

THE INFLUENCE OF THE RENAISSANCE ON RICHARD HOOKER

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ABSTRACT. Like many writers after the Renaissance, Hooker was influenced by a number of classical and Neo-Platonic texts, especially by Cicero, Seneca, Hermes Trimegistus, and Pseudo-Dionysius. Hooker's regular allusions to these thinkers help illuminate his own work but also his place within the broader European context and the history of ideas. This paper addresses in turn the reception of Cicero and Seneca in the early Church through the Middle Ages and Renaissance, Hooker's use of Ciceronian and Senecan ideas, and finally Hooker's use of Neo-Platonic texts attributed to Hermes Trimegistus and Dionysius the Areopagite. Hooker will be shown to distinguish himself as a sophisticated and learned interpreter who balances distinctive motifs such as Scripture and tradition, faith, reason, experience, and ecclesiology with a complex appeal to pagan and Christian sources and ideas.

KEY WORDS: Cicero, Hermes Trimegistus, Pseudo-Dionysius, Renaissance, Seneca

Introduction

The Anglican Church has had a rich past, as the churchmen who reshaped its life in the sixteenth century were also learned scholars (see Sykes and Booty, 1988; Evans and Wright, 1991), such as archbishop Thomas Cranmer (1489-1556), bishop John Jewel (1511-1570), archbishop John Whitgift (c.1532-1604), and priest and theologian Richard Hooker (c.1554-1600). More recently, some scholars (such as Lake, 1988: 227, 230) have singled out Richard Hooker as the inventor of Anglicanism. In any event, Hooker distinguished himself as a sophisticated and learned interpreter by the judicious balance between several distinctive motifs, such as Scripture and tradition, faith, reason, and experience, as well as individual responsibility and ecclesial authority. Now, Hooker's style was to develop these motifs not all at once, but gradually, and as he reflected on a wide range of doctrinal concerns. It was his manner to offer clear definitions and then re-state them, sometimes distancing himself from his previous insights, but most often re-interpreting them in several enriching perspectives. Without any doubt, Hooker's theology was essentially scriptural in at least two ways. His own prose statements

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were filled with scriptural phrases. Writing with an abundance of incorporated biblical expressions and quotations seemed to come naturally and fluently. But then there were also consciously included direct motifs from the Old and the New Testaments, such as the Old Testament promise that the Savior will come, and the New Testament revelation of the gradual fulfillment of that promise in Jesus Christ and the establishment of the Early Church (Grislis, 2008: 273-304). The understanding of high Christology was gained through Hooker's scriptural studies as well as his careful reading of the Church fathers. With his mind and heart, Hooker affirmed the Tome of Pope Leo the Great and the brilliantly paradoxical creed of the Council of Chalcedon, 451 A.D.

Hooker had approached theology with a careful and realistic attention to sin—the 'foggy damp of originall corruption' (Hooker, 1990: 71.16-17). Fog can be a disorienting and a virtually blinding factor that distorts much evidence and almost all truth. But the effect of spiritual fog, according to Hooker, could be dealt with by the grace of God. Then human rationality could experience a measure of redemption, and reason could be upgraded. The result for Hooker was 'right reason' (Grislis, 2013: 116), or in an appropriate context simply 'reason' or 'theological reason'. The fluidity of Hooker's language, even a measure of uncertainty, now seems to be the result of trying to utilize Cicero (who, of course, did not have the category of grace). While reason was initially conceived as an individual possession and as a gift of creation, the use and the maturing of reason was communal. Thus redeeming grace was experienced in the ecclesial community, through the opening of the Scriptures in preaching and reading, through baptism and the holy Eucharist, as well in some way through time honored and church accepted ceremonies. The final test for right reason, wise and sanctified, also came in a communal setting. Here Hooker had borrowed an ancient and dynamic term from Cicero, namely the *consensus gentium*, the agreement of experienced, learned, and level headed people. This thoughtful act of agreement began by the learned and linguistically schooled exegesis of Scriptures, the concurrence with a sustained acceptance of the accepted traditions of the *Ecclesia Anglicana*, and practical affirmation of continuous experience. Consensus then was thoughtful and prolonged, and not a surprise event in a moment of zeal. Aged and wise counselors with experience, and not young people with impatient and rash temperaments, might have the appropriate attitude to weigh and to deliberate, to think and to rethink over time. Formulating a judicious consensus necessarily took time.

Hooker had selected his resources judiciously. In terms of a major source, he responsibly offered a reliable overview of the Scriptures. Then he referred to major thinkers of the Early Church, extensively Tertullian, amply Irenaeus and Lactantius, and most generously Augustine. Hooker did not have a full access to all of the Apostolic Fathers, but he generally followed the main Councils and the Greek Fathers. Of the philosophical literature, Hooker was intrigued by Cicero, and Plato with the Neo-Platonists received more attention than Aristotle; but since he was

well acquainted with Thomas Aquinas, both the Roman Catholic and the Protestant traditions were respected. At the same time, Hooker's very thorough knowledge of John Calvin (despite his critique of Calvin's doctrine of double predestination) supplied Hooker with a firm foundation of historical theology and indicated Hooker's basic ecumenical orientation. In a time of intense inter-religious hostilities, it was nevertheless possible for Hooker to envision that Roman Catholics could be saved. Despite the strong political winds that scorned Puritanism and abhorred Roman Catholic aggressive moves (such as the excommunication of Elizabeth I, the religiously motivated attempts on her life, and unfriendly invasion by priestly zealots), Hooker remained steadfast and imperturbable.

From the Early Church through the Middle Ages and the Renaissance

Richard Hooker's admiration of Marcus Tullius Cicero, however, had the most solid foundation (see Grislis, 2013: 92-130).¹ Cicero had been embraced with high praise by Lucius Caelius Firmianus Lactantius, a fourth century Christian scholar. Lactantius' *De opificio Dei* had been composed as an imagined extension of Cicero's *Republic, Book iv*. It fully accepted Cicero's Stoic outlook and did not introduce Lactantius' Christian perspective. Lactantius' other works, however, defended faith in God on the grounds of the teleological shape of the universe (Geyer, 1952: 57). Eventually Christian humanists referred to Lactantius as a 'Christian humanist' on account of his imitation of Cicero's style. In the judgment of Johannes Quasten (1953: 393-394) 'the quality of his [i.e. Lactantius] thought does not correspond to the excellence of his expression. Whatever training in philosophy he boasts, he owes almost entirely to Cicero'. It was nevertheless the first Latin *summa* of Christian ideas (Quasten, 1953: 396).

St. Augustine in his *Confessions*, recorded a most remarkable praise of Cicero's role in his early life:

I came upon a certain book of Cicero's whose language almost all admire, though not his heart. This particular book of his contains an exhortation to philosophy and was called *Hortensius*. Now it was this book which quite definitely changed my whole attitude and turned my prayers toward the, O Lord, and gave me new hope and new desires. Suddenly every vain hope became worthless to me, and with an incredible warmth of heart I yearned for an immortality of wisdom and began now to arise that I might return to thee. It was not to sharpen my tongue further that I made use of that book, I

1 Cicero faced death as bravely as Plato, and I disregard Petrarch's criticisms, faulting Cicero for the guilt of his own assassination (Thompson, 1971: 60-62). In the *Tusculan Disputations* Cicero wrote, expressing his Stoic conviction, 'What gladiator of ordinary merit has ever uttered a groan or changed countenance? ...Who after falling has drawn in his neck when ordered to suffer the final stroke. Such is the force of trainings, practice and habit' (1971: II.18.41; 193). Cicero faced his own death in a like manner. 'Cicero was killed in the prescription of 43 BC. When the executioners overtook him he thrust his neck as far forward as he could out of the litter and bade them do their work (1971: 193).

was now nineteen; my father had been dead two years, and my mother was providing for my study of rhetoric. What won me in it [i.e. in *Hortensius*] was not its style, but its substance (1956: 3.4.7).²

St. Augustine, a voluminous writer, continued his reading of Cicero. Cicero enriched Augustine's limited knowledge of Greek thought, notably Plato's *Timaeus*, and the ideas of Plotinus and Porphyry (Geyer, 1952: 99). Cicero's direct influence on Augustine is most visible in Augustine's philosophy of state, in *De civitate Dei*, chapters 19.12 and 24, 15.8 and 16; and in Letters 138.19, 135.3 and 9 (Geyer, 1952: 113-114).

The Early Middle ages, while not completely interrupting Cicero's influence, nevertheless reduced it. The following brief overview, as an example, will outline Cicero's endurance. With the administrative order of the Roman empire in shambles, almost all of Cicero's writings were preserved by Christian monks, were immediately not available, emerged only gradually, and then were celebrated.

As fragments of Cicero were discovered in Christian monasteries, these 'new' texts had a scintillating influence. Thus by the ninth century several grammar books (one of them by Bede the Venerable) included Cicero's *De inventione*. Paschasius Radbertus (d. 860), better known today for his interpretation of the Holy Eucharist, also wrote two famous biographies, *Vita Adelhard* and *Epitaphium Arsenii*, attractive in the ninth century because they contained several quotations from Cicero and Seneca. But Cicero was not the only writer, attractive in the West. John Scottus [sic.], otherwise also known as Johannes Eriugena, had been invited to France by the king Louis the Bald, because this Irish scholar knew Greek and would translate [Pseudo] Dionysius the Areopagite into Latin.

In the Middle Ages, as now customary, Pope Sylvester II (d. 1003) knew Cicero well and through Cicero had a good awareness of the classical Greek philosophy. Sylvester II, like many other scholars was also well read in Augustine as well as Boethius, and continued to cherish Cicero. By High Middle Ages what had previously been exceptional, now became common scholarly knowledge. This, however, did not diminish Cicero's fame, as the Italian Renaissance began to exult it. As every process, the increase of the celebration of Cicero in the minds of the Renaissance scholars took time and was notably gradual.

Petrarch (1304-1374) indicated the personal and spiritual struggle that was required in assessing Cicero's Christian standing. In his famous *Of his own ignorance*

2 Augustine's first conversion to Philosophy was soon followed by a second conversion to the Christian faith, described in the *Confessions*, 12.6. Although further significant references occur to Cicero throughout Augustine's writings, his most intensive references are in the great book of his old age, *De civitate Dei* (Brown, 1967: 300). Of course, not all Christian sources praised Cicero. Crusty Jerome recorded a dreadful dream (1956: 262) in which the heavenly Judge denied his Christian claim: 'Thou liest. Thou art a Ciceronian, not a Christian. For where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also'.

and that of many others, Petrarch wrote in 1368, 'At times you would think that were hearing not a pagan philosopher but an Apostle' (see Cassirer, Kristeller, and Randall, 1948: 80). But then Petrarch began to question his earlier judgment: 'Shall I count Cicero among Catholics?' Then Petrarch confessed, 'I wish I could. Were I but allowed to do so, if He who gave him such gifts had but permitted him also to know Himself, as He granted permission to seek Him!'

By the Renaissance, particularly in Italy, it seems that the praise of Cicero had become boundless. Thus Pietro Bembo had for several years resolved to read only Cicero in order to be able to maintain his uniquely beautiful writing style. No one criticized Pietro Bembo. And who was Pietro Bembo? He was a brilliant scholar and Latinist and a true Renaissance man. No one scorned his life either. For twenty-three years he lived faithfully with Donna Marosina, his mistress. When his beloved died, Pietro Bembo mourned her for four years. Then, in 1539 Pope Paul III invited and Pietro Bembo accepted the invitation, becoming an ordained priest and cardinal. For eight years until his death Pietro Bembo devoted himself 'as a pillar exemplar of the Church' (see Durant, 1953: 320-321).

As Paul Oskar Kristeller (1961: 18) has incisively observed, the Renaissance was the Age of Ciceronianism, yet the strongest support for such an observation came from Italy. Douglas Bush (1962: 46) has observed 'the Latin world held nothing greater than Cicero, who is cited along with the Fathers as a prime authority'. At the same time, the Renaissance spirit everywhere was brave, even adventurous, and sought to discover new lands as well as recovered 'new' classical texts and countries not yet visited or even known. Kristeller also wrote:

And there was no thinker in the sixteenth century who did not use beside the traditional texts of Aristotle, Cicero, and Boethius, the newly acquired writings of Plato and the Neoplatonists, of Plutarch and Lucian, of Diogenes Laertius, of Sextus and Epictetus, or the apocryphal works attributed to Pythagoreans, to Orpheus, Zoroaster, and Hermes Trismegistus (1961: 21).³

The sources of the Renaissance had reached Northern Europe by the sixteenth century and were interpreted in a more intensively Christocentric way and therefore also were more concerned about the fate of non Christians. In any case the question of the salvation of the more prominent heathen was raised directly. The Swiss reformer Huldrych Zwingli, (1484-1531) having gained his theological education in Austria, had been fortunate to become well acquainted with the theology of Thomas Aquinas. Back in Switzerland, he had read many of Luther's writings, but was really touched by the Renaissance through Desiderius Erasmus, read the

³ In comparing Kristeller's list to the *Index of Names and Works* in volume 7 of the *Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker* (1998), three comments are in order: 1. The list was obviously not prepared with Richard Hooker in mind; 2. every scholar noted in the list has also been used by Richard Hooker; 3. Hooker's list was significantly more inclusive.

traditional classics and some of the important Renaissance texts. When serving as a chaplain in a Swiss Protestant regiment, Zwingli was killed in a local war with a Roman Catholic Swiss regiment. He was 47 years of age. He had completed a tract a year before his death, which was published in 1532 and entitled *An Exposition of Faith* (Bromiley, 1953: 239-279). He had first affirmed the traditional claim that Christian believers will enter heaven immediately after their death,⁴ including the believers from the Hebrew Bible as well. Finally, Zwingli asserted what the more liberal members of the Renaissance had only hinted at. Zwingli (Bromiley, 1953: 275) put it this way, 'Human experience moreover and general custom have made it a practice to confer the deification of renown and gratitude upon distinguished benefactors. This is the origin of Hercules, of Castor and Pollux, of Aesculapius, and also of Liber'.

The argument for salvation had been developed by Cicero. But Cicero did not want to announce his own preferred future and hence did not include his name in this list. Why Zwingli did not include Cicero among the heaven bound heathen, I do not know. If I would need to guess, I would point out that Luther was eventually convinced that Cicero would be in heaven, had written it down as well as told his students about it. Students also gossiped in the sixteenth century and may have told Zwingli what Luther had said. Zwingli had always resented Luther's condescending attitude, and did not want to give the impression that he had agreed and followed Luther. When Luther accidentally found Zwingli's posthumous statement, Luther was totally outraged and wrote in 1544, two years before his own death:

Since my death is now imminent, I want to take this testimony and this honor along with me before my dear Lord and Savior Jesus Christ's judgment seat, that I have earnestly condemned and rejected the fanatics and enemies of the sacrament [i.e. the Eucharist]. Still outraged, Luther continued to explain how really wrong Zwingli had been, for whom '... The Christian faith... is no better than any other faith and that anyone can be saved by his own faith, even an idolater and an Epicurean like Muma and Scipio... I say that I would much rather let myself be torn apart a hundred times or let myself be burned before I would be of one mind and will with... Zwingli... and whoever else they might be, these loathsome fanatics, or before I would acknowledge their teaching' (Luther, 1955: 38.291).

4 This was also the major emphasis by John Calvin. While Luther did not deny this insight, Luther's main emphasis was on the resurrection at the end of the world and the final Day of Judgment. Here the Anabaptist reformers followed Luther and affirmed the sleep of the soul till the Resurrection and Judgment. Calvin criticised the Anabaptists and drew an imaginary picture: everyone is soundly asleep as in a huge dormitory while God the Father is watching the sleepers; by contrast, the Bible teaches that God is the living God who never sleeps and is always awake.

Previously Luther had struggled in defense of the eternal future of Cicero. Luther had started from a very conservative position, following Cyprian of Carthage (d. 258), ‘there is no salvation outside of the church’ (Richardson, 1956: 6.169). But Luther’s insights began to develop beginning with 1522 when he received a letter from Hans von Rechenberg with a question, ‘whether God can or will save people who die without faith’ (1955: II.51; 43). Luther’s answer was polite, diplomatic, and somewhat ambiguous: while God can save people without faith, we do not know the circumstances under which he will do that. In his *Table Talk* Luther at first sounded hopeful, but not at all certain that God will help:

I hope that God will also help Cicero and such people with the remission of sins. Should he remain without grace, he will nevertheless be several steps higher than our cardinals and our bishop of [Mainz] (1883ff: 3.3904; 698).

Now ‘several steps higher’ sounds good until we realize that Cicero is still in hell, waiting. On another occasion Luther left no doubts and assigned Cicero to paradise, ‘God is a just judge, and Cicero will not be condemned as Caiphas, who will sit in hell, while Cicero will be in paradise’ (1833ff: 5.5972, 413). But now, attacking Zwingli, Luther had indirectly denied his earlier and loftier view of Cicero reaching heaven. Luther never realized that Zwingli had borrowed this insight about the saved heathen—from Cicero! Thus Luther seemed to remain in an outspoken contradiction with himself.

In the end then, Luther’s disdain of philosophy in general prevailed more than his good will statements, fortified by a glass or two of beer in a cheerful fellowship. And more lasting than Luther’s hope for Cicero’s salvation was Luther’s conviction that biblical Judaism exhibited numerous examples of a genuine, believing faith. Now since Judaism had converted many heathen who had become authentic members of the elect Jewish people, these former heathen were saved. Luther wrote:

I do not say with Zwingli that the church of Cain or that Numa Pompilius and other such pagans were saved and made heirs of the kingdom of heaven, but that some good men and women of the race and relationship of Cain heard God’s word and the teaching of the fathers and by the faith thus generated entered in the communion of the heavenly kingdom with the church of the [Jewish] patriarchs. For God has always been wont to gather a church for Himself also from he heathen. Thus Ruth was a Moabite, Rahab a Canaanite; and yet they are recorded in the genealogy of Christ. Nor were these the only ones who held with the godly, but many of the older Canaanites joined them (Plass, 1959: II, 618, nr. 1890).

John Calvin’s knowledge of Cicero was profound and consistent. The first chapters of the *Institutes* highlight the situation, by turning special attention to Cicero. Cicero had praised Epicurus for being the first to affirm, that ‘gods exist, because

nature herself has imprinted a conception of them on the minds of all mankind'. Cicero elaborated:

You see therefore that the foundation (such as it is) of our inquiry has been well and truly laid. For the belief in the gods has not been established by authority, custom or law, but rests on the unanimous and abiding consensus of mankind; their existence is therefore a necessary inference, since we possess an instinctive or rather an innate concept of them; but a belief which all men by nature share must necessarily be true; therefore it must be admitted that Gods exist (Cicero, 1979a: I.16-17, 43-44; 4-47).⁵

Calvin agreed, and restated elegantly, 'Yet there is, as the eminent pagan says, no nation so barbarous, no people so savage, that they have not a deep-seated conviction that there is a God' (Calvin, 1960: I.3.1; 44; see also I.3.3; 44).

But Calvin did not rest such a weighty observation only on the witness from the past. It was an insight fully collaborated by contemporary observation as well, 'Experience teaches that the seed of religion has been divinely planted in all men' (Calvin, 1960: I.4.1; 47). However, Calvin was convinced that such insights, obtained by human reason and experience, were not adequate for salvation, because they possessed no staying power: 'experience teaches that the seed of religion has been divinely planted in all men. But barely one man in a hundred can be found who nourishes in his own heart what he has conceived; and not even one in whom it matures, much less bears fruit in its season... As a result, no real piety remains in the world' (Calvin, 1960: I.4.1; 47).

Richard Hooker and Cicero with Seneca

Richard Hooker's knowledge of Cicero was thorough. His benefactor, bishop John Jewel had been a Reader in Humanities at Corpus Christi College, Oxford University. In his writings Jewel referred to Cicero twenty three times (see Gough, 1855), and it is known that many years later Jewel had recited a lengthy text from Cicero (Jenkins, 2006: 217). Jewel had also sponsored Richard Hooker at Corpus Christi, with John Rainolds (1549-1607) as a tutor. The *John Rainolds's Oxford Lectures on Aristotle's Rhetoric* (Green, 1986) compared Aristotle with Cicero and Quintilian, and though they were handwritten were bound and available to students in the Library of Corpus Christi College. Hooker's thorough knowledge of Cicero

5 In the *Tusculan Disputations*, Cicero offered another form of the same argument: 'this seems to be advanced as the surest basis for our belief in the existence of gods, that there is no race so uncivilized, no one in the world, we are told, so barbarous, that his mind has no inkling of the belief of Gods: true it is that many men have wrong notions about the gods, for this is the result of a corrupt nature; nevertheless all men think that a divine power and a divine nature exist, and that it is not the result of human conference or convention, it is not a belief established by regulation or by statute, but in every inquiry the unanimity of the races of the world must be regarded as a law of nature'. See Cicero (1971c: I.13.30; 36-37); similarly Cicero (1971c: V.27.78; 504-505).

indicates that he had read Cicero diligently. Of course, Hooker's thorough knowledge of Calvin's *Institutes*, a gold mine of quotations of Cicero, also introduced Hooker to Cicero.

Hooker appealed to a general consensus among philosophers as 'most probable', established 'by nature's guidance', which affirmed the existence of the gods. Hooker agreed and pointed to a 'first cause' as well as the reality of death which increased human interest in life after death (1977a: 59.33-60.14; see also 1990: 5.741). Of course, it had been Cicero's custom almost always also to record an opposite point of view with which he did not agree: 'Protagoras declared himself uncertain, and Diagoras of Melos and Theodore of Cyrene held that there are no gods at all' (Cicero, 1979a: I. 6.13; 14-17).⁶

Cicero had followed Epicurus in affirming that 'nature' had actually imprinted on the human mind a preconception of divinity (Cicero, 1979a: I.14.43; 44, 45). This preconception then 'rests on the unanimous and abiding consensus of mankind; their existence is therefore a necessary inference, since we possess an instinctive or rather an innate concept of them; but a belief which all men by nature share must necessarily be true; therefore it must be admitted that the gods exist' (Cicero, 1979a: I.16; 44; 45; and I.16.44; 44-47; compare. Cicero, 1977b: I.8.24; 324-325).

Yet, Cicero's main attention was directed to the overwhelming beauty and order of the universe, revealed to all reasonable people who at night time looked up to the sky:

For when we gaze upward to the sky and contemplate the heavenly bodies, what can be so obvious and so manifest that there must exist some power possessing transcendent intelligence by whom these things are used? (Cicero, 1979a: II.2.4; 124-125).⁷

But Cicero could be practical at the same time, and with a sense of humor: 'If we saw a handsome mansion, we should infer that it was built for its masters and not for mice; so therefore we must deem the world to be the mansion of the gods' (Cicero, 1979a: III.110.26; 310-311).

6 See also 'there are many nations so uncivilized and barbarous as to have no notion of any gods at all' in Cicero (1979a: I: 23.62; 60-61); compare Cicero (1977b: 21.22-24) and Hooker's *Jude* in Hooker (1990).

7 Compare Cicero (1979a: II.16.43; 162-163, and II.4.12; 134-135). How tragic that electric lights, created by bright human beings, have virtually erased the splendor of heaven over our larger cities. Although then an unbelieving refugee, I was deeply moved in 1944 when in a large swamp in Western Latvia, where for two weeks I had sought refuge from Soviet Russian tanks, which had encircled the land around the swamp, but could not erase the ever so powerful a view of heaven. In 1985 as a believer on a retreat after a lecture tour in Australia, a distance outside Sydney, one calm night there was the heaven, open and shining with the Southern cross. Although in a different perspective, I shared with Cicero the magnificent view of heaven itself directly above me.

Cicero's nature mysticism was expressed on numerous occasions and immediately connected with a general experience of either 'gods' (Cicero, 1979a: I.12.31 and I.13.32-33; 34-35; II. 29.74; 194-195), or 'god' (Cicero, 1979a: I.10.25-26; 25-29; I.20.52; 52-53), or 'deity' (Cicero, 1979a: II.15.39; 160-161). It seems that in a typically Roman and sophisticated way, Cicero could regard *many* and *one* and *deity* as synonymous. Perhaps the Christian faith, by teaching that the Holy Trinity is one God is in some way reflecting the old Greco-Roman conviction that it is not contradictory to speak of *Three* [Holy Trinity] as *one* [God]. This may be the rationale which undergirds the Christian rejection of the Muslim criticism that Christians are worshipping three gods and therefore are heathen. Cicero's mysticism, of course, was not limited to nature, but transcended nature. There is a clear imprint of deity on the human mind; in more modern terms, humanity has formed a consensus of the reality of God not by a vote, but witnessed of an inward experience, shared by all people. And this experience had been transcendental, as it had guided humankind from here to there, from this earth to heaven and thereby God.

When Richard Hooker came to interpret his own mysticism, he had to make a distinction between Christ's incarnation and the Trinitarian unity on the one hand (Hooker, 1977b: 236.16-17), and the relationship between God and the believers on the other: 'All other thinges that are of God have God in them and he them in himselfe likewise. Yeat because theire substance and his whollie differeth, theire coherence and communion either with or amongst them selves is in no sorte like unto that before menioned' (Hooker, 1977b: 236.18-22). As Hooker continued to reflect on the latter, he relied on a number of biblical texts, now fused together:

All thinges are therefore partakers of God, they are his ofspringe, his influence is in them, and the pesonall wisdom of God is for that verie cause said to excel in nimblenes and agilitie, to pearce into all intellectuall pure and subtile spirites, to goe through all, and to reach unto everie thinge which is (Hooker, 1977b: 236.26-31).

In a truly Renaissance like exuberance, Hooker could continue to celebrate the magnificence of the creation of humanity by God:

So that all thinges which God hath made are in that respect the ofspringe of God, they are *in him*. As effectes in theire highest cause, he likewise actuallie is *in them*, thassistance and influence of his deitie is *theire life* (Hooker, 1977b: 237.22-25).

If this sentence were to be read out of context, it could be argued that here Hooker has agreed with Luther's highest level of development when Luther admitted Cicero to heaven. But Hooker saved the reader from such a disillusion as he explained what a further addition is necessary for salvation. Hooker immediately started the next sentence by stating, 'Let hereunto saving efficacie be added' (Hooker, 1977b: 237.25). And then Hooker explained this needed addition more

fully, ‘The sonnes of God wee neither are all nor anie of us otherwise hen onlie by grace and favor’ (Hooker, 1977b: 237.31-32). Hooker continued to adhere firmly to this insight, ‘The light of nature is never able to find out any way of obtaining the reward of blisse’ (Hooker, 1977a: 118.11-13). In other words, the *sola fide* is for salvation absolutely necessary.

Now Hooker’s authentic reliance on Cicero was not limited to the many occasions when Hooker quoted Cicero, but also could include Cicero’s systematic approach. That is, for a central issue like human salvation Hooker noted two valid and different approaches. As just stated above, the Scriptures, Christ, and *sola fide* provided one salvific and undeniable focus. For the other focus a firm foundation was established by a Neo-Platonic insight of Augustine. In the traditional translation that text reads, ‘for Thou hast formed us for Thyself, and our hearts are restless till they find rest in Thee’ (Augustine, 1956: 45). Already in the Second Book of the *Laws* Hooker had asked, ‘is it probable that God should frame the hartes of all men so desirous of that which no man may obtaine?’ (1977a: 114.14-15). And Hooker continued to reflect:

If the soule of man did serve onelye to geve him being in this life, then ths appertaining unto this life would content him... which creatures injoying what they live by, seeke no further... With us it is otherwise (1977a: 115.13-19).

This characteristically human and further seeking quest takes place as human beings by exploring nature search for supernature or transcendence. Hooker continued to observe, ‘Who the guide of nature but only the God of nature? *In him we live, move, and are* [Acts 17:28] Those things which nature is said to do, are by divine arte performed, using nature as an instrument’ (1977a: 67.16-19).

To summarize, on the one hand there was revelation, which Hooker understood in comparison to a law book, consisting of main principles and axioms with their exposition: ‘the frutes of true and infallible principles delivered unto us in the worde of Gods d the axiome of our religion’ (Hooker, 1977b: 21.21-22). This supernatural revelation was recorded as the Scriptures, *the sola scriptura*, which disclosed grace and evoked faith. Without this gift salvation was not possible. But then, on the other hand, the same principles and axioms were also given to humankind by ‘beinge imprinted by the God of nature in their heartes also’ in such a way that their presence was not readily perceived with the same accuracy and clarity, namely, by ‘takinge better roote in some then in most others’ (Hooker, 1977b: 21.24). Now in order to facilitate this obviously needed selection, Cicero had looked to the various schools of philosophers. Hooker instead looked at the only organized and available resource, the Church. Hooker’s position is then stated clearly in three steps which I shall number: 1. ‘what Scripture doth plainlie deliver, to that the first place and credit and obedience is due; 2. the next whereunto is whatsoever anie man necessarily conclude by force of reason; 3. after these the voice of the Church succeedeth. That which the Church by her ecclesiastical au-

thoritie shall probable thinke overrule all other inferior judgmentes whatsoever' (Hooker, 1977b: 39.8). The two essential foci then are 1. Scripture and 2. reason while 3. Cicero's *consensus gentium* is here replaced by the Church in its theological consensus. Hooker's 'probable' is a concept with a double meaning, decided by the context. It can refer to probability (as in 75 to 25) or provability (as when additional information and interpretation are supplied). The *provability* by reference to Scripture texts and exegeses seems to be here the reasonable meaning. At the same time, whether the two foci are of equal significance may very well be a matter of *probability*. Then Scriptures appear to somewhat outrank Renaissance reason in number, clarity and significance—but do not actually eliminate it.

While both Cicero and Seneca were equally known and praised throughout the Early Church and the Middle Ages, Cicero's eclecticism with a bent toward Stoicism seems broader and more intensively oriented to the religious inclination of Neo-Platonism. Seneca's concerns were more in the field of ethics. Both died heroically by not resisting or successfully escaping the death sentence by the ruthless emperor. Particularly older textbooks praise unquestioning obedience to state and church, and used to describe it as a *Kadavergehorsam* (as obedient as a corpse); but the concept was well known already to Francis of Assisi, to Ignatius of Loyola, and others who cherished some elements of the Stoic tradition,⁸ and Seneca, glorified for his courage to submit rather than to criticize Seneca for not opposing the tyrant Nero. At the very same time, since Seneca had been a tutor of Nero, and supposedly introduced Nero to immoral life, in Nero's earlier rule served as advisor, and collected immense wealth, several Roman historians regarded Seneca as a hypocrite (Suetonius, *Nero*, 52; Tacitus, *Annales*, 13.42). Seneca was eventually forced by Nero to commit suicide (Griffin, 1976: 370-373), which he unfortunately deserved for having been a submissive coward.

In regard to Seneca's contact with Christianity, at this time there is no definitive evidence, and abundance of legendary material probably arisen on account of Seneca's elder brother Annaeus Novatus, who was later adopted and known as Gallio, and served as a governor of Achaia during the reign of Claudius. The New Testament Book of Acts 18:12 reports that, Apostle Paul was arraigned before Gallio, 'But Gallio paid no attention to any of these things'. 'The Apocryphal Correspondence between Seneca and Paul', as indicated by the headline of the modern edition (Hennecke, 1957: II, 133-142), had no historical foundation. While a contact between Apostle Paul and Seneca was not impossible, J. N. Sevenster (1951) has not endorsed it. The information by Paul Berry (1999) is generally informa-

8 Francis interpreted the concept for his monks: 'Take a lifeless body and place it where you will. You will see that it does not resist being moved, it does not murmur about its position, it does not cry out if it is allowed to lie there. If it placed on a chair, it will not look up but down; if it is clothed in purple, it looks twice as pale. This... is a truly obedient man... Raised to an office, he retains his accustomed humility; the more he is honored, the more unworthy he considers himself' (Habig, 1973: 484-485).

tive, but not clear enough. During the English Renaissance, Seneca was overshadowed by Cicero. Seneca received little attention in ecclesial circles (Gough, 1855: 696-697) but became of some importance among the Latitudinarians (McAdoo, 1965: 220, 223).

Hooker was opposed to John Calvin's idea of a double predestination (and did not accept Calvin's defense) and therefore also scorned the heathen idea of fate, and criticized Seneca's: '*Fatis agimur; cedite fatis* [By fate we are driven, yield ye to fate]' (Seneca, 2004: I.980). Hooker declared, 'Let not such cogitation take place in the heart of any man; abandon it with all execration and hatred: it were even impious and dialectical' (Hooker, 1990: 406.3-407.5). But Hooker's statement was recorded in a short fragment and was not discussed more thoroughly, as has been done in more recent scholarship (Asmis, 2009: 225-238).

With all sensible members of humankind, Hooker shared the awesome uncertainties of life; the vivid observation of the effect of tides is understood by everyone, except for those who live far away from the sea, 'The higher we flow the nearer we are unto an ebb' (Hooker, 1990: 77. 5-8).⁹ Yet for the Christian the experience of nature and hence of violent fear is overcome by the reality of redemptive love in the Cross of Christ and the subsequently in the life in Christ which is free from fear. Of different origin and direction, the Christian also knew that personal fear is important: 'we are to... stand in feare nothing more then the extremity of not fearing' (Hooker, 1990: 376.11-13).¹⁰ But the human life also knew of situations where the fear of God was helpful. Cicero knew that 'the heaviest penalty of all [is] their own demoralization' (Cicero, 1989: 3.8; 304-305). Seneca warned that 'publical hate' would be the consequence (Seneca, 1989b: 3.171; 3:156).

Both the Christian Scriptures as well as classical culture recognized the significance of personal experience:

To supplie the absence of such as that way might doe us good when they see us in daunger of slidinge, there are judicious and wise men which thinke wee may greatly relieve our selves by a bare imagined presence, of some whose authoritie wee feare and would be loath to offend, if in deed they were present with us. Witnesses at hand are the bridle unto many offences. Let the minde have allwaies some whome it feareth, some whose authoritie maie keepe even secret thoughtes under awe (Hooker, 1990: 305. 6-21; see Speed Hill, 1993: 757).

9 This commonplace observation was also known to Seneca, *Epistulae Morales* (1989a: 72.7; 2: 100-101, 704), and *De providentia*, in *Moral essays* (1989b: 1.4; 1.4-7).

10 Hooker had borrowed from Seneca without a reference: 'strip things of all that disturbs and confuses, and... see what each is at bottom; you will then comprehend that they contain nothing fearful except the actual fear' (Seneca, 1989a: 24.12; I.172-173). The American President Franklin D. Roosevelt (1882-1945) also wrote without a source reference: 'Let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself,' *First Inaugural Address*, 4 March, 1933.

Here Hooker had borrowed an insight from Seneca's comment on Epicurus: 'We ought to choose out some good man, and always fix him before our eyes, that we may so live as if he always looked on and do all things as if he continually beheld' (Seneca, 1989a: I.25; I:182-186). But it was not the personal benefit that counted. Rather, the experience was essentially altruistic, the care for the other person, commissioned by God:

God hath created nothing simply for it selfe: but such thinges and of everie thing ech part in other hath such interest that in the whole world nothing whereunto anie thing created saie, *I need thee not* (Hooker, 1990: 333.16-19).¹¹

Hooker continued his reflections on the other-directedness of the laws by spelling out that laws are essentially reasonable: 'the wisest lawmakers have endeavoured alwaies that those Laws might seem most reasonable which they would have most inviolable kept' (Hooker, 1990: 309.9-11). This insight also appropriated by Seneca (Seneca, 1989a: I.3.2; I.364; 1989a: VIII.I; VI, 667) and Calvin (1960: II.2.13).

Death and dying was considered in this perspective by both Seneca and Hooker (Hooker, 1990: 412.17-18). Seneca's view was clearly Stoic: 'It is natural to rejoice at the ending of one's ills' (Seneca, 1989a: I.78.14; 2: 190-192). Hooker also considered death in the context one's duty and Hooker acknowledged his classical sources:

Wherewith even they who never tasted of the joyes of the world to come have notwithstanding so fare prevailed, as to cause the will contentedly to yelde when nature, joyfully when *duty* seemeth to require the suffering of death. The chiefe motives that made the heathens themselves so resolute many times to die, were for the most part no other then such as that of Seneca (Hooker, 1990: 412.11-16).

Seneca's wisdom was often common sense insight, characteristic of Stoicism, that death is natural: 'For life is granted to us with the reservation that we shall die; to this end our path leads' (Seneca, 1989a: 30.101; I.216-217); 'You will die, not because you are ill, but because you are alive; even when you have been cured, the same end awaits you' (Seneca, 1989a: 78.6; 2: 184-185); and death is bearable 'for death, when it stands near you, gives even to inexperienced men the courage not to seek to avoid the inevitable' (Seneca, 1989a: 30.7; 2.214-215). Therefore the wise person will accept death with 'wise resignation' (Seneca, 1989a: 30.5; 2: 214-

11 Hooker built on Classical tradition. Aristotle had stated, 'The same reason, namely that it involves relationship with someone else, accounts for the view that Justice alone of the virtues is "the good of others," because it does what is for the advantage of another, either a ruler or an associate' (Aristotle, 1957: 5.1.71; 1130a; 260-261). See also Cicero, *De finibus bonorum et malorum* (1971a: II. 19. 63; 282-283 and III.20.68; 288-289); see also Seneca's *De Ira*, 'Man is born for much help; anger for mutual destruction' (Seneca, 1989b: I.5.2; 1.118-119); and also Aquinas (1946: Ia.65.2).

215). Seneca's definition of virtue also included the sense of duty: 'For virtue accomplishes its plans only when the spirit is in harmony with itself. There is no element of fear in any of its actions' (Seneca, 1989a: 82.18; 2: 252-253). Virtue exalts bravery, with Seneca often mentioning such examples as the Lacedaemonians at the pass of Thermopilae with 'no hope of victory, no hope of returning'. Seneca quoted Leonidas' speech as a prime example of virtue, expressed through bravery: 'Fellow-soldiers, let us to our breakfast, knowing that we shall sup in Hades!' (Seneca, 1989a: 62.21; 2: 254-255). Thus true virtue justified suicide (Seneca, 1989b: 2.12; 12-14,) a view shared by Cicero (1971b: 2.5; 12-14 and 20.73; 84-8; see Hick, 1976).

At the same time, there seems to remain a moral ambiguity in connecting Seneca's definition of the virtue of absolute obedience to duty as defined by one's superior with the readiness to die or to kill in obedience and without the right reason participating in the evaluation of such a situation. In other words, the interpretation of the dutiful killing of oneself in the exercise of one's duty then may be congruous to a dutiful killing of the other in obedience to superior's orders. If either of these two acts are both virtuous then Seneca was consistent in being an obedient participant in some of Nero's atrocities, and obediently obeying Nero's order to commit suicide. If, however, right reason or one's conscience is brought in the deliberation, then one's own death in martyrdom will be preferred to the killing of the other person. Whether Hooker expressed it or not, his entire discussion occurred in the Christian context where ideally reason and conscience would be upgraded by grace, and even without an explicit statement *duty could never be absolute* and could not be a higher standard than provided by Scriptures, the ten commandments or the commandment of love for the neighbor (see John 3:16).

Richard Hooker and the Forged Texts of Hermes Trismegistus and Dionysius the Areopagite

The *corpus Hermeticum* is a collection of seventeen individual Greek manuscripts by anonymous authors. The text was written in Egypt either in Greek or it was a translation in Greek. The authors had merged the names of the Greek god Hermes and the Egyptian god Toth into Hermes Trismegistus, that is Hermes the *Three-Times-Great*. Hooker followed the Latin form and instead of the Greek *Hermes* wrote the Latin *Mercurius*. This collection of texts was brought to Florence in 1460 for the manuscript collection of Cosimo de Medici. Believed to be authentic, the texts were thought to be from the end of the second to the beginning of the third century. Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499), believed that Plato was the author, and translated the texts by 1463 (Yates, 1964: 201).

The ancient world had known the texts and Early Church authors had evaluated them negatively. Lactantius thought that Hermes Trismegistus was a pre-Christian, who foresaw the coming of Christ and the rise of Christianity (I.6, IV.6 and VIII.18). Augustine had known of the document only one chapter, designat-

ed as Asclepius (Augustine, 1956: VIII.23-24 & XVIII.29). Clement of Alexandria described Trismegistus' publications and religious rites (VII.4.25-28).

When the *Corpus Hermeticus* re-emerged during the Renaissance, its popularity grew, reached its heights by 1500, and retained its prominence till 1650. Among the early Renaissance admirers of Hermes Trismegistus was Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, who referred to Hermes Trismegistus in his famous *Oratio de hominis dignitate*. Ludovico Lazzarelli, a near contemporary, affirmed that 'Hermes flourished not after the time of Moses... but rather long before Moses's age...' Hermes was further studied by Cornelius Agrippa, Giorgio Veneto, Copernicus, Giordano Bruno and Tomasso Campanella, and many others. Indeed, Hermes had quickly become a part of essential of Renaissance culture (Shumaker, 1972: 232-234; and Copenhaver, 1992).

But the Renaissance did not arrive in England in haste. There is one reference to a Hermes by Shakespeare in King Henry V, Act III, scene 6. In the Parker Society edition of English ecclesiastical authors there is one reference by Roger Hutchinson. He had written a remarkable sermon, gathering scriptural and classical texts. Just on one page alone, he referred to Virgil, Ovid, Cicero, Pythagoras, Parmenides, and Aristotle. He had referred to a list of Renaissance authors and concluded:

Plato also saith, that the governance of this world is monarchy, and that God only both made and rule it. Hermes Trismegistus teacheth the same thing; and that he is unsearchable. Marcus Tullius [Cicero], the famous orator, agreeth with them... (Hutchinson, 1842: 176).

Jewel quoted a brief sentence: '*Homo transit in naturam Dei* [A man is turned into the nature of God]' (Jewel, 1845-48: 2.577). The learned and popular Swiss clergyman, Heinrich Bullinger, placed Hermes Trismegistus as a contemporary of Moses: 'Moses was before all the other lawgivers that were of name and authority: among them Mercurius Trismegistus and Rhadamantus the Lycian are thought to be the oldest' (Bullinger, 1850: 3.218). As for John Colet and Thomas More, Wayne Shumaker (1972: 256-257) doubts that they have appropriated any important insights of Hermes Trismegistus. John Rainolds, however, already referred to Hermes Trismegistus in his master's thesis (1986: 28) at Oxford. Perhaps he introduced Hooker to Hermes Trismegistus.

Richard Hooker offered a general evaluation Hermes Trismegistus, appropriate for the Renaissance:

The wise and learned among the verie Heathens themselves, have all acknowledged some first cause, whereupon originallie the being of all things dependeth. Neither have they spoken of that cause, then as an Agent, which knowing what and why it worketh, observeth the working a most exact order and lawe.

Here Hooker pointed to Homer, Mercurius [i. e. Hermes] Trismegist[us], Anaxago[ras], and Plato, as well as the Stoics, concluding:

They all confesse therefore in the working of he first cause that causell is used, reason followed, a way observed, that is to say, constant order and law kept, whereof it selfe must needs be another unto it selfe... God therefore is a law both to himselfe, and to all other things besides (Hooker, 1977a: 59.33-60.18).

Hooker first denied the salvation of the heathen, and then proceeded to outline their several valuable insights about them without any further argument.

According to Hooker, Hermes Trismegistus had several ideas which illuminated the understanding of human beings. Unlike the angels, the humans needed to mature until they became perfect, ‘the soule of man being therefore at the first as a booke, where nothing is and yet all thinges may be imprinted’ (Hooker, 1977a: 125: 74.25-27), a text which should be compared with Aquinas’ *Summa Theologiae* (1946: Ia.79.2). The human soul could reach divine perfection’ as it advanced ‘higher then unto sensible things’ (Hooker, 1977a: 75.17-20) and Hooker quotes Mercurius:

man ascends even to heaven, and measures it; and what is more than all beside, he mounts to heaven without quitting the earth; to so vast a distance can he put forth his power. He must not shrink then from saying that a man on earth is a mortal god, and that god in heaven is an immortal man (Hooker, 1977a: 75.v)

Thus by creation and redemption the humankind belonged to both realms—to earth and heaven. Deification was the ultimate goal of human life. With a closer look how this ultimate goal is to be reached, Hermes Trismegistus described it in mythological language. Obviously moved by the original text, Hooker quoted it twice:

While we are in the world, subject we are unto sundry imperfections, griefs of body, defectes of minde, yea the best thinges we do are painfull, and the exercise of them grievous being continued, without intermission, so as in those very actions, whereby we are especially perfected in this life, wee are not able to persist: forced we are with our *weariness* and that often to interrupt them; which tediousness cannot fall into those operations that are in the state of blisse, when our union with God is complete (Hooker, 1977a: 112.25-113.7).

The six lines of Hermes’ text in Hooker’s footnote he identified by the author, but not by the text and without translation. The translation and identification number / letter were provided by A. D. Nock (1945-1954: I.74) with a translation below from Walter Scott:

1. Thus in men, Asclepius, it is only the name of Good that is present; the thing itself is nowhere to be found.
2. It is impossible then for things in this world to be pure from evil;
3. And that which is good in this world is that which has the smallest share of evil;
4. For in this world the good becomes evil.
5. And for my part, I thank God for this very thought that he has put into my mind, even for the thought that the Good is absent, and, that it is impossible for it to be present in the Kosmos. For the Kosmos is one mass of evil, even as God is one mass of good.

While the contrast between the finite Kosmos and the infinite God is regarded as real, it is somewhat alleviated for humans by deification. And deification is not only a goal, but is already visible in the deified existence of church leaders. Hooker compared, 'The very countenance of Moses was glorious after the God had conferred with him' (Hooker, 1981: 299.13-14) Accepting the comparison by the Scriptures and Hermes Trismegistus, Hooker pointed to the bishops of his own church, 'shine they must as Angels of God in the midst of perverse men' (Hooker, 1981: 299.24-25). Hooker's general selections from *Corpus Hermeticum* were brief. Gnostic motifs tending toward polytheism, the disintegrating structure of Nature, the bisexuality of God and human beings, the significance of Destiny and other mythological motifs were either not present or not prominent. Wayne Shumaker's final evaluation of Hooker's position seems fitting:

No doubt he was gratified when he found in the *Hermetics* a hint of properly Christian beliefs; and for the whole body of writings he may have felt a qualified respect like that a modern man may feel for Plato's dialogues (1972: 239).

In 1614 the Swiss scholar and Calvinist Isaac Causubon published a book in which he proved that the work of Hermes Trismegistus was a forgery (Yates, 1964: 239). Hermes Trismegistus disappeared from Christian theology as suddenly as he had come.

The Neo-Platonic texts in Greek attributed to a Dionysius the Areopagite appeared suddenly. The Book of Acts (17.16-34) stated his full and sonorous name and affirmed that he was a convert by Apostle Paul in the middle of the first century AD. The West did not know who was Dionysius the Areopagite. It had been heard that this saint had been a bishop of Jerusalem and later also the bishop of Paris. The mystique grew as the West did not have either the text, or the knowledge of Greek. Gregory I, known as Pope Gregory the Great (c. 540-604, pope from 590), did not write in Greek, but could read and understand Greek. Jean Leclercq (1987: 26) writes that 'he certainly was familiar with Dionysius' doctrine of celestial hierarchies'. Finally in 827, a copy was sent to the French king Louis the Pious by the Byzantine emperor Michael the Stammerer. Ten years later

Halduin, abbot of a monastery outside Paris, translated the text, but the translation was almost unintelligible. In the meantime another French king, Louis the Bald, the grandson of Louis the Pious, invited John Scotus Eriugena to France on account of his knowledge of Greek, who then completed a readable translation, which in 862 was revised by the papal historian Athanasius (Leclercq, 1987: 26-27).

Finally the mystical, devotional, Neo Platonic and Christian, and beautiful text could be read! Yet no one knew that the text was from the fifth or the sixth century, and could not have been authored by Dionysius the Areopagite, because he would not have been able to refer to texts written several centuries later. However, this fact was not known and holy churchmen lined up in general adoration and praise of Dionysius the Areopagite. They included Bernhard of Clairvaux, Thiery, Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventure, Meister Eckhart, Tauler, Ruysbrock, Gerson, Nicholas of Cusa, and Marsilio Ficino. The Middle Ages and the Renaissance had embraced and adored Dionysius the Areopagite (Leclercq, 1987, 28-32). The Florentine Academy had the most significant role. Karlfried Froehlich (1987, 36) summed up, 'For its members Dionysius was the quintessential Platonist, preferable even to the ancients, because he combined Platonist philosophy with the truth of the Christian faith'.

Yet the authenticity of Dionysius was already suspected by Nicholas of Cusa, declared as inauthentic in writing by Lorenzo Valla, but not published¹² and persuasively proven as forgery by Desiderius Erasmus (Froelich, 1987, 33-46). For Protestant England, the situation was described by William Fulke (1848): the claim that Dionysius was a contemporary of Paul the apostle has been 'cracked by Erasmus'. In general, the Anglican clergy knew of Dionysius, but referred to him seldom. Bishop John Jewel was an exception with 50 references to Dionysius; Hooker was also well acquainted (Speed Hill, 1998: 7.48). However, Dionysius had been well known by scholars John Colet, William Grocyn, Thomas Linacre, William Latimer (Froehlich, 1987: 37).

Immediate revelation during the lifetime of the apostles was briefly affirmed by Hooker (1977: 440.7-9) and enriched from Dionysius as an act of 'divinization' (1987: 199). Hooker regarded good works as necessarily following justification, but neither preceding it or serving as a means of grace (1982: 23-24). Hooker concluded with the observation that good works cannot justify, because 'evell workes do exclude from salvation: And the most righteous in some things offend' (Hooker, 1982: 23.7-9). Here Hooker immediately provided a reference to Diony-

12 According to Karlfried Froehlich (1987), Valla's *Annotations to the New Testament* remained in manuscript; Pico and Ficino knew of Valla's position, as did William Grocyn in England. When Erasmus found a copy of the *Annotations* at the Abbey of Parc near Louvain on his return from a second visit to England, he decided to print it, in deep admiration of Valla's scholarship but not without some hesitation.

sus (1987: 155), with two foci: a. 'to those who have lived in a most pious fashion there is given a bright, divine life under the most just guidance, for in his kindly love for man divinity closes his eyes to the faults coming from their human weakness'; and b. the hierarchical interpretation of God's justice 'does not offer this prayer for those who have died in a state of unholiness' (1987: 255).

Hooker shared with Dionysius the Neo-Platonic double role of a symbol as visible and invisible. In his discussion of ecclesial ceremonies, Hooker briefly referred to Dionysius, 'The sensible things which Religion hath hallowed, are resemblances framed according to things which Religion hath hallowed, are resemblances framed according to things spiritually understood, whereunto they serve as a hand to lead and a way to direct' (1977a: 275.21-24), which should be compared to Dionysius (1987: 204).

Although Hooker had generally absorbed the mysticism of Dionysius, he ordinarily avoided Dionysius' Neo-Platonic speculations and overly dramatic statements. Consequently, Hooker was not a direct follower of either of Hermes Trismegistus or of Dionysius the Areopagite. These popular thinkers in Hooker's time rather served to enhance the general Neo-Platonic ideas already present in the Early Church since Augustine. Hence the mystical motifs in Hooker's works described the unity with Christ within the Christian life in the Church, enabled by scriptural revelation, reason, reception of the sacraments, and experienced in faith, reasoning, feeling, and love. When Hooker wrote of illumination (1977a: 17.12-19), he referred to the more ordinary rational enlightenment (1977a: 238.25-27) rather than a supernatural illumination by the Holy Spirit. 'God hath not moved their hartes to *thinke* such thinges, as he hath not inabled them to prove' (1977b: 97.7-9).

However, Hooker's appreciation of mysticism was deep. He was also well acquainted with the fourth century Cappadocian fathers: Basil of Caesarea, Gregory Nazianzus, and Gregory of Nyssa. These were astute theologians and great mystics who were aware, as Basil of Caesarea had stated, that God was 'at one and the same time incomprehensible to human reason and inexpressible to the human voice' (Pelican, 1993: 200). Gregory of Nyssa had formulated it in this way, 'When, therefore, Moses grew in knowledge, he declared that he had seen God in darkness, that is, that he had come to know that what is divine is beyond all knowledge and comprehension, for the text says, *Moses approached the dark cloud where God was* [Exodus 20:21]'. Hence, with reason and in faith the believer recognized that God had '*made darkness his hiding place*' (Nyssa, 1978: 95).

Conclusion

Hooker was a great theologian who thought through his major theological motifs. He did not look at the major motifs in conjunction or tension all at one. Only when Hooker had progressed far enough and each motif had become relatively clear in its own right, he began to bring them in a dialogue. And so the careful

observer ended up with two major motifs, encountered in tension: Scripture / revelation / grace on one hand, and reason, hermeneutic, interpretation on the other. Two foci they were, but not in a 50 / 50 relationship. Whenever mysticism came in the consideration, the glory of God outweighed the perspicuity of rational thought.

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