

De fontibus revelationis

The debate about a constitutive tradition during the Second Vatican
Council

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Abstract

This investigation deals with the debate surrounding the controversial question of whether there exists a constitutive tradition at the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). The investigation can broadly be divided into three sections. The first section provides both an analysis of the terminology relevant for understanding and a theological background. The background leads up the Council of Trent (1545-1563) that plays a significant role in the question of the “sources” of revelation. The second section analyses the conciliar drafts leading up to *Dei Verbum* regarding the question of a constitutive tradition. Each Latin draft is first placed within its historical context in order to highlight the events of the council that played a significant role in the question at hand. Thereafter, the relevant passages are analysed both in terms of language and theological content. As the conciliar drafts develop, this study focuses on the contrasting elements concerning the choice of words in addition to the omissions and reformulations of the documents that become evident as each draft can be seen in light of the previous. The first draft, *De fontibus revelationis*, contains the scholastic view of the two-source theory, claiming that certain revealed truths are only to be found in Tradition. The subsequent four versions, with varying terminology, strive to maintain neutral towards the question of a constitutive tradition, resulting in a broad formulation that leaves the disputed question open to interpretation. The final section includes a discussion of the results leading up to the conclusion of this study, which shows that a decision was avoided regarding whether Tradition ‘adds’ anything to Scripture. The Latin drafts focus instead on the mutual dependence that exists between Scripture and Tradition that resulted in a deeper study into the nature of revelation.

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1. Introduction

The majority of catholic theologians during and after the Council of Trent understood Scripture and Tradition as two distinct and independent sources of revelation. At that time, questions started to arise how Tradition contains the truth of the Gospel. Were some truths of faith found in Tradition alone? The reasons for those questions are important to understand. The theologians of the time concerned themselves greatly with proving the dogmas and doctrines of faith. They followed the method of the medieval school and found their proofs in the *auctoritates*, which is from Scripture, from the Fathers, Councils, Canon Law and commentaries on Scripture. As will be developed in this study, the two-source theory arose, stating that revelation is found partly in Scripture and partly in Tradition. The origin of this theory is not directly worked out as part of a theology of revelation but instead as a scientific methodology. The theologians following the Council of Trent wanted to determine the places (*loci*) from which the theological proofs could be drawn. Scripture and Tradition were regarded as the most authoritative *loci theologici* since they contained divine revelation.¹ This view was principally dominant up until the Second Vatican Council. In 1962, at the beginning of the Council, with the presentation of the conciliar schema *De fontibus revelationis*², this question that had been under dispute for centuries was aimed to be resolved once and for all. During the 19th and 20th century voices outside of the mainstream scholastic school had started to question the validity of viewing Scripture and Tradition as two independent sources. The debate leading up to *Dei Verbum* was largely a clash of two different theological mentalities.

¹ Harrington, Wilfred and Walsh, Liam, *Vatican II on Revelation*, Scepter Publisher, 1967 p. 15-16

² Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani II, *Schema Constitutionis Dogmaticae de Fontibus Revelationis* (Form C). Vol. I Pars III. Vatican City: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1971, p. 14-26

1.2 Aim of study

By analysing the Latin conciliar drafts leading up to *Dei Verbum*, the aim of this study is to explain the shift in theological position that occurred during the Second Vatican Council regarding the question of a constitutive tradition. The final text agreed upon was to a certain extent a compromise text where opposing positions had been in confrontation since the beginning of the council. A sentence that testifies to the compromise nature of *Dei Verbum* is found in §9: “*Quo fit ut Ecclesia certitudinem suam de omnibus revelatis non per solam Scripturam hauriat.*” (Consequently it is not from Scripture alone that the Church draws her certainty regarding all that have been revealed). Through studying the Latin texts that eventually resulted in the final version, a greater understanding of the disputed question and its complexity will be achieved.

1.3 Research Question

In order to fulfil the presented aims, this investigation will answer the following questions:

- 1) How did the debate concerning a constitutive tradition develop during the Second Vatican council (1962-1965)?
- 2) What decisions were taken regarding this question and for what reasons?
- 3) How is this development traceable in the Latin conciliar drafts?

1.4 Method

In order to interpret the conciliar drafts, an important part of the method is to see how the relationship between Scripture and Tradition has been described prior to the council. Therefore, a historical context is an essential part for understanding the specific themes discussed during the Second Vatican Council. Following a hermeneutical method, this study investigates the development and redaction of texts. Grasping the significance of a text is often dependent of our knowledge of previous texts; in this case the main focus is on conciliar drafts. By comparing different drafts with each other one can identify not only differences and similarities but also even omissions play an important aspect.³ The real meaning of a phrase or

³ Vikström, Björn, *Den skapande läsaren – hermeneutik och tolkningskompetens*, Studentlitteratur, Lund, 2005, p. 66-67

sentence only becomes clear if it is seen in light of the contemporary debate and the discussions leading up to sentences being included or even excluded.⁴

An essential part of my method has been in the handling of the Latin texts. In order to single out the relevant passages from the documents, each had to be read, understood and subsequently further analysed concerning both translation and content. The only text that has an official translation is *Dei Verbum*. Text C (*De fontibus revelationis*), has an available translation online by the church historian Joseph A. Komonchak, which has been consulted when necessary to my own translation. Texts D, E, F have not been translated to this author's knowledge. Therefore all translations from the conciliar documents are my own. Official translations are only used where available such as the Tridentine decree.

1.5 Material

The material used in this study is taken from the series *Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani II*, (Vatican City Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1970-1999), consisting of in total 32 Latin volumes where all the records from the Second Vatican Council are to be found. In the undertaking of this investigation the following documents have been used:

- *Schema constitutionis dogmaticae de fontibus revelationis* (form C)
- *Schema constitutionis de divina revelatione* (form D, E, F)
- *Dei Verbum* (form G)

The material analysed is four drafts and the final version. Throughout the study the various drafts will follow the taxonomy already created by Alois Grillmeier⁵ where the texts are arranged in terms of their relationship to *Dei Verbum*.

⁴ Baum, Gregory, "Vatican II's constitution on revelation: history and interpretation" in *Theological Studies* 28, 1967, p. 51

⁵ Kruggel, James C, *Scripture, Tradition and the Magisterium in the teaching of Vatican II*, The Catholic University of America, Washington DC, 2013, p. 151

1.6 Limitations

The initial limitation to be mentioned is the choice to begin the investigation with the first text discussed at the official start of the Second Vatican Council, namely *De fontibus revelationis*, form C. Forms A and B are pre-conciliar and it would exhaust the length of the investigation to include additional texts.⁶ A further limitation that should be noted is that this account will not discuss the role of Scripture and Tradition in relation to the Magisterium⁷, which is the teaching authority of the Church. Neither will there be any extensive discussion of the idea of doctrinal development. All of these questions are very relevant in a wider perspective, but they exceed the limits of this investigation. The conciliar texts contain numerous topics such as biblical inspiration and inerrancy, the relationship between the Old and New Testament, doctrinal development, and the role of the Magisterium. However, the emphasis of this study has been put on the close reading and analysis of the Latin conciliar texts relating to the single question of a constitutive tradition. Therefore a thorough presentation of the background, premises and controversy of the issue will be required before reaching the main body. This investigation aims to be more thematically oriented than historical. Only the most relevant historical aspects are included as to provide an adequate context for understanding the problem at hand. Including an extensive amount of historical detail would further exhaust the limits of this study and shift focus from the aim set out which is a textual study of a specific theological problem.

1.7 Previous research

Two main works have been useful in conducting this study. The first work is the invaluable series: History of Vatican II, vol. I-V⁸. Each volume contains an immense amount of information covering all topics of the council. The second work is a dissertation entitled *Scripture, Tradition and the Magisterium* by James C. Kruggel (2013)⁹. Kruggel is writing from a contemporary perspective seeking the relationship between Scripture, Tradition and the Magisterium. This dissertation was inspirational both in acquiring literature for further reading and references.

⁶ For the history of Forms A and B see: Schelkens, Karim, Catholic Theology of Revelation on the Eve of Vatican II – a redaction history of the schema De fontibus revelationis (1960-1962), Brill's series in Church History, Boston, Leiden, 2010

⁷ For further reading: Latourelle, Rene, *Dictionary of Fundamental Theology*, 1995, p. 614-620,

⁸ *History of Vatican II*, English version edited by Joseph A. Komonchak, Orbis Maryknoll, Peeters Leuven

⁹ Kruggel, James C, *Scripture, Tradition and the Magisterium in the teaching of Vatican II*, The Catholic University of America, Washington DC, 2013

2 The *Quaestio Disputata* and Preliminary Definitions

In this section the nature of the problem at hand will be formulated and an outline given of the various interpretations possible. Afterwards some preliminary definitions are in order before continuing the investigation.

2.1 Approaching the *Quaestio Disputata*

An intense debate was triggered among theologians as a result of the definition of the dogma of the Assumption of Mary by Pope Pius XII in 1950. The question had risen again concerning the relationship between Scripture and Tradition. Theologians were asking what the scriptural basis was for this definition or if indeed it was exclusively based on Tradition. A common and widely spread definition of Tradition from the scholastic handbooks by Gerardus Van Noort (1861-1946) is the following:

Tradition is a source of revelation distinct from Scripture and goes beyond the data of Scripture. This is a *dogma of faith* from the Council of Trent...The first part of the proposition states the existence of tradition in general and consequently includes inherent tradition; the second part refers specifically to constitutive tradition.¹⁰

Here it is clearly stated that a constitutive tradition is a dogma of faith proclaimed by the council of Trent. The text from the Tridentine decree that the above quote refers to states the following:

"The sacred and holy ecumenical and general Synod of Trent, lawfully assembled in the Holy Spirit, with the same three Legates of the Apostolic See presiding over it, keeping this constantly in view, that with the abolishing of errors, the purity itself of the Gospel is preserved in the Church, which promised before through the Prophets in the Holy Scriptures our Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God first promulgated with His own mouth, and then commanded "to be preached" by His apostles "to every creature" as the source of every saving truth and of

¹⁰ Moran, Gabriel, *Scripture and Tradition – a survey of the controversy*, Herder and Herder, New York, 1963, p.18

instruction in morals, and [the Synod] clearly perceiving that **this truth and instruction are contained in the written books and in the unwritten traditions**, which have been received by the apostles from the mouth of Christ Himself, or from the apostles themselves, at the dictation of the Holy Spirit, have come down even to us, transmitted as it were from hand to hand, [the Synod] following the examples of the orthodox Fathers, receives and holds in veneration with **an equal affection of piety and reverence** all the books both of the Old and of the New Testament, since one God is the author of both, and also the traditions themselves, those that appertain both to faith and to morals, as having been dictated either by Christ's own word of mouth, or by the Holy Spirit, and preserved in the Catholic Church by a continuous succession.”¹¹

“Contained in the written books and in the unwritten traditions” – this sentence has been debated since the Council of Trent up until the time of the Second Vatican Council. The dominant perspective since Trent has been the view as exemplified by van Noort. Those theologians in particular during the 20th century who denied the existence of a constitutive tradition never had the intention of denying a dogma of faith. What was being denied was that it ever had been proclaimed at the council of Trent. But before engaging in the texts from the Second Vatican Council, we need to have mapped out the different theological positions, which were to clash during the council. The justification for providing an historical overview first is that the conciliar texts all need to be understood within a context. The conciliar texts provide close lines of argumentation where words have both been added and omitted in the schemas leading up to *Dei Verbum*. If one simply were to compare the different texts, the uniqueness would be lost without a historical perspective. Without the background, or knowledge of how the topic has been treated, the significance both of what is written, and what is not included, would gravely limit the scope of understanding. As Gregory Baum (1923-) points out, usually an argument from silence is not worth much, however if it becomes known that the silence on a significant topic came about through deleting a passage, then the silence indeed speaks a clear message.¹²

¹¹ Denzinger, Henricus. *Enchiridion symbolorum definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum*, § 783; available online both in latin and in English. This translation is from <http://patristica.net/denzinger/>

¹² Baum 1967, p. 51

2.2 Preliminary definition of Tradition

The etymological meaning of the word tradition (from the Latin verb *tradere*) is a handing over. The general meaning within catholic theology refers to the transmission of beliefs and practices in the Church through the course of the centuries. Yet this broad and slightly vague definition can be further divided and explained.¹³ The way of defining tradition, which will be presented below, has a scholastic character and differs from how tradition is eventually to be explained in *Dei Verbum*. However, for the purpose of having a basis for understanding the problem to be discussed the terminology serves a pedagogical function.

Within Christian theology a distinction is often made between passive (objective) tradition and active (subjective) tradition.

- A) Passive tradition refers to the transmission of a body of material. The body of material – the content of tradition – is referred to as passive tradition.
- B) Active (subjective) tradition is the term used to refer to the act of handing over or to the organ of transmission.¹⁴

Within the category of passive tradition further distinctions can be made which help to illustrate the controversy at hand. Tradition can be described as the following:

- A) Divine-apostolic which refers to truths which were revealed by God to the apostles through Christ or by the direct working of the Holy Spirit. The origin of this tradition is the apostles, the transmitters of the revealed word.
- B) Human-apostolic which originated with the apostles but is not part of revelation.
- C) Ecclesiastical, which refers to tradition from post-apostolic times. Revelation is described as closed with the apostolic age¹⁵ and therefore this does not constitute revealed truth.¹⁶

Another way to distinguish the content matter of tradition is to designate tradition as either ‘dogmatic’ or ‘disciplinary’.¹⁷ When the term ‘dogmatic’ tradition is used, it refers to revealed doctrine consisting of revealed truths within the apostolic age. In contrast, ‘disciplinary’ tradition refers to any practise that has existed in the Church. In addition to these distinctions it

¹³ Moran 1963, p. 19. See also Pottmeyer, Hermann J, "Tradition" in Dictionary of Fundamental Theology, Ed. Latourelle, René and Fisichella, Rino, The Crossroad Publishing Company, New York, 1995, p. 1119

¹⁴ Moran 1963, p. 19

¹⁵ Denzinger § 2021

¹⁶ Moran 1963, p. 19-20

¹⁷ Moran 1963, p. 20

is also necessary to explain the different ways in which dogmatic tradition is contained in revelation. This is the part that concerns the heated debate during the Second Vatican Council, namely when one asks where and how a dogmatic tradition is found and its relation to Scripture. There are three possible ways in which a truth of tradition can be related to Scripture¹⁸:

- A) Inherent tradition – traditions that are explicit in Scripture.
- B) Declarative tradition – when a tradition is implicitly contained in Scripture.
- C) Constitutive tradition – a tradition that exists separate from Scripture.

After reviewing the above mentioned distinctions and definitions it is important to single out what is in dispute, namely: the existence of constitutive tradition, which is objective, divine-apostolic, dogmatic, extra-scriptural revealed truth.¹⁹

It is within this context that theology is able to distinguish between the formal and material sufficiency of Scripture. When discussing the material sufficiency of Scripture it refers to the doctrine that all sacred books in Scripture contain all the truths necessary for salvation. In addition, this doctrine maintains at the same time the formal insufficiency of Scripture, meaning that Scripture requires the correct interpretation (through the Church).²⁰ Once again, when arguing for the material sufficiency of Scripture, one is denying a constitutive tradition but not Tradition itself. In essence, the material sufficiency is asserting the identity between Scripture and Tradition.²¹

¹⁸ Moran 1963, p. 21

¹⁹ Moran 1963, p. 25

²⁰ Fischer, Mark F, *Catholic Hermeneutics: The theology of Tradition and the philosophy of Gadamer*, Berkeley, California, 1983, p. 338

²¹ Moran 1963, p. 25

2.2.1 Definition – source

The ambiguous word ‘source’ needs explanation to its meaning and significance. By looking at the words used and their meaning it will hopefully highlight where both areas of similarity and conflict exist. The idea, which argues for a constitutive tradition, is often called the two-source theory. Those opposing this view believe in one unified source of revelation. However, as the Roman Catholic professor Gabriel Moran (1935-) writes, the word source can be used in two distinct manners. The first way is to speak of source in the sense that the Gospel, which was delivered to the apostles, is referred to as the source, the *fons* of all revelation. The second way is by referring to the places where one finds revelation as sources, which would be Scripture and Tradition. This second way places the emphasis on our knowledge of where revelation is to be found.²² Therefore it clarifies matters if one were to speak of one source (the apostolic tradition) and two manifestations (written books and unwritten traditions). This distinction ought to be acceptable regardless of one’s view on constitutive tradition. To deepen the understanding of the controversy, it is important to also see how much mutual ground can be found. Gabriel Moran has singled out six statements, as common denominators, which those who maintain the material sufficiency of Scripture and those who support a constitutive tradition both could agree on:

- a) The whole of revelation is contained in the apostolic tradition
- b) Scripture is the written form of apostolic tradition
- c) Revelation overflows the text of the Bible
- d) Tradition exists and “completes” Scripture
- e) This Tradition is truly apostolic
- f) Tradition is closely identified with the life of the Church.²³

This illustrates that the key issue of controversy as it appeared during the Second Vatican Council concerns the way the Church establishes her dogma. Those who maintain that a constitutive tradition exists hold that some truths of revelation can be found apart from Scripture.

²² Moran 1963, p. 78-79

²³ Moran 1963, p. 78-81

3. Theological Background

This section aims to highlight a few theological positions that have been taken during history. Initially it should be said that there is an anachronistic problem with applying questions that arose after the Council of Trent to a period much earlier in history. However, it is still possible to ask and see what the relationship has been between Scripture and Tradition prior to Trent. Therefore a few positions will be mentioned below in order to put the nature of the controversy in a historical perspective.

3.1. The coincidence view²⁴

The earliest record of the relationship between Scripture and Tradition is found in Irenaeus (130-202) and Tertullian (160-220). They maintain that the teaching of the Church, Scripture²⁵ and Tradition coincide. Apostolic tradition was clearly viewed as authoritative at the same time as their content was seen as identical to that of Scripture. Both Irenaeus and Tertullian reject any teaching that goes beyond the testimony of Scripture since this was seen as a gnostic element.²⁶ The main concern for these two theologians was not the relationship between Scripture and Tradition but that Church teaching was in identity with the apostolic teaching. In Irenaeus work *Adversus Haereses* he writes how the gnostic teaching – since it did not align itself with the apostolic teaching of the Church - is contrary to both Scripture and Tradition. Any tradition that sought to have supplementary knowledge in addition to what was given in Scripture was seen as a gnostic. Irenaeus writes:

But when we refer them to this tradition again, which is from the apostles, preserved in the Church through the succession of the presbyters, they oppose these traditions, saying that they are wiser than not only the presbyters but even the apostles, since they found the pure truth. For they say that the apostles mixed up that which pertains to the law with the words of the Saviour...but that they themselves without doubt and without fault have pure knowledge of the hidden mystery, this is a rude blaspheme of

²⁴ The terminology "coincidence view" and on the next pages "supplementary view" is a reference from an article by Lane, A.N.S. "Scripture, Tradition and Church: An Historical Survey" in *Vox Evangelica* 9, 1975

²⁵ Another anachronistic problem arises when referring to Scripture at a time previous to the fixation of the Church canon. Lane 1975 p.8. writes: "It suffices to note that by the time of Irenaeus the New Testament was seen as a more or less well-defined corpus of Scripture alongside the Old Testament so that Scripture and tradition could be seen as twin touchstones of truth". For further reading of the theological aspects to the development of the canon see Wicks, Jared, "Canon of Scripture", in *Dictionary of Fundamental Theology* 1995, pp. 94-101

²⁶ Lane 1975, p. 39

their Creator. It follows that they agree neither with the Scriptures nor tradition.²⁷

The conclusion that Irenaeus draws is that since the gnostics claim to have a deeper knowledge than that which resides in the Church, they cannot be said to be in agreement with the unity that is Scripture and Tradition. Tertullian who argues that since the apostles lived with Christ all the time it naturally follows that all was entrusted to them. In his work *De praescriptione haereticorum* he expounds this line of thought:

They usually say that the apostles did not know everything; through the same demented state they again change opinion, saying that the apostles knew everything, but did not hand on everything to everybody. In both alternatives they are putting blame on Christ for either sending out poorly instructed apostles or apostles of lesser comprehension.²⁸

Similar to Irenaeus, Tertullian argues for the close identity and unity of Scripture with that of the apostolic teaching. According to Tertullian, it is not a plausible argument to say that the apostles lacked any specific knowledge or deeper understanding. On the contrary, the New Testament bears witness to that the apostles were given closer insight than any others. Therefore any additional teaching cannot be said to correspond to apostolic tradition or Scripture.

An example from John Chrysostom (349-407) who writes that everything in Scripture is clear and straightforward and that everything necessary is clear and open.²⁹ Athanasius of Alexandria (296-373) writes that the Scriptures are enough (*per se satis sunt*) for the exposition

²⁷ *Adversus Haereses* 3.2.2: Cum autem ad eam iterum traditionem, quae est ab Apostolis, quae per successiones Presbyterorum in Ecclesiis custoditur, provocamus eos, adversantur traditioni, dicentes se non solum Presbyteris, sed etiam Apostolis existentes sapientiores, sinceram invenisse veritatem. Apostolos enim admiscuisse ea quae sunt legalia Salvatoris verbis:... se vero indubitate, et intaminate, et sincere absconditum scire mysterium; quod quidem impudentissime est blasphemare suum factorem. Evenit itaque, neque Scripturis iam, neque traditioni consentire eos.

http://www.earlychurchtexts.com/main/irenaeus/01_tradition_01.shtml

²⁸ http://www.tertullian.org/latin/de_praescriptione_haereticorum.htm XXII Latin text: Solent dicere non omnia apostolos scisse, eadem agitati dementia qua susum rursus conuertunt, omnia quidem apostolos scisse sed non omnia omnibus tradidisse, in utroque Christum reprehensioni iniciantes qui aut minus instructos aut parum simplices apostolos miserit.

²⁹ "Omnia sunt dilucida et recta quae sunt in divinis scripturis; manifesta sunt quaecumque sunt necessaria." *Patrologia Graeca* vol.62 col. 485 from Chrysostomos *In Epistolam secundam ad Thessalonicenses*.

of truth.³⁰ From these examples we see that within the patristic era there was a close unity between Scripture and apostolic teaching. In matters of conflict Scripture was the highest norm. Another author who also expresses himself in terms of sufficiency is Vincent of Lerins (d.445) when he writes that the Canon of the Scriptures is itself complete and more than sufficient.³¹ Scripture is here seen as materially sufficient but formally insufficient since it needs the correct interpretation and this is where Tradition plays its role.³² Moving on to the scholastic era one finds examples from both Anselm (1033-1109) and Aquinas (1225-1274) that agree with this position. Anselm writes that:

There is nothing that we usefully preach for salvation that sacred scripture, made fruitful by the Holy Spirit, has not expressed or does not contain within itself.³³

A similar expression is met in Aquinas:

Sacred scripture was divinely appointed to manifest for us the truth necessary for salvation.³⁴

The conclusion that can be drawn from these citations is that a broad consensus can be found for a view that presents Scripture as complete and containing all things necessary for salvation. During the patristic period emphasis is put on a denial of any teaching that contradicts either the Scriptures or apostolic teaching.

3.2. The supplementary view

The supplementary view gradually emerged from the coincidence view. From this perspective, Tradition is not just another way of saying the same thing as Scripture, but is also a supplement to it. The supplementary view gained influence during the Middle Ages since it became evident that not everything that the church taught could be found in Scripture, which required Tradition

³⁰ "Et vero sanctae ac divinae Scripturae ipsae per se satis sunt ad veritatem indicandam". *Oratio contra gentes* in *Patrologia Graeca* vol.25 col.4.

³¹ "Cum sit perfectus scripturarum canon sibi que ad omnia satis superque sufficiat, quid opus est ut ei ecclesiasticae intelligentiae iungatur auctoritas?". *Patrologia Latina* vol.50 col. 640 *Commonitorium*

³² Fischer 1983, p. 337 On the same page Vincent of Lerins adds to his reasoning explaining the need for interpretation: Atque idcirco multum necesse est, propter tantos tam varii erroris anfractus, ut propheticae et apostolicae interpretationis linea secundum Ecclesiastici et catholici sensus normam dirigatur."

³³ "Nihil utiliter ad salutem praedicamus, quod sacra scriptura, Spiritus Sancti miraculo fecundata, non protulerit aut intra se contineat." *Patrologia Latina* vol.158 col. 528b. *De Concordia Praescientiae Dei cum Libero Arbitrio*.

³⁴ "sacra scriptura ad hoc divinitus est ordinata ut per eam nobis veritas manifestetur necessaria ad salutem". *Quaestiones duodecim quodlibetales, Quodlibetum VII* q.vi, a 14.

to supplement it. The problem was not that the church teaching had slightly expanded, but that the church clearly professed teachings not related to Scripture. In most cases it was liturgical traditions that were said to be of apostolic origin that was appealed to as a supplementary source. The basis for the supplementary view was the principle that the *lex orandi* was also the *lex credendi*, in other words that the liturgical customs were appealed to as support in dogmatic questions.³⁵ The difficulty that arises from this is appealing to liturgical practises to justify a theological position that is in question, since all liturgical practises cannot be said to be part of Revelation. The problem that developed was that the church eventually itself became a source of revelation - since the church dictated what was of apostolic origin and what was not. As was done in the previous section, a few examples will be given. Of early origin is the example from Basil of Caesarea (330-379) who writes that:

Of the beliefs and practises in the church, some we have derived from written teaching, others we have received delivered to us in mystery from the tradition of the apostles of which both are to be regarded with equal piety.³⁶

Lane writes that this passage of Basil was later to be used in the Decree of Gratian. Basil refers to two distinct "sources" through the usage of the words *alia* (some) - *alia* (others). However as Lane points out these traditions that Basil referred to were mainly ceremonial.³⁷ The passage found in Gratian says:

We accept some of the ecclesiastical institutions from the Scriptures, others indeed, from apostolic tradition that has been confirmed by the successors of ministry.³⁸

Since the traditions referred to by Basil are ceremonial, this passage cannot be used as support for any two-source theory.³⁹

³⁵ Lane 1975, p. 48

³⁶ Ex asservatis in Ecclesia dogmatibus et praedicationibus alia quidem habemus e doctrina scripto prodita; alia vero nobis in mysterio tradida recepimus ex traditione apostolorum; quorum utraque vim eandem habent ad pietatem. *Basil Liber De spiritu sancto. Patrologia Graeca vol. 4. Col. 186*

³⁷ Lane 1975, p. 42

³⁸ Ecclesiasticarum institutionum quasdam scripturis, quasdam uero apostolica traditione per successores in ministerio confirmatas accipimus. *Decree of Gratian:*

http://geschichte.digital-sammlungen.de/decretum-gratiani/kapitel/dc_chapter_0_91

³⁹ Lane 1975, p. 41

3.3. The Reformation

The catholic theology of Scripture and Tradition that would emerge during the 1500s was directly influenced by the challenges brought forth by the reformation. To a large extent, the views that would shape catholic theology were formulated clearly in opposition to the views of the reformers. Influencing the question at hand was the protestant principle of *sola scriptura*. It should be noted that the original charge from the reformation was not specifically targeted at the catholic theology of tradition, but at the abuses of the church. Nevertheless, the challenge arose for catholic theology to explain how practises of the church and of its doctrine – not explicitly found in the Bible – still constitute dogmatic revelation.

The principle of *sola scriptura* means that Scripture should be the highest rule of faith. Luther (1483-1546) writes that all human words must follow from Gods word and be able to be traced back to it and proved by it.⁴⁰ Scripture is the supreme judge and rule of faith in making theological conclusions according to Luther. Theologians such as Johannes Eck (1486-1543) would counter argue and write that all heresies stem from a misinterpretation of Scripture and that it is only to be interpreted within the church. To this Luther argued that Scripture is its own interpreter (*sui ipsius interpres*).⁴¹ The challenge of the reformers can be summarized as a denial of the complementarity between Scripture and Tradition. The reformers argued that Scripture contains all truth and revelation and is in no need of supplementing from Tradition. This critique posed an immense threat to the contemporary Catholic Church since, according to the reformers, Scripture clearly excluded some of the practises of the church. As a basis for this line of argumentation Luther relied on the church Fathers, in particular Irenaeus and Tertullian where Scripture was seen as highest norm in doctrinal disputes.⁴² The catholic dilemma was to be able to maintain the primacy of Scripture and at the same time accept the validity of doctrines where there was little foundation from Scripture. As the reformation continued, the doctrinal response from the Catholic Church would be seen at the council of Trent.

⁴⁰ "Sint ergo Christianorum prima principia non nisi verba divina, omnium autem hominum verba conclusiones hinc eductae et rursus illuc reducendae et probandae", Luther, Martin *Assertio omnium articolorum M Lutheri per Bullam Leonis X novissimam damnatorum*, 1519
<https://download.digitale-sammlungen.de/pdf/1459170005bsb10204076.pdf>

⁴¹ Luther, *Assertio omnium articolorum*, 1519

⁴² Fischer 1983, p.337

4. The Tridentine Decree and its interpretation

On the 13th December 1545 Pope Paul III opened the Council of Trent. The intention of the council was set from the beginning: to dismiss heresies and make amendments where necessary. In essence, the council proceeded in a polemical manner against the reformers. At the beginning of this study, a longer quote was cited where the council managed to reconcile seemingly contrasting views by a decree that said that revelation is contained both in Scripture and Tradition. However, the council did not leave any specific clues as to how this formulation was to be interpreted or any explanation of in what way Scripture and Tradition are to be related. The theological problem becomes difficult when considering the wording used. In the first draft it says that revelation is contained partly (*partim*) in Scripture and partly (*partim*) in Tradition. In the final draft the *partim-partim* was changed to *et-et*, translating that revelation is contained both in Scripture and Tradition. The first draft is said to give support to the two-source theory where Scripture and Tradition are contained in two distinct and of each other independent sources, whereas the final version gives a more open interpretation.

4.1. The March 22nd draft

The decree of the fourth session of the council presented a draft version on the 22nd of March. It contained a few formulations that would continue to be debated up until the Second Vatican Council. The first sentence that would be of key issue is:

hanc veritatem partim contineri in libris scriptis, partim sine scripto traditionibus.⁴³

This truth is contained partly in written books, partly in unwritten traditions.

The first recorded usage of the *partim-partim* formula from the council was on February 12th (1546) when cardinal del Monte declared:

Omnis fides nostra de revelatione divina est et hanc nobis

⁴³ Selby, Mathew L. *The relationship between Scripture and Tradition according to the council of Trent*, Saint Paul Minnesota, 2013, p. 41

traditam ab ecclesia partim ex scripturis, quae sunt in veteri et novo testamento, partim etiam ex simplici traditione per manus.⁴⁴

All our faith is from divine revelation and has been handed down to us from the Church partly from the Scriptures, which are in the Old and New Testament, partly also from a simple handing down by hand.

The origin of the *partim-partim* formula is debated but the Tridentine fathers attributed it to a translation of Pseudo-Dionysius by Ambrose Traversari in 1431. This text was highly regarded by the Fathers and eventually became a part of the decree.⁴⁵

The second phrase of the draft to which attention is due is: *quibus par pietatis debetur* – “which ought to be regarded with equal reverence”. This sentence can be traced back to Basils *De Spiritu Sancto* where he explains that some beliefs of the Church have their origin in written form and others in unwritten form (as was quoted in section 2.2.).

In the next section we will look at the developments concluded in the final version.

4.2. The final decree of the fourth session

The definite decree was promulgated on 8th April 1546. Most of the sentences have the same structure and wording as the earlier draft yet with slight variation concerning Scripture and Tradition. The March 22 draft used the word *regulam* in one sentence which now had been replaced with *fontem*: “*fontem omnis et salutaris veritatis et morum disciplinae omni creaturae praedicari iussit* ” (and he commanded to be preached to all creatures as the source of every saving truth and of instruction in morals).⁴⁶ This is the only place in the decree where the word source appears. When considering the centuries of handbook theology that would follow and the debate around the time of the Second Vatican council, it is important to note that Trent did not address Scripture and Tradition as sources. A more accurate description would be “two ways of two forms by which the one source of the Gospel is communicated to us.”⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Selby 2013, p. 34

⁴⁵ Selby 2013, p. 38

⁴⁶ Denzinger § 783

⁴⁷ Selby 2013, p. 17. Originally a quote from Yves Congars book *Tradition and Traditions*, p. 166

The point that would cause controversy from the final decree is the removal of the *partim-partim* formulation and replacing it with *et-et*. This leads to the decree now stating:

Hanc veritatem et disciplinam contineri in libris scriptis et sine scripto traditionibus.

This truth and instruction are contained both in the written books and in the unwritten traditions.⁴⁸

This passage became particularly difficult to interpret since the commentaries of the Council does not mention why this alteration was made. The interpretations and theories surrounding this are several, however this is beyond the scope of the investigation. Nevertheless, the important part to acknowledge is that the Council itself makes no explicit reference as to why the change was made.⁴⁹

Lastly, the council strengthened the formulation concerning Scripture and Tradition to: *pari pietatis affectu ac reverentia suscipit et veneratur* – with an equal affection of piety and reverence. Here it is significant to note that at the council it was discussed whether it should say *similis pietatis affectus* – with similar affection of piety. Instead it was decided to place Scripture and Tradition on equal terms.⁵⁰

4.3. The Interpretation of the decree

The prevailing view since the council of Trent up until the 19th century was the two-source theory. This was the view taught in seminars. Therefore, the publications of Joseph Rupert Geiselmann (1890-1970) would stir up controversy and create divisions among catholic theologians. Geiselmann was a German catholic theologian who published a paper in 1956 claiming that the past centuries of theology had misinterpreted the Tridentine decree concerning Scripture and Tradition, and was himself a proponent of the material sufficiency of Scripture. According to Geiselmann, the council of Trent never decided upon the matter. This conclusion he draws from the change of the *partim-partim* to *et-et*. Geiselmann did not interpret this just as a semantic alteration, but instead that the council decided to leave the question open with the more ambiguous wording with *et-et*. Hence, nothing was decided upon

⁴⁸ Denzinger § 1783

⁴⁹ Selby 2013, p. 48

⁵⁰ Selby 2013, p. 45

the question.⁵¹ Despite the fact that Geiselmann claimed that nothing was decided, he still had to account for how the majority of post-tridentine theology interpreted in the manner of *partim-partim*, as two independent sources of revelation. The next paragraph will therefore present a brief outline of it.

The first time the *partim-partim* formulation appeared in pre-Tridentine theology is in a work by the bishop of Rochester John Fisher (1469-1535) called *Assertionis lutheranae confutatio*. In this text, Fisher quotes Pseudo-Dionysius (5th-6th century AD) in his *De ecclesiastica hierarchia*:

De ducibus et praeceptoribus christianae fidei tradit quod hi multa partim scriptis, partim non scriptis institutionibus suis, iuxta quod sacras diffiniunt leges, nobis tradiderunt.⁵²

Concerning the teachers and instructors of the Christian faith, he teaches that they have handed on much to us partly in written form, partly in non-written form through their institutions, according to what the sacred laws define.

However, this quote does not say anything about the relationship between Scripture and Tradition. Theologians such as Johan Eck became inspired by such texts and used it to justify practises and doctrines of the church. Furthermore, the quote from Pseudo-Dionysius used by Fisher, can be traced to a translation by Ambrose Traversari during the 1400s. This text would have a significant influence on theological thought during the coming centuries. However, and this is the central part of Geiselmanns line of argumentation: the translation made by Traversari was incorrect on a fundamental point. The Greek original of Pseudo-Dionysius reads ταῖς ἐγγράφοις τε αὐτῶν καὶ ἀγράφοις μύησει. Traversari translated this into Latin as: *partim scriptis, partim non scriptis institutionibus suis*. The greek expression τε...καὶ which corresponds to the Latin *et...et* was given the incorrect translation of *partim-partim*. Instead of being translated both...and, it became partly-partly. Geiselmann's conclusion is that it is in this

⁵¹ Selby 2013, p. 7

⁵²https://books.google.se/books?id=I5c8AAAACAAJ&pg=PP5&lpg=PP5&dq=assertions+lutheranae+confutatio&source=bl&ots=N694tPUTQa&sig=yF7SLEoiWWkw-asW8ORf9xd8-YQ&hl=en&sa=X&redir_esc=y#v=thumbnail&q=partim%20partim&f=false

incorrect translation that we find the first traces of the separation between Scripture and Tradition.⁵³

4.3.1. A contrary Interpretation

Opposing Geiselmann's interpretation stands Heinrich Lennerz SJ (1880-1961) who supported the two-source theory of revelation. Lennerz argues:

The Councils teaching seems clear: not all the teaching of Christ is written, i.e. contained in Holy Scripture, but much is not written, and this is contained in the apostolic traditions. The deposit of faith, which Christ entrusted to His Church, includes Holy Scripture and the apostolic traditions. So the Council defined the true doctrine against the Innovators, who claimed: everything is in Holy Scripture – sola scriptura.⁵⁴

Following this line of reasoning, Lennerz accused Geiselmann of holding the protestant doctrine of sola scriptura. Trent clearly taught the insufficiency of Scripture and the need for tradition to complete it. Lennerz writes:

For the text of the decree perfectly explains the same doctrine that was found in the form of the decree initially proposed by the Fathers; and thus the decree itself when it was definitively approved, clearly showed that the Council altogether remained firm in its first opinion, that not all doctrine is contained in Sacred Scripture, and that which is not found there, is contained in unwritten traditions.⁵⁵

Lennerz argues that the removal of the *partim-partim* was but a small semantic change. It is unthinkable that such a drastic shift in theological position would occur by the alteration of a few words. Furthermore, as Lennerz proceeds, the council itself provides no indication as to

⁵³ Linderöth, Hjalmar, "Skrift och Tradition" in *Festskrift till Bo Gieritz*, Uppsala 1965 p. 65-67. It is noteworthy that the translation from *De Ecclesiastica hierarchia* given in *Patrologia Graeca vol. 3 col. 157 p. 376* reads: "qua scriptis qua non scriptis institutionibus...nobis tradiderunt", which corresponds to "et-et", see Norstedts Latinsk-Svenska Ordbok, p. 721

⁵⁴ Selby 2013, p. 19

⁵⁵ Selby 2013, p. 20

why the change was made. The conclusion that Lennerz reaches is that the council spoke of “unwritten traditions” excluding Scripture and in contradistinction to Scripture; therefore it is correct to hold that Trent decided for the existence of a constitutive tradition.⁵⁶

4.4. Outside mainstream scholasticism

The next section of this study will follow the development of the conciliar texts regarding the question of a constitutive tradition. As will be seen, two opposing theological mentalities will stand against each other. Whenever one is attempting to analyse the debates of the council, it is important to know that the theology which appeared “progressive” at the Second Vatican Council, has a long history during the 19th and 20th century.

The catholic Tübingen School was a meeting of Romanticism, Idealism and the catholic theology. Theologians such as Johann Sebastian von Drey (1777-1853), Johann Adam Möhler (1796-1838), and Johannes von Kuhn (1806-1887), have all greatly inspired the theologians of coming generations which saw their full development only one-hundred and fifty years later during the Second Vatican Council. The Tübingen School envisioned Tradition as a living truth, instead of the transmission of old ideas. As a result, Scripture and Tradition could not be seen as a distinct and independent source, but rather as two organically connected factors in the transmission of the Gospel.⁵⁷ Similar thoughts came from John Henry Newman (1801-1890), who was not looking for explicit proofs of doctrines, but instead focused on the historical continuity, which has always existed in the Church since the time of the apostles. Theologians such as Newman and those from the Tübingen School were rather tracing a process of transmission. Consequently, the historical awareness led theologians such as Newman to see the unity between Scripture and Tradition.

What we will see in the next section of this investigation is the clash of two theological mentalities. It should not be simplified as on the one side being a traditional and scholastic-minded party, and the others as progressives acting in the spirit of *aggiornamento*. It is two different methods of theology, both with extensive history, which as we shall see, have consequences for answering the question whether there exists a constitutive tradition.

⁵⁶ Moran 1963, p. 77-81

⁵⁷ Harrington & Walsh 1967, p. 17. For further reading see: Kaplan, Grant, *Answering the Enlightenment – The catholic recovery of historical revelation*, The Cross Road Publishing Company, New York, 2006; Dietrich, Donald J, and Himes, Michael J, *The Legacy of the Tübingen school – the relevance of nineteenth-century theology for the twenty-first century*, The Cross Road Publishing Company, New York, 1997.

5. The Question of a Constitutive Tradition: From *De Fontibus* to *Dei Verbum*

The aim of this study is to through a textual study of the conciliar drafts, follow the development in theological position concerning the relationship between Scripture and Tradition. As a starting point a sentence from *Dei Verbum* §9 is illustrative to the nature of the problem: *Quo fit ut Ecclesia certitudinem suam de omnibus revelatis non per solam Scripturam hauriat* (consequently it is not from Sacred Scripture alone that the Church draws her certainty about everything which has been revealed). This sentence played an important part as an addition in this debated question at the same time as it remains a sign of compromise in a controverted question. Yet looking at the first and last texts, they stand miles apart and speak two different theological languages. In *Dei Verbum* tradition is described as a living and dynamic mode that transmits the Gospel. During the conciliar debates, a division was created between two ways of speaking of revelation: 1) the propositional view which identified propositions found in Scripture and Tradition as revelation, and 2) the personalist view which describes revelation as essentially Gods self-manifestation where revelation reaches its climax in Christ. Scripture and Tradition are then seen as modes of transmission that bear witness to revelation.⁵⁸

When considering the propositional view, the question soon arises of the quantitative extension of both Scripture and Tradition, regarding whether Tradition contains doctrines that Scripture does not. The 1950s became an intense decade for this discussion originating with the declaration of the Assumption in 1950. It was asked where the scriptural evidence for this dogma was to be found. To understand the nature of this debate and to answer the research questions of this study, an analysis will now be made of the schemas leading up to *Dei verbum*, starting with *De Fontibus*, concerning the question of a constitutive tradition. For each text a historical context will first be provided, which will then be followed by a close reading of the Latin texts.

⁵⁸ Cf. Dulles, Avery, *Models of Revelation*, Maryknoll, New York, 2011, p. 41-52

5.1. Form C – context

A few months before the start of the Second Vatican Council, a few drafts were sent out to the council Fathers to be reviewed. In a letter from Cardinal Frings (1887-1978) (originally composed by Joseph Ratzinger (1927-) who served as his theological expert), a few remarks were made about *De fontibus revelationis* (form C). Ratzinger argues that a main fault of the text is that it attempts to settle still debated questions within theology, namely the material sufficiency of Scripture.⁵⁹ In an address to the German-speaking bishops on October 10th 1962 Ratzinger continues to elaborate on this conciliar text. Ratzinger notes that despite the fact that *De fontibus* cites Trent as support of a two-source theory, this was not the correct interpretation. According to Ratzinger, this draft contained a narrow view of revelation, and he writes: “Actually, Scripture and tradition are not the sources of revelation, but instead revelation, God’s speaking and his manifesting of himself, is the *unus fons*, from which then the two streams Scripture and tradition flow out.”⁶⁰ To illustrate his point, he makes the distinction between the order of reality and the order of knowing. In Ratzinger’s view:

- a) From the human perspective it is correct to say that for us, Scripture and Tradition are sources from which we know revelation. However,
- b) In the order of reality they are not in themselves sources since revelation is in itself the one source of Scripture and Tradition.⁶¹

This schema was discussed at the council in 1962 from November 14th to December 8th. A significant amount of time was spent on the topic of the sources of revelation.

Karl Rahner SJ (1904-1984) also outlined a few areas that were seen as problematic with this schema. Firstly, *De fontibus* tried to settle theological disputes where theologians were not in agreement. Secondly, it lacked pastoral orientation and was full of scholastic language. Finally, it was not written in an ecumenical spirit.⁶² The author of this draft was the pre-conciliar Theological Commission under the presidency of Cardinal Ottaviani (1890-1979). On November 20th the Council Fathers took the first vote. In order for the draft to be entirely rejected a two-thirds majority of negative votes were required. However, of the 2209 Fathers

⁵⁹ Wicks, Jared, “Six texts by Prof. Joseph Ratzinger as *peritus* before and during Vatican Council II”, in *Gregorianum* 89, 2, 2008, p. 267

⁶⁰ Wicks 2008, p. 270

⁶¹ Wicks 2008, p. 270

⁶² Ruggieri 1997, p. 237-238

voting, only 1368 wanted the schema rejected. To reach the necessary limit 1473 votes needed to be reached – which meant a shortage of approximately a hundred votes.⁶³ Despite the fact that one could see the clear will of the majority, according to the council statutes, the discussions were going to continue with this draft. The following day, on November 21st, an unexpected turn of events occurs, namely that Pope John XXIII intervened and had the text removed. It quickly became known as one of the most dramatic events of the council that caught the Fathers by surprise. The significance cannot be overestimated; as Schelkens writes:

It is generally considered to be a benchmark moment, a symbolic incident that signalled the separation of the Council from the influence of the curia – or at least from the clutches of the Holy Office.⁶⁴

5.1.1. Analysis of Form C

The title of this document is worthy of comment – *De fontibus revelationis*. The word sources (*fontibus*) is written in the plural. The mere title gives a preliminary idea of the nature of the document about the sources of revelation.

In § 3 we see an example of the separation between Scripture and Tradition:

Sic Episcopi, qui in Ecclesia locum Apostolorum per successionem obtinent, eorum doctrinam semper praedicatione tradiderunt et cum auctoritate interpretati sunt. Quidam ex Apostolis vel apostolicis viris revelationem, divino afflante Spiritu, litteris quoque mandaverunt; illis autem scriptis vivum Apostolorum praeconium nec abrogatum neque imminutum, sed potius roboratum, securius conservatum et authentice explanatum est.⁶⁵

In this way the bishops, who through succession, stand in the place of the apostles in the church, have always through

⁶³ Baum 1967, p. 52

⁶⁴ Schelkens, Karim, *Catholic Theology of Revelation on the Eve of Vatican II – a redaction history of the schema De fontibus revelationis (1960-1962)*, Brill's series in Church History, Boston, Leiden, 2010 p. 2

⁶⁵ *Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani II* (hereafter abbreviated AS). Vol. I Pars III. Vatican City: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1971, p. 15

preaching handed on their doctrine and authoritatively interpreted it. Some of the apostles or the apostolic men even put this into writing, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. But these writings were neither annulled or diminished by the living preaching of the apostles, but rather strengthened, more securely preserved and authoritatively explained.

Characteristically of a document with a propositional view of revelation, is that revelation is identified with doctrine. The text explains that revelation -as doctrine (*doctrinam*)- was also put into writing (*revelationem...litteris...mandaverunt*). In the following sentence the written revelation (Scripture) is contrasted with the living preaching of the Apostles (*vivum Apostolorum praeconium*). The last sentence gives Tradition a significant role in understanding revelation. It is strengthened, preserved and authoritatively explained, at the same time as it is not diminished or annulled by Scripture. A hint is given towards the idea that Scripture and Tradition exist independently.

§ 4 of *De fontibus*, is entitled *De duplici fonte revelationis*, contains two important sentences for this investigation. The first reads:

sancta mater Ecclesia semper credidit et credit integram revelationem, non in sola Scriptura, sed in Scriptura et Traditione, tanquam in duplici fonte contineri, alio tamen ac alio modo.⁶⁶

Holy mother Church has always believed and believes that the whole of revelation is not contained in Scripture alone but in Scripture and in Tradition as in a twofold source, although in different ways.

In the Latin text after the word *contineri*, a footnote is given with two references as support for the claim of the two-fold source:

- a) The first reference is from a decree from the First Vatican Council (1869-1870) quoted from Denzinger. In essence, this reference restates the decree of the council of Trent

⁶⁶ AS I-III, p. 15

that revelation is contained in written books and unwritten traditions. It shows that it was a spread notion that Trent had decided in favour of the two-source theory. It has been argued that some of the theologians who worked on this schema had Geiselmann's work particularly in mind and wanted it banned.

- b) The second reference is first a quote from 2 Thess. 2:15: "*Tenete traditiones, quas didicistis sive per sermonem sive per epistolam nostram.*" "Keep the traditions which you learned from us either by word of mouth or by my letter." Thereafter, Aquinas commentary on this passage is quoted: "*unde patet, quod multa in Ecclesia non scripta, sunt ab Apostolis docta et ideo servanda.*" "It is thus clear that many things in the Church, not written down, were taught by the Apostles and are therefore to be followed."

Arguments both from Scripture and Tradition are here presented as proof of a constitutive tradition that exists independently of Scripture. Concerning the interrelationship between Scripture and Tradition they are described as being contained in a twofold source but in different ways (*alio tamen ac alio modo*). Both Scripture and Tradition contain the knowledge of revelation in their own way, leading to the idea that Scripture is not enough (*non in sola Scriptura*).

The above-mentioned citation from § 4 is a clear formulation of the two-source theory. Since all of what the church believes is not found in Scripture, and revelation is described as a twofold source, it is stating that Tradition is an independent source in itself. This is the idea of a constitutive tradition and is clarified in the second sentence to emphasis it:

Quare quae divina Traditio ratione sui continent, non ex libris, sed ex vivo in Ecclesia praeconio, fidelium fide et Ecclesiae praxi hauriuntur.⁶⁷

Therefore, that which divine Tradition contains by itself is drawn not from books, but from the living preaching of the Church, from the faith of believers, and from the Church's practice.

In this quote the emphasis is put on Tradition in itself (*ratione sui*) that is here described as a

⁶⁷ AS I-III, p. 15-16

source independent of Scripture.

§ 5 entitled *De habitudine unius fontis ad alterum*, discusses the mutual relationship between Scripture and Tradition. Here it is relevant to cite a longer passage:

Licet enim Sacra Scriptura, cum sit inspirata, ad enuntiandas et illustrandas veritates fidei instrumentum praebeat divinum, eius nihilominus sensus nonnisi Traditione apostolica certe et plene intelligi vel etiam exponi potest; immo Traditio, eaque sola, via est qua quaedam veritates revelatae, eae imprimis quae ad inspirationem, canonicitatem et integritatem omnium et singulorum sacrorum librorum spectant, clarescunt et Ecclesiae innotescunt.⁶⁸

Although Sacred Scripture, since it is inspired, offers a divine instrument to express and illustrate the truths of faith, nevertheless, its meaning can be clearly and fully understood or even explained solely through apostolic tradition. Tradition, more correctly, and only Tradition, is the way in which some revealed truths are clarified and become known to the Church, especially those concerning inspiration, canonicity and the integrity of all sacred books.

In this passage Tradition is said to contain all things necessary to illustrate the truths of faith. Then it adds a sentence which previous cited passages has not yet written so clearly that Tradition – and only through Tradition - is indeed the way in which some truths are revealed (*immo Traditio, eaque sola, via est qua quaedam veritates revelatae*), which explicitly states a constitutive tradition.

In § 6 a further example is given in the same spirit as the above-mentioned reference:

Magisterii Ecclesiae ergo est...illustrare et enucleare quae in utroque fonte obscure vel implicate continentur.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ AS I-III, p. 16

⁶⁹ AS I-III, p. 16

It is the role of the Magisterium of the Church...to illustrate and to explain, that which is contained obscurely and implicitly in each source.

As in previous paragraphs, Tradition is singled out as a separate and independent source. This particular sentence speaks of that which is contained in each source (*in utroque fonte*). This sentence ends with a footnote, which in turn refers to a passage from the encyclical *Humani generis* by Pope Pius XII (1950) that reads:

Verum quoque est, theologis semper redeundum esse ad divinae revelationis fontes; eorum enim est indicare qua ratione ea quae a vivo Magisterio docentur, in Sacris Litteris et in divina "traditione", sive explicite, sive implicite inveniantur. Accedit quod uterque doctrinae divinitus revelatae fons tot tantoquesque continet thesauros veritatis, ut numquam reapse exhaustiatur.⁷⁰

It is also true that theologians must always have recourse to the sources of divine revelation; for it is their duty to indicate how what is taught by the living magisterium is found, either explicitly or implicitly, in Sacred Scripture and in divine "tradition." In addition, both sources of doctrine, divinely revealed, contain so many and such great treasures of truth that they are in fact never exhausted.⁷¹

Here it is not stated explicitly that some truths are only found in Tradition, yet a clear distinction is made between Scripture and Tradition as two independent sources. In § 7 another example is given of Scripture and Tradition as two independent sources:

Deus in Scripturis quoque sanctis Veteris ac Novi Testamenti, quae alterum ac praeclarum constituunt supernae revelationis fontem, verbum suum hominibus tradere et accuratius conservari voluit.⁷²

⁷⁰ Denzinger § 3886

⁷¹ Translation from Denzinger

⁷² AS I-III, p. 17

God also wished to hand his word over to men and for it to be more accurately preserved in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, which constitute the other splendid source of supernatural revelation.

This passage makes the same point but by speaking of that which is preserved in the other source (*alter fons*).

Similarly in § 18:

Sacrarum Scripturarum catholici interpretes sancte teneant quidquid certi hac de re in utroque revelationis fonte invenitur.⁷³

Catholic interpreters of the Holy Scriptures should religiously maintain whatever there is of certainty found about this matter in either source of revelation.

Once again the same point is made but by the expression of either source of revelation (*in utroque revelationis fonte*). The conclusion to be drawn from this text is that it is a clear proponent of tradition having a constitutive function providing revealed truths that are not to be found in Scripture.

Looking back at the text, the language of sources is highlighted by the usage of two closely related words: this is the subtle distinction between *uterque* and *ambo*. As noted in the dictionary *Ny latinsk grammatik*⁷⁴ the definition of *uterque* is ‘both – (each by its own)’ whereas *ambo* translates ‘both – (together)’. Therefore, depending on the choice of word, two important nuances can be made which the conciliar fathers likely were aware of.

In § 6 of *De fontibus* the first sentence reads:

Ut autem **ambo** fontes revelationis concorditer et efficacius ad salute hominum concurrerent, providus Dominus eos tanquam unum fidei depositum custodiendum et tuendum autenticeque interpretandum tradidit non singulis fidelibus, utcumque eruditis,

⁷³ AS I-III, p. 21

⁷⁴ Sjöstrand, Nils, *Ny latinsk grammatik*, Gleerups förlag, Lund, 1960, § 67: 11

sed soli vivo Ecclesiae Magisterio.

The provident Lord handed over one deposit of faith to be defended, protected and authoritatively interpreted, not to individual believers, regardless of learning, but only to the living Magisterium of the Church, so that both sources of revelation may effectively and in unison work towards the salvation of man.

The context in which the word *ambo* is used describes how the Magisterium interprets and defends the deposit of faith, where in addition, the two sources of revelation – both together – work towards the salvation of man. Therefore, in this example, *ambo* translates as ‘both’, yet with the meaning of Scripture and Tradition which both work for the salvation of man. In contrast, in the same paragraph of *De fontibus*, the word *utroque* appears - the example has already been cited on page 30 with the expression “*in utroque fonte*”. However, the context in this sentence is the role of the Magisterium in explaining what is obscure or implicit in *utroque* – both (to be interpreted as both separately) sources of revelation. The conclusion that is close at hand is that the Council Fathers were aware of this subtle distinction since both words appear in the same paragraph with each word chosen depending on the context and intention of the expression.

5.2. Form D – context

When John XXIII had ordered the discussion on *De fontibus* to be stopped, he also ordered that a mixed commission consisting of bishops and cardinals should rework the draft. After the discussions in December of 1962, the Council Fathers did not reconvene until October 1963. During the meetings in between, the question of the material sufficiency continued to cause disagreement. In March 1963, the new commission had produced a new draft entitled *De divina revelatione*. It was subsequently sent to the Council Fathers around the world for evaluation. However, when the council met again during the fall of 1963, this was not proposed for discussion.⁷⁵

On June 3 1963, Pope John XXIII passed away, an event which received global attention. The conclave was split between the scholastic-minded side that wished to turn the council in their direction, and on the other side, the progressives who wanted to continue in the spirit of John

⁷⁵ Baum 1967, p. 52

XXIII. The outcome was that Pope Paul VI was elected, a supporter of John XXIII. Among the texts to be discussed during the council in the autumn *De divina revelatione* was not mentioned. Among some of the Fathers a fear existed that the discussions on revelation would be worked into a completely different schema.⁷⁶

5.2.1. Analysis of Form D

§ 7 will be cited in full:

Christus Dominus mandatum dedit Apostolis, ut Evangelium suum, id est ea quae per totam suam vitam fecerat et docuerat, tamquam fontem omnis et salutaris veritatis et morum disciplinae omni creaturae praedicarent. Quod quidem Apostoli fecerunt cum per scripta Spiritu Sancto inspirata, cum oretenus tradendo ea, quae ex ipso Christi ore vel a Spiritu Sancto dictante acceperant. Hoc autem verbum Dei, scriptum vel traditum, unum Depositum Fidei constituit, ex quo Ecclesiae Magisterium haurit ea omnia, quae fide divina⁷⁷ tamquam divinitus revelata credenda proponit.⁷⁸

The Lord Jesus Christ gave the mandate to his apostles, that his Gospel, which is what he taught and did during all his life, should be preached to all of creation, as the source of all saving truth and moral discipline. The apostles did this both with inspired Scriptures of the Holy Spirit, and orally through handing over, that which was received by the mouth of Christ himself or dictated by the Holy Spirit. Yet this word of God, written or handed down, consists of one Deposit of faith, from which the Magisterium of the Church draws everything, which it proposes to be believed with divine faith as been divinely revealed.

⁷⁶ Meloni, Alberto, "The beginning of the second period: the great debate on the church", in *History of Vatican II*, vol. III, 2000, p. 26

⁷⁷ This phrase, *fides divina*, refers to the highest degree of theological certainty ascribed to a proposition. The Catholic professor of dogmatics, Ludwig Ott, gives the following definition in his book *Fundamentals of Catholic dogma*, p.9: "The highest degree of certainty appertains to the immediately revealed truths. The belief due to them is based on the authority of God Revealing (*fides divina*), and if the Church, through its teaching, vouches for the fact that a truth is contained in Revelation, one's certainty is then also based on the authority of the Infallible Teaching authority of the Church (*fides catholica*). "In declining order hereafter the degrees of certainty are: *de fide ecclesiastica*, *theologice certum*, *sententia communis*, *sententia probabilis*, *sententia tolerata*.

⁷⁸ Schema Constitutionis De Divina Revelatione (Form D), AS III-III, p. 79

In this paragraph the language of the two sources is abandoned. According to this draft, the Gospel – what Jesus did and taught (*fecerat et docuerat*) – is the one source of revelation (*fontem omnem*). The draft presents revelation as something greater than propositions. Revelation is identified as the word of God (*verbum Dei*), and this Word can either be written or handed down (*scriptum vel traditum*). The emphasis in this draft is placed on the fact that Scripture and Tradition constitute one deposit of faith (*unum Depositum Fidei constituit*). One of Ratzinger’s critiques of *De fontibus* was the danger of “scripturalism”, which is identifying revelation with words. Instead, revelation must be seen as something dynamic and living – not limited to the letter. In essence, Scripture and Tradition together constitute one deposit of faith.⁷⁹

§ 8 of *De divina revelatione* states:

S. Scriptura ergo et S. Traditio ita mutuo se habent, ut altera alteri extranea non sit. Imo arcte inter se connectuntur atque communicant. Nam ambae ex eadem scaturigine promanantes, in unum quodammodo coalescunt et in eundem finem tendunt. Quapropter utraque pari pietatis affectu ac reverentia suscipienda ac veneranda est.⁸⁰

Therefore, Sacred scripture and sacred tradition are related to each other in such a way that neither is foreign to the other. On the contrary there exists a close connection and communication between them. For both of them, flowing from the same wellspring, in a certain way merge into a unity and tend toward the same end. Therefore both are to be accepted and venerated with the same sense of piety and reverence.

The relationship between Scripture and Tradition is described co-dependently where one is not foreign to the other (*altera alteri extranea non sit*). What actually can be said of the mutual relationship is the description of Scripture and Tradition as having a close connection (*inter se connectuntur*) and communication (*communicant*). Scripture and Tradition are described to have a common origin from the same wellspring (*ex eadem scaturigine*). The imagery

⁷⁹ Wicks 2008, p. 276

⁸⁰ AS III-III, p. 80

continues by explaining that they merge themselves together into a unity (*in unum quodammodo coalescunt*) and aim towards the same end (*in eundem finem tendunt*). The conclusion to be drawn is that a harmonious and unitary presentation of the relationship between Scripture and Tradition is depicted, while simultaneously avoiding the question of a constitutive tradition. Important to note is also the shift in words, from using the word source (*fons*) to wellspring (*scaturigo*). The emphasis is put on them stemming from the same wellspring. Note also that *ambae* is used to describe how Scripture and Tradition **together** stem from the same wellspring. Lastly it echoes the Tridentine decree of *pari pietatis affectu*, that Scripture and Tradition should both be held with equal affection of piety - in doing so, *utraque* is used. However the context lets us know that the meaning is that Scripture and Tradition – **each on their own** – are to be held with equal affection of piety.

§ 9 provides an illustrative sentence for the direction of the discussion:

quod quidem Magisterium non supra verbum Dei est, sed eidem ministrat, quatenus illud, ex divino mandato et Spiritu Sancto assistente, tuetur et authentice interpretatur, illustrando et etiam enucleando quae in una vel altera Depositum parte implicite et obscure continentur.⁸¹

Since the Magisterium is not above the word of God, but its servant, in the same way that, through divine mandate and the assisting of the Holy Spirit, it protects and authentically interprets, through illustrating and even by elaborating, that which is contained implicitly and obscurely in one or other part of the Deposit.

This sentence has a resemblance to the previously quoted text from *Humani Generis*: *Verum quoque est, theologis semper redeundum esse ad divinae revelationis fontes; eorum enim est indicare qua ratione ea quae a vivo Magisterio docentur, in Sacris Litteris et in divina "traditione", sive **explicite**, sive **implicite** inveniantur. Accedit quod uterque doctrinae divinitus revelatae fons tot tantoquesque continet thesauros veritatis, ut numquam reapse exhaustiatur.* ("It is also true that theologians must always have recourse to the sources of divine revelation; for it is their duty to indicate how what is taught by the living magisterium is found, either explicitly or implicitly, in Sacred Scripture and in divine "tradition." In addition, both sources

⁸¹ AS III-III, p. 81

of doctrine, divinely revealed, contain so many and such great treasures of truth that they are in fact never exhausted”).⁸² From this we can conclude that the deposit: a) contains things both implicit and obscure, b) has more than one part, and c) it leaves out any explanation of how these parts are related to one another.

5.3. Form E – context

It was not until the third session of the council that the question of revelation was to be discussed, which was in the fall of 1964. At this point, a new version of *De divina revelatione* was discussed, which had been modified by suggested amendments between June 1963 and April 1964.⁸³ In the process of revising the existing draft, heated discussions yet again arose about the extra material provided by tradition.⁸⁴ In the working of this text, the commission at hand deliberately avoided taking sides on the material sufficiency of Scripture. This decision was met with resistance by a few of the members drafting the document.⁸⁵ The Council Fathers discussed this version from September 30th to October 6th 1964. According to Sauer, already at the opening of these discussions, there was still strong opposition to how Tradition was to be described. In the doctrinal commission a few members strongly rejected not mentioning anything about a constitutive tradition, since according to them, some revealed truths are only known through Tradition. The current version suggested that Tradition only have an interpretative function. One of the arguments used was that the Orthodox Church held a doctrine of a constitutive tradition. Therefore, for ecumenical reasons, the Catholic Church ought to take this into consideration. Those who opposed such views did so with the intention rather of not taking sides in a subsequent binding document.⁸⁶ Furthermore, the minority argued that biblical scholars would have to provide false exegesis if they had to ground all doctrine in Scripture. Sauer described that the strength of the text lay in the fact that it resisted to reach a definite definition on the relationship between Scripture and Tradition.⁸⁷ Nevertheless, voices continued to be raised that the doctrine of the material sufficiency was incompatible with the teaching of Trent.⁸⁸

⁸² Denzinger §3886

⁸³ Kruggel 2013, p. 199

⁸⁴ Kruggel 2013, p. 201

⁸⁵ Villanova, Evangelista, "The Intersession (1963-1964), in *History of Vatican II*, vol. III, 2000, p. 429

⁸⁶ Sauer, Hanjo, "The Doctrinal and the Pastoral: the text on Divine Revelation", in *History of Vatican II*, vol. IV, English version edited by Komonchak, 2003 p. 207

⁸⁷ Sauer 2003, p. 208

⁸⁸ Sauer 2003, p. 218

5.3.1. Form E – analysis

In § 7 an analogy is given of Scripture and Tradition that remained also in the final version of *Dei Verbum*:

Sacra igitur Traditio et Sacra Scriptura veluti speculum sunt in quo Ecclesia in terris peregrinans contemplatur Deum.⁸⁹

Therefore, sacred tradition and Sacred Scripture is like a mirror in which the Church during its pilgrimage on Earth looks at God.

This imagery suggests a profound similarity and identity between Scripture and Tradition, in contrast to the notion of a constitutive tradition. A significant alteration has been made in this revised version. In form D the sentence: *S. Scriptura ergo et S. Traditio ita mutuo se habent, ut altera alteri extranea non sit.*” was used to show their interrelationship. However, in Form E this sentence has been removed in an attempt to remain neutral on the question of a constitutive tradition. In the notes of the text it is argued that:

Unde omittuntur verba textus prioris: ut altera alteri extranea non sit: quia videntur saporem habere polemicum, vel etiam intelligi possent in favorem illius sententiae quae tenet nihil haberi in Traditione quod in Scriptura non sit quomodocumque contentum.⁹⁰

The words of the first text is removed: that one is not foreign to the other: since it seems to have a polemical touch, or could even be understood in favour of those who hold the opinion that nothing exists in Tradition which is not somehow found in Scripture.

This illustrates the effort being made not to take sides for or against the idea of constitutive tradition.

§ 9 states similarly as Form D that both Scripture and Tradition flow from the same divine wellspring and that there exists a close relationship between them. In addition, the following

⁸⁹ AS III-III, p. 79

⁹⁰ AS III-III, p. 86

sentence was added:

Etenim S. Scriptura est locutio Dei quatenus divino afflante Spiritu scripto consignata, S. Traditio autem mens, doctrina, exempla et mandata Christi per Apostolorum eorumque successorum praeconium, assistente Spiritu Sancto, fideliter transmissa.⁹¹

For Sacred Scripture is the word of God in as much as it is consigned to writing under the inspiration of the divine Spirit, while Sacred Tradition is the mind, doctrine, example, and mandate of Christ handed down faithfully by the Apostles and their successors preaching, assisted by the Holy Spirit.

As Sauer comments on this section, the question of the material sufficiency has carefully been avoided. Scripture and Tradition are not treated as “sources” but as ways of transmitting the message of the mystery of salvation.⁹²

§ 8 is an entirely new addition where Tradition is comprehensively described. As Sauer notes: “ it consists in the entire being and activity of the Church, in its life, teaching, and worship, for it is in all this that its saving mystery is contained and communicated to all ages. The question of the material sufficiency of the scriptures is carefully omitted and left to the study of the theologians...”⁹³ As shown, a new concept has been introduced, significantly different from the previous which identified tradition as doctrine.⁹⁴

⁹¹ AS III-III, p. 80

⁹² Sauer 2003, p. 199

⁹³ Sauer 2003, p. 199

⁹⁴ Cf. Meszaros, Andrew, “Haec Traditio proficit”: Congar’s reception of Newman in *Dei Verbum* Section 8”, in *New Blackfriars*, vol. 92, issue 1038, p. 247-254. As previously stated in this study (3.4) the “new” influences in the council can be traced back to 19th century theology. In this particular case (DV §8), is largely influenced by Yves Congar who in turn heavily relied on J.H. Newman’s theology.

§ 10 reinforces that Scripture and Tradition form one divine deposit:

S. Traditio et S. Scriptura unum verbi Dei sacrum depositum
constituunt.⁹⁵

Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture constitute one sacred
deposit of the word of God.

In one of the notes given to the text, a new way of expressing the interrelationship between Scripture and Tradition is described:

Affirmatur ergo expressio qualitativa, quaestione seposita de
expressione quantitativa.⁹⁶

Therefore a qualitative expression is affirmed, having put aside
the question of a quantitative relation.

Concerning the material sufficiency it could be said that there exists a qualitative identity between Scripture and Tradition, and the question of the constitutive nature – the quantitative extension - of Tradition was put aside.⁹⁷ This distinction proves useful in the sense that it allows for an expression of the identity that exists between Scripture and Tradition, yet at the same time, it avoids enquiries about ‘how much’ of Tradition is to be found in Scripture.

⁹⁵ AS III-III, p. 80

⁹⁶ AS III-III, p. 84

⁹⁷ Baum 1967, p. 60

5.4. Form F – context

The previous version was form E that was discussed at the council September 30th – 6th October 1964. To this text followed revisions and amendments which resulted in form F that was sent to the council Fathers on November 20th 1964. The text was now very close to its final form. However, it would be ten months before the council took up the text for its final revision. As Burigana explains, one of the reasons for this delay was due to that a minority still believed they could insert an explicit declaration of the existence of a constitutive tradition.⁹⁸ The council discussed form F 20-22nd September 1965.⁹⁹ As Tavard comments: “Whereas the first text adopted one particular interpretation of Tradition (as a partial source of faith, complementary to and independent of Scripture), the subsequent texts did not take sides among theologians in the controverted question of the quantitative extension of Scripture and Tradition.”¹⁰⁰

5.4.1. Form F – analysis

Form F contains only a few new sentences of interest to our topic of study which has not been dealt with previously. One example illustrates the difference of how Scripture and Tradition is viewed:

Etenim Sacra Scriptura est locutio Dei quatenus divino afflante Spiritu scripto consignatur; Sacra autem Traditio verbum Dei, a Christo Domino et a Spiritu Sancto Apostolis concreditum, successoribus eorum integre transmittit, ut illud, prae lucente Spiritu veritatis, praeconio suo fideliter servant, exponant atque diffundant.¹⁰¹

For Sacred Scripture is the word of God in as much as it is consigned to writing under the inspiration of the Divine Spirit. On the other hand, sacred tradition transmits the word of God entrusted by Christ the Lord and the Holy Spirit to the Apostles, and hands it on to their successors in its full purity, so that led by the light of the Spirit of truth, they may in proclaiming it preserve this word of God faithfully, explain it, and make it more widely known.

⁹⁸ Kruggel 2013, p. 208

⁹⁹ Kruggel 2013, p. 213

¹⁰⁰ Tavard, George, “Commentary on De Revelatione.” *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, 1966 p. 7

¹⁰¹ AS IV-I, p. 350

In this sentence, as Harrison¹⁰² points out, Tradition is said to transmit (*transmittit*) the word of God, whereas Scripture is said to be the word of God (*est locutio Dei*). Scripture is here given an extended role in comparison to Scripture.

5.5. Form G – context

After the voting in September 1965 it yet again became clear that a minority favoured a more scholastic presentation of Scripture and Tradition. As a result the discussions continued in light of the suggested amendments. At this point in the council, Pope Paul VI would have a decisive impact of the treatment of this question. It turned out that the Pope personally agreed with the minority. In a letter dated 24th September 1965, over the signature of Archbishop Pericle Felici (the secretary-general of the council), the president of the doctrinal commission – Cardinal Ottaviani, was informed: “is it the will of the Holy Father that, at the most convenient place in the text, the constitutive nature of Tradition, as a font of Revelation, be mentioned more clearly and more explicitly.”¹⁰³ The end of this letter closed with a citation from St Augustine as support of this position: There are many things which the universal Church holds, and therefore rightly believes to have been taught by the Apostles, even though they are not written down.”¹⁰⁴ The point of mystery concerning the letter of September 24th is that it never reached Cardinal Ottaviani to whom it was addressed. This was only found out after the council. However, the content would become known in a new letter from the Pope on October 18th 1965, also addressed to cardinal Ottaviani. In this letter the Pope does not insist that the council favours his own view on Tradition, but instead he adds a list of seven formulations on the nature of Tradition all by him deemed acceptable.¹⁰⁵ Once a vote had taken place on these sentences (in addition to other amendments), the final version of the text was put to vote on November 18th 1965 and was approved then solemnly proclaimed on the same day. A minority of the Council Fathers warned even up until the end that this was a weak text on revelation that would harm the Church. However the vast majority was not convinced.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² Harrison, Brian, “Paul VI on Scripture, Tradition and Magisterium” in *Living Tradition – Organ of the Roman Theological forum*, november 2013, p. 3

¹⁰³ Harrison 2013, p. 6

¹⁰⁴ Harrison 2013, p. 6, “Sunt multa quae universa tenet Ecclesia, et ob hoc ab Apostolis praecepta bene creduntur, quamquam scripta non reperiantur.”

¹⁰⁵ Harrison 2013, p.6

¹⁰⁶ Kruggel 2013, p. 218

5.5.1. Form G – analysis

In this section we will now analyse the seven different formulations that were approved by Pope Paul VI on the role of tradition. Afterwards we can draw conclusions on why the selected sentence was indeed selected. In § 9 between the words *diffundant* and *quapropter*, one of the following sentences were to be added¹⁰⁷:

- i) *quo fit ut non omnis doctrina catholica ex sola Sacra Scriptura probari queat* –
consequently it is that not all catholic doctrine can be proved from Sacred Scripture alone.
- ii) *Quo fit ut non omnis doctrina catholica ex sola Sacra Scriptura directe probari queat* –
Consequently it is that not all catholic doctrine can be proved directly from Sacred Scripture alone.
- iii) *Quo fit ut Ecclesia certitudinem suam non de omnibus revelatis per solam Scripturam hauriat* –
Consequently it is not from Scripture alone that the Church draws her certainty regarding all that has been revealed.
- iv) *Quo fit ut Ecclesia certitudinem suam non de omnibus veritatibus revelatis per solam Scripturam hauriat* –
Consequently it is not from Scripture alone that the Church draws her certainty regarding all revealed truths.
- v) *Sacrae Scripturae complexum mysterii christiani referent, quin omnes veritates revelatae in eis expresse enuntientur* –
The Sacred Scriptures express the entire Christian mystery, even though not all revealed truths are expressly stated in them.
- vi) *Sacrae Scripturae complexum mysterii christiani continent, quin omnes veritates revelatae ex ipsis solis probari queant* –
The Sacred Scriptures contain the entire Christian mystery, though not all revealed truths can be proved from the Scriptures alone.

¹⁰⁷ The Latin citations are from Harrision 2013. In most cases my translation concurs with those suggested by him in the article.

- vii) *Non omnem veritatem catholicam ex sola Scriptura sine adiutorio Traditionis et Magisterii certo hauriri posse* –

Not all catholic truth can be drawn with certainty from Scripture alone, without the aid of Tradition and the Magisterium.

At first appearance all of these formulations sound very similar and the variations are indeed subtle. Nevertheless, a few of them can be said to have more in common than others. Sentence (i) and (ii) lean more towards the idea of a constitutive tradition. As Harrison writes¹⁰⁸, the reason why the Pope chose to put these two alternatives first is possibly because they closest correspond to his own preference. However, it should be said that even though these two have a way of tending towards a constitutive view of tradition, they still leave the question open. The first two alternatives use the words *sola* and *directe* in the sense that Scripture and Tradition taken as a whole/together prove certain doctrines. If one were to compare with the first text *De fontibus* we see a clear difference. In § 5 of *De fontibus* it states: *immo Traditio, eaque sola, via est qua quaedam veritates revelatae...innotescunt* (Tradition and it alone is the way in which some revealed truths...become known to the Church.) The alternatives (i) and (ii) presented by the Pope are still milder in expression though opening for an interpretation which would lead to an idea of a constitutive tradition. *De fontibus* §5 formulates itself positively by saying that some truths are only known through Tradition. All alternatives, not just the first two, are formulated negatively by saying how something is not - which leaves room for a broader interpretation.

The third alternative is the one that eventually gained majority and became the official conciliar text. Harrison notes that this alternative possibly preserves the neutrality best in order.¹⁰⁹ Alternative (iv) just added one word, *veritatibus*, yet the significance is great. Even though only one word separates these two, the fourth alternative denotes a more scholastic view of revelation, since revelation is identified with truths. This gives it a propositional and static dimension lacking in the third alternative as Harrison points out. During the council a different view of revelation was being moulded in contrast to the view that identifies revelation with true church dogma.

¹⁰⁸ Harrison 2013, p. 7

¹⁰⁹ Harrison 2013, p. 7

In agreement with Harrison¹¹⁰ it is not difficult to see how the fifth alternative favours those who maintain the material sufficiency of Scripture. It states that Scripture contains all of the Christian mystery, yet all doctrines are not expressly stated. The sixth alternative is very similar to the fifth. The last alternative phrases it somewhat differently by explicitly referring to Tradition and the Magisterium as aiding in knowing certain truths. Yet this is to be understood in combination with Scripture.

The question of the constitutive nature of Tradition was evidently a debated question up until the last days of the council. It is interesting to note, writes Harrison, that the Pope's choice to add one of these alternatives after decisions were made at the council to rule out any formulation that hinted towards this interpretation. The third alternative maintains a fine balance both of what is said, but also of what is omitted. Archbishop Florit comments: "Two things are clear: Tradition is not presented as a quantitative supplement to Sacred Scripture; but neither is Scripture presented as a codification of revelation in its entirety."¹¹¹ Once again, a fine balance in wording leaving the disputed question open.

¹¹⁰ Harrison 2013, p. 7

¹¹¹ Harrison 2013, p. 7

6. Discussion

By looking at the shift in terminology through the various conciliar drafts one can see a development in the line of thought. In *De fontibus* (form C), revelation is identified with doctrine (*doctrina*). In the text a separation is made between that which was put into writing (*litteris mandaverunt*) and that which was the living preaching of the apostles (*vivum Apostolorum praeconium*). Scripture and Tradition were described as a twofold source (*in duplici fonte*) independently of each other where the emphasis is put on what can be said of each source in itself (*ratione sui*). Ultimately form C states that some revealed truths are only known through Tradition. Continuously throughout the text, various expressions denoting the separation between Scripture and Tradition are used, such as: in each source (*in utroque fonte*) or the other source (*alterum fontem*). As described in section 5.1.1, according to Sjöstrand *utroque* translates more accurately as both – each on its own, which shows that the specific theological distinction which was sought out, also reflects the choice in Latin wording.

The biggest change occurred between Form C (*De fontibus revelationis*) and D (*De divina revelatione*) since an entire new version was drafted without the word source. Form D up until G struggle with balancing the difficult question of a constitutive tradition by different terminology being used and sometimes omitted. Form D states that the one source of revelation is the words and deeds of Christ. Whether written or handed down, it constitutes one deposit of faith (*scriptum vel traditum, unum Depositum Fidei constituit*). Concerning the difficult question of the mutual relationship between Scripture and Tradition, form D writes (which remained in the final version) that there exists a close connection and communication between them (*inter se connectuntur atque communicant*). Instead of the previously used word source (*fons*), the word wellspring (*scaturigo*) has replaced it. Scripture and Tradition are described as growing together (*in unum coalescunt*) and tending towards the same goal (*eundem finem tendunt*).

Form E introduces a simile that stands in contrast to the notion of a constitutive tradition. It writes that Scripture and Tradition are like a mirror (*veluti speculum*) in which the Church on Earth looks at God. Interestingly, Form E also removed a sentence found in form D namely *ut altera alteri extranea non sit* (that one is not foreign to the other). Since this sentence could be interpreted as leaning more towards the position of the material sufficiency of Scripture it was removed in the next version. In Form F it is important to note that Scripture and Tradition are

described differently: Scripture being the word of God, while Tradition is functionally described as transmitting the word of God. In Form G, after several alternatives being discussed by the request of Paul VI, the alternative was chosen which said that: *Quo fit ut Ecclesia certitudinem suam non de omnibus revelatis per solam Scripturam hauriat* – consequently it is not from Scripture alone that the Church draws her certainty regarding all that has been revealed. This sentence bears witness to the compromise nature of the final version.

After having analysed the drafts from *De fontibus* to *Dei Verbum* it has hopefully been shown that the majority view was to avoid making a final decision whether tradition “adds” anything materially to Scripture. The council chose instead to focus on the mutual cooperation and dependence that exists between Scripture and Tradition. Together they form an organic and inseparable unity. Three reasons can be found in *Dei Verbum* § 9 as justification for this conclusion: a) both spring from the same divine wellspring, b) both fuse together into a whole, c) they both cooperate towards the same goal. From this, Latourelle draws the conclusion that Scripture and Tradition are equally said to be the word of God; Scripture insofar as it was put into writing through the guidance of the Holy Spirit; Tradition insofar as Christ and the Holy Spirit entrusted it to the apostles and their successors in order to faithfully pass on and explain. Therefore it is correct to say that the Church does not derive all of its faith from Scripture alone.¹¹² Despite the fact that Scripture and tradition are both to be held with equal reverence, a distinction is still made between them. As Ratzinger comments: “It is important to note that only Scripture is defined in terms of what it is: it is stated that Scripture is the word of God consigned to writing. Tradition, however, is described only functionally in terms of what it does, it hands on the word of God, but is not the word of God.”¹¹³ This can be seen in § 9 of *Dei Verbum* where Scripture is directly said to be the word of God (*Etenim Sacra Scriptura est locution Dei*), at the same time Tradition is given the functional role of transmitting the word of God (*Sacra autem Traditio Verbum Dei...transmittit*).

As the last section of this study showed, the motive for the insertion of that sentence was – on the initiative of the Pope – to include a statement about the constitutive nature of Tradition.

¹¹² Latourelle, Rene, *Theology of Revelation – including a commentary on the constitution Dei Verbum of Vatican II*, Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2009, p.479

¹¹³ From Joseph Ratzinger's *Commentary on Dei Verbum in the Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche* (Translation: Herbert Vorgrimler, ed., *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II* - New York: Crossroad, 1989, Vol. 3), p. 194 (available online)

Since the Pope was willing to accept either one of these previously mentioned seven alternatives (section 5.5.1, page 43-44), it shows willingness to compromise on the issue. Once again, the third alternative best preserves the neutrality of the question (*Quo fit ut Ecclesia certitudinem suam de omnibus revelatis non per solam Scripturam hauriat*). Nevertheless, the sentence is still open to interpretation. Timothy George, a protestant theologian, has argued that the language of DV §9 actually endorses the two-source theory. He writes: “From an Evangelical perspective, this language seems to imply at once a retreat from the “new theology” of Scripture and Tradition advanced prior to the Council, and a reassertion of the two-source theory in all its vigour...”¹¹⁴ Although this be Georges interpretation, it is lacking in coherence with the intentions of the Council.¹¹⁵ In section 5.3.1 it is expressed that the prevailing view among the conciliar fathers was not to take sides on the so-called ‘quantitative extension’ of Scripture and Tradition. As this study shows, forms D-G went to great lengths in order to avoid any sentence that would favour the idea of a constitutive tradition – or to explicitly condemn it despite the fact that a majority saw it as a foreign way of dealing with the more relevant question of the nature of revelation. By looking at the Latin texts, it is possible to see that as a shift in theological position occurred, so too did the language used to express these ideas. A more moderate interpretation would be that DV § 9 does not rule out the two-source theory.

Christoph Theobald SJ points out that the opponents of the two-source theory: “...shifted the problem from the content of revelation to the certain and complete knowledge of it, a knowledge that is provided by tradition.”¹¹⁶ Theobald is explaining that depending on if one views § 9.4 from the perspective of: a) the content of revelation or b) from the perspective of the complete knowledge of it, the question of a constitutive tradition appears more or less urgent. When looking at the specific content, for e.g. the 1950 dogma of the Assumption, the question appears more relevant to inquire on what this dogma is based and how has it been transmitted. As a result the question of the material sufficiency arises since Scripture and Tradition become *in themselves* sources of revelation. Ratzinger writes: “the idea of the two sources, distributes revelation in a mechanical way between two vessels of revelation that are independent of each other and thus again fails to recognise its true nature, which is not a

¹¹⁴ George, Timothy, “An Evangelical Reflection on Scripture and Tradition.” *Pro Ecclesia* 9-2 (Spring 2000): p. 206

¹¹⁵ For a lutheran perspective see: Hägglund, Bengt, *Tro och verklighet – tre studier i 1900talets teologihistoria*, Artos & Norma Bokförlag, Malmö, 2007, p. 82-89

¹¹⁶ Theobald, Christoph, “The Church under the Word of God”, in *History of Vatican II*, English version edited by Komonchak, Orbis Maryknoll, Peeters Leuven, 2006, p. 348

collection of propositions, but a living organic unity which can only be presented as a whole.”¹¹⁷ When looking from the perspective of the complete knowledge of it, it appears uncontroversial to say that Scripture and Tradition are ways of knowing revelation. Consequently, Scripture and Tradition are no longer seen as sources of revelation, but rather as ways of knowing revelation stemming from the one source – the Gospel of Christ. As Ratzinger describes the entire debate: “an unreal controversy about the quantitative completeness of Scripture.”¹¹⁸

The aim of this study has been a close reading of the Latin conciliar drafts to understand the debate about the idea of a constitutive tradition during the Second Vatican Council. The position taken by Ratzinger is clearly reflected in the language of the final version of *Dei Verbum*. When Ratzinger calls it an unreal controversy he is doing so with the knowledge of how standard theological manuals were constructed. These were presented in a series of theses or propositions, which ranged in authority from the definitions of the solemn Magisterium down to the “common opinion” of theologians.¹¹⁹ Each theological doctrine had to be “found” in the deposit of faith, being Scripture and Tradition – the so-called sources of revelation.¹²⁰ Theologians such as Ratzinger were essentially protesting against a reduction of revelation to propositions or dogmas. Instead, revelation is the self-disclosure of God that is found both in Scripture and Tradition.

The final remarks from this investigation is that taking into consideration the amendment made by Pope Paul VI, the controversy around the question of a constitutive tradition only fully appears when comparing and analysing the Latin conciliar drafts. Many of the sentences have been up for heated debate and their meaning carefully chosen. At the same time, by following the development of these texts (keeping in mind the contextual theological debate), it is equally significant and apparent what has been omitted. Up until the last days of the council, the wording was debated to best avoid taking sides as to whether Tradition adds anything ‘quantitatively’ to Scripture. Looking at the development of the conciliar drafts, it is the position exemplified by Ratzinger that is the dominant one and that sets the direction for the council. Yet at the same time, both the redaction history and the Latin wording tell us that the question of a constitutive tradition has deliberately not been settled.

¹¹⁷ Ratzinger 1989, p. 191

¹¹⁸ Ratzinger 1989, p. 186

¹¹⁹ Cf. Ott, Ludwig, *Fundamentals of Catholic dogma*, Tan Books and Publishers Inc, Illinois, 1974, p. 9-10

¹²⁰ Harrington & Walsh 1967, p. 18

7. Conclusion

This study has shown that the debate was not simply between conservatives and reformers, but between two fundamentally different theological approaches. Depending on the presuppositions of the theologian, the question of whether there exists revealed truths only found in Tradition, has greater or less impact. The central question that emerged as a result of the debate of a constitutive tradition was the necessity of a deeper reflection on the nature of revelation. This became the central theme and major result as shown in *Dei Verbum*. Cardinal Bea¹²¹ makes the significant point that the question of the material sufficiency must be left to theologians for continued debate and deeper reflection. The Latin conciliar drafts bear witness to theological tensions between the opposing views. Sentences with a leniency towards either side were gradually reformulated or omitted in order not to settle the question in anyone's favour. The result was that after years of debate, leading to a deeper search into the nature of revelation, the question of a constitutive tradition was set aside, resulting in a broad formulation (DV§9.4) which was deemed acceptable regardless of theological presuppositions. By doing so it also fulfils one of the initial aims of John XXIII of also being a pastoral council.

¹²¹ Bea, Augustin, *The Word of God and Mankind*, Geoffrey Chapman, London, 1967, p. 158

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