

THE TREATISE ON ABANDONMENT TO DIVINE PROVIDENCE

Dominique Salin

THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE PRESENT MOMENT is regularly associated with the treatise known as *L'Abandon à la providence divine*, or, in English, *Self-Abandonment to Divine Providence*. This book appeared in 1861, at the beginning of a period of conflict that was to tear France apart and marginalise the Church. Its influence and fame became considerable. 'It's one of the books that most influences my life', Charles de Foucauld said of it.¹ Along with Thérèse's *Story of a Soul*—though it is written in a less colourful style—it enabled many French Catholics to cope with the First World War. And major intellectual figures such as Henri Bremond and Hans Urs von Balthasar have expressed warm admiration for the book.

'Caussade'

We know very little about how this famous book originated, though it now seems almost impossible that that the author was in fact the Jesuit, Jean-Pierre de Caussade. The work was first published in 1861 by Fr Henri Ramière (1821-1884), a Jesuit who was director of the Apostleship of Prayer. The manuscript with which Ramière worked had been preserved through the period of the French Revolution. By Ramière's time, it was kept at the convent of the Sisters of Nazareth in Montmirail, some sixty miles east of Paris, but it had originally belonged to a Visitation convent in Paris. A note said that it was a set of 'letters written by an ecclesiastical person to a superior of a religious community', and someone had written on it, 'the author is the Revd Fr

¹ In a letter to a White Sister, 24 December 1904: *Correspondances sahariennes*, edited by Philippe Thiriez and Antoine Chatelard (Paris: Cerf, 1998), 957.

Caussade of the Society of Jesus'. Ramière took these indications at face value.

Ramière gave the published book its title. The name found in the manuscript, *A Treatise Where One Discovers the True Art of the Perfection of Salvation*, 'gives no idea', Ramière said in his preface, 'of the subject that it deals with'. The idea of *abandon* came from the writings of Mme Guyon, Fénelon and Francis of Sales in the seventeenth century. Ramière reordered the ideas to some extent, with an eye to the 'orthodox' demand that unschooled readers be protected from ideas that were too 'mystical' and 'risky'. He noted in his preface that the treatise does not stress sufficiently how God's sanctifying action never happens apart from the person of Jesus Christ.

Ramière's edition was subsequently to be extended with letters, published as de Caussade's, that at least trebled the size of the volume and gave an impression of de Caussade as a prolific author. It was only in the 1960s that a text closer to the original manuscript was published, edited by the Jesuit scholar Michel Olphe-Galliard (1900-1985), and that the treatise was separated from two further volumes of letters.²

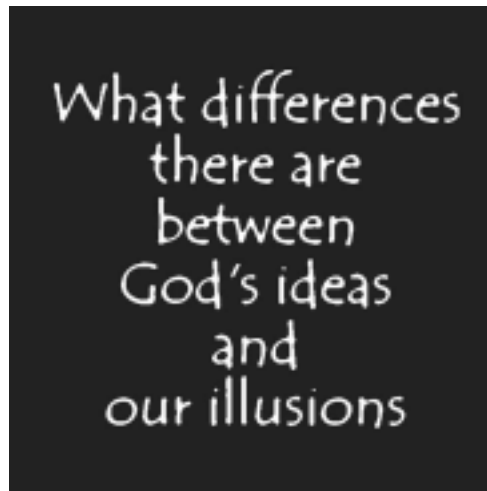
Jean-Pierre de Caussade was born in southern France in 1675—it is not clear whether his real name was de Caussade or simply Caussade. At the outset of his career he taught in schools, but his superiors did not allow him to stay long in any one place. In their notes on him, they wrote of a lack of judgment. In 1720 he was transferred to spiritual ministries, and in 1724 he moved north to the Champagne province, for reasons that are unknown, working as a preacher and as a giver of city missions. It was in this capacity that he came to Nancy in 1730, staying until the following year. He then, for some reason, returned to his home province, before coming back to Nancy in 1733 for a further six years. He worked in the retreat house in Nancy, becoming its director in 1737, and taking part in city missions throughout Lorraine. In 1739 he returned to his own province again, becoming rector of the college at Perpignan. He died in Toulouse in 1751.

Nothing in de Caussade's biography would suggest that this man was the author of a famous treatise, and recent research has rather

² Most English translations, such as that by Alger Thorold (London: Burns and Oates, 1933), depend on the Ramière text. Kitty Muggeridge's translation, published as *The Sacrament of the Present Moment* (London: Fontana, 1981), is based on Olphe-Galliard's more authentic version. The present author has recently produced a new edition that corrects Olphe-Galliard in detail (Paris: Desclée, 2005).

discredited the idea of de Caussade as a major spiritual writer, as suggested by the editorial work of Ramière and Olphe-Galliard. Very little in fact can be attributed to him.

Fr Jacques Gagey³ has recently studied the different manuscripts associated with de Caussade, and has also discovered the letters of a sister at the Nancy Visitation convent, Soeur Fervel, an



archivist who had been in contact with Ramière. From this correspondence it becomes clear that it was Soeur Fervel who persuaded Ramière that *Abandonment to Divine Providence* had been put together from the letters of de Caussade to Mère Marie-Anne-Sophie de Rottembourg, the superior of the convent from 1738 onwards. She also told him that de Caussade was the author of many letters that the convent had in copied manuscript, and passed these texts on to him. Ramière simply added the letters to subsequent reprints of the treatise. Maybe Soeur Fervel was sincere in her belief and acted in good faith, but her attribution of authorship, both of the treatise and of most of the letters, cannot be taken seriously. Gagey has shown that only 32 letters of spiritual direction are genuinely by de Caussade. These are addressed to 'a lady from Lorraine' who was obviously very attached to him. The manuscripts have not been corrected or polished, and the style is far removed from the lyricism marking the treatise.

Who, then, was the true author of the famous treatise? It is better to be cautious here. Gagey attributes *Abandonment to Divine Providence* to none other than the 'lady from Lorraine' whom de Caussade was directing in his authentic letters.⁴ However, his arguments are not convincing. There is nothing to establish definitively that the author is female, and de Caussade's letters to this particular woman show that

³ *L'Abandon à la providence divine d'une dame de Lorraine au XVIII^e siècle, suivi des Lettres spirituelles de Jean-Pierre Caussade à cette dame*, edited by Jacques Gagey (Grenoble: Jérôme Million, 2001).

⁴ Hence the title of Gagey's edition, as cited in the previous note.

she was herself far removed from the state of 'abandonment'—far too much so to have been able to write so eloquently on the subject, and with such rich biblical and spiritual culture.

We know neither the author's gender, nor his or her ecclesiastical status. But whoever it was had been steeped in the tradition of Francis of Sales and Mme Guyon—a tradition greatly esteemed in Nancy at the time when de Caussade was working there. The historical de Caussade certainly displays affinities with this spirituality, and he was a published author. It must have been tempting for some anonymous archivist to have attached his name to the manuscript, and thus to lead both Soeur Fervel and Ramière astray.

Whoever the author is, the treatise is a magnificent example of the tradition stemming from Mme Guyon and Francis of Sales, a tradition which also influenced figures such as Nicolas Grou at the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and which was to shape, a generation after it was first published, the idea of spiritual childhood articulated by Thérèse of Lisieux.

The Tradition of Abandon

In the nineteenth century, de Caussade was known as one of the contributors to a publication that, on its first appearance, had been anonymous: *Spiritual Instructions in the Form of Dialogues on Different States of Prayer Following the Teaching of M. Bossuet, Bishop of Meaux* (1741).⁵ The title indicated some affinities with *Abandonment to Divine Providence*, and directed readers to a specific context: the controversies between Bossuet and Fénelon at the end of the seventeenth century. These had turned on what was called 'quietism', which was effectively another name for illuminism, and they had been occasioned by the teaching of Mme Jeanne Guyon. Despite the reference in the title to Bossuet, whose opinion had prevailed partly because of royal patronage, the 1741 publication in fact seeks to rehabilitate Fénelon's teaching.

⁵ The extent of de Caussade's contribution to this volume is uncertain, but the published version has certainly been worked over both by censors and by others. An English version exists, under the title *On Prayer*, translated by Alger Thorold (London: Burns and Oates, 1931). What we now have as *A Treatise on Prayer from the Heart*, translated by Robert McKeon (St Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1998) goes back to the original manuscript underlying the first part of the book, and depends on an edition by Olphe-Galliard. Here de Caussade's authorship is unquestioned.

The Bossuet-Fénelon debates concerned the way in which the spiritual life was to be understood, particularly in its more developed forms. What is it to live in accordance with God? What does 'union with God' mean? How far is it possible for human beings to be so detached from themselves that they can will only what God wills? Can we love God with a purely disinterested love? Can human beings be united with God unceasingly without somehow ceasing to be themselves? Is union with God the normal flowering of a committed spiritual life (Fénelon) or a favour miraculously bestowed by God only on particular predestined souls (Bossuet)? Is it or is it not dependent on 'extraordinary states', on the paranormal?

In the seventeenth century, Mme Guyon had proposed a set of answers to these questions, which the interest in mental states at the time had caused to be hotly debated. Fénelon had given her to understand that her answers followed the main lines of Christian tradition. She took herself to be advocating in her writings nothing other than the receptiveness to things divine, or passivity—*divina pati*—spoken of by spiritual writers in the tradition of Denys: the *Gelassenheit* of the Rhineland mystics, Ignatian 'indifference', or, most recently, Francis of Sales' 'abandonment'.

'Abandonment', the central idea in Francis of Sales' thought, was, for Mme Guyon and Fénelon, a French culmination of a tradition that had started in Greek, passed through Latin and Flemish, and had reached them via John of the Cross and Francis of Sales. This tradition speaks of a secret union with God, of the soul's peace, of a blessed life, of 'rest' and 'quiet'. 'Abandonment' involves letting things be, in all circumstances, amid the night of faith: letting God act, letting God be God in the soul. 'Abandonment' is a matter of accepting that one will never be in control of one's life, and of being ready to see a message from God in events as they occur—particularly if they are somehow contrary to our wishes or expectations. 'Abandonment' is subjective as well as objective: an abandoned soul renounces everything, every possible claim, including any claim about its own perfection or even salvation. Like Christ on the cross, it may even in some circumstances feel abandoned by God.

But Mme Guyon's ideas were condemned. Fénelon attempted theologically to justify her spiritual teaching and the mystical tradition that lay behind it in *Maxims of the Saints*, but his work was proscribed by papal bull in 1699. This is not the place to analyze the theological and



Mme Guyon

political implications of this condemnation. Its rationale drew on the standard accusations made long before against the Beguines and Meister Eckhart, and it was to some extent formulated under pressure from Louis XIV. What we should note is its effect: for some two centuries subsequently, 'mystical' language and themes vanished from spiritual literature. From this point forward, there was a reserve about 'quietism'; people spoke about 'devotion' or 'piety' rather than about 'mysticism'. The successful spiritual writers—one thinks of figures such as Pierre de Clorivière or Nicolas Grou—used very moderated tones, avoiding the language not only of Mme Guyon but even of the more generally accepted 'mystics', such as Teresa of Avila, John of the Cross, and their French counterparts, despite the fact that texts by such figures were still being republished.

Mme Guyon's more daring affirmations, though condemned within the Catholic Church, found their way into German Pietism and English Methodism, and were warmly welcomed in these contexts. Moreover, Mme Guyon continued to exercise an influence in France, within religious houses, and in individual spiritual direction and corresp-

ondence, as the cataloguing of French archives during the twentieth century has shown. The treatise *Abandonment to Divine Providence* can be seen as witnessing to the hidden persistence of Mme Guyon's mystical idiom even during the Enlightenment period.

Events and 'God's Order'

'De Caussade', as we have seen, is very probably just a label. But the little treatise that has come to us under his name with the title *Abandonment to Divine Providence* seems always to have spoken to people. It is time to recall the text's teaching, and thus to discover why it has always been so successful. From within this treatise, there emerge the features of a spirituality suitable for troubled times.

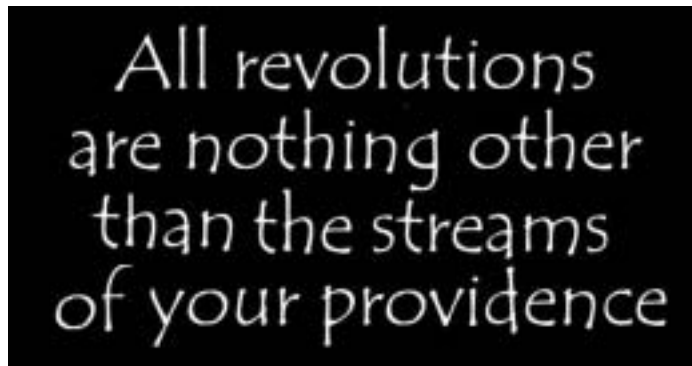
What comes to us at each instant by God's ordering is what is holiest, best, and most divine for us. All our knowledge consists in knowing this ordering in the present moment.⁶

The spirituality of abandonment and the present moment depends on the premise expressed here, or rather on this act of faith that is constantly reaffirmed in the treatise. Whatever happens in our lives, the succession of 'moments' which constitute those lives (obviously with the exception of sin, but not—significantly—of sin's effects) is the expression of 'God's order'. 'Order' was a key term for the culture of the time. Appearing from the very second sentence of the treatise onwards, it normally indicates the objective element in God's benevolent, watchful design, or the divine 'plan'—a divine will that is so often hidden and disconcerting in its manifestations. The treatise says so explicitly, with the concern for simplicity that marks out Mme Guyon's disciples:

God's order, God's good pleasure, God's will, God's action, grace—all this is one and the same thing.⁷

⁶ VII, 81; Muggeridge, 59-60. Quotations from the treatise are translated directly, and fairly literally, from the original. References are given to the chapter, the original page of the manuscript as given in the 2005 French edition, and to the page number in Kitty Muggeridge's translation from the Olphe-Galliard 1966 edition.

⁷ VII, 80; Muggeridge, 59.



All revolutions
are nothing other
than the streams
of your providence

And there is one word which sums up 'all this', a word which from the seventeenth century onwards became more and more common in spiritual vocabulary: providence.

The treatise presents us with a vision of all time submitted to providence's ordering. This text, though written in the Enlightenment period, goes back to the mystical tradition of Denys:

Divine action is flooding the universe; it is penetrating all creatures; it is bathing them. Wherever they are, it is there; it is going before them; it is accompanying them; it is following them. You only have to let yourself be carried along on its waves.⁸

'Il n'y a qu'à ... il ne s'agit que ... all you have to do is ...' These formulae of mystical language, which appear so frequently in the work of Mme Guyon and in the treatise, point up how a believing soul should behave. The guidance is 'simple' and 'easy'. All you have to do is fulfil the 'duty of your station' together with your duty as a Christian, and face up to unexpected events:

Would that it might please God for kings and their ministers, for the princes of the Church and of the world, for the priests, the soldiers, the bourgeois and so on—in a word for everyone—to know how easy it would be for them to arrive at a very high holiness! All they have to do is to carry out faithfully the duties of Christianity and their station, to embrace submissively the crosses attached to these, and to submit to the order of providence as ceaselessly present, without their looking for it, in and for everything that comes along to be done or endured.⁹

⁸ I, 7; Muggeridge, 19.

⁹ I, 7-8; Muggeridge, 19.

An idea of hierarchy going back to Denys has here become the hierarchy of society. And, as in Denys, hierarchy here reflects, in and of itself, the divine order; hierarchy is a privileged manifestation of God's action. It bathes the creature. The author does not hesitate to use very physical metaphors:

You only have to receive everything and let it happen. Everything is directing you, straightening you out, carrying you. Everything is a banner, a litter, a comfortable vehicle. Everything is God's hand; everything is God's earth, air and water. His action is more extensive and more present than the elements: he enters into you through all your senses.¹⁰

There are obvious echoes here, not only of Denys, but also of the *Spiritual Canticle* of John of the Cross.

'The Gospel in Hearts'

Another major link with traditional mystical writing is the distinction, taken from Francis of Sales and expressed in his language, between two ways in which God's will can show itself. In the first place, God's will is manifest through the commands and duties enjoined on all Christians, and through the commands and duties applying to each individual by virtue of their 'state', their social function. For Francis of Sales, all this is 'the declared will of God', and the obligations are clear. *Abandonment to Divine Providence* speaks of the need,

... to fulfil faithfully one's present duties to the degree that His will is signified, without allowing oneself any reflection, no second thought or examination of consequences, causes and reasons. It should be enough for them to move forward in simplicity doing pure duty, as if there were nothing in the world but God and this pressing obligation. The present moment is thus like a desert, where the simple soul sees nothing but God alone, and rejoices in God, occupying itself with nothing other than what He wants of it: everything else is left, forgotten, abandoned to providence.¹¹

But there is also what Francis calls *la volonté absolue et de bon plaisir*—a divine will that acts in total freedom, according simply to God's good

¹⁰ IX, 136; Muggeridge, 93.

¹¹ II, 46; Muggeridge, 25.

God is still
speaking today
as He spoke in
former times
to our ancestors,
when there were
no directors or methods

pleasure. The manifestations of this divine will are far less clear. This divine will is mediated to us through 'events', in particular through what is unexpected, what is pulling us up short. Whereas the 'declared will of God' is straightforward and predictable, this other will of God is somehow disconcerting. Something will go wrong: we may be ill or have an accident or get

into an embarrassing situation; perhaps there will be a dramatic conflict. At that point, what matters is 'a dependence on God's good pleasure and a continual passivity as regards our being and doing': in other words, a discerning docility to the Spirit grounded in indifference (spiritual freedom). What God is at this point manifesting is,

... His unknown will, his will that is a matter of chance, encounter, and, so to speak, adventure. I shall call it, if you like, his will of pure providence in order to distinguish it from the one which indicates precise obligations to us, of a kind from which no one may exempt themselves.¹²

These two ways in which God's will can be expressed carry over into a recurring image: that of two books in which these two divine wills are written, the book of Scripture and the book of history:

The Word of God is full of mysteries, and His Word as carried out in the events of the world is no less so. These two books are sealed, truly. Of both, the letter kills. God alone is the centre of faith.¹³

'Abandonment' is the key required for interpreting both these books. One learns the art of this interpretation only from experience, and it involves much that was traditionally associated with mysticism:

¹² II, 13; Muggeridge, 22.

¹³ IX, 123; Muggeridge, 85.

We are not well trained in the proper sense except by the words which God pronounces expressly for us. It is not through books nor through inquisitive historical researches that one becomes learned in the knowledge of God: all that is but a vain, confused knowledge that puffs up. What really trains us is what happens to us from one moment to another, forming in us the experiential knowledge that Jesus Christ wanted to have before he taught.¹⁴

Thus even the second 'book', that of history, can become the book of life, nothing less than a continuation of Scripture, provided that souls know how to unite themselves to God's action:

If souls knew how to unite themselves to this action, their lives would be nothing other than a series of different Scriptures which would continue until the end of the world, Scriptures not with pen and ink, but on hearts. . . . The sequel to the New Testament is being written, then, currently, in the things people do and in the things that happened to people. Holy souls have become the successors of the apostles and prophets, not in order to write canonical books, but in order to continue the history of divine action through their lives, lives whose moments are so many syllables and sentences through which this action expresses itself in a living way.¹⁵

In reality, it is Christ's own life that is being continued in the souls of those who are 'abandoned':

We are in the times of faith. The Holy Spirit is no longer writing any Scripture except in hearts. All the actions of the saints, all the moments in their lives, are the Gospel of the Holy Spirit. Holy souls are the paper; what they endure and what they do are the ink. The Holy Spirit, through the pen which is His action, is writing a living Gospel, and one will be able to read it only on the day of glory, when, after our having emerged from the busyness of this life, it will be published.¹⁶

At that point there will become apparent a difference between two sorts of soul—the distinction here is of a kind that is typical of mystical writing and often provokes suspicions of illuminism. There are souls 'who live in God', and souls 'in whom God lives';¹⁷ there is 'the devout

¹⁴ IX, 127; Muggeridge, 88.

¹⁵ IX, 139-140; Muggeridge, 94-95.

¹⁶ XI, 193; Muggeridge, 125.

¹⁷ II, 9; Muggeridge, 20.

soul' reliant on 'practices' and on progress in virtue, and 'the interior soul', the soul of abandonment, which,

... prefers to go astray by abandoning itself to His guidance, leading it without reason or order, than to reassure itself by making the effort to take up the marked-out roads of virtue.¹⁸

'A God So Hidden and So Unknown'

Let God act, and do what He requires of us: there you have the gospel, that Scripture as a whole, that is the universal law. There you have what the easy, the clear, the proper way of acting for all divine instruments. It is the only secret of abandonment—but it is a secret that is no secret, an art that is artless. This is the straight path.¹⁹

In the course of ordinary life, whether in a religious house or the secular world, keeping the commandments may seem straightforward enough. For,

... the present moment is always like an ambassador declaring God's ordering, and the heart is always saying its *fiat*.²⁰

But God's ordering is not always so clear. Are we obliged to see God's ordering always at work when things happen that seem, overtly or subtly, to be contradicting it, whether they happen to an individual, to a community or to a nation?

It is with regard to such cases that the treatise is most insistent, implying that the normal situation for a life of abandonment is the darkness of faith. The text boldly echoes Denys on the divine light which manifests itself only as darkness, and John of the Cross on the Dark Night:

God is the centre of faith. There is an abyss of darkness which, from out of this ground, spreads itself over everything emerging from it, All His words, all His deeds are only, so to speak, dark rays of this sun which is even darker. We open the eyes of the body to see the sun and its rays, but the eyes of our soul, through which we see God and His works, are closed eyes. Here darkness takes the place of light; knowledge is ignorance; and one sees by not seeing. Holy Scripture is

¹⁸ XI, 178; Muggeridge, 117.

¹⁹ XI, 189-190, Muggeridge, 123.

²⁰ XI, 147; Muggeridge, 99.

a dark word from a God who is even darker. What happens in the world are dark words of this same God, so hidden and so unknown.²¹

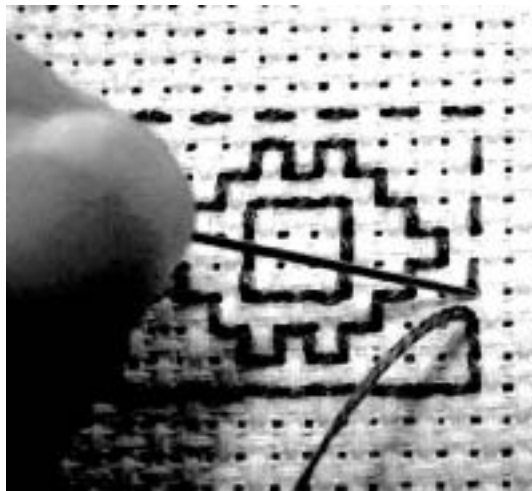
The treatise expands at length on how a soul in abandonment, seeking only its God, can be enveloped in this darkness:

The life of faith is nothing other than a continual quest for God in and through what disguises Him, disfigures Him, as it were destroys Him, and annihilates Him.²²

Then we have the image of a tapestry:

... the work is done rather like the superb tapestries that are worked stitch by stitch on the underside. The person working at it only sees their own stitch and their own needle; and when all these stiches are brought together they form magnificent shapes which appear only when everything is finished and the good side is exhibited in the daylight. But during the time of the work, all this beauty and splendour is in darkness. ... The more the soul is applying itself to its own small work, completely obscured and simple as it is, completely hidden and contemptible as it may be from the outside, the more God is making variations with it, embellishing it, enriching it with the embroidery and colours that He is mingling in with it.²³

Thérèse of Lisieux would not have denied any of this.



²¹ IX, 124; Muggeridge, 85-86.

²² IX, 122; Muggeridge, 85.

Mysticism for a Time of Crisis

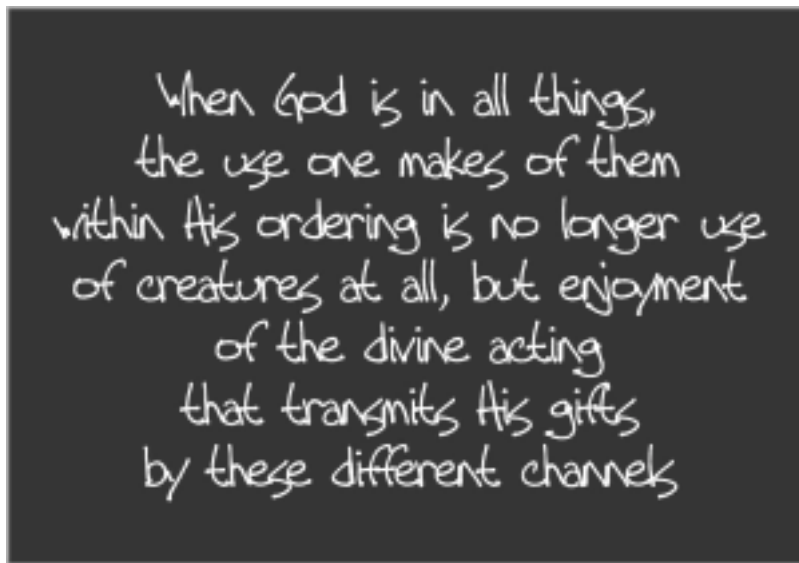
One can thus see how *Abandonment to Divine Providence* is a text in the mainstream mystical tradition, albeit one marked by the constraints of its period on public discourse regarding such matters. And above all, one can see why Catholics from the end of the nineteenth century until our own day have found and continue to find in this small treatise the resources they need for a spiritual life. The truth is that here we have a mysticism for a time of crisis: a crisis which began with the dawn of modernity and which, throughout the twentieth century, was becoming more acute.

We are no longer living in a cultural world that is full of God and speaks only of God. Pascal had already seen this: even in his time, the proof of God's existence on the basis of a harmony between nature and the cosmos no longer appealed to thinking people. It is rather in the world within, in the 'interior castle', that a hidden God allows Himself to be encountered, through inward experience.

Moreover, the reality discovered in this inner world is no longer the master of the spatial and social order; these have become disenchanted. A hidden God works only *in time*: in history and in events. But even in this temporal sphere it has become more and more difficult, since the beginning of modernity, to see God's design in the course of events. The break-up of the Church in the West, the traumas of the Wars of Religion, the rise of irreligion and atheism, the French Revolution, secularisation (and in particular the conflicts associated with this in France), the world wars, the tyrannies of Communism and Nazism, the gradual marginalisation of the Church in advanced societies—all these have cut our normal senses off from the things of God, and forced us to rely more and more on the eyes of faith. We believers can no longer read off God from public history; we can find God only in the present moment—a moment without any density or duration, a moment that is always vanishing, but nevertheless a moment when a person can adore the One who never lets Himself be pinned down ('do not hold on to me'—John 20:17), and who shows us only His back.

Since the seventeenth century, 'providence' and its correlative, 'abandonment', have figured ever more largely in religious and

²³ VIII, 102, 106; Muggeridge, 72, 74.



spiritual discourse. This is precisely because the traditional sense of a provident God has become less and less manifest in the course of events, instead becoming more and more a matter of pure faith. The need to talk about something is often a sign that the reality is somehow absent, or lacking.

Admittedly, our contemporaries no longer dare to use the word 'providence'. The eclipse of God and the collapse of institutional religion in advanced democratic societies seem to be irreversible, and these phenomena seem to be exerting too massive an influence for talk of providence to be possible. But this does not prevent believers, at the deepest levels of their hearts, from clinging to the God of whom they hear in *Abandonment to Divine Providence*. The action of this God is, to be sure, no longer manifest in the histories of nations, families and individuals; this God is no longer transmitted, so to speak. But this God is no less present in events for being hidden, just as He was hidden to Christ in his suffering (a way of thinking familiar both in the treatise and the mainstream mystical tradition). The God of such believers is no longer the idol whose death has been so confidently proclaimed. This God is a God who is more humble and more mysterious than ever: a God who certainly does not exempt us from doing our part for the earthly city and its history, but who ultimately is always inviting us—as the fashionable phrases have it—to 'let it happen' and 'let go'. And this

irrespective of whether things work out right, go wrong, or just turn out in ways we do not expect.

More than ever it has become clear that to live a spiritual or mystical life is not a matter of seeking after exalted feelings, sensational messages or rarefied and exclusive states of mind. To live a spiritual life is to live in faith, faith in the One whom one cannot see (Hebrews 11:1). This pure faith is another name for what the treatise calls 'abandonment', and the treatise's last passage neatly expresses what is at stake:

When a soul has received this faith-understanding, God is speaking to it through all creatures. The universe is a living Scripture for the soul, which the finger of God is constantly tracing before its eyes. The history of all moments in their flow is a sacred history.²⁴

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²⁴ XI, 198; Muggeridge, 127.