1. The Theological Commission

Yet another SCUF Draft

We demonstrated in the preceding chapter that it was impossible for the SCUF and its schema *De Verbo Dei* to exercise influence on the schema *De fontibus* for chronological reasons. We also spoke of overlapping competencies, bearing in mind that both preparatory organs were engaged in the redaction of texts on the same issues. The said overlapping continues at this juncture with the establishment of a new subcommission within the SCUF occasioned by the work of the TC and with the question of Scripture and Tradition as its focus. The subcommission’s *modus operandi* is similar to that outlined in the preceding chapter, and on this occasion also they set about the preparation of their own schema.

Subcommission XIII was established during the general assembly of the SCUF in Bühl in August 1961.¹ Three of the five members—Bévenot, Stakemeier, Boyer, Feiner and Tavard—of this *Subcommis-sio de Traditione et Sacra Scriptura* had in fact already served on the subcommission *De Verbo Dei*. By November, 1961, subcommission XIII had put together a twenty-three page, four part report. The first part contains a *status quaestionis* on the topic at that time, and demonstrates a clear awareness that the main potential obstacle would be within the context of dialogue between Protestantism and the Roman Catholic Church. Theologians are encouraged to be careful in this regard, and the text reminds the reader that consensus has not been reached among theologians in the debate on the material insufficiency of the Scriptures.² Part two of the text explores this latter point in

¹ Feiner, ‘La contribution du Secrétariat,’ p. 120.
² CSVII Archive De Smedt 334, De Traditio ne et Scriptura, p. 2: Conantur theologi catholici evitare defectus et exaggerationes, quae in historia theologiae observari possunt. Difficultas praesertim consistit in accuratius determinanda habitudine
more detail and offers a historical overview of the issues, focusing particular attention on the Reformation and the Tridentine definition of the relationship between Scripture and Tradition. It is interesting to note that the text’s authors pointed out that theology during the Counter Reformation read Trent from the *partim...partim* perspective, although this had never been officially promulgated. Based on recent theological developments, however, the SCUF wanted to abandon this doctrinal unilateralism. The subcommission’s report thus opts unashamedly to underline the inseparability of Scripture and Tradition, considering both as channels of transmission for revelation itself. In so doing, it recognised the familiar distinction between the *event* of revelation and the manner with which it was passed on. As a matter of fact, the text ultimately follows Congar’s reading of Trent. The third part sets forth a number of principles for a Catholic ecumenism and suggests, more importantly, that this still pending question should be left open:

---


5 Compare Joseph A. Komonchak, ‘The Council of Trent at the Second Vatican Council,’ in From Trent to Vatican II: Historical and Theological Investigations, ed. Raymond Bulman and Frederick J. Parrella (New York NY, 2006), pp. 61–101, there 71: Monsignor Pietro Parente, assessor at the Holy Office, criticized Joseph Geisellmann by name for having ‘tortured’ the text of Trent. Without naming him, he also criticizes Yves Congar for having admitted that while the Fathers of Trent were themselves in favor of the two-source theory, this was not the mind of the Holy Spirit, so that the omission of the ‘partly-partly’ formula and its replacement by a simple ‘and’ left the door open for future ecumenists to favor the protestant formula. ‘Ludus igitur Spiritus Sancti’, Parente mocked.