] But the possibility of a reconciliation would soon grow far more remote.

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[53] On Solages' position and its debt to Rousselot and Maréchal, see Gerald McCool, *From Unity to Pluralism: The Internal Evolution of Thomism* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1989), 214-16.

[54] "Autour d'un controverse," *Bulletin de littérature écclésiastique* 48 (January-March 1947), preserved in Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 4/21, p. 8-9.

[55] Bruno de Solages to Henri de Lubac, 23 June, 1947, CAEHL, 74095.

[56] Ibid., 15. Emphasis added.

[57] See, for instance, the correspondence between Labourdette, Solages, and Daniélou in Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 4/21bis. Here, Labourdette reaffirmed his argument that to deny theology a scientific status and an ability to "attain a truth determinable by objective criteria" would be to descend into relativism (Labourdette to Daniélou, 26 September, 1946). See also the far more tense correspondence between de Lubac and Labourdette and de Lubac and Nicolas, in CAEHL, 56344; 73994; 74057. Fessard also addressed the debate in his 1947 article on "Théologie et histoire," *Dieu Vivant* 8 (1947), 39-65, discussed in chapter 6. Here, Fessard links his critique of the approach to history taken by "modern Thomists" like Journet, Maritain, and Féret to the debate with Labourdette. Where the Dominican had accused the Lyon Jesuits of historical relativism, Fessard turns this very charge back against the Thomists themselves, on the grounds that they treated biblical categories such as "Jew" and-"Gentile" as historical rather than existential ones, whose opposition could be overcome within time. Fessard quotes directly from Labourdette's article—notably, his critique of the Jesuits' tendency to reduce metaphysical truth to historical truth—turning it against Labourdette's fellow Thomists instead.

The "Atomic Bomb"

By the time the Solages-Nicolas exchange appeared in print, a far more menacing development made the dispute between St-Maximin and Fourvière appear relatively benign. This was the release, immediately following the Jesuit response to Labourdette and Nicolas, of Garrigou-Lagrange's first public intervention on the subject—what some referred to as his "atomic bomb."[58] It appeared in February of 1947 in the pages of *Angelicum*, the journal for the Dominican pontifical university in Rome, bearing the title "La nouvelle théologie où va-t-elle?"[59] Here, for the first time, an explicit connection was made between the Pope's vague reference to a "theologia nova" and the Jesuits targeted by the *Revue thomiste*: de Lubac, Bouillard, Daniélou, Fessard, Teilhard, and Montcheuil. But although the substance of Garrigou-Lagrange's critique was similar to the one articulated by Labourdette, it went much further in accusing the Jesuits' of heterodoxy and calling down a condemnation. A major difference between the two articles was that Labourdette had not used the term "nouvelle théologie," nor had he explicitly accused the Jesuits of "modernism." Garrigou-Lagrange did both, and he also focused his attentions on "certain typed pages" written by Teilhard de Chardin and Yves de Montcheuil, which were circulating in France without the *nihil obstat* and *imprimatur* of their superiors. The texts in question were of course the various works by Teilhard de Chardin that had long circulated in *samizdat* form because their author had been effectively banned from publishing on religious matters since 1925. But they also referred to the pages by Yves de Montcheuil on the Eucharist discussed in Chapter 4, in which the Jesuit expressed reservations about the Aristotelian, spatialized categories underwriting the doctrine of transubstantiation. According to de Lubac, these were informal notes dating back to Montcheuil's student days and not intended for public consumption, although their origins remain unclear.[60] Labourdette had initially intended to address the unpublished texts by Teilhard in his own article, but Maritain restrained him, on the grounds that "it would be best to avoid anything that would have the appearance of a denunciation to the authorities."[61]

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[58] The term was coined by fellow Dominican critics of the "nouvelle théologie," Frs. Gillon and Peter. See Fouilloux, *Une Église en quête de liberté*, 283.

[59] Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, "La nouvelle théologie où va-t-elle?" *Angelicum* 23 (1946), 126-145. Although attached to the late-1946 issue of *Angelicum*, the article was made public in February 1947. It was followed by another piece in the same vein later that year: "Vérité et immutabilité du dogme," *Angelicum* 24 (1947), 124-139.

Garrigou was not burdened by the same concerns. For the Dominican, these "typewritten pages which are circulated (some since 1934) to the clergy, seminarians, and Catholic intellectuals" of France were evidence of a full-scale assault on the system of ecclesiastical censorship and thus on hierarchical authority within the Church.[62] He and other critics were particularly concerned that these texts were exposing young seminarians to heterodox ideas, and Garrigou-Lagrange thus devoted a substantial part of his essay to "unmasking" the sorts of outlandish ideas circulating in this form. He pointed, for instance, to Montcheuil's critique on the Aristotelian notion that Christ is present in the Eucharist in the manner of a substance. This amounted, Garrigou insisted, to a wholesale rejection of the Catholic doctrine of transsubstantiation and the "real presence" of Christ in the Eucharist, in favor of something much closer to the Protestant model—the Host as "efficacious symbol of Christ's spiritual presence."[63] Here, the Dominican stoked fears that the "nouvelle théologie," with its emphasis on a return to the sources of the Tradition, on ecumenical dialogue, and its tendency to downplay hierarchical authority within the Church, was crypto-Protestant.

But Garrigou-Lagrange was even more concerned about the ideas expressed in Teilhard de

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[60] See Henri de Lubac to Fr. Girardon, 17 July, 1947, CAEHL, 74101. Here, de Lubac in fact claims that the text was disseminated by Montcheuil's critics in order to discredit him.

[61] Jacques Maritain to Marie-Michel Labourdette, 24 May, 1946, quoted in Fouilloux, "Dialogue théologique?" 159n2. See also Maritain's letter to Journet on the subject on 15 June, 1946, in their *Correspondance,* 419.

[62] Garrigou-Lagrange, "La nouvelle théologie où va-t-elle?" 134.

[63] Ibid., 141.

Chardin's unpublished texts. Having somehow gotten hold of Teilhard's essay "Comment je crois," Garrigou revealed to a much wider public the controversial evolutionary theory of its author, which had been common knowledge amongst French intellectuals for decades. He cited lengthy passages in which the paleontologist explained his theory of the continuity between biological and spiritual evolution, which saw in "'the plenitude of Christ,"' "'the physical pole of universal Evolution.'"[64] Such an approach posed a number of challenges to Catholic dogma, but Garrigou-Lagrange was particularly concerned about its implications for the doctrine of original sin. Teilhard's vision of evolutionary ascent seemed to allow little space for the notion of a Fall at the beginning of human history, not least because the Jesuit denied the evolutionary theory of monogenism—the notion that humans all share a common ancestor. Teilhard instead framed the biblical Adam as a figure denoting a collective entity rather than an individual person. As Garrigou-Lagrange pointed out, this seemed to vitiate the doctrine that all humans are born with the stain of original sin because they are descended from Adam. Teilhard's theory thus threatened to undermine the very foundations of Catholic dogma, Garrigou warned. With its pantheist tendencies and narrative of unbroken progress, the Dominican likened Teilhard's theory to a "Hegelian evolutionism, Christian only in name."[65]

This allowed Garrigou-Lagrange to establish an identity between Teilhard de Chardin's evolutionism, the historical studies of Bouillard and de Lubac. For the Dominican, both were manifestations of the same historicist assault on immutable truth summed up by Bouillard's now infamous claim that "a theology which is not contemporary would be a false theology."[66] Like Labourdette, Garrigou took this to mean that "the theology of St. Thomas, being no longer contemporary, is a false theology."[67] But, like his fellow Dominican, Garrigou also read this as a broader attack on the very possibility of unchanging truth and on the realist epistemology underwriting Neo-Scholastic theology. What united the various manifestations of the "nouvelle théologie," he argued, was their common rejection of a realist definition of truth ("the conformity of the judgment to the extra-mental real and its immutable laws") in favor of a historicist and subjectivist definition ("the conformity of the judgment to the exigencies of action or of human life which constantly evolves").[68] Such a definition was implicit in Bouillard's attempt to disentangle the doctrine of grace affirmed at the Council of Trent from the purely contingent Aristotelian categories in which it was expressed. And it was also implicit in de Lubac's historical study of the evolution in Catholic teaching on the supernatural. Labourdette and Nicolas had not been able to take *Surnaturel* into account in their articles because they was written before its publication, but Garrigou-Lagrange's intervention shifted the focus of critical attention onto de Lubac's most recent work and its critique of the Scholastic theory of "pure nature." Here, the Dominican formulated what would become the standard objection of the book's Neo-Scholastic critics—that, by denying the necessary distinction between the natural and supernatural orders, de Lubac had undermined the gratuity of grace. This was an error Garrigou attributed to a reading of St. Thomas that "neglects all metaphysics in order to content itself with historical erudition."[69] In other words, it derived from the same erroneous understanding of truth that de Lubac shared with the other proponents of the "nouvelle théologie," according to which, "the true is no longer *that which is* but *that which becomes* and changes constantly."[70]

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[64] Teilhard de Chardin, quoted in ibid., 137.

[65] Ibid., 136.

[66] Labourdette had also made much of this line in his *Revue thomiste* article. It is cited in ibid., 126.

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[67] Ibid.

[68] Ibid., 127.

[69] Ibid., 132.

[70] Ibid., 144.

The Dominican laid the blame for this development squarely at the feet of the Catholic "Modernist" Maurice Blondel, whom he figured as the *maître-penseur* of the "nouvelle théologie." In answer to the question "where is the new theology going?" Garrigou therefore concluded that "it is returning to Modernism."[71] In contrast to the *Revue thomiste* articles, there was no mention of the project of *ressourcement* and the Jesuits' interest in returning to the work of the Church Fathers in Garrigou's piece. Instead, the Dominican charged that, in their desire "to frequent the masters of modern thought in order to convert them," the "new theologians" had instead allowed themselves to be converted to the historicist philosophies that reigned contemporary France.[72] This accounted for their departure from "the traditional definition of truth" in favor of "a vitalist, evolutionist one...leading to full relativism."[73]

What was ultimately to blame for all of this, of course, was the fact that these theologians had strayed from the path of Thomism, which provided safeguards against such relativism. As proof of this, the Dominican pointed to a much-cited line from Daniélou's *Études* article, which referred to Neo-Thomism as a "*garde-fou*" (an allusion to the guardrails on bridges which prevent unstable individuals from jumping to their death). In addition, Garrigou cited a passage from Gaston Fessard's review of a book by Joseph de Tonquédec, in which Fessard had insulted the "blissful lethargy protected by a canonized Thomism that is also, as Péguy once said, a 'buried' Thomism."[74] Alongside efforts by Bouillard, de Lubac, and Montcheuil to undermine long-established elements of Scholastic theology, Garrigou-Lagrange took these passing remarks as evidence that the "nouvelle théologie" constituted a systematic assault on Thomism. This put it in contravention of various

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[71] Ibid.,

[72] Ibid., 142.

[73] Ibid., 144.

[74] Quoted in ibid., 133.

Church documents that affirmed the privileged status of Thomism, including *Aeterni Patris, Pascendi dominici gregis,* and the 24 Thomist theses approved by the Congregation of Studies in 1916. In other words, Garrigou-Lagrange presented the conflict over the "nouvelle théologie" as a reprise of the turn-of-the-century battle between the forces of Catholic Modernism and those of Neo-Thomism. That conflict had of course ended with the Vatican condemnation of Modernism in 1907, and Garrigou-Lagrange was calling for nothing less against the "nouvelle théologie."

The Jesuits targeted by this attack were under no illusions about the dangerous position in which it placed them, and they were therefore anxious to respond as quickly as possible. In the aftermath of the Garrigou "bomb," however, there was a palpable shift in the attitude of their superiors in the Jesuit Curia. Whereas they had initially encouraged de Lubac and his friends to "confront such tendentious and grave attacks," the Father General and his Assistant now took a more cautious line and forbade them from publishing a public response to Garrigou-Lagrange.[75] It seems that the Father General had been displeased by the polemical tone and the collective, anonymous format of the Jesuit response to Labourdette and Nicolas. Consequently, the Jesuits targeted in Garrigou-Lagrange's article—Bouillard, de Lubac, Fessard, Daniélou, Teilhard de Chardin, and Rondet—were instructed to write up individual responses to the charges leveled against them. These documents, after being vetted and censored by their superiors in Rome, would be privately circulated to the relevant Church authorities in France and Rome. Faced with mounting attacks on Fourvière from within and outside the order, the primary concern of the Jesuit Curia was to protect the public image of the order as a whole. De Lubac and his friends were therefore instructed to frame their responses in such a way as to avoid "with care, any personal or passionate attacks which would bring us back to the bad old days of the quarrels between Dominicans and

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[75] Bernard de Gorostarzu to Henri de Lubac, 6 February, 1947, CAEHL, 73990.

Jesuits."[76] In, addition, they were advised "to distance themselves and to distance our theologians from these typed pages (Teilhard or de Montcheuil), which are—at least some of them—indefensible and have no *imprimatur*...they are poisoning our defense and singularly favoring the attack."[77]

In their private responses, de Lubac, Fessard, Daniélou, Teilhard de Chardin, and Bouillard did not repudiate the "typed pages," however. Teilhard maintained that Garrigou-Lagrange had simply mistaken his essay on the psychological and phenomenological motives for belief as a formal work of theology, "unduly transporting my phenomenology into the order (so strenuously avoided throughout the criticized pages) of Theology."[78] De Lubac took a similar tack, framing his *Surnaturel* as a historical study (as the subtitle to the book indicated) rather than a work of positive theology. "It is not a question of affirming a doctrine...but of how to interpret certain texts," de Lubac insisted, and Garrigou-Lagrange had failed to cite any passage that contradicted the Jesuit's reading of Aquinas on this question.[79] The Jesuit also insisted, as he would do again and again in the coming years, that the notion that humans posses a natural desire for the beatific vision in no way implies that this supernatural end is *owed* to us, that it is our *right* and not a gratuitous gift from God.

Fessard and Daniélou, on the other hand, flatly denied that they had questioned the work of the Angelic Doctor. Instead, Daniélou insisted that he merely took issue with "a particular school, and precisely that of Garrigou-Lagrange, which represents the hardened and sclerotic form of the thought of the Angelic Doctor."[80] In opposition to the Dominican, they took refuge in the Jesuit tradition of Suarezianism represented by their former teacher at Jersey, Pedro Descoqs, of whom they had been so critical during their student days. Descoqs had long opposed Garrigou-Lagrange's literalist interpretation of Aquinas and his former students now used this critique (rather disingenuously) in their favor. They did not reject "Thomism as such," Fessard insisted, but only "what seems to us the overly narrow way he [Garrigou-Lagrange] understands fidelity to St. Thomas."[81] A more faithful, living Thomism would be one that instead cleaved to the *spirit* of Aquinas, entering into and understanding modern thought in order to critique it from within, just as Thomas had used his knowledge of Aristotle to articulate an immanent critique of Averroism. Daniélou likewise insisted that "theology did not achieve its definitive form in the 13th century, such that it need only repeat itself now, but that, faithful to the acquisitions of the past, it must continue to elucidate the new problems posed to it by contemporary thought."[82] To say this was not to call for a "new theology," but rather to remain faithful to the Tradition of the Church, including the example of Thomas Aquinas. "If Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange speaks of heresy, then, it is not in the sense that the Church understands it, but only to the extent that he identifies the thought of the Church with his own system," Daniélou concluded. "To be excommunicated by him, then, is perhaps to be more orthodox than he is himself."[83] Once again, the strategy of the Jesuits was to present themselves as more Thomist than their Thomis critics. As a result of the resrictions imposed by their superiors, however, their vigorous defense would never reach a public beyond the internal channels of ecclesiastical government and the grave charges leveled by Garrigou-Lagrange were met with a deafening silence.

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[76] Bernard de Gorostarzu to Henri de Lubac, 27 February, 1947, CAEHL, 56238.

[77] Bernard de Gorostarzu to Henri de Lubac, 18 February, 1947, CAEHL, 74001.

[78] "Réponse au P. Garrigou-Lagrange," Fonds Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, AJPF, 8/1.

[79] The full text of de Lubac's response is preserved in the dossier on the Fourvière Affair in CAEHL, 56342-3.

[80] Daniélou's response is preserved in the Fonds Henri Bouillard, AJPF, 39.

That the Dominican focused so much of his critical energy on the so-called "typewritten pages" is highly significant, though, and points to a key political dimension of this theological conflict. It is clear that the constant references to clandestine tracts circulating without ecclesiastical *imprimatur*, which became a fixture of the attacks on the "nouvelle théologie," clearly recalled the wartime activities of the "theologians without a mandate" who had produced the clandestine *Cahiers du Témoignage chrétien*. This was not least because one of the authors of these "typed pages," Yves de Montcheuil, had also been a key contributor to the *Cahiers*. It was de Lubac's belief that the Jesuit Order had been embarrassed by the circumstances of Montcheuil's death—he had been ministering to a band of *maquisards* when he was caught and executed by the Gestapo—and now sought to disown him.[84] Whether this is true or not, it is no coincidence that the same priests who had led the "spiritual resistance" to fascism now found themselves under attack and their orthodoxy questioned. In the case of Garrigou-Lagrange—who had been a stalwart of both the Action Française and Vichy, and who still believed in 1947 in the necessary analogy between divine omnipotence in the spiritual order and monarchical government in the temporal order—there was evidently a political dimension to his attack on the "nouvelle théologie." Nor was he alone in taking this position. Many of the sharpest critics of the Lyon Jesuits were also their political opponents, and Journet warned de Lubac that his accusers were "almost always...friends of the AF seeking their base revenge against [you]."[85]

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[81] Fessard's response is preserved in the dossier on the Fourvière Affair in CAEHL, 56338.

[82] Daniélou response, Fonds Bouillard, AJPF, 39.

[83] Ibid.

But the controversy over the "typewritten pages" also points to a second continuity between the political conflict over the war and the theological conflict of the postwar period. The decision to publish *Témoignage chrétien* clandestinely and without ecclesiastical *imprimatur* was not just a violation of the political line of the French Church and the Jesuit Order. It also directly disobeyed the instructions of the Jesuit Curia and thus constituted a powerful act of defiance against the principle of hierarchical authority within the Church. Nor did it help that de Lubac and his friends had been so critical of the position their superiors in the French hierarchy and the Jesuit Curia had taken during the war.[86] In conjunction with their mystical body ecclesiology, which tended to downplay the juridical, hierarchical structure of the Church, these wartime activities seemed proof of a troubling spirit of independence brewing within the French Church. That this same group now seemed to be behind the unapproved dissemination of tracts, sometimes reproduced in their thousands, which exposed young seminarians to radical new theological ideas, did not endear them to the Roman Curia. And it did not help that de Lubac and his friends consistently refused to disown the "typewritten pages" out of loyalty to Teilhard and Montcheuil, who was no longer alive to defend himself. The postwar travails of the "nouvelle théologie" therefore cannot be separated from the resistance activities of the theologians at the heart of this controversy. But this was not just a conflict between competing political factions within the Church; it was also a conflict over the transnational politics of the Church itself and, above all, over the structure of spiritual authority.

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[84] See Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, 14 November, 1945, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 73/2.

[85] Charles Journet to Henri de Lubac, 27-28 June, 1946, quoted in Fouilloux, "Dialogue théologique?" 167n2. For example, Bouillard warned de Lubac on 21 March, 1946 that some of the most vociferous attacks on his and Montcheuil's theology were coming from Fr. Fillère, who had gathered together a group of former partisans of the Action Française, Camelots du roi, and members of the right-wing Parti républicain de la liberté (CAEHL, 73907). In a letter to the Father General on 6 July, 1946, Henri Rondet likewise denounced the "political designs" that inspired many of the accusations against Fourvière (CAEHL, 73924). And later that same year, Bouillard reported that a certain priest in Reims who was "violently anti-MRP" had been calling loudly for the condemnation of the "'neo-innovators'" and "'Protestant priests'" teaching at "'a certain Scholasticate [Fourvière]'" (CAEHL, 73936).

Fractures in the Thomist Family

Whatever one may say about the accusations leveled by Garrigou-Lagrange, Labourdette, and Nicolas, they were not wrong to perceive a palpable anti-Thomist sentiment informing the work of de Lubac and his friends. Although, in response to their critics, they might proclaim to be "more

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[86] See esp. de Lubac's "Lettre à mes supérieurs" of 25 April, 1941 (Fonds de Lubac, AJPF, dossier 21) and Fessard's critical report on 'Le rôle de l'Episcopat francais sous l'occupation," prepared for Mgr. Théas in July 1945 (Fonds Fessard, AJPF, dossier 3/22). De Lubac had been asked by Cardinal Saliège to prepare a similar report on the role of the French episcopacy during the war, and in 1946, the Jesuit wrote anxiously to his Provincial because he feared that Saliège had taken the report to the Pope and that it might cause problems for him with his superiors (CAEHL, 73891).

Thomist than many 'Thomisms'" and to defend "the true Thomism against its gravediggers," the private correspondence between these Jesuits tells a very different story.[87] Certainly, they complained that the Thomism of their contemporaries "is extremely far from the spirit (and often from the letter) of Saint Thomas" and that "it is not those who show the most intransigent zeal for Thomism who are the most legitimate heirs to the great Doctor."[88] But this did not imply that they simply wished to return, as Dominicans like Congar and Chenu did, to the authentic teachings of Aquinas himself. Instead, de Lubac and his friends sought to undo the exclusive privilege that Thomism had long enjoyed within the Church, with the goal of securing a space for alternative theological models. "I believe that a certain narrow and sectarian Thomism...is a considerable obstacle to real knowledge of the Catholic Tradition, as much as to the action of the Church in the contemporary world," de Lubac complained to his superiors.[89] Daniélou likewise lamented the dominance of a "bastardized Thomism" that edged out all other theologies with its pretension to universal applicability:

> What we ask of Thomism is that it be itself and let others be themselves in mutual respect...Thomism is a particular system. It is this pretension of Thomism to set itself up as *the* Christian philosophy that is unacceptable. In addition, this bastardized Thomism fosters the worst habits of thought, from which our theological teaching is dying.[90]

Statements such as these combine an appeal to the principle of theological pluralism and the equal validity of all theological systems with an undisguised contempt for Thomism. If these Jesuits did not disparage St. Thomas himself, they nevertheless found little of value in the work of his contemporary disciples. They were alienated by the pretension that Thomism constituted a theological "science" supported by speculative reason, as well as by "the impossibility Thomism imposes on its adepts of reflecting the slightest bit about history."[91] But what appalled these Jesuits the most was the way Thomism had become a defensive, knee-jerk position for so many of their contemporaries. These Catholics cleaved to "the 'soft pillow' of a purring Scholasticism which ensures them such a comfortable, but also such a numb, mental existence!" Fessard complained, and it was precisely this model which was being used "to stupefy the spirit of thousands of seminarians every year, under the pretext of giving them an orthodox and 'sound' doctrine."[92] From the perspective of these Jesuits, there was little in Thomism, at least in its contemporary iteration, to recommend it.

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[87] Gaston Fessard to Henri de Lubac, 30 September, 1949, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 73/3; Gaston Fessard to Bruno de Solages, 6 October, 1946, Fonds Fessard, 4/21bis.

[88] Henri de Lubac, "Examen de conscience théologique," 6 March, 1947, CAEHL, 56355.

[89] Ibid.

[90] Jean Daniélou to Henri de Lubac, 2 June, 1947, CAEHL, 74086. Emphasis added.

This was not lost on their critics, and despite the wide range of political and theological positions that now composed the "great family" of Thomism, most could rally around a shared commitment to the privileged status of the Angelic Doctor. The Roman Dominicans—Garrigou-Lagrange, Gagnebet, and Paul Philippe—therefore made repeated overtures to the St-Maximin Dominicans, in the interests of establishing a united Thomist front against the Lyon Jesuits. Congratulating Labourdette on his article, Gagnebet wrote, "it is good that the first reaction came from us [the Dominican Order]," and asked his correspondent to keep him apprised of developments within the French Church.[93] "We must now stick together and work in concert," Philippe wrote to Labourdette, following the Jesuit response in 1947, and Garrigou-Lagrange likewise insisted, "we must remain united...just as our enemies are against us."[94]

But these efforts were rebuffed by Labourdette and Nicolas, who wanted no part of the inquisitorial campaign their Dominican brothers were waging from Rome. It was not that they disagreed with the substance of Garrigou-Lagrange's critique in the *Angelicum*. They conceded that his argument was "irrefutable on the fundamentals," and Maritain agreed that Garrigou-Lagrange "is terribly right," while the Jesuit response had an air of "bad faith" to it.[95] But both Maritain and his disciples eschewed any effort to secure a condemnation from the Holy Office. And this divergence reflected the broader differences between the Maritainians and integrists like Garrigou-Lagrange, which were more properly political than theological. Maritain and Garrigou had of course parted ways over Vichy and now found themselves on opposing sides of the democracy question, and this political disagreement also manifested itself in their very different approaches to the management of theological disagreements within the Church. From Maritain's perspective, it was better to "critique [the Jesuits] thoroughly on an objective and rational level" than simply to reduce them to silence, and he lamented that the integrists were "spoiling the doctrinal debate with their denunciations."[96] In lieu of a condemnation, "which would be deeply misunderstood in France," Maritain instead believed that "the Pope should issue a *positive* document, illuminating minds on the nobility of speculative knowledge and the need for Catholic thought to base itself on the wisdom of St. Thomas."[97] His disciples at St-Maximin likewise balked at the approach taken by their Roman counterparts and were at pains to differentiate their theological debate with the Jesuits from Garrigou-Lagrange's inquisitorial campaign, which they attributed to far from lofty political motives. "You know me well enough to know that it pains me to be thus 'allied' with 'integrists' whose procedures appall me," Nicolas complained to Labourdette after Garrigou-Lagrange's article appeared in the *Angelicum*.[98] Like many French Dominicans, Nicolas was excited by the new apostolic initiatives pioneered in postwar France and did not wish to be associated with the reactionary politics of his Roman brothers. For this reason, when Garrigou-Lagrange initially sought to publish his attack on the "nouvelle théologie" in the pages of the *Revue thomiste*, Labourdette had refused the article.[99]

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[91] Gaston Fessard to Henri de Lubac, 5 February, 1950, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 73/3.

[92] Gaston Fessard to Henri de Lubac, 29 September, 1946, Fonds Fessard, AJPF 73/3.

[93] Rosaire Gagnebet to M-M Labourdette, quoted in Fouilloux, "Dialogue théologique?" 184.

[94] Paul Philippe to M-M Labourdette, 14 February, 1947; Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange to M-M Labourdette, 5 March, 1947, quoted in ibid., 184.

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[95] M-M Labourdette to Jacques Maritain, 28 February, 1947, quoted in ibid., 183; Jacques Maritain to Charles Journet, 11 February 1947, *Correspondance Maritain-Journet*, 525.

[96] Jacques Maritain to Charles Journet, 6 August, 1946, *Correspondance Maritain-Journet*, 455-6.

[97] Jacques Maritain to Charles Journet, 2 June, 1946, in ibid., 408.

If the St-Maximin Dominicans consistently sought to distance themselves from those working to secure a condemnation of the "nouvelle théologie" from the Holy Office, such a distinction was lost on de Lubac and his friends. Nicolas and Labourdette constantly reaffirmed that they were "neither integrist nor retrograde," that they in no way sought "to cast a vague suspicion of heterodoxy on a group of theologians beloved and respected by everyone," and that the *Revue thomiste* article was not a "war machine," but merely the "protestation of Thomism against a new theology which...practically eliminates it."[100] But de Lubac could not accept this logic. As far as he was concerned, the *Revue thomiste* article amounted to "an unacceptable accusation of heterodoxy" that played directly into the hands of Garrigou-Lagrange and his ilk.[101] "How could you see fit to formulate these public accusations of relativism and of modernist tendencies," de Lubac demanded, without realizing how such accusations would be coopted by those seeking to secure the Jesuits' condemnation?[102] And the fact that Nicolas and Labourdette had also adopted the term "nouvelle théologie" was further proof of their complicity with Garrigou-Lagrange. As a direct result of their articles, de Lubac concluded, "in many milieus where our works and we ourselves are unknown, we are now regarded...at least as half-heretics."[103]

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[98] M-J Nicolas to M-M Labourdette, 4 February, 1947, quoted in Fouilloux, "Dialogue Théologique?" 183. On the political motives of Garrigou-Lagrange and his allies, see also M-M Labourdette to Jacques Maritain, 11 April, 1947, also quoted in ibid., 184.

[99] See Étienne Fouilloux, "Dialogue théologique?" 183-4. Labourdette and Nicolas frequently insisted upon their distance from the Roman Dominicans in their private correspondence with the Lyon Jesuits, such as M-J Nicolas to Henri de Lubac, 29 December, 1947, CAEHL, 74123.

[100] M-J Nicolas, "Autour d'un controverse," 10; M-J Nicolas to Henri de Lubac, 5 February, 1947, CAEHL, 56344.

[101] Henri de Lubac to M-J Nicolas, 7 February, 1947, CAEHL, 73994.

[102] Henri de Lubac to M-M Labourdette, 5 April, 1947, CAEHL, 74057.

The intervention of the Roman Dominicans thus poisoned the possibility of any reconciliation between St-Maximin and Fourvière, transforming this from an internal French theological debate into a much broader conflict between France and Rome, Jesuits and Dominicans, Thomism and a "nouvelle théologie," with the specter of a condemnation looming ever larger. In May 1947, the St-Maximin theologians responded to the Jesuit reply in *Recherches de science religieuse* by publishing a book-length collection titled *Dialogue théologique: pièces du débat entre "La Revue thomiste" d'une part et les RR. PP. de Lubac, Daniélou, Bouillard, Fessard, von Balthasar, SJ, d'autre part.*[104] The collection reprinted the initial *Revue thomiste* articles, along with an annotated version of the Jesuit response, and two new responses by Labourdette and Nicolas in which the Dominicans reiterated their primary objections against the Jesuits in question while distancing themselves from the integrism of Garrigou-Lagrange. The publication of this volume brought this theological debate to a much wider audience, particularly amongst French intellectuals outside the Church, but the heavy restrictions imposed upon the Jesuits by their superiors prevented them from responding publicly to their critics.

Once again, it was Bruno de Solages who rallied to their aid, first by publishing a strongly-worded rejoinder to Garrigou-Lagrange in which he quipped that, if the Dominican had lived in the thirteenth century, he probably would have condemned Thomas Aquinas himself.[105] Following the publication of *Dialogue théologique*, Solages once again tried to broker a reconciliation between the

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[103] Henri de Lubac to M-J Nicolas, 7 February, 1947, CAEHL, 73994.

[104] [Theological Dialogue: Elements of the Debate Between the "Revue Thomiste," on the One Hand, and the Rev. Frs. de Lubac, Daniélou, Bouillard, Fessard, von Balthasar, SJ, on the Other], op. cit.

[105] Bruno de Solages, "Pour l'honneur de la théologie: les contre-sens du R. P. Garrigou-Lagrange," *Bulletin de littérature écclesiastique* 48 (1947), 65-84.

Jesuits and St-Maximin. He hoped to be able to convince the two sides to sign a joint "theological declaration" that struck a compromise between their respective positions. But while de Lubac agreed to sign it, Fessard and Daniélou took exception to its Thomist framework, prompting Labourdette to pull out as well. Solages then tried instead to organize a retreat in which both parties could discuss their differences privately, but by the autumn of 1947, relations between the two sides had soured considerably. Hans Urs von Balthasar had washed his hands of the entire affair, informing Labourdette that he had nothing to do with writing the Jesuit response, and that the passage from his book with which Labourdette had taken issue in his article was actually written by Fessard instead. Pointing to von Balthasar's disavowal and to the reservations that Daniélou had privately communicated to him about the tone of the Jesuit response, Labourdette withdrew from any further discussions.[106] "One can't argue with children," de Lubac complained to Solages in frustration, "but...these childish gestures risk doing a lot of harm."[107] From the Jesuits' perspective, any reservations that Maritain and his disciples might have had about the political motivations and the inquisitorial procedures of the Dominican integrists in Rome were ultimately overshadowed by their shared theological commitment to a "scientific" and exclusive Thomism.

In fact, even Dominicans like Congar and Chenu, who were otherwise so sympathetic to the *ressourcement* project, criticized de Lubac and his friends for devaluing Scholastic theology. In a letter to Solages, Chenu explained that his position on "the value of 'science' in theological knowledge" and on "the situation of 'Scholasticism' in Christian thought" converged in some respects with "the critique of my brothers at the *Revue thomiste*," even if he differed from them on many other points and abhorred their prosecutorial tone.[108] Congar took a similar position in his review of de Lubac's

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[106] See M-M Labourdette to Bruno de Solages, 16 July, 1947, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 4/21bis. See also Étienne Fouilloux, "Dialogue théologique?" 181; 192.

[107] Henri de Lubac to Bruno de Solages, 4 March, 1947, quoted in Fouilloux, "Dialogue théologique?" 181.

[108] Marie-Dominique Chenu to Bruno de Solages, 19 August, 1946, CAEHL, 73929-73931.

Corpus Mysticum, published soon after Garrigou-Lagrange's article on the "nouvelle théologie." Like Nicolas, Congar took issue with de Lubac's narrative of theological decline, which presented the advent of Scholastic theology, with its scientific, dialectical formulations, as a "fall" from the golden age of Patristic theology.[109] The Dominican identified this as part of a broader, quite coherent "critique of Scholasticism in favor of a symbolic theology in the manner of the Fathers," which animated the work of Jesuits like Bouillard and Daniélou as well. And Congar was at pains to distinguish it from his own *ressourcement* project, which remained firmly Thomist. While he shared with the Jesuits a desire to "go back before the baroque theology" inaugurated by the Council of Trent, Congar preferred to stop at the Scholastic theology of Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventure, while de Lubac and his colleagues wished to return to a much earlier moment.[110] And while the Dominican recognized the dangers lurking in the rationalism of Scholastic theology and took issue with "the quasi-exclusive place" it had acquired in the contemporary Church, he could not condone de Lubac's "relativization, by means of historical criticism, of the so upright, so humble, so rigorous work...of Thomas Aquinas or of the other great Scholastic doctors."[111] In this respect, and despite his many stark theological differences with his Dominican confrères at St-Maximin and in Rome, Congar's critique of de Lubac in some ways echoed that of his other Thomist critics.

This is highly significant because the term "nouvelle théologie" has come to denote both the Jesuits around de Lubac and the Dominicans associated with Congar and Chenu. In fact, when the term was first coined in 1942, it applied to works by Chenu and Charlier that had just been placed on the Index.[112] But in the immediate postwar period, the term was applied almost exclusively to the Jesuits of Lyon-Fourvière. Thus, Garrigou-Lagrange's article made no mention of the Dominicans, and *Humani Generis* was almost entirely directed against the Jesuits as well. This is not to suggest that the two groups had nothing to do with each other. They certainly did share a common commitment to the *ressourcement* project and its historical methodology, to ecumenical dialogue, and to the mystical body ecclesiology.

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[109] Yves Congar, "Bulletin d'écclésiologie," *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 31 (1947), 78-96, preserved in CAEHL, 56249.

[110] Ibid., 56250.

[111] Ibid., 56251.

But, the status of Thomism and of Scholastic theology more broadly remained a significant sticking point between them. In response to Congar's review, de Lubac protested that a "critique of Scholasticism was as absent from [*Corpus Mysticum*] as a desire to overturn the Ramadier government."[113] As we have seen, however, this was rather a disingenuous claim in light of the anti-Scholastic sentiment that was explicit in de Lubac's private correspondence and implicit in his publications. Congar suggested as much when he replied that he was by no means alone in suspecting the Jesuit of harboring anti-Thomist designs and that "you (or others) have given cause for this suspicion. You must take it into account and explain yourself sometime."[114] De Lubac interpreted this as an indication that Congar had sided with Labourdette and complained about the timing of Congar's review, "at the peak of a very violent and very unjust campaign to which everyone will think that...you are adding the weight of your authority."[115] Bouillard echoed this sentiment, complaining that all the Dominicans "seem to be in solidarity with Frs. Garrigou-

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[112] The term was first used by Pietro Parente, future Secretary of the Holy Office, in an article on the condemned works. See Parente, "Nuove tendenze teologiche," *L'Osservatore romano* (9-10 February 1942), 1. On the origins and evolution of this term, see Mettepenningen, *Nouvelle Théologie—New Theology*, 3-7.

[113] Henri de Lubac to Yves Congar, 27 February, 1947, CAEHL, 74017.

[114] Yves Congar to Henri de Lubac, 1 March, 1947, CAEHL, 74021.

[115] See Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, February 1947, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 73/3; Henri de Lubac to Yves Congar, 27 February, 1947, CAEHL, 74017.

Lagrange, Labourdette, and a few others."[116] Nevertheless, Congar and Chenu remained sympathetic to the plight of the Jesuits and unequivocally opposed to any condemnation of Fourvière, having had their own share of difficulties with Rome.

What the reaction of Congar and Chenu reveals, however, is that this was above all a conflict over the status of Scholastic theology and one that tended to pit Dominicans against Jesuits. Even if de Lubac and his colleagues were by no means hostile to St. Thomas himself and even though could claim the support of a couple of Thomists, such as Bruno de Solages, it was clear that they sought to dethrone Aquinas and Scholastic theology more broadly from the virtual monopoly they enjoyed over the late-modern Church. And this was not lost on their critics, who despite their marked theological and political differences, could rally around a shared commitment to the privileged place of Scholasticism in the Catholic Tradition. Most of the other disputed questions at issue in the Fourvière Affair—from the application of the historical method to theology, to the nature of knowledge and of theological truth—in fact derived from this central conflict. But increasingly, this was framed less as a conflict between Augustinians and Thomists, or between Patristic and Scholastic theology, but instead between *Hegel* and St. Thomas. This began with the intervention of Garrigou-Lagrange, who had raised the specter of "Hegelian evolutionism" and focused exclusively on the modernism of the "nouvelle théologie" without alluding to the Jesuits' interest in Patristic theology. Soon Nicolas and Labourdette too began to frame this as a conflict between Hegelians and Thomists, accusing the Jesuits of "abandoning Thomism in order to adopt the central principles of Hegel," which were irreconcilable with the Catholic faith.[117] For Nicolas, Fessard complained, "Thomism must truly be the incarnation of the divine system," such that "Hegelianism seems like a dangerous competitor!"[118] Journet had also framed the debate in similar terms in the preface to his *Introduction à la théologie,* and by the late-1940s it had become a fixture of the critical literature on the "nouvelle théologie."[119]

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[116] Henri Bouillard to Yves Congar, 27 February, 1947, Fonds Henri Bouillard, AJPF, 3/37.

[117] Marie-Michel Labourdette, "Fermes propos," *Revue Thomiste* 47 (1947), preserved in Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 4/21bis, p. 12. Nicolas had also framed the debate in these terms in his response to Solages: "Autour d'un controverse," 10-15.

This is rather curious, given that only one of the Jesuits under suspicion had shown any interest in Hegel (Fessard), despite the widespread notion that this was a "Hegel-St. Thomas conflict."[120] Even if the Jesuits evidently did not conceive of the quarrel in precisely these terms, they certainly did perceive it as a battle against an exclusive Thomism. This was not, as some have argued, a conflict internal to the "great family" of Thomism and attributable to its internal differentiation into a range of increasingly divergent theological positions, although the affair did bring some of these differences to the fore.[121] Instead, it was first and foremost a conflict between the disciples of Thomas Aquinas and those who sought to carve out a space for alternative theological approaches—a conflict in which Jesuits and Dominicans stood opposed.

Roman Discipline

By 1948, however, an increasingly vocal opposition to the Lyon Jesuits had emerged from within their own order, transforming this predominantly French debate between Dominicans and Jesuits into a transnational dispute between France and Rome. As early as February 1947, following Garrigou-Lagrange's intervention, there was a palpable shift in tone on the part of the Jesuit Curia in

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[118] Gaston Fessard to Henri de Lubac, 15 March, 1947, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 73/3.

[119] In this work, Journet complained that it was useless "to try to explain the superiority of Christianity over the great contemporary atheist collectivist movements by means of the Hegelian dialectic," because it made it impossible to "distinguish the natural from the supernatural." The passage is quoted in Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, 2 February, 1948, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, dossier 73/3. In January 1948, also Fessard wrote to de Lubac that a recent article against the "nouvelle théologie" in *La Pensée catholique* had made much of his Hegelianism. See Gaston Fessard to Henri de Lubac, 4 January, 1948, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 73/3.

[120] Gaston Fessard to Henri de Lubac, 7 November, 1946, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 73/3.

[121] This is, most notable, Gerald McCool's argument in the final chapter of *From Unity to Pluralism*.

Rome. Where the Father General and his Assistant had previously encouraged the targeted Jesuits to defend themselves vigorously against attack, they were now forbidden from publicly responding to their critics. A rather stern letter from Fr. Janssens to the Jesuits of Fourvière and *Études* on February 26th signaled this change in mood. While he commended their efforts "to understand the men of your time," the Father General lamented that they seemed "more desirous to win over those outside [the Church] than to avoid offending or throwing off those within it."[122] Here, for the first time, Janssens gave credence to some of the accusations against the French Jesuits, chastising them for "giving rise to the suspicion" that they sought to "revolutionize" theology and for having "circulated unsound and sometime erroneous writings" through "a clandestine multiplication and diffusion."[123] He therefore counseled them to pay heed to their critics so that "your team never becomes a closed circle."[124] In separate letters, the Father General also warned de Lubac that he had heard a number of complaints about the "soundness of your doctrine" in *Surnaturel* and about de Lubac's position on the role of reason in Catholic apologetics.[125] He also warned Bouillard that the attacks on Fourvière were multiplying both within and outside the order.[126]

As a result of the suspicions raised against their work, these Jesuits were subjected to an exceptional disciplinary regime. As we have seen, they were enjoined not to respond to their critics in a public forum. In addition to obtaining the usual *nihil obstat* and *imprimatur* from their superiors in France, they were also required to submit their publications to "super-censors" in Rome, who would have the power to override the decision of their French counterparts.[127] The Jesuit Curia also had several of the disputed works retrospectively re-examined by four Roman censors. In the case of *Surnaturel*, for instance, three of these censors agreed that de Lubac's thesis on the doctrine of "pure nature" expressed the position of the Augustinian school, which had never ben condemned by the Magisterium. Consequently, they concluded that it remained "within the limits of freely debated opinions" and was not strictly "contrary to orthodoxy."[128] Nevertheless, all four censors disagreed with his position and two expressed serious reservations about its capacity to "safeguard the gratuity of the supernatural" and "the Catholic distinction between our nature and the grace of God."[129]

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[122] Jean-Baptiste Janssens to the Jesuits of Fourvière and *Études*, 26 February, 1947, CAEHL, 56254.

[123] Ibid.

[124] Ibid., 56253.

[125] Bernard de Gorostarzu to Henri de Lubac, 18 February, 1947, CAEHL, 74001; Bernard de Gorostarzu to Henri de Lubac, 19 April, 1947, CAEHL, 740173.

[126] Bernard de Gorostarzu to Henri Bouillard, 28 February, 1947, CAEHL, 74020.

These remarks reflect the position of an increasingly public opposition to de Lubac that had emerged within the Jesuit Order by the end of 1947. Leading the charge were a group of theologians at the Gregorian University in Rome—most notably Charles Boyer, who some believed had had a hand in the Pope's 1946 remarks on the "nouvelle théologie."[130] Towards the end of 1947, Boyer published a vigorous critique of de Lubac's *Surnaturel* in the *Gregorianum*. Here, he conveyed what was becoming an increasingly common complaint—that, in repudiating the doctrine of "pure nature," de Lubac had undermined both the integrity of the natural order and the gratuity of grace. Because God created us with a desire for the beatific vision that inheres within our very nature, de Lubac held that it was not even possible to conceive of a human life oriented towards a purely natural end. But Boyer cleaved to an Aristotelian understanding of nature, conceived as an "essence" defined by ends it can achieve through its own natural resources. This was not to say that humans did not *also* possess a supernatural end, but only that it must be possible to at least *conceive* of a human nature existing without this supernatural end, for "as soon as one assigns to a nature only one possible end, not only is this end natural, but it is owed to it."[131] Either the desire for the beatific vision belongs to our nature, in which case it is no longer supernatural and gratuitous, or it is a supernatural grace added on to our nature, in which case "a human nature is conceivable without this desire."[132] In other words, Boyer concluded, "one cannot conceive theologically of the supernatural without referring to pure nature."[133] This was a position soon echoed by several other Jesuits, including Boyer's colleague at the Gregorian, Guy de Broglie, as well as Jacques de Blic, and even an American Jesuit.[134]

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[127] On these measures, see Jean-Baptiste Janssens to Henri de Lubac, 25 March, 1948, CAEHL, 74163 and a note by Henri de Lubac dated May 1948, in CAEHL, 74180.

[128] The four censors' reports, dating from September 1947, are reprinted in appendix 4:6 to de Lubac, *At the Service of the Church*, 259-64. Quotation is from the second censure, 260.

[129] These quotations are, respectively, from the fourth, and third censures: 264; 262.

[130] See de Lubac's notes from the 1946 General Congregation of the Jesuit Order, in *At the Service of the Church*, 255.

Faced with these attacks, de Lubac appealed to his superiors to lift the disciplinary mechanisms imposed upon him, so that he might publicly defend himself against his critics. He complained that the "regime of exception" to which he was subject and from which his critics were immune only encouraged them to attack him with impunity, knowing full well that he could not respond.[135] As a result, Catholics around the world were now introduced to his work exclusively through the distorted image his critics conveyed of it.[136] Additionally, de Lubac worried that there might be some overlap between these critics and the "super-censors" responsible for signing off on his publications in Rome, thus allowing them to "play the double role of critics and arbiters...both judges and interested parties."[137] De Lubac, it seemed, was caught in a double-bind:

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[131] Charles Boyer, "Nature pure et surnaturel dans le *Surnaturel* du Père de Lubac," *Gregorianum* 28 (1947), 392.

[132] Ibid., 394.

[133] Ibid., 395.

[134] See Jacques de Blic, "Bulletin de Morale," *Mélanges de science religieuse* 4 (1947), 93-113. Guy de Broglie communicated his critique in the pages of *De fine ultimo hamanae vitae* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1948) as well as in the French Catholic newspaper *La Croix*. The American was Philip Donnelly: see his "Discussions on the Supernatural Order," *Theological Studies* 9 (1948), 213-49.

[135] Henri de Lubac to Fr. Décisier [Provincial of Lyon], 25 March, 1948, CAEHL, 74164.

[136] Henri de Lubac to Bernard de Gorostarzu, 3 February 1949, CAEHL, 74211.

> It is therefore enough that a few theologians...trigger an attack against another, even if it is unjust, for a double row of misunderstandings to rise up between him and his Superiors: suspicions about his doctrine and suspicions about his spirit of obedience... And these misunderstandings are impossible to dissipate because any attempt at an explanation would be taken as a mark of obstinacy and a new act of insubordination.[138]

In any case, de Lubac's superiors firmly rebuffed his repeated pleas for permission to break his silence and respond to a chorus of critics growing louder by the day.[139] The most he could do was defend himself privately to his superiors.

This he did in the form of a "theological examination of conscience," penned at his superiors' request in March 1946. In it, de Lubac insisted that he did not "have the temperament of a reformer" and that the first time he had heard the expression "nouvelle théologie" was when it came out of the Pope's mouth at the General Congregation in 1946.[140] Far from being a modernist, he maintained, "I have always sought to bring...those who seem overly taken with 'modern' thought back to the traditional sources," while he nevertheless recognized a "certain need for renewal, even in theology."[141] De Lubac also reaffirmed, as he had done many times in response to his critics, that that the arguments advanced in his work were properly *historical* rather than doctrinal. "I have never engaged in anti-Thomism," he concluded, but only in the critique of "a certain narrow and sectarian Thomism" which precludes a wider appreciation of the Tradition.[142] In addition to defending his own orthodoxy, de Lubac also rallied to the defense of his friends, stressing the "wide apologetic impact" of Teilhard's and Fessard's work in bridging the abyss between Catholic and secular intellectual life.[143] But above all, de Lubac was at pains to defend his friend Montcheuil, who could no longer defend himself. Not only had he been a great soul, de Lubac insisted, but a "profoundly traditional" theologian.[144]

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[137] Henri de Lubac to Fr. Décisier [Provincial of Lyon], 16 March 1948, reprinted as appendix 4:12 in de Lubac, *At the Service of the Church*, 273.

[138] Henri de Lubac to Fr. Décisier, 25 March 1947, CAEHL, 74164.

[139] Jean-Baptiste Janssens to Henri de Lubac, 25 March 1948, CAEHL, 74163.

[140] Henri de Lubac, "Examen de conscience théologique," 6 March 1947, CAEHL, 56353.

[141] Ibid., 56353-4.

[142] Ibid.,

Bouillard echoed these sentiments in his own letter of complaint to his superiors, although it was becoming increasingly clear that the balance of suspicion had notably shifted toward de Lubac. This was in large part because Boyer had in fact advised Bouillard's thesis on Thomas Aquinas—what became *Conversion et grâce chez Saint Thomas d'Aquin*—and Bouillard could therefore count on his support.[145] Bouillard acknowledged this himself in a letter to his superiors in which he rallied to the defense of his friends. "We do not constitute a school" with a "homogeneous and complete body of doctrine," he explained, but only shared a "fraternal understanding" and certain methods of study and apostolic concerns.[146] Above all, Bouillard sought to convey to his Roman superiors the extraordinary respect all of the theologians under suspicion had earned within France, in order to show that their condemnation would cause a major scandal. He pointed out that Fessard was widely "esteemed and feared by Marxist intellectuals" for his penetrating insights on Marxism, while Daniélou "has the ear of those touched by atheist existentialism," and both were thus at the forefront of the battle against unbelief.[147] But Bouillard also recognized that they were not the central targets of the campaign against Fourvière and not immediately in danger. He therefore moved on to Teilhard, whom he characterized as "one of the greatest scientists in the world," such that "a condemnation directed at him would produce a scandal analogous to the condemnation of Galileo."[148] Finally, Bouillard stressed the unmatched importance of de Lubac's role both within the French Church and "amongst unbelievers." A central architect of the theology underpinning Catholic Action, "there is no initiative of interest in the religious realm that he has not encouraged and often guided. A condemnation of his work would shake many men to the very core of their faith."[149] Not only this, but de Lubac was a "theological advisor" to Cardinal Gerlier and highly-regarded by Cardinal Suhard. The implication, in other words, was that any condemnation of the French Jesuits would meet with stiff resistance from both the French hierarchy and laity.

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[143] Ibid., 56355-6.

[144] Henri de Lubac to Bernard de Gorostarzu, 30 March, 1947, CAEHL, 74054.

[145] As de Lubac put it in a letter to Fessard: "In this whole affair, I'm pretty sure I'll be the one taken for a ride. You are only affected indirectly and our friend Bouillard will be strenuously defended." (8 March, 1947, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 73/3.)

[146] Henri Bouillard to Bernard de Gorostarzu, 19 March, 1947, CAEHL, 74035-6.

[147] Ibid., 74036.

Bouillard here put his finger on an important dimension of this international theological crisis, which brought to the fore longstanding tensions between the French Church and Rome. These tensions manifested themselves first within the Jesuit Order. The double layer of censorship imposed upon de Lubac and his friends revealed significant tensions between their Provincial superiors in France and the Jesuit Curia in Rome. On several occasions, articles that were deemed acceptable by the Provincial censor were subsequently vetoed in Rome.[150] There was also a stark difference in the tone of de Lubac's correspondence with his Provincial superior, who continued to insist, against the orders of the Father General, that "we must defend ourselves"[151] The use of the first person plural here is highly significant, because it suggests that this was at least in part a power struggle between the French Jesuits and their Roman superiors. But these internal tensions within the Jesuit Order also reflected a much broader dynamic. The Fourvière Affair had raised the

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[148] Ibid., 74037.

[149] Ibid.

[150] See, for instance, Henri de Lubac to Bernard de Gorostarzu, 3 February, 1949, CAEHL, 74211; see also the super-censure of Jean-Marie Leblond's article "Transcendance divine et vérité humaine," which defended Fourvière: CAEHL, 56430-1.

[151] Fr. Décisier to Henri de Lubac, 3 June, 1947, CAEHL, 74087.

Gallican hackles of the broader French Church, which had a long tradition of jealously guarded independence from Rome. Thus, in 1947, when Rome tried to prevent de Lubac and Chenu from participating the annual *Semaine sociale* (where de Lubac delivered his essay on Marxism and the "new man"), Cardinal Suhard simply refused to comply.[152] In fact, the Cardinal appeared to publicly to side with Fourvière in his Lent message, which deplored the gathering wave of integrism in the Church.[153] Suhard confirmed this message of support in a meeting with Bouillard that same year, which the Jesuit quickly reported to his superiors in Rome.[154] They responded in kind, warning the French Jesuits that the Pope was following their work very closely and had begun, for instance, reading each issue of *Études* from cover to cover.[155] "Your positions," Janssens warned them, "are on essential points contrary to those of the Roman theologians."[156]

This was not, however, simply a battle between a French Church jealous of its independence and Roman authorities anxious to assert their sovereign authority over insubordinate French theologians—a conflict stoked first by the clandestine resistance activities of the Lyon Jesuits, and now by the infamous "typed pages." More than just a struggle for authority, these tensions between France and Rome also reflected an important difference in theological style between the French clergy and their Roman counterparts, many of whom were French by birth but had made their careers in Rome. These theologians tended to be far more conservative (both politically and theologically) than those working in France, Germany, or Belgium, in part because of their proximity to the watchful eye of the Holy Office and in part because of the institutional culture of the pontifical universities. As Étienne Fouilloux has shown, there was also a "quasi-affective side" to this dispute between French and Roman theologians.[157] The Roman theologians resented what they perceived to be the independent spirit and intellectual arrogance of the French Church—what Fouilloux has called "intellectual Gallicanism"—which frequently manifested itself in the condescending attitude with which de Lubac and his friends regarded their Roman counterparts.[158] Again and again, they complained of the intellectual sterility and narrowness of the Roman theologians, and of having to submit to Roman censors who were "frankly incompetent" and even "idiots."[159] This attitude was certainly not lost on their superiors, and served to reinforce the suspicion that these theologians lacked the requisite respect for the authority structures of the Church. For their part, the French theologians perceived themselves as victims of a "well-organized...campaign of defamation" led by a Roman cabal who relied on spies, secret denunciations, and tactics more appropriate to a police state in order to silence their theological opponents.[160] Such fears were not entirely unwarranted, as we shall see. Congar complained bitterly, for instance, about the way the Roman authorities relied upon "'whispered criticisms, of which the person they concern never receives a clear and frank explanation,'" nor an opportunity "'to defend or at least explain himself.'"[161] So incensed was he by these sorts of tactics that, in a small act of defiance, Congar urinated on the outer wall of the Holy Office during a visit to Rome.[162]

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[152] See Fouilloux, *Une Église en quête de liberté*, 287.

[153] On this incident, see Fouilloux, "Dialogue Théologique?" 176.

[154] Henri Bouillard to Bernard de Gorostarzu, 3 June, 1947, CAEHL, 74081

[155] Jean-Baptiste Janssens to Henri de Lubac, 27 March, 1947, CAEHL, 74052; Bernard de Gorostarzu to Henri Rondet, 21 June, 1947, CAEHL, 74094.

[156] Quoted in Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, May 1949, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 73/3.

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[157] Fouilloux, "Dialogue théologique?" 165.

[158] Fouilloux, *Une Église en quête de liberté*, 248.

[159] Henri de Lubac to Jean-Baptiste Janssens, 1948, CAEHL, 56423; this was Teilhard's evaluation of the censors who forbade the publication of his *Phénomène humain* in 1946, quoted in Fouilloux, *Une Église en quête de liberté,* 253.

[160] Henri de Lubac to Bernard de Gorostarzu, 18 July, 1947, CAEHL, 74102.

[161] Yves Congar to Rosaire Gagnebet, 4 December, 1946, quoted in Fouilloux, *Une Église en quête de liberté*, 257.

[162] Ibid., 260n45.

Anatomy of a Condemnation

In 1950, de Lubac's worst fears were realized when, as he put it, "lightning struck Fourvière."[163] The immediate occasion was an official visit in June 1949 from the Belgian Jesuit Édouard Dhanis, sent by the Father General to report on the goings-on at Fourvière. Fr. Dhanis reminded the Professors at the scholasticate that their curriculum should focus on the teachings of St. Thomas and steer clear of new philosophies not yet sanctioned by the Church.[164] But Dhanis' report to the Father General must have been much more severe, because Janssens credited it with alerting him that the situation at Fourvière was "even more grave than we had suspected."[165] Shortly after the visit, de Lubac received a rather ominous letter from the Father General, informing him that it was useless "to tire yourself out refuting these attacks" and not to "have any illusions" about the attention his work had received in the highest circles in Rome.[166] "I call this injustice and tyranny," de Lubac complained to Fessard, adding: "I doubt one can find a single example in the whole history of the Society [of Jesus] of a theologian who had been thus prevented from defending himself, while all those who attack him are encouraged to recidivate and assured in advance of impunity."[167]

In early 1950, the Father General sent a confidential note to the Provincial of Lyon requesting that de Lubac resign his teaching post at the Theology Faculty of Lyon and his editorial functions at the *Recherches de science religieuse.*[168] De Lubac quickly complied, but the order met with stiffer resistance from Cardinal Gerlier, who was Chancellor of the Catholic University of Lyon and resented the interference of the Jesuit Curia in an institution administered by the French Church.[169] He protested on de Lubac's behalf to both the Father General and the Pope, but to no avail. In June 1950, de Lubac officially resigned his teaching and editorial responsibilities. A similar fate soon befell his colleague Pierre Ganne, with whom de Lubac had worked on *Témoignage chrétien,* as well as three professors at Fourvière: Émile Delaye, Alexandre Durand, and Henri Bouillard. All were accused of spreading "pernicious errors on essential points of dogma."[170]

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[163] De Lubac, *At the Service of the Church*, 67.

[164] See the recommendations listed in his "Avis donné aux professeurs," June 1947, in Fonds Bouillard, AJPF, 3/44.

[165] Quoted in Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, 30 October, 1950, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 73/3.

[166] Bernard de Gorostarzu to Henri de Lubac, 24 July, 1949, CAEHL, 74275.

[167] Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, 10 August, 1949, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 73/3.

[168] De Lubac did not keep a record of this letter, but reported its existence in *At the Service of the Church,* 292. It was likely dated January or February 1950 because de Lubac reported its contents to his friend René d'Ouince in a letter dated 21

This must have come as something of a surprise to the first three, whose names had scarcely been mentioned at all in the context of the Fourvière Affair, although Ganne's relationship to *Témoignage chrétien* once again suggests the significance of the wartime context. Fessard expressed his confusion as to why Ganne and Durand—whom many now referred to as the "martyrs" of the Affair—had been targeted, but de Lubac replied that it was impossible to know the rationale behind the decision because the Father General refused to clarify the precise nature or source of the charges against them.[171] He had already written to his superiors on this subject, demanding that the Father General "make known to me in a precise way what he is reproaching me for and why he is reproaching me for it, then to allow me to present my defense to him."[172] For he had only been told that the decision was based on the opinion of "numerous theologians." "Who are these

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April, 1950 (Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 73/3) and because on February 26th, de Lubac sent an official note to his superiors asking to be relieved of his functions at the University and the *Recherches* (CAEHL, 74372).

[169] It appeared initially as though the Cardinal might be able to block the measure, because his approval was required in order for de Lubac to resign from his post. On 26 June, 1950, de Lubac therefore reported to Fessard: "On the other hand, Cardinal Gerlier is so displeased that we are wondering what will happen" (Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 73/3).

[170] See the account in de Lubac, *At the Service of the Church*, 68.

[171] Gaston Fessard to Henri de Lubac, 7 August, 1950 and Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, 9 August, 1950, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 73/3.

[172] Henri de Lubac to the Provincial of Lyon, July 1, 1950, reprinted as appendix 4:24 to de Lubac, *At the Service of the Church,* 295.

theologians?" de Lubac demanded. "I have the right to know with what I am being reproached, to obtain from them their reasons, to question them if necessary."[173] But his request fell on deaf ears, and even his Provincial and the Rector of Fourvière, who travelled to Rome to plead their case, were unable to ascertain the precise nature of the accusations against them.[174]

The sanction did not end here. De Lubac was also evicted from his home at Fourvière and exiled from Lyon itself. He was first relocated to Paris, and when this was deemed insufficiently remote, he was packed off to Tunisia, and finally to a remote convent in the French Alps.[175] In addition, he was forbidden from publishing on theological questions, but permitted to continue writing historical and sociological works. Finally, three of his books—*Corpus Mysticum, Connaissance de Dieu*, and *Surnaturel*—as well as a 1948 article he had published in an effort to explain his position in *Surnaturel* were removed from sale and from all Jesuit libraries. Two books by Yves de Montcheuil, Daniélou's infamous *Études* article on "Les orientations présentes de la pensée religieuse," Bouillard's *Conversion et grâce* and three of his articles also met with the same fate. Fessard seems to have emerged from the Affair relatively unscathed, apart from being relieved of his position alongside de Lubac on the editorial board of the *Recherches de science religieuse,* the content of which struck their superiors as rather too adventurous. Although these disciplinary measures were ordered by the Father General of the Jesuit Order, it remains unclear whether the impetus for them came primarily from within the order, or instead from external pressure exerted by the Vatican. Several letters from de Lubac's superiors made reference to "pressure" coming from outside the Society at "the highest levels," but until the records of the Jesuit Curia and Holy Office are made available for this period, it is impossible to pinpoint the true agent of the condemnation.[176] It is nevertheless unlikely that the Jesuit Curia was acting entirely in isolation, given that the purge of Fourvière took place only two months before the Vatican handed down its own sanctions against the "nouvelle théologie."

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[173] Ibid., 294.

[174] See the letters from Fr. Décisier and Fr. Louisgrand in Fonds Bouillard, AJPF, 3/43; Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, 30 November, 1950, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 73/3.

[175] See the account in de Lubac, *At the Service of the Church,* 70-72.

These came in the form of a papal encyclical, *Humani Generis*, which was promulgated on August 12th 1950 and bore the subtitle: "Concerning Some False Opinions Threatening to Undermine the Foundations of Catholic Doctrine."[177] The encyclical in many respects reiterated the critique leveled by Garrigou-Lagrange against the "nouvelle théologie," leading some to speculate that he had played some part in writing it.[178] It took issue with those within the Church who privileged becoming and the irrational over "all that is absolute, firm and immutable."[179] And although the document did not refer by name to the "nouvelle théologie" or to any of the theologians associated with it, it was clear from passages such as the following who and what Pius XII had in mind:

> In theology some want to...bring about a return...to the way of speaking used in Holy Scripture and by the Fathers of the Church...they assert that when Catholic doctrine has been reduced to this condition, a way will be found to satisfy modern needs, that will permit of dogma being expressed also by the concepts of modern philosophy, whether of immanentism or idealism or existentialism or any other system. Some more audacious affirm that this can and must be done, because they hold that the mysteries of faith are never expressed by truly adequate concepts but only by approximate and ever changeable notions...Wherefore they do not consider it absurd, but altogether necessary, that theology should substitute new concepts in place of the old ones.[180]

This was a clear reference to the paradoxical modernism of the *ressourcement* project and to those, like

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[176] Bernard de Gorostarzu to Henri de Lubac, 27 July, 1948, CAEHL, 74189.

[177] Pius XII, *Humani Generis* (12 August 1950): http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_12081950_humani-generis.html.

[178] See, for instance, Michael Kerlin, "Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange: Defending the Faith from *Pascendi dominici gregis* to *Humani generis*," *U.S. Catholic Historian*, 25 (Winter, 2007), 111.

[179] Ibid., §6.

[180] Ibid., §14-15.

Daniélou, who believed that the Patristic sources were in many ways more compatible with modern thought than Scholastic theology was. But it was also an attack on Bouillard's argument about the historical contingency of theological concepts, which violated Scholastic epistemology and amount, as his critics had long maintained, to "dogmatic relativism."[181] Indeed, much of the encyclical was directed against the incursion of historical thinking into theology, as Pius insisted that "positive theology cannot be on a par with merely historical science."[182]

Such comments were no doubt directed as much against de Lubac as Bouillard, and what worried the Pope in particular about their shared project of historical *ressourcement* was the way it undermined both the authority of the Magisterium and the privileged status of Scholasticism. He perceived in this appeal to the authority of Scripture and of the Church Fathers, not only a weapon against the dominance of Scholastic theology, but also against the very theological authority of the Vatican itself, "which gives such authoritative approval to scholastic theology."[183] And as proof of this spirit of insubordination, Pius pointed to the "typed pages" that were circulating without *imprimatur* and infecting the minds of the youth and the laity.[184] The Pope here put his finger on the way that, for de Lubac and his friends, history served as a *critical* weapon against their theological opponents as well as, implicitly, the structure of theological authority in the Church. Pius therefore reaffirmed that the teaching authority of the Church, over which he himself presided, was the guardian of the "deposit of faith" revealed in the Scripture and preserved in the Tradition. As a result, nothing contained in the Scripture could contradict the teaching of the Magisterium and "the most noble office of theology is to show how a doctrine defined by the Church is contained in the sources of revelation." For Christ had bestowed the ultimate authority to interpret the *depositum fidei* "not to each of the faithful, not even to theologians, but only to the Teaching Authority of the Church."[185]

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[181] Ibid., §16; see also §7.

[182] Ibid., §21.

[183] Ibid., §18.

[184] Ibid., §13. The pope did not refer to "typed pages" but to those who "express themselves more openly in their writings intended for private circulation and in conferences and lectures," warning that "these opinions are disseminated not only among members of the clergy...but also among the laity, and especially among those who are engaged in teaching youth."

Such an assertion of hierarchical authority went hand in hand with a rejection of theological pluralism, as Pius confirmed that the teachings of Thomas Aquinas would retain their pride of place as the official philosophy of the Church—the foundation for all clerical formation and theological inquiry. "The method of Aquinas is singularly preeminent...for bringing truth to light," Pius averred, and an attack on this method therefore constituted an attack, not only on the value of reason, but also on the very possibility of trans-historical truth. [186] The encyclical thus endorsed the notion, dear to critics of the "nouvelle théologie," that the advent of Thomism constituted an irreversible advance in the history of Christian thought. While it was possible to fine-tune this system and "prudently enrich it with the fruits of progress of the human mine," Pius acknowledged, "never may we overthrow it...or regard it as a great, but obsolete, relic."[187] Thomism thus remained the most effective system "for safeguarding the foundation of the faith and for reaping, safely and usefully, the fruits of sound progress."[188] Like previous Thomist critiques of the *ressourcement* project, then, the encyclical both affirmed and denied the principle of theological progress in order to safeguard the primacy of Scholasticism. For Pius wish to maintain that Scholasticism constituted a real advance over the systems that preceded it and a testament to the principle of progress in theology, while combatting "these advocates of novelty" who wished to replace Thomism with "a method of philosophizing suited to the needs of our modern culture."[189]

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[185] Ibid., §21.

[186] Ibid., §32.

[187] Ibid., §30

[188] Ibid., §31.

And here we arrive at the crux of the Pope's concern, for the encyclical was above all directed against modern philosophies of becoming and historical change—from Hegelianism and Marxism to existentialism and evolution—which seemed to threaten the immutable truths of dogma. Although one might expect that Pius XII, the great Cold-Warrior, was particularly concerned about the threat posed by Marxism, but the bulk his encyclical was instead directed against a different enemy: "the new erroneous philosophy which...has assumed the name of existentialism, since it concerns itself only with existence of individual things and neglects all consideration of their immutable essences."[190] That the encyclical fixated on existentialism in particular had everything to do with its affinities, perceived or otherwise, with the "nouvelle théologie." The Pope focused in particular on what he perceived to be their shared historicism and contempt for the value of reason. It was these affinities with existentialism, he implied, which led certain theologians to complain that Thomism "is only a philosophy of immutable essences, while the contemporary mind must look to the existence of things and to life, which is ever in flux."[191] But the encyclical also suggested a deeper affinity between Blondelian and existentialist modes of thought, which manifested itself in the way these "new" theologians privileged the dynamism of the human will over the intellect.[192] These were rather astute observations that did indeed capture of the relationship between existentialism and the "nouvelle théologie." As if to respond to these theologians, who sought to distinguish a legitimate Christian existentialism from the atheist variant associated with Sartre, the encyclical made it clear that both forms of existentialism, "whether atheistic or simply the type that denies the validity of the reason in the field of metaphysics," were equally unacceptable.[193]

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[189] Ibid., §18; 31.

[190] Ibid., §6.

[191] Ibid., §32.

[192] Ibid., §33.

In addition to these general remarks, the encyclical also took aim at specific individuals, without of course mentioning them by name. The clearest reference to de Lubac's work came in paragraph 26, when Pius denounced those theologians who "destroy the gratuity of the supernatural order, since God, they say, cannot create intellectual beings without ordering and calling them to the beatific vision."[194] This critique of de Lubac's thesis in *Surnaturel* appeared in the same paragraph in which Teilhard de Chardin's teaching on original sin and Yves de Montcheuil's "typed pages" on the Eucharist were taken to task. In other words, de Lubac's work was included as part of a list of approaches deemed to undermine the most basic of Catholic doctrines: grace, original sin, and transubstantiation. Other passages, such as the denunciation of "irenism" (a reference to ecumenicism) and repeated affirmations on the central role of reason in theology—its ability to "prove the existence of a personal God" and discern natural law unaided by revelation—were likely directed against the entire group of Jesuits associated with the "nouvelle théologie."[195] The critique of "spiritual exegesis" in favor of a literalist reading of the Scripture probably referred not only to de Lubac's *Corpus Mysticum,* but also to the non-literalist reading of Genesis which informed Teilhard's critique of monogenism. Indeed, the encyclical devoted a sizeable concluding section to the problem of evolution, which Teilard de Chardin's work had raised anew. On this question, *Humani Generis* seemed to mark a softening of the Church line on evolution, for it did not reject the theory out of hand. It did, however, distinguish between the properly scientific aspects of evolutionary theory and those which impinged upon the truths of the faith. Thus, while Pius accepted that the human body might have indeed descended from "pre-existent matter and living matter," he maintained that "the

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[193] Ibid., §32.

[194] Ibid., §26.

[195] Ibid., §25; see also §2, §4, §29.

Catholic faith obliges us to hold that souls are immediately created by God."[196] And Pius likewise insisted in no uncertain terms that the theory of polygenism was absolutely untenable from a Catholic perspective.

In keeping with the conventions of its genre, the encyclical did not name the specific authors or books it condemned, and as a result, it immediately gave rise to a furious debate about the identity of its targets. The integrist camp of course adopted a "maximalist" interpretation of the encyclical's scope, while defenders of the beleaguered Jesuits, such as the journal *Études,* advanced a "minimalist" reading.[197] In 1951, the Father General of the Jesuit Order issued his own official interpretation of the encyclical in a letter circulated to all the Jesuits of France, which also served as an explanation of the disciplinary action taken against de Lubac and the four other professors at Lyon-Fourvière. Here, Janssens cleared up any doubts that the primary targets of the encyclical were de Lubac (for *Surnaturel*), Montcheuil (for his pages on the Eucharist), and Teilhard de Chardin (for his vision of the relationship between matter and spirit and of original sin).[198] The only option now available to them was to submit to the decisions of their superiors and of the Vatican. This meant addressing a letter of filial submission to the Pope, in which they admitted to their errors and asked for forgiveness. As de Lubac joked to Fessard, he was now expected to "admit his own crime, thank those who have punished him, and request a harsher punishment," and Fessard quipped that this was precisely how they handled such matters in the Soviet Union as well.[199] Just over a year after the encyclical was handed down, de Lubac and the theologians of Fourvière publicly apologized for their errors in letter published in the *Osservatore romano*. In a spirit of "filial gratitude for the very sound teachings that he has given the world in his encyclical," the letter read, "we prostrate ourselves at the feet of Your Holiness, asking him filially to encourage our efforts, to correct our errors if need be or to warn us paternally about our lack of prudence."[200] But this letter of submission arrived only after Henri Rondet—who was Prefect of Studies at Fourvière and had briefly come under suspicion in 1946 for his teaching on original sin—was relieved of his teaching post. And the reason for this was that Fourvière had not publicly submitted to the encyclical sooner.

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[196] Ibid., §36.

[197] On these dueling interpretations, see Fouilloux, *Une église en quête de liberté,* 293. Robert Rouquette penned the "minimalist" readings for *Études*. See "L'encyclique *Humani generis*," *Études* (October 1950), 108-16; "Quelques commentaires de l'encyclique *Humani generis*," *Études* (December 1950), 353-73. Józef Maria Bochenski, the Polish Dominican who had written a vigorous condemnation of the "nouvelle théologie" on the occasion of the pope's 1946 speech to the Jesuit General Congregation, like many other Dominican integrists, offered a "maximalist" interpretation. Bochenski seems to have conflated the condemnation of the "nouvelle théologie" with the disciplinary measures taken against the Catholic Left in the same period. He argued that the encyclical targeted above all Teilhard, de Lubac, and the Dominican Henri Desroche. See Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, 30 October, 1950, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 73/3.

[198] Jean-Baptiste Janssens, "De executione Encyclicae 'Humani Generis,'" 11 February 1951, Fonds Bouillard, AJPF, 3/45.

In other words, behind this public profession of humility and submission, the encyclical and the measures taken by the Jesuit Curia had elicited deep consternation in France. Following de Lubac's dismissal, a number of Catholic intellectuals, from Jean Lacroix to Étienne Gilson, expressed their outrage to Cardinal Gerlier. Victor Carlhian, the president of the Lyon Philosophical Society denounced the measure as "an intolerable scandal," in a letter addressed to fifty prominent Catholic intellectuals.[201] He encouraged them to "make known to the ecclesiastical superiors you are able to reach, the grave and deadly consequences of such measures," which will "set back by several decades" the vital apologetic work de Lubac had undertaken in reaching out to secular intellectuals.[202] Above all, Carlhian denounced the heavy-handed tactics of the Roman authorities, warning that "the Church is no more immune than states to the ills caused by the proliferation of bureaucratic mechanisms."[203] Some within the Jesuit order, such as the philosopher Émile Rideau, were even more explicit. In a letter to his Provincial, Rideau deplored the actions taken against de Lubac and his colleagues as an "inhuman proceeding, contrary to the most elementary rights of man, to honor, to the natural law itself, resembling the tyranny of a dictator, employed by totalitarianism: man is there reduced to nothing."[204] The duty to protect human rights and basic democratic freedoms did not just apply to states, Rideau implied, but also to the governing structures of the Church and the religious orders. It was difficult for "unbelievers who militate for the rights of man" to take seriously the Church's human rights rhetoric, he pointed out, when it treated its own clergy in such an arbitrary manner.[205] He therefore called upon the four Provincials of France to stand in solidarity with the professors in question and against the abusive overreach of their Roman superiors. The arrival of the encyclical put a stop to these rumblings, however, and to any hope of redress.

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[199] Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard 30 November, 1950 and Gaston Fessard to Henri de Lubac, 9 December, 1950, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 73/3.

[200] A draft of the letter is reprinted as appendix 4:21 to de Lubac, *At the Service of the Church,* 290-1; it is also preserved in Fonds Bouillard, AJPF, 3/45.

[201] A copy of this confidential letter by Victor Carlhian is preserved in CAEHL, 48946.

[202] Ibid.

The Long Chill of the 1950s

In addition being a theological conflict, then, the Fourvière Affair was also a conflict over the location, structure, and limits of authority in the Church—that is, over how the Church was governed. What the Affair and the ensuing encyclical revealed were powerful tensions between a local Church and the central ecclesiastical authorities in Rome, anticipating much greater tensions to come between the burgeoning Churches of the Global South and the insistently Eurocentric—and indeed Rome-centric—authorities who governed, and continue to govern, them. Rome's relationship to the French Church in particular would grow considerably more strained as the 1950s wore on. The promulgation of *Humani generis* in 1950 brought an end to one of the richest decades of Catholic renewal and experimentation since the Modernist Crisis, and opened a decade of retrenchment during which the Vatican attempted to reign in what it perceived to be the excesses of the 1940s. This campaign would focus above all on the French Church, highlighting but also increasing its alienation from the priorities of the Roman authorities. In 1952, an anonymous French cleric testified to this growing tension in the pages of *Le Monde*, explaining that "'the malaise of French Catholics comes from this discrepancy between everyday experiences which require great freedom of spirit and initiative, and a doctrinal rigorism'" emanating from Rome.[206]

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[203] Ibid.

[204] Émile Rideau to the Provincial of Paris, 10 June 1950, reprinted as appendix 4:17 to de Lubac, *At the Service of the Church*, 283.

[205] Ibid., 284.

That same year, the target of this "doctrinal rigorism" would shift from the French Jesuits to the French Dominicans. Following his eviction from Lyon, de Lubac complained to Fessard that the Dominican superiors seemed far more concerned to protect their own, given that leftist priests like Desroche and Montuclard had managed to evade censure, whereas he instead required protection *against* his own superiors.[207] This sentiment proved to be premature because in 1953, Montuclard's works were placed on the Index and he was stripped of his priesthood. That same year, Frs. Féret and Boisselet—the editor of Cerf, the Dominican publishing house, who had ties to the "progressivist Christians"—were summoned to explain themselves in Rome. The following year, the Dominican Master General relieved Congar, Chenu, Féret, and Boisselot of their teaching and editorial functions, and exiled them from Paris.[208] Although the timing and nature of these measures suggests a kinship with the disciplinary action taken against the Jesuits of Lyon-Fourvière four years earlier, it is important to distinguish the two cases. Chenu had indeed fallen afoul of the Holy Office in 1942 for advocating the use of the historical method in theology, and Congar had also aroused suspicion for advocating ecumenical dialogue and a greater role for the laity, but the reason for their dismissal in 1954 was above all a political one.

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[206] Quoted in Étienne Fouilloux, *Une Église en quête de liberté*, 295.

[207] Henri de Lubac to Gaston Fessard, 9 August, 1950 and 30 November, 1950, Fonds Fessard, AJPF, 73/3.

[208] See Congar's account of these events in *Journal d'un théologien: 1946-1956* (Paris: Cerf, 2001), 232-72.

As both Philippe Chenaux and Étienne Fouilloux have shown, the disciplinary measures taken against these Dominicans were part and parcel of the ongoing worker-priest controversy.[209] In 1954, the French episcopacy, under orders from Rome, had attempted to stamp out this experiment, but 73 of the worker-priests publicly refused to submit to the directives in a statement widely disseminated in the French media. Shortly thereafter, Chenu had published an article in which he appeared to defend the worker-priests, fueling suspicion that "the soul of the resistance to the decisions of the Holy See was Dominican."[210] The Dominicans in question were indeed fervent supporters of a working-class apostolate and possessed close ties to the worker-priests through their work with the Mission de Paris and the Mission de France.[211] Congar was less directly involved, but had nevertheless endorsed the worker-priest movement in the pages of *Témoignage chrétien*.[212] And Boisselot and Chenu were also close to Ella Sauvageot, editor of *La Quinzaine*, the mouthpiece of the radical wing of the Christian progressivist movement. Coming on the heels of the Fourvière Affair and *Humani generis,* the sanctions against these Dominicans elicited even greater outrage from French Catholics. In the pages of *Le Figaro,* the great Catholic intellectual François Mauriac called for a "new Concordat" in order to protect the autonomy of the French Church from Vatican overreach. Hubert Beuve-Méry, founder and editor of *Le Monde,* likewise complained that an excessive fear of

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[209] See Fouilloux, *Une Église en quête de liberté*, 296-7; Philippe Chenaux, *L'Église catholique et le communisme en Europe, de Lénine à Jean-Paul II (1917-1989)* (Paris: Cerf, 2009), 194-5.

[210] François Leprieur, *Quand Rome condamne: Dominicains et prêtres-ouvriers* (Paris: Cerf, 1989), 73. The article in question was Marie-Dominique Chenu, "Le sacerdoce des prêtres-ouvriers," *La Vie intellectuelle* (January-March 1954), 175-181.

[211] See Fouilloux, *Une Église en quête de liberté*, 296-7; Chenaux, *L'Église catholique et le communisme,* 194-5. For a more detailed discussion of the Dominicans' involvement with the worker-priests, see Leprieur, *Quand Rome condamne*, passim.

[212] Yves Congar, "L'avenir des prêtres-ouvriers," *Témoignage chrétien* (25 September 1953).

Communism had led the Vatican back to "'the most questionable methods of the Inquisition.'"[213]

Even Maritain was not immune from this disciplinary campaign. The philosopher's postwar stint as French ambassador to the Holy See had considerably increased his public profile in Italy, particularly after his *Integral Humanism* was translated into Italian in 1946. As in France, the work had a particularly important effect on a burgeoning postwar Catholic Left, which adopted Maritain's "separation of planes" model and his call for a "new Christendom" sensitive to the needs of the working class. But Maritain's increased visibility was a double-edged sword, for it also attracted the unwanted attention of the conservative Roman clergy. Thus, in 1956, the Roman Jesuit newspaper *Civiltà cattolica* published a vituperative attack on Maritain's *Integral Humanism.* The author accused Maritain of embracing a basically liberal and secular humanism, and even found "an unconscious Hegelianism" in Maritain's work, which is rather ironic given the philosopher's own distaste for what he perceived to be the Hegelianism of the Lyon Jesuits.[214] The attack in *Civiltà cattolica* was by no means an isolated incident. The Holy Office had been investigating Maritain for some time, but no formal sanctions were forthcoming and the death of Pius XII brought an end to the controversy.

If Maritain managed to escape censure, his brush with the Roman authorities is nevertheless a testament to the thick fog of mutual suspicion that prevailed between France and Rome for much of the 1950s. As de Lubac and many others had noted, this was in many ways a struggle between the conflicting imperatives of an effective apostolate and sound doctrine. Whatever their differences, the various renewal movements of the postwar French Church emerged from a common apostolic spirit—a commitment to reach out to unbelievers and reverse the tide of secularization that had swept over France and Europe. For some, this took the form of a working-class apostolate oriented toward a segment of society ignored or despised by a Church that had long placed itself on the side of the elites. For others, it took the form of an intellectual apostolate that sought to bridge the abyss between Catholic theology and mainstream intellectual life. In both cases, this apostolic zeal required an openness to new ways of thinking and of being in a predominantly secular world which, to those in Rome tasked above all with defending and maintaining Catholic orthodoxy, to make too many concessions to modern political and intellectual life. But this was also and perhaps above all a conflict over the internal governance of the Church itself: between a local Church jealous of its autonomy, and the central authority structures of the Church; between those who advocated a greater pluralism and freedom of debate within Catholic theology, and a Magisterium anxious to maintain its theological control in and through the monopoly of a single philosophical and theological system; between a more horizontal ecclesiology open to the role of the laity and to ecumenical dialogue, and a vertical ecclesiology founded upon the authority of a centralized hierarchy in Rome. These would of course become the central problems addressed by the Second Vatican Council when it opened in 1962. And by then, the status of Henri de Lubac and the beleaguered Dominicans would be considerably altered.

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[213] Both are quoted in Chenaux, *L'Église catholique et le communisme*, 195.

[214] Antonio Messineo, "L'umanesimo integrale," quoted in Chenaux, *L'Église catholique et le communisme*, 202.

Epilogue: Towards Vatican II

The 1950s were a long and difficult time in the wilderness for Henri de Lubac and the other French theologians reprimanded in the wake of *Humani Generis*. Unable to publish on properly theological questions, he turned his attentions elsewhere, producing three books on the subject of Buddhism over the course of the decade.[1] A stroke of good luck in 1952 allowed de Lubac to secure the publication of a new book on ecclesiology, *Méditation sur l'Église*, but only because both the Father General of the Jesuit Order and the usual Jesuit censors happened to be away on vacation when the manuscript arrived in Rome.[2] When his opponents in Rome managed to block the book's Italian translation, the new Archbishop of Milan rallied to de Lubac's defense and took it upon himself to secure its Italian publication. Eight years later, in the middle of the Second Vatican Council, the Archbishop became Pope Paul VI.

In other words, de Lubac was not without powerful supporters in both France and Rome, who worked throughout the 1950s to alleviate the sanctions against him. First among these was Cardinal Gerlier of Lyon, who successfully lobbied the Pope to secure permission for de Lubac to teach a few probationary courses on Hinduism and Buddhism at the Catholic University of Lyon in 1956. That same year, he was allowed to return from exile and take up residence in Lyon once again, as well as to publish a reworked version of his controversial *Connaissance de Dieu*.[3] By 1958, de Lubac judged that it might be possible for him to return to teaching full-time, but he still had powerful opponents in the upper echelons of the Jesuit Curia. After a long series of negotiations, facilitated in part by Cardinal Gerlier, he was finally permitted to resume teaching at the end of 1959.

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[1] Henri de Lubac, *La Rencontre du bouddhisme et de l'Occident* (Paris: Cerf, 1952); Henri de Lubac, *Aspects du bouddhisme,* vol. 1 (Paris: Seuil, 1951); Henri de Lubac, *Aspects du bouddhisme,* vol. 2: *Amida* (Paris: Seuil, 1955).

[2] See the account in Henri de Lubac, *At the Service of the Church: Henri de Lubac Reflects on the Circumstances that Occasioned his Writings,* trans. by Anne Elizabeth Englund (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1993), 74-5. The English translation of this book is *The Splendour of the Church*, trans. by Michael Mason (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1956).

[3] Henri de Lubac, *Sur les chemins de Dieu* (Paris: Aubier, 1956).

By then, however, much greater changes were afoot. In October 1958, Pius XII died and was succeeded by John XXIII, who had been the Vatican nuncio to France at the time of *Humani Generis*. This change in leadership would have profound implications for de Lubac and the other theologians associated with the "nouvelle théologie." In a highly symbolic gesture, one of the first acts of the newly elected Pope was to make a substantial donation to the *Sources chrétiennes* series, the centerpiece of the Patristic *ressourcement* project led by the Jesuits of Fourvière.[4] On January 25th, 1959, the new Pope took the most significant step of his papacy when he announced the convocation of a council—what became known as Vatican II. The following year, he established a set of Preparatory Commissions to oversee the production of draft documents that would be discussed and voted on at the council. It was in August of 1960, in the pages of the French Catholic newspaper *La Croix*, that Henri de Lubac read the list of theologians chosen to serve as consultors for the Preparatory Theological Commission. With great surprise, he found his own name listed there, alongside Yves Congar's.[5]

This highly symbolic gesture was an indication that the new Pope considered the affair of the "nouvelle théologie" to be definitively at an end and that the priests associated with it had been rehabilitated. But not everyone shared the Pope's view. This was particularly true of Cardinal Ottaviani, who had long been a forceful critic of the "nouvelle théologie" and now presided over the Preparatory Theological Commission in his capacity as Secretary of the Holy Office. In response to the Pope's initial call for proposals about what the council should address, Ottaviani suggested that it expand upon *Humani Generis* by explicitly condemning the errors of relativism, immanentism, existentialism, and evolutionism, and defending "'scholastic theology against the hidden assaults of the New Theology.'"[6] It should therefore come as little surprise that de Lubac's work within the Preparatory Commission overseen by Ottaviani was an exercise in frustration. He recalls constantly having to defend both his own work and that of his good friend Teilhard de Chardin, whose works had finally appeared in print following his death in 1955. There was a powerful faction within the Church which viewed the council as an opportunity to secure a definitive condemnation of Teilhard's work, and it was in an effort to combat this campaign that, at the behest of his Jesuit superiors, de Lubac published a book-length defense of his friend's work in 1962.[7] Despite the consternation it elicited, he would go on to write four more books on Teilhard over the next few years, in addition to publishing two volumes of his correspondence.[8] This earned him few friends in Ottaviani's Preparatory Commission and when the attacks turned against his own work as well, de Lubac threatened to complain to the Pope and resign from the Commission.[9]

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[4] See Henri de Lubac, *At the Service of the Church,* 116 and Rudolf Voderholzer, *Meet Henri de Lubac,* trans. by Michael J. Miller (San Francisco: Ignatius, 2008), 84.

[5] De Lubac recounts this moment in *At the Service of the Church*, 116.

De Lubac's experience on the Theological Commission is significant because it indicates the extent to which the theological opponents of the "nouvelle théologie" dominated the preparatory phase of the council and the draft documents (schemata) that emerged from it. This has been widely recognized in the scholarship on Vatican II, which has noted the prevalence of a characteristically Neo-Scholastic approach, with its ahistorical, legalistic, deductive style of reasoning, within the draft texts developed by the Theological Commission.[10] This was particularly evident in the schema on the Church, *De Ecclesia*. Prepared by Sebastian Tromp, the leading author of the encyclical *Mystici Corporis Christi*, and Marie-Rosaire Gagnebet, who had led the charge against the "nouvelle théologie" with Garrigou-Lagrange in the 1940s, the schema stressed the hierarchical and juridical nature of the Church. It was also true of the two schemata on the sources of revelation (*De Fontibus Revelationis*) and the deposit of faith (*De Deposito Fidei*). The first upheld the controversial thesis that Scripture and Tradition constituted two distinct sources of revelation (a major barrier to ecumenical dialogue) and treated revelation as a body of propositional knowledge or information about God.[11] The second included a new formula for the profession of faith that would have Catholics proclaim: "'I also condemn and reject whatever is condemned and rejected in those Councils [Trent and Vatican I] and Encyclicals, namely in *Pascendi* and *Humani generis*.'"[12] The text also included a direct condemnation of two positions advanced in de Lubac's work—the attacks that had prompted his resignation threat—testifying to his embattled position within the Theological Commission.[13]

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[6] "Proposal of the Holy Office," 1960, quoted in Brian E. Daley, "Knowing God in History and in the Church: *Dei Verbum* and '*Nouvelle Théologie*,'" in *Ressourcement: A Movement for Renewal in Twentieth-Century Catholic Theology,* ed. by Gabriel Flynn and Paul D. Murrary (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 344.

[7] Henri de Lubac, *La Pensée religieuse du Père Teilhard de Chardin* (Paris: Aubier, 1962)

[8] Henri de Lubac, *La Prière du Père Teilhard de Chardin* (Paris: Fayard, 1964); Henri de Lubac, *Teilhard, missionaire et apologiste* (Toulouse: Prière et vie, 1966); Henri de Lubac, *L'Éternel Féminin, étude sur un texte du Père Teilhard de Chardin, suivi de Teilhard et notre temps* (Paris: Aubier, 1968); Henri de Lubac, *Teilhard posthume: réflexions et souvenirs* (Paris: Fayard, 1977); Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *Lettres intimes à Auguste Valensin, Bruno de Solages, Henri de Lubac, 1919-1955*, ed. by Henri de Lubac (Paris: Aubier, 1972); Maurice Blondel and Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *Blondel et Teilhard de Chardin: Correspondance commentée, ed. and annotated by Henri de Lubac* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1965).

[9] See the account in de Lubac, *At the Service of the Church,* 117.

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[10] See esp. Gerald O'Collins, "*Ressourcement* and Vatican II," in *Ressourcement*, 372-91. O'Collins associates five characteristics with this Neo-Scholastic style typical of the theological textbooks in circulation at the time: a regressive method of mining the tradition for "proof-texts" with which to authorize the pronouncements of the Magisterium, a commitment to unchanging and objective conceptual knowledge, a legalistic mentality, and a resistance to liturgical and experiential categories; see also Daley, "Knowing God in History," 344-51; John O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2008), 63, 88-9; 147-8.

[11] On this schema, see O'Collins, "*Ressourcement* and Vatican II," 379-85 and Daley, "Knowing God in History," 344-51.

[12] Quoted in Joseph A. Komonchak, "*Humani Generis* and *Nouvelle Théologie*," in *Ressourcement*, 155.

[13] See the account in Henri de Lubac, *Carnets du concile,* vol. 1 (Paris: Cerf, 2007), 77-8. These passages appear to have been inserted by de Lubac's Jesuit confrère Édouard Dhanis, whose official visit to Fourvière in 1949 had precipitated the disciplinary measures taken against de Lubac.

The Tide Turns

Events took a dramatic turn when the roughly 2400 council fathers gathered in Rome towards the end of 1962 to debate the documents of the Preparatory Commission.[14] In this first session of the council, these draft documents drew fierce criticism from a majority of the bishops voting at the council and were sent back to the Theological Commission to be rewritten. A memorandum from Cardinal Frings of Cologne, for instance, insisted that the conciliar documents "'should not be treatises in a scholastic style...but should instead speak the language of Holy Scripture and the holy Fathers of the Church.'"[15] Like many of the bishops and cardinals, Frings had brought a theological expert (*peritus*) to advise him during the council, and this theologian was the true author of the memorandum. It was none other than Joseph Ratzinger, the future Benedict XVI, whose work had been profoundly shaped by de Lubac and the "nouvelle théologie." Ratzinger was one of several theologians who had penned severe critiques of the schemata—particularly the three mentioned above—in the lead-up to the council and even circulated a set of alternative draft texts amongst the council fathers. The most significant of these critiques and alternative proposals came from Dutch and Belgian theologians broadly sympathetic to the "nouvelle théologie," such as Edward Schillebeeckx (advisor to Cardinal Alfrink of Utrecht), Pieter Smulders (advisor to the Indonesian bishops), and Gérard Philips (a moderating force within the Theological Commission), as well as German theologians such as Karl Rahner (advisor to Cardinal König of Vienna) and Ratzinger himself.[16] Even before voting began in late-1962, then, some of the most prominent theological critics of Neo-Scholasticism were shopping around alternatives to the documents prepared by Ottaviani's Commission.

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[14] This is John O'Malley's estimate of the average number of voting participants (usually bishops, cardinals, and religious superiors) at any given moment, although the number of course varied over the course of the Council. See *What Happened at Vatican II*, 21.

[15] Quoted in Jared Wicks "Vatican II on Revelation—From Behind the Scenes," *Theological Studies* 71 (2010), 643.

[16] On these alternative texts, see esp. Wicks, "Vatican II on Revelation" and O'Collins, "*Ressourcement* and Vatican II," 379-81; 385-6. They included Schillebeeckx' *Animadversiones*, 2700 copies of which were circulated to the bishops; Rahner

The turning point came on November 20th, 1962, when voting began on *De Fontibus Revelationis,* the schema on the sources of revelation. When he introduced the text, Ottaviani acknowledged and forcefully condemned the alternative drafts circulating, he argued, in flagrant violation of the council regulations. But when voting began, it became clear that these texts had accomplished their goal. Cardinal Liénart of Lille, the first to vote, rejected the schema for its "frigid" language and reliance on "'Scholastic arguments,'" a sentiment that was soon echoed by the Cardinals advised by the theologians listed above, as well as Cardinal Léger of Montreal, Cardinal Ritter of Saint Louis, and Cardinal Bea.[17] With the vote locked in a stalemate, John XIII took the initiative and set up a "mixed commission" of experts from Ottaviani's Theological Commission and Bea's Secretariat for Christian Unity tasked with producing a new draft of the text. Ten days later, the discussion of *De Ecclesia* followed a similar trajectory. Bishop de Smedt of Bruges denounced the schema for its "triumphalism," "clericalism," and "juridicism," while Cardinal Frings complained that the document cited virtually no Patristic or medieval sources.[18] With the first session of the council drawing to a close, the document was sent back to the Theological Commission, where it would be reworked by a seven-person subcommission drawing upon the work of Gérard Philips, Karl Rahner, Jean Daniélou, and Yves Congar. The effect of these two votes, then, was to break Ottaviani's control over the Theological Commission and to allow the leading voices of the

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and Ratzinger's *De revelatione Dei et hominis in Jesu Christo Facta*, circulated in 2000 copies as an alternative to *De Fontibus*; Congar's draft for a new profession of faith to serve as a preface to the council documents; Rahner's *Disquisitio brevis* on Scripture and Tradition.

[17] Quoted in O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II*, 144. On this debate, see Giuseppe Ruggieri, "The First Doctrinal Clash," in *History of Vatican II*, vol. 2, ed. by Giuseppe Alberigo and Joseph A. Komonchak (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1997), 233-66.

[18] See the account of this debate in O'Malley*, What Happened at Vatican II,* 155-9.

"nouvelle théologie" to play a key role in rewriting what would become the two central doctrinal pronouncements of the Council: *Dei Verbum* (The Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation) and *Lumen Gentium* (The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church). The significance of this moment was not lost on *Études*, which proclaimed that the November 20th vote was nothing less than the end of ""the era of the Counter Reformation.""[19]

This was perhaps most evident in the case of *Dei Verbum*. One of the members of the new "mixed commission" tasked with producing a new draft document on revelation was Archbishop Garrone of Toulouse, who immediately asked Jean Daniélou to draft a new prologue for the document on revelation. Daniélou obliged, sending Garrone a seven-paragraph draft "On Revelation and the Word of God," which would lay the groundwork for the first six sections of *Dei Verbum*.[20] Along with Smulders, Ratzinger, and Rahner, Daniélou thus played an important role in reorienting the council's teaching on revelation towards a more inclusive, sacramental, and historical framework. Dispensing with the cognitive model of revelation offered by *De Fontibus*, the conciliar document instead defined it as an intimate act of personal self-disclosure, by which the triune God "speaks to men as friends" and invites them "to share in the divine nature" (DV§2).[21] By framing revelation in these relational terms, *Dei Verbum* bound divine revelation to the act of faith it elicits and insisted that this must be an interior, and loving response rather than just an intellectual assent, as Neo-Scholasticism tended to treat it. *Dei Verbum* thus presented revelation as a single broad and unified activity that unfolds in and through history. Scripture and Tradition are not two distinct bodies of information, it argued, but "flowing from the same divine wellspring, in a certain way merge into a unity and tend toward the same end" (DV§9). Nor is revelation confined to the historical past. It began at the moment of creation, reached its culmination in Christ, and continues to unfold in the history of salvation, "through deeds and words bound together by an inner dynamism" (DV§2). This sort of sacramental and historical language, which frames revelation as a living, personal, and mysterious relationship between human beings and the divine, bears all the markings of the "nouvelle théologie" and testifies to the role that theologians like Daniélou played in the document's rewriting.

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[19] Robert Rouquette, quoted in ibid, 152.

[20] On the content and significance of this draft, see Wicks, "Vatican II on Revelation," 647-9; O'Collins, "*Ressourcement* and Vatican II," 381-2.

[21] *Dei Verbum* (Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation), 18 November, 1965: http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_ councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651118_dei-verbum_en.html.

The same is true of *Lumen Gentium*, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church. Daniélou also played a role in the revisions to this document, after *De Ecclesia* was discarded in favor of Gérard Philips' alternative schema. But Yves Congar played an even more central role in the revisions, producing the initial drafts of Chapter 1 and sections 9, 13, 16, and 17 of Chapter 2 in what became *Lumen Gentium*.[22] These passages reflect Congar's profoundly ecumenical vision and thus mark a dramatic departure from the initial draft prepared under Ottaviani. Chapter 1, for instance, affirmed that the "one, holy, catholic and apostolic" Church that Christ entrusted to St. Peter "*subsists in* the Catholic Church," and is not simply identical with it, such that "many elements of sanctification and of truth are found outside of its visible structure" (LG§8).[23] The document went on to stress the common Scripture and sacraments that Catholics shared with other Christian churches, affirming that "in some real way they are joined with us in the Holy Spirit" (LG§15). This language strongly echoes the principles expressed in another conciliar document on which Congar worked, the Decree on Ecumenism (*Unitatis Redintegratio*).[24]

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[22] For the extensive list of conciliar texts to which Congar contributed, see Yves Congar, *Mon journal du concile,* vol. 2 (1964-1966) (Paris: Cerf, 2002), 511. On the genesis of *Lumen Gentium,* see also Giuseppe Ruggieri, "Beyond an Ecclesiology of Polemics: The Debate on the Church," in *History of Vatican II,* vol. 2, ed. by Giuseppe Alberigo and Joseph A. Komonchak (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1995-2006), 281-357. On Congar's influence on the document, see Gabriel Flynn, *Yves Congar's Vision of the Church in a World of Unbelief* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004), ch. 2; William Henn, "Yves Congar and *Lumen gentium*," *Gregorianum* 86 (2005), 563-92.

[23] *Lumen Gentium* (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church), 21 November, 1964: http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html (emphasis added). The precise meaning of the formulation "subsists in" was much-debated. On this controversy, see Francis A. Sullivan, "The Meaning of *Subsistit in* as explained by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith," *Theological Studies* 67 (2006), 116-24. This phrase introduced a distinction between the Catholic Church and the Church of Christ, in recognition of the spiritual value to be found in other Christian churches.

Congar's work on section 16 of *Lumen Gentium* likewise anticipated the much-discussed Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions (*Nostra Aetate*), the introduction and conclusion of which Congar helped to draft.[25] Section 16 stressed, first and foremost, the Church's special relationship to the Jewish people, which "remains most dear to God, for God does not repent of the gifts He makes nor of the calls He issues" (LG§16). But it also acknowledged the Church's regard for Muslims, with whom it shares an Abrahamic heritage and monotheistic faith. Finally, this crucial passage concluded with an affirmation that salvation is not beyond the reach of those "who through no fault of their own do not know the Gospel of Christ or His Church" or "have not yet arrived at an explicit knowledge of God," for grace can operate within them without their knowledge. "Whatever good or truth is found amongst them," the passage concludes, "is looked upon by the Church as a preparation for the Gospel" (LG§16). This principle is further developed in the council's Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church (*Ad Gentes*), the first chapter of which, according to Congar, "is my work from A to Z."[26] This chapter is a monument to Patristic *ressourcement*, citing twenty-three discrete fathers of the Church and more sources than all of the other chapters put together.[27] It affirms that, "whatever truth and grace are to be found among the nations" not yet touched by the Gospel constitutes "a sort of secret presence of

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[24] According to his journal, Congar worked on the preface and conclusion. See *Mon journal du concile,* 511. On Congar's ecumenical vision and its influence on Vatican II, see Gabriel Flynn, "Cardinal Congar's Ecumenism: An 'Ecumenical Ethics' for Reconciliation?" in *Yves Congar, Theologian of the Church,* ed. by Gabriel Flynn (Leuven: Peeters, 2005), 205-26; Paul D. Murray, "Expanding Catholicity through Ecumenicity in the Work of Yves Congar: Ressourcement, Receptive Ecumenism and Catholic Reform," *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 13, no. 3 (2011), 272-301; Joseph A. Komonchak, "Vatican II as ecumenical council: Yves Congar's Vision Realized," *Commonweal* 129 (22 November 2002), 12-14.

[25] Congar, *Mon journal du concile*, vol. 2, 511.

[26] Ibid.

[27] See the commentary on Congar's role in the genesis of *Ad Gentes* in O'Collins, "*Ressourcement* and Vatican II," 388-90.

God" (AG§9).[28] This more inclusive vision of salvation was a significant innovation of the Second Vatican Council and testifies to Congar's "ubiquitously influential" role there.[29] In fact, the Dominican played a role in drafting no less than eight of the council's sixteen documents, including three of its four central Constitutions.[30]

Henri de Lubac's influence upon the documents, with a few notable exceptions, was less direct than Congar's. This may have had something to do with the suspicions that various factions at the council continued to harbor against him, in no small part because of his very public defense of Teilhard de Chardin.[31] Nevertheless, many have argued that de Lubac's ecclesiology did have a significant, if indirect, influence on documents such as *Lumen Gentium* and *Dei Verbum*, because of the pervasive impact his works had on many of the *periti* and bishops who drew up these documents.[32] Some have pointed out that the first chapter of *Lumen Gentium,* "The Mystery of the Church," bears the same title as the first chapter of de Lubac's *Méditation sur l'Église*, which was so highly regarded by the newly-elected Pope Paul VI.[33] John O'Malley interprets the title as the "first indication of the rehabilitation of 'la nouvelle théologie'" and the central role it would play at the council, as well as specific proof that both "the form and substance" of *Lumen Gentium* are indebted to de Lubac.[34] Indeed, the sacramental, mystical, and eschatological terms the document employs to describe the Church bear a profound affinity with de Lubac's ecclesiology and show just how far the final document diverged from the hierarchical and juridical formulations of the initial draft, *De Ecclesia*. The very first section of *Lumen Gentium* opens with a vision of the Church as "a sacrament or as a sign and instrument both of a very closely knit union with God and of the unity of the whole human race" (LG§1). Implicit in this statement is an appreciation for the social dimension of salvation, which was of course one of the centerpieces of de Lubac's ecclesiology, and the document therefore insists that God "does not make men holy and save them merely as individuals, without bond or link between them" (LG§9). There is also a strong eschatological thrust to this vision of the Church, to which *Lumen Gentium* repeatedly returns, presenting the Church as "the kingdom of Christ now present in mystery" (LG§3). All of these elements were of course central to de Lubac's ecclesiology, even if he did not play a direct role in drafting the Constitution on the Church.

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[28] *Ad Gentes* (Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church), 7 December, 1965: http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_ council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651207_ad-gentes_en.html.

[29] O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II*, 120.

[30] In addition to the contributions mentioned above, Congar also played a role in the drafting of *Dei Verbum* (§21 and parts of chapter 2), *Gaudium et Spes* (§4), *Dignitatis Humanae* (esp preface, but collaborated on the whole document), *Presbyterorum Ordinis* (preface, §2-9, §12-14, conclusion). On Congar's role at the council, see also Étienne Fouilloux, "Comment devient-on expert à Vatican II? Le cas du Père Yves Congar," *Le deuxième concile du Vatican (1959-1965): actes du colloque organisé par l'Ecole française de Rome en collaboration avec l'Université de Lille III, l'Istituto per le scienze religiose de Bologne et le Dipartimento di studi storici del Medioevo e dell'età contemporanea de l'Università di Roma-La Sapienza (Rome 28-30 mai 1986)* (Rome, École française de Rome, 1989), 307-331; Jared Wicks, "Yves Congar's Doctrinal Service of the People of God," *Gregorianum* 84 (2003), 499-550.

[31] See Congar, *Mon journal du concile,* vol. 2, 419; Karl Heinz Neufeld, "In the Service of the Council: Bishops and Theologians at the Second Vatican Council (For Cardinal Henri de Lubac on his Ninetieth Birthday)," in *Vatican II: Assessment and Perspectives Twenty-Five Years After (1962-1987)*, vol. 1, ed. by René Latourelle (New York: Paulist Press, 1988), 89-90; 91-2; 97-8.

[32] Neufeld, "In the Service of the Council," 88-105. Neufeld notes, for instance, that de Lubac was cited in a number of the discussion materials during the formulation of the conciliar documents. See also Voderholzer, *Meet Henri de Lubac*, 85-7.

[33] Paul McPartlan, "*Ressourcement*, Vatican II, and Eucharistic Ecclesiology," 392n4; O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican* II, 163.

Nowhere is his influence more evident, however, than in *Lumen Gentium*'s treatment of Eucharistic ecclesiology. This model was virtually synonymous with de Lubac's *Corpus Mysticum* at the time, and it found expression in *Lumen Gentium* alongside the image of the Church as the "people of God." Section 3, for instance, echoes de Lubac's famous claim that the Eucharist makes the Church. It affirms that, "in the sacrament of the eucharistic bread, the unity of all believers who form one body in Christ is both expressed and *brought about*" (LG§3, emphasis added; reaffirmed in §11). The debt to de Lubac was even more explicit in the second draft of the document, which proclaimed in a footnote that, "if the Church alone makes the Eucharist, it is also true that the Eucharist makes the Church." This is virtually a direct quotation from de Lubac's *Méditation sur*

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[34] O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II*, 163; 119.

l'Église.[35] His imprint is also evident in the lengthy tribute to the Pauline vision of the Church as the body of Christ in section 7. It foregrounds the social dimension of the Eucharistic celebration, by which "all of us are made members of His Body" and, in the process, "'severally members one of another'" (LG§7).

This Eucharistic ecclesiology finds its highest expression in section 26 of the Constitution on the Church. Based largely on Patristic sources, this passage places the celebration of the Eucharist squarely "under the sacred ministry of the bishop," even if he does not always administer it directly, and argues that the "Church of Christ is truly present in all legitimate local congregations of the faithful" formed through this sacrament (LG§26). The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*) likewise identifies the celebration of the Eucharist under the authority of the bishop as "the pre-eminent manifestation of the Church" (SC§41). Passages such as these are significant because, by grounding the Church within the "community of the altar" formed around the local bishop, they offer a remarkably decentralized vision of the structure of the Church (LG§26). In fact, *Lumen Gentium* looks to the Eucharist as the key to harmonizing the local dimension of the Church with its unity and universality. The document therefore affirms that each time Mass is celebrated "in these communities, though frequently small and poor, or living in the Diaspora, Christ is present, and in virtue of His presence there is brought together one, holy, catholic and apostolic church" (LG§26). This teaching had significant ecumenical implications for the Church's relationship to the Orthodox churches, with which it shares the sacrament of the Eucharist. The council's Decree on Ecumenism made this explicit, acknowledging that, "through the celebration of the Holy Eucharist in each of these churches, the Church of God is built up" (UR§15).[36]

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[35] The line in *Méditation sur l'Église* is "the Church makes the Eucharist, but the Eucharist also makes the Church" (113). The relationship between the two texts is pointed out by Paul McPartlan in "*Ressourcement*, Vatican II, and Eucharistic Ecclesiology," 392-3 and the original text of the draft appears in *Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani II,* vol. 2, part 1 (Vatican City: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1971), 251n57.

But this Eucharistic ecclesiology also served to underwrite what was by far the most controversial teaching of the council: episcopal collegiality. By grounding ecclesiastical authority in the college of bishops, this teaching was meant to correct, or at least to complement, the First Vatican Council's emphasis on the sovereign authority of the Pope. Outlined just before the section on Eucharistic ecclesiology, it identified the order of bishops as "the subject of supreme and full power over the universal Church, provided we understand this body together with its head the Roman Pontiff" (LG§22). The discussion of the Eucharist both before and after this section seems to support this teaching by establishing the Eucharistic celebration performed under the ministry of the local bishop as the foundation of the ecclesial community.[37] Joseph Ratzinger certainly saw a connection between the council's teaching on collegiality and the Eucharistic ecclesiology he attributed to Henri de Lubac. "From the starting-point of eucharistic ecclesiology," he argued, "there follows that ecclesiology of the local Church which is characteristic of Vatican II and which provides the inward sacramental foundation for the doctrine of collegiality."[38] O'Malley likewise points out that this doctrine was largely justified through an appeal to the logic of *ressourcement*.[39] It was of course broadly in keeping with the more horizontal and decentralized vision of the Church that stood at the heart of the "nouvelle théologie" and runs like a red thread throughout this dissertation.

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[36] *Unitatis Redintegratio* (Decree on Ecumenism), 21 November, 1964: http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19641121_unitatis-redintegratio_en.html. On the ecumenical implications of Eucharistic ecclesiology, see esp. McPartlan, "*Ressourcement,* Vatican II, and Eucharistic ecclesiology," passim; Paul McPartlan, *The Eucharist Makes the Church: Henri de Lubac and John Zizioulas in Dialogue* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993); Hervé Legrand, "L'écclésiologie eucharistique dans le dialogue actuel entre l'Église catholique et l'Église orthodoxe," *Istina* 51 (2006), 354-74.

[37] Paul McPartlan establishes this connection in "*Ressourcement,* Vatican II, and Eucharistic ecclesiology," 401-2. He also notes that certain passages from de Lubac's *Méditation sur l'Église* seem to make this connection as well and anticipate the council's teaching, such as the following: "Each bishop constitutes the unity of his flock, 'the people adhering to its priest, cohering with the heavenly sacraments'. But each bishop is himself 'in peace and in communion' with all his brother bishops who offer the same and unique sacrifice in other places...He and they together form one episcopate only, and are all alike 'at peace and in communion' with the Bishop of Rome, who is Peter's successor and the visible bond of unity; and through them all the faithful are united" (quoted in McPartlan, 401).

[38] Joseph Ratzinger, *Church, Ecumenism and Politics: New Essays in Ecclesiology* (New York: Crossroad, 1988), 9. He identifies de Lubac as the primary architect of this ecclesiology, "which became the real core of Vatican II's teaching on the Church" (7).

De Lubac's role at the council was not confined to these indirect channels. He also played a more direct role in drafting a portion of *Gaudium et Spes*, the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World. Because of his work on Proudhon and *The Drama of Atheist Humanism,* de Lubac was given a seat, along with Daniélou, on the sub-commission charged with drawing up the sections of the document dealing with atheism.[40] This committee drew up sections 19-22 of the final document, and de Lubac's fingerprints are all over them. They begin by rooting human dignity in "man's call to communion with God," that "intimate and vital link" which was the subject of *Surnaturel* (GS§19).[41] Certain passages even seem to echo the book's critique of the distinction between the natural and supernatural ends of the human person, maintaining that "the ultimate vocation of man is in fact one, and divine" and that faith must "penetrat[e] the believer's entire life, including its worldly dimensions" (GS§21-2).

The discussion of atheism likewise follows a line of reasoning similar to the one deployed in *The Drama of Atheist Humanism.* Like de Lubac, *Gaudium et Spes* defines modern atheism first and foremost as an attempt to liberate man from dependence on God, and goes on to show how such a project only serves to "dethrone man from his native excellence" (GS§21). In a passage that condenses key aspects of the counter-political vision articulated by both de Lubac and Daniélou in their postwar work, the document goes on to affirm:

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[39] O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II,* 43; 180-5; 208-9; 302-5.

[40] See the account in Congar, *Mon journal du concile,* 419; 421; 429-30; Voderholzer, *Meet Henri de Lubac,* 85.

[41] *Gaudium et Spes* (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World), 7 December, 1965: http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_cons_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html.

> The Church holds that the recognition of God is in no way hostile to man's dignity, since this dignity is rooted and perfected in God... She further teaches that a hope related to the end of time does not diminish the importance of intervening duties but rather undergirds the acquittal of them with fresh incentives. By contrast, when a divine instruction and the hope of life eternal are wanting, man's dignity is most grievously lacerated, as current events often attest (GS§21).

But *Gaudium et Spes* also recognizes that Catholics bear some responsibility for the progress of atheism and secularization—something that was a constant theme in de Lubac's work and particularly central to his critique of Neo-Scholasticism. "To the extent that they neglect their own training in the faith, or teach erroneous doctrine, or are deficient in their religious, moral or social life," the document admits that Catholics "frequently bear some responsibility for this situation" (GS§19). The best response to atheism, then, is to bear a more faithful witness to the "integral life of the Church and her members" (GS§21). And yet, there are other portions of *Gaudium et Spes* that articulate a very different approach to secular culture and politics—one that owed more to the vision of Chenu and Schillebeeckx, among others. As we shall see, these ambiguities within the text would set the terms for the divisions of the post-conciliar period. They explain why de Lubac, despite his own role in the drafting of the Pastoral Constitution, had major reservations about the text.

The most significant impact of the "nouvelle théologie" on the Second Vatican Council lies not in the particular doctrinal positions it adopted, however, but in the broader spirit and tone of the council. As John O'Malley has shown, the very style and language adopted by the council was in fact one of its most transformative features. The conciliar texts thus departed dramatically from the Scholastic language that had dominated previous councils, encyclicals, and of course the early schemata prepared for Vatican II. Eschewing the juridical language of canon law and the deductive, highly-abstract argumentation of Scholastic disputations, O'Malley argues that the council turned instead to the more "pastoral" style of the Church Fathers. This "epideictic" language was more literary than metaphysical, more spiritual and mystical than rational, and more inclusive than analytic. It was evident in the language of experience and interiority, of humility and horizontality, which pervades so many of the conciliar texts and distinguishes them from the usual style of magisterial pronouncements. These stylistic choices, O'Malley insists, were by no means ancillary to the substantive changes wrought by the council, for they were a constitutive feature of precisely what made Vatican II new or different. It was at this level of style, then, that the council owed perhaps its greatest debt to the "nouvelle théologie" and to the Patristic renewal it had inaugurated in the 1940s.[42]

This debt was likewise evident in the explicit appeals to *ressourcement* which pervaded so many of the conciliar documents and reinforced this shift away from the Neo-Scholastic or "manualist" approach that had so dominated Church teaching up to this point. The documents of the council thus constantly call upon Catholics at all levels of the Church to steep themselves in the biblical sources of the faith. The Decree on Priestly Training (*Optatam Totius*) enjoined priests to study the Scriptures in their original languages and to read and reflect upon them daily, calling these sources "the soul of all theology" (OT§13; §16).[43] *Dei Verbum* likewise endorsed the need for a historical approach to biblical exegesis (DV§12) and devoted a full chapter to the central role of the Scriptures as the "pure and everlasting source of spiritual life" for both the clergy and the laity (DV§21). In addition to returning to the biblical sources of the faith, the council also endorsed the work of Patristic *ressourcement* that was so central to the "nouvelle théologie." This is evident not only in the many references to Patristic sources which pepper the council documents, but also in explicit calls for priests to anchor themselves in the study of the Greek and Latin Fathers of the Church (PO§19; OT§16; DV§23). In the case of the Greek Fathers, this call for *ressourcement* was part and parcel of the council's ecumenical opening to the Orthodox Churches. The Decree on Ecumenism therefore called upon Catholics "to avail themselves of the spiritual riches of the Eastern Fathers which lift up the whole man to the contemplation of the divine" (UR§15). Along with biblical and Patristic *ressourcement*, the council likewise validated the liturgical movement that had been gathering steam since the early twentieth century, by calling for a return to the liturgical sources of the Tradition. This was a key feature of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*) in particular.

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[42] The above argument is laid out in O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II,* 43-52; 76.

[43] *Optatam Totius* (Decree on Priestly Training), 28 October, 1965: http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651028_optatam-totius_en.html. This principle is also reaffirmed in *Presbyterorum Ordinis* (Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests), §19.

And yet, these pervasive calls for a return to the sources of the Catholic faith would appear to be at odds with the primary mission of the council to bring the Church "up to date" with modern life—what became known as the principle of *aggiornamento*. In fact, as this dissertation has sought to demonstrate, these apparently contradictory principles were bound together in the work of the "nouvelle théologie," and the same was true of the Second Vatican Council. The Decree on Religious Life (*Perfectae Caritatis*), for instance, explained that "the adaptation and renewal of the religious life includes both the constant return to the sources of all Christian life...and their adaptation to the changed conditions of our time" (PC§2).[44] *Aggiornamento* and *ressourcement* are here invoked as mutually reinforcing, just as Daniélou had argued in his 1946 "manifesto" that returning to the Patristic sources would bring Catholic thought into line with the themes of modern intellectual life.

In fact, as John O'Malley has shown, the logic of *ressourcement* was invoked to underwrite some of the most important innovations wrought by the council, from the teaching on religious liberty in *Dignitatis Humanae* to the principle of collegiality.[45] This, he argues, made *ressourcement* "the most traditional yet potentially the most radical" of the various approaches to change invoked at the council.[46] Those who envisioned the role of the council in terms of *aggiornamento* or "development," he points out, conceived it as part of an ongoing and incremental process of change that would require only a continuation in the same direction—a further step along the same path. But the call to return to the sources arguably implied a more radical form of change.[47] After all, it was precisely this logic which the Protestant reformers invoked to support one of the greatest revolutions in the history of Christianity. The "new theologians" and the council fathers of course had no such ambitions. Instead, they tended to combine elements of what O'Malley treats as conflicting approaches to the problem of change, weaving together the logic of *ressourcement* and of *aggiornamento*. And this is precisely what accounts for the inadequacy of approaches which frame the council as a conflict between "progressives" and "conservatives."

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[44] *Perfectae Caritatis* (Decree on the Adaptation and Renewal of Religious Life), 28 October 1965: http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651028_perfectae-caritatis_en.html.

[45] See O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II*, 301-3.

[46] Ibid., 301.

The World the Council Made

The limitations of this progressive/conservative framework become clear when one considers the divisions of the post-conciliar Church, which were already beginning to manifest themselves in the final sessions of the council. By June 1964, de Lubac had grown so concerned about what he witnessed within the committee charged with drafting "Schema 13" (what became *Gaudium et Spes*), that he communicated his fears to several of the council fathers. The purpose of *Gaudium et Spes* was to outline the Church's relationship to the modern world, and de Lubac feared that a minority of those involved in drafting the document had dangerously misconstrued the meaning of *aggiornamento*. In a letter to several bishops on the committee, de Lubac complained that some interpreted the need to open up to the modern world in such a way as to allow the Church "to be invaded by it."[48] He feared that the text, in its current form, seemed to lend itself to such a misappropriation. In its excessive concern to demonstrate the Church's willingness to engage with secular modernity, the document tended to neglect or gloss over the truths of the Christian faith, without which all human life is meaningless. The danger, de Lubac felt, was that non-believers would interpret this as "a concession rooted in weakness, the expression of an inferiority complex with respect to the 'world'...the Catholic Church beginning to doubt her mission of eternity."[49] The problem, then, was not that the text was too bold or went too far, but that it did not go far enough. It lacked the "apostolic audacity" and "boldness that alone has a chance of reaching people of our age."[50] De Lubac reiterated these concerns in an October letter to Cardinal Léger of Montreal, who promised to bring them up during the upcoming general debate on Schema 13.[51] Once again, de Lubac complained that current iterations of the schema "lack spiritual density" and that "one does not feel the great breath of Christian hope in them." Such "silence or timidity in the schema about the eternal vocation of man," he feared, would only encourage people to turn away from the faith rather than invigorate it.[52]

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[47] See ibid., 36-43. O'Malley develops this question of competing approaches to the problem of change and history in John O'Malley, "Reform, Historical Consciousness, and Vatican II's Aggiornamento," *Theological Studies* 32 (1971), 573-601.

[48] An excerpt of this letter from 5 June, 1964 is preserved in appendix 7:1 in de Lubac *At the Service of the Church*, 342.

De Lubac blamed this situation on the activities of a small but vocal "paraconciliar" faction that he felt was in danger of "wrecking the Council."[53] Although he did not name names, it is clear from his notes and subsequent writings that de Lubac had in mind those theologians conventionally labeled "progressives," such as Chenu, Schillebeeckx, and Hans Küng. Schillebeeckx had given a lecture in September 1964, much-debated at the council, in which he suggested that the world outside the Church was already implicitly Christian, for God's grace was at work within it in a hidden way.[54] Chenu's theology of incarnation, with its emphasis on the autonomous value of human history and society, seemed to move in a similar direction.[55] De Lubac was concerned that this tendency to inflate the spiritual significance of the profane world, even in its most secular, modern manifestation, would lead to the "atrophy of the supernatural" and devalue the Church's evangelical mission.[56] Above all, what alarmed him and others, such as Joseph Ratzinger and Karol Wojtyła (the future John Paul II), was that this overly optimistic approach to secular modernity seemed to have made its way into portions of Schema 13. Together, these theologians worked to offset such tendencies by inserting language that affirmed Christ's role as "the key, the focal point and the goal of man, as well as of all human history" (GS§10). What was emerging in the debate over *Gaudium et Spes*, then, was a growing split within the "majority" that had successfully sidelined the anti-reformist "minority" led by Ottaviani in 1962. This split would become even more pronounced in the post-conciliar period as the rival factions competed to lay claim to the legacy and meaning of the council.

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[49] Ibid.

[50] This line comes from the concerns de Lubac communicated to the chair of the French working-group for Schema XIII in September 1964. It is quoted in Jared Wicks, "Further Light on Vatican Council II," *The Catholic Historical Review* 95, 3 (2009), 558. For the text of the letter, see Henri de Lubac, *Carnets du concile,* vol. 2 (Paris: Cerf, 2007), 138-42.

[51] See de Lubac, *Carnets du concile,* vol. 2, 221-2; Wicks, "Further Light on Vatican Council II," 559.

[52] This letter, dated 18 October 1964, is reprinted in appendix 7:1 to de Lubac, *At the Service of the Church,* 341.

[53] De Lubac, *At the Splendour of the Church,* 118; 340. The latter passage comes from de Lubac's letter to Léger.

The conflict came to a head almost as soon as the council drew to a close in 1965. A year earlier, de Lubac had accepted a position on the editorial board of *Concilium*, a new international theological journal established to further the spirit of Vatican II. Here, he was joined by a number of the leading theologians at the council, including Congar, Chenu, Rahner, Schillebeeckx, Küng, and Johann Baptist Metz. After Schillebeeckx' lecture on the Church and the world in late 1964, de Lubac had already developed reservations about serving on the same journal as the Belgian theologian. The first few issues of the journal confirmed his fears, and in November 1965, de Lubac resigned from *Concilium*, on the grounds that "the orientation of the Review did not correspond to what its title had led me to expect."[57] He would encounter similar frustrations in his work on the Secretariat for Non-Believers, established by Paul VI in 1965, which he complained had been hijacked by a pro-Marxist contingent.[58] De Lubac grew increasingly alarmed by new theological approaches to history, politics, and secularization, such as Latin American liberation theology, that had emerged in the wake of the council and often clothed themselves in the authority of documents like *Gaudium et Spes*. Such approaches, he believed, rested upon a (often deliberate) misreading of the conciliar texts, which he sought to dispel in his own post-conciliar writings.[59] "The Yes said wholeheartedly to the Council," he insisted, "must...be coupled with a No that is just as resolute to a certain type of exploitation that is in fact a perversion of it."[60] He protested vigorously, in particular, against one-sided readings of the council documents, which silenced their ambiguities in order to coopt them in the service of a particular political or theological project.[61] And he also condemned the disproportionate focus both within and outside the Church on the pastoral and political implications of the council, which "ignores the existence of all the doctrinal, spiritual and apostolic aspects of the Council and that commits us to the ways of a miserable secularization."[62]

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[54] Edward Schillebeeckx, "Church and World," in *World and Church* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1971), 97-114. De Lubac published a strongly-worded critique of Schillebeeckx's position an appendix to his *A Brief Catechesis on Nature and Grace*, trans. by Richard Arnandez (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1984), Appendix II.

[55] Hans Boersma points out that despite Chenu's incarnationist theology and his critique of the separation between the natural and supernatural orders, his work sometimes appeared "to reintroduce a certain dualism through the back door," largely because of his classically Thomist commitment to the autonomy of the natural order. See Hans Boersma, *Nouvelle Théologie and Sacramental Ontology; A Return to Mystery* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 144-8. Joseph Komonchak has make similar observations, noting Chenu's frequent appeals to the principle of autonomy and showing how this approach was at odds with de Lubac's. See "Returning from Exile: Catholic Theology in the 1930s," in *The Twentieth Century: A Theological Overview*, ed. by Gregory Baum (New York: Orbis, 1991), 35-48. Chenu's work had a significant impact on the council, where he served as advisor to Bishop Rolland of Antsirabé, Madagascar. *Gaudium et Spes,* in particular, bears the imprint of his historical anthropology and adopts his appeal to the "signs of the times." See Christophe Potworoski, *Contemplation and Incarnation: The Theology of Marie-Dominique Chenu* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), 156-95.

[56] De Lubac, *Carnets du concile,* vol. 2, 453.

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[57] De Lubac, *At the Service of the Church,* 345; see also de Lubac, *Carnets du concile,* vol. 2, 395-6.

[58] Ibid., 119-20.

[59] See esp. *L'Église dans la crise actuelle* (Paris: Cerf, 1969); *Brief Catechesis on Nature and Grace*; *Entretien autour de Vatican II* (Paris: Cerf, 2007); *Athéisme et sens de l'homme: une double requête de Vatican II* (Paris: Cerf, 1968). See the discussion of de Lubac's post-conciliar work in Christopher J. Walsh, "De Lubac's Critique of the Postconciliar Church," *Communio* 19 (Fall 1992), 404-32.

[60] De Lubac, *At the Service of the Church*, 118.

[61] See esp. de Lubac, "The Council and the Para-Council," in *Brief Catechesis on Nature and Grace,* 235-60.

De Lubac was not alone in opposing these currents in post-conciliar theology. His concerns were shared by Joseph Ratzinger and Hans Urs von Balthasar, with whom de Lubac served on the International Theological Commission (an advisory body attached to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith) from 1969 to 1974. It was during this period that the two theologians approached de Lubac about launching a new international theological journal that would serve as a counterpoint to *Concilium* and advance an alternative account of the legacy of Vatican II. Known as *Communio*, it was established in 1972 and de Lubac spearheaded the creation of its French-language edition with Louis Bouyer in 1975. His concerns over the direction of post-conciliar theology also drew de Lubac into a close friendship with Karol Wojtyła after the council.[63] Following his election to the papacy, Wojtyła would elevate de Lubac to the rank of Cardinal in 1983—an honor bestowed upon Daniélou fourteen years earlier. The rehabilitation of the so-called "Fourvière School" was now complete.

Because of his post-conciliar trajectory and because his most visible contemporary disciples include figures like Ratzinger, Avery Dulles, and John Milbank, de Lubac has developed a reputation as a conservative theologian. And yet, there are important reasons to be wary of this characterization. In the first place, it often presumes a rupture between de Lubac's pre- and post-conciliar thought that overlooks significant continuities between the two. When de Lubac opposed those who argued during and after the council for the need to "adapt" the Church to the modern world, he was extending a line of critique that he had first articulated against Catholic supporters of Vichy during the war. As this dissertation has shown, it was then that de Lubac's circle had first turned away from the logic of incarnation and adaptation, precisely because of the way it was being deployed to underwrite the Church's cooperation with Pétain's National Revolution. In the postwar period, de Lubac and Daniélou had redeployed this same line of critique against the Catholic Left and proponents of a progressive theology of history. In fact, what de Lubac wrote against Schillebeeckx in the 1960s could easily have come from his or Daniélou's critique of Montuclard in the 1940s. In this sense, de Lubac's later work was less the product of a conservative post-conciliar "turn" than of a much earlier turn from incarnation to eschatology, which emerged from the crucible of his wartime resistance activities. Nor did the split between the Dominicans Congar and Chenu and Jesuits like de Lubac and Daniélou emerge during the council, as is often assumed. Instead, as we have seen, these divisions date back to the politico-theological disputes of the immediate postwar period.

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[62] De Lubac, *At the Service of the Church*, 345.

[63] See the account of their relationship in de Lubac, *At the Service of the Church,* 171-2.

Having said this, it is nevertheless clear that de Lubac's work did evolve in the wake of the council. His attitude to the authority of the Magisterium shifted noticeable, for instance, as he went from being an "outsider" suspected of heterodoxy to an "insider" who advised Popes. But it should also be pointed out that de Lubac was still being denounced on the council floor for his "suspect" theological positions well into the final sessions of the council, long after he had begun to articulate his own concerns about the dangers of an uncritical embrace of modernity.[64] These two things, he believed, were not unrelated. It was precisely because Ottaviani and the Roman theologians had taken such an extreme position in the years prior to the council that the backlash against them had produced an equally extreme alternative. Both positions, de Lubac believed, were unwitting allies of secularization and both were equally "modern;" the "new 'modernity'" embraced by theologians like

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[64] On these attacks, see Neufeld, "At the Service of the Council," 91-2; 97-8.

Schillebeeckx had simply replaced the "petrified modernity" of Neo-Scholasticism.[65] Absent from both was a sense of the indissoluble bond between tradition and renewal; the need for a "true *aggiornamento*" rooted in the fertile soil of *ressourcement*.[66] De Lubac never ceased to reaffirm this principle, which he felt was the true legacy of the council:

> *...there is no aggiornamento without a traditional spirit, and there is no traditional spirit without aggiornamento...* Only in a more complete faithfulness to the tradition can one obtain the renewal that is always necessary. And in this renewal, and only in it, is found complete faithfulness to the tradition... The tradition itself is life, and life is not maintained or passed on except by a continual renewal and aggiornamento.[67]

For de Lubac, then, the commitment to "update" the Church and fidelity to tradition were mutually reinforcing.

This is what makes it so difficult to label him a "conservative" or a "progressive" and points to the limits of these categories more broadly in making sense of theology. De Lubac himself always refused the choice between these alternatives, on the grounds that the Catholic tradition could not be identified "'either with a conservative spirit or a revolutionary one.'"[68] This perhaps explains why he has been a favorite, not only of "conservative" Popes like John Paul II and Benedict XVI, but also of Pope Francis. The new pope has repeatedly invoked de Lubac's *Méditation sur l'Église* to signal the dangers of "spiritual worldliness":

> There are those that seek to compromise their faith for political alliances or for a worldly spirituality. One Catholic theologian, Henri de Lubac, says that the worst that can happen to those that are anointed and called to service is that they live with the criteria of the world

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[65] De Lubac, *At the Service of the Church,* 145. On the parallels between these to extremes, see also de Lubac, *Carnets du concile,* vol. 2, 398. See also the excellent discussion of the parallels between de Lubac's critique of Neo-Scholasticism and of post-conciliar theologies in Walsh, "De Lubac's Critique of the Postconciliar Church," 407-8; 424.

[66] De Lubac frequently appeals to the principle of a "true" aggiornamento in opposition to what he perceived to be misunderstandings of this principle. See esp. his letter to Léger in *At the Service of the Church,* 341; his 1966 letter to *La Croix* in ibid., 345; and his *Carnets du concile,* vol. 2, 327, in which he comments on a speech at the council by Schillebeeckx: "nothing in his speech to recall the basic conditions of all truly Catholic and evangelical *aggiornamento*."

[67] Henri de Lubac, "Esigenze attuali della nostra fede," quoted in Walsh, "De Lubac's critique of the Postconciliar Church," 422-3. Emphasis in original.

[68] Ibid.

> instead of the criteria that the Lord commands from the tablets of the law and the Gospel... The worst that can happen in the priestly life is to be worldly, to be a "light" bishop or a "light" priest.[69]

Francis aptly captures what was perhaps the driving concern of de Lubac's career: to imagine a way for the Church to be *in* the world but not *of* it, so that it could engage with the drama of modern life without adapting itself to the logic of secular modernity. In many ways, these were competing concerns, and this is no doubt what accounts for the Jesuit's lifelong enthusiasm for paradox—his sense that Christian life is defined precisely by the necessary tension between incarnation and transcendence, tradition and renewal, symbol and reality, divine omnipotence and human freedom, engagement and detachment, history and eschatology.

This is precisely why it is so difficult to make sense of both his political and theological commitments according to a secular political framework organized around the opposition between "right" and "left" or "progressive" and "conservative." Such categories cannot explain what inspired de Lubac and his friends to throw themselves into the "spiritual resistance" to fascism and the Cold War critique of Communism, even as they eschewed the principles of liberal democracy. As this dissertation has shown, it is only by attending to the tensions as much as the continuities between theology and politics that one can begin to understand both this particular group of priests and the many other religious actors whose engagement with politics escapes the categories that scholars have traditionally used to make sense of it. What the story of de Lubac and the "nouvelle théologie" reveals, then, is the need to for a more expansive definition of the political—one less bound to the conventional sites of political action and better able, therefore, to account for the political power of religious ideas and practices. My hope is that this dissertation provides a suggestive image, if not an exhaustive definition, of what such a vision of the political would entail.

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[69] Jorge Mario Bergoglio and Abraham Skorka, *On Heaven and Earth* (New York: Random House, 2013), 45. Francis likewise invokes de Lubac in *Evangelii Gaudium,* 24 November 2013: http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html#_ftnref71, §93. On Francis' debt to de Lubac, see also Carl E. Olson, "Pope Francis and Henri de Lubac, SJ," *Catholic World Report* (28 March 2013): http://www.catholicworldreport.com/Blog/ 2136/pope_francis_and_henri_de_lubac_sj.aspx.

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