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Mark Richard SSAJJABBI

NEWMAN'S SPIRITUAL ITINERARY
Development or corruption?

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Dr. Ioseph MORALES

Dr. Ioseph Raimundus VILLAR

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Secretarius Facultatis
Eduardus FLANDES

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INTRODUCTION

The thesis is theological and historical, critical and synthetic; tracing the spiritual pilgrimage that Newman undertook culminating in what he described as *the only Sheepfold of Christ* in some of his correspondence. It carefully analyses the low and high, joyous and painful, strong and weak moments of his spiritual exodus beginning with Calvinism, through Anglicanism to Roman Catholicism. It is divided into five chapters, followed by a few conclusions. The first chapter, *Newman and his age*, is a brief consideration of the historical circumstances in which Newman lived and worked. The second, *Newman's moral exodus*, considers his moral disposition to act on the principle rule that God is the ultimate source of all his decisions in life. Unlike figures like St Paul and St Augustine, Newman did not have grave moral obstacles to overcome, but if his soul was to attain salvation he had to exhibit high spiritual and moral standards given his intimate relation with God his Creator.

The third chapter, *Newman's doctrinal exodus*, is a theological evaluation of his (Newman) thought in light of the historical circumstances in which he lived as can be discerned from his lectures as professor at Oxford, his letters, sermons and other literary publications. They reveal elements of unity, identity and continuity, but most especially growth, in his thought. He is revealed as an authentic thinker singularly determined to seek and dwell in the truth, at the same time encouraging others to acknowledge it as binding. Whether Calvinist, Anglican or Roman Catholic he cherishes the truth as he believes it to be at that particular epoch of his life. The moment he realises that he is in a mistaken position he is not afraid to move on towards the higher truth that he has discovered be it in a faith Communion different from his current one —thus a doctrinal exodus or pilgrimage—.

The fourth chapter concentrates on the personality of Newman from the affectionate perspective. He is perhaps best described as one

who loved beyond imagination, thus winning love and respect even from his enemies. His affection for his family, friends, nature and faith is verified as genuine and selfless. All, however, is considered inferior whenever the truth is at stake. Despite the pain of upsetting loved ones and the loneliness that this causes Newman is ready to abandon all in service of his faith and for truth's sake. He may be deceived, but he is prepared to take the risk for it is only then that inner peace is assured—hence the crucial step to join the Church of Rome—.

The extent to which such measures as he took are justified is what the last chapter attempts to establish. The criteria that Newman's *Essay on the Development of Doctrine* offers for distinguishing true developments from corruptions in matters of dogma and Divine Revelation is applied to the spiritual itinerary of the author himself; that is, was it a *Development or a corruption*? As the conclusions at the end of the thesis illustrate, far from a corruption, Newman's journey of faith demonstrates all characteristics of a true development, judging from the *Essay* itself. It manifests a preservation of type, continuity of principles, power of assimilation, logical sequence, anticipation of future, conservative action upon the past and chronic vigour.

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ABBREVIATIONS OF THE THESIS

AAS	<i>Acta Apostolicae Sedis</i> , Citta del Vaticano.
Apo.	<i>Apologia Pro Vita Sua</i> .
AW	<i>Autobiographical Writings</i> .
CCL	<i>Corpus Christianorum: Series Latina</i> , Turnholt 1954s.
Dev.	<i>Development of Christian Doctrine</i> .
ITC	<i>International Theological Commission</i> .
LD	<i>Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman</i> .
LC	<i>Letters and Correspondence of John Henry Cardinal Newman</i> .
np.	<i>No page number</i> .
PG	<i>Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca</i> , J.P. Migne (ed.), Paris 1857-1912.
PL	<i>Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina</i> , J.P. Migne (ed.), Paris 1844-1864.
VM	<i>The Via Media of the Anglican Church</i> .

NEWMAN'S CONVERSION: DEVELOPMENT OR CORRUPTION?

«Nunc dimittis servum tuum Domine, secundum verbum tuum in pace, quia viderunt oculi mei salutare tuum»¹.

The closing words of Newman's *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* reveal beyond doubt the satisfaction he had attained as a result of his efforts to seek, through reason, the true Church as left by Christ and faithfully maintained since the primitive ages. They are the song of the old Simeon (Lk 2:29-31) who, after waiting for his entire life yet without wavering in faith or losing hope, was able to see his Lord and Saviour before dying, as had been promised by God. While Simeon had physically seen his Master, Newman had come to certainty, through faith and reason, that God truly lived on in his Church and the doctrinal content of Christianity was authentic and of immense credibility. It was on that basis that he felt obliged to leave the church of his birth for another that he had always accused of corrupting Revelation. But as he admits in a letter to his sister Jemima, «*It is so costly to make decisions*»²

The first four chapters of the thesis show in detail how Newman spiritually evolved and championed the cause of Protestantism almost more than any of his contemporaries. The decision to abandon such a body of faith can but make critical minds wonder at what must have been his state of mind at the time. Moreover analysis need be made of his entire faith journey to examine the extent to which he was earnest in every step he took to fight for and promote the cause of religion. Such reactions as was Pusey's to Newman's conversion (to Roman Catholicism) need be scrutinized due to their revelation of the sense of loss that Anglicanism felt after October 1845. In Pusey's words, «it was the greatest loss that could occur» to the Church of England³. If indeed it was an act of duty on Newman's part it is worthwhile investigating in what sense such results could be yielded after so much labour as was his that he had undertaken earlier.

1. BY THEIR FRUITS YOU WILL KNOW THEM (Mt 7:15-20)

«There is no corruption if an idea retains one and the same type, the same principles, the same organization; if its beginnings anticipate its subsequent phases, and its later phenomena protect and subserve its earlier; if it has a power of assimilation and revival, and a vigorous action from first to last»⁴.

During his earthly ministry Christ warned his disciples to beware of false prophets who were bound to persuade and mislead them. He encouraged them (disciples) to test and prove the authenticity of all who claimed to be God's messengers. Newman himself had met with different schools of dogma each contradicting the other in the name of religion. The project that he undertook to determine a true development from a corruption of dogma, thus his *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, is in a way reflective of his own spiritual journey. While the first four chapters of the thesis attempted to make a survey of his itinerary from moral, doctrinal and affective aspects, this particular one is an analysis of how his thought on doctrine relates to his own life or spiritual journey. As a teacher and minister of the Gospel message attempt is made to evaluate whether he ought to be ranked among the true prophets. Thus, whether his lifestyle corresponded with his teaching. The fruits of his labour, in the above-mentioned *Essay*, have provided the basis for the analysis—the seven notes—.

In 1990, the International Theological Commission (ITC) enthusiastically acclaimed the *Essay* on doctrinal development as «constituting a criteriology for dogmatic development (...) that is useful (...) for the ongoing contemporary interpretation of dogmas»⁵. Thus Newman, through the *Essay* plays a major role in the preservation of the integrity, identity and perpetuity of doctrine. Pope John Paul II in his *Dominicae cenae* (On the Mystery and Worship of the Most Holy Eucharist, February 24, 1980) presents a dynamic concept of tradition; yet he does not develop criteria for verifying that the new understanding and adaptation are a genuine continuity of the church's process of tradition. Theologians such as Karl Rahner and Bernard Lonergan produced theological theories of religion and doctrine seeking to incorporate both the cognitively propositional and the expressively symbolic dimensions of religion and doctrine. But as Lindbeck remarks they are «weak in criteria for determining when a given doctrinal development is consistent with the sources of faith»⁶. It is in this regard that Newman deserves special credit for his efforts. Indeed Cipriano Vagaggini, commenting on the *Essay*, makes much of

his (Newman) significance for any attempts towards establishing criteria for genuine doctrinal development⁷.

Such appraisal could, however, be misleading. Newman considered the book's contents simply as *hypotheses*; as if to acknowledge that it had significant limitations as a work of theological enterprise. His correspondence with Mrs. William (Catherine) Froude in July 1844; with Lord Adare in August 1846 and Robert Isaac Wilberforce in December 1853, to mention but some, testify to his acknowledgement of the work's limitations. It is perhaps the letter to John Finlayson which best explains the difficulty. Having accepted the criticisms labelled against the *Essay*, he points out that they «generally went upon the hypothesis that I was not on the defensive. (...). My argument then along (sic) is to account for what is already likely»⁸. The main focus of this dissertation is not to enter the theological debate as to whether Newman's *Essay* commands respectability or not. It is a survey of how the *Essay* was a personal revelation of the author's state of mind; and then examine the extent to which his own spiritual itinerary was consistent with his thought.

Georg Soll described the issue in Newman's *Essay* as a «very personal matter»⁹. It was to a great extent that his personal faith interest provided the basis and moving force with regard to taking on the project as a theological piece of work. Indeed Gezinus Meuleman and Herbert Hammans, among other theologians, do make much of the personal nature of the *Essay*¹⁰. When Newman later comes to fully embrace the slogan emphasized by Scott (one of his masters) that «growth is the evidence of life» a clear connection with his own theory of development is evidenced. Writing to Mrs. William (Catherine) Froude in September 1854 he testifies beyond reasonable doubt that the motivation behind the work was highly personal; hence: «Shortly before my reception, when my book was partly printed, I saw I *ought* to be a Catholic, and I did not then wait till I had finished the printing, but left the book unfinished, as it now stands»¹¹. So abundant is the evidence pointing to the *Essay*'s personal nature. The more demanding and crucial issue is the need to inquire the extent to which such fruits of labour consistently correspond with the person of the author —hence the notes/tests applied to Newman as an individual—.

1.1. Preservation of type

«The same man may run through various philosophies or beliefs, which are in themselves irreconcilable, without inconsistency, since in

him they may be nothing more than accidental instruments or expressions of what he is inwardly from first to last»¹².

The first test or note for a true development was intended by Newman to demonstrate that for all the church's variations from one period to another in history, or from one place to another throughout Christendom, it (the Church) remains the same. He commenced the illustration with «the analogy of physical growth», which indicates how a plant or animal develops yet remaining the same. It is rather unfortunate that he did not give a precise definition of this particular note. Only through the discussion he makes regarding the note do readers get a clear knowledge of it—as Pierre Gauthier remarks—¹³. Though he mainly focused on the church's political aspect, which renders the presentation to be a narrow one, the addition he makes to the chapter in the 1878 edition does broaden his perspective due to its analysis of the church's doctrinal and devotional aspects¹⁴.

The note is mainly concerned with the external image of the Church given its many variations in history. Newman argues that such variations, some of which are apparent contradictions of its Gospel message, «have no force to weaken the argument for its substantial identity, as drawn from its external sameness, when such sameness remains». After all, he continues, «real perversions and corruptions are often not so unlike externally to the doctrine from which they come as are changes which are consistent with it and true developments»¹⁵. Newman identifies the refusal to follow the *course* of a doctrine as it moves on, and an obstinacy in the notions of the past to be the real causes, among others, of corruption in religion; this not only with external but also internal conditions of doctrines as Dublanchy highlights¹⁶. It is such peculiar emphasis of the course of doctrine and past notions that reveal the nature of Newman's personality. To a great extent his thought was a personal revelation of what was going on in his spiritual life viewed from doctrinal, moral or affective perspectives.

The Newman that was officially received into the Catholic Church (1845) at the hands of an Italian Passionist Priest was essentially the same that had for so long laboured to destroy that very Communion on the ground that it was the agent of the Antichrist in this world. He may have altered in shape, size and age—among other changes that time produces—but he was essentially the same person. Indeed *young birds do not grow into fishes, nor does the child degenerate into the*

brute, wild or domestic, of which he is by inheritance lord. His identity as a human person remained intact particularly from a virtuous point of view. Smaller may have been his brains as a young evangelical, large as a liberal Oriel don, quite aged as a High Churchman and Vicar of St Mary's; but they were the same. As a young boy at East Ham he wrote regularly to his family and so he continued throughout his life till his limbs and eyes could not let him proceed. The love and affection that he showed as an elder son and big brother in the Newman family setting, later as a young Oxford undergraduate and don was demonstrated all the way through his Oxford days. When he became Catholic traits of the same are clearly identifiable in his relationship with different kinds of people.

There are clear differences, no doubt, in approach and emphasis with regard to his mannerisms or behaviours as ought to be expected with growth. Such variations or differences in levels, perspectives or attitudes simply manifest a change that education, age and circumstances normally produce in all peoples. He may have been a scrupulous Calvinist as a young man, liberal as an adult and a very high Anglican during his maturity, but he is the same man —John Henry Newman son of Mr. and Mrs. John Newman for whom religion was indispensable for a life well lived—. He was the Newman for whom God was always to be feared and religion was to be taken seriously. Fear of hell and punishment dictated his morality throughout his different life stages. As a young man it was not well reasoned but as he advanced in age and insight faith and reason were issues that for him could not be compromised.

The young Newman ceaselessly helps his sisters to read and learn all that they can about the Bible. It is the source of all that there is to know about religion, particularly our relationship with authority whether divine or human. The Oxford tutor is impertinent. He is sure that all authority is divine, but still it can be challenged especially when other lives are at stake. Experience and wide reading helped him to recognize that there is more to authority and religious practice than what the Sacred Scriptures reveal to us. We thus see the Vicar of St. Mary's keen on promoting the cause for asserting the Tradition of the Church and all the consequences that such a development brought with it. He is affectionate and very intimate with his brothers and sisters, let alone his parents at home. His letters are full of jokes and show a quite playful child, in a nice and innocent way. Let a letter to his sister Jemima testify to such a nature of his:

«One thing in your letter disappointed me very much, and this it was. At the end you say, we all send our love with your affectionate sister, J.C. Newman. I consequently very naturally supposed that you were sent to me, as your letter seemed to imply it, and as there was a lumbering heavy lump of something or other at the bottom of the parcel, I concluded it must be you, and so I began to unpack this rapidly, to give you (as I thought) some fresh air, of which I did not doubt that you were in want. When to my surprise, having unpacked the said heavy lamp, it proved to be a cake!»¹⁷.

Besides the writer's logical keenness that the letter portrays, as will be discussed later on with regard to the note on *logical sequence*, humour and affection are wonderfully mixed so much as to provoke amusement. But there is also a very serious dimension of such humour and affection. As an Oxford undergraduate he does not mind the company of his friends, but would not in any way approve of their beer parties and lack of temperance. He may spare time to entertain them with his flute but not at the expense of his precious study time and personal dignity. In short, he is loving and caring but not to be associated with anything stupid or lax. Life and studies are not by any means to be taken for granted. Similar traits of the affectionate, friendly, but strictly business minded Newman are discernible during the days of the Oxford Movement, his early days as a Catholic and throughout his Catholic era. Circumstances do change and his opinions do vary according to situations, but he is a Christian from start to last.

There is, however, need to point out that Newman is vulnerable both in thought and person. There are a number of inconsistencies that his work and life journey reveal, thus raising a number of questions and criticism. The distinction between the first note, «preservation of idea» and the development of an idea itself is difficult to detect from the discussion as portrayed by Newman. In fact he acknowledges in the 1845 edition that his first test was the *most striking* of the seven —though the claim is dropped in the 1878 edition—¹⁸. This perhaps explains why he changes the name from «preservation of *idea*» to «preservation of *type*». Just as there is a limitation in the book so is a problem in Newman's own spiritual itinerary. There is apparent confusion in any attempt to precisely identify what he preserves and what he does not as he moves from one stage to another in his spiritual life. Moreover the exact moment at which such changes do occur in him is always almost a mystery. It is perhaps by considering other notes that such limitations or confusions, if any, can be ad-

dressed; and indeed the second note has some special link or connection with the first as shown in the next section.

1.2. Continuity of principles

«A development, to be faithful, must retain both the doctrine and the principle with which it started. Doctrine without its correspondent principle remains barren, if not lifeless, (...); or forms those hollow professions which are familiarly called “shams” as a zeal for an established Church and its creed on merely conservative or temporal motives»¹⁹.

The second note for a true development, as opposed to a corruption, is intended by Newman to show that Catholic principles engender true development. Any attempt to abandon such principles would only lead to the miserable situation of losing credibility, similar to what Wesley foretold with regard to Methodists. Having attached such great importance to early preaching Wesley warned that if his followers (Methodists) ever dropped such a discipline they would «dwindle away into nothing, they have lost their first love, they are a fallen people»²⁰. It is in this regard that Newman describes any destruction of special laws or principles of development by an institution as a corruption. The closest he comes to a definition of what he means by principles is probably when he refers to *certain lines of thought or conduct by which something grows great*²¹. He argues that doctrines are developed by the operation of principles and, in the process, develop in various ways according to those same principles. It is perhaps his reference to Jesus' Sermon on the Mount that relates his thought to his own spiritual journey:

«Contrariwise to other empires, Christians conquer by yielding; they gain influence by shrinking from it; they possess the earth by renouncing it»²².

When Newman refers to religious investigation as sometimes conducted on the principle that it is a duty «to follow and speak the truth», the words can be exceptionally applied to his own journey of faith. Dutiful as he was he was never afraid of following the truth, no matter where it led him. Far from seeking popularity at truth's expense it was his life principle to suffer ridicule or unpopularity as long as his destination was not compromised. This section of the dissertation has as its main focus the demonstration of a continuity of

principles in Newman's life and thought. Governed by faith and reason he earnestly followed his conscience at each epoch of life yet without turning a deaf ear to the possibility of encountering new truths —as the following few paragraphs briefly show—.

The account in the *Apologia* reveals the future cardinal as a dreamer from so early an age. It was, however, not a matter of dreaming without purpose. It was a means to something much greater, or far superior significance as can be seen in such works as *Callista* and *The Dream of Gerontius*. His own testimony is worth citing at this point: «I thought life might be a dream, or I an Angel, and all this world a deception, my fellow-angels by a playful device concealing themselves from me, and deceiving me with the semblance of a material world»²³. Such disregard for the visible world and unique movement in the invisible, as if it were a well-known territory, does point to Newman's determination to pursue higher goals than those pursued by ordinary folk. Though vague and far off such pleasures of a heavenly nature were for him to be followed out of duty. Commenting on the same Henry Bremond describes Newman as the young dreamer who «seems always ready to lend his ear to hear the voice of angels, and, in truth, lives isolated in the midst of his fellows, a stranger to all that affects them, altogether out of sympathy with them»²⁴.

Such was Newman's journey into the unknown. As he began so he continued and the impact of his thought and life testimony to Christendom as a whole can by no means be under estimated. His entire life whether Anglican or Catholic was strictly characterized by (or governed on) *certain lines of thought or conduct* so consistent that an exceptional element of continuity is fairly attributable to them. While his conduct will be subject for discussion in a later section or note his thought provides enormous evidence as some of his letters and sermons reveal. Let it suffice in this section to limit the discussion to two of his University Sermons (VII and VIII) and his *Letter to the Duke of Norfolk*²⁵. The young Anglican clergy who, thanks to Providence, was one of the few select preachers of Oxford University portrays coherent development as manifested by his sermons and letters, among other works.

In a letter to his sister Jemima, Newman recommended to her his volume of *University Sermons* a work he described as *consistent* due to the fact that he had «kept to the same views and arguments for twelve years». Between 1830 and 1843 he had been working on a theory that is perhaps best summarized as the relationship between faith and reason. The invitation for Newman to go down in history as one of

Oxford's select preachers dates as early as 1824, while he was still a young deacon, but his first University Sermon was delivered in July 1826. Mention was made earlier on concerning the 1828 Emancipation Act, which authorized Catholics to form part of the British Parliament. While the Irish Catholics were by right entitled to civil and religious freedom, their participation in the British Parliament was a contradiction to Newman. It did not make sense for Catholic Members of Parliament to influence laws that governed the Church of England—a body that Catholics had always struggled to destroy—. Moreover Catholics were not morally obliged to follow the Parliament's rulings that were meant to favour the Establishment. It is in such circumstances that he advocated for the separation of Church and State as essential or else the spiritual be determined by worldly (political) affairs.

In a nutshell Newman was convinced that the boundaries between the temporal and spiritual matters required clear demarcation. Sermon VII is an analysis of what one may call the elements of a worldly mentality. Making use of a quotation from St. John, «*This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith*» (1Jn 5:4), the young select preacher exhorted his congregation to detach themselves from worldly things for they are deceptive and could ruin their souls. That is, the world is a False Prophet promising what it cannot fulfil, and gaining credit by its confident tone. Only the Spirit of Truth, «gifted with those piercing eyes of faith», can scan the world's shallowness thus leading the soul to the heavenly realm. Sermon VIII is a detailed description of how each individual's conscience functions under normal circumstances. It was based on the temptation and fall of man as is accounted in the book of Genesis, «*The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat*» (Gen 3:13). The sermon is a classic given its outstanding persuasive nature appealing to the listeners to turn from irresponsible behaviour and seeking excuses for failure to a rather mature understanding and use of freedom, thus:

«That we are accountable for what we do and what we are—that, in spite of all aids or hindrances from without, each soul is the cause of its own happiness or misery—, is a truth certified to us both by Nature and Revelation»²⁶.

It is such accountability and freedom in decision-making that led Newman so many years later to write his classic letter on conscience, the *Letter to the Duke of Norfolk*. The letter is an explanation of how an individual can be a good person with regard to both civil and reli-

gious domains at the same time. To put it precisely it demonstrates how an English Catholic can be loyal both to the Crown and the Roman Pontiff without any contradictions whatsoever. William Ewart Gladstone, in 1874, published an article in the *Contemporary Review* whose content provoked answers with regard to conscience of converts to Roman Catholicism. He charged that no one could be a convert to Rome «without renouncing his moral and mental freedom and placing his civil loyalty and duty at the mercy of another». Distinguishing between what he called ordinary Catholics and Ultramontanes (a small group whose zeal for allegiance to the Roman Pontiff was rather extreme) Newman insisted that each person is responsible for his/her own actions and words out of personal responsibility. With exceptional wit Newman insisted that he wouldn't mind tossing to the pope, but first to conscience —that *aboriginal Vicar of Christ* in each person—.

The continuity of principles lies in the fact that, among other possible evidences, the Anglican Newman of the *University Sermons* appealed to his flock to be otherworldly, not over investing in the visible world with all its promises. The separation of church and state would be vital for such a project. Not that they had to abandon the world, but that being in it they ought to be detached from it. Much later on as a Catholic he demonstrates that individuals with dual citizenships can make responsible decisions effectively, civil and ecclesial. While the former is mainly earthly, visible and worldly, the latter is associated with goods of a spiritual and heavenly nature. Both, however, are important and do command love and respect. Newman can be fairly accused of denying Catholics of their civil rights around the time of the Emancipation Act. He, however, took such a stand out of *duty* to safeguard the destinies of the Anglican flock from *Catholic heretics* whose influence over Parliamentary decisions he deemed disastrous. After all is it not a similar zeal and spirit that Saul (St. Paul) demonstrates as a Jew with regard to the Mosaic Law! It is only later on that the Apostle admits the defects that lay therein and of course with explanation, *for when I was a child I behaved like a child* (1Cor.13:11). Newman was a very dutiful and principled Anglican.

Such zeal for the heavenly kingdom as was his could, however, raise a few more questions to curious minds. There seems to be an element of overemphasizing the spiritual at the expense of the visible world. As Bremond observes, Newman gives «an impression of isolation, of an exile's proud sorrow touched with disdain»²⁷. There is thus

a problem as to how one for whom the earth almost has no existence can have any merit in renouncing it. Does such facility as his in withdrawing from other people and things not represent some egoism of some sort? In one instance only two beings matter, «my God and myself»; on another occasion he locks himself in his cell insisting that «I want nothing». Such and many other likely causes of disquiet are perhaps best addressed by considering yet another aspect of Newman as reflected in the third note for detecting a true development from a corruption as the next section attempts.

1.3. Power of Assimilation

«In the physical world whatever has life is characterized by growth, so that in no respect to grow is to cease to live. It grows by taking into its own substance external materials; (...). Two things cannot become one except there be a power of assimilation in one or the other»²⁸.

The secret of Newman's inner life and the inspiration of all his works is, to a great extent, revealed by his capacity to adapt to different situations and influences. Having resolved to give himself to God forever, as servant and instrument, he (Newman) decidedly opened up to external influences. This is particularly true with regard to the intimacy of his friends and acquaintances. Quite often he is courteous and obliging to friends, let alone interchanging civilities by opening up his heart to them and admitting them into it. Moreover this is extended beyond the circle of his friends to strangers who out of nowhere apply to him for acquaintance. It is therefore worthwhile to examine the nature of his relationships with people and his encounter with new circumstances.

The third note for a true development, «power of assimilation», depicts Christianity as always absorbing its antagonists, just like Aaron's rod (Ex. 7:12). In Newman's understanding, development from a Christian and doctrinal perspective is a process of incorporation. Far from losing its identity in its interaction with its various milieu, the Church has throughout history been a «treasure-house, giving forth things old and new, casting the gold of fresh tributaries into her refiner's fire, or stamping upon her own, as time required it, a deeper impress of her Master's impress»²⁹. Instead of accommodating itself to what it encounters, Christianity assimilates all into its domain. Such a process is, of course, not a mere accretion of doctrines or rites from without—as he explains—. While it borrowed from pagan

cultures, philosophies and religions, Christianity remained normative over the elements it assimilated from the cultures in which it found itself. Newman believed that it is precisely through such assimilation that Divine Providence operated, as Gerard McCarren points out³⁰.

In as much as development was related to incorporation of cultural and philosophical norms by Christianity, Newman's thought was in agreement with his own faith journey. If assimilation is to be simply looked at as «making similar or like», the true image of his assimilative powers will be obscured by a theory that tends to move in one direction. While it entails converting into a like substance, like food in the body; or to become like (to be incorporated in), it denotes an element of interrelationship when compared to Newman's spiritual exodus. He was greatly influenced by people and external circumstances, on one hand, but he too greatly influenced and shaped other people's lives. He was almost always open to new ideas and often used the new knowledge to move onto a much higher platform than before. He, at many instances, went as far as influencing his own masters —using the knowledge that he had acquired from their tutorship—. His own thought is, significantly, a development of his friends' ideas.

Mention was made earlier of a young Mr. Newman who was a zealous pupil in school, besides being open-minded, ever prepared to learn from his strict evangelical mother and culturally progressive father. Thus he carried demonstrating peculiar faculties as far as listening and learning were concerned; but that was not the end of the episode. As a young cleric Newman was under the guidance of Edward Hawkins, an Oriel Fellow, by then Vicar of St. Mary's. Among other things as mentioned before he (Hawkins) taught the new cleric to be original and self-reliant, hence «*think for himself*», by criticizing his sermons in 1824. It must have been a lesson of a life's time. In 1828, Hawkins was elected Provost of Oriel and Newman succeeded him as Vicar of St. Mary's. This, thanks to Hawkins assistance, was a platform that raised him to heights beyond imagination particularly through his sermons as has been repeatedly alluded to in this dissertation. At the same time, however, such originality of thought was exercised in his role as Tutor. It was to be pastoral as well as academic, contrary to the new Provost's wish. The disciple since then became a master of his own and influenced many others to oppose the new Provost. Since then, Newman's legacy has remarkably progressed.

The circumstances were often the same with most of Newman's friends. Though not necessarily controversial as in the case of Hawkins,

they led him on and in a matter of time he took over leadership. Most of his doctrinal dispositions were acquired from men like John Keble, Edward B. Pusey and Hurrell Froude, to mention but some. He, however, went into further details, to the ultimate core of issues, and eventually won their admiration and respect. Having reached such heights his role and status too had to be changed. He became their champion, thinker and dependable guide. Just like the Church that transcends pagan religions and philosophies with which it encounters, Newman not only made his own other people's thought, but went beyond by interpreting it anew and then teaching them. He thus became exceedingly influential and outspoken.

His life story demonstrates exceptional power of assimilation and influence over those with whom he comes in contact. Richard William Church describes his sermons at St. Mary's as having «made men think of the things which the preacher spoke of, and not of the sermon or the preacher»³¹. Referring to the spring of 1839 when his Anglican position was at its height, Newman says that he «had supreme confidence in my controversial *status*, and I had a great and still growing success in recommending it to others»³². His capacity to influence others was outstanding and almost unrivalled by any of his contemporaries. Grant Duff's description of Gladstone's amazement during a conversation at a dinner party is a vital insight:

«I do not believe that there has been anything like his influence in Oxford, when it was at its height, since Abelard lectured in Paris. I myself, in my undergraduate days, saw just the commencement of it. It was beginning to be the custom to go and hear him on Sunday afternoon at St. Mary's»³³.

W. F. Hook, Vicar of Leeds, in a letter to Newman (March 1841) expressed similar sentiments when he acknowledged that he was under the very deepest obligation to the former vicar of St. Mary's. «Your sermons have done me more good than almost any work: and your work on Justification has opened to me, (...), a field to (sic) thought, on which I hope to profit till my dying day»³⁴. Indeed such a field of thought was opened up to all sorts of people let alone Newman's close circle of friends, correspondents and church congregation. As he himself acknowledged once in 1849, his «influence among persons who have not seen me has been indefinitely greater than among those who have». It is no surprise therefore that for many Anglicans his cessation to Roman Catholicism was an inestimable loss. In the words of Anne Mozley, he was a guide who abandoned his

flock to seek its path: a champion and watchman whose cry that could be heard no more. He who for long had cheered them had deserted his own adherents.

There is, so to say, variability in Newman's faith journey as far as assimilation, development and incorporation is concerned. Much as he influenced other people they too influenced him and quite often his own convictions had to be altered. His journey of faith was marked by both failure and success at different stages from childhood to adulthood and later old age. Many a time ideas and influences external to his own milieu came to him and their force or power could not be resisted. The shocks in form of «ghosts» from the early Church Fathers, the strength of Rome as an institution, the persuasion of friends both in the school and church settings he found himself, all posed important challenges that almost always obliged him to move, respond or react accordingly. This calls into question the nature and logic of his faith journey as will next be considered —hence the fourth note for detecting true development—.

1.4. Logical Sequence

«An idea under one or other of its aspects grows in the mind by remaining there; it becomes familiar and distinct, and is viewed in its relations; (...); and thus a body of thought is gradually formed without his recognizing what is going on within him»³⁵.

The first chapter of the dissertation —*Newman and His Age*— lays much emphasis on the effects that modern science had on religion as a whole. Men having begun to think about, and question, all issues that affected their lives, religious belief could not be taken for granted any more. Logical positivism in particular, through its systematic syllogism led many people to doubt a number of formerly unquestioned religious doctrines as inconclusive or illogical. Newman was very much opposed to its emphasis of logic and reason at the expense of religious faith, like all the other sciences at the time. It is the case, however, that he was not totally against all logic. This is verified by the fact that logic provides the basis for his fourth note or test for a true development —*logical sequence*, as will be analysed in this section—.

Newman's use of the word *logic* needs to be interpreted in the broad rather than the strict sense. He argues that all doctrines proceed according to the rules of logic in the sense that they demonstrate «progress of the mind from one judgment to another, as, for

instance, by way of moral fitness (...)»³⁶. Authentic developments, therefore, do not transgress the rules of logic or reason. Logic, according to him, is vital in the sense that it helps to arrange and inculcate what is gained without science. While the note ensures continuity of doctrine, it also allows for the new expression of the same yet without losing its essence or projecting developments. He emphasizes that if all developments must depict conscious reasoning from premise to conclusion, then syllogistic or symbolic logic is limiting. True or genuine logical operation could sometimes be unsystematic.

The journey of faith that led Newman into what he later described as the *port of truth* is in so many ways related to his own thought with regard to the fourth note for doctrinal development. Far from being a straight and clear cut, it was characterized by success and failure, joy and sadness, love and hate—all of which were necessary entities for the crucial step taken in October 1845—. The pattern of his whole career portrays an oscillatory rhythm characterized by extremities of both weakness and vigour at various moments and circumstances. While the period 1833-1839 was of exuberant joyous energy, such as he never had before or since, 1840-1845 was of enormous despair. It is true, at the same time, there were mixtures of joy and sorrow throughout his entire career. Yet all was in the end to prove essential for his growth in the deepest sense of the word.

Edward B. Pusey described Newman's conversion as «perhaps the greatest event which has happened since the communion of the Churches was interrupted»³⁷. One so formed in the Anglican Church and the work of God's Spirit believed to be dwelling in her was transplanted to Roman Catholicism. Through him (Newman) all that is good in Anglicanism would be opened to Catholics so as to make them outgrow their prejudices and hatred. Whether such a claim is justifiable or not, Newman's was an intellectual pilgrimage with two remarkable characteristics—the one connected with the other—. Bruno Forte observes that Newman, in the first place, «demonstrates the full logical coherence of the principle by which the One who has revealed truth in history could not deprive human beings of a living guardian to guarantee that truth's faithful transmission and interpretation. In the second place, he proposes to discover that living milieu which receives, transmits and interprets the gift of divine truth ever more profoundly, and he recognizes this milieu in the Catholic Church»³⁸.

Newman treats as an illusion the idea of being able to fix a particular date for one's conversion. The process or journey of faith, whose peak is true conversion, defies the rules of logic, systematically analysed.

Constant returning and renewal of principles characterized his journey in various stages or epochs of his life. It was a mixture of errors, probabilities and certain truths, all of which presented themselves in varying degrees and circumstances. Three years after what he calls his *first visit* from God, he can still be detected as being in the full favour of Evangelicalism. The Bible is heavily still the main support of his beliefs, yet at the same time, he is in a process of transformation. Despite taking on High Church attitudes, the conviction of sin, terror and despair, to mention but some, are still strongly implanted in him. Indeed, his own testimony is very important as far as recognized formulae are concerned:

«I speak of conversion with great diffidence, being obliged to adopt the language of books. For my own feelings, as far as I remember, were so different from any account I have ever read that I dare not go by what may be an individual case»³⁹.

Verily so, *an individual case* it might have been but full of challenges to all minds that earnestly seek true conversion. Is it not the case that those who are honest, as far as search for truth is concerned, are bound to encounter failures? Newman had a fair share of such a puzzling and sometimes desperate experience. A return to that famous passage in the *Apologia* when he makes an account of his first meeting, or rather *interview* with God is relevant in this case. During the encounter Newman, among other things, recollects beyond doubt that he was elected to final glory. Though short, the passage is detailed enough and the personal confession admirable in its exactness. Talking about the doctrine of final perseverance his certitude is as grave and calm as it is invincible:

«I received it at once, and believed that the inward conversion of which I was conscious (and of which I am still more certain than that I have hands and feet) would last into the next life, and that I was elected to eternal glory. I have no consciousness that this had any tendency whatever to lead me to be careless about pleasing God. (...) I believe it had some influence on my opinions, (...), in isolating me from the objects which surrounded me, in conforming me in my mistrust in the reality of material phenomena, and making me rest in the thoughts of two and two only absolute and luminously self-evident beings, myself and my Creator»⁴⁰.

The *Apologia* is a work of 1864, by a man in his sixties. To the standards of Victorian England he was in his old age. His testimony, however, is of a fifteen year old and most readers will probably be

tempted to question its validity for any authentic history of an individual soul. The author, in any case, was a genius in the prime of his life journey. It may be difficult, as far as logic can be applied, to determine the precise point such assurance (of election) as his is obtained, but one thing is certain —it was a personal encounter with God—. Having found God, he exchanged the abstract, vague and cold formulae for a personal, sensible, living and present reality. It was, at the same time, a mere starting point whose impact on the pilgrim's future cannot be underestimated. Since then his entire philosophy was determined by the need to establish a fundamental identity between God's voice and the voice of his conscience. His journey after that special encounter was forward-looking in nature whose consequences can only be fairly analysed in relation with yet another note of a true development.

1.5. Anticipation of its future – Tendimus in Latium

«Unless something occurs which I cannot anticipate I have no intention of any early step even now. But I cannot but think (...) that some day it will be, and at a definite distance of time»⁴¹.

The fifth note for detecting a true development as opposed to a corruption, *Anticipation of future developments*, has as its thesis the possibility that an idea will be displayed with outstanding richness early in its history though time is necessary for its maturation. It is Newman's argument that «developments are in great measure only aspects of the idea from which they proceed»⁴². Looking to, and critically analysing history, he observes that later Catholic doctrines which are sometimes accused of being a corruption of Sacred Revelation are actually exhibited within the doctrines concerning Christ's work of redemption. Such doctrines include that of the resurrection of the bodies of saints and their later glorification, cults to relics and images, the merit of virginity and the prerogatives pertaining to Mary, Mother of God. «All these doctrines», he remarked, «are more or less developed in the Ante-nicene period»⁴³.

The original edition of the *Essay* points out that the early Fathers had not reflected much on the connections between various doctrines. It is the case, however, that the whole content of the faith was fully inherent there within; only time was required to bring it to surface. Interpretation by later ages and thinkers was therefore determi-

native in the arrangement of the evidence from the Patristics, out of which doctrines developed. As Newman points out, Christendom could be accused, by pagans for instance, that it simply connects «together for a particular purpose certain opinions or practices (...) which are really unconnected and accidental»⁴⁴. Having anticipated such an objection, he reminds his readers that the main purpose of the *Essay* is not so much to seek to derive developments as «merely to determine whether certain developments, which did afterwards, and do exist, have not such sufficient countenance in early times, that we may pronounce them to be true developments and not corruptions». That this is a limitation on the note's function one has to admit for, as Newman himself observes. Yet, «stray heterodox expressions (...) can be made up into no system»⁴⁵.

Such limitation and retrospective function of the fifth note, if anything, is vital for revealing the nature of Newman's journey of faith. It was not one clear or straight path from childhood to adulthood, characterized by unwavering faith and religious practice. It was, on the contrary, a long process of change in anticipation of a future that could only be fully revealed with the progress of time. During the pilgrimage, it is Newman who shows constant zeal to grow and move on in a direction that was not of his own personal determination. Through prayer, meditation, study and the encounter with friends, the path was demarcated for him at different stages of his life. If there was only one constant aspect of the whole process, it is the manner in which the future cardinal of the Holy Roman Catholic Church portrayed strong catholic tendencies since childhood till the morning that the inevitable took place.

Tendimus in latium! This seems to be the slogan of his entire life, whether he is aware of it or not. All he wants is a religion that is free from corruption, the true Catholic faith as willed by Christ. To ensure this noble reality, he has to criticize all those he considers responsible for corrupting Divine Revelation. His beginnings do anticipate the subsequent phases of his life journey. The scrupulous young Calvinist, the liberal Anglican with noetic currents of the Oriel College circles (whose rooms «stunk with logic») and the mature high Anglican have at least one thing in common —the obsession to seek and dwell in the truth—. Once this is achieved beyond reasonable doubt, it should not be so much a surprise that the pilgrim calls to mind, and makes his own, those words of the old Simeon —*Nunc dimittis*—. All roads for him, as far as analysis can permit, led to Rome. The nature and depth of his religious disposition inherent in

his entire being is perhaps best typified by his correspondence with Jemima during the last two years of his Anglican days.

The end of 1844 was for Newman a time of tremendous disturbances. Rumour had circulated that he was already a Roman Catholic simply maintained in the Anglican Communion by a cloudy intention of some sort. He thus took to clarify his position especially to reassure those broken hearts among the church of his birth that had always looked to him for a guide. It is in this respect that his correspondence with his sister Jemima deserves attention. Writing in November 1844, he confessed that the pain he may have caused to people he had always loved was of no human motives. Given the nature of his religious conviction, he could not stay where he was at the time, let alone the many changes his history demonstrates. Despite the many risks involved, he was always determined to move into the unknown whenever the need arose. In this particular instance the Roman system had for long demanded his personal assent, but only time would bring it to fruition despite the many inclinations he had always towards the same. Let his own words portray the depth of his conviction and inclination:

«A clear conviction of the substantial identity between Christianity and the Roman system occupy my mind since three years back. (...). They (Roman Catholics) don't attract me as a group. I am disposed, however, to leave all»⁴⁶.

While Newman tries to avoid precipitations and unfounded anticipations, he admits that any time he could change religion. To Jemima this is a disaster comparable to the death of a dear friend. Religious duty, for Newman, obliges him to look beyond the limits of consideration for friends. Indeed the Jews, in the early church, would never have embraced Christianity if it were not the determination to abandon all even if this meant hurting one's friends and family. Only time would prove him right and thus appeal to his accusers to follow suit. His testimony in this regard is emphatic:

«With the advance of time, and given the opportunity to know me better, people will know that their conjectures do not square. They will realize that my only reason is to simply believe that the Church of Rome is the true one»⁴⁷.

This no doubt is a testimony of one deeply convinced that he has searched well enough. He seems to lack no more facts for proving his

case, religious inclination in this matter. Neither does he anticipate a greater maturity of spirit as his exclamations reveal. Again writing, as mentioned earlier, to his sister Jemima he wonders thus: «What means of judging can I have more than I have? What maturity of mind am I to expect?» Such intensity of conviction is to many readers a cause for alarm. The level of Newman's assertiveness is perhaps stretched beyond normal dimensions. If any thing, however, his convictions had history for a foundation and experience had taught him to uphold ancient wisdom. In yet another note for a true development a strong case is made for such a claim.

1.6. Conservative action upon its past – Ne quid nimis

«A true development, (...) is conservative of the course of antecedent developments (...): it is an addition which illustrates, not obscures, corroborates, not corrects, the body of thought from which it proceeds»⁴⁸.

The sixth note for a true development, *conservative action upon its past*, is to a great extent similar to the first, *preservation of type*⁴⁹. Both notes do recommend change in perception yet without losing the essence of the original doctrine. While the first approves as genuine developments only such doctrines where «the parts and proportions of the developed form, however altered, correspond to those which belong to its rudiments», this particular one (the sixth) is cautious in nature. Change does not necessarily mean reverse or deformation of a particular entity, for that is destruction other than growth. Just as young birds do not grow into fishes, or children degenerate into brute, «manhood is the perfection of boyhood, adding something of its own, yet keeping what it finds»⁵⁰. Newman is concerned about the tendency to go to extremes, which eventually distorts the true nature of things (doctrines in this case). Vincentius of Lerins described development as *profectus fidei non permutatio*, and his influence to Newman is enormous since it provided the basis for both the first and second notes⁵¹.

Conversion is a gradual process, continuous in nature, which continuity is characterized by addition and increase as opposed to destruction. That is why true religion or development should have the ability to combine in one entity whatever good and true there is of the different things that it encounters. This calls to mind the third note for a true development —*power of assimilation*—. As far as conservation is concerned a true development should never at any mo-

ment cease to illustrate the acquisitions gained in its previous history. Attempt to disturb or disregard such acquisitions turns into a corruption since it is unfaithful to its heritage. It is clear therefore that the sixth note serves to guarantee both continuity and transformation (positive change) at the same time. The words of the philosopher Heraclitus that «Becoming is the fundamental feature of all existence» are appropriate in this case⁵².

Medio tutissimus, as opposed to «vaulting ambition» is Newman's recommendation for any authentic development or process of change. It is his fear that «too much of what is good is evil» and so he insists on being cautious. This is true both in his thought, as the *Essay* demonstrates, and his life journey as a whole. Neither thesis nor antithesis provide the true essence of reality. On the contrary it is the synthesis which has within its entity the ultimate truth, richness and goodness —*in media veritas est*—. What the philosopher Hegel applies to physical nature, as also are similar instances in the *Essay*, can be significantly applied to the spiritual itinerary of John Henry Newman, despite apparent limitations or contradictions, as far as existing evidence illustrates.

The entry in Newman's *Early pocket books* (1810) makes record of a note from his mother running thus: «Train up a child in the way he should go, and, when he is old, he will not depart from it»⁵³. Thanks to her influence, Newman always looked to his past for determining his next step. It was for him a rock whose significance in decision-making could by no means be underestimated. Such conviction, beyond his thought as revealed by the *Essay*, is best illustrated in the affairs surrounding the Oxford Movement. Most historians and critics have labelled as «grave limitation» the fact that the movement's standpoint was backward-looking. The Tractarian William Palmer (1803-85) strikes the right code when remarking thus about the Movement:

«Our effort (...) was wholly conservative. It was to maintain things we believed and had been taught, not to introduce innovations in doctrine and discipline. (...). Our principle was traditional, the maintenance of that which had always been delivered. (...). Our appeal was to antiquity —to the doctrine which the Fathers and Councils and Church universal had taught from the creeds—»⁵⁴.

Throughout his entire life and spiritual journey, Newman does not pretend to possess or propose anything new. It was his belief that whatever he was and taught as truth had been upheld and taught by

many that preceded him. His main preoccupation was to remind the world through word and deed of the treasures of its noble past. Such truths as laid down in the Catechism and ritualised out in the Liturgy needed reminding to those who seemed to have forgotten them. By no means did he see himself as an apostle of some new doctrine. His parents and teachers, since childhood, had taught him to seek righteousness and it was up to him to live it out, let alone helping others to do the same. On the ecclesial front, the Fathers had demonstrated unshakeable faith in matters of religion and for him progress was to be achieved only by appealing to them and sanctioning what they sanctioned.

Despite his backward-looking and conservative nature, however, Newman believed that the Church had to be dynamic, progressive and pragmatic. Only then would it stand the test of time in a rapidly changing world. Such elements as pragmatism, dynamism and progress if not overstretched would ensure the necessary spiritual vitality that masses of people looked for in faith; this, however, not at the expense of its heritage. In his own life, Newman harmonized both conservative and progressive characteristics. This in a sense explains why his legacy has lived on for centuries. Indeed, it is the secret to standing the test of time as yet another note for a development illustrates. This is the subject to which attention is drawn in the next few paragraphs.

1.7. Chronic vigour

«While ideas live in men's minds, they are ever enlarging into fuller development: (...) and thus *duration* is another test of a faithful development»⁵⁵.

Last but not least, the seventh note raises the vital questions of time, energy and endurance in the process of development. Corruption, according to Newman, can neither be long standing nor demonstrate elements of endurance or growth. On the contrary it is swift, violent and exhibits a short life span. It is remarkable that when making the case for this note he gives some elements of what he means by a *corruption*; thus a sort of accident or affection of the development of an idea. He further takes the responsibility of accounting for the distinction between development, decay and corruption. This is important because decay demonstrates similar characteristics to his idea of development in this context. He argues that while «de-

cay, which is one form of corruption, is slow» (like a development); it exhibits neither violence nor vigorous action (like a corruption). Thus, «while a corruption is distinguished from decay by its energetic action, it is distinguished from a development by its *transitory character*»⁵⁶.

The Church, analysed from a historical perspective, is for Newman the best example of what it means to have or demonstrate chronic vigour. Inherent in it (Church) are seeds of life whose legacy is of a lifetime. The reason or major principle for such a characteristic is nothing other than its identification or possession of virtue and truthfulness. While heretical schools have historically shown to be of short life spans, or rather intermediary states between life and death; orthodoxy has consistently demonstrated life and endurance despite the many obstacles that have come its way. The Church, even when sometimes unfaithful to Revelation, ensures the continuity of life for the whole world. It is therefore important, Newman would argue, to be virtuous and truthful if one is to live forever. Such men and women whose legacies have proved infinite no doubt exhibited virtue and truth as principle foundations for their lifestyles.

When applying the note, Newman emphasizes the fact that the Church's ability to endure suffering and persecution, as history testifies, is a unique testimony to its authenticity. Any system to undergo such changes from both within and without if not plausible or faithful to Christianity would no doubt break down. The martyrdoms suffered by the early church and the anti-religious revolutions of later generations (the French revolution in particular) are some of the most relevant examples of external inflictions that can be cited. Internally too were various and frequent cases of disloyalty, syncretism, exaggerations, to mention but a few, obstacles to its true mission. Despite the difficulties, the Church is still vigorous, energetic, persuasive and progressive. In Newman's words «it grows and is not overgrown, it spreads out yet is not enfeebled; it is ever germinating yet ever consistent with itself»⁵⁷. Such suffering was undergone both by individuals and the institution as a whole. If, however, one thing is certain it is the indispensability of pain or suffering where there is growth or development.

The seventh note to a great extent points to the amount of suffering and endurance Newman had to put up with during his journey of faith. One thus wonders as to what extent Newman was himself faithful to his own teaching! That is how his yearning for the truth and salvation of his own soul obliged him to accept all pain for the

sake of attaining his dream—that union between him and his Creator—. Failure to oblige or endure, any attempt to compromise his conviction revealed to him during that special encounter at the age of fifteen, would be nothing other than a failure, and therefore a corruption. Indeed far from compromising his religious principles, he was steadfast in his convictions, though variably at different stages, and thank God, the Church has so far recognized his merit and ranked him among its Venerable members. May further recognition might take place as evidenced by the desire of a number of Roman Pontiffs to rank Newman among the Doctors of the Church⁵⁸. Before concluding this section, it is worthwhile pointing out some of such difficulties that indirectly reveal his thought on matters of religion and doctrinal development.

The fourth chapter, among other things, dwelt much on the fact that Newman's affectivity was significantly damaged by isolation particularly during the last five years of his Anglican career. The history of such loneliness and isolation could be traced as far back as his early years at home with his family and parents. A dutiful first-born son and elder brother Newman from the start is determined to take everything seriously, his studies and religious affiliation in particular. The loving Newman who frequently writes to the family for one reason or another is often misunderstood. The brothers and sisters at times find him too domineering and the elder Newman accuses him of *morbid sensitivity* as mentioned earlier. As far as John Henry is concerned, all Newmans must be kept in good relationship with God. This, however, is not the case and the gap between him and his brothers, let alone his father and sister Harriet, is constantly increasing.

While at Oxford he is exceptionally studious so much so that to many of his fellow students he is rather eccentric. He can take no part in their beer parties since according to him they represent pagan cults or ungodliness. Having gone to Oriel, however, the power of its liberal thinkers overwhelmed him. It was a crucial spot in his faith journey to remind all believers that the Evil one is always at work. Oriel's rooms that *stunk with logic* at some point made him lose sight of that special union with his God that he had for long strived to attain. It was another persecution though of a different nature from those that isolated him. It was perhaps a period of decay as far as his spiritual itinerary can be described. Yet, thanks to Providence, having decided to take clerical Orders his faith was reawakened. His new preoccupations took on another dimension, of a pastoral nature,

commencing with his university lectures and ministry as curate in St. Clements (Oxford)⁵⁹ culminating in the saga surrounding the Oxford Movement.

Writing to a friend during the early stages of nineteenth century Tractarianism, Newman insisted that he and his companions would *get nothing by sitting still*. He was calling for action from among his colleagues with the purpose of renewing the face of the Establishment. Vigour and endurance were no doubt characteristic elements of the entire process, and indeed time was so limited⁶⁰. They were labelled as traitors, popish and disguised Roman Catholics because they criticized the status quo. The amount of power and strength they portrayed in standing up to the opposition that they came across is no doubt outstanding. The previous chapters have more than once illustrated such mental power and intellectual competence, let alone religious discipline. There is, however, underneath such power and determination a sense of values that can perhaps best be summarized as a yearning for the truth. Before drawing a conclusion to this chapter, it is worth dedicating a few paragraphs to this subject of truth, as will shortly be done. In the light of the above, it is at this stage important to consider the «notes» as a whole.

The relationship or rather interdependence between the seven «notes» as a unity for developmental criteria in matters of doctrine is worth analysing for a better understanding of Newman's own journey of faith. The venerable author himself seems to be inconsistent, or at least wanting in clarity, with regard to the exact function of the «notes». While at one stage he refers to them as being «of varying cogency, independence and applicability»⁶¹, throughout the project he is certainly serious about their significance for discriminating «healthy developments of an idea from its state of corruption and decay»⁶² though leaving it to the reader to determine how. Moreover they are retrospective other than prospective in nature, something that renders it more difficult to apply them if need arises for preventing future corruptions with regard to the content of the faith.

Given such limitations, among possible other critics of the *Essay*⁶³, historians and theologians can perhaps simply fall back on the fact that Newman in undertaking the project was certain that the true Church existed and simply sought to identify it from among those that prevailed. The Communion that exhibited all of them without fail would no doubt prove its truthfulness and faithfulness to the Church of the Apostles. As he admits, however, what he produces «are seven out of various Notes, which may be assigned, of fidelity in

the development of an idea» and lays much emphasis on the necessity for «the unity and identity of the idea with itself through all stages of its development from first to last (...) one and the same all along»⁶⁴.

That is, a corruption may pass or demonstrate some of the «tests» (notes) but never all. It follows therefore that, among other possible characteristics, a true development must consistently exhibit all the notes throughout its history. On an individual basis they may be insufficient, but considered as a whole they provide reliable grounds in ascertaining accuracy as far as the various doctrines of the church have developed in history. It is particularly worth bearing in mind that Newman's own conviction about the validity and plausibility of the entire project underwent development in the process. The change from labelling his criteria as «tests» to «notes» is in itself indicative of one who was enlightened constantly with the progress of time and deeper research into history. If anything, this endorses the fact that like great men and women in history, Newman earnestly sought to grow in faith and ceaselessly yearned to dwell in the truth as the next few paragraphs attempt to verify.

2. EX UMBRIS ET IMAGINIBUS IN VERITATEM

«For myself it was not logic that carried me on; as well might one say that the quicksilver in the barometer changes the weather. It is the concrete being that reasons; pass a number of years, and I find my mind in a new place; how? The whole man moves; paper logic is but the record of it»⁶⁵.

The great Athanasius (c. 296-373), in his controversy against the *Arians*, makes much use of St. Paul's message to the Church of Corinth (1Cor.1, 21). He contrasts the knowledge of God through created things «per imaginem et umbram» to the «vera Sapientia» that the mystery of the Incarnation and Passion of Christ reveal⁶⁶. To Newman this provided the synthesis of his own life and message and indeed he chose it for his epitaph. Ian Ker interprets this as an expression of the journey of human knowledge that from the darkness of mere evocation and ignorance can move towards the one necessary thing, in its ontological reality, truth. It is a journey «out of unreality into Reality»⁶⁷. In the above quotation Newman had realized that from personal experience, once one becomes possessed of an idea, he is obliged to move on by an irresistible impulse, almost against his own will. This is especially true from a philosophical point of view.

Thanks to God's grace Newman's spiritual itinerary testifies to that same reality. *Ex umbris et imaginibus in veritatem*. From being simply virtuous and having insignificant tendencies towards religion he became Calvinist, Evangelical, Liberal and eventually High Anglican. From the shadows and darkness of unbelief, or rather unsound faith, he was able to grow into a mature Christian and one of the greatest defenders of the faith that Christendom has seen in the modern times. The *Essay* for doctrinal development, outside Newman's other literary works, particularly highlights two underlying factors for any journey of faith —the nature of truth and the essence of conversion—. These are the focus of attention in the next few paragraphs before concluding the dissertation.

2.1. The nature of truth – Cor ad cor loquitur

«Was in der Gesamtheit der Kirche als lebendige Überzeugung existent festgestellt worden ist, kann auch feierlich als verbindlich erklärt werden»⁶⁸.

The Passion narrative of the gospels regarding the encounter between Our Lord and Pilate is of great significance for any attempt to analyse the nature of truth. Pilate confused by the calm posture of this *itinerant Jewish preacher*, Jesus, despite the impending danger that he (Jesus) was faced with, makes a very revealing question; «*Truth, what is that?*» (Jn 18:37). Prior to that Jesus had already solemnly confirmed to his followers that he is the way, *the truth* and the life (Jn 14:6). The life and history of Newman is in a sense best summarized as a journey of the personal encounter with truth or the ultimate reality, from a religious or spiritual point of view. While Pilate was amazed with its meaning, Newman, besides the faith he had in the Christ, seems to have looked back to the book of Deuteronomy and fixed his eyes on the affirmation that «*the word is in your heart*» (Deut. 30: 14). When many years later on he chooses for his Episcopal motto the words *Cor ad cor loquitur*, he is in a way affirming a similar conviction⁶⁹.

Evidence from the *Apologia* and the *Via Media* affirms Newman's conviction that «truth has the gift of overcoming the human heart, whether by persuasion or compulsion; and, if what we preach be truth, it must be natural, it must be popular, it will make itself popular»⁷⁰. In the former case he makes a very painful but honest account

of the «history of my religious opinions». The fruits that the self-revealing account yields are beyond imagination and the work has gone down in history as one of the greatest spiritual classics of all times. On the contrary, in the latter case, he is more intellectual and philosophical than realistic. As a consequence, his efforts to defend Anglicanism against what he calls Roman aggression or «Romanism» on the one hand and Protestantism on the other are pulverized. The doctrine of the *Via Media* was simply a theory on paper, but not possibly realizable in practice, contrary to Romanism and Protestantism which he describes as *real religions*. If there is one reason for such a miserable limitation, it is because the doctrine of the *Via Media* was based on argument other than facts, on controversy other than truth—thus the nature of truth—.

Truth, by nature, has the power of unifying different peoples or opinions. It can never divide for it is one and the same always. It is realized in history though is not limited to history. Both history and truth, however, are mutually interrelated in the sense that history provides the mediation through which truth is realized. Newman's *Essay* on doctrinal development is indeed a historical analysis of the development, or self-revelation, of truth. In the process of writing the book he undergoes the pain of revealing the truth that lay deep *in his heart* and in consequence the history and progress of his religious convictions and affiliation. The seven notes or tests for a true development are hypothetical bases for verifying such conviction. From them and of course supported by Newman's own life testimony can be concluded that the truth is objective not subjective. It is not relative, but based on ontological reality, a given that all are bound to earnestly search under the guidance of their mental faculties and no doubt the *Kindly Light*.

The fact that Newman submitted all his doctrinal works to the scrutiny, and therefore approval or disapproval, of the Holy See is in itself emphatic of his concern for the objectiveness of truth. He was worried that the Protestant principles of private judgment and «free enquiry» could turn his theological labour into a source of scandal and heresy. His attack on such individual and subjective enterprises on matters of truth could not be more emphatic and in the *Essay* he describes, with lament, their emphasis: «That there is no truth; (...) that our merit lies in seeking, not in possessing, that it is a duty to follow what seems to us true, without a fear lest it should not be true; that it may be a gain to succeed, and can be no harm to fail; that we may take up and lay down opinions at pleasure; that belief belongs to

the mere intellect, and not to the heart also; that we may safely trust ourselves in matters of Faith, and need no other guide —this is the principle of philosophies and heresies, which is very weakness—»⁷¹.

That the *Essay* was, and still is, a journey of genuine personal reflection for Newman can be verified in the author's awareness of possible errors in determining truth. While truth happens in history, it does not become in history. Different schools could interpret particular historical events to their own pleasure and satisfaction, yet at the expense of the truth, just like Newman himself often did. At stake was therefore the certainty of vital matters of faith, hence; «A conviction that truth was one; that it was a gift from without, a sacred trust, an inestimable blessing; that was to be revered, guarded, defended, transmitted; that its absence was a grievous want, and its loss an unalterable calamity»⁷². Such limits and risks of historical mediation, according to Newman, are best safeguarded against by the guidance of *only* one authentic body in matters of faith and truth —the Church Magisterium—. By attributing to the Holy See such a task of resolving the perplexity or mistake as to what was truth in particular cases, in what way doubtful questions were to be decided, or what the limits of *the* Revelation were, Newman no doubt surrenders his life to the guidance of the Church. This is a clear testimony of the genuineness of his conversion and change of heart; and indeed calls for a survey, however brief this may be, of the meaning of conversion in the light of Newman.

2.2. The Essence of Conversion – «Doctor veritatis»

«True conversion is ever of a positive, not a negative character»⁷³.

St. Cyprian of Carthage (c.200-258), in one of his letters, narrates how during his pagan days he ridiculed Christian teaching and described as impossible the fact that through baptism an individual person would regenerate to a new life⁷⁴. His account is but one of many stories of great men and women in the early Church period that had to cross the barrier from paganism to Christianity; of which the *Confessions* of St. Augustine remains a classic. The advent of Christianity, among other things, witnessed men and women renouncing the traditional religious affiliations of their birth cities and ancestors to embrace, whole-heartedly and exclusively, a new religion, and consequently a new way of life. Such *metanoia*, or total change of

heart, remains the classic definition and understanding of conversion, and always will as has been interpreted throughout the history of Christendom.

The spiritual itinerary of Newman, however, seems to draw attention to yet another concept or aspect of conversion that no serious theologian would dare underestimate. Evidence from the preceding chapters points to the fact that Newman was never a pagan in the whole of his life. He, thanks to his parents and teachers, was born and bred in a religious environment; and throughout his whole career the Christian religion served as the principle guide for his decision-making. It could be asked then, in what sense do we talk of conversion as far as Newman's spirituality is concerned? How could one who having been born of Christian parents, baptized just a few days after his birth and nourished or brought up according to Christian principles; and, as if not enough, became a teacher of the faith himself, be talked of as having *undergone conversion*!

The answer to such an apparently contradictory concept of conversion lies in a critical analysis of the life and teaching of Newman as laid down in his various works and sermons. Conversion for Newman is a «returning to, a renewal of, principles, under the power of the Holy Spirit, which I already felt, and in a measure acted upon, when young»⁷⁵. It is, besides the embracing of the faith and taking a new name, a continuous process of renewal, growth and change in the positive sense. It is a mission of a lifetime for all who are serious with the call to perfection; the end or termination of which is the Beatific Vision, when God will be all in all. Far from being complacent, the essence of conversion lies in an unwavering disposition to undergo change or progress towards the True and ontological Being, thus dwelling in God. Baptism or Christian initiation is a beginning of a journey which journey could involve anything from pleasure to martyrdom.

Seeking the truth with all one's reason and energy is one of the most important characteristics of such a journey or process of conversion. This, no doubt, entails being infamous or unpopular, but at the end of the day it is for the sake of peace and love. When Newman left the Church of his birth, Anglicanism, it is not because he simply wanted to separate himself from it, but to carry his faith journey to its completion, or rather to a higher platform which he believed lay in the Church of Rome. That is why he was at pain to attempt a frustrated interpretation of the Thirty Nine Anglican Articles in a Catholic sense. He truly believed that the Church Catholic subsisted, neither in Protestantism nor in Anglicanism, but the Roman

Catholic Church. If the step he took was extreme it ought to be viewed as a fortunate one because it was taken in the service of Truth and in obedience to the call to religious perfection.

The fact that Newman never had regrets for becoming a Roman Catholic, despite the many trials and controversies that he endured in what he believed to be the «port of truth»⁷⁶, is significant. It shows that he was convinced of the righteousness of his decision to join a faith Communion he had always attacked as being unfaithful to the Revelation. The evidence for his peace of mind is abundant in the *Apologia*. It is important to point out that Newman was in fact true to his own teaching and thought in this regard. When expounding his *Tract* on «The Scripture proofs of the Doctrines of the Church» (No. 85), he insists, in an attack on those who emphasise private judgment and free enquiry, that what is right and what is happy cannot in the long run cause regret. «To follow truth can never be a subject of regret; free inquiry does lead a man to regret the days of his childlike faith; therefore it is not following truth». On the contrary, thanks to the guidance of Mother Church, the rock of all ages, through its interpretation of the Sacred Scriptures and sanctioning of doctrines, conversion takes on a different aspect. Under the light of truth, the religious mind is drawn off from error into the truth, not by losing what it had, but by gaining what it had not, not by being unclothed, but by being «clothed upon», that mortality may be swallowed up of life⁷⁷.

The *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* reflects the view that Newman had with regard to the development entailed in an individual person, or community of faith, that undertakes a journey of conversion. Newman's own physical journey to the Mediterranean (1832-3), among many others, is symbolic of the spiritual journey of faith that his life signifies; and to a great extent reveals the spirit of the *Essay*. The need to have a break from Oxford's daily academic routine and to learn more about the lands of his cherished Fathers, let alone the ambits in which the classics were based, eventually led to the surrender of his soul and mind to the care and guidance of a higher power. As pointed out by Vincent Blehl in an earlier quotation, it was paradoxical in the sense that instead of enlarging his *animus*, as desired before, it enlarged his *anima*; thus allowing God to take stronger possession of his whole being. The Catholic Church was in the end to be the authentic voice of God and so adherence to it was a matter of duty.

The highly intellectual and inquisitive Newman deserves respect for his obedience and total self-giving in matters that pertain to seek-

ing and following the truth. It is in this regard that I deem him one of the greatest examples the modern Church can pride in whenever the service of truth is in question; hence «*Doctor Veritatis*». The Calvinist, Evangelical, Liberal and High Anglican Newman is identified with, if only one, the strenuous zeal to live, teach and defend the truth as he is convinced of it. He does not close his mind to new beliefs, but, on the contrary, he is open to grow in it (truth). At the same time, however, he is aware that he needs guidance if he is to grow into perfection, no matter how long, how painful and how slow the process is. In the Roman Catholic Church, he discerns all that he needs to lead him into perfect truth. Only then can his spiritual journey cut at the root of doubt, providing a chain between God and his soul that is with every link complete. This phenomenon, far from being a corruption, is a true development.

NOTES

1. *Dev*, p. 445.
2. *LCII*, p. 386.
3. H.P. LIDDON, *The Life of E. B. Pusey*, 1893, vol. 2, pp. 460-1.
4. *Dev*, p. 171.
5. ITC, «On the Interpretation of Dogmas», *Origins* 20 (1990): 13.
6. George A. Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Post Liberal Age*, p. 7.
7. «Dogma», in *Enciclopedia Cattolica*, ed. Pio Paschini et al. (Citta del Vaticano: L'Enciclopedia Cattolica and il Libro Cattolico, soc. p. a., 1950), 4:1800.
8. *LDXXVII*, p. 146; cfr. *Apo*, pp. 208-9.
9. Georg SOLL, SDB, *Dogma und Dogmenentwicklung*, Handbuch der Dogmengeschichte Series, eds. Michael Schmaus, Alois Grillmeier, SJ and Leo Scheffczyk, vol. 1, no. 5 (Freiburg im Breisgau, Basel and Vienna: Herder, 1971), 201.
10. G.E. MEULEMAN, *De Ontwikkeling van het Dogma in de Rooms Katolieke Theologie*, p. 15; H. Hammans, *Die neueren katholischen Erklärungen der Dogmenentwicklung*, Beitrage zur neueren Geschichte der katholischen Theologie Series, vol. 7 (Essen: Ludgerusverlag Hubert Wingen KG, 1965), 55.
11. *LD XVI*, p. 122. He became a Catholic on 9th October 1845, and the *Essay* was published at the end of November, that same year (according to the editor; see note 3 of the same page).
12. *Dev*, pp.174-5.
13. *Newman et Blondel: Tradition et developpement du dogme*, p. 159.
14. Cfr. *Dev*, p. 322, note 5.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 176.
16. E. DUBLANCHY, «Dogme», *Dictionnaire de theologie catholique*, ed. A. Vacant and E. Mangenot, 4 (Paris: Letouzey et Ane, 1911), 1632-1633.
17. *LDI*, p. 16.
18. 1845 edition, pp. 58 and 117; 1878 edition, p. 171.
19. *Dev*, p. 181.
20. John Wesley quoted by J. H. Newman in *Development of Doctrine* (1878 edition), pp. 184-5.
21. *Ibid.*
22. *Ibid.*, p. 184; in reference to the *Beatitudes* (Mt. 5:1-10).
23. *Apo*, p. 96.
24. *O.c.*, p. 179.
25. Sermon VII, on *Contest Between Faith and Sight*, was preached on 27th May 1832; and Sermon VIII, on *Human Responsibility as Independent of Circumstances*, was

- preached on 4th November the same year. The *Letter to the Duke of Norfolk* arose out of the circumstances that surrounded Vatican I's promulgation of the Papal Infallibility Doctrine (July 1870) under Pope Pius IX.
26. J.H. Newman, *Fifteen Sermons Preached Before the University of Oxford*, p. 137.
 27. *O.c.*, p. 179.
 28. *Dev*, p. 185.
 29. *Ibid.*, p. 382.
 30. Gerard H. McCarren, «*Tests or Notes*» (Doctoral dissertation), Book I, 1998, p. 292.
 31. *The Oxford Movement*, p. 130.
 32. *Apo*, p. 93.
 33. Sir Mounstuart E. Grant Duff, *Notes from a Diary* (1873-81), II, p. 121.
 34. *LD VIII*, pp. 119f.
 35. *Dev*, p. 190.
 36. *Ibid.*, p. 393.
 37. *The English Churchman*, n.p., 1845.
 38. Bruno Forte, «Historia Veritas» on *Newman's Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, Oxford International Newman Conference, p. 6. (Keble College, Oxford, 11-15 August 2001).
 39. *AW*, p. 166
 40. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
 41. Newman to Jemima. Cfr. *LC II*, p. 445.
 42. *Dev*, p. 195.
 43. *Ibid.*, p. 402. By *Ante-nicene* period is meant the early church time before the council of Nicaea (325).
 44. *Dev*, 1845 edition, p. 388.
 45. *Ibid.*, pp. 388-9.
 46. To Jemima Newman (24 November 1844); Cfr. José Morales, *o.c.*, p. 177.
 47. *Ibid.*, p. 178.
 48. *Dev*, p. 200.
 49. It is worth noting that there are many similarities among all the notes and it is important to take or apply them, not in isolation, but as an entity for criteria, as will be shown later.
 50. *Dev*, p. 420.
 51. *Ibid.*, pp. 172 & 201
 52. Though the ancient philosopher Heraclitus is not worth taking as a model in matters of faith and doctrine, given the fact that the role of God's grace for a genuine conversion does not form part of his thought, his philosophy of change can be analogically applied to Newman's journey of faith due to its demonstration of continuous evolution as fundamental for all that is real and genuine.
 53. *LD I*, p. 5.
 54. *A Narrative of Events*, p. 44.
 55. *Dev*, p. 203.
 56. *Ibid.*, p. 204.
 57. *Ibid.*, p. 438.
 58. The most significant reference is perhaps Pope Pius XII (1939-58)'s prophecy in his conversations with Jean Guitton thus; «No lo dude usted: Newman será un día doctor de la Iglesia» (Do not doubt it: Newman will one day be a Doctor of the Church). Cf. Jean Guitton, *Dialogos con Pablo VI*, p. 213.

59. One particularly significant incidence during his time at St. Clements was the occasion when he refused to witness to the marriage of a woman who had hitherto not been baptized. If his ministry meant him to be enemies with those who wanted to abuse sacraments and other Church rituals he was more than determined to suffer such unpopularity and all that it implied. And as he started so he continued as is evidenced by the controversy that surrounded the Tractarian Movement.
60. The controversial character of most of the Tracts is greatly highlighted by the provocative language and style employed by Newman in particular. The first three Tracts (written by Newman himself) seem to have been composed out of the need to invite reactions from the readers. The introduction (*Opening words*) in Tract No.1 deals with the doctrine of Apostolic Succession and its implications for the divinity and independence of the Church. «Yet speak I must; for the times are very evil, yet no one speaks against them». The conclusion was particularly radical and of a new nature (or rather tone) in oxford. «But if you will not adopt my point of view of the subject, which I offer you, not doubtingly, yet (I hope) respectfully, at all events, CHOOSE YOUR SIDE. To remain neuter (sic) much longer will be itself to take a part. *Choose* your side; since side you shortly must, with one or other party, even though you do nothing. Fear to be of those, whose line is decided for them by chance circumstances, and who may perchance find themselves with the enemies of CHRIST, while they think but to remove themselves from worldly politics. Such abstinence is impossible in troublous times. HE THAT IS NOT WITH ME, IS AGAINST ME, AND HE THAT GATHERETH NOT WITH ME SCATTERETH ABROAD».
61. *Dev*, p. 171.
62. *Ibid*.
63. McCarren's remark is pertinent at this point. He observes that «there were not always crisp dividing lines between the notes. Sometimes one note presupposed another, as in the case of the apparent dependence of «anticipation of its future» upon «logical sequence». To cite another example, the dividing line between principles (the second note) and doctrines (and the closely related first note, «preservation of type») was not always clear. The Incarnation is a doctrine and a font of principles, according to Newman, but some of these principles, grace being a clear example, seem also to be doctrines (*Dev*, pp. 324-326)». *o.c.*, p. 378.
64. *Ibid.*, pp.205f.
65. *Apo*, p. 264.
66. Cf. *Oratio II contra Arianos*, 81: PG 26, 319f. The *Arians* were a fourth century heretical sect who denied the full Divinity of Christ. They were named after Arius (d. 336) their founder or chief proponent. I refer to Athanasius (Bishop of Alexandria) as «great» because at one time he literary stood on his own against the whole world in defence of Church doctrine. The Arian controversy caused him enormous trouble, being exiled at least five times, but he never gave up the fight till he was eventually proved right.
67. I. Ker, *o.c.*, p. 745.
68. That which has been established as a live and extant conviction in the totality of the Church can also be solemnly declared as binding. Cfr. J. Arzt, *Newmans vier Maximen*, in *Catholica* 2 (1979) 152.
69. «Heart speaks to heart». On the occasion of his election as Cardinal (12th May 1879). In like manner, the words of that great theologian and philosopher St. Augustine of Carthage are pertinent in this regard, hence: «Do not wander far and wide but return into yourself. Deep within man there dwells the truth». (*Noli foras ire, in te ipsum redi. In interiore homine habitat veritas*) Cfr. *De Vera Religione*, XXXIX, 72: CCL 32, 234.

70. *VM* (Preface to the third edition, 1877), p. xxiii.
71. *Dev*, p. 357.
72. *Ibid.*, p. 360.
73. J.H. Newman, *Tracts for the Times* (No. 85), p. 73.
74. Cyprian, *Ad Donatum*, 3; PL., IV, 198-199.
75. *AW*, p. 172 (Journal entry of 26 July 1826).
76. In mind I have the circumstances around the Achili Trial (1853), the attack on the Catholic Priesthood as not concerned with truthfulness and therefore the writing and publication of the *Apologia* (1864), the project to start a catholic university in Ireland (1854) and Infallibility debate as circumstanced by Vatican I (1871-74), among other controversial circumstances.
77. Newman, far from losing what he had, was always acquiring more and thus growing in religious knowledge and disposition.

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