The Virgin Mary in the Works of St. Anthony of Padua

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he prospect of participating in the work on St. Anthony made me accept joyfully your invitation of August 17, 1979, to present a report on the Mariologia antoniana. Its fulfillment was not without difficulty. I ought to acknowledge immediately that I was not well acquainted with the work of St. Anthony. In my ignorance, I vaguely shared the impression of a certain theological group according to whom making this very popular saint a doctor had a very slender foundation: no Summa, no treatise, only sermons. Then I was happily surprised to discover (in the critical edition of 1979) the quality of his sermons: the contemplative and apostolic inspiration that quickened them, their symbolic and poetic beauty, and finally, their organic coherence well designed from the inside.1 Edified by the number and the quality of the works on St. Anthony of Padua, I took measure of my inadequacy for the task. My contribution could not be that of a specialist on this doctor, nor on the thirteenth century, but only that of a specialist on the Virgin: to situate what Anthony said about her, and to set down the methodological principles helpful for further study.

In taking care to establish the *status questionis*, I was surprised to find 20 titles about Mary in the works of Anthony which appeared since the centenary in 1931 or during the years that followed his becoming a doctor (from 1946 to

¹S. Antonii Patavini, O.Min. Doctoris evangelici sermones dominicales et festivi, 3 volumes (Patavii, Messaggero, 1979).

the Marian Year of 1954). The three principal monographs which carry the same title La mariologia di S. Antonio di Padova are:

G. Roschini, in *Marianum* 8 (1946) 17-67: an edition of a conference for the celebration of the centenary: short and simplified for the requirements of that literary kind

Lorenzo Di Fonzo, O.F.M. Conv., 1947: a mature work in the volume published by the Vatican Polyglot for the proclamation of S. Antonio dottore della Chiesa.

Beniamino Costa, O.F.M. Conv., 1950, who became after his thesis (finished in 1941, defended in 1946) one of those who completed the definitive critical edition.²

These three theses, the last two with remarkable care, are devoted to cataloging St. Anthony's contribution to the principal points of Mariology. On this basis, it is necessary for me to situate some methodological difficulties and conclusions which lead to an evaluation of St. Anthony of Padua.

I. Method

Mariology?

The first difficulty: is it necessary to speak of a Mariology of St. Anthony? Such was the title adopted by the three monographs dedicated to this theme. But this word is an anachronism. It did not appear until 1602 at the beginning of the Marian movement which developed within the ambit of the Counter-Reformation.³ If it is proper to characterize an organic synthesis such as we find in Suarez (however he anticipated the rise of this word) the title appears illegitimate in designating the teaching of the Fathers of the Church and even of the majority of the scholastics in whose works the Virgin had not yet become an object of a treatise nor of a treatment ex professo. That is also the case of St. Anthony.

A Complete Doctrine?

We find at least in the works of Anthony a "very complete" doctrine, as Roschini expressed it; and, with nuances, spoken of by Lorenzo Di Fonzo as a Mariology "relatively and substantially complete." As admirable as the doctrine of St. Anthony might be otherwise, an historical approach suggests lacunae in relation to what would be today "a complete Mariology." And that

²See *Bibliography*. Let us recall that we cite in summary, only by the author's name, those three monographs together entitled *Mariologia di sant'Antonio*: Costa, Di Fonzo and Roschini.

³N. Nigido, *Mariologia*, Palerme, 1602, cf. R. Laurentin, "Mariologie" in Catholicisme, (Paris Letouzey, 8, 1979), col. 521-522.

is normal for an author at the beginning of the thirteenth century. It is necessary to take these limits into account.

The Immaculate Conception

Near the middle of the monographs on Mary in the works of St. Anthony of Padua the problem of the Immaculate Conception is of concern. We do not find this expression in any of his works nor the key point of the dogma that Mary had been preserved from all sin from the first instant of her existence, according to the formula in which Pius IX had translated the ambiguous word launched through the liturgical feast: conception.

This absence ought not to astonish us. The contrary would have been surprising. In spite of the rapid expansion of the feast called The Conception (December 8), from England to France at the beginning of 1127, theologians and preachers remained in a dilemma, unable to identify the object of this celebration. Only Eadmer extricated himself honorably from it. The difficulty was two-fold:

On the one hand, on a doctrinal plane, the tradition held Christ only to have been exempt from all sin since his origin; the virginal Conception appeared to be a necessity to preserve him from the sinful contagion that tainted a whole sexual generation. Finally, the Christ, the universal Savior, had redeemed all human beings; to declare a human being, even Mary, without sin, seemed to be an attack on the dogma of universal Redemption. On the other hand, the word Conception was weighted with the gynecological notions of the period; they distinguished then the original Conception of the body and that of the soul which came to humanize it, only at the end of 40 days; a little less for boys and a little more for girls whom, following Aristotle they regarded as abortive males (mas occasionatum).⁴

Given this inextricable situation, St. Bernard (around 1130-1140) was opposed to the installation of the feast which he judged unacceptable in the face of tradition and doctrine. The difficulties were so insurmountable that none of the great scholastics taught the doctrine of the preservation of Mary before the end of the thirteenth century, beginning with Raymond Lull and Scotus. The latter, promoter of change, could only react against the general misconception with a lot of prudence. With reason, for otherwise he would have incurred some censure and compromised the cause. Thus he affirmed only the possibility and the propriety of the original preservation (potuit,

⁴About this debate, R. Laurentin, Court Traite sur la Vierge Marie (Paris, Lethielleux, edition post-conciliaire, 1967) 73 (where it would be necessary to add some monastic antecedents for the Feast of the Conception among the Latins) 79-81, and the Bibliographie, 190-192.

decuit) without going as far as "fecit:" God had done it. Anthony of Padua inherited these difficulties.

Before, as after the definition of Pius IX (1854), the authors were classified as "partisants" or "adversaries." From the historical point of view, the question was an anachronism. Anthony of Padua who did not mention the Feast of the Conception at all (a local feast that was spreading but as yet was not adopted at Rome) did not touch the question except obliquely and indirectly. He neither affirmed nor contested the future dogma. His heart and fervor were positive towards Mary and inclined him to the opinion of the future. But we do not find in his sermons either the affirmation or the principles for a solution.

In the measure in which the authors wanted to reply by a "yes" or by a "no" to the anachronistic question, they were on the outside of St. Anthony's dilemma. Their works do not have less merit in identifying in diverse degrees the texts which refer closely or further from the question.

C. M. Romeri depicted the widespread ideas and how Anthony of Padua was tributary to the general misunderstanding. G. Roschini brilliantly assembled at a glance the texts in which St. Anthony took care to remove from Mary, not only every fault, but concupiscence (51-57). B. Costa pointed to the two sanctifications or purifications of Mary, which Anthony had received from tradition: that of birth in the womb of her mother and that of the Annunciation, according to the famous doctrine of "katharsis," which pervaded tradition in the East since Gregory of Nazaianzan⁶ and which John Paul II has recently integrated in a positive sense.⁷

St. Anthony did not ignore the problem posed by the Feast of the Conception. We can say, following Di Fonzo, that he had not resolved it. He was not inventive in this entangled matter. As a traditional and prudent man, he struggled to keep an open position. If his heart was inclined to move towards

⁵The complex history of Anthony's interpretation (maculist or immaculist) was studied by C. M. Romeri, De Immaculata Conceptione (Romae 1939) 17-45.

On Katharsis, R. Laurentin, Court Traite sur la Vierge Marie, ed. (1967) 129.

⁷John Paul II. "Homelie d'Ephese," in Documentation catholique (December 13, 1979) 1064, n. 1776. This frequent initiative to take up the theme of katharsis in the Annunciation, not only with the Greeks but with the Latins in the Middle Ages, is all the more remarkable in that at the Council Mgr. Butler O.S.B., did not obtain this integration in the conciliar documents. Like the Pope, he took up katharsis in an entirely positive sense, as a sort of recreation by grace (in the line of tradition) and not as a purification from sin.

⁸Di Fonzo, 137-138, who finds in St. Anthony an "immaculatist psychology" (137).

the opinion of the future, we would deceive ourselves by eliminating his ambiguity.

Spiritual Maternity

In the chapter on spiritual maternity the monographs show some difficulty. Roschini does not breathe a word about it. Di Fonzo refers to the tradition according to which Anthony the child said, "Mamma Maria!" Does this hagiographical tradition have a foundation? It is still surprising that the same monograph does not cite an explicit text on that doctrine which "St. Anthony could certainly not have avoided" (161). Costa complicated the difficulty in relegating this question to a corollary of his second chapter on the universal mediation (68-69); he tried to show there by deduction that "the sermons of Anthony offered a sufficient argument for this Marian prerogative." But he could find only two texts in which Mary seemed to be called Mother with reference to human beings. 10

The first was the final prayer in the First Sermon on the Purification which he thus cited, according to the Locatelli edition (725b): Rogamus ergo te, Domina, nostra mater electa, ut a sanquine peccatorum nos purifices. But the definitive critical edition of 1979, established by the same. Costa, refers "nostra" to "Domina" and "mater" to God, not to human beings, according to this preferable reading: "Rogamus ergo te, Domina nostra, Dei mater electa...." (ed. 1979, 2, 140). Briefly, Mary was invoked here formally as the Mother of God and not as our mother. The other text which is found in the Second Sermon on the Purification (3, 110) applies to Mary this characteristic of a queen bee according to Aristotle, "She was no animal:" Nullum animal id est peccatorum, fugit, imo omnes ad se confugientes recipit, et ideo vocatur Mater misericordiae: misericors miseris, spes desperatis.

The title of Mother of Mercy, which we find at the beginning of the tenth century was widespread at the time of St. Anthony. ¹¹ It echoed in the text. But in what sense? Originally, this title signified the Mother of Christ who is Mercy personified. Such was the meaning intended by St. Peter Damian, who died in 1072:

We pray thee, very clement Mother of Piety and of Mercy, (ipsiues Pietatis et Misericordiae Mater), that we may obtain the help of your intercession in the heavens (Sermon Forty-six on the Nativity, PL 144, 161 B).

⁹Di Fonzo 161.

¹⁰B. Costa, 68-69, who refers for the text to the notes 77-78 on p. 67.

¹¹ R. Laurentin, Court Traite sur la Vierge Marie, (1967) 70, note 59.

Here Peter Damian asked for the intercession of Mary and commended to all people her Mercy, not her Maternity. Is there more in the works of Anthony of Padua? There is no evidence. It has not been proven to this day that he addressed himself to Mary as his mother.

This relative silence on Mary the Mother of human beings can appear astonishing today, after the Second Vatican Council which turns with such frequency (14 times) to Mary the Mother of all people. But this insistence in Lumen Gentium is explained in part by the care to avoid the use of other controversial words: Coredemptrix or Mediatrix from which Cardinal Bea hoped they would abstain. The discretion of Anthony of Padua is not surprising. The title was inscribed following the Fathers of the Church (mostly Greek) and a number of later authors.

Co-redemption?

Nor do we find co-redemption in the works of Anthony, neither the word, nor the explicit teaching from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries on "the immediate cooperation of Mary in objective Redemption" by "association in the sacrifice of Calvary;" neither appears formally nor in their equivalent meaning.

Anthony refers only twice to the scene on Calvary (John 19:25-27). He does not attach importance to co-redemption; nor does he take up, to my knowledge, the theme of compassion (perhaps very widespread at the time) whenever he considered the sorrows of Mary, nor the universal mission of the Mother that she received at that moment. He fixes his gaze only on the adoption of the disciple present at the foot of the Cross, not on that of other people. He does not attribute to Mary at all the offering of the dying Christ. Certainly, following St. Bernard and medieval iconography, he says that Mary offered her Son at the time of the Presentation in the Temple but he opposes that first oblation made by Mary to that which Christ made alone, the way St. Ambrose underlined so strongly. 13

A double oblation of Mary is designated:

¹²"Lumen Gentium," chapter 8, and the commentary by R. Laurentin, La Vierge au Concile (Paris Lethielleux, 1965) 151-168. We find on p. 152 the list of the 14 affirmations on the theme in this chapter: n. 53, 54, 56, 61, 62, 63, 65, 67, 69.

¹³(2, 139, 26-27) The triple text of Ambrose on the theme: Jesus did not have a need for help for Redemption, and their passing by Arnaud of Chartres, have been studied in R. Laurentin, Marie, PEglise et le sacerdoce (Paris, Lethelleux, 1952) 145-156. For this passing Arnaud used St. Bernard, "Sermon des douze etoiles" n. 7 and 14, PL 183, 429 B-437 C, 438, 441; which explains Anthony's confusing Arnaud and Bernard.

His Mother offered him according to the law of Moses (Lk 2.22)

He offered himself in sacrifice to God the Father in reconciliation of the human race.

The first oblation (tied up with the *Old Testament*) is only attributed to Mary. The second, the redemptive sacrifice, to Christ alone.

Mediation?

Is it necessary to see in St. Anthony a theologian of universal Mediation?¹⁴ Understanding this point is more delicate. Anthony gave Mary the title of Mediatrix while referring to St. Bernard who in fact used it; but it was Arnaud de Chartres whom he cited here.¹⁵ This title, whose sporadic use we find, beginning with the sixth century, was not widespread until the eleventh century and above all in the twelfth when the striking formula of St. Bernard accentuated its popularity.¹⁶ St. Anthony of Padua could not then ignore it. There is an echo of it, once only, (it seems to me) and that in passing:

His glory will be like an olive (Is 14.6): a symbol of peace and mercy. For the Blessed Virgin Mary, our mediatrix, has restored peace between God and human beings" (Sermon for the Annunciation 2, 120).

St. Anthony referred this achievement of the Virgin to the Incarnation, when she brought God and humanity together by giving birth to God among human beings. ¹⁷ This connection is judicious for it was at the Annunciation that Mary justified in the most obvious way this ambiguous title of Mediatrix. She found herself then in the position of intermediary between God who invited her to this mission and humanity which she went on to tie to God by making the Son of God a man. After which Christ became the sole Mediator and that word was not appropriate any more to Mary but in a wholly other

¹⁴"Capitolo 2. Mediazione universale" the title by B. Costa, 45-69. G. Roschini (46) titled only "La Mediatrice dell'uomo" without the word "universel." "Missione di mediatrice" the title by Di Fonzo (150) before concluding with a nuance (160) that she is rather "the dispensatrix of grace rather than universal Mediatrix... as we have heard today."

¹⁵Concerning the text of Arnaud ("De laudibus" PL 183, 1726), see above note 11.

¹⁶About the first uses of the title of "Mediatrix," see R. Laurentin, Court Traité sur la Vierge Marie (1967) 68, n. 53.

¹⁷It was the current thinking with St. Anthony: the first wedding (of God and humanity) was celebrated in the temple of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Between us and God, there was one great discord. In order to eliminate it and restore peace (the same expression as in the text where Mediatrix figured: pacem reformare), it was necessary that the Son of God received a spouse, from among our kin...; in the nuptial chamber (thalamo) of the Blessed Virgin Mary, he joined himself to our nature (Sermon on the Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost 2 (1979) 331, 8-23).

sense, in Christ, by participation in "the only Mediator" or through intercession, etc. Anthony used the title in the most archaic sense, the one that we find in the works of the first Greeks explicitly like Andrew of Crete, (R. Laurentin, Marie, l'Eglise et le sacerdoce Paris 1953, 52-54) or Jean le Géomètre (Sermon on the Annunciation PG 106, 871 B) took it up forcefully, "Mary was near the Word, who was not yet a Mediator, as the Virgin mediatrix." Anthony did not refer yet either to a sacrificial mediation, nor to an actual mediation. But there was an echo in that of the most ancient and judicious tradition.

Undoubtedly, the subsequent context evoked the intercession of Mary by citing Arnaud de Chartres. But it was not evident that the word Mediatrix covered this further development. Thus, L. Di Fonzo concluded with reason that Anthony did not treat the question ex professor. According to his sermons:

She is the grand dispensatrix of graces, rather than universal Mediatrix of grace, as we understand it today (160).

We will try to evaluate later in what perspective Anthony considered this "dispensation and the relation of Mary to humanity; it is a symbolic perspective whose images cannot be extrapolated in a deductive way without misinterpretation."

Anthony of Padua did not picture to himself Mary's mode of action nor its modalities. His discourse, centered on the Incarnation, the beginning of Salvation, grasped its extension and consequences in all directions even to today's sinners towards whom she had compassion. Very significant is the passage in the Sermon on the Purification (2, 135, lig. 12-15):

She had great compassion towards the penitents, hence she said: they have no more wine (7n 2.3);

as if she said:

O Son, pour out the grace of your love for the penitents, for they no longer have the wine of compunction (2, 135, 12-15).

The petition no doubt dwells on the actual compassion of Mary, but it is integral to the commentary on the gospel scene. Anthony seems to situate the intercession of Mary not in heaven, but in Cana. He refers the penitents to the permanence of the Gospel scene rather than to a heaven which at that time was about to take form, and to the hour when the spatial-temporal axis of culture changed. He did not take up the new and striking formula of St. Bernard; Mary is positioned between Christ and the Church (Sermon for the Sunday after the Assumption 5, PL 183, 432 A).

Mary in Anthony's Bible

In order to finish with the question, was Anthony's Mariology complete? we can ask ourselves if his essentially biblical exposition covered all that Scripture has about Mary? No, his inventory was not complete. He did not cite Micah 5:1-5, nor Luke 2:50 (they did not understand), nor John 1:13, Matthew 1:18-19. He cited none of the texts of Mark concerning Mary (3:21,31-35 and 6:3), partly, no doubt, because the liturgy did not refer to them.

Luke was for Anthony the Gospel source. And that was in part for liturgical reasons. It is here that he found the theme for his first sermon in praise of Mary, for the Third Sunday of Lent Luke 11:27-28 D (proper to Luke). He retained only its positive orientation. The infancy narrative furnished him with the theme for two of the four sermons in the Mariale, inserted between the twelfth and thirteenth Sundays after Pentecost, the Annunciation and the Purification. Two sermons on these two same themes may be added within the festival cycle of volume three. Anthony did not fix his attention on the Gospels of the Nativity of the Virgin nor of the Assumption. Concerning the Nativity, he undoubtedly perceived that the genealogy of Matthew did not relate to Mary; for the Assumption, he did not use Apocalypse 12. He referred to that chapter in the Sermon for the Second Sunday after Easter (2, 173); he did not see Mary there at all but only the Church and the penitent soul (1, 63, 3-4). And if he applied Apocalypse 12:1 only once to Mary, it was by a simple reference to St. Bernard: the crown of twelve stars in the Sermon on the Annunciation (110, 31-32).

Anthony did not stop at the Gospel of John and did not seem to have perceived there the involvement of the Mother of Jesus in the ministry of Christ. His Sermon for Epiphany whose theme was the Gospel of Cana was not ad laudem Mariae; he did not dwell on Mary at all. And he did not stop at John 19:26-27 (two references only which do not go back to 19, 25). He considered only John's personal adoption, as we have seen, and not Mary's universal mission. That other dimension of the Gospel had perhaps come to light throughout the twelfth century.

This limited evidence does not diminish the merits of St. Anthony. He was a man of his time. Not only was he not an innovator, but he did not want to be one. If he made an effort in that direction, in order to satisfy the fashion of the day, he scorned that pedagogical necessity:

The insipid wisdom of readers and listeners of our times has been debased to such a point that if they do not find or hear elegant words, in search of or resounding with novelty, they tire of reading or refuse to listen. For that reason, in order that the word of the Savior may not be received with scorn or ennui at the peril of

their souls, we have put at the beginning of each gospel a prolog and inserted in the work a moral expose on the nature of animals the etymology of names, etc. (Prologue 1 p. 4.8-16).

Anthony was a traditional preacher, both coherent and free, whose contemplation of doctrine was characteristic of his time.

The Originality of Anthony

Anthony was not exempt, for all that, from rare developments to which he gave his personal stamp: the sabbath when Mary did not leave the tomb of Christ, and the apparition on Easter morning. But first had appeared around the middle of the twelfth century with Odo of Ourscamp¹⁸ and the apparition on Easter morning was current with the Greeks in the fourth century.¹⁹

We find in Anthony as in other Franciscans an explicit reference to the heart of Mary. ²⁰ If he was original, it was in his creative and clear images. But it is always difficult to be certain each of them if he was the first, the creator of each of them, as appears to be the case in his designation of Mary under the symbol of elephant. ²¹

Understanding Anthony from the Inside

This prefatory analysis aims, not so much at tracing the limits as at preparing a new stage in the study of Mary according to St. Anthony. So far, the we have written in terms of modern Mariology. The harvest thus gleaned tended to conform the teaching of St. Anthony to forms and categories that were strange to him. One ought to go beyond this artificiality, now that the Council has deliberately moved away from the peculiarities of the Mariology of the Counter-Reformation by a return to the sources as Anthony understood them. We have not, however, been able to recover an organic and coherent theology of the Virgin, nor to restore her place in Christian doctrine. She seems to be all too often a piece of furniture that one places, for better or worse, in a museum or the attic. ²² Briefly, it is necessary today to understand St. Anthony

¹⁸On this theme of the faith of Mary, alone alive during the death of Christ, witnessed to for the first time in Odo d'Ourscamp (1171) see R. Laurentin, Court Traite (1967) 75, n. 18.

¹⁹On the apparition of the Risen Christ, the object of numerous monographs and controversies, R. Laurentin, *Court Traité* (1967) 107, n. 13.

²⁰On this theme, Di Fonzo 162.

²¹See below, n. 34.

²²The Société mariologique espangnole was disturbed by this incompetence, at the level of teaching, and launched a petition to the Spanish episcopate realtive to this, in its last bulletin: Estudios marianos 46 (1981) 471-472.

from the inside according to his logic, coherence, and proper proportions and not under the guise of our modernity.

The Problematic and Method

Some principles can clarify the method of such an exploration:

- 1) The first way would be to evaluate Anthony's tension between the sources that he used and the manner in which he used them. Thanks to the new edition, we are ready to get such a job done. The sources have been identified; Anthony's manner can be made precise in a methodical way.
- 2) In this way, it is important to point out the literary genre of the sermons. Thereupon certain observations of Di Fonzo and, above all, the introduction of the definitive critical edition²³ have brought to light important data which has to do, not with spoken sermons, but with writings for the use of preachers. They were composed with care to furnish "a treatise on sacred doctrine," essentially founded on the Scripture which was then the fundamental norm, according to a traditional, symbolic and poetic explanation in an essentially liturgical form; and according to more structured rules with which he did not deal. Anthony took care to proceed in an orderly way. That is why he did not follow the line of the liturgical year; he set out not with the first Sunday of Advent but with Septuagesima which allowed him to begin with a commentary starting with *Genesis* 1:1, etc. A comparative study (synchronic and diachronic) remains to be done which considers Anthony's conformity to his predecessors or contemporaries, by characterizing his manner and originality. His Franciscan inspiration is evident.
- 3) Beyond these historical and literary analyses, identification of the logic proper to Anthony necessarily passes to a semiotic study. We know that this discipline, which arose with the extension of the linguistics of Saussure and the study of stories by Russian morphologists, has, as its aim, the objective study of the meaning of the texts in two stages. First, their working: the internal logic of the program (narrative or poetry) which governs the transformation of the reading, and thus produces the sense by the play of differences or contrasts just as a pattern or photographic image produces its meaning by the coherent contrasts of black and white. Materially, it is the differential play of the elements of the meaning that produces the sense.

Next, a profound spirit. It is that which tries to bring to the fore the semiotic square, the second more hypothetical stage of analysis. The semiotic method arouses suspicion because it has often been used, in a reductive

²³Sermones (1979), Introductio, xlvi-lxiv.

manner, namely under the cover of disputable philosophies which extrapolate methodological principles, so much as to say that it is not a human who made language but language made the human. The semiotic method also repels by its forbidding and, sometimes sybilline technicality of its language. But it is quite an objective instrument, supple and perfectible, which excels in the study of texts. The mistakes, excesses or blunders inherent in the first steps of this new method did not touch the method as such. It was a new effort in the study of the meaning of texts, beginning with the connections between the objective elements of the meaning. It had merit and incontestable possibilities, whatever its limitations.

A semiotic analysis could then bring to light the internal logic of the sermons of Anthony of Padua, such as was inscribed in the content of the text to identify its procedures. This method which has refined the study of narratives and stories is adaptable with its principles to the study of poetic and other texts. The sermons of Anthony of Padua furnish a field for an original study. This method will be fruitful. It identifies on a material basis the mechanisms by which the differential elements and transformations of the text produce a meaning. A meaning (above all, poetic and mystical) goes beyond "the meaning produced." The semiotic must not be a prison (a reproach addressed to it, not without reason, by American linguists). It ought to remain open, on the part of the author and his inspiration, without which there is no text there. On the other hand, it ought to be open to the reality which the text expresses: in this instance, a cultural reality, and more profoundly, the perspective of faith. And it ought to be open to the fruitful inspiration that it communicates. By this I mean to say that the semiotic study, rigorous in its own way, can be only a stage, that will necessitate more than one doctoral thesis.

The unity between contemplation and action lived by St. Anthony who wanted to be like the Virgin Mary, "Martha and Mary at the same time" (2, p. 149, 21), is the essential motivation of his sermons. It is necessary, therefore, to remember his coming to this last step of the investigation. It is sought and found in the living tension between his life (occupied with a traditional but personalized vision) and his listeners in whom he wished to promote a conversion. Hence, the primordial importance that he attached to a moral sense. 24

²⁴Among the three directions of the spiritual sense that he distinguished himself: allegorical (regarding the faith), tropological (regarding morality), anagogical (regarding future life). Anthony favored the second, that is to say, practice: "Milk was composed of three substances: the first which is a watery serum; the second, cheese; the third, butter. The watery serum signifies history; the cheese, allegory; the butter, morality. More, the last is smooth, it affects the spirits of

If it is permissible to anticipate that last stage, let us make two points:

1) The inspiration of Anthony of Padua was that of a charismatic saint, full of light and joy by reason of his generous and apostolic union with God (from whom his vocation to martyrdom, which fell through, and then of missionary miracle-worker for whom miracles came as an extra). His familiarity with "the presence" of God (Sermon for the Fifth Sunday after Pentecost 1, 509, 10-13) and the presence of Mary (1, 163). He counted on the light and warmth that emanated from these realities, and it was in terms imaging light and warmth that he spoke of them.

2) His pastoral care for conversion was founded on the communication of this contemplative light. That is why his predilection for the moral sense had nothing of moralism. His preaching was not psychological manipulation. Certainly, he used his talent to arouse the conviction that produced conversion. But he relied above all on the source of grace by which he lived and which he shared from the abundance of the heart. It is this inspiration, influencing and profoundly elucidating, which future studies on St. Anthony are called to set in a precise and scientific light.

II. The Place of Mary in the Works of St. Anthony

Our very short account will be limited to situating in key points the place of the Virgin in an overview of St. Anthony's.

Marian Doctor

First, was he a "Marian" author? This term is not exempt from anachronism; for if the Latin word *Mariale* appeared at the beginning of the thirteenth century, it was only to designate those writings of which Mary was the object. It is a substantive, not an adjective. Thus it was later that was formed *Marialis* for that adjectival function.

G. Roschini deliberately (intenzionalmente) characterizes Anthony's life as a vita Mariana (17), for it was una effusione di profumi mariani...tutta imbalsamata di Maria (a pouring out of Marian perfumes...). He based this affirmation on the traits found essentially at the beginning and the end of his life: nation of origin: Portugal, "land of Mary;" town: Lisbon, one of the most Marian on the earth; mamma: donna Maria Taveira, who offered to Mary before his birth "the future miracle-worker and doctor." But has this "tradition" a foundation?

the listeners more sweetly, for the morals have been destroyed. That is why it is necessary to attach oneself more to morality which instructs in morals than to allegory which instructs in faith: for the faith, by the grace of God is everywhere on earth (Sermon Nine after Pentecost, 2, 5-18) where the last phrase is a citation from Guibert, abbot). This preference explains principally humility.

Roschini added to that list Anthony's birth on August 15, 1195. The date that the Bollandists maintain. But the critical edition of the sermons places it among the more uncertain: "between 1188 and 1195." "I do not know what weight to accord to traditions according to which," wrote Roschini, "the first words pronounced by the infant had been Maria and Ave Maria, and that in response to servants who urged him to say 'papa, mama'". His first and last chant (on his death-bed) had been 'O gloriosa Domina.' (Cf. also V. Gamboso, Vita di s. Antonio Padova, EMP, 1965, more nuanced 144-150). This collection of traits seems polarized by hagiographical generosity. If there had been exaggeration, historical criticism has held that his parents entrusted the child to the cathedral school dedicated to St. Mary of God ("Vita prima 'Assidua'," 2, 5, ed. V. Gamboso, Padova, 1981, 279).

The Introduction of Mary into his Sermons

What is important is to situate the place of the Virgin in the sermons of St. Anthony of Padua. That place is modest, discreet, in conformity with the proportions of the liturgy itself. St. Anthony did not achieve systematic innovations in this area. To the personal feasts of Mary he consecrated only two sermons: 1) The one for the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the shortest of all (2, pp.103-105), 2) and another for the Assumption, relatively short (2, pp.141-150). To that are added five sermons for Christological feasts in which Mary had an integral part.

The Nativity (3, 1-16), in which [Mary] is compared to a doe because she had a child on the way, like a doe according to Aristotle (*De historia animalium* 9, 5, 611a6). St. Anthony invited, with an accommodated reference to *Genesis* 21:5-6 Sara's laugh, to laugh with Mary who had become by the Holy Spirit, "a hot coal impregnated by the fire of God." Three of the fifteen pages of the sermon (3, pp.4-7 are dedicated to the Mother of God: a normal and balanced proportion.

On the contrary, Mary occupied first place in the two sermons on the Annunciation (2, 109-126 and 3, 151-168): above all the first which was completed by a prayer to Mary. She equally occupied the first place in the two sermons for the Purification (2, 127-140 and 3, 99-116), especially the first which closes with the invocation "Rogamus te."

It is significant to note that Anthony grouped four of the sermons mentioned (Nativity, Annunciation, Purification and Assumption) between the twelfth and thirteenth Sundays after Pentecost. This collection "for the feasts of the Blessed Virgin Mary" was preceded by its own Prologue, under the sign of the twelve stars in the crown of the Virgin. This collection is what was called at the beginning of the thirteenth century a *Mariale*. It was a sign of special attention and devotion towards Mary. Each of the four sermons con-

cluded with a prayer to the Virgin, beginning with: Rogamus te. Only the Christological sermons closed with a similar prayer addressed to Christ, never the sermons of the saints. The exception made for Mary manifested esteem towards her outside the series (hors serie).

More significant still was the place Anthony accorded the Virgin in the sermons *De tempore*; fifty-three in all (minus the series of four sermons for the feasts of Mary, published in 2, 103-150). Mary appeared or surfaced in 32 of them; more than half. Exceptional concentration. One is not surprised to find it in the two Sundays of Advent and the two Sundays after Nativity, since that liturgical time of the Incarnation calls for it. For the Third Sunday of Lent, Anthony composed a second sermon (alternative), "In laudem Beatae Mariae Virginis." There he commented on Luke 11:27-28. He took a part of this text (an ambiguous one, since Christ corrected an enthusiastic eulogy for his Mother) as a pure tribute which gave the measure of his fervor (l, 157-163).

This sermon, like the fourth in the *Mariale*, concluded with a prayerful clause from the *Rogamus te*, which shows an exceptional focus on Mary. I hope that the specialists clarify the import of that clause, but also this dividing of the sermons. There is evidence of that only in the first volume, for the second and third Sundays of Lent, this last being no longer a simple alternative (sermo alter), but a show of fervor towards Mary. Undoubtedly, the liturgy furnished this occasion, and Anthony seized it with enthusiasm. It is then well established that Mary enjoyed a special place in the works of Anthony.

The Fundamental Principle and Meaning

Mariologists have arrived at a certain agreement as to the first principle of Mariology in Anthony. It was divine Maternity.

The first and supreme principle of Anthony's whole Mariology was the divine maternity, considered concretely...inasmuch as it included also Mediation. St. Anthony derived all the privileges of Mary from this first and fundamental principle.²⁶

The first principle is a modern question: it was not made explicit (aside from a latent problem since the middle of the thirteenth century) until 1935²⁷

²⁵On Mary in the sermons *De Tempore*, see Annex at the end of the article.

²⁶G. Roschini, in *Marianum* 8 (1946) 34, and with more correct nuances, Costa, 41 and Di Fonzo, 139-140.

²⁷If the problem of the principle of Mariology was found effectively involved in the synthetic Marian works beginning with Pseudo-Albert ("Mariale super Missus est" in the middle of the thirteenth century) then in the works of Gerson in the fifteenth, and Suarex and Lawrence of Brindisi in the sixteenth century, the problem was posed reflexively, and did not have as its aim

St. Anthony had not posed this problem. His teaching on the Virgin Mary was not at all abstract or scholastic. It was not formally organized nor tied to a "principle." His logic was less rational than symbolic and poetic, that is to say, without denying that it was reasonable and reasoned according to an undeniable internal coherence.

Since we have to define his doctrine from the inside and according to his formulation, it is necessary to provide evidence that we do not find the expression "divine maternity" (used by all the monographs) in his works. This abstract formulation is of late origin. H. Manteau-Bonamy said that he did not find it before Nazarius at the beginning of the seventeenth century — a report that we can hold to because of the benefit of the survey. I have not yet found a text to contradict it. Ancient authors spoke in a more concrete manner. They spoke of the "Mother of God," without experiencing the need to use "divine maternity:" an expression that has the disadvantage of giving way to an abstraction over the person, so important in the matter. The abstraction is not progress. It is a retreat from the personalism of the Bible. Rahner thought that this tendency has caused the Virgin to be forgotten wherever Christology became an abstraction: "An abstraction does not need the Mother," he said. It is paradoxical that an invading abstraction was extended to the most personal title of Mary — the Mother of the Son of God — in order to reduce her to an impersonal model of maternity which was soon raised to "a first principle." Like the ancients, Anthony spoke of Mary "concretely." The cited monographs have rightly acknowledged that.28

More surprising is how extremely rare is Anthony's use of the title "Mother of God." In surveying these designations of Mary in eight principal sermons, I was astonished not to find the expression, Deo genetrix (in Deipara): and only four times to find the expression Mater Dei. Anthony designated Mary as "Mother" only nineteen times. Three appellations that he combined in a way (binaries and ternaries) are more frequent: Blessed, Virgin, Mary. In these combinations, the most frequent word is Beata, 90 times; then Maria, 82 times; and Virgo, almost equally, 75 times. The title of Mother is then four to five times less frequent.²⁹ If Mater Dei is exceptional, this expression is at least

studies ex professo until the beginning of 1935 with J. Bittremieux, "De principio supremo mariologiae" in Ephemerides theol. Lovanienses 12 (1935): 607-609. On this complicated debate which began thus, R. Laurentin, Court Traite (1967) 103-108.

²⁸"S. Antonio...:preferisce considerare l'attivita fisicomorale di Maria...; ne risulta la maternita divina di Maria in concreto" B. Costa 27.

²⁹I have found the title of Mother of God only four times, and only in the Mariale of the sermons

placed at important and conclusive points, exclusively in the three last sermons in laudem Maria, three times in the four with the conclusion in Rogamus in which he condensed the theme and the prayer. It was this title that forced us to recognize the importance of the title of the Mother of God in the theology of Anthony. The Incarnation was the important event that gave rise to his reflections on Mary. It was the predominant and exclusive source for their abundance in twenty sermons de tempore (see note 25).

The focus of his poetic and symbolic contemplation was the generation of Christ by Mary, but not its conceptualization as her divine maternity. From his perspective, the role of Mary was in what the Fathers called the "admirable exchange" of divinity and humanity beginning with the Incarnation. If he developed this theme in praise of the Blessed Virgin Mary with an unreserved admiration, the most significant theme and one of the most insistent in his writings, was the humiliation of the Son of God in receiving humanity from Mary. (1, pp.157, 8)

In this regard, St. Anthony situated himself, not only in line with the Franciscans but in line with the apostle St. Paul (Gal 4: 4) whose expression facturn ex muliere he cited twice. He repeated the fact three times that Mary communicated human weakness to Christ:

The Father had given majesty; the mother, weakness (Sermon for Purification 2, p. 134, 1)

It was a citation from St. Augustine³⁰ that Anthony integrated emphatically into his own perspective:

God, the Son of God received human nature from the Blessed Virgin in the unity of Person: The Father had given divinity, the mother humanity; the father, majesty; the mother, weakness. By his divinity he had the power to change water into wine, give sight to the blind, resuscitate the dead; but because of his human weakness, he was hungry, suffered thirst, was bound, spit at and crucified. He said, 'What is it to me and to thee, woman?' Note well these two things: 'to me'

in laudem B.M.V; for the Annunciation (2, p.126,23); for the Purification (2, p.140, 23); and the Assumption (2, p.142,17,150,16). It is in this last sermon, the conclusion of the trilogy, that the theme is more forcefully expressed) p.142. 17) by adaptation to Mary of the Christological text in Romans 1, 4: A mundi constitutione praedestinata mater Dei in virtute, secundum Spiriturn sanctificationis. The words underlined modify what Paul said about Christ praedestinatus Filius Dei in virtute. We find also mater Filii Dei, in the Sermon on Saint John (3, pp.37, 22 and 30). I have found genitrix once (I, p. 316), but not Dei genitrix.

³⁰Saint Augustin, In In Tractatus 8, 9, PL 35, 1455-1456. (31) This theme is one of the more frequent. Anthony retained several etymologies: Stella maris (2, p.526, 24; 3; p.153 and 162,22 etc.) and Mare amarum (2, p.552, 12. Cf. Di Fonzo, 162).

specifies divinity; 'to thee,' humanity, etc. (First Sunday after the Octave of the Epiphany 2,573-574).

A third text shows more explicitly why the key to the discourse seems to us to be in the "admirable exchange:"

O more blessed and wholly blessed one who has communicated a Son to God the Father! (Citation of St. Bernard, In Ann. s2, 2 PL 183.391).

What glory would have been that of this poor little woman (Pauperculae feminae) if she had communicated a son to a mortal emperor! How much longer and further is the greater glory for that Virgin who communicated a Son to God the Father! She gave birth to her Son (Lk 2.7): The Father had given divinity; the mother, humanity; the Father, majesty, the mother, and the weakness (Sermon for the Nativity 3, p. 5, 1:13-18). The following insists on poverty and humility:

She wrapped him in linen and laid him in the manger (Lk 2:7). O poverty!O humility! The Savior of all was bound with a bit of rag (pamiculo) the king of angels was laid in a stable. Blush insatiable avarice! Break down human pride! She bound him in linen.

Note that Christ was bound with linen at the beginning and the end of his life. Joseph, according to Mark 15, bought a shroud, laid him and bound him in this shroud (ib. p.5-6). The similarity between the humiliations of infancy and those of the Passion underlay the Christian symbolism and iconography. The imagery of Eucharistic miracles referred always to Jesus the infant and dead, to the creche or to the tomb.

For Anthony the sack and the ashes of Job (16, 16-19) evoke the Incarnation:

By the sack and the ashes, the roughness and the degradation of human nature, Jesus Christ is identified. From the sack of our nature he made himself a tunic which he sewed with a needle, that is to say, the subtle work of the Holy Spirit, and with a thread, that is to say, the faith of the Virgin Mary. He dressed himself in it and on that tunic he sprinkled the ashes of degradation, poverty. (Sermon for the Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost, 2, 156-157).

This theme was predominant with him, since he placed it at the center of the Sermon on the Assumption. St. Anthony saw the mystery of pure glory in the abasement of the Incarnation: "The Savior humiliated himself when he received flesh from her" (150, line 8). He expressed the connection between this humiliation and the glory of the Assumption thus:

I will glorify the place of my feet (Isaiah 60,13). The feet of the Savior signify his humanity...The place of the feet of the Savior is the Blessed Virgin Mary, from whom he received humanity, whom he glorified today in exalting her above the choirs of angels. That signifies openly that the Blessed Virgin was taken up in her body, by which she was placed at of the feet of the Savior (Assumpta: Sermons on the Assumption, 143, lines 10, 23-27).

The key to the contrast (which was never explicit) is here also the reversal of the admirable exchange between the humble humanity that Mary communicated to Christ, and that divine glory that he enabled her to share, above all creatures. This has nothing to do with the merits of Mary here, but with a logic arising from the Incarnation.

With this connection, St. Anthony joined St. Paul who juxtaposed the abasement, humility and kenosis of the Incarnation (Gal 4:4; Phil 2:7) to the glory of the Resurrection. In this Pauline line, the Protestant, S. Benko proposed to erect as a principle of Mariology, that Mary was the instrument of Christ's kenosis. And this principle is well rounded in St. Paul, the influence in Protestant theology (S. Benko, Catholics and Mary, Valley Forge, Pa., Judson Press, 1968).

But if Anthony expressed forcefully the kenosis of the Incarnation differently from Paul, he did not juxtapose it to the glory of the Resurrection. He did not set in opposition knowledge according to the flesh and knowledge according to the Spirit (he did not cite *John* 6:63, and 2 *Cor* 5:16 only once in 3, p. 255, 30, an abstraction made from this opposition). He situated himself more in line with John the evangelist, who knew how to see glory in the humility of Christ, even in his Passion in which he discerned his royalty (according to an authentically Johannine vision).

Poverty

We will not be surprised then that Anthony insisted on the humility of Mary. She was qualified seven times as *Paupercula*, a diminutive (then superlative) of "poor;" poor little one (l, 83, 25; 500, 32 2, 368, 15, 564; 600, 4, 3, 5, 14; 86, 28 etc). Thus he made humility the first of "the three principal virtues of Mary." He recognized them allegorically in the floating basket in which Moses the infant was deposited.

The three elements out of which the basket was constructed signify the three principal virtues of Mary:

in the wicker basket, humility; in the bitumen, virginity; in the pitch, poverty (Sermon for the Purification, 2, 132, 28-31).

He recognized the same trilogy (with a reversal of the three last elements) in the wholly different image of the temple with which Mary was identified:

Of the temple of the virginal uterus it is said in the third Book of Kings that Solomon built the temple of three (materials), marble, cedar and gold. The marble was covered with cedar, and the cedar with gold (1 Kgs 6:22).

The marble... stands for virginity. The cedar which by its fragrance causes serpents to flee, means humility. Gold is poverty. The cedar of humility is

adorned by the gold of poverty. (The Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost, 2, 328, 1-5).

This paradoxical identification of gold with poverty which places in relief the proper value of poverty in the eyes of God, according to the Gospel, is familiar to St. Anthony. We find it again in the Sermon for the Assumption:

Just as a vase of solid gold,
Mary was the vase by humility,
gold by poverty
and solid by virginity (Sermon for the Assumption 2, p.144, 8-12)

In this perspective, Anthony knew how to discern a theme that was restored to honor by the Second Vatican Council. It was the offering of the poor that Mary made at the Presentation:

The Blessed Mary, the poor little one, offered for her poor Son a poor offering so that in all things the humility of the Savior might be manifest. (Sermon for the Purification 3, 98, 21-23 where the last words are a citation of the ordinary gloss on Luke 2:24; the same theme in 2, 137).

The Glory

The emphasis on poverty and humility did not turn St. Anthony away from what Paul VI called the "way of beauty." He constantly exalted the beauty of Mary. Astral images of light held the first place in his Marian symbolism; Mary is the sun, the moon and above all the star. Such is the etymological sense of her name.³¹

We can be surprised at the first image: the sun, for it is appropriate to Christ, the sun of Justice. How then did Anthony say:

Mary was the radiant sun in the Annunciation of the Angel...In the sun there are three things: the splendor, the candor and the warmth which correspond to Gabriel's three interpolations: the first *Ave gratia plena*...here the splendor of the sun; it can refer to the four virtues that Mary exercised, each three times (temperance, prudence, modesty, humility). (*Sermon for the Annunciation*, where this theme of the sun is developed at length, 2, 110-113).

It is in no way forgotten that this title belongs first to Christ: He alone is "the True Sun." Anthony recognized that Mary was only its reflection. If the countenance of Moses was radiant ex consortio sermonis Dei, according to Exodus 34:29-30.

³¹Ce theme est des frequents. Antoine retient plusieurs etymologies; Stella maris (2, p. 526, 24; p. 153, et 162, 22 etc.) et Mare amaarum (2, p.552, 12 Cf. Di Fonzo, 162).

...how much more on the face of the glorious Virgin did the rays of the True Son whom she carried, blaze in her womb! Joseph could not comprehend it. He was afraid to approach for the True Sun was covered with a cloud, and emitted blazing rays of gold (*radiolos aurei fulgoris*). This countenance was full of all grace, gracious to the eyes of the angels. They desired to look upon him (cf. 1 *Phil* 1, 12); and she shone like the sun (2, 14-25).

The light of Mary is then properly related to the sun of justice which radiates from her; it is related as well to the Mystery of the Incarnation. In this same way, Anthony applies to Mary other images of light: the rainbow and the radiant Dawn.³²

A statistical study of the titles of Mary (with reference to the symbolic studies of Bachelard on the four elements) shows that the earth and water are largely predominant over air and fire. With Anthony we can discern an original predilection for fire, bound as it is in his writings to light. The Prologue to his four sermons for the feasts of the Virgin is very significant. According to the first, Mary is the star; according to the second, "the blazing sun;" according to the third, she is the "burning incense" in the "flashing fire." This observation appears significant for his interior vision (Prologue, 2, 103).

But the images which predominate among the symbols of Mary are those which designate her as "dwelling" (*habitatio*) and house of Christ, above all in terms of the sacred objects of the Old Testament: the ark of the covenant, the tabernacle, the temple, the vase, but also palace, granary, and basket.

Other images (taken from tradition) signify as well, in this instance by way of a container (the content being the divinity but by underlining especially the virginity). Thus we find the closed garden, the sealed fountain. Insistence on virginity characterizes also Anthony's animal symbolism. He identified Mary with the bee, a chaste creature, for according to Aristotle:

The bee breeds without coition, for she has in her the power of generation. Thus Our Lady, the Blessed Mary engendered the Son of God without corruption, for the Holy Spirit had come upon her, and the power of the Most High covered her with His shadow.

³²The arc in the heaven (arcus effulgens) holds a great place in the Sermon on the Annunciation (2, pp. 113-117), a theme introduced at the beginning of the prologue (103).

pp.113-117), a theme introduced at the beginning of the prologue (103).

33 R. Laurentin, Foi et mythe en theologie mariale, in Nouvelle Revue Theologique 89 (1967); cf. pp.297-298 on the poetry of the four elements according to Bachelard. The statistical study of titles was made in Dictionnaire d'I. Marracci, Polyanthea mariana, Coloniae Agrippinae. Ketteler, 1783, reedited in Bourasse, t. 9 for the word Elephas col. 1147-1148.

The same motif inclines him to make the elephant a symbol of the Virgin. He was perhaps the first to use that rare image before Richard of St. Lawrence and Jacques of Voragine. ³⁴ St. Anthony reported according to Pliny:

The elephant is the most serviceable and most obedient of savage animals. He receives instruction well, and he is intelligent. For that reason, we can teach him to adore the king. And he has good sense.³⁵

But the trait at which Anthony paused was that "[the elephant] fled from the odor of a rat." (According to Pliny):³⁶

The elephant signifies the Blessed Virgin who was more humble and obedient than others and adored the King whom she gave birth to. The rat signifies the luxury that is born of earthly secretion, that is to say, of the sensuality of the mouth and the Blessed one fled from, not only that but even its odor. She who became afraid, at the entry of the angel. Thus, all those who want to live chastely in Christ, ought to flee, not only the rat of luxury, but also its odor. And it is not surprising that they ought to flee fornication, since the elephant, which is like a great mountain, fled the rat.

Let us underline in the passage a characteristic of Anthony's symbolism: his interest in odor.³⁷ He went on to say that it healed and nourished the whole population of India which did not eat but subsisted exclusively on odor.³⁸

The Virginity of Mary occupied the first place in the writings of Anthony. He considered it, in line with the Fathers of the Church, as a specific sign of the divinity of Christ. It was in this sense that he cited St. Bernard (3, 155, 5-8). "No other Son was suitable to the virgin Mother. No other birth was suitable to God's Son."

It was one of the sources for Anthony's symbolism, largely borrowed from tradition: a closed garden, the sealed fountain, "Virga de radice Jesse," but also, the Gate of Ezechiel; that door which he saw closed on three sides, but open on one only, from the side of God (A frequent image: 1, 44, 18; 1, 110, 1; 2, 133, 134).

³⁴2 p. 111-112. The elephant recurs often in Anthony's sermons: l.pp. 237-244, 495, 498-499; 3, pp.78-79.

³⁵He cited Aristotle, "Histoire des animaux," 9, 46, 630b. Always in 2, p. 111, note 18.

³⁶He cited here Pliny, "Histoire naturelie," 8-10, Solinus etc. 2, p. 111, n. 18.

³⁷Odors inspire in part the basic symbols of his *Mariale*: the lily and the rose, odoriferous incense (2, p. 103).

³⁸"Sermon for the Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost," n. 14, 2, p. 369, 19-29 where he bases himself on Solini, "Polyhistory," 65.

This door was called 'closed' because the blessed Mary was closed to the north, the south and the west, as it had been said; but she humbly opened herself to the east, namely, Jesus Christ, who came from heaven. (Sermon for Purification, 12, 1, 134, 6-8).

Virginity is not for St. Anthony a simple symbol; it is the burst of life which personalizes Mary in Luke. For him, she is: the first among women who offered to God the glorious presence of her virginity (Sermon for the Annunciation, 153, 19-20). She took the vow of virginity by which she crushed the head of the serpent (2, 131, 31; cf. Luke 1:34).

Anthony celebrated the superiority of her grace as well as of her glory:

The blessed Mary, when she was in the Church militant, possessed the virtues of all the just....Now she reigns in glory in which she has the reward of all the saints, for she was raised above the choirs of the angels (Sermon on the Purification, 2, 135, 9-17).

This vase (Mary) was adorned on this day (on this day of the Assumption) with all the precious stones, that is to say, with all the prerogatives, with all the celestial rewards. She received the reward of all the saints, she who gave birth to the creator and redeemer of all. (Sermon for the Assumption, 2,146, 2-5).

Her crowning depended on the admirable exchange:

Truly the grace of Mary was superior to all grace (omni gratia praestantior), she who had the Son with God the Father. That is why today she merited to be crowned in heaven. That is why it was added: 'So he set the royal diadem on her head.' (Esther 2:17) Because the Blessed Virgin Mary crowned the Son of God with a diadam of flesh, on the day of his marriage, that is to say, of the conception by which the divine nature was united as a spouse to the human nature, like a spouse in the nuptial chamber (thalamo) of the same virgin. For that reason the same Son had crowned his mother today with a diadem of his celestial glory (Sermon for the Assumption, 2, 148, 18-18).

If Anthony did not give Mary the title of Mother of human beings, if he only once gave her the title of Mediatrix, he attributed to her three times the title of Queen: Our Queen and Celestial Queen.³⁹ He compared her crowning to that of Esther. But this exaltation of her royalty remained associated with the emphasis on her humility, even there where he called her the queen of angels:

³⁹Regina nostra, Sermon for the Annunciation 3, p.154, 24 where Mary is Regina noster Esther, for this "name signifies: prepared for the time, namely, our Salvation," and Assuerus signifies: Beatitude, even God. "Sermon for the Assumption," 2, p.149, 20-21: In verbo humilitatis: Ecce ancilla Domini (1, 38) facta est regina coelestis Haec eadem virgo fuit Martha et Maria.

The palm seen from below is rough because of its bark, but from on high it is beautiful, by its appearance and fruit. And, as Isidore said, it bears fruit by the hundred. Thus, the Blessed Virgin in this world was unpolished because of the bark of poverty, but in heaven she is 'beautiful and glorious, because she is Queen of the angels. It was above all the virgins that the Virgin of virgins merited to obtain the hundredfold fruit which was given to the virgins.' 40

Her Role with Regard to Human Beings

What can we now say about the role of Mary with regard to humanity? We have shown in what way the thesis of universal Mediation seemed an anachronism for Anthony of Padua and how it would be artificial to credit him with a clear-cut distinction between the role of Mary yesterday and today. Anthony did not separate them because he considered the mysteries of the life of Christ and Mary in an eternal brightness, communicated simultaneously by example and presence.

His theocentric preaching in no way excluded, but rather implied the influence of Mary with regard to humanity. But he did not cling to explaining its mechanisms as others began to do at that time, nor even to placing Mary between Christ and the Church, according to the formula created by St. Bernard. He welcomed the givens of the tradition and lived the experience which they implied. Mary interceded, and Anthony described her influence by way of images that one could falsify by materializing them allegorically. For materializing each image by way of a mechanical model would drag one into incoherence and contradiction. The symbol is understood from the point of view of inspiration, not by combinations or extrapolations of each image that is used. Mary was victorious over the demon with and in Christ. As we have seen she crushed his head (Genesis 3:15) by the vow of virginity. She cast him down by the Passion of her Son like Jael nailed Sisara, with a stake and hammer (Judg 14:16; 13:23). 41 The image of crushing and that of transfixing of the enemy signify the same thing without any need to interpret allegorically the detail of each image.

Mary is a column which upholds our life, and her name is a castle.⁴² The pistil in the middle of the lilies was

the excellence of divine love in the heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary. She is the medicine of sinners who have been burned by the fire of vices. The Blessed

⁴⁰"Angelorum regina," Sermon for the Third Sunday of Lent 2, p.160, 17.

⁴¹S. in Purif. 2, pp.135-136.

⁴²S. 5 in Pentecost. 1. pp.500,34. Sermon for the Third Sunday of Quadragesima, 2 (pp.162,4).

Virgin has healed their burns and blackness by the medicinal whiteness of her holiness, and she has conferred holiness on those who hope in her.⁴³

Anthony pictured [Mary] to himself as full of grace, like a vase overflowing on us⁴⁴ like a door through which we export gifts of grace (gratiarum munera exportamus),⁴⁵ an image of mediation, but also as a "very strong castle where the sinner takes refuge and is saved." These subtle and diverse metaphors do not allow themselves to be materialized or combined. Let us not see here too quickly a mediation that would mitigate the action of God. It will be clearer that in Anthony the reverse will instead be true: God takes over intercession from Mary, or rather grants it.

If Anthony had recourse to Mary's prayer, it was in a theocentric way, by even attributing the action to the Holy Spirit.

By her prayers and merits, that the dew of the Holy Spirit refreshes the ardor of our spirit, remits our sins, infuses grace. (Sermon for the Annunciation 2, 120, 25-28).

What must be retained is the living relation of Mary to human beings without any systematization. The place par excellence in which Anthony expresses it, is in the conclusions of the five principle sermons written specifically "for the praise of Mary." These conclusions are in the form of prayer, like the *Rogamus*.

An analysis of these key-texts is significant. If Anthony reserved his prayers to Christ (once to the Father and never to the saints, his prayers to Mary always led to the invocation of Christ.)⁴⁷ It is with Him that the conclusion was completed. That showed at once the Christocentrism of Anthony and the bond that he established between Christ and Mary.

That the title of Mother of God figured only in three of the specific sermons for the praise of Mary, and three times out of four in the final clause of Rogamus tends to show the central importance that Anthony gave this title, without — for all that — erecting it into a primary principle of Mariology. This title was qualified each time with a different epithet: alma, electra, inclyta,

^{432,} pp.126, 1-4 and 17-18.

⁴⁴3, p.157, 11-14.

⁴⁵ Sermon for the Purification 2, p.133, 29-33.

⁴⁶ Sermon for the Third Sunday of Lent for the Praise of Mary 2, pp. 162, 4.

⁴⁷ The invocation in *Rogamus* which we find at the end of each of the five sermons for the praise of Mary is found only eight times at the end of the Christological sermons in which we find it most often *Rogemus ut...* twenty-two times. And also Exoremus 1 (425 and 443). *Rogamus te Pater*, S. VI in Pentecost., 1, p.530.

and the petition was specified each time according to the theme proper to the sermon:

For the Amunciation: 'You who wrapped your Son in swaddling clothes, heal the burn of sin by the plaster of your mercy' 48

For the Purification: 'Purify us from the blood of sins, obtain for us the fire of contrition, by the wax of confession and the wick of satisfaction.'

For the Assumption (the last sermon, which finishes with a longer conclusion: 12 lines in place of 7 to 9): 'Fill with celestial grace the vase of our hearts, make them shine with the gold of wisdom; consolidate it by the virtue of your strength, decorate it with the precious stone of virtues. Pour upon us the blessed olive, the oil of your mercy, and cover the multitude of our sins so that we might merit to be raised on high to celestial glory.'

The spirit of the discourse is symbolic. The fundamental image of radiation or diffusion is diversified according to the Gospel of the day with a basic reference to the mystery of the Incarnation, but it does not inform us about Mary's manner of acting. The traditional theme of intercession is very clear. In the Sermon for the Annunciation, for example, the invocation begins with these words: "Ask for us an indulgence."

More personal, more intimate and therefore significant is the theme of the "presence of Mary." Anthony employed this expression in the concluding prayer of the *Rogamus* of his first sermon for the praise of Mary:

We pray thee, our Lady, our hope, we who have been shaken by the tempest of this sea, you the Star of the sea, shine, direct us towards the port, assist our arrival by the protection of your presence (exitum nostrum tuae praesentiae tutela munias).⁵²

Anthony was not the originator of the expression the "presence of Mary." We find it in Germain of Constantinople⁵³ and in the *Liber salutatorius*, before the end of the twelfth century which he undoubtedly did not know.⁵⁴ But the

⁴⁸Sermon on the Annunciation, 2, p.126, 25-27.

⁴⁹Sermon for the Purification, 2, p.140, 22-25.

⁵⁰Sermon for the Assumption' 2, p.150, 16-22.

⁵¹Sermon for the Annunciation 2, p.126.

⁵²Sermon for the Third Sunday of Lent unto the Praise of Mary 1, p. 163, 3-7.

⁵³Germain de Constantinople, Ser. 1 In Dormit. 3, PG 98, 344D; cf. 345 A and C.

⁵⁴Manuscrit de la Bibliotheque Nationale, new Latin acquisitions. 186, edition J. LeClercq, in Eph. mar. Lit. 72 (1958), p.303. The author, prior to the end of the Twelfth century could have been Peter Damian. On this theme of the presence of Mary, R. Laurentin, Court Traite (1967) 153, 38 note 7.

word "presence" was familiar to him.⁵⁵ It conveys the way in which he lived and pictured to himself his relation to Mary. It is one of the better words, even today, for signifying the living relation of Mary to human beings in Christ and in the communion of saints.

Conclusion

These considerations may help us to better approach from the inside and from St. Anthony's point of view of the simple and profound vision that he had of Mary in a constant reference to Christ and to salvation. It is not "complete," but rooted in the essential. He was not an innovator but traditional and perhaps original and free. He did not build but he loved to make the sources flow with love and fervor, poetry and symbols, and community devotion.

His theology was not abstract and scholastic, but symbolic and poetic, contemplative and radiant with joy. It overflowed from the interior. It was apostolic, concerned about the sinner but without proselytizing. His concern about morality was not moralism. Anthony focused on the radiance of the mysteries, and if he placed Mary in a high place, it was because he discerned in her a beautiful concentration of light.

Anthony's fervor for Mary verified in advance the principle traits by which Paul VI characterized true devotion to Mary: Christological, biblical, liturgical. The way of beauty which he recommended to the International Mariological Congress of 1975 was connatural to Anthony. Finally, Anthony's theology radiated the glory of Mary without ever forgetting her poverty. In this — his Franciscan inspiration — he anticipated the Second Vatican Council. 56

Following Christ, the saints knew how to be universal, not in abstract and general terms, but in the particular which is irresistibly personal and characterizes the whole of human existence. Anthony found his way, an intermediate one between the artists of the cathedrals and the universities whose work he knew as the first professor to be chosen by St. Francis himself. If he shared the curiosity of his age for etymologies, chronologies, and unusual information of the ancients about animals, it was when his symbolism became contemplative in conveying the Mystery of the Incarnation with all its consequences, near or far, that Anthony of Padua showed his worth and became sublime, both in doctrine and expression.

⁵⁵Divinae majestatis praesentiam, Sermon for the Fifth Sunday after Pentecost 1, p.509, 11-12.

⁵⁶Dono pauperum oblato, Lumen Gentium. 57.

It was sanctity which inspired Anthony with traits of genius and earned him the title of Doctor. This title came to him with an eye to history, for the Middle Ages also admitted the equivalence of the two concepts of preacher and doctor, as Fr. Mandonnet has proven.⁵⁷ It would be a blessed perspective to restore at a time when preachers are not enough doctors, when theologians are often too caught up in the human sciences to give the essential reference to the faith its place. Since his time is no longer ours, it is not as an exterior model but as an inspirer that Anthony can help us return to the true sources of evangelical doctrine with a particular delight in Mary.

⁵⁷P. Mandonnet OP, Saint Dominique, t.2 (Paris 1937) 64.