

Anhang 1b: Abstract English

The right understanding of the Holy Scripture is a key question of Christian Theology. The interpretation of the Scripture in the Church was questioned by the Reformation's insistence on the principle of *sola scriptura* and by new philosophical theories of the Enlightenment period through its denial of any possibility of God's revelation. In the 20th century, Catholic exegetes started a lot of historical studies in the Bible and criticized the exegetical method of the Church fathers as pre-critical. Their exegesis emphasized more the *spiritual sense* of the Holy Scripture, which goes beyond the *literal sense*.

This thesis deals with the relation between the *literal* and the *spiritual sense* of the Bible according to the writings of the French theologian Henri de Lubac SJ (1896-1991), one of the influential minds of the reforms of Second Vatican Council. De Lubac's important theological sources are Origen (c. 185-254) and Maurice Blondel (1861-1949).

Henri de Lubac made an extensive investigation of the historical development of theology in the patristics. Focusing on Origen, he discovered that the unity of the Old and the New Testament lies in the *spiritual sense* of the Scripture. This sense is primarily based on the personalistic and historical understanding of the Christian revelation. The Christ event is the center of any Christian interpretation of the Holy Scripture. The historicity of revelation therefore demands a scientific research with the best available tools. The allegorical interpretation, which was practiced by Paul and Origen, and understood by de Lubac as *spiritual sense*, remains in every sense indispensable. This interpretation takes place within the living context of the ecclesial community of the faithful, its primary receptor. It is therefore not a mere subjective or random interpretation. Christians, who read the bible, become not just passive spectators, but active participants, to whose innermost concerns the Word of God is addressed.

In this thesis, de Lubac's understanding of the *spiritual sense* of the Scripture is described through a synthesis of ideas out of his writings related to biblical hermeneutics, particularly his evaluation on historical-critical method with its strength and limits. Many insights of Henri de Lubac influenced part of the constitution *Dei Verbum* of Second Vatican Council and of later documents of the Magisterium. After a critical evaluation of de Lubac's arguments, the thesis deals with contemporary questions in biblical hermeneutics, for instance, the canonicity of the Old Testament and the importance of the recovery of the *living sense* of the Scripture undermined by historical-critical method.