

Patricia Kelly, *Ressourcement Theology*: A Review Essay

MATTHEW K. MINERD

*Ss. Cyril and Methodius Byzantine Catholic Seminary
Pittsburgh, PA*

Introduction

Although now over seventy years in the past, the theological and ecclesiastical events of the 1940s, most often styled under some banner akin to “the crisis over the *nouvelle théologie*,” leading up to the promulgation of the encyclical *Humani Generis*, retain a currency and interest to this very day. No doubt, the later influence of many of the so-called *nouveaux théologiens* leading up to, during, and following the Second Vatican Council has contributed to the continued currency of their thought and the debates connected to it. Numerous monographs continue to be written concerning themes of “ressourcement,” theological reform, and engagement with the world, all of which were dear to many of those who were embroiled in the philosophical and theological controversies of the 1930s and 1940s. Moreover, increased interest in certain long-buried conservative Thomist thinkers from this same era has led to renewed consideration regarding the concerns that they expressed at the time. In fact, it would seem that today, in 2022, the evaluation expressed in *Nineteenth Century Scholasticism: The Search for a Unitary Method* by Fr. Gerald McCool (from a perspective rather different from my own) remains true, as the Church continues to live in the midst of an ongoing crisis of modernity that places us in tight continuity with so much of the past several centuries of European Christian intellectual history:

In contemporary Catholic theology, the relationship between apologetics, or fundamental theology, and speculative theology is as much

an issue as it was in the nineteenth century. . . . And in contemporary Catholic theology, the relation between positive theology and speculative theology still remains a problem whose solution demands the use of a coherent system of epistemology and metaphysics. . . . The contemporary debate over theological method is simply another phase in the dialectical movement of Catholic theology's response to post-Enlightenment thought from the beginning of the nineteenth century through Vatican I, *Aeterni Patris*, the modernist crisis, between-the-wars Thomism, the New Theology controversy, and Vatican II up to the present.¹

The great crisis of the 1940s—whether we name it *nouvelle théologie*, after the reform-advocates of the era, or *dialogue théologique*, in honor of the Toulouse Dominicans' attempt to present a Scholastic position between, on the one hand, Fr. Chenu's and Congar's view of what the Saulchoir should be, and, on the other hand, the more-conservative Thomism of Frs. Garrigou-Lagrange, Gagnebet, and Gillon in Rome²—was and remains, in the words of Étienne Fouilloux, “the only theological debate of real [*quelque*] importance, at least in France, from the condemnation of Modernism to the time of the Second Vatican Council.”³ And like any truly great event or crisis in intellectual-spiritual culture, it remains with us today in its fruits, both resolved and unresolved.

Thus, when a new work is published dedicated to these events and the figures involved therein, the Catholic intellectual world should take heed, for our own self-understanding—whatever *sui iuris* Church in which we are ascribed—is at stake. Hence, the arrival of the collection of translations by Dr. Patricia Kelly of the University of St. Andrews is an event to be welcomed, even if elements of its publication also give rise to concern. This volume, *Ressourcement Theology: A Sourcebook*,⁴ gathering together essays by various parties involved on both sides of the specifically Francophone debates over theological method and truth that came to a head in the 1940s, provides the reading public with a dual “service”: it presents in English a

¹ Gerald A. McCool, *Nineteenth Century Scholasticism: The Search for a Unitary Method*, 2nd ed. (New York: Fordham University Press, 1999), 15.

² See Étienne Fouilloux, *Un Église en quête de liberté* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 2006), 116.

³ Étienne Fouilloux, “Dialogue théologique? (1946–1948),” in *Saint Thomas au XXe siècle: actes du colloque centenaire de la Revue thomiste; Toulouse, 25–28 Mars 1993*, ed. Serge-Thomas Bonino (Paris: Éditions Saint-Paul, 1994), 153–95, at 153. Unless otherwise stated, all translations in this review are my own.

⁴ Patricia Kelly, *Ressourcement Theology: A Source Book* (London: T&T Clark, 2020).

number of texts not heretofore available, while also, unfortunately, bearing witness to the academic prejudices lingering against the authors writing from Rome and Toulouse concerning certain veins of thought in theological methodology during the inter-war and immediate post-war era. Although my review will be somewhat negative on certain points—both for technical textual reasons and because of the slanted narrative presented by Dr. Kelly—I wish only the best to her and her work, hoping that the concerns that I voice can serve as a springboard to dialogue, not retrenchment within respective philosophico-theological bunkers.

Before beginning my review in earnest, one final cautionary statement should be registered. Together with Dr. Jon Kirwan, I am the author of a forthcoming collection of translations of texts related to this debate, in particular the various pieces written by Frs. Garrigou-Lagrange, Labourdette, Marie-Joseph Nicolas, and Raymond-Léopold Bruckberger, O.P. Our work, along with the historical-speculative introduction that accompanies it, takes a very different approach to these events, particularly seeking to emphasize the peaceful overtures made by Fr. Labourdette in seeking to have open dialogue with his Jesuit interlocutors in particular. No doubt, our own research and conclusions will give my own review its own slant, for there is no reviewer who writes from an anonymous scholarly “nowhere” position. Nonetheless, sharing in the crooked timber of humanity, I sincerely look for fruitful discussion to be the outcome of this review, above all so that Dr. Kelly’s own work might bear positive fruit. In that spirit, I will now turn to the details of her work.

In the following two sections, I will voice concerns that can be organized into four main registers: (1) an open anti-Scholastic bias that marks the very organization of the work; (2) the way that this polemical orientation also disorients the logical structure of the volume; (3) the fact that the volume reproduces several articles that were already available from other translators; (4) translation issues.

Structural-Historical Evaluations

Dr. Kelly’s collection is divided into three sections, each accompanied by an introduction providing brief biographical and historical details about each piece’s author and the article in question. The sections are entitled “The Sources of Theology,” “Attacks on the ‘New Theology,’” and “Further Thoughts on *Ressourcement*.” Structurally, this breakout is likely a bit confusing for the reader who is not familiar with the history of the exchanges undertaken in the articles included in the volume. This is most readily seen

if one considers the chronology and historical situation of the works in the first two sections in particular:

Part 1: The Sources of Theology

Marie-Dominique Chenu, O.P., “Theology” (1937): This text is drawn from Chenu’s address as regent of studies, published privately as *Une école de théologie: le Saulchoir* and placed on the index in 1942.

Henri Bouillard, S.J., “Conversion and Grace in Aquinas” (1944): The conclusion to Bouillard’s published dissertation, *Conversion et grâce chez S. Thomas d’Aquin. Étude historique*.

Jean-Marie Le Blond, S.J., “The Analogy of Truth: A Philosopher’s Reflection on a Theological Controversy” (1947): A text written as a philosophical defense of Bouillard, articulating a metaphysical-epistemological view of the transcendentals owing much to transcendental Thomism (or something epistemologically very similar, whether inspired by Joseph Maréchal, Pierre Rousselot, or even Maurice Blondel)

Henri de Lubac, S.J., “Supernatural and Superadded” (1946): A selection from De Lubac’s work *Surnaturel*, arguing that the notion of being “superadded to nature,” as introduced into the theology of grace, influenced and changed the notion of supernaturality as it was traditionally understood by most pre-Scholastic thinkers.

Jean Daniélou, S.J., “Current Trends in Religious Thought” (1946): An article devoted to themes in ressourcement and engagement with contemporary thought.

Anonymous (Henri de Lubac⁵), “Response to ‘The Sources of Theology’”⁶ (1946): A response authored in response to

⁵ For the attribution of this infamous article to de Lubac, see: Fouilloux, “Dialogue,” 174; Antonio Russo, *Henri de Lubac: teologia e dogma nella storia, l’influsso di Blondel* (Rome: Studium, 1990), 379; Aidan Nichols, “Thomism and the *Nouvelle Théologie*,” *The Thomist* 64 (2000): 1–19, at 10.

⁶ The title to this article also should have been synchronized with the title of the

Fr. Michel Labourdette's "Theology and its Sources"; the response defends Frs. De Lubac, Daniélou, Bouillard, Hans Urs von Balthasar, S.J., and Gaston Fessard, S.J.

Part 2: Attacks on the "New Theology"

Pietro Parente, "New Tendencies in Theology" (1942): A very brief Roman response (perhaps the first using the expression "new theology"), though directly in the context of the 1930s texts by Frs. Chenu and Louis Charlier, O.P.

Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., "Where Is the 'New Theology' Going?" (1946): The infamous article warning of a purported reviviscence of modernism witnessed in certain contemporary works.

Marie-Michel Labourdette, O.P., "Theology and its Sources" (1946): A review article commenting on the first ten volumes of the collections *Théologie* and *Sources chrétiennes*.

Marie-Michel Labourdette, O.P., and Marie-Joseph Nicolas, O.P., "The Analogy of Truth and the Unity of the Theological Method" (1947): A lengthy critical response to the article by Le Blond, outlining what the authors present as the true Thomist approach to historical relativity.

I will revisit the third section at the end of this portion of my review, for it is of less concern for our purposes than is the content of these first two parts.

Before considering the content of these sections, it is useful to note the polemical posturing of the work's outline. Whereas the first section is devoted to "The Sources of Theology," the second section receives the

Labourdette article in section 2, there translated as "Theology and its Sources." The current reviewer has done much work translating and is well aware that this kind of discrepancy can happen all too readily in the course of working. Although I personally think that the original French should not be translated as "the Sources of Theology," given that Fr. Labourdette is concerned with *the nature* of theology *itself* as well as *the sources* used in theological reflection, I personally allow the translator a fringe for such interpretation for the sake of euphony, even where I would disagree. But, as for the discrepancy, it seems that Dr. Kelly would have benefitted from copy editors who might have helped her to catch something that understandably seems to have escaped her eye while heeding other translational concerns.

polemically inclined title, “Attacks on ‘the New Theology.’” This polemical slant, which is variously echoed in Kelly’s introductory sections, implicitly (and, the present reviewer would argue, explicitly at times) presents the figures gathered herein as reformist “white hats” and retrenched conservative “black hats,” reacting Vichy-style to the secularism of turn-of-the-century France.⁷ This oppositional narrative is the generally received interpretation of these events. In the face of the historical facts, it remains only partially fair, for while it is true that Frs. Garrigou-Lagrange, Labourdette, and Nicolas expressed various concerns in response to volumes being published in the *Théologie* series, as well as the introductions and notes to texts in the first ten volumes of *Sources chrétiennes*, there was no united flank looking to brazenly attack the authors in question.⁸

Although Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange did not flinch from noting the risk of “modernism” in Fr. Bouillard’s notion of dogmatic development, he explicitly did so as a theologian, not an ecclesiastical judge.⁹ His repeated insistence, across the course of many articles (themselves not given sufficient recognition by Kelly in her introductory observations), is almost wholly devoted to the theory of speculative truth and the question of dogmatic development. Although repetitive, his “attack” is solely looking for Bouillard to respond to a rather direct question: If notions (which are the necessary components of our judgments, furnishing the latter with their subjects and predicates) used in dogmatic statements can intrinsically change, how is it that dogmatic statements (which are expressed in propositional form¹⁰) do not ultimately change when their notions change in the way that Bouillard proposes? Perhaps one could critique the “Old Dominican” for not going

⁷ See Kelly, *Ressourcement Theology*, 7. Although Kelly somewhat charitably presents the conservative Francophone temptation toward Vichy-style *intégrisme* in light of the experience of turn-of-century anti-clericalism, the connection (along with all the political connotations of the collaborationist regime) should be handled with *great* care, given the nuance needed for understanding the various positions held by people during this lamentable period of Catholic history.

⁸ Some discussion of this history can be found in Matthew K. Miner, “*Humani Generis* and the Nature of Theology: A Stereoscopic View from Rome and Toulouse,” *Saint Anselm Journal* 16, no. 2 (2021): 1–35. A fuller discussion will be presented in the forthcoming volume by Kirwan and Miner.

⁹ Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, “Vérité et immutabilité du dogme,” *Angelicum* 24, no. 2/3 (1947): 124–39, at 136: “A theologian is not forbidden to say that, to his eyes, a given new position leads to heresy and even that it seems to him to be heretical. He only says this from the perspective of theological science and its deductions, without *authoritatively* speaking like a judge in an ecclesiastical tribunal.”

¹⁰ Obviously, this is not the place to take up all the various methodological issues in need of consideration for a full theology of revelation.

deeper to the root of the significant epistemological difference separating himself from Bouillard (and Fr. Le Blond), but, what one cannot do is say that Garrigou-Lagrange launched a kind of wholesale attack, whatever might have been the title and rhetorical excesses of his first article in a lengthy series of texts ultimately devoted to the question of speculative truth and dogmatic development.

But we might go further still. This section title becomes an *utter* fabrication when it is applied to Fr. Labourdette's "Theology and its Sources," especially when this text is read in its definitive form as published in the volume *Dialogue théologique*, which I will discuss below.¹¹ To any unbiased eyes, Fr. Labourdette bends over backwards¹² to laud the work being done in the two series mentioned above. Although he notes his concerns regarding a perceived depreciation of Scholasticism and an overly zealous attempt to present new texts (in *Sources chrétiennes*) with a ready inflection toward contemporary relevance,¹³ he takes immense pains to retain an irenic tone in the exchange.

As I have already hinted, a further remark might be registered concerning the historical-thematic organization of Dr. Kelly's volume. Although all the articles gathered here are part of the long historical arc from the 1930s to the time of *Humani Generis*, technically there are three different strands presented here, and even then, only in part. First, the Chenu and Parente articles ultimately are connected to a series of publications and Roman-magisterial interventions from the middle of the 1930s through the 1942 indexing of Chenu's *Une école* and Charlier's *Essai sur le problème théologique*. This context, which would also engage other authors (e.g., Frs. Marie-Rosaire Gagnebet, O.P., and Charles Boyer, S.J.), is not sufficiently established in Kelly's volume. Although she cites Jürgen Mettepenning's study, which contains details concerning these events,¹⁴ her own comments

¹¹ Moreover, the reader should consult the recently published review article by Dr. Jon Kirwan (*New Blackfriars* 103 [2022]: 700–703), where he points out certain translational issues that unfortunately (and, we argue, incorrectly) render Fr. Labourdette's tone to be that of a judge in a tribunal—something he explicitly denies, both in the original French article and in his follow-up comments.

¹² See Fouilloux, "Dialogue théologique," 155: "'Theology and its Sources' is anything but polemical: the tone is meant to be modest, serene, and even explicitly benevolent."

¹³ Thus, here too, it is unfortunate that Dr. Kelly did not thematically consider the missiological debates ongoing during the time period as well. See the critical review study by Frs. Labourdette and Marie Joseph Nicolas, "Théologie de l'apostolat missionnaire," *Revue thomiste* 46 (1946): 575–603. I owe to Dr. Kirwan my awareness of this important theme.

¹⁴ See Jürgen Mettepenning, *Nouvelle Théologie, New Theology: Inheritor of Modernism*,

do not make it adequately clear to the readers that what we have here in the Chenu and Parente articles is really only one strand of the unfolding controversy during this period.

The second and third strands are a bit more intertwined. On the one hand, there is the concern raised by Bouillard's comments concerning dogmatic development, registered at the end of his *Conversion et grâce*. These concerns would be shared by the Dominicans writing in the *Revue thomiste*, as well as by Garrigou-Lagrange. However, there is also a broader concern about theological methodology that only partly comes to the discussion in Garrigou-Lagrange, whereas it is quite clear in the interventions written by Labourdette in particular.

Thus, if one were to label the Chenu-Parente strand (1), the Bouillard-related strand (2), and the theological-methodology strand (3), the clearest way to understand the dependencies of the articles gathered in the first two sections would be as follows:

- (1) Chenu, "Theology"
- (1) Parente, "New Tendencies"
- (2) Bouillard, "Conversion and Grace"
- (3) Daniélou, "Current Trends"
- (2, with rushed treatment of 3) Garrigou-Lagrange, "Where is the 'New Theology' Going?"
- (2 + 3) Labourdette, "Theology and its Sources"
- (2 + 3) Anonymous Jesuits, response to "Theology and its Sources"
- (2) Le Blond, "Analogy of Truth"
- (2) Labourdette and Nicolas, response to "Analogy of Truth"

Now, it is somewhat troubling that Kelly seems to have chosen to use the original edition of Fr. Labourdette's "La théologie et ses sources," published in *Revue thomiste* in 1946, whereas the definitive version of his text, accompanied with extensive notes in response to the anonymously published article by the Jesuit Fathers, was published in the volume *Dialogue théologique*.¹⁵ This latter publication contained his original article (with annotations), the Jesuit response, Labourdette's own further response devoted to the nature of theological criticism, a closing article by Fr. Nicolas

Precursor of Vatican II (London: T & T Clark, 2010).

¹⁵ Marie-Michel Labourdette, Marie-Joseph Nicolas, Raymond-Léopold Bruckberger, *Dialogue théologique: pièces du débat entre la Revue thomiste d'une part et les R.R. P.P. de Lubac, Daniélou, Bouillard, Fessard, von Balthasar, S.J., d'autre part* (Saint-Maximin: Les Arcades, 1947).

(then provincial of the Toulouse province of Dominicans), and a stentorian introduction by Fr. Bruckberger. Quite unfortunately, Dr. Kelly does not mention this volume in her own thematic treatment of this debate, despite the fact that it represents the full and definitive articulation of the position of the Toulouse Dominicans, who wished to retain an open dialogue between the parties. Alas, the lines of communication broke down before any substantive resolution could be reached.

In all of his texts, one gets a full sense for Fr. Labourdette's positive desire for rapprochement, registered alongside his concerns that theological relativism would end in the rejection of the later Scholastic inheritance of the various *scholae*. In fact, given the near wholesale abandonment of post-Baroque Scholasticism in the immediate wake of the Second Vatican Council, the estimation expressed by him and Fr. Nicolas cannot fail to echo prophetically today: "How can we fail to see that Thomism finds itself at a critical moment—and along with it, all the traditional theological schools, for none of them would survive its ruin unscathed, existing thereafter only in the form of scattered themes taken up and transformed into brand new intellectual constructions?"¹⁶ To present the Toulouse Dominicans' interventions as being solely an attack does not truthfully contextualize their own express intention to engage in dialogue, lest discontinuity replace what was positive in the Western inheritance of later Scholasticism. Perhaps they were overly defensive of the prerogatives of Scholasticism; however, only the most partisan of readings could interpret Fr. Labourdette's repeated overtures in such a systematically negative sense.

Moreover, the reader will note that Kelly's translation of Fr. de Lubac's chapter, "Supernatural and Superadded," is not included in my reordered list above. Truth be told, it is not clear whether this text is very helpful for understanding the central concerns of the debates reflected in the other texts.¹⁷ In the popular consciousness today, there is an understanding of

¹⁶ Michel Labourdette and Marie Joseph Nicolas, "L'analogie de la vérité et l'unité de la science théologique," *Revue Thomiste* 47 (1947): 417–66, at 466.

¹⁷ In point of fact, if one considers the articles by Frs. Labourdette and Nicolas, the more important texts in this debate would be de Lubac's *Corpus mysticum* and his notes in the translation of *Homélies sur la Genèse*. Although, Fr. Labourdette voices his frustration with *Surnaturel* by noting the affinities between the interpretation offered by de Lubac and the thought of Blondel ("De la critique en théologie," in *Dialogue théologique*, 117: "We will also say that *Surnaturel*, alongside solid historical studies, presents summary and hasty generalizations, wishing, out of an allegedly 'historical' concern, to lead us back to a St. Thomas, whom he interprets through the lenses of a very contemporary school of thought which has drawn significant inspiration from the ideas of Maurice Blondel.").

these events that places de Lubac's *Surnaturel* close to its center. However, as is clear upon reading the whole sequence of articles by Garrigou-Lagrange in *Angelicum* and by Fr. Labourdette and others in the *Revue thomiste* (and in the *Dialogue théologique* volume), this matter is quite secondary, textually speaking.¹⁸ Far more pages in his lengthy sequence of articles are devoted to Bouillard, his defenders, Maurice Blondel,¹⁹ and epistemological issues related to conceptual knowledge, speculative truth, and doctrinal development.²⁰ These themes are far more important than the topic of the distinction between the natural and supernatural orders.²¹

In fact, upon reading Kelly's volume, one will not come away with sufficient awareness of how central the anti-Blondel theme was for the somewhat aggressive series of articles penned by Garrigou-Lagrange. Whether or not one shares in the Dominican's interpretation and critique of Blondel's theory of truth, as well as the former's implicit attribution of similarities to Frs. Bouillard and Le Blond, this point of intellectual history is very important, for it bears witness to the fact that, in the final analysis, Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange's concerns remained steeped in the context of his youth and the philosophical/theological excesses that gave rise to Pius's 1907 *Pascendi Dominici Gregis*. The issues of truth, dogmatic development, and the nature of theological reflection were central for him (and, in a different key,

¹⁸ Obviously, however, the Blondellian implications in apologetics and theological anthropology involved in *Surnaturel* are conceptually connected to the debate over theology, dogma, and truth. My point here, however, is to orient the reader to the latter debate, which is the true *locus* for the joint concerns of the Dominicans writing from Toulouse and Rome. This latter perspective represents the proper hermeneutic context for understanding the essence of all the many articles penned between 1946 and 1949. A full, systematic presentation would need to take into account the conceptual ties between the questions of the orders of nature and of grace, alongside the other topics. However, the particular arguments in *Surnaturel* are not of great import for understanding the main concerns raised by Frs. Garrigou-Lagrange, Labourdette, Nicolas, and Bruckberger.

¹⁹ The older Dominican quite correctly senses the influence of the latter's own thought on the debate unfolding in the late 1940s.

²⁰ On Blondel's influence on various Jesuits of this era, see: Henri Bouillard, S.J., *Blondel et le christianisme* (Paris: Seuil, 1961); Fouilloux, *Une Église en quête de liberté*, 149–91; and the lengthy introduction in Maurice Blondel, *The Letter on Apologetics and History and Dogma*, ed. and trans. Alexander Dru and Iltyd Trethowan (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1964). So pervasive is Blondel in the narrative presented in Jon Kirwan, *An Avant-garde Theological Generation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), that the author merely indexes the entry "Blondel, Maurice" as *passim*.

²¹ This claim will be substantiated at greater length in the forthcoming volume by Dr. Kirwan and myself. It is important, in any case, that the researcher not be distracted by de Lubac's *Surnaturel* here, for this work was not at the center this particular debate.

for Frs. Labourdette and Nicolas). The problem of nature and grace remained quite secondary, and in the final analysis one has the sense that the Old Dominican wishes that de Lubac would merely read his lengthy treatment of the question in the former's *De Revelatione*.²² Ultimately, an overview of the sequence of articles shows that his main concern is the epistemological issue of the development of doctrine tied up in Bouillard's claims.

What is more, in Dr. Kelly's volume, one does not get a sense for the fact that, among all the parties involved, the only substantive dialogue that happened was between Bouillard and Garrigou-Lagrange.²³ Labourdette's review article was met with a somewhat contemptuous dismissal of his concerns.²⁴ However, for several articles, Bouillard and Garrigou-Lagrange at least had a real intellectual exchange, though it did not end in mutual agreement. From reading Kelly's presentation, one gets no idea that this exchange took place, even though knowledge of it would do much in helping to draw attention to one of the main points of contention for Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange in his many, quite repetitive articles.²⁵

The third section of Dr. Kelly's volume contains three essays that are more loosely connected to each other, though they all are concerned with themes of importance to the thinkers engaged in what might be broadly styled "ressourcement" (though the introduction of Congar adds yet another fold to the concerns addressed):

- Jules Lebreton, S.J., "The [series] *Sources chrétiennes*" (1943): A brief summary of the first four volumes of the series *Sources chrétiennes*.
- Henri de Lubac, S.J., "Memories of 1940–1945" (1987): A very brief recollection by de Lubac concerning some of the intellectual labors of his fellow workers during World War II.
- Yves Congar, O.P., "Appendix 1 [to *True and False Reform in the Church*]: Collective Responsibility" (1950): A reflection on the problem of collective responsibility in the context of ecclesiastical self-awareness and reform.

²² See Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, "L'immutabilité des vérités définies et le surnaturel," *Angelicum* 25, no. 4 (1948): 285–98, at 297.

²³ This will be discussed in some detail in the introduction to the volume by Dr. Kirwan and myself. In the article by Fouilloux cited on several occasions above, one will also find that an honest and genial interpersonal dialogue took place between Frs. Labourdette and Daniélou. Something of a dialogue with Msgr. Bruno de Solages took place as well.

²⁴ I would hesitate to make this claim if it were not for the balanced observations of Fouilloux in "Dialogue Théologique," 171–75.

²⁵ In our forthcoming volume, Dr. Kirwan and I summarize this exchange and present the articles by Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange.

Although perhaps interesting, the first two articles, given their brevity, do not add much to either the speculative or the historical content of the volume. The article from Congar is devoted to a completely new vein of discussion, and although it is not unrelated to the concerns addressed in the articles included in the first two sections, it is not clear what it adds, especially since this appendix can be found in a currently existing translation of Congar's *Vraie et fausse réforme dans l'Église*.²⁶ In this regard, I should here note the fact that both the Daniélou article in the first section and the Garrigou-Lagrange article in the second also pre-existed Kelly's volume in translation.²⁷ Although she is to be recognized for her work in re-translating these texts, it is disappointing that 33 pages out of a total 176 (including the introductions and index) are devoted to such pre-existing content.

Translation Concerns

In his forthcoming review in *New Blackfriars*, Dr. Kirwan notes a number of translational concerns in Kelly's volume, most frequently in the context of technical Scholastic philosophical terminology, though also in relation to certain stock expressions of transcendental Thomism. I do not here wish to revisit these particular concerns, so ably and carefully considered by Dr. Kirwan. Moreover, having put my own hand to the plow of translation for many years, I have become immensely sensitive to the difficulties of the translator's task, especially when dealing with technical texts. I am loath to add to a potential chorus of "second guesses" regarding the work of a fellow translator. Thus, to this end, I will register translation-specific concerns only as they immediately touch on technical points in one article in particular, "L'analogie de la vérité et l'unité de la science théologique" by Frs. Labourdette and Nicolas. However, I wholly agree with Dr. Kirwan's own critiques, which are real and merit further consideration.

As my collaborator has already noted, Dr. Kelly's volume is marred on occasion by excisions, particularly in footnotes. As she comments in her own introductory remarks, she chose to retain the shortened mid-century French style of citation. I think that nobody should make a negative judgment concerning that choice. We do not know the time constraints under which Dr. Kelly was operating, and for this reason, let us not second-guess

²⁶ See Yves Congar, *True and False Reform in the Church*, trans. Paul Philibert (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical and Michael Glazier, 2011), 349–64.

²⁷ See Jean Daniélou, "The Present Orientations of Religious Thought," *Josephinum Journal of Theology* 18, no. 1 (2011): 51–62; Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, "Where is the New Theology Leading Us?," *Josephinum Journal of Theology* 18, no. 1 (2011): 63–78.

this quite-understandable choice in the face of the miserably abbreviated notes so often found in authors of this period.

What are not acceptable, however, are some significant *content* excisions from certain notes. At a first glance, when I was using this text for a course, I thought that she had only removed the Latin original from some notes, or at the very worst the text of certain citations from Aquinas which could be easily found in contemporary translation. “Perhaps,” I mused, “T&T Clark pressured her to watch her word count.” Too busy at the time to check in detail, I worked on this assumption, giving her the benefit of the doubt. However, as I began to closely review the text of her translation of “The Analogy of Truth” by Frs. Labordette and Nicolas, I began to note the lack of several lengthy footnotes.

On page 119 of her translation (422–423 of the original), she excises a lengthy (five hundred words) footnote with no indication of this fact. It contains an important technical discussion and disagreement registered by the authors. We likewise find, on 120 (425 of the original) the excision of two notes, for a total length of over two hundred words, both containing important technical asides. On 123 (430 of the original), she truncates a footnote that contains a reference to *Dialogue théologique* concerning the solely theological (not *De fide*) nature of the Dominican friars’ disagreement with the Jesuit Fathers. Then, again, over the course of 124–25 (431–433 in the original), approximately three hundred words of footnotes are omitted as well, once again with no warning thereof. On 126, a one-hundred-word citation from the Council of Vienne is truncated.

Finally, near the end of the article, she excises an entire paragraph in which the Dominican fathers defend themselves against the accusation of being insensitive to the missionary needs of the Church. While one might quibble with details concerning their view of the unity of theological science or with their obvious biases toward Latin theology,²⁸ it is not clear why this passage was not included in the published translation:

Finally, in what way would our position be *anti-missionary*? Certainly, “incarnating” Christian thought in cultures that are entirely different from Latin culture involves great difficulties. However, a great problem is already involved in freeing these cultures from what in them is opposed to Christianity. Even then, even under the pure

²⁸ The present reviewer, who is dedicated to much in the Dominican fathers’ thought, is nonetheless also a Ruthenian Catholic, forever ready to note that Latin hegemony is not the sole coin of the whole Catholic realm.

dominion of faith, reason that has been shaped by Hindu thought would doubtlessly be ill-adapted, in its current state, to assimilate Scholastic theology. Doubtlessly, it would think out its new faith in its own manner, and surely it would introduce fundamental Christian philosophical conceptions into mental structures which are uniquely its own, into a vocabulary charged with references to a mentality that is quite different from our own. But, we must think that not everything would be true, nor complete, nor precise in this theology (even though nothing would prevent faith in the dogmas) until the day when, by dint of its own progress and perhaps of coming into confrontation with Latin theology, and by dint of the latter being obliged to deepen itself and perhaps refashion itself on certain points, indeed, to enrich itself upon everything found in this new contribution, this theology would itself reach a more perfect age, the scientific age.²⁹

Thus, over a thousand words are removed from this article without any justification offered for this “editorial” activity. I have not taken time to document all the footnotes, but something similar can be detected in Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange’s “Where is the ‘New Theology’ Going?,” in which approximately five hundred words are excised from two footnotes.³⁰

Moreover, I would be remiss if I did not remark on several translational issues I noted in the course of my review of the same Garrigou-Lagrange essay. In the opening of the essay, she translates “la controverse qui vient de s’ouvrir” as “a shrill controversy.”³¹ In point of fact, this is tied to a translational issue in her rendering of Fr. Le Blond, who is being quoted here. Le Blond, writes, “le problème des rapports entre théologie historique et théologie scolastique, que pose avec acuité un controverse qui vient de s’ouvrir . . .,” which she renders, “the question of the relationship between historical theology and scholastic theology, which has suddenly become a shrill controversy . . .” However, the subordinate clause in question should, in fact be rendered (in a somewhat literalistic form) along the lines of “which a recently opened controversy acutely poses [for us today].” This translational distortion at once (1) implicitly accuses the Dominican fathers of shrillness in their tone and (2) even makes Fr. Le Blond’s own contribution seem more negative than it truly was. (In point of fact, he believes he is serenely proposing a set of shared theses). Also, here too (on 117), as in her rendering of Fr. Le Blond’s

²⁹ See Labourdette and Nicolas, “L’analogie,” 464.

³⁰ See Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, “La nouvelle théologie—ou va-t-elle?” *Angelicum* 23 (1946): 126–45, at 138n1 and 140n1 (95n15 and 97n17 in Kelly’s volume).

³¹ Labourdette and Nicolas, “L’analogie,” 418 (“Analogy of Truth,” 115 in Kelly).

article, she translates *asymptotique* as “asymptomatic,” distorting a technical point regarding Fr. Le Blond’s presentation of the human mind’s asymptotic attempt to reach the full truth. This error was obvious in the English, with no need to refer to the French.

On 117, where Dr. Kelly renders the words “du fait que” from Le Blond as “if it is a ‘unified multiplicity,’” what is in fact required is something closer to “because” or “on account of the fact that,” precisely for a technical point that Le Blond is making (from within his own outlook): precisely because intellectual constructions are “unified multiplicities,” they thus are *systems* (which would be marked with the deficiencies befalling all such unified multiplicities). Also, where she here renders *l’affirmation* as “statement,” this choice seems confusing to Dr. Kirwan and myself, for the term is technical for Le Blond (and Bouillard): concepts change, but the affirmation expressed through those concepts are the same. It does not seem that *l’affirmation* is being used by Bouillard with the same sense as *énoncé*, often used by French Scholastics to refer to the “enunciabilia” fashioned by the intellect’s second operation.

On 119 her rendering of *adéquation* as “matching” is contestable, given that the former is a technical Scholastic term, whereas the latter represents one (but by far not the only) possible interpretation of the Scholastic notion of speculative truth. Then, on 124, she renders, “qui font son adéquation au réel” as “which make it appropriate to the real.” Admittedly, the term *adéquation* is difficult to render in English without using the awkward cognate “adequation”; however, I believe that one is justified in worrying that the Scholastic meaning will be lost by translating it loosely as “matching” or “appropriate” for the sake of euphony.³² Equally problematic is, on the same page, a rendering that will stand out to any Scholastic reader and will seem quite odd to any non-Scholastic: “l’act n’est limité que par la puissance” is rendered as “the act is limited only by power,” but *puissance* here in French is obviously standing in for the Latin *potentia*, “potency.” Perhaps it was an honest error in editing, due to the use of the various translational tools that we all blessedly have at our disposal today. However, it does not accurately convey the meaning, which clearly echoes the words of the second of the twenty-four Thomistic theses: “*Actus, utpote perfectio, non limitatur nisi per potentiam, quae est capacitas perfectionis.*” A similar rendering of *puissance*

³² The purpose of seeking linguistic euphony (something to be lauded in translations) is precisely to make the text clearer. In philosophical and theological works, technical terminology is, however, often the only means for clear communication, even when it is also eminently clunky, as I too judge “adequation” to be. Clunkiness and opaqueness are not quite the same things.

can be found on 125 as well.³³ Also, on 146, one will find “doctrine of action and potentiality” for “doctrine de l’acte et de puissance.”

In a similar vein, on 130, Frs. Labourdette and Nicolas make the technical point that, while concepts are not subject to formal truth or falsity (which pertains, strictly speaking, to judgments), truth does indeed flow from our concepts’ relationship to reality. The two Dominicans open this section stating: “Quoique les concepts ne soient, en rigueur de termes, ni vrais ni faux . . .” The clear sense here is “even though, strictly speaking, concepts are neither true nor false . . .” However, the technical Scholastic point is lost in the Dr. Kelly’s rendering: “Whether concepts are strictly speaking true or not . . .”

On 132, the technical notion of “imperfect abstraction” (which is very important for understanding the theory of analogy proposed by Cajetan and developed by John of St. Thomas) is described by the original authors by stating, “nous formons un concept analogue *incomplètement* abstrait de ses inférieurs” (443). In the translation presented, however, one reads, “we form an analogous concept which is *completely* abstract from those inferior to it.” The error might have been a wholly understandable typographical error at some point of the translation process, but like several of the errors noted in this review, it too bears witness to a seeming insensitivity to the technical requirements of Scholastic terminology. Without consulting the French, this error will stand out immediately to any Thomist who recalls the doctrine of the later *schola Thomae* regarding the nature of properly proportional analogical “concept”³⁴ formation.

On 135, speaking of Jacques Maritain’s discussions of the noetic distinction between ontological and *empiriological* analysis (a neologism he proposes in relation to the epistemological diversity of the sciences), the translation presented renders *empiriologique* as “empirical.” The term is, however, technical for Maritain, and in fact, Labourdette and Nicolas cite this word in quotes in their own French, thereby drawing attention to the neologistic sense in which Maritain himself uses it. Then, when they

³³ Let it be noted: I am not looking to quibble over words. It is my preference to allow a wide range for translational freedom. However, these technical points, in light of Dr. Kirwan’s own findings reported in *New Blackfriars*, merit being noted at least so that these issues might be addressed in a future edition of the volume.

³⁴ Since it is not a question of generic concept formation, one is not dealing merely with abstraction in such analogical “conceptualization.” Concerning this point, as well as the aforementioned texts from Cajetan and John of St. Thomas, see Yves R. Simon, “On Order in Analogical Sets,” in *Philosopher at Work: Essays*, ed. Anthony O. Simon (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999), 135–71.

compare this distinction to that proposed by Maritain in the *Degrees of Knowledge*, between ontological analysis, on the one hand, and moral and mystical analysis, on the other, a note in Dr. Kelly's translation reads, "again, Maritain gives too sketchy principles for the solution of both Augustine and St. John of the Cross." In point of fact, however, the note reads, "là encore, Jacques Maritain dans *Les Degrés du Savoir* à propos de saint Augustin et de saint Jean de la Croix a donne des principes de solution trop négligés," which one would be much more justified in rendering: "Here too, in the *Degrees of Knowledge*, in relation to Saint Augustine and St. John of the Cross, Maritain has provided principles for solving this issue, and what he says there deserves wider recognition." The sense of *trop négligés* is clearly "all too neglected." One would only expect such a comment from men whom Fouilloux numbered, in a slightly different but connected context, as being part of a group deserving the appellation "maritainiens de stricte observance."³⁵ The general context also supports this rendering, such that it was actually the English alone that alerted me to a translational issue here.³⁶

At the top of 137, *scientifique* is rendered "academic." The technical term "scientific" is important here, given the Scholastic meaning of the term and the connected issues related to the scientific status of theology. Due to the technical necessities attached to the term in this context, such a broad rendering is not justified.

On 138, in the midst of all this technical discussion of various sources of noetic differentiation, the authors only then take up the issue of formal objects. Here, they express, in rather difficult French, an important point. The translation presented by Dr. Kelly, however, is insufficiently clear in its rendering. My concern is not so much with her different translational approach to an admittedly indirect French construction, but rather with a subordination structure that obscures more than it illuminates. For the sake of clarity here, I will provide the texts in parallel, with the phrases italicized that make the significant difference:

³⁵ See Fouilloux, *Une Église en quête de liberté*, 116–18.

³⁶ Also, in this same paragraph, bearing witness to similar issues regarding Maritain's notion of "empiriological analysis," one reads in the translation, "pseudo-mathematical" for "physico-mathématique," a term used by Maritain to describe the noetic character of mathematical physics.

French

Qu'à ces multiples causes de différenciation viennent s'ajouter des différences d'éclairage, c'est-à-dire d'objet formel, nous serons en face de "positions," devant le réel, dont l'erreur principale serait de s'exclure mutuellement, de comporter la négation de vérités mal comprises parce que vues sous un jour étranger.

Kelly translation

When we add differences of emphasis to these multiple causes of differentiation, in other words the formal object, we find ourselves faced with "positions" about the real, whose principle error is their mutual exclusion and of being the denial of poorly understood truths because they are seen under a strange light.

Proposed translation

Let differences in illumination—that is, differences in formal objects—come to be added to these manifold causes of differentiation, and we will find ourselves faced with "positions" before reality whose principal error would be to mutually exclude each other, including the denial of truths that are poorly understood because they are viewed under an unfamiliar³⁷ intellectual light.

Finally, on 140, in one (among many) important passages where the Dominican fathers openly analyze the many ways that our knowledge is

³⁷ The sense of *étranger* allows for some latitude here, even perhaps requiring more re-rendering than my still-rather-strict wording. However, "strange" is not the point being made. Rather, the sense of *étranger* is "foreign": the truths being denied are misunderstood because they are being judged in light of the wrong formal perspective, like the scientist misunderstanding a philosophical datum. (This observation is connected, no doubt, to Maritain's own treatment of the nature of facts, a theme deployed elsewhere by Fr. Labourdette.) This is clear in the next sentence: "A so-called 'scientific' outlook (in the modern sense of the word 'science') concerning the world is often simply a worldview lacking in philosophical illumination, where the only portion of error that is discernable comes from what is rejected." For more on this theme of "facts" in Maritain and Yves Simon, see Michael D. Torre, "Yves R. Simon, Disciple of Maritain: the Idea of Fact and the Difference between Science and Philosophy," in *Facts are Stubborn Things: Thomistic Perspectives in the Philosophies of Nature and Science*, ed. Matthew K. Minerd (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press and the American Maritain Association, 2021), 19–39. For Fr. Labourdette's own use of it, see the essay to be included in the forthcoming volume by Dr. Kirwan and myself, "Théologie, intelligence de la foi," *Revue thomiste* vol. 46, no. 1 (1946): 5–44.

made imperfect by the vicissitudes of our cultural situation, the translation obscures an important point. Here, it is best to present the texts in parallel, again with the phrasings in question italicized:

French

Et d'ailleurs beaucoup des idées dans lesquelles on pourrait essayer (chose si difficile!) de formuler une mentalité, sont acceptées toutes faites, introduites sans critique, parce qu'admises par tous, *dans un système par ailleurs fort appliqué à rendre raison de ses principes propres.*

Kelly translation

And yet many of the ideas in which one might try (with some difficulty!) to formulate a mind-set are accepted ready-made, uncritically accepted because everyone accepts them, *into a system which is strongly applied to give its own principles reason.*

Proposed translation

And, moreover, many of the ideas one might try to use—though, with what difficulty!—to formulate a mentality are themselves accepted ready-made, and are introduced uncritically (because they are admitted by all) *into a system that otherwise diligently strives to render account of its principles.*

The French of this passage is admittedly vexing and difficult. However, the final clause is quite confusing in the translation presented by Dr. Kelly. A fair reading of this comment, especially when interpreted alongside remarks made by Frs. Labourdette and Nicolas in the course of this controversy,³⁸ reveals the fact that the Dominican fathers are more than willing to say that the state of affairs being described has also befallen Thomistic thought.

Conclusion

To be fair, there are many points when, reviewing or reading Dr. Kelly's translation, I thought, "that's an excellent turn of phrase" (the mark of a good translation). It should be clear that my primary focus in the critiques registered here has been technical in nature. However, given that similar issues were discovered by Dr. Kirwan while reading her rendering of Fr. Le Blond's article, I thought it best to present some of the Thomistic-Scholastic translational issues that stood out to my eye, focusing primarily on the single

³⁸ Texts which will be included in the forthcoming volume by Dr. Kirwan and myself.

article by Frs. Labourdette and Nicolas. I suspect that having a Scholastically trained philosopher or theologian review the translations would have enabled almost all of these errors to be avoided.

Dr. Kelly correctly senses that a full understanding of our contemporary ecclesiastical situation calls for keen self-awareness of the history of the great conflict that generated a host of Francophone articles over the course of merely four years' time. She is to be commended for undertaking the difficult work of translation, making available original sources to readers who do not have ready facility in French. Given the heated nature of these exchanges, as well as their continued reverberations up to our own day, direct textual contact is utterly vital for forming a fair estimation of the parties involved, all of whom were deeply concerned priests seeking the correct way to be faithful to the revealed Truth so desperately needed by a world that had just been devastated by the horrors of two world wars. However, it is precisely because of the urgency of such *fair assessment* that Dr. Kelly's volume raises such concerns for me. More than the translation issues noted earlier, the structural-historical issues discussed in the second section of this review essay remain my primary concerns with this volume. A well-apprieved reader will draw some benefit from this volume, but it is unfortunate that it is marked by the aforementioned problems.

I warmly approve of an interlocutor who interprets the history and import of the infamous exchange from the 1940s differently than do I. However, I feel that Dr. Kelly's volume represents a missed opportunity concerning a matter of significant importance. Nonetheless, it is also my sincere desire that my comments be read in a spirit of fraternal charity, inflected with hope for true dialogue in the midst of a Church all too sadly marked by divisions. N:V