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AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF Steven Percy Poitra for the
Master of Arts in History presented July 16, 1986.

Title: The Spirituality of Pierre de Bérulle.

APPROVED BY MEMBERS OF THE THESIS COMMITTEE:

Michael F. Reardon, Chairman

Charles A. Le Guin

Franklin C. West

The sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries witnessed a revival of spirituality throughout Europe. Positive theology emerged as both an instigation to and instrument for Christian humanists in their endeavor to redress the Church's fundamental relationship to the laity.

The early efforts for reform in France were discouraged by Gallicanist sympathies. Further, growing numbers of Calvinists combined with the possibility of a Protestant king led to thirty-five years of sporadic civil war.

From the 1580's and 90's, French spirituality began a period of renewal and growth. At the heart of the French experience was the famous Acarie circle among whose members was Pierre de Bérulle. Bérulle eventually rejected the abstract mysticism of the Acarie circle and elaborated his own spiritual doctrine. Bérulle's achievement was a synthesis of theocentrism, inherently opposed to humanism's anthropocentrism, and Christian humanism. Berullian spirituality was the culmination of the Reformation of the French Church. This achievement, however, is largely ignored by historians of Christianity.

The object of this thesis, therefore, is to describe the historical context of Berullian spirituality and to examine the spirituality itself so as to confirm or deny the claims of the handful of French historians who have resurrected the memory of Bérulle. At the end of this process of description and examination, causes for the disparagement of Bérulle, of his spirituality and of his congregation will be suggested.

THE SPIRITUALITY OF PIERRE DE BERULLE

by

STEVEN PERCY POITRA

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS
in
HISTORY

Portland State University

1986

TO THE OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH:

The members of the Committee approve the thesis of
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PREFACE

To uncover the ties between an historical phenomenon and the cultural reality in which that phenomenon has appeared, is a primary task of the historian. By cultural reality is meant the social, political, economic and intellectual forces that, in a matrix of relationships, form or comprise what may be called the social problematic. It is from this matrix of relationships, this social problematic, that rises the very culture, the very way of life, even the habits of thought, in short, the cultural reality, of a specified people within a specified period of time inhabiting a specified geographical area or territory. A cultural reality is a conceptual construct that may be as broad as the whole of Western Civilization from Ancient Greece to the present time or as narrow as Post-Reformation France under the regency of Marie de Medicis. For practical reasons, the parameters of an historical investigation are limited purposely in one way or another. Choosing a specific historical phenomenon and showing its relation to the milieu in which it was born and upon which it worked an effect, is one such purposeful delimiting.

At first, the historical phenomenon to be investigated in this thesis was the congregation of priests officially instituted by papal bull as the Oratory of Our Lord Jesus

Christ, commonly known as the Oratory of France of the Ancien Régime. In the course of my research, however, this earlier object gave way to something less ambitious but also of greater historical significance. Specifically, I discovered that a thorough reconstruction of the establishment of the Oratory was quite impossible if one were limited to the relevant primary materials available in the United States and Canada. Though certainly available in this country, the few histories of the Oratory that have been written are nearly exclusively by Oratorians. So marked by polemic are these, that were one ever to attempt to reconstruct the story of this group, access to pertinent archival collections would be essential. A simple illustration of this is provided by the words of two Oratorians themselves.

In the preface to Leherpeur's L'Oratoire de France, Mgr. Baudrillart, not only of the Académie Française but the Bishop of Himeria and Rector of the Institut Catholique in Paris, as well as an Oratorian, writes:

Historien moi-même, et avide de sincérité, je ne craindrai pas d'approuver la franchise, pour ne dire pas la hardiesse, avec laquelle vous abordez les questions les plus délicates et vous faites justice de légendes erronées et tendancieuses dont d'autres ont chargés notre histoire.¹

¹"An historian myself, and eager for truthfulness, I will not fear to approve the frankness, so as not to say the daring, with which you tackle the most sensitive issues and refute the erroneous and tendentious legends with which others have encumbered our history." Lettre-Préface of S. G. Baudrillart in Leherpeur, L'Oratoire de France, p. vii.

He goes on to mention specifically the three erroneous and tendentious legends which Leherpeur has tackled with such frankness: that the Oratory, in accepting the direction of colleges, allowed itself to be diverted from its original and proper vocation of seeing to a reform of the secular clergy through the direction of seminaries only; that the Oratory, either in its entirety or only partially, depending upon the writer one reads, came to embrace the Jansenist heresy; and, lastly, that Oratorians were among the first and constituted the most numerous group of priests to apostatize in taking the oath of the Civil Constitution of the Clergy in revolutionary France. For himself, Leherpeur, thus praised for his fitting straightforwardness, revealingly writes of the first of these myths that he encounters in his narrative:

Le respect de la vérité historique crée l'obligation de ne pas passer sous silence cette lutte entre oratoriens et jésuites, si la charité impose le devoir de n'en parler qu'avec le souci de ne pas << rallumer le feu de ces vieilles querelles >>. ²

The admonition to bear in mind one's responsibility for not relighting the fire of old quarrels, coupled with the ardent desire for defending the Congregation against what are seen as deliberately biased accounts of episodes in its past,

²"Respect for historical truth creates an obligation to not pass over in silence the struggle between Oratorians and Jesuits, though charity imposes the duty only to speak of it with concern to not 'relight the fire of old quarrels'." Leherpeur, M. L'Oratoire de France. Paris: Editions Spes, 1926, p. 23.

produces a curious style of writing. In nearly all histories of the Oratory these conflicting interests combine to produce circumspect accounts in which only the most careful reader is able to discern the background tableau that constituted the impulse to compose the history in the first place but which now is not to be treated directly. It would be inaccurate, more so in the case of some than in others, to accuse these historians of deliberate obfuscating. Still, the effect is the same.

Between the Oratory of the Ancien Régime (1611-1790) and the Oratory as reconstituted in 1852, a revolution had been effected. The history of the earlier Oratory became a matter of great concern to those who had labored for its reconstitution. Thus they undertook to discover what that earlier history had been both for their own internal uses in terms of being able to adhere more closely to the practices of their forebears and, as noted above, to combat legends. Hence, the histories dating from the mid-nineteenth century up to and including the early twentieth century are thinly veiled apologies. Whatever definition of truth one may ascribe to, the anecdotal treatment of the ever pious Bérulle and his saintly work contained in these histories is the stuff of hagiography. Most probably sincere, these priest/historians were not above creating legends of their own so as all the better to combat those other, less flattering ones.

From the second decade of the twentieth century to the opening years of the 1930's, the eleven volumes of Henri Bremond's history of French religious sentiment were published. Approximately three volumes were devoted not to the Oratory but to the spirituality with which the Oratory and several other religious groupings were imbued. From Bremond's monumental work, the history of the Oratory gave way to historical treatments that revolved around Pierre de Bérulle. These studies of Bérulle's spirituality and of the spirituality of those whom he influenced have been conducted by a mere handful of French historians, Louis Cognet, Jean Orcibal, Jean Dagens and a few others. Taken together their efforts lend validity to the hypothesis that Berullian spirituality constituted a revolution in the history of Christianity -- a synthesis of theocentrism and Christian humanism.

North American historians of Christianity have ignored or are unaware of this singular development. Computer-generated bibliographic searches of North American libraries turned up no English language works uniquely devoted to the Oratory of the Ancien Régime much less to Berullian spirituality.³ Interestingly, where Bérulle figures most

³The only North American work devoted exclusively to the Oratory of the Ancien Regime is the unpublished doctoral dissertation of Stephen Wagley, "The Oratory of France, 1629-1672: A Social History," Canadian Theses Division, National Library of Canada, 1976. It was cited in an article in the Revue d'Histoire de l'Eglise Française with an explanation that the authors of the article had been unable to avail

often in American historians' treatments of the seventeenth century is in works on Jansenism. Tendentious legends, it would seem, die very slowly indeed.

The Oratory of France of the Ancien Régime experienced meteoric growth and precipitous decline and has received some notice though, as with its founder, usually in connection with Jansenism. Berullian spirituality, arguably the culmination of the Catholic Reformation, has been completely ignored or forgotten by all but a few. The institution, that is the Oratory, was merely an instrument, the surface representation of an undercurrent. For the historian, then, it is merely an outward sign indicating the presence of something else. The object of this thesis inevitably shifted focus from the shadow of the thing to the thing itself.

In what follows, chapter one recounts the emergence and development of Positive theology and the demand of Christian humanism for practical programs to satisfy the spiritual requirements of the ordinary Christian. Chapter two is an exposition of Berullian spirituality as the synthesis of Christian humanism and theocentrism. Chapter three treats the establishment of the principal instrument of Berullian spirituality, the Oratory, and the subsequent political movements that halted its elan.

themselves of the dissertation in time to include its findings in their article.

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CHAPTER I

THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT:

REVIVAL OF SPIRITUALITY IN LATE SIXTEENTH CENTURY FRANCE

Before embarking upon an examination of Pierre de Bérulle's role in the Gallic Catholic Reformation, it will be necessary to survey the status or shape of theology contemporary to and acting upon the Catholic Reformation in general so that the ways in which it applied to France can be considered. Secondly, whereas durable institutions reflecting the new concern for programs of practical spirituality emerged throughout Europe, they did so last in France. Causes for the lagging development of institutions promoting practical Catholic spirituality in France will be suggested. Finally, we shall look briefly at how some of the educated Catholic elite of France, armed with a new spirituality now resting on firm dogmatic bases, sought to propagate this piety among ordinary Christians. This final point leads to the particular contribution of Bérulle.

1. AN ONGOING CHRISTIANIZATION OF EUROPE

For many years the accepted profile of the sixteenth century in Europe was that the growing Protestant movement had fostered a hostile counter-movement in Catholicism. In

this scenario the conservative forces of Catholicism were seen as reacting negatively to the reforms in practice, and later in doctrine, that were being championed by Luther and the second generation reformers. This reaction admittedly was belated due to widespread corruption among the hierarchy and to papal preoccupation with the dynastic ambitions of Habsburgs and Valois. The culminating "moment" of the reaction was the Council of Trent which met intermittently between 1545 to 1563. This interpretation of events operates on the supposition that the thing which needs explaining is Protestantism. In other words, this view of sixteenth century European society takes Luther's and Calvin's activity as its focus, as a turning point in the development of Western Christianity, and proceeds to understand subsequent events as consequent to it. Thus was born the term Counter-Reformation.

Historians of Christianity, most particularly those of Catholicism, have since argued convincingly for a modification of this profile.¹ They have pointed out that such a Protestant or Luther-oriented interpretation fails to consider the veritable tradition of reform movements that periodically shook the massive edifice of Christianity as had

¹H. Daniel-Rops, The Catholic Reformation, trans. John Warrington (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1963), pp. 1-4. Augustin Fliche and Victor Martin, eds., Histoire de l'Eglise depuis les origines jusqu'à nos jours (Paris: Bloud & Gay, 1934-), vol. 18: La Restauration Catholique, by Leopold Willaert. Marvin R. O'Connell, The Counter Reformation 1560-1610 (New York: Harper & Row, 1974), p. 29.

been made concrete in Catholic institutions. The *Devotio Moderna* which began at the end of the fourteenth century, for example, though initially suspect because its organizers had proceeded without hierarchical approval, is a clear example of these kinds of reform movements.² Necessarily, some among these historians have downplayed the role of Trent as initiator of Catholic reform activity though certainly not its importance as a symbol of the strength and depth of a movement that had finally touched the upper reaches of the hierarchy itself.³ Others, focussing on the institutional church, have persisted in assigning Trent the capital role of inaugurating true reform by first making possible a purge of unworthy members of the hierarchy and by doctrinally instituting the changes needed to insure the formation of a cadre of pious clergy.⁴ In either case, the contention is that a growing general cry for reform, long anterior to Luther, ultimately coalesced into two competing camps which are identified under the rubrics of Protestant Reformation and Catholic Reformation. For these historians, then, it is more accurate for one to speak not of a Counter-Reformation

²Admittedly, the *Devotio Moderna*, as with each of the many reform movements that Christianity has experienced, was endowed with qualities and emphases peculiar to it. This particular movement is the first that addressed the need for a deepening of personal spirituality among the laity as well as among its clerical adherents.

³Willaert, La Restauration Catholique, pp. 14-18.

⁴Daniel-Rops, The Catholic Reformation, p. 64 and pp. 131-138.

but of a Catholic Reformation. Not insignificantly, Protestantism, for them, remains a heresy.

Out of these historiographical evolutions in the history of Christianity there now comes a further mutation from the social historians of the Annales school.⁵ Drawing on copious data, Jean Delumeau concurs with Catholic apologists that it is more precise to speak of a growing general clamor, but where the previous historiography would add the words "for reform," Delumeau places "for Christianization." As Delumeau sees it, the issue is not reform in the sense of recapturing or recomposing that which once was and from which Christians have fallen. He posits, rather, a re-forming of believers, the intent or result of which was to bring them into line with Christian doctrine.⁶ The implication here, of course, is that the great mass of Europeans had never stopped believing in something.⁷ The true spirit of Christianity, however, had failed to penetrate and work an effect on the interior lives of the vast majority of the "faithful." Christian sacramental practices were no more than a thin covering, a veneer as it were, imposed by authorities of Church and state on an essentially still barbarous and superstitious people. Indeed, a crude

⁵Jean Delumeau, Catholicism between Luther and Voltaire, trans. Jeremy Moiser (Philadelphia: Burns & Oates, 1977).

⁶Ibid., pp. 175-202.

⁷Ibid., pp. 154-174.

syncretism of ancient beliefs and practices with those of Christianity was all that had been accomplished in even the most orthodox communities.

It bears mentioning that in all of this Delumeau is referring to the ordinary believer, lay and clerical, peasant and bourgeois, in the rigorous sense of those terms. Hence, the agents for reform, the educated Catholic elite, were always present and only needed some source of motivation to initiate, to undertake, the great movement that in fact engulfed Europe in the sixteenth century. The Reformation, then, Protestant or Catholic, in so far as it achieved a true permeation of the interior life and spirit of the ordinary believer, is an historical phenomenon best understood as the ongoing Christianization of Europe.

In no way is it the aim of the present study to attempt any confirmation or defense of Delumeau's provocative thesis. Yet the seductiveness of his argument, in terms of arriving at a satisfactory explanation for the "revival" of spirituality in sixteenth century France, cannot be denied. That there was at all a quickening or awakening in this period among the pious is well documented, as will be made evident below, and this awakening, indeed, occurred throughout Europe.

As far as a cause is concerned, all historians seem to agree that it was two-fold: On the one hand there was the dismal state of affairs in the institutional Church, accounts

of the low point to which the clergy and the monasteries had sunk are legion. On the other hand there was the deplorable neglect of the spiritual needs of the great mass of Christians. Any description of the first part of this two-fold cause would be superfluous. The monotony, however, of the usual litany of vices and abuses to which the institutional Church was given prior to its Reformation should not impinge upon the veracity of the historical accounts which relate these vices and abuses. In turning to the general failure of the Church in its pastoral mission, it is easy to see the failure as a logical consequence of the state of the institutional Church.

There is yet another factor to be worked into this formula. There were, in the upper levels of the Christian hierarchy, the Church's doctors, its theologians, hence its formulators of dogma and policy-makers for doctrine. Some among these, the educated Catholic elite, had grown weary, as it were, of the endless trivia that had become the stuff of Thomistic scholasticism. For them, the Reformation, Catholic and Protestant, began as the product of a new theology that assumed an adversarial posture toward the prevailing theology. In the reconstruction of sacred texts, Christian humanists felt that they had uncovered the true message of Christ, the Apostles and the Fathers that had been buried beneath an accumulation of tradition. As with the texts that they labored over to restore, they also called for a

stripping away of the vitiating formalism that had accreted for a thousand years.

From the vantage point of the twentieth century, it is possible to see the structure and organization of the pre-Reformation Church as a necessary response, in a sociological sense and not in a moral sense, to the larger social context from which it arose and within which it operated. Changes in this larger social context, unnoticed or ignored by the institutional Church, rendered Church institutions, traditions and practices obsolete. Post-Reformation Christianity, including the Tridentine Church, was the consequence of the lengthy process of redressing the discrepancies between Church and society. The notion of an ongoing Christianization of Europe applies to the educated Catholic elite as much as it does to the mass of ordinary Christians.

Born of Renaissance humanism, this new formulation of the study of God is known as Positive theology. Among the practitioners of Positive theology, one finds confirmed reformers, fervent Catholics as well as followers of Luther and Calvin. These, then, are the Christian humanists⁸ who

⁸Henri Bremond, Histoire littéraire du sentiment religieux en France depuis la fin des Guerres de Religion jusqu'à nos jours, 11 vols. (Paris: Bloud & Gay, 1913-1933), vol. 1: L'humanisme dévot (1590-1620), specifically denies that Calvin should be considered a Christian humanist because of his inhuman theology: ". . . Calvin nous humilie et nous accable, il désespère de nous: il n'est donc pas humaniste" (p. 11). Christian humanists, however, are perhaps better conceived of as educated men of letters, practitioners of the

had a concern for the development of a practical spirituality for the ordinary Christian. However, it is open to question whether such a development is uniquely to be found among Christian humanists, in the sense that all programs aimed at the spiritual life of the ordinary Christian bear a direct causal relationship to the theological evolution brought about by Christian humanism.

Such a thesis would seem to neglect the contributions of the *Devotio Moderna* to the sixteenth century kindling of spirituality. It is interesting to note, however, that the schools and houses of the Brethren of the Common Life spread throughout the northern Netherlands and the Rhineland. Monasteries affiliated to Windesheim were confined to approximately these same areas though some were to be found in Switzerland as well. The effects of this movement in terms of French spirituality, therefore, were indirect and secondary at best. The indebtedness of sixteenth century French mysticism, which is only the most prominent aspect of its spirituality, to Ruysbroeck, and to others, will be treated below. At this point, strict compliance with the chronology of events suggests that, in the case of France, it may be valid to posit a reformation among the educated

new science, exhibiting special concern for the application of the tools of the new science to sacred works with the aim of developing a more personal and immediate theology, regardless of whether that theology stresses man's infinite inferiority and contemptibility before the divine or celebrates human nature on the grounds that it was created and later redeemed by God.

Catholic elite that subsequently became a program for the ordinary Christian.

2. POSITIVE THEOLOGY

The European-wide development of a new spirituality, which most historians see as the common stock of the Protestant and Catholic Reformations, and which Delumeau, in a sociological context, sees as the ongoing Christianization of Europe, was, in France, largely the product of a new theology. This new theology, in turn, found its basis in the new science of the Renaissance: philology. Attendant with the new science, or, rather, making the new science possible, was a profound transformation in man's perception of the word. It was perhaps inevitable that the desire for a precise knowledge of ancient pagan words should ultimately spawn a similar desire in terms of the Sacred Word.

Application of philological methods to Scripture and the writings of the Fathers of the Church occurred with some anxiety. Erasmus wrote: "There is no danger that anyone will suddenly depart from Christ if he happens to hear that a passage has been found in the Scriptures which an unskilled or drowsy copyist has corrupted or some translator or other has rendered inexactly. That danger springs from other causes, which I prudently pass over here."⁹ The issue was

⁹Desiderius Erasmus (c. 1469-1536) in a letter to Martin Dorp as quoted by Robert Mandrou, From Humanism to Science, 1480-1700, trans. Brian Pearce (Editions du Seuil,

subject matter for much debate and the anxiety that was felt was not unique to the Christian humanists.

The defenders of Tradition were not only concerned with the possibility of sudden departures from faith. In humanists such as Erasmus, they correctly perceived a threat to their monopoly of the centers of learning. Knowledge of languages, which the critical study of ancient authors required, led to the founding of the Collegium Trilingue at Louvain in 1518 while at Paris, in 1531, it gave rise to François I's establishment of the Collège Royal.¹⁰ In England, in 1516, St. John's College was established at Cambridge and Oxford saw the opening of the "Erasmian college of Corpus Christi."¹¹

None of these establishments escaped the opposition of existing university organizations. In the case of the Collège Royal, it was necessary to place the new institution completely outside the contemporary university structure.¹² As for the others, however, the opposition was overruled and they were established *intra muros*. With the exception of Louvain's Collegium Trilingue, these new institutions owed their existence to royal patronage.

1973; New York: Penguin Books, 1978; Pelican Books, 1978), p. 47.

¹⁰Willaert, La Restauration Catholique, pp. 227-228.

¹¹Mandrou, Humanism to Science, p. 62.

¹²Ibid., pp. 60-61.

Finally, the faculty and the subjects they taught reveal the orientation of these new centers. At the Collegium Trilingue the three languages in question were Greek, Hebrew and Latin. The Collège Royal also offered courses in the three Biblical languages and had on its faculty Guillaume Budé (1467-1540), a former student of Lefèvre d'Etaples and at one time a friend of Erasmus. As for the colleges in England, John Fisher (1469-1535), as Chancellor of Cambridge from 1504, and Thomas More (1478-1535), in his many and varied public offices, were able to insure a humanist orientation.¹³

Further, in the midst of these institutional developments, humanist critical editions of sacred works were also appearing. Erasmus published the New Testament in Greek in 1516 along with his own Latin translation.¹⁴ Jacques Lefèvre d'Etaples (c. 1450-1537) published an edition of the Epistles of St. Paul in 1512. In 1524 and 1530 there appeared his editions of the New and Old Testaments respectively. His edition of the complete Bible in French was published in 1534.¹⁵ In Spain, a Franciscan of strict observance, provincial of his order and archbishop of Toledo, Francisco Ximenez de Cisneros (1436-1517), after founding the

¹³Ibid., pp. 60-62.

¹⁴The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, 2nd ed. (1974), s.v. "Erasmus, Desiderius."

¹⁵Mandrou, Humanism to Science, pp. 70-71.

University of Alcalá in 1498 and instituting the teaching of theology, Greek and Hebrew there, initiated and directed the production of the Complutensian Polyglot Bible. It was finished around 1517 and published about 1520.¹⁶ Along with the Hebrew Bible of Daniel Bomberg that had been published in 1518,¹⁷ it served as the model for numerous other editions.¹⁸ These few citations are but a minuscule sample of the prodigious outpouring of texts from humanist scholars.

As the commentaries and editions proliferated, the theology curricula of colleges, the old as well as the new, reflected the novel emphasis. Alongside the *quaestio*, *interrogatio* and *disputatio* of Thomistic scholasticism, the branches of Positive theology arose as both offspring and vindicators of the new science. Exegesis obtained autonomy. Patristics, as the study of the teachings of the Fathers of the Church, and patrology, the study of the Fathers as historical persons and writers, the history of dogma and Church history all took a place in the colleges.¹⁹ Though speculative (i.e. scholastic) theology, responding to the discoveries of the new method of textual criticism, experienced a renewal of sorts, it was the radical shift in

¹⁶Willlaert, La Restauration Catholique, p. 232.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 229.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 232.

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 242-53.

focus engendered by the branches of Positive theology that either lent impetus to or made possible a new spirituality.

Where scholastic theology had been concerned with interpretation of the givens of Revelation, Positive theology stressed the authenticity of the sources that constitute the observable trace of Revelation. From Salamanca there came a reconciliation of these divergent emphases.²⁰ Francisco de Vitoria (c. 1485-1546), following a long period of study and teaching at Paris (1506-1523), returned to Spain where, from 1526, he held the first chair of theology at Salamanca.²¹ Among his students was Melchior Cano (1509-1560).²²

Cano undertook the codification of the new theological method. He identified ten "places" or locales to which theologians had recourse in support of their arguments.

The first seven of these are proper to theology and rest upon authority: Scripture, apostolic Tradition (which includes all of Revelation), councils, doctrinal power of the Roman Church, saints and Fathers of the Church, scholastic theologians, and canonists. The last three are reason, philosophers and jurists, and history.²³

Cano, concerned that theologians be just as well-schooled in the critique of texts as in the formulation of scholastic argumentation, insisted on adherence to the Vulgate in its original text and distinguished between theological questions

²⁰Ibid., pp. 235-238.

²¹The Oxford Dictionary, s.v. "Vitoria, Francisco de."

²²Willaert, La Restauration Catholique, p. 236.

²³Ibid., pp. 238-239.

that deal directly with the supernatural and "those which are but the consequence of the former."²⁴

There were twenty-three colleges of religious orders at Salamanca, the oldest being that of the Dominicans of San Esteban. Beginning with Vitoria, the Dominicans of San Esteban would hold the first chair of theology for the next two hundred years. Many students of theology would leave Salamanca to spread the innovative curriculum, initiated by Vitoria, in universities throughout Europe.²⁵ As codified by Cano, Vitoria's theological method consisted in basing speculative theology on Scripture and the Fathers, as these had been newly revealed through the various branches of Positive theology. "This was a theological method *tempori aptior*, founded on the givens [of Revelation] as controlled by critique."²⁶

The most successful propagators of Vitoria's marriage of old and new theological methods were the Jesuits. Juan Maldonado (1533-1583) at the Collège de Clermont and the Collegium Romanum, Francisco de Suarez (1548-1617) and Francisco de Toledo (1533-1596) also at Rome and Gregoire de Valencia (1549-1603) at Ingolstadt are just a few of their number. But it was due to Dominicans that the movement spread throughout Iberia. Between Martin de Ledesma (d.

²⁴Ibid., p. 239.

²⁵Ibid., p. 187.

²⁶Ibid., p. 239.

1574) and Andre de Tudela, the reform was carried to Alcalá, Sevilla, Valladolid, Evora and Coimbra.²⁷ Outside the peninsula, Dominicans transplanted the new theology in Rome²⁸ and attempted to establish it at Cambridge and Oxford under the reign of Mary Tudor.²⁹

In much of Europe the continuing fallout of all this Christian humanist activity further stimulated existing threads of the reform, or gave rise to new ones. Movements emerged by the 1520's that focussed on the piety, the interior or spiritual life of the ordinary Christian. The separation of theology from spirituality, which had occurred in the Middle Ages with the erection of the former into a speculative science, was reversed.³⁰ This additional impetus was, certainly, in the form of providing sound theological bases for the changes and modifications being advocated. But in many instances one can discern on the part of these wielders of a new method in a very old science the excitement of discovery and the hope they held for achieving a true and precise knowledge of God and man's relation to him.

²⁷Ibid., pp. 237-238.

²⁸Juan Solano founded the Dominican College of Saint Thomas Aquinas in 1577. The college became a university due to Pope Gregory XIII's patronage in 1580. Willaert, La Restauration Catholique, pp. 191-192.

²⁹Ibid., p. 237.

³⁰Louis Cognet, Post Reformation Spirituality, trans. P. Hepburne Scott (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1959), p. 10.

It was Italy, birthplace of the new science, that "displayed the first symptoms of religious change even before Luther had made his presence felt, and certainly before the council [of Trent] and pope had taken the Church in hand."³¹ The Oratory of Divine Love, founded in 1497, advocated methodical prayer with the aim of achieving a personal, interior devotion. It spread from Genoa to Rome and included among its members Cajetan (1480-1547), future General of the Dominicans and papal legate to Germany, Giovanni Pietro Carafa (1476-1559), the future Pope Paul IV, and Iacopo Sadoletto (1477-1547), humanist and future secretary to Popes Leo X and Clement VII.³² From Carafa and Cajetan came the Theatines in 1524. Based on the religious community which St. Augustine had set up at Tagaste upon his return to Africa in 388, the Theatines were a congregation of clerks regular. That is, they lived according to a rule and professed vows but unlike monks, they were priests who followed the pattern of life of ordinary clergymen.³³ Their emphasis, aside from charitable work and service, was to inspire personal devotion among the laity through their preaching. A return, as they saw it, to the Christian life of the early Church -- an attitude analogous to the humanists' search for and

³¹Delumeau, Catholicism between Luther and Voltaire, p. 3.

³²Ibid., and Daniel-Rops, The Catholic Reformation, p. 10.

³³Daniel-Rops, The Catholic Reformation, pp. 21-22.

reconstitution of a kind of golden age of human institutions before the passage of time had introduced a decline or a falling away from the original, and therefore purer and morally superior, form. Many like-minded congregations followed, the Barnabites, the Somaschi,³⁴ and, for women, the Ursulines and the Guastillines.³⁵

In Spain, this same conception of a congregation of priests, professing vows and living according to a rule but devoted to the spiritual life and formation of the laity, found expression in Ignatius Loyola's Society of Jesus. Ignatius' Spiritual Exercises, largely written during his stay at Manresa, is a manual for personal conversion. Like the Exercises of the Spiritual Life, written in 1500 by Dom Garcia Ximenes de Cisneros, a copy of which Ignatius received while at the Benedictine monastery of Montserrat,³⁶ the Exercises employ methodical prayer in a technique calculated to bring the interior life of the exercitant to a conversion. Further, as one progresses through the stages prescribed in the Exercises, one is to arrive at a genuine form of contemplation. The whole experience is predicated on the notion that deliberate, conscious use of reflection and the imaginative powers will enable one to attain a state of

³⁴Delumeau, Catholicism between Luther and Voltaire, p. 4.

³⁵Daniel-Rops, The Catholic Reformation, pp. 24-25.

³⁶Ibid., p. 30.

spiritual perfection. Unlike mystical systems before it, the Ignatian Exercises were meant to open the possibility of experiencing true interior piety to all Christians. No longer were monks thought of as having a monopoly on spiritual experience of the divine through personal sanctification.³⁷

In the development of practical programs designed to minister to the spiritual needs of the ordinary Christian, e.g. the *Devotio Moderna*, those in Italy and Ignatius' Exercises, as well as in many others which have not been named, most obviously those of Protestantism, the hand of Christian humanism can be discerned acting primarily as collaborator. A similar movement in France must now be treated.

Jacques Lefèvre d'Etaples studied the classics at Paris and then the ancient philosophers as a student of Pico della Mirandola in Italy. Among his early works were translations of Aristotle's Introduction to Metaphysics and the Nichomachean Ethics, but around 1500 he came to focus on religious studies. As a teacher of astronomy, mathematics and Greek philosophy, he attracted a following of students "who became teachers in the opening years of the sixteenth century: Josse von Clichtove [1472-1543], who later was to teach Lefèvre's philosophy at the Sorbonne, . . . Guillaume

³⁷Rene Fülöp-Miller, The Jesuits: A History of the Society of Jesus, trans. F. S. Flint and D. F. Tait (Viking Press, 1930; New York: Capricorn Books, 1963), pp. 3-10.

Budé, [instrumental in obtaining royal favor for the Collège Royal],³⁸ and Guillaume Briçonnet the younger [c. 1472-1534]."³⁹ In 1521, Lefèvre joined his former pupil, Briçonnet, who, in 1516, had become Bishop of Meaux, the place where he was now busy implementing the reformist ideas of Lefèvre. Briçonnet the elder, counselor to Charles VIII, had become, following the death of his wife, Bishop of Saint-Malo, Archbishop of Rheims, then Archbishop of Narbonne and Cardinal.⁴⁰ A small part of the great wealth of the Briçonnets went for a press "in order to make available for distribution good texts of the Gospel."⁴¹ But in Paris the forces of speculative theology, the defenders of Tradition, reacted negatively towards the still young movement for reform. Syndic of the theology faculty, Noël Bédard (?-1536 or 37), attacked Erasmus' Paraphrases and Lefèvre's Commentaires in 1526 in writing. Then, in 1528, he obtained the University's condemnation of Erasmus and in 1530, the faculty "prohibited the statement that 'Holy Scripture cannot be fully understood without Greek, Hebrew and similar languages.'"⁴²

³⁸Mandrou, Humanism to Science, pp. 60-61.

³⁹Ibid., p. 70.

⁴⁰Le Petit Robert 2, 1981 ed., s.v. "Briçonnet (Guillaume)."

⁴¹Mandrou, Humanism to Science, p. 71.

⁴²Willaert, La Restauration Catholique, p. 241.

At the very moment when it appeared as though France, too, was to contribute to the program for reform from within, events of a decidedly more political nature were to frustrate the endeavor. "The very shadow of disaffection with the scholastic and above all the employment of the Positive was, to the nostrils of the conformists, the odor of Protestantism."⁴³ The condemnation of Luther's Theses in 1520 and his excommunication by Rome in 1521 was the signal for the defenders of Tradition at Paris to act similarly towards any such reforming in France. "The enemies of Briçonnet's circle at Meaux were not slow to accuse these reformers of being Lutherans."⁴⁴ By the 1540's, positions, and doctrines, had hardened.

Whatever Pope Paul III's hopes in convening the Council of Trent in 1545, rather than re-establishing the unity of Christendom, it made its division permanent. There is no greater symbol of this fact than the characteristic formula, traditionally employed by the Church in delimiting the boundaries of orthodoxy, that amounts to a statement of the doctrine or dogma that anathematizes its adherent.

If anyone says that man's free will, moved and stimulated by God, cannot cooperate at all by giving its assent to God when he stimulates and calls him... and that he cannot dissent, if he so wills, but like an inanimate creature is utterly inert and passive, let him be anathema.

⁴³Ibid., p. 240.

⁴⁴Mandrou, Humanism to Science, p. 90.

If anyone says that it is not in man's power to do evil, but that it is God who works evil as well as good, not only by permitting it but also by willing it directly and formally, in such a way that Judas' betrayal would be just as much his work as Paul's vocation, let him be anathema.

If anyone says that the grace of justification is granted only to those predestined to life, and that the others who are called are called, certainly, but do not receive grace, because they are predestined by God's power to evil, let him be anathema.

If anyone says that nothing is commanded in the Gospel beyond faith, that everything else, be it commandment or prohibition, is indifferent and up to the individual, and that the ten commandments have nothing to do with Christianity, let him be anathema.

If anyone says that the justified man's good works are gifts from God to the extent that they are not at the same time his own merits, or that, by the good works he achieves by God's grace and the merit of Christ, he does not genuinely merit an increase in grace and eternal life, as long as he dies in a state of grace . . . let him be anathema.⁴⁵

These repudiations of fundamental tenets of Protestantism leave no doubt as to the irrevocable course taken at Trent.

Of greater significance, however, as far as the work of the Council is concerned, was that even as it reaffirmed "the truth of its dogma," it "undertook to reform [the Church], thereby unquestionably admitting the well-foundedness of certain criticisms made earlier."⁴⁶ Criticisms, it bears recalling, that were made first by Christian humanists. "Reform which had been advocated for so long by the Erasmians was now put into effect" as the Church "sought to define

⁴⁵Canons from the Council of Trent as cited by Delumeau, Catholicism between Luther and Voltaire, p. 12.

⁴⁶Mandrou, Humanism to Science, p. 299.

afresh its relation to the laity."⁴⁷ Specifically, in 1566 Charles Borromeo's Catechismus ex decreto concilii Tridentini ad parochos was published;⁴⁸ in 1568 Pius V issued the Breviarium Romanum, the greatest virtue of which lay in reducing the amount of space accorded to lives of the saints which had come slowly to replace readings from Scripture;⁴⁹ and in 1570 the new Missale Romanum brought the Roman, Milanese, Gallican and Mozarabic rites into conformity.⁵⁰

The importance of these measures, however, pales in comparison to the Council's efforts in the realm of discipline. The entire hierarchy, from prelates to the lower clergy, were charged with the responsibility of attending more assiduously to pastoral concerns, especially the religious formation and instruction of the laity. Henceforth, all were to "see to the spiritual nourishment of their people, at least on Sundays and major feast days, either in person or through the delegation of other capable persons if they are legitimately prevented themselves, to the best of their ability and in conformity with the capabilities of their hearers."⁵¹ More specific decrees dealt with

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 154.

⁴⁸Delumeau, Catholicism between Luther and Voltaire, p. 24.

⁴⁹The Oxford Dictionary, s.v. "Breviary."

⁵⁰Daniel-Rops, The Catholic Reformation, p. 107.

⁵¹Decree of the Council of Trent as cited by Delumeau, Catholicism between Luther and Voltaire, p. 16.

residence, visits, the practice of granting benefices in *commendam*, the holding of multiple benefices and so forth. Finally, to insure a more virtuous secular clergy equipped with the necessary knowledge of theology, the Council decreed the erection of diocesan seminaries.⁵²

3. THE DELAY IN DEVELOPMENT OF A PRACTICAL FRENCH SPIRITUALITY

Reception by the national churches of the decrees of Trent were varied. In France, Trent fared badly. Historians see two reasons for French obduracy towards reform as conceived of by the Council: Gallicanism and the Wars of Religion. This is not the place to attempt an exposition of the many currents and cross-currents of these two phenomena. Still, their combined effect in terms of delaying the development of a uniquely French program to minister to the spiritual needs of the masses requires some comment.

Gallicanism in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries was, broadly speaking, an attitude on the part of prelates, jurists, the king and his counsellors and the faculty of theology at the University of Paris that the French Church possessed a degree of freedom from the ecclesiastical authority of the papacy.⁵³ This attitude was

⁵²Mandrou, Humanism to Science, p. 155.

⁵³The origins of Gallicanism have been traced as far back as the 3rd century. The liberties of a Gallican Church were first codified in the Codex Dionysio-Hadrianus in the reign of Charlemagne. The New Schaff-Herzog, s.v.

nuanced by the idiosyncratic interests of each of the aforementioned groups. Hence, in reference to prelates, one speaks of an episcopal Gallicanism, among jurists there was a parliamentary Gallicanism, for the king, a royal Gallicanism and, finally, at the University of Paris, which is really to say at the Sorbonne,⁵⁴ a theological Gallicanism.

The problem is further complicated by the fact that the positions taken by these several Gallicanisms did not always enjoy the unanimous support of all those who may be thought of as belonging to one or the other of these groupings. In other words, the several faces of Gallicanism, even while forcing the evolution of the larger concept that is implied in anti-Romanism, were themselves, under the force of their mutual antagonisms, undergoing constant revision in terms of their arguments and their plans of action.

"Gallicanism," J. F. Schultze. Also see New Catholic Encyclopedia, 1967 ed., s.v. "Gallicanism," C. Berthelot du Chesnay, and the Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique, (hereinafter referred to as DTC) 1920 ed., s.v. "Gallicanism" which proposes a simpler scheme in positing only two gallicanisms: political and ecclesiastic.

⁵⁴Early on in its existence the Sorbonne became confused with the University's *Faculté de Théologie* due to the preponderant influence of Sorbonne students in its ranks. In the 14th century more than two-thirds of the *maîtres régents* belonged to the Sorbonne. The continued vitality of the college is evidenced by the founding of no less than six chairs there between 1577 and 1625. Three reasons for the College's influence: its grand aula which permitted larger crowds to attend University and faculty functions; its library which loaned to Sorbonnistes and which could be consulted by others; the esprit de corps of the *messieurs de Sorbonne*, analogous to a religious order. DTC, columns 1903-1914.

The conciliarism of Pierre d'Ailly (1350-1420) and Jean Gerson (1363-1429), each at one time *Grand Chancelier* of the University of Paris, reflects the form of Gallican sympathies that obtained in the Faculty of Theology at Paris during the Grand Schism.⁵⁵ French theologians would continue to be the proponents of conciliarism right up to and including Trent. Their opposition to the Tridentine decrees, they insisted, stemmed from the lack of ecumenicity at Trent and the fact that Italian bishops had dominated the proceedings by their numbers. It had been, they said, an Italian council, a council of the pope, rather than the ecumenical council which they had always held to be the supreme and final arbiter of contending views on Church doctrine.⁵⁶

To this theologically based rejection of Trent, was added the support of parliamentary Gallicanism. This party's conception of a Church of France was of a "national church based on the conciliarist doctrine, where the authority of the spiritual power would be replaced by lay jurisdiction."⁵⁷ Dear to parliamentary Gallicanists was the *appel comme d'abus* which allowed them the opportunity "to invade ecclesiastical jurisdiction and, by their indulgence [of the appellants], assure themselves of partisans."⁵⁸ Of those insisting that

⁵⁵New Catholic Encyclopedia, s.v. "Gallicanism."

⁵⁶Willlaert, La Restauration Catholique, p. 375.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, p. 377.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*

the parlements register the Council's decrees as law in France, the jurists demanded to know why a reform of the French Church could not come from the present laws of the kingdom.

Parlementary Gallicanism took the form of a nascent nationalism in so far as it promoted loyalty to the state and obedience to its head, the king, in place of submission to the hierarchy of Christendom. Already in France the movement away from a social organization that responded to men's preoccupation with salvation to one in which the state would operate as the basic framework of people's lives was gaining coherence and momentum. In his work of 1594, Recueil des libertés de l'Eglise gallicane, Pierre Pithou (1539-1596), a magistrate in the Parlement of Paris, held that

the popes can neither command nor ordain anything, be it general or particular, that bears on the temporal affairs of countries or lands under obedience to the Most Christian King, and should they command or decree any such thing, the subjects of the king, even though they be clerics, are not bound to obey (article 4).

And, in the following article, he contended that

although the pope is recognized as sovereign in spiritual matters, nevertheless absolute and infinite power has no place in France, but is restricted and limited by the canons and rules of the ancient councils of the Church accepted in this kingdom (article 5).⁵⁹

The decrees of Trent posed the greatest difficulty to partisans of episcopal Gallicanism. On the one hand they

⁵⁹Pierre Pithou as cited by DTC, s.v. "Pithou (Pierre)."

recognized the need for reforms in order to respond to the criticisms being levelled by the Huguenots, and on the other they sought to protect and advance their liberties. They saw these latter as three-fold: administrative, fiscal and judicial.⁶⁰ Against the encroachment upon their liberties by parlements and the king, the bishops by and large supported the Council's decrees. Their efforts to have the decrees recognized failed repeatedly at Estates General and Assemblies of the Clergy.⁶¹ It was not until 1615 that a united clergy of France solemnly declared its autonomy from the state, legally received the Council of Trent and ordered provincial councils to do likewise.⁶²

The progress of the Wars of Religion,⁶³ while influencing the course of the complex relationships of competing Gallicanisms, was itself a significant cause for delaying a reform of the French Church. Even before the first bloodletting at Vassy in 1562, the failure of the Colloquy of Poissy, called in 1561 by the Queen Regent Catherine de Medicis (1519-1589) to resolve the disputes between Catholics and Protestants, revealed the extent to

⁶⁰New Catholic Encyclopedia, s.v. "Gallicanism."

⁶¹Stephen Wagley, "The Oratory of France, 1629-1672: A Social History" (Doctoral dissertation, Theses Division, National Library of Canada, 1976), p. 30.

⁶²Willaert, La Restauration Catholique, p. 394.

⁶³Richard S. Dunn, The Age of Religious Wars, 1559-1689 (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1970), pp. 20-31 presents an excellent brief account of the major twists and turns in this conflict.

which the differences already had become irreconcilable. In an age when the secular and religious spheres were virtually concentric, the spectacle of combat over religious disagreements is not inaccessible to one's understanding. Besides, "more than a third of the national patrimony of France was in Church hands."⁶⁴

A durable solution was possible only after the elimination of the leaders of the extreme parties and rival aristocratic factions (most often through the expedient of assassination: François I de Lorraine, second Duc de Guise, in 1563; Louis I, Prince de Condé, in 1569; Gaspard de Coligny in 1572 and his two brothers François and Odet, in 1569 and 1571 respectively; the royal pretender Henri I de Lorraine, third Duc de Guise, and his brother Louis de Guise, the Cardinal de Lorraine, both in 1588; and of course Henri III, Roi de France, in 1589). The party of the *Politiques*, derisively so called "because they preferred merely political goals to spiritual ones,"⁶⁵ advocated a policy of toleration. This policy, which permitted what Richelieu would call the "state within a state," ultimately prevailed.

The fact that the solution to the troubles was political, as opposed to one of a theological nature, had great significance for subsequent French Catholic spirituality. With "heresy" in their midst, the elite of the

⁶⁴Cognet, Post Reformation Spirituality, p. 56.

⁶⁵Dunn, Age of Religious Wars, p. 29.

now Roman and Tridentine French Church turned their attention to developing programs with two goals in mind: conversion of the "heretics" to regain lost ground, and programs for the instruction and the formation of the orthodox laity's mind and soul so as to prevent any further attrition in the body of the faithful.

4. DEVELOPMENT OF SALESIAN SPIRITUALITY: DEVOUT HUMANISM

From the end of the Wars of Religion, French religiosity began to experience the same renovation and renewal that had already made itself felt in other parts of Europe. In a rather dry catalog that embraces every conceivable mutation of religious life, Leopold Willaert, for France alone, lists no less than sixty orders, congregations and associations that were reformed, created or introduced into the country between 1580 and 1648.⁶⁶ The list, he admits, is only partial. At the very center of this

⁶⁶Some of the more important groups with an approximate date of their founding or of their institution of reform measures or of their introduction into France follow: Congregations of Canons Regular: the Genovéfaines in 1622, Notre Sauveur in 1623; Augustinian Orders: Augustins Déchaux about 1620, Prémontrés in 1618; Congregations of Benedictine houses: Exempts in 1580, Bretagne in 1604, Saint-Denis in 1614, Saint-Maur in 1621; Cistercians: Feuillants about 1580, Strict Observance in 1615; Carthusians in 1582; Mendicants: Observant Franciscans between 1594 and 1624, Capuchins in 1619, Trinitarians in 1596; novel congregations of priests: Oratorians in 1611, Lazaristes in 1625, Eudistes in 1643, Sulpiciens in 1641; female groupings: Feuillantines in 1588, Carmelites in 1604, Clarisses in 1606, Visitandines between 1610 and 1618, Jésuitesses and Calvairiennes in 1617, Sépulcrines in 1622; Tertiary Orders and pious associations: Franciscans in 1594, Obregons about 1600. Willaert, La Restauration Catholique, pp. 99-164.

explosion of religiosity was a transformation of spirituality, of the notion of personal sanctification, of individual Christian perfection.

Born Barbe Avrillot in 1566, a cousin of Pierre de Bérulle, the future Carmelite nun Marie de l'Incarnation (1614) married Pierre Acarie. Acarie had been a partisan of the League formed in 1576 by extremist French Catholics, ardent supporters of the regal pretensions of the Duc de Guise. Mme Acarie managed to secure a pardon for her husband from the tolerant Henri IV. In the beginning years of the seventeenth century, she opened her home to the devout Catholic elite of Paris. Among those attending the frequent reunions at the Acarie mansion in the *faubourg* of Saint-Antoine, one would variously find the Marquise de Maignelay, born Gondi and sister of the bishop of Paris, the Marquise de Bréauté, a future Carmelite, André Duval, highly regarded doctor of theology at the Sorbonne, M. Gallemant, secular priest and future Visitor of Carmelite houses, Pierre Coton, Jesuit and future confessor of Henri IV, Benet of Canfield, François de Sales or the young Pierre de Bérulle among many, many others.⁶⁷

Acarie's salon "was the starting point of a movement, the origin of that religious spring which revived French

⁶⁷Daniel-Rops, The Catholic Reformation, p. 366. Hedwige de Polignac, Une société de prêtres: l'Oratoire (Paris: Emile-Paul, 1968), p. 48. Cognet, Post Reformation Spirituality, p. 59.

Catholicism in the early years of the seventeenth century."⁶⁸ Chief among the theorists of this group was the Englishman Benet of Canfield (1562-1610) who published the Rule of Perfection, in France, in 1609.⁶⁹ As with the others in Acarie's circle, Canfield's spirituality was mystical in nature. He posited three wills of God. The first of these is a will that is external to the individual Christian and which has been made concrete in Revelation and in the hierarchy and discipline of the Church. The individual Christian's active life in the world, when in conformity with the Church, is in conformity to the deity's external will. The second will is interior. The deity, through graces, affections and illuminations, makes known to the individual soul its will. A soul faithful to these "gifts" enters true contemplation. The final will is "essential" or a will of essence. "The soul which attains to perfect conformity with this will enters a life of union with God, of transformation into God, which [Canfield] calls the supereminent life and describes as deiform."⁷⁰

The path to the supereminent, deiform life only begins with imaginative and discursive prayer. To attain true contemplation, one must ultimately strip away all images. The gulf that separates man and God is so great that human

⁶⁸Cognet, Post Reformation Spirituality, p. 59.

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 60. The following discussion of Canfield's mysticism is taken largely from Cognet pp. 59-63.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 61.

faculties of reason and understanding are merely impediments to attainment of conformity with the interior divine will. Entry into the supereminent life is achieved only upon the instigation of the essential divine will. Thus, it is the individual's initiative that realizes conformity to the external will, that first embarks upon the path to conformity with the interior will. Finally, through active annihilation or negation one leaves behind all that is human or other than divine so as to experience a passive annihilation, instigated by God, in the absorption of the soul into the supereminent or essential life of the deity. This is the end of the path, "the soul arrives at deiformity, a permanent and stable theopathic state. . . . Here the mystic recovers full freedom of action but his actions become those of the other who possesses him fully."⁷¹

Canfield's mystical spirituality draws heavily from the Rheno-Flemish school of mysticism and from the Pseudo-Dionysius. As Thomistic theology became an increasingly speculative science, late medieval mystics came to stress an interior piety. "Individual psychological states" were adjudged to be of greater significance than the vitiating superficial adherence to rites and sacraments. Achievement of true Christian interior piety became the subject of theoretical works produced by Rhineland and Flemish mystics. The writings of Jan Van Ruysbroeck (1293-1381) and Hendrik

⁷¹Ibid., pp. 61-62.

Herp, or Harphius (d. 1477), show the influence of Master Eckhart (c. 1260-1327), Johann Tauler (1300-1361) and Heinrich Seuse, or Suso (c. 1295-1366). These in turn had been greatly influenced by the anonymous author of writings long attributed to Dionysius the Aeropagite and today simply referred to as the Pseudo-Dionysius. Pseudo-Dionysian *theoria*, or contemplation, "neither derogates ecclesiastical authorities nor sets them up as a privileged coterie. . . . The contemplative life with its purgation, illumination, and union is open, therefore, to the totality of holy people and not to specialized renunciants alone, whether lay, clerical, or monastic."⁷² Christian humanists' attraction to neo-Platonism made them further sympathetic to Rheno-Flemish mysticism and the Pseudo-Dionysius.⁷³ In 1502 Lefèvre d'Etaples edited works of the Pseudo-Dionysius and in 1512 his Latin version of Ruysbroeck's Ornament of the Spiritual Espousals appeared.⁷⁴ French versions of Harphius came out in 1549, the anonymous Pearl of the Gospel in 1602, the Spiritual Espousals in 1606 and a complete Harphius in 1607.⁷⁵

Canfield's influence within the Acarie circle was great. To the extent that this group may be said to have

⁷²Ray C. Petry, ed., Late Medieval Mysticism (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1957), pp. 33-34.

⁷³Cognet, Post Reformation Spirituality, p. 15.

⁷⁴Ibid.

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 58.

formed a school of mysticism, it is largely Canfield's mysticism that it adopted. Though Christ is the only way to God, the final step of annihilation, the rejection of all created things, necessarily entails what mystics call the bypassing of the humanity of Christ since it is, after all, a created thing. In this school of mysticism that took form at Mme Acarie's reunions, which Cognet calls the Abstract School, the desired end of an unmediated union with the divine accomplished through annihilation of self and rejection of all created things, since such things cannot be of the essence of the divine which is eternal and therefore uncreated, the Platonic notion of the presence of the uncreated God in the soul's center, is denied.

For some in Acarie's circle, the mysticism of the Abstract School was too theoretical, too metaphysical. Those who could hope to follow this particular mystic's way were altogether too limited in number. This Christian humanist mysticism is properly so called because of its emphasis on the voluntary aspect of the individual initiating a process that results in conformity with the freely given graces of God. But it was expressed in language more speculative than practical.

It was reserved for an elite of Catholics, the well-born who had leisure, culture and a taste for ancient letters. . . . It was [François] de Sales who placed the entirety of the Christian Renaissance at the door of the most humble in a little book of devotion.⁷⁶

⁷⁶Bremond, Histoire littéraire, vol. 1, pp. 71-72.

A native of Savoy, François de Sales (1567-1622) was, by his studies, a humanist whose formation took place in the "Parisian milieu."⁷⁷ He became a priest in 1593 and devoted himself to converting the Calvinists of Chablais, a region of Haute-Savoie. In 1599 he was made coadjutor and in 1602 became titular of the bishopric of Geneva. While in Paris in 1602 he met Acarie and was introduced into her circle and took to attending the reunions whenever the opportunity presented itself. He thereby became familiar with the particular spirituality for which the group remains historically significant. His participation in the discussions, however, was very slight. At the Acarie's house he is, in Bremond's words, "at school." He preferred to observe, to listen, rather than participate too actively in their circle.⁷⁸ Between 1608 and 1609 he published his Introduction to the Devout Life. With the aid of Jeanne de Chantal, whom he converted, he founded the female order of Visitandines in 1610. In 1616 his Treatise on the Love of God appeared.

The genius of de Sales lay in his ability to vulgarize,⁷⁹ and to popularize the road to Christian perfection already worked out by philosophers and theologians. "Philosophy and theology [are] scholarly

⁷⁷Cognet, Post Reformation Spirituality, p. 63.

⁷⁸Bremond, Histoire littéraire, vol. 1, p. 97.

⁷⁹The word is Bremond's.

disciplines to which the masses are not invited but which envisage nonetheless the moral education and the sanctification of all."⁸⁰ His great merit lay in bringing "monastic devotion to popular devotion, [in bringing] the piety of the cloister into the world."⁸¹ For Bremond this is so capital a development in French spirituality as to require its clear distinction from Christian humanism. He calls it Devout humanism and de Sales "is the most exact and perfect expression" of it.⁸²

In the Treatise on the Love of God, the "magnificent charter of Devout humanism,"⁸³ de Sales reveals his fundamental belief in the beauty of human nature, in the irrepressibility of man's natural inclination to love God, and in the impossibility of man ever completely shutting out the influence of grace.⁸⁴ Belief in the beauty of human nature was a theme dear to most humanists. Among Christian humanists the beauty of human nature stemmed from the fact that it had been created by God. Pessimistic humanists, Luther, Calvin, Saint-Cyran, contended that the Fall had changed things such that human nature in its present state of sin was incapable of any good. Their theology focussed on

⁸⁰Bremond, Histoire littéraire, p. 71.

⁸¹Cognet, Post Reformation Spirituality, p. 62.

⁸²Bremond, Histoire littéraire, vol. 1, p. 104.

⁸³Ibid., p. 115.

⁸⁴Ibid., p. 117.

the sin of Adam and man's subsequent fall from grace. More optimistic humanists, such as de Sales, focussed on the Redemption, the gift of the Second Adam, which they interpreted as evidence of the lessened but still present natural beauty of man even after the Fall. For them the sin of Adam was best expressed in the phrase "*O, felix culpa!*"⁸⁵

Man's natural inclination to love God received a decidedly more metaphysical explanation from de Sales than his first point. He saw in the very structure of the soul the reason for man's love of God.⁸⁶ The soul is seen as being composed of many regions that correspond to the faculties that are employed in prayer and contemplation--activities that bear witness to man's love for God. The regions fall into two levels: the lower level is that which uses the knowledge derived from the senses. The upper level is reserved to the intellectual or mental. The knowledge produced here does not come from the senses. This upper level is itself further divided into three levels. In the first two, employing normal operations of thought, the intellect applies itself, on level one, to the things of human science, and, on level two, to the truths of faith. At level three, however, normal operations of the intellect cease. Here the intellect "is brought into action only by

⁸⁵Ibid.

⁸⁶What follows is adapted from Cognet, Post Reformation Spirituality, pp. 64-66, and Bremond, Histoire littéraire, vol. 1, pp. 115-127.

supernatural truths."⁸⁷ That is to say that at this point conscious effort ends and it is the activity of the deity that begins. De Sales explicitly rejected annihilation or absorption, for him the center of the soul, though it is not a particle of the deity trapped in a corporeal existence nor does it ever attain to participation in divinity, is nonetheless capable of union with the divine essence -- such a union, of course, being the goal of the spiritual life. Finally, with such a structure of the soul and given man's natural inclination to love God, it follows that man never is able to completely shut himself away from the influences of grace -- basically a Molinist conception of the efficaciousness of grace.⁸⁸

Through spiritual direction of those in his care and the publication of his works, de Sales enhanced considerably the opportunity for the ordinary Christian to tend to his spiritual needs. As Bishop of Geneva de Sales saw first hand the appeal of Calvinism to those in need of a personal, interior religion.⁸⁹ His response was to guide Christians to a realization that "the whole life of the believer must be

⁸⁷Cognet, Post Reformation Spirituality, p. 65.

⁸⁸Luis de Molina (1535-1600), Jesuit theologian who wrote Concordia liberi arbitrii cum gratiae donis, published in 1588. The central tenet is that the efficacy of grace lies in the divine foreknowledge of its free use by men rather than being intrinsic to it. This argument saves free will while admitting the plenitude of God's grace that is showered upon all.

⁸⁹Cognet, Post Reformation Spirituality, p. 63.

steeped in the religion to which they belong so that their life will match their external profession of Catholicism."⁹⁰ In this endeavor, de Sales was not alone. The contribution of Pierre de Bérulle must now be taken up.

⁹⁰Ibid.

CHAPTER II

PIERRE DE BERULLE

1. EARLY LIFE AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Pierre de Bérulle was born February 4, 1575 at the family chateau of Sérilly, located south-east of Paris. midway between Sens and Troyes, in what is now the Departement de l'Aube in the region of Champagne-Ardenne.¹ The sources provide few particulars regarding his parentage, but from what is given it is clear that the infant Bérulle was the product of a marriage between two wealthy and aristocratic families.

The de Bérulle line seems to have been authentically noble. The age of the ennoblement, however, is never mentioned and its source is no more than alluded in

¹This biographical sketch has been drawn from Henri Bremond, Histoire littéraire du sentiment religieux en France depuis la fin des Guerres de Religion jusqu'à nos jours, 11 vols. (Paris: Bloud & Gay, 1913-1933), vol. 3: La conquête mystique: L'école française; Louis Cognet, Post Reformation Spirituality, trans. P. Hepburne Scott, (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1959); M. Houssaye, Le Père de Bérulle et l'Oratoire de Jésus, 1611-1625 (Paris: E. Pilon & Cie., 1874); M. Leherpeur, L'Oratoire de France (Paris: Editions Spes, 1926); Jean Orcibal, Le Cardinal de Bérulle: Evolution d'une spiritualité (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1965); Adolphe Perraud, L'Oratoire de France au XVII et au XIX siècle, 2nd ed. (Paris: Charles Douniol, 1866); Hedwige de Polignac, Une société de prêtres: l'Oratoire (Paris: Emile-Paul, 1968); Stephen Wagley, "The Oratory of France, 1629-1672: A Social History," Theses Division, National Library of Canada, 1976.

classifying the family as *gens d'épée*. Bérulle's father, Claude, is identified as a counsellor of the Parlement of Paris. One source explains Claude's career in the magistracy as the result of submitting to his own father's wishes that he avoid a duel. Once having done so, we are told, Claude was obligated to abandon arms altogether.²

Only slightly more is told of Bérulle's maternal line, perhaps because the Séguier family is so well known through other sources -- not the least of which would be Voltaire's History of the Parlement of Paris. Louise Séguier, Bérulle's mother, was the daughter of Pierre Séguier, president of the Parlement of Paris; she was sister to Antoine Séguier, also a president of the Parlement, in his case, president for life; and, finally, she was cousin to the Pierre Séguier who was chancellor under Louis XIII and Louis XIV. The Séguier family, as with certain other families, was a veritable "parliamentary dynasty."³

Political troubles of the time required counsellor de Bérulle to be in Paris. Accordingly, shortly after Pierre's

²Polignac, Société de Prêtres, p. 45. This explanation seems gratuitous in light of the arguments made by Pierre Goubert in The Ancien Régime: French Society, 1600-1750, trans. Steve Cox (Armand Colin, 1969; New York: Harper & Row, 1973; Harper Torchbooks, 1974), pp. 153-192. Goubert points out that the majority of noblemen were not descended of a warrior class and, further, that they expected to be included in the affairs of state irrespective of their martial status.

³Albert Guerard, France in the Classical Age: The Life and Death of an Ideal, 1st ed., 1928, rpt. (New York: Harper & Row, 1965) p. 307.

birth, the family moved to the capital and settled into quarters in the Marais, an aristocratic and ecclesiastic center of the city since the Middle Ages.⁴ Here Pierre was raised, in a home very near the *hôtel* of the Duc de Guise, during the most unsettled times of the Wars of Religion.

Following his studies in grammar and the humanities at the colleges of Boncourt and Bourgogne, Bérulle began his attendance at the Jesuit Collège de Clermont in 1591. Upon completing the philosophy curriculum, he seems to have been pressured by his Séguier uncles to take up law. The extent to which Bérulle applied himself to his studies while in this *faculté* is open to question. Favorably disposed biographers prefer to explain his dismal performance in law to the workings of a supernatural agent with a higher moral purpose in mind than a career in the magistracy. More likely, he simply did not enjoy his legal studies and sooner spent his time in spiritual conversations and theological discussions.

Jean Orcibal, in his work on Bérulle's spiritual formation, informs us that at this point in his life, Bérulle took to frequenting the famous *salon* maintained by Mme Acarie (1566-1618) in her Paris home.⁵ The influence of the participants at these "spiritual colloquies" on Bérulle's own theological and devotional formation cannot be overestimated. However, one should hasten to add that the

⁴Le Petit Robert 2, 1981 ed., s.v. "Marais (le)."

⁵Orcibal, Evolution d'une spiritualité, p. 23.

influence was manifested in Bérulle's near complete break with the Abstract school.⁶

Being nothing short of an habitué of the "Belle Acarie's" brilliant gatherings of lofty devout, Bérulle's inattention to law finally convinced his uncles to let him pursue his own interests. He returned to Clermont near the end of 1594 to undertake his study of theology only to have his Jesuit masters banned from France in January of the following year.⁷ Not to be deterred, he transferred to the Sorbonne.⁸ Upon completion of his studies there, he retired to a Capuchin retreat for forty days and was ordained June 6, 1599.⁹

Since 1596 Bérulle had taken the Carthusian Dom Robert Beaucousin as his spiritual director. Now, the time for choosing a particular vocation having arrived, Beaucousin advised him to forgo professing any vows. Bérulle, it seems, had expressed a desire to join the Carthusians just as at other times he had shown interest in the Capuchins and the

⁶Cognet, Post Reformation Spirituality, p. 69.

⁷A student at the Collège de Clermont, Jean Châtel, made an attempt on Henri IV's life. The Jesuits, some of whom played leading roles in the development of the notion of justifiable regicide, were banned from the kingdom. Henri IV allowed them to return in 1603. Rene Fülöp-Miller, The Jesuits: A History of the Society of Jesus, trans. F. S. Flint and D. F. Tait (Viking Press 1930; New York: Capricorn Books, 1963), pp. 317-318.

⁸Leherpeur, L'Oratoire, p. 3.

⁹Perraud, L'Oratoire de France, p. 32.

Society of Jesus.¹⁰ He was, at this time (1600), named to look after the Jesuits' material interests in Paris.

In this same year Bérulle was chosen to assist Du Perron (1556-1618) in his debate with the Huguenot leader Du Plessis-Mornay (1549-1623) before Henri IV at Fontainebleau. In April of the following year, he was named *aumonier du roi*. This is an interesting development in light of the fact that the politics of the Acarie circle were so pro-Catholic. Further, Bérulle had found himself among the opponents of the king in the Marthe Brossier affair in 1597. His Traité des énergumènes argued against the position taken by a certain physician, Marescot, and seconded by Henri IV, who believed the women to be simply hysterical rather than demoniac. Orcibal points out that at this period the young Bérulle "was especially attached" to the Capuchins, those responsible for effecting the exorcism.¹¹ That the affair was considered at all important to the king is indicated by the imprisonment of Brossier by royal order on the grounds that anti-Huguenot sentiment had been stirred up over the matter.¹² In any case, as far as Bérulle's royal patronage is concerned, it is perhaps just as easily explained either by a genuine desire or a genuine disinterestedness on Henri's part in regards to Catholicism.

¹⁰Orcibal, Evolution d'une spiritualité, p. 24.

¹¹Ibid., p. 35.

¹²Wagley, "A Social History," p. 34.

From 1602 (or 1603) to 1604, under the influence of the Acarie circle, Bérulle was involved in the effort to establish the reformed Carmelites in France.¹³ Even before leaving for Spain in February of 1604, Bérulle was named third superior of the Carmelites in France, the other two being André Duval and Jacques Gallemant. Surmounting many obstacles, the Acarie forces returned from Spain in October with their cargo of Carmelites, none of whom could speak French.

In 1606 Bérulle made his way south, visiting César de Bus, founder of the French Doctrinarians, and François de Sales. It is supposed that the purpose of his visit was to discuss different means to effect a reform of the secular clergy in France.¹⁴ At about this time, though apparently unrelated to his apostolic zeal, Bérulle came to abandon his earlier inclination to the Abstract school and began to more fully develop his Christocentrism.¹⁵ In the period from between 1606 and 1608 to 1614, Bérulle's spirituality experienced a great progression.¹⁶

This progression owed much to his preoccupation with theological controversy -- an occupation in which Bérulle had been engaged since 1600. By 1608 Bérulle had moved to a

¹³Cognet, Post Reformation Spirituality, p. 69.

¹⁴Orcibal, Evolution d'une spiritualité, p. 51.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 45-47.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 149.

conception that united the Church and the Eucharist in the mystical Body of Christ. In arguments for the conversion of Calvinists Bérulle came to insist upon a great correspondence between the

author of nature and the author of grace. . . . The Church, being the living image of the divine essence and the work of the Holy Spirit, it is necessary that [*missio*, or the action of sending] hold the same place among men as procession does among the divine persons. . . . It belongs to God alone to send without being sent and Jesus-Christ does nothing but by mission from his Father. But [Jesus] conferred to his apostles the exclusive power to send that he himself possessed. . . . The conclusion [in this argument, is a condemnation] in the name of the trinitarian hierarchy of those who reject the ecclesiastical hierarchy. The celestial and divine functions of the latter [include] cooperation in the salvation of souls and in dispensing the mysteries of God, that is, both the doctrine and the sacraments.¹⁷

In this, the "first oratorian page of the Berullian opus, the theme of mission already provides the opportunity to comment on the priestly Prayer."¹⁸

Bérulle's controversy with the Calvinists over the Eucharist was also of great importance for his own development of the notion of the divinization of humanity in Christ. Calvinists did not deny the Eucharist to be a sacrament in so far as it was the unification of God to man.

But their position on the real presence prevented them from considering Jesus as an object of adoration. Nor could they see in the Eucharist a

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 60-61.

¹⁸Ibid. There is no question that by this capitalized "prayer" Orcibal is making reference to Bérulle's more fully developed notion of "elevation" which necessarily concludes in "adherence." See below, pp. 66-69.

sacrifice, because they refused to admit any other than that of the Cross.¹⁹

Against accusations of idolatry, Bérulle argued that human weakness makes recourse to the concrete necessary. He also argued that a

consequence of the Incarnation of him 'to whom it is pleasing to incorporate himself, not for a time, but for ever in human nature' [was the establishment] of a new religion in this world, founded on the belief and adoration of this mystery, at once a divine and corporeal religion.²⁰

Finally, Bérulle took issue with the Protestant emphasis on Christ as Savior only. For him, the "price and sacrifice for our redemption is also the tribute and sacrifice of our religion by which we render homage for our perpetual servitude to his divine majesty."²¹ Bérulle's Christocentrism is thus carried one step closer to the idea of "adoration by state" where he writes "Adore him, adoring his eternal Father in his Eucharist, by this his present state. Let us unite our actions to his actions, our adoration to his."²²

A properly so-called Berullian spirituality began to develop only after Bérulle had made a break with the abstract mysticism of the Acarie circle which had no place for the

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid., p. 61-62.

²¹Berulle as quoted by Orcibal, Evolution d'une spiritualité, p. 62.

²²Ibid.

humanity of Christ since it held the hypostatic union to be attainable only in the complete rejection of all created things. Bérulle's activity in theological controversy brought him to a refusal of this position.

Against the Protestant position that the bread at mass is but a sign and symbol and that the mystical Body of Christ is but the "'operation of our spirit, the energy of our faith, the interior attitude' of love," Bérulle held that the "'Eucharist results in Jesus-Christ living in us corporeally' and the effects of his physical presence in us surpass those of the *theological* virtues of faith, hope and love." Bérulle's Eucharistic realism was drawn not only from St. Cyril, the fifth century Patriarch of Alexandria, but also from Luis de Leon's (1527-1591) Nombres de Cristo.²³

Bérulle came to argue that by universal analogy the joining of humanity to divinity in the Incarnation, imitated the unity of the Trinity. The Incarnation, being the model for all other mysteries, is copied in the Eucharist. This Platonic Christology of St. Cyril was popular among Parisian

²³De Leon, an Augustinian and a mystic, was in prison from 1572-1576 by order of the Inquisitor General Manriques for his Song of Songs which was regarded as an Illuminist work. The *recogido* Illuminati practiced a "technique of the interior life and mental prayer" that sought complete withdrawal from all created things as well as the soul so as "to be freely penetrated" by grace. They were victims of the Inquisition on the grounds that their doctrines reflected some Lutheran tenets. e.g. justification by faith, worthlessness of external works and "illusory character of devotional practices." Cognet, Post Reformation Spirituality, pp. 27-33.

humanists at the time.²⁴ Bérulle sought to demonstrate that this "Eucharistic realism was compatible with a spirituality of the mystical body" by appealing to a principle of natural law. In natural law the oldest or most primitive thing in a species influences all subsequent things in the species. Likewise, the Body of Christ, which is the first of all bodies, being united to the divinity, constitutes a link between all humanity and God as well as a link among men. Bérulle further contended that "St. Paul attributed the power and the dignity to perfectly compose the mystical body not to faith or spirit but to the body of Christ received in the Eucharist."²⁵

In sum, "Bérulle's study of the Greek Fathers, required of him as a controversialist, profoundly marked his [mature] spirituality."²⁶ His Christology, slowly worked out over an approximately seven year period, was finally given full and coherent expression in his mature works, primarily in numerous "opuscules de piété" and his twelve Discours des Grandeurs de Jésus. Increasingly, he came to a true Christocentrism that took the Incarnation as its focus. This was so because in the Incarnation Bérulle saw the model for all other divine mysteries. The neo-Platonic notion of unity

²⁴Orcibal, Evolution d'une spiritualité, p. 66.

²⁵Berulle as cited by Orcibal, Evolution d'une spiritualité, p. 69.

²⁶Ibid, p. 71.

in the Godhead was seen as the principle that prevailed among the persons of the Trinity. The essence, the substance, the being of these three persons lay in their mutual relations. Similarly, the relation between divinity and humanity established in the Incarnation effected a true substance in humanity and placed man in rapport with divinity. The Church, the living expression of the Incarnate Word, Christ's mystical Body, was also seen as operating on this principle of unity. In its practices it rendered homage to the divinity whom it pleased to pull man from non-being and conserve unceasingly in a state of nature that afforded him a rapport with divinity. Of paramount importance, then, for an understanding of Berullian Christocentrism, is that the exinanition of Pauline kenoticism be conceived of as a fulfillment of the divinity and of humanity and not a suspension or a renouncing of the former that necessitates a parallel self-annihilation in the individual Christian to achieve a rapport with the divinity. The ramifications of this conception upon Berullian spirituality are of the highest order and the mention of it here requires that a full exposition of Bérulle's mature spirituality no longer be delayed.

2. BERULLIAN SPIRITUALITY²⁷

Bérulle's spirituality was preserved in the works of the mature man. His Bref discours de l'abnégation intérieure of 1597 and his Traité des Energumènes of 1599 do not figure among these latter and therefore do not figure in the task at hand. The works, with their date of publication, that do figure in the following exposition of his doctrine are Discours des Grandeurs de Jésus, the first six discourses in 1622, all twelve in 1623; Mémorial pour la direction des supérieurs, 1625; Elévations à Dieu sur le mystère de l'Incarnation, 1625; Elévation sur sainte Madeleine, 1627; Lettres aux religieuses de N.D. du Mont-Carmel, 1627; Vie de Jésus, 1629; numerous "opuscules de piété" of undetermined dates.

Berullian spirituality rests upon two fundamental orientations: theocentrism and the Incarnation. By theocentric spirituality is meant one which is God-centered in the sense that the interior devotion of the individual is to God by virtue of the essential nature of the deity itself rather than for any salutary effect which the individual may hope or be promised to gain through such an interior devotion. Necessarily this implies a psychological state

²⁷This exposition of Bérulle's spirituality would have been impossible without the magisterial treatment it receives in Henri Bremond's third volume of the Histoire littéraire du sentiment religieux en France. Bremond has been justly credited with effecting what amounts to a rehabilitation of Bérulle, of rescuing him from "inouï."

that is achieved only by an activity of self-abnegation. The individual must lose all sense of self, all concern for the self, so as to contemplate fully and uniquely the divinity of the deity.

A great difficulty is encountered, however, because the qualities of divinity are infinitely superior to and beyond the reach of the human spirit. Thus, the Incarnation is the second great orientation in Berullian spirituality. In this, the greatest of the divine mysteries, God joined his divinity to humanity and thereby revealed to his creation that much and that part of the divine essence that he determined to be within the capacity of his creation to comprehend.

Berullian theocentrism²⁸

Berullian spirituality emphasizes its theocentrism to a degree that is not common to the "schools" of spirituality either before it or contemporaneous to it.²⁹ The notion of God as the aim and goal of mankind may be conceived of, or interpreted, as either theocentric or anthropocentric, as either "we are for God" or "God is for us." Bremond suggests that "out of preference, Christian thought had long placed

²⁸All passages of Bérulle's work in this discussion, unless otherwise noted, are from Pierre de Bérulle, Oeuvres complètes du Cardinal de Bérulle, 2 vols. (reproduction of the 1st ed., 1644, Villa Béthanie, Monsoult: Maison d'Institution de l'Oratoire, n.d.). The translations that appear in the notes to these passages are mine.

²⁹Bremond, Histoire littéraire, pp. 23-43.

itself in the anthropocentric point of view."³⁰ From Augustine to the schoolmen, the prevailing concept was one of the soul of man in distress until it found repose in God, that God made man for man to find his beatitude in God. Clearly, the emphasis here is on man's salvation which can be found only in God.

In contrast to this anthropocentric view of creation, an orientation toward a theocentrism, first launched by St. Bernard and reinforced by St. Francis, began to operate in the Christian conscience.³¹ In so far as Bérulle may be accredited with initiating a spiritual revolution, it is in the sense that "with him and by him, theocentrism, already dear to the mystics, but which, for good or bad, was guarded, was rare, was complicated or esoteric, liberated itself, grew, was simplified, was brought to the light of day, offered itself and imposed itself in the prayers of all."³² In Bérulle's words:

A cet effet, il faut premièrement regarder Dieu, et non pas soy-mesme, et ne point operer par ce regard et recherche de soy-mesme, mais par le regard pur de Dieu.³³

³⁰Ibid., p. 25.

³¹Ibid., p. 26.

³²Ibid., p. 29.

³³"To this end one must be concerned foremost with God and not with himself, and not at all engage in this concern and search for himself, but for the pure concern of God." Bérulle, Oeuvres, p. 1078.

François Bourgoing, disciple of Bérulle and author of the preface to the 1644 edition of Bérulle's Oeuvres complètes, further supports this notion of Berullian theocentrism as revolutionary in Christian spiritual practice when he writes that Bérulle

a renouvelé en l'Eglise. . . l'esprit de religion, le culte suprême d'adoration et de révérence due à Dieu. . . . Plusieurs se portent à Dieu par le motif de sa bonté, peu par l'adoration profonde de sa grandeur et de sa sainteté. . . . Mais icy nous sommes enseignés à estre vrayes Chrétiens, à estre Religieux de la primitive Religion.³⁴

Finally, in Bérulle's Second discourse on the state and grandeurs of Jesus, is the following conceptualization of his theocentrism:

Un excellent esprit de ce siècle a voulu maintenir que le soleil est au centre du monde, et non pas la terre; qu'il est immobile, et que la terre proportionnement à sa figure ronde se meut au regard du soleil: par cette position contraire satisfaisant à toutes apparences qui obligent nos sens à croire que le soleil est en un mouvement continuel à l'entour de la terre. Cette opinion nouvelle, peu suivie en la science des astres, est utile, et doit estre suivie en la science du salut.³⁵

³⁴"has renewed the spirit of religion in the Church, the supreme worship of adoration and of reverence which is due God. . . . Many come to God motivated by his goodness [i.e. by what God offers], few by a profound adoration of his grandeur and his sanctity. . . . But here [in the Oratory] we are taught to be true Christians, to be the religious of the primitive religion." Bérulle, Oeuvres, pp. xxiii-xxiv.

³⁵"A great mind of this century sought to maintain that the sun is at the center of the universe, and not the earth; that it is motionless, and that the earth, in proportion to its round shape, is moving beneath the sun: thus satisfying all the experiences of our senses which lead us to believe that the sun is in continual movement around the earth. This novel opinion, scarcely followed in the science of the stars, is useful and should be followed in the science of

Bérulle, too, was conscious of the revolutionary quality inherent in his emphasis on a worship or cult of God based upon and oriented towards the deity himself as opposed to the salvation which the deity held for man. His novel emphasis was as radical and its consequences every bit as far-reaching in the science of man's relationship to God as Copernicus' new perception of the relationship between the planets and the sun in the science of astronomy.

Devotion to the Incarnation

The second great limb of Berullian spirituality is devotion to the Word Incarnate; devotion that is, at one and the same time, to the double nature of Christ. These two natures of Christ, joined together "by a link so dear, so strict, so intimate as to be the unity of a single person: the divinely human and humanly divine life of the God-Man."³⁶

Or par cette Unité si pénétrante, si puissante et si permanente, Dieu est homme vraiment, réellement et substantiellement: Et l'homme est Dieu personnellement, et Dieu et l'homme ne constituent qu'une mesme Personne, laquelle est subsistante en deux natures si diverses, et si éloignées l'une de l'autre. Et toutefois ces natures, ces états et ces conditions qui ont tant de différence et d'inégalité, sont conjointes si divinement et si intimement, si inséparablement et si confusement selon les définitions des saints Conciles, que la Foy reconnoist et adore son Dieu en deux natures si différentes, et que l'esprit humain et Angélique se

salvation." In the margin of this passage Bérulle wrote the name "Nicolaus Copernicus." Bérulle, Oeuvres, pp. 171-172.

³⁶Bérulle, Oeuvres. pp. 770-771 as cited by Bremond, Histoire littéraire, vol. 3, p. 53.

perd en l'Unité et en la diversité de ce très-haut Mystère.³⁷

In this divine linkage of God and Man, Bérulle sees the method and means whereby the divinity, infinitely superior to man, chose to communicate to its creation.

Car le nom, la grandeur, la vertu, la dignité, la Majesté de Dieu, en tant qu'elle est communicable à la Créature, réside et repose en cette humanité: Dieu la joint à soy, la vivifie en soy, et la rend consubstantielle avec sa Divinité. Au moyen dequoy quand elle est adorée, Dieu est adoré en elle; et quand elle parle, quand elle marche, Dieu est parlant et marchant; et ses pas doivent estre baisez, et ses paroles [sic] écoutées, comme estans les pas et les paroles d'un Dieu. . . Ainsi Dieu incompréhensible se fait comprendre en cette humanité: Dieu ineffable se fait ouyr en la voix de son Verbe incarné; et Dieu invisible se fait voir en la chair qu'il a unie avec la nature de l'Eternité; et Dieu épouvantable en l'éclat de sa grandeur se fait sentir en sa douceur, en sa bénignité et en son humanité. . . .³⁸

³⁷"By this unity so penetrating, so powerful and so permanent, God is truly man, really and substantially; and the man is God in his person, and God and the man compose but one person, which is substance in two natures so diverse, is living in states so different, and is placed in conditions so removed the one from the other. Nevertheless, these natures, these states, and these conditions which are so different and unequal, are joined so divinely and so intimately, so inseparably and so confusedly, according to the definitions of holy councils, that faith recognizes and adores its God in two natures so different, and human and angelic spirit loses itself in the unity and the diversity of this very great mystery." Bérulle, Oeuvres, p. 220.

³⁸"For the name, the grandeur, the virtue, the dignity, the majesty of God, such as can be communicated to the creation, resides and reposes in this humanity. God joins it to himself, vivifies it in himself, and renders it consubstantial with his divinity. In this way when it [this humanity made divine] is adored, God is adored in it, and when it speaks and when it walks, God is speaking and walking and his steps are worthy of kisses and his words of listening to even as are the steps and words of God. . . . In this way, incomprehensible God makes himself understood in this humanity; ineffable God makes himself heard in the voice of

Whereas the human life of Jesus was frequently employed by schools of spirituality as a model for the conduct of one's life on earth, for Bérulle it was above all a model for the conduct of one's life as regards God. Differing greatly from a spirituality as conceived by Ignatius Loyola, Bérulle presented the earthly life of Jesus as the unique example of the perfect servant of and sacrifice to God.

Vous estes encore ce Serviteur choisi qui seul servez à Dieu comme il est digne d'estre servi, c'est à dire, d'un service infiny; et seul l'adorez d'une adoration infinie, comme il est infiniment digne d'estre servy et adoré: Car avant vous cette Majesté suprême ne pouvoit estre servie et adorée ny des hommes ny des anges, de cette sorte de service, par lequel elle est animée et adorée selon l'Infinité de sa grandeur, selon la Divinité de son Essence, et selon la Majesté de ses personnes. De toute éternité il y avoit bien un Dieu infiniment adorable: mais il n'y avoit pas encore un Adorateur infiny; Il y avoit bien un Dieu digne d'estre infiniment aimé et servy; mais il n'y avoit aucun homme ny serviteur infiny propre à rendre un service et un amour infiny. Vous estes maintenant, O Jésus! cet Adorateur, cet homme, ce Serviteur, infiny en puissance, en qualité, en dignité; pour satisfaire pleinement à ce devoir, et pour rendre ce divin hommage.³⁹

his Word made incarnate; and invisible God makes himself seen in the flesh which he has united with the nature of the eternal; and God, terrible in the sight of his grandeur, makes himself felt in his sweetness and magnanimity and in his humanity." Bérulle, Oeuvres, p. 220.

³⁹"You [Jesus] remain the chosen servant who alone serves God as he is worthy to be served, in other words, by an infinite service,* and alone adore him with infinite adoration, as he is infinitely worthy of being served and adored. Because, before you, this supreme majesty could not be served and adored neither by man nor by angels, with the kind of service by which it [the majesty] is loved and adored according to the infinity of its grandeur, according to the divinity of its essence, and according to the majesty of its persons. From all eternity there has well been a God to be infinitely adored, but there was not yet an infinite adorer.

Bérulle distinguishes two aspects in Jesus' perfect adoration of God. These are *états* and *actions* or, simply, states and acts.⁴⁰ Acts are ephemeral and of less importance for Bérulle. States, on the other hand, conceived by Bérulle as states of being, are of long duration and, in this case, "since it has to do with a divine person, has the characteristic of being eternal."⁴¹ Each of Jesus' acts corresponds to a state of being. Thus, the act of Jesus' birth is seen as corresponding to an eternal state of being of the infant Christ. Similarly, the act of Incarnation is eternal, and so forth.

Ce jour de l'Annonciation est le premier jour de la vie de Dieu sur la Terre. . . [et] c'est un Mystère permanent, et qui a commencé pour durer toujours. . . L'Incarnation est un état permanent, et permanent dans l'Eternité. Sans cesse Dieu fait don de son Fils à l'homme; sans cesse ce Fils qui est le don de Dieu, donum Dei, se donne luy-mesme à notre humanité: sans cesse le Père Eternel engendre son Fils dans une nouvelle nature, et le Fils procède sans cesse de luy par cette nouvelle génération, comme son Fils et Vassal tout ensemble; et en cela consiste le Mystère

There was well a God worthy of being infinitely loved and served, but there was not a man nor an infinite servant proper to render an infinite service and love. You are now, O Jesus!, this adorer, this man, this servant, infinite in power, in quality, in dignity, so as to fully satisfy this duty and to render this divine homage." Bérulle, Oeuvres, pp. 190-191.

*Service as in the ensemble of charges and obligations to God.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 1062.

⁴¹Bremond, Histoire littéraire, vol. 3, p. 65.

de l'Incarnation, lequel partant est un Mystère permanent, et non une action passagère.⁴²

And again, in a pious work that the bears the title De la perpétuité des mystères de Jésus-Christ,

Il faut considerer l'infinité qui y est communiquer par l'infinité de la Personne qui les accomplit en sa Nature humaine. Il faut peser la perpétuité de ces Mystères en une certaine sorte: Car ils sont passez en certaines circonstance, et ils durent et sont présens [sic] et perpétuels en certaine autre manière. Ils passez quant à l'exécution, mais ils sont présens quant à leur vertu, et leur vertu ne passe jamais, ny l'amour ne passera jamais avec lequel ils ont esté accomplis. L'esprit donc, l'estat, la vertu, le mérite du Mystère, est tousjours présent. . . . L'estat intérieur du Mystère extérieur, l'efficace et la vertu qui rend ce Mystère vif et opérant en nous. . . est tousjours vif, actuel et présent à Jesus.⁴³

⁴²"The day of the Annunciation is the first day of the earthly life of God. . . and this mystery lasts forever, was begun so as to take place eternally. . . . The Incarnation is a permanent state, permanent in eternity. Unceasingly, God makes a gift of his son to man. Unceasingly, this son who is the gift of God, *donum Dei*, gives himself to our humanity. Unceasingly, the eternal Father begets his son in a new nature and the son unceasingly proceeds from him by this new generation as his son and servant at one and the same time. In this consists the mystery of the Incarnation, which as such is an eternal mystery and not an ephemeral act." Bérulle, Oeuvres, p. 754.

⁴³"One must consider the infinity [in the mysteries of Christ] that is communicated by the infinity of the person who accomplished them in his human nature. One must weigh the certain kind of perpetuity of these mysteries, because in some respects they passed and in other respects they remain and are present and perpetual. They passed in terms of their execution, but they are present in terms of their virtue, and their virtue will never pass, nor will the love with which they were accomplished ever pass. The spirit, then, the state, the virtue, the merit of the mystery is always present. . . . The interior state of the exterior mystery, the efficaciousness and the virtue which renders this mystery alive and operating in us. . . is always alive, immediate and present in Jesus." Bérulle, Oeuvres, p. 886.

The states of Jesus are abstract. They are a conceptualization of his "divinely human and humanly divine" acts while on earth. They exist in Christ and are eternal because he is eternal. For Bérulle, we are obliged "to treat these things and mysteries of Jesus, not as things past and deadened, but as things alive and present, indeed, eternal, and from which we have also to harvest a present and eternal fruit."⁴⁴ That present fruit is realized in the activity of adherence, in one's interior life, to appropriate states of Jesus. One applies oneself, links oneself to Jesus and thereby to a sanctified interior life.⁴⁵

It must be mentioned that Berullian spirituality did not limit itself to "the acts, so few in number, which the Gospel has preserved" for the extrapolation of states of Jesus.⁴⁶ The entire life of Jesus, the unknown as well as the known, is viewed as material for arriving at definitions of various and diverse states. A disciple of Bérulle, Father Lejeune wrote in one of his sermons that Bérulle

prenait tant de plaisir à penser au Fils de Dieu, que, pour honorer ses mystères et tous les états de sa vie, en détail et en particulier, il en faisait comme l'anatomie. . . . [Il nous à enseigner d'] honorer les premiers actes de Jésus, la première élévation de son esprit à Dieu son Père, la première effusion de son coeur envers les hommes, ses premiers regards sur la Vierge, ses premiers cris enfantins, la première goutte de son sang dans la Circoncision,

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Bremond, Histoire littéraire, vol. 3, pp. 72-74.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 76.

sa première prédication, le premier moment de sa vie glorieuse, etc. . . Honorer tous ses ages, tous les états et les périodes de sa vie, sa divine enfance, son adolescence, sa jeunesse et son age plus avancé, tous les battements de son coeur, tous les mouvements de son corps, et toutes les affections de son âme. L'honorer en tous les lieux ou il a été.⁴⁷

The states of Jesus, then, are fluid idealizations of the constituent parts of his personality and are not limited to those which may be inferred from the specific acts of his life.

As indicated above, the individual Christian appropriates the states of Jesus and, in adhering to it, enjoys a sanctification of his interior life. This aspect of Berullian spirituality stems from a particular view of Christ as "a divine capacity of souls," as the soul's "source of life which [it lives] in him."⁴⁸

Il y a trois différentes sortes de vie, ou pour mieux dire, trois manières de vie. La première est d'avoir la vie de soy et en soy, et cela ne convient entre tous les vivans qu'au Père éternel: La seconde est d'avoir la vie en soy, et ne l'avoir de soy, et

⁴⁷"took such pleasure in thinking of the Son of God, that, in order to honor his mysteries and all the states of his life, in detail and particularly, his approach was anatomical. . . . [He taught us to] honor the first acts of Jesus, the first prayer of his spirit to God his Father, the first effusion of heart toward men, his first sight of the Virgin, his first infant cries, the first drop of his blood in circumcision, his first sermon, the first moment of his glorious life, etc. . . . Honor all his ages, all the states and periods of his life, his divine infancy, his adolescence, his childhood and his most advanced age, every beat of his heart, every movement of his body, and every emotion of his soul. To honor him in every place he had been." Father Lejeune as quoted by Bremond, Histoire littéraire, vol. 3, p. 77.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 81.

c'est ce qui convient proprement au Fils Et la troisième est d'avoir la vie, et de ne l'avoir ny de soy ny en soy, mais en Jésus-Christ, ce qui convient a nos âmes. . . . Jésus-Christ est Vie en trois manières, en sa Nature éternelle, en sa Personne Divine, et en sa Nature nouvelle, qui est l'Humanité. En sa Nature Eternelle, car la Divinité n'est pas seulement source de Vie, mais la Vie mesme: En sa Personne, car estre Vie, luy convient comme sa propriété personnelle en vertu de sa génération Eternelle: Et en son Humanité, car il s'y applique et l'actué comme Vie, et ainsi il la rend vivante. . . . Et lors que le Père nous donne son Fils, il nous donne sa Vie, la Vie de son propre essence; la Vie engendrée par luy mesme, et qui réside en son sein: et il établit cette double Vie dans notre nature, afin que la nature qui estoit notre, et source de mort en Adam, soit Vie et source de Vie en Jésus. Ainsi doncques qui a Jésus, a la Vie; et qui n'a point Jésus, est éloigné de la vie: ainsi adhérer à Jésus, c'est adhérer à la Vie. . . . Ainsi accomplir toutes nos actions en Jésus, et par Jésus; c'est la vraie Vie.⁴⁹

⁴⁹"There are three different kinds of life, or better yet, three ways of living. The first is to have life of oneself and in oneself, and this among all the living applies only to the eternal Father. The second is to have life in oneself but not of oneself, and this is what properly applies to the Son. . . . And the third is to have life and to have it neither of oneself nor in oneself but in Jesus-Christ, which applies to our souls. . . . Jesus-Christ is life in three ways: in his eternal nature, in his divine person, and in his new nature which is humanity. [He is] in his eternal nature because divinity is not only the source of life but is life itself, in his person because to be life comes to him as his proper inheritance in virtue of his eternal generation, and [he is life] in his humanity because he attaches himself thereto and stimulates it to life. . . . And when the Father gives us the Son, he gives us his life, the life of his own essence, the life begat by himself and which resides in his breast. He establishes this double life in our nature so that the nature which was dead, the source of death in Adam, becomes the source of life in Jesus. Therefore, he who has Jesus has life and he who has Jesus not at all is separated from life. This is why to adhere to Jesus is to adhere to life. This is why to accomplish all our actions in Jesus and by Jesus is the true life." Bérulle, Oeuvres, p. 802.

This is a long passage but a capital one. One is reminded of the neo-Platonic image of God as the sun and the Son of God as the rays that emanate from it but there are subtle distinctions that differentiate this Berullian conception. God, as the sun, is life in and of itself. The life of the Son, proceeding from the Father, is realized in three ways. Being of the Father it participates dependently in the life of the Father. The emanant Father's life, which is the Son, is superabundant and eternal and therefore a kind of life in itself. Finally, the Son is unceasingly joined to humanity thereby vivifying it and constituting the third realization of the Son's life. In this last sense, the Son is capacity for humanity, for souls, whose only source of life is in the Son. Thus, in Berullian spirituality, there can be no thought of bypassing the humanity of Christ for it is in that humanity made divine that the soul participates in the deity and in adhering to the states of Jesus the soul embarks on that participation.

In the act of adherence to the states of Jesus it is understood that the individual ceases to think of himself. The individual invites Jesus to enter into his life and make it complete. The individual himself is a capacity for Jesus, as Jesus is a limitless capacity for souls. As he is filled by Jesus, the individual gains life, acquires being. One's humanity is an empty shell. Just as Jesus, whose being is the Word Incarnate, realized fully his being in the double

nature of God-Man, so, too, the Christian finds full realization of his being in Jesus.

Jésus est l'accomplissement de nostre estre, qui ne subsiste qu'en lui et n'a sa perfection qu'en luy. . . . Nous devons regarder nostre estre comme un estre manqué et imparfait, comme un vide qui à besoin d'estre remply. . . . Et nous devons regarder Jésus comme nostre accomplissement. . . . comme le Verbe est l'accomplissement de la nature humaine qui subsiste en luy. Car comme cette nature considérée en son origine, est en la main du S. Esprit, qui la tire du néant, qui la prive de sa subsistence, qui la donne au Verbe, afin que le Verbe l'investisse et la rende sienne, se rendant à elle, et l'accomplissement de sa propre et divine subsistence: ainsi nous sommes en la main du S. Esprit, qui nous tire du péché, nous lie à Jésus, comme esprit de Jésus émane de luy, acquis par luy, et envoye par luy.⁵⁰

In contemplating the states of Jesus, above all that of the Incarnation, and in adhering to them, the individual invites Jesus into his life and is thereby sanctified. In this activity there is an implied denial of the self. One turns away from considerations of oneself to focus on the life of Jesus. This is the extent of the mystic's way in Berullian spirituality as conceived of by its originator.

⁵⁰"Jesus is the fulfillment of our being which does not subsist but in him and does not have perfection but in him. We must look at our being as one that is lacking and imperfect, as a vacuum that is in need of filling. And we must look at Jesus as our fulfillment, just as the Word is the fulfillment of human nature in subsisting in it. For just as this [human] nature, in its origin, is in the hand of the Holy Spirit, who pulls it from nothingness, deprives it of its substance, and gives it to the Word so that the Word imbues it and makes it his in surrendering to it and fulfills it with his own divine substance, so, too, are we in the hand of the Holy Spirit, who pulls us from sin, links us to Jesus, just like the spirit of Jesus comes from him [i.e. the Spirit], is realized by him and sent by him." Bérulle, Oeuvres, p. 1014.

There is no hypostatic union in the rigorous sense for Bérulle. Christian perfection consists in adhering to the states of Jesus to the degree that the individual Christian has the "capacity" to do so.

Yet another consequence of Berullian devotion to the Word Incarnate was a renewal of devotion to the Virgin. From the moment of conception the Virgin acquires the "state" of being of the mother of God. As such, she is "indissolubly united to the workings, the states, of the being of the Word."⁵¹ For Bérulle the Virgin as mother of God is a being of "pure capacity for Jesus" and is "filled with Jesus."⁵² Their states of being are as one. In adoring the Virgin, one adores Jesus.

Comme les personnes divines n'ont subsistence en la Trinité, que dans leurs relations mutuelles; Vous aussi, O Vierge sainte, O Personne divine et humaine tout ensemble, divine en grâce et humaine en nature, Vous n'avez subsistence en l'estre de la grâce, que par relation à Jésus, Vous ne vivez que par sa grâce, avant qu'il vive à vous par la nature, Vous ne respirez que par son esprit, et vos grâces et vos grandeurs sont siennes.⁵³

⁵¹Bremond, Histoire littéraire, vol. 3, p. 96.

⁵²Bérulle, Oeuvres, p. 520.

⁵³"Just as the divine persons have no substance in the Trinity but through their mutual relations, you, too, Holy Virgin, divine and human at the same time, divine in grace and human in nature, you have no substance in that being which is of grace but through relation to Jesus. You live only by his grace. Before he lives for you in nature, you do not breathe but by his spirit and your graces and your grandeurs are his." Bérulle, p. 937.

As with Mary, so too with the saints, but where Mary was wholly linked, in all her being, in all her states, to Jesus, the saints are seen as partaking wholly in only one aspect, one state, of Jesus.

Berullian spirituality as a practical program

François Bourgoing, Bremond says, "excellently summarized" the two components that constitute the practice of Berullian spirituality. "Our life as regards God [must be] a life of elevation and of interior alliance [to God]."⁵⁴ By "elevation" is meant orison or prayer. As for "interior alliance," the allusion is to adherence, interior devotion, to the states of Jesus as defined above.

Fortunately, Bérulle's concept of elevation to God was the subject of an "opuscule de piété," number CLXIV in the Oeuvres complètes. Bérulle titled the work, "De l'adoration de dieu."⁵⁵ After explaining that the first duty and most frequent exercise of the "creature" is to adore God, Bérulle sets out to define adoration.

Adorer est avoir une très-haute pensée de la chose que nous adorons, et une volonté rendue, sousmise et abaissée à l'excellence et dignité que nous croyons ou scauvons estre en elle. Cette estime très-grande en l'esprit, et ce consentement de la volonté qui se rend toute à cette dignité suprême qu'elle conçoit, font l'adoration: car elle requiert non la seule pensée, mais aussi l'affection qui soumet la personne adorante à la chose adorée, par l'usage et

⁵⁴François Bourgoing as quoted by Bremond, Histoire littéraire, vol. 3, p. 117.

⁵⁵Bérulle, Oeuvres, pp. 1044-1047.

correspondance des deux facultez de l'âme, l'entendement, et de la volonté, également employées et appliquées au regard du sujet que nous voulons ou devons adorer.⁵⁶

Bérulle concludes his discussion of adoration by pointing out the necessity that the activity be a composite of body and spirit. That is, given the corporeal and spiritual components of human existence, one adores God when both these components are involved. All of which is very much in keeping with the Berullian concept of the states of the Word Incarnate and one's adherence to them.

Creatures of God, men are dependent upon him for the small being that they possess. From adoring God for the creation that is his and the being that he is, in and of himself, one then turns to try to unite God to oneself, to appropriate some aspect of him for oneself. In the activity of adherence, the will is initiator but the emotions overwhelm it such that the will operates with "force, with joy, to be that which we are already, that is to say, a dependent of God."⁵⁷

⁵⁶"To adore is to have exalted thoughts of the thing that we adore, and to have a will that is rendered to, submissive towards and lowered before the excellence and dignity which we believe or think to exist in it. This very great esteem of the spirit and this consent of the will, which completely surrenders itself to the supreme dignity that it perceives, are adoration. For it [adoration] requires not only thought but the emotion too that submits the adorer to the thing adored, in the use and correspondance of these two faculties of the soul, the understanding and the will, equally employed and applied in regards to the subject that we wish or should adore." Bérulle, Oeuvres, p. 1044.

⁵⁷Bremond, Histoire littéraire, vol. 3, p. 130.

Adherence, then, consists first of desire and demand. One is led by adoration, by elevation, to desire and to demand a belonging to God. In this desire one's thoughts are on the future, but the ratification of this desire already is assured by the state of being of the Word Incarnate. In other words, the demand, once expressed in all sincerity, will not fail to be met. There then remains simply to open

votre âme à ses opérations, et l'abandonnez toute à ses intentions: et jugeant vos propres actions trop peu de chose pour l'honorer, exposez-vous à la puissance et efficace de son esprit, afin qu'il daigne vous disposer à l'honorer par ses influences et opérations. Le fils de dieu en sa divinité, est la figure et le caractère de la substance de son Père; et comme un divin caractère, il a voulu imprimer luy-mesme sa divinité en nostre humanité par le sacré Mystère de l'Incarnation. Et il luy plaist imprimer dans les âmes, ses estats et ses effects, ses mystères et ses souffrances: et un jour il luy plaira imprimer en nous ses grandeurs et sa gloire.⁵⁸

From a desire which one is assured will be met no sooner than it is voiced stems the counsel to present oneself freely and openly to the workings of the divinity who will engrave upon the creature's soul the trace of the divine disposition, or state that is proper to it. In their

⁵⁸"your soul to his work and leave it wholly to his intentions. Judging your own actions to be insufficient to honor him, expose yourself to the power and efficaciousness of his spirit so that he might deign to dispose you to honor him by his influences and his workings. The son of God, in his divinity, is the form and nature of the essence of his Father. Like a divine person, he desired to imprint his divinity on our humanity himself through the sacred mystery of the Incarnation. Likewise it pleases him to imprint his states and his effects, his mysteries and his sufferings, on souls. And one day it will please him to imprint on us the grandeurs of his glory." Bérulle, Oeuvres, p. 888.

ensemble, in their cumulative effect, these acts add up to an attitude, a state of mind, hence a Berullian state of being.

In closing this exposition of the Berullian program, a final contribution to an understanding of it, taken from François Bourgoing's preface to the 1644 edition of Bérulle's collected works is called for.

Il faut scavoir qu'il y a deux sortes d'opérations employées en la sanctification de l'âme, l'opération de Dieu en l'âme [grace], et l'opération de l'âme vers Dieu [virtue]. . . . La grâce n'opère point en nous la sanctification, si elle n'est suivie de la vertu, et si elle ne donne le vouloir et le faire, en quoy consiste la vertu. . . . Or celle de ces deux opérations, qui nous convertit et nous lie à Dieu. . . c'est l'opération de Dieu et de sa grâce: et la créature n'y a point d'autre part, que celle que la mesme grâce luy donne, qui est une adhérence volontaire à cette opération. . . . L'état de servitude est une manière spécial d'appartenance. . . qu'en une qualité et disposition permanente, que nostre Seigneur imprime et met en l'âme. . . Au moyen de quoy, l'âme renonce à toute propriété. . . . Qu'elle ne se fait pas par forme de prest, et pour un temps, mais pour toujours. . . . Cette donation n'est pas muable à la volonté et au bon plaisir de ce-luy qui la fait. . . mais qu'elle impose obligation et nécessité, comme estant établie et confirmée par une espèce de vœu, que est le vœu primitif de la Religion Chrétienne. . . .⁵⁹

⁵⁹"It is necessary to know that there are two kinds of forces employed in the santification of the soul: the workings of God on the soul [grace], and the workings of the soul toward God [virtue]. Grace in no way effects our sanctification if it is not followed by virtue, that is, if it does not cause a desire [in the soul] for grace to work its effect, which is what virtue consists of. Of these two forces it is that of God and grace that turns us and that links us to God. The creature plays no part other than that which grace itself gives him, which is a voluntary adherence to the force. The state of servitude is a special way of belonging, [being of] a permanent quality and disposition which our Lord stamps and places on the soul. In such a manner, the soul renounces all freedom, which it does not do in the form of a loan for a period of time, but forever.

Bourgoing's preface has been hailed by nineteenth and even twentieth century scholars of Bérulle as the most succinct and lucid treatment of Berullian spirituality available. In the passage above, too long to be quoted in its entirety, Bourgoing opened Berullian spirituality to charges of illuminism and quietism. Charges which become untenable when one examines the Berullian corpus. As for the invocation to the primitive vow of Religion, it is best understood as adherence to the acts and rituals that place one in rapport with God and lead to a true interior piety and devotion, a true personal sanctification.

This gift is not open to the will and the pleasure of the giver, but imposes obligation and necessity, as though having been established by a kind of vow, which is the primitive vow of the Christian religion." François Bourgoing in the preface to Bérulle's Oeuvres, pp. x-xi.

CHAPTER III

THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION AND THE DISPARAGEMENT OF BERULLIAN SPIRITUALITY

1. THE ORATORY OF FRANCE

Questions have been raised regarding Bérulle's motivation in the establishment of a new religious congregation. It has been suggested that there is no causal relationship between Bérulle's spirituality and his efforts for the erection of the Oratory.¹ Be that as it may, it cannot be denied that the Oratory, once in place, was the primary means of spreading Berullian spirituality even as it continued to mature.

The Oratory experienced a remarkable degree of success. Typically, success is measured in the number of establishments and the number of members of a religious order or congregation. Recent work in this area for the Oratory has been very successful in arriving at reliable figures.² On the morning of November 11, 1611, the relevant numbers for the Oratory in these two measurable categories were six

¹Orcibal, Evolution d'une spiritualité, pp. 50-53.

²Willem Frijhoff and Dominique Julia, "Les Oratoriens de France sous l'Ancien Régime," Revue d'Histoire de l'Eglise Française, vol. 65 (1979), pp. 225-265.

practitioners located in one establishment. By the end of Bérulle's life (1629), the Oratory included no less than 73 establishments. Of these, four were seminaries, four were noviciates or houses of study and seventeen were colleges. The remainder were simple residences to which were attached various parishes, sanctuaries and places of pilgrimage.³

This remarkable success of the Oratory in its early years, made still more remarkable given the nearly constant opposition to its growth, is largely attributable to the efforts and influence of its founder. Bérulle's successful negotiations with Rome for approval of his congregation bear recounting for what this activity reveals about the other great facet of his character -- one which is not evident from his purely spiritual works.

As noted earlier, Bérulle was born of a great family of the realm. He came to enjoy such prestige at the royal court that Henri IV had named him a royal *aumonier* and had wanted to entrust to him the education of the young dauphin, Louis.⁴ Further, Bérulle held special favor with Henri's wife, Marie de Medicis (1573-1642, married Henri in 1600). As the nephew of Antoine Séguier (1552-1626), president for life of the Parlement of Paris, to whom Marie de Medicis was obligated for certain favors, Bérulle was assured of the support of the

³Ibid., pp. 227-232.

⁴Leherpeur, L'Oratoire, p.8.

court.⁵ It was she, as Queen Mother and Regent of France, who obtained the first letters patent from the young King Louis XIII (1601-1643, King of France from 1610) in December of 1611. To these she added her own in January, 1612. These royal letters patent authorized the establishment of the Oratory, declared it to be of royal foundation and permitted it "to enjoy the same rights, franchises and privileges conceded to other ecclesiastical houses" of the realm.⁶ Marie de Medicis would eventually declare herself to be *fondatrice* of the Oratory.

Aside from the favor of the royal family, Bérulle benefited from his noble friends. Among the most conspicuous in this group were the Marquise de Maignelay, of the Gondi family of Italian bankers.⁷ The Marquise provided essential financial support to the fledgling congregation in exchange for the right "to be a participant in the prayers of the Congregation, and to enjoy the other graces and privileges of *fondatrice*." Though later abandoning the title of *fondatrice* in deference to Marie de Medicis, she would nonetheless retain the privileges.⁸ There was also Michel de Marillac

⁵Houssaye, Le Père de Bérulle, pp. 13-14.

⁶Ibid., pp. 29-30.

⁷This Florentine family had established itself in France following the marriage of Catherine de Medicis to the future Henri II in 1533. The de Gondi were bishops (from 1622 archbishops) of Paris for some 200 years.

⁸Ibid., pp. 14 and 31.

(1563-1632), *Garde des Sceaux* who in 1630 was chosen by Marie de Medicis to replace Cardinal Richelieu.⁹ Finally, there was of course Mme Acarie -- Marie de l'Incarnation after her entry into the Carmelite order. A Dame of France, she had masterminded the establishment of the Carmelite Order in France using Bérulle as her principal instrument to do so. She now encouraged him to proceed with his plans for a congregation of priests dedicated to the reform of the secular clergy.

Among the ecclesiastical hierarchy whose support of Bérulle's project was significant, there was François Cardinal de Joyeuse (1562-1615).¹⁰ He had distinguished himself at court and won the favor of the royal family as negotiator of a reconciliation between Henri IV and the Holy See. It was he who consecrated Marie de Medicis and Louis XIII. Further, he presided over the General Estates of 1614. De Gondî, bishop of Paris, brother of the Marquise de Maignelay, was also instrumental in the opening stages of the

⁹This royal patronage proved unfortunate for him when Richelieu, in a private interview with the King, convinced Louis XIII to renege on his promise to dismiss the Cardinal from his post. The expectant beneficiaries of this promise, the King's mother, Marie de Medicis, his wife, Anne of Austria and his brother, Gaston d'Orleans, thereby failed in their attempt to be rid of Richelieu who now had his enemies delivered to him. Michel de Marillac was arrested -- a fate arguably worse than that of his brother, Louis, who was beheaded for his complicity in the plot. Le Petit Robert 2, s.v. "Dupes, la Journée des."

¹⁰Houssaye, Le Père de Bérulle, pp. 31-32.

Oratory.¹¹ Finally, Father Pierre Coton, S.J., (1564-1626), confessor of Henri IV in 1610 and wielder of considerable influence at court, was first to visit Bérulle and his companions at their lodging on the rue Saint-Jacques and to express to them his desire to have the effort succeed.¹²

Bérulle's prestige in the eyes of many other prelates and ecclesiastics is evidenced by their willingness to place certain diocesan operations and functions under his direction. As early as 1612, negotiations began between Bérulle and Father J.-B. Romillion, Superior of the Oratory of Provence, for the merging of their two congregations. Ultimately, Romillion's establishments would not be the first to be placed in Bérulle's care, but it is perhaps significant in terms of recognizing the practical, diplomatic character

¹¹Houssaye says that Bérulle accepted the task of founding a religious congregation dedicated to a reform of the clergy only after being ordered to do so by de Gondî. Prior to this, he says, Bérulle had approached others with his idea in hopes that they would assume this burden. Leherpeur, L'Oratoire, identifies François de Sales and César de Bus as having been approached by Bérulle for this purpose (p. 6). Houssaye identifies only the curate of Aumale, Father Gallement (p. 17). These claims stem from a desire on the part of early historians of the Oratory to assert that from the moment of his birth Bérulle was acted upon by the Holy Spirit to perform a saintly work but that profound humility prevented him from seeking positions that might garner him great prestige. This hagiographical tradition is no longer in vogue and historians of the Oratory today, with the exception of Polignac, agree that the idea for the endeavor probably came from Acarie's circle, that Bérulle energetically took it up and that he received a great deal of encouragement, both financial and moral, and that the final form for the congregation, though with important differences, was modelled after the Oratory of Philip Neri.

¹²Leherpeur, L'Oratoire, p. 9.

of Bérulle that lack of papal approval for his group's existence was not thought of by him as something which stood in the way of actively pursuing acquisition of additional houses. As one author, in writing of Bérulle's decision to assume the leadership in the establishment of the Oratory, put it,

Rien ne lui manquait de ce qui pouvait garantir le succès de l'entreprise. Sa naissance l'apparentait aux plus grandes familles du royaume. . . . Le laborieux établissement du Carmel en France avait révélé chez lui une volonté plus forte que tout obstacle dans la poursuite de ses desseins.¹³

As is evident from the above, Bérulle was of the requisite social class and enjoyed the necessary status and network of support that allowed him to conceive and then initiate as ambitious a project as the founding of a new religious congregation. Indeed, it is said of the participants in the enterprise that they anticipated a quick affirmative response from Rome regarding official ecclesiastical approbation of the Oratory. To this end, since August of 1611, the Queen Mother and Bishop de Gondy had made requests of Paul V (1552-1621, Pope from 1605) that a bull of institution on behalf of the Oratory be granted. The request itself, actually written by Bérulle in the name of Marie de Medicis, was carefully fashioned so as to set

¹³"He was lacking in nothing that could guarantee the success of the endeavor. His birth placed him among the greatest families of the realm. . . . The laborious establishment of the Carmelites in France had revealed in him a will stronger than any obstacle in the pursuit of his designs." Leherpeur, L'Oratoire, p. 8.

forth clearly Bérulle's conception of the Oratory and so as to suggest the manner and language of the bull that would be acceptable to him.¹⁴ However, these matters were not to be so easily resolved.

Paul V was well informed as to the debate currently inflaming passions at the University of Paris. At the heart of this debate was the doctrine of Gallicanism and its principal exponent at the time, Edmond Richer (1559-1631), who had been elected syndic of the Faculty of Theology in 1602.¹⁵ Richer made use of the ecclesiology of Jean Gerson (1363-1429) in formulating his own argument for conciliarism that he then put to use in advancing the claims of Gallicanism. Further, Richer had at his disposal the work of Pierre Pithou, which listed 83 propositions under the title Les Libertés de l'Eglise gallicane. It will be recalled that propositions three and four denied the pope any say or influence of any kind in the temporal affairs of the state even to the point that clerics, as subjects of the king of France, were free to ignore papal decrees and commands and that the sovereignty of the pope was restricted to spiritual matters and still further limited in France by the acts of councils of the Church that had been accepted in the kingdom. Among the many works by Richer, his De ecclesiastica et

¹⁴Houssaye, Le Père de Bérulle, p. 35.

¹⁵Dictionnaire de Théologie, s.v. "Richer (Edmond)," J. Carreyre.

politica potestate published in Paris in 1611 instigated the more tumultuous debates at the Sorbonne on the issue of the Gallican Church and the papacy.¹⁶

These frequent attacks on the supremacy of papal authority disturbed Paul V who, it should be recalled, had dealt sternly with the Republic of Venice during the Venetian Schism of 1605 to 1607.¹⁷ Whereas Bérulle had made clear in the request for a bull of institution that he intended his foundations to depend directly upon the episcopal hierarchy in whatever jurisdiction the establishments were erected, the Pope questioned the sagacity of instituting an order so completely devoted to the bishops given the present mood of some French ecclesiastics, the University of Paris and the Parlement. It was feared that the partisans of Gallicanism envisioned nothing short of an "episcopal aristocracy" that was "destined to ruin pontifical authority."¹⁸ Consequently, the matter was referred to two cardinals for further investigation.

For his part, Bérulle could not accept that his order should answer directly and exclusively to the pope. He felt certain that just such a specification would compromise his group's chance for success. Cardinals Mellini and Lancelotti, after some months, finally conveyed to Bérulle

¹⁶Ibid., col. 2699.

¹⁷Daniel-Rops, The Catholic Reformation, p. 326.

¹⁸Houssaye, Le Père de Bérulle, p. 37.

their reservations regarding the new order. They doubted that the group was needed and they questioned whether its integrity and coherence could remain intact given that individual bishops, to whom respective houses would be subjected, would always be free to modify whatever his predecessor had initiated or decreed. Finally, they asked if it would not be wiser for Bérulle to simply adopt the rule of the Oratory of Philip Neri.

Bérulle responded to each of these points. He cited the present state of the clergy in France and convincingly argued for its reform. To the second point of the cardinals, he insisted that only in ministerial or priestly functions would the new congregation answer to the bishops. In all matters pertaining to the conduct and direction of the order, the pope would be the sole authority. This double dependence, he reasoned, far from being a contradiction, would tie the Oratory to the hierarchical order in its entirety. As he explained in a letter to Cardinal de la Rochefoucauld,

This company, halfway between seculars and regulars, must necessarily have something of each of those and this is found in its dependence upon the pope for its statutes and in its submission to the prelates for the exercise of its functions. You know the scant ability that our bishops of France have over the secular clergy to get them to undertake tasks that are not lucrative and are not sure to bring them honor, and also over the regulars to contain them and hold them to their vows, whereas this congregation desires to give itself up to a true regular life in spirit and thought and to subject itself to the prelates in so far as ministry is concerned. This is assistance that will be of use to

those who want us and which cannot bring detriment to those who do not since it is in their power to call us whereas it is not in our power but to work if they call us and employ us.¹⁹

To the cardinals suggestion that Bérulle adopt the form and rules of the Oratory founded by Philip Neri (1515-1595) in 1575, Bérulle responded that the organization of Neri's order was in keeping with the peculiar status of the political situation of the Italian peninsula. There, owing to the division of authority among numerous sovereign states, the individual autonomy of the several houses of Neri's congregation was in conformity to the needs of that country. In France, however, where all the provinces answered to a sole power, it seemed to follow logically that a congregation such as the Oratory should also answer to a single head. Further, he argued that with autonomous houses, finding superiors from among the residents of each was always a difficulty. He contended that greater efficiency would be realized if the houses were united under a superior with the liberty to choose from among the entire body the necessary individuals to be placed according to their aptitudes and the needs of the group.

Finally, Bérulle asked that he be given the authority to establish not only the house of Paris but also all those which may be offered him in the future. Bérulle's explanation for this last request is revealing on a number of

¹⁹Ibid., p. 40.

points. In a letter of January 4, 1612 to his operative in Rome, de Soulfour, whom the cardinal de la Rochefoucauld had attached to his entourage upon being charged with delivering to the pope the "compliment" of the new king Louis XIII's obedience,²⁰ Bérulle instructed de Soulfour as to how to present his request to the cardinals. He was to reason that one does not always have the "ready money," nor the deputies, nor the credit, nor the time to "bargain" with Rome and to request new bulls for each house that it will be necessary to found. The cardinals response was to wonder where Bérulle intended to find the necessary revenue for these new establishments.

To this Bérulle gave two replies. Directly to the cardinals he stated that in as much as the house of Paris is of royal foundation, it would be an insult to the liberality of the Queen if one were to question her commitment to the subsidy of it which, though she had yet to give anything at all, was assured anyway due to more than 30,000 *écus* received from other sources.²¹ Bérulle went on to assure the cardinals that he was resolved to accept only those houses for which there was sufficient revenue, be it from "fondateurs" or provided by the members of the congregation themselves who, "*jouissant de leur patrimoine, et ayant tous*

²⁰Ibid., p. 25.

²¹The Marquise de Maignelay had given 50,000 livres tournois. Ibid., p. 31.

de l'aisance, pouvaient travailler sans lui être à charge."²² In a confidential letter, Bérulle went on to ask de Soulfour to convey to the cardinals the danger that he saw in requiring the Oratory to have permission from Rome to set up in a diocese as though the respective bishop's assent would not suffice.

As the negotiations dragged on, Bérulle demonstrated perserverance. In a letter of August 3, 1612, de Soulfour informed Bérulle that the cardinals were still concerned about the division of obedience between pope and bishops that would confront Bérulle's disciples. In hopes of wearing down Bérulle's obstinacy on this point, de Soulfour went on to say, the cardinals were deliberately moving at snail's pace. This would avail the cardinals little. Bérulle remained firm on the point and at last received word from Cardinal Borghese that the bull of institution would be forthcoming.

The document was sent to Bérulle prior to its official promulgation for his observations. In that part of it which addressed the requirements for establishment of Oratorian houses Bérulle suggested that the approbation "ab ordinariis locorum" be replaced with "ab episcopis" so as to prevent misconstruing this specification to mean that approval of even parish priests would be required. This was agreed to and, in exchange, Bérulle dropped his insistence on having

²²"profitting from their patrimony, and, each of them, being well-off, they [the members of the congregation] were able to work without being dependent upon him." Ibid., p. 42.

Oratorians observe a vow of obedience to the bishops. Further, Bérulle agreed to restricting the reference of "obedientia" to ministerial or ecclesiastical functions only.²³

On two other points the bull diverged from Bérulle's initial desires, but he apparently chose not to delay further its official promulgation with still more negotiation and it is also likely that he considered the differences to be such that they would work in the Oratory's favor later. On the first of these, Bérulle had asked that the statutes and regulations of the Oratory be submitted to the bishop of Paris, who, acting only in consequence of a special commission from Rome for that purpose, would then approve the rule. On this point it was decided by Rome that approval of in-house rules would rest with Bérulle himself with the further proviso that papal ratification then be obtained.

As for the other deviation from his wishes, the bull did not contain the exact wording regarding instruction that Bérulle had had in mind. In his "projet de l'érection" Bérulle wrote:

Ainsi l'institution, non de la jeunesse, comme aux jésuites, mais des prêtres seulement, serait une des fonctions de cette congrégation. Et cette institution des prêtres serait, non en la science, comme aux séminaires, mais en l'usage de la science, que l'école et les livres n'apprennent pas, et aux

²³Ibid., pp. 45-47.

vertus purement ecclésiastiques, et en la forme d'exercer . . . les fonctions ecclésiastiques.²⁴

The bull, however, read:

Sacerdotum insuper aliorum ad sacros ordines aspirantium instructioni, non circa scientiam, sed circa usum scientiae, ritus et mores proprie ecclesiasticos se addicere.²⁵

Bérulle's "projet de l'érection" dates from about 1611. He had wanted the Oratory to be involved in the religious formation, not instruction or education, of men already admitted to the priesthood. The bull added to this the formation of those aspiring to the priesthood and did so in language that was open to being interpreted as the education one would receive in a seminary. It is also true that even before the promulgation of the bull of institution the Oratory was accepting the direction of colleges. Though a full treatment of Oratorian and Jesuit rivalry in education lies outside the scope of this thesis, it is mentioned here for the effects that this rivalry had in the matter of Jansenism which is taken up in the following section.

²⁴"Thus the formation, not of children, as with the Jesuits, but of priests only, would be one of the functions of this congregation. And this formation of priests would be, not in science, as [it is] in seminaries, but in the use of science, which schools and books do not teach, and in purely ecclesiastical virtues and in the way to carry out ecclesiastical functions." Bérulle as quoted by Bremond, Histoire littéraire, vol. 3, p. 175.

²⁵"The above [congregation] dedicates itself to instruction of priests and others aspiring to holy orders, not in science, but in the use of science, especially ecclesiastical habits and virtues." Bull Sacrosanctae Romanae Ecclesiae as reproduced in Houssaye, Le Père de Bérulle, p. 573.

On May 10, 1613, the bull *Sacrosantae Romanae Ecclesiae* was published. It canonically established the Congregation of the Oratory of Our Lord Jesus Christ. In these negotiations and behind-the-scene tactics which Houssaye fully recounts and which other Oratory histories treat partially, the talent of the founder for such affairs is well demonstrated. Nor were these talents overlooked by the court.

In 1620 he successfully negotiated a reconciliation between Louis XIII and his mother.²⁶ This success, which thwarted Richelieu's hopes for a continuing estrangement, combined with the growing differences of opinion between Bérulle and the Cardinal-Minister over foreign policy issues is at the bottom of Richelieu's opposition to Bérulle.²⁷ In other diplomatic ventures on behalf of the royal family, Bérulle obtained a dispensation from Rome in 1624 to allow the marriage of Henriette-Marie (1609-1669), the daughter of Henri IV, to the future Charles I of England. He accompanied her there in 1625.²⁸ Cardinal since August 1627, Bérulle was joined to the "Conseil d'Etat" in November 1628 and, "in the absence of the king, [was to be] president of the regency council."²⁹ Finally, on September 27, 1629 Bérulle left

²⁶Houssaye, Le Père de Bérulle, pp. 256-300.

²⁷Wagley, "A Social History," p. 35.

²⁸Perraud, L'Oratoire au XVII^e et au XIX^e, pp. 54-55.

²⁹Ibid., p. 66.

Fontainebleu with the mission to persuade the king's brother, Gaston d'Orléans, to return to Paris from Nancy. In declining health, Bérulle was unable to make the trip. Five days later, October 2, he died.

2. BERULLISM AND JANSENISM

From the start, Jansenist and Jesuit hostility assumed a political character. By the eighteenth century there were those who called themselves Jansenists when what they really meant was that they were *nationals* -- that they were opposed to any foreign influence whatsoever in French affairs. This was anti-Romanism, Gallicanism, carried to its fullest.³⁰ The final expulsion of the Jesuits from France in 1762 was indeed a Jansenist revenge for the dispersal (1709) and then razing (1711) of the abbey of Port-Royal, but even more it was the victory of one political division over another. In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, however, before the purely political ramifications of an essentially theological dispute came to push aside all other considerations, the argument revolved around competing notions of grace and free will.

From 1588, Jesuits, who from their inception had sought a concordance between the exigencies of humanism and the

³⁰Dale Van Kley, The Jansenists and the Expulsion of the Jesuits from France 1757-1765 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975), pp. 6-36.

doctrines of the Church, had recourse to the work of Luis de Molina in their arguments against the strict Augustinianism of Protestant sects and certain Catholic circles. In the Concordia liberi arbitrii cum gratiae donis, Molina set forth an argument that preserved free will by assigning man a role in his salvation. Rigid Augustinianism, largely stemming from interpretations of Augustine's anti-Pelagian writings, held the opinion that absolute predestination was the free choice of God and that the Fall from grace resulted in the absolute corruption of the state in which man had been created. All good works were the action of grace. Certain interpretations further held that good acts accounted for nothing in man's salvation.

Against the Augustinian conception of the absolute corruption of human nature brought about by the Fall from grace, Molina hypothesized man created in a purely natural state before the Fall and before God had bestowed graces upon him. In this hypothetical state of nature man would have possessed all the faculties that he does now. These faculties, such as reason and control of the appetites, are not in and of themselves evil. They are part and parcel of man in a state of nature which God could have chosen to create. The effect of the Fall was simply to remove the additional, supernatural gifts with which God clothed man at the moment of creation. In this way, man, of his own volition and by God's general concourse, is now able to

perform good works because he is still in possession of his natural faculties. In avoiding the Pelagian error, Molina stipulated that these good works stemming from man's natural capacities had no bearing on his salvation. For the goal of human existence to be realized, i.e. union with God, reattainment of the supernatural gifts bestowed on man in his state of innocence, man could do nothing on his own. For that he required a special grace.³¹

This grace he called sufficient. Sufficient grace with the cooperation of the free will becomes efficacious grace that enables performance of salutary acts. To explain the process involved, Molina argued that there existed in God a middle knowledge. This middle knowledge is that whereby God knows if his sufficient grace will be met with cooperation or not. God is able to dispense his grace to those whom he knows will choose to cooperate. Thus the notion of efficacious grace, the grace that, though working interiorly, acts as an external force to enable or assist man in salutary good works, was safeguarded.

Among rigid Augustinians opposed to this doctrine, the work of Cornelius Otto Jansen or Jansenius (1585-1638) and of

³¹Robert R. Palmer, Catholics and Unbelievers in Eighteenth Century France (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1939), pp. 30-33.

his close friend Jean Duvergier de Hauranne or Saint-Cyran³² (1581-1643) propelled them to the forefront of the polemical battle. The movement which they initiated has been labelled Jansenism and their followers as Jansenists. This nomenclature is potentially misleading. Officially, Jansenism is a heresy that did not exist before 1640, the date of publication of Jansen's Augustinus. Secondly, as noted above, though originating from differing views on the correct interpretation of Augustine, Jansenism very quickly became a political movement in which the initial theological considerations were overshadowed and ultimately ignored altogether. Finally, as a political movement, Jansenism was not begun by Jansen.³³

In so far as the Jansenist movement relates to the Oratory, Saint-Cyran met Bérulle in Poitiers in 1620. In 1622 the two of them spent long hours together over the next several months. Saint-Cyran's Augustinianism thus became that of Bérulle's and not Jansen's.³⁴ The relationship between Saint-Cyran and Bérulle had far greater consequences

³²In keeping with current practice, Duvergier de Hauranne will be referred to as Saint-Cyran, the name he has received from the Benedictine monastery of Saint-Cyran in the Poitou region of France of which he was made commendatory abbot by the bishop of Poitiers in 1620.

³³Alexander Sedgwick, Jansenism in Seventeenth-Century France: Voices in the Wilderness (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1977), p. 14.

³⁴Louis Cognet, Le Jansenisme, Que sais-je?, no. 960 (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1961), pp. 21-22.

for Saint-Cyran and the Oratory than Saint-Cyran's relationship with Jansen. Since 1612 Bérulle had been leading a campaign to persuade the Carmelite nuns, of which he was Visitor, to sign a formulary he had written titled, Voeu de servitude à Jésus et à Marie. The masculine branch of the order, the Carmels, had long been seeking ways to remove the Carmelites from Bérulle's directorship. In 1620 they obtained censures against the Voeu de servitude. Saint-Cyran led Bérulle's defense in the ensuing controversy.

Taking the side of the Carmels were the Jesuits, inspired to do so in hopes of disgracing Bérulle in whose congregation they correctly perceived a threat to their near monopoly of colleges. As a secular congregation of priests subject to local episcopal authority, the Oratory was favored by French bishops for the direction of their colleges and seminaries rather than the Jesuits with their special vow of obedience to the pope. Saint-Cyran, informed by Bérulle as to the efforts of the Society against him, published an attack against a work of the Jesuit scholar Garasse in 1626. This was followed by works between 1632 and 1635 in which Saint-Cyran, under the pseudonym Petrus Aurelius, defended the rights of local episcopal authorities to regulate the activities of monastic orders within their dioceses.³⁵

³⁵Sedgwick, Jansenism in France, pp. 21-23; and Cognet, Le Jansenisme, pp. 22-24.

Meanwhile, Richelieu's foreign policy came increasingly to oppose the so-called *dévot* party of which Bérulle was a leading figure. Basically, this party held that French foreign policy should serve the Church. Thus the alliance of Catholic France with Protestant princes and kingdoms against the Catholic Spanish Habsburgs was regarded as unholy. Under Bérulle's influence, Saint-Cyran adopted this position as well. The appearance of Jansen's Mars Gallicus which attacked Richelieu's politics, though not actually endorsed by Saint-Cyran, led the Cardinal-Minister to further distrust the abbot in as much as his close friendship to the work's author was well known to Richelieu.

When Bishop Zamet of Langres asked Saint-Cyran to defend a writing of Mother Agnes of the "Institut du Saint-Sacrement" against charges of heresy, he readily agreed. The Institute had been founded by Zamet and Angélique Arnauld. The success of Saint-Cyran's defense of the order led Zamet to ask him to be the Institute's spiritual director. Mother Angélique found in Saint-Cyran a spiritual director with whom she was comfortable. In 1636 she asked Zamet to disassociate himself from the order and then sought the protection of the Archbishop of Paris who closed the Institute and had the nuns return to Port-Royal in the Faubourg Saint-Jacques. Zamet blamed Saint-Cyran for the defection of his nuns and voiced his complaints to his friend Richelieu.³⁶

³⁶Sedgwick, Jansenism in France, p. 23.

Justifications for Richelieu to mistrust and dislike Saint-Cyran continued to accumulate. In 1634 and 1635, Saint-Cyran opposed the annulment of the marriage of Gaston d'Orléans and Marguerite de Lorraine. The annulment was important to Richelieu's plans and he had secured the approval of both Parlement and the 1635 Assembly of the Clergy. Then, in 1637, a well-known and promising Paris lawyer, Antoine Le Maître, abandoned his career and retired to Port-Royal des Champs. He was soon followed by others. "Saint-Cyran was accused of stealing Paris' elite from public service by dint of his excessive theories."³⁷

Finally, in 1638, the Oratorian Seguenot produced a translation of Augustine's De la Sainte Virginité in which he criticized certain orders of religious and in which an "aggressive Augustinianism was noted." Knowing Saint-Cyran to be of opinions similar to those in Seguenot's work, Richelieu had him arrested and imprisoned at Vincennes. He was not released until after the death of Richelieu in 1643. However, his own health ruined, Saint-Cyran died in the same year, a martyr to the Jansenist party.

In none of these incidents was there any question regarding grace and free will. The only doctrinal dispute between Richelieu and Saint-Cyran was over the issue of contrition as a necessary sentiment on the part of a penitent for the remission of sins. Saint-Cyran's position, as with

³⁷Cognet, Le Jansenisme, p. 27-28.

that of most Augustinians, was that true sadness stemming from love of God had to be the attitude of the penitent. Richelieu, as with Molinist theologians, held that fear of God's retribution for sins was sufficient. He had expressed this position in his 1619 Instruction du chrétien.

This brief resume of the origins of Jansenism is enough to show the extent to which the controversy was defined in political terms as opposed to purely theological ones. Berullian spirituality was indeed an influence on Saint-Cyran. Many Oratorians took sides with Jansenists in the opening debates over the allegedly heterodoxical propositions supposedly taken from Jansen's Augustinus. From 1641, under the generalate of François Bourgoing, the Oratory repeatedly took measures to insure at least outward compliance with the decrees and bulls coming from Rome in regard to Jansenism. These at times repressive measures, as in cases of expulsion from the congregation, apparently had little effect in putting a stop to the continuing discussion of Jansenism in Oratorian schools.³⁸

This does not mean that a significant percentage of Oratorians embraced a heresy. It was sincerely believed by those involved that the pope was mistaken in assigning a heretical interpretation to the propositions drawn from the Augustinus and hence for them it is more accurate to speak of heterodoxy than heresy. Even here, however, the political

³⁸Wagley, "A Social History," pp. 94-102.

nature of the controversy reveals itself. Adherents to Jansenism had a perception of themselves as defenders of the right of individuals to freedom of thought. They were combatting authoritarian absolutism that ultimately claimed for itself infallibility in questions of fact. The real issue, as far as Jansenism as a doctrine is concerned, was whether or not adherence to a rigorous and uncompromising Christian life amounted to error. In finding that it was, pontifical absolutism mirrored royal absolutism. In arguing that it was not, Jansenists opened the way to the *philosophes* and the Revolution.

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