PERICH ORESIS

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Reformed Antisocinianism in Northern Germany: Ludwig Crocius' *Antisocinismus Contractus* of 1639

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Socinianism: "sulcken schrikkelijcken ende grouwelicken qua-edt" [this terrible and dreadful evil]

No single movement has been as controversial in seventeenth-century Europe as Socinianism, named after the Italians Lelio (1525-62) and Fausto Sozzini (1539-1604).[1] In the eyes of established Christendom this radical-liberal strand of Protestantism was an unprecedented theological and socio-political menace. This was not only the case in Poland, where until their expulsion in 1658 the Socinians had their spiritual and administrative center in Raków, but also, and especially, in those countries where Socinianism was favorably received: in Germany, in the Dutch Republic, and in England.[2]

Socinians (they called themselves "Brothers" or "Christians", and after 1650 "Unitarians" or "Polish brethren") were strongly rationalistic. Faith should be consistent with reason; believing was a matter of *assensus* (consent) rather than *fiducia* (trust); although the Holy Scriptures contained truths that were *supra rationem* (beyond reason), these were not *contra rationem* (contrary to reason). Dogmas of which the biblical foundation was considered doubtful were rejected, i.e. those of the Trinity, the divinity of Christ and of the Holy Spirit, original sin, unfree will, expiation, infant baptism, God's foreknowledge (*praescientia*) and predestination (*praedestinatio*), a life in Hell after death, and the resurrection of the dead; capital punishment and military service were not accepted. Nevertheless, Socinianism was more than a protest movement: its members aimed for a serious, rational and ethical daily practice of their faith. On the basis of an optimistic anthropology it was considered possible to observe Christ's commandments and in this way, taking Him as an example, to attain salvation.

Lutherans, Calvinists, Anglicans and Catholics all contributed in equal measure to the mythologization of Socinianism as an ideological pest undermining Christendom and public morality. In this "beast with seven heads from Revelation" people saw a return of the old heresy of Arianism,

Photinianism and "servetianism"; "atheists" they were, "Turks" who called the dogma of the Trinity a three-headed monster and a fabrication from the Devil. There was also a public side to this: as long as confession of the Trinity was seen as one of the foundations of society in the *corpus christianum* (as in the Middle Ages: "one society, one religion"), the authorities were considered bound, sometimes with an explicit appeal to the old imperial laws against heresy, to suppress any form of antitrinitarianism. In this view, Socinians were not only guilty (theologically) of blasphemy, but also (socially) of a breach of the peace. Suffice it here to remind the reader of the pyres on which in 1553 in Geneva the antitrinitarian Michael Servet,[3] and Socinian books in Leiden, Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Leeuwarden in the following century,[4] were publicly burned. There is also the well-known tragedy of the German theologian Conradus Vorstius (1569-1622), who had been appointed to the post vacated by Arminius in Leiden (1610-12); Vorstius, accused of Socinianism, was exiled by the States-General under pressure of none other than the English King James.[5]

The seriousness of the Socinian threat was linked to the success of antitrinitarian propaganda. Socinian book production, for instance, blossomed, especially in the Dutch Republic;[6] so many Polish Socinians took refuge from persecution there that "all of Raków seemed to have swum to Amsterdam".[7] In the internationally oriented and tolerant Amsterdam (called "Vrijburg" [Freetown] or "Eleutheropolis" by Socinians) the famous *Bibliotheca Fratrum Polonorum* was even published from 1665, a series of folios including Fausto Sozzini's *Opera omnia* and writings of such heavyweights as Johann Crell, Johann Schlichting, Samuel Przypkovius and Johann Ludwig Wolzogen.[8] In the seventeenth century more than 300 Socinian works were published in the Republic alone.[9] Among the readers were many radical Mennonites and Remonstrants.

From the beginning, Socinianism also found fruitful soil in Germany.[10] The *Raków Catechism* (1605), originally written in Polish, first appeared in a German translation (after only three years) and only later in Latin (1609). Prominent Socinians were the Germans Valentin Schmalz (1572-1622), Christoph Osterodt (†1611), Johann Völkel (†1618), Johann Crell (1590-1633), and Stegman, Sr. and Jr. Of the universities, it was especially the Academy in Altdorf (under Ernst Soner, 1572-1612) that proved to be a hotbed of crypto-Socinians (1605-16); other German centers were Danzig and Elbing. To date, little research has been carried out into Socinian propaganda in Germany, unlike that which occurred in the Republic, which was its neighbor and with which it shared a more or less similar intellectual history.

Antisocinianism: the Example of Bremen

Far more is known about *anti*-Socinianism: the seventeenth century reverberated with it. Between 1600 and 1800 more than 700 antisocinian works appeared in Germany, originating mostly in the Lutheran camp.[11] In the Dutch Republic more than 400 saw the light, mainly written by Calvinist authors, but also by Remonstrants.[12] The latter (among whom, for instance, Hugo Grotius[13]) were keen to draw attention to their retention of the Trinitarian doctrine as proof of their own orthodoxy. What was advocated by this great bulk of *antisociniana*?

I shall not provide a survey of their contents, especially because these writings are not only rather unspectacular but also rather unoriginal – they are, in fact, utterly predictable. The authors simply defended what the Socinians attacked; Catholics, Lutherans, Calvinists, Anglicans all upheld the jointly professed early Christian dogma, of course retaining all the nuances implied in this multi-confessionalism. *Nihil novi attuli* was one of the prefatory remarks in *De Iesu Christo servatore* (1611) by one of the first Dutch polemicists, the Franeker professor Lubbertus, directed against Socinus' book with the same title (1578), "I do not bring anything new."[14] In his dissertation on Lubbertus (1963), C. van der Woude dismissed the work in a few lines, saying: "We need not say more about his book, which conforms to the Holy Scriptures and the Reformational confessions."[15] Similarly, W. J. Kühler, pioneer of Socinus research, drew the conclusion in his general survey of 1912: "It is unnecessary to go into the polemics themselves; they teach us nothing new"[16] (except, of course, that in these polemical writings the Socinian publication under attack was sometimes quoted in its entirety)[17] which made them available to a wider audience and unintentionally served as propaganda.[18] A more interesting question is: where did this considerable antisocinian concern come from – *why* did the orthodoxy "constantly put their best efforts toward the cause of this controversy"?[19]

To find an answer to this question, and to acquire a more detailed picture of Protestant antisocinianism, we will select one example to analyze more closely: a totally unknown debate from the equally virgin research territory of German-Reformed antisocinianism. One of the leading German-Reformed centers was the Bremen Academy, where the famous Ludwig Crocius (1586-1653) worked as a dogmatician.[20] Crocius was a mild and tolerant theologian, and a friend of the irenic Georg Calixtus in Helmstedt. As a deputy to the National Synod of Dordrecht in 1618-19, his admiration of Arminius, and his reservations about the supralapsarian doctrine of predestination, had temporarily provoked the displeasure of the Counter-Remonstrants.[21] Exactly one century after the birth of Fausto Sozzini (1539) Crocius published his *Antisocinismus Contractus* [Anti-socinianism in brief], consisting of 330 questions and answers distributed over 28 disputations – 500 pages in all.[22] What moved him and other polemicists?

Before their expulsion from Poland in 1658, Socinians in Germany kept a low profile. Crocius also remarked,

> that by the grace of God in our German churches we do not have any intercourse at all with the Socinians, so that until now there has been no necessity for the Christian republic to get acquainted with their teachings or to transmit and distribute these to others, either in the presence of the people or by refutation.[23]

Rather, Socinian writings should be avoided, "as they are full of manifestly blasphemic teachings, and with diabolical strophes and sophistry might easily confound those less experienced."[24] Why then this "polemic theology", as he himself called it?[25]

An obvious reason, which however is only rarely mentioned in the literature,[26] might be that compared to Catholicism and Lutheranism, Socinianism offered the best opportunity to train students in the currently popular polemic disputes. Crocius, too, judging from his enumerations of points of difference and the repeated "Socinus, Smalcius, Osterodt, etc. here answer negatively, we answer affirmatively", wanted to provide a textbook for his students rather than engage in a controversy.

An additional reason might be that among the students (also those Eastern European students that had swarmed out over Western Europe, including Bremen[27]) there was often a secret interest in Unitarianism.[28] In Franeker, for instance, former students of Vorstius' from Steinfurt even anonymously published a short tract by Socinus, resulting in national tumult.[29]

A third reason: even though there might not have been any Socinians in the vicinity, the Socinian elevation of *ratio* over *revelatio* actually meant a real (and therefore attractive?) innovation... and menace.

Finally, in the prevalent confessionalist climate some theologians might have felt the need to deliver a public statement of orthodoxy by prominently drawing attention to the differences separating them from Socinianism.[30] This was especially relevant in the Calvinist Dutch Republic: subscribing to, for instance, a historicising doctrine of election was soon associated with the loathed Remonstrantism, infected as it was with Socinianism.[31] This might also have applied to Crocius; in any case, a year earlier some of his Bremen colleagues who sympathised with Dordrecht had asked the Utrecht faculty for a pronouncement on allegedly Socinian statements made by Crocius.[32]

This brings us to another question: was not a certain affinity to be expected? Both branches, Socinianism as well as orthodox Protestantism, had sprouted from the one trunk of the Protestant Reformation. Both tested their theology against the text of the Bible. Socinians were sound philologists; Socinus (a renowned Hebraist) used a purely philological argumentation as his theological method.[33] Lutheran and certainly Reformed exegetes had the same excellent linguistic instinct, thanks to their often Humanist education. The Socinian shift of emphasis from "doctrine" to "life" is also found in some Reformed theologians (including

Crocius) and Lutherans, such as Philipp Jakob Spener (1635-1705), the father of Lutheran pietism.[34] Did this result in a more nuanced judgment on the Socinians among the milder Protestants? Was Crocius more moderate than such markedly Calvinist antisocinians as Lubbertus[35] in Franeker, Polyander[36] in Leiden and Maresius[37] in Groningen? Was he more tolerant than the orthodox Wittenberg theologian Abraham Calov[38] (1612-86), who accused fellow-Lutherans, such as for instance Crocius' friend Calixtus, of Socinianism?[39] Was he more nuanced than Hoornbeek[40] in Leiden, who considered his antisocinian colleague Heidanus a Socinian, in the same way as Voetius placed Coccejus in the Socinian dock?[41] Did Crocius deploy his arguments in the same way as Johann Amos Comenius?[42] This Reformed theologian and pedagogue (1592-1670) had connections with the Socinian movement and acknowledged the appeal of Socinian views. He did reject them eventually, in no uncertain terms, but at the end of his life, when challenged to do this by his adversary Daniel Zwicker. Incidentally, on that occasion Comenius also reckoned Luther and Calvin among the despots [...][43]

The answers to these questions will be provided in the next and last paragraph.

Antisocinianism: Some General Observations

On the basis of Crocius' *Antisocinismus* the following five observations may be made on Protestant antisocinianism.

Socinianism as Renewal of an Old Heresy

Established Protestantism saw Socinians as renewers of heresies from the time of the Early Church.[44] To Crocius, they occupied the third position on the gliding scale from "true Christian", "brother in Christ", "heretic" to "total unbeliever":[45] they were heretics, "because they consort clearly with sect leaders, both old and new": with Gnosimachoi, Noetians, Aetians; with Arius, Manetus, Ebion, Cerinthus, Paul of Samosata; with Pelagians, Manicheans, Donatists, Papists and Anabaptists.[46] Socinianism meant a retrograde step, turning back the clock on the Reformation, a relapse of many centuries.

Disputed points

Crocius' main objection, which again revealed him to be a typical (Protestant) antisocinianist, was to the Socinian denial of Christ's preexistence and of the divinity of the Holy Spirit. The first jeopardised reconciliation by expiation, the second the theonomous character of salvation and Biblical anthropology. This already becomes clear from Crocius' opening definition:

> What is Socinianism? A pernicious heresy, an amalgam of many monstrous heretic aberrations, whose sum total amounts to denying the divinity of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, and the satisfaction for our sins, and leads to a misguided pursuit of eternal life on the basis of one's own obedience.[47]

Nevertheless, Crocius then addressed all dogmatic *loci*,[48] a method also representative of the orthodoxy. On all points of ecclesiastical doctrinethe heretics were weighed and found wanting. Not until Spener (1706) do we find a concentration on the divinity of Christ as the "Haupt- und Grundartikel" of the Christian faith, "an dem unser Heil liegt und auf ihm der Bau des ganzen Christentums beruhet";[49] in Spener, something becomes visible of the Christocentric orientation that via Zinzendorf and Schleiermacher was to exert its influence until the twentieth century.[50]

Scholasticism, Proof Texts, and Exegesis

Crocius' method of argumentation (also characteristic of the orthodoxy) was a mixture of (analytical) scholasticism, combined with the use of *loca probantia* (proof texts), and exegesis. The Bremen scholar himself characterised his method as an analytical use of Bible testimonies,[51] in which he sometimes tried to beat the Socinians with their own philological weapons. He for instance pointed to their suggestive placement of the comma in the Word from the Cross in Luke 23:43 ("Verily, I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise"):

> Nothing is more common in their writings than the distortion and depravation of the Holy Scriptures. One example from many: in Luke 23:43 they corrupt the punctuation, connecting *today* to the preceding verb *I say*, so that the sentence then becomes: "Today I say to you, you will be with Me in Paradise, that is, when I shall have returned to judge".[52]

Of course antisocinians could not avoid appealing to the *orthodoxa antiquitas*,[53] to confessions, decrees, and writings on Trinitarian theology and on Christology by Early Church councils and theologians. Being a true Calvinist, Crocius maintained at the same time both the *perspicuitas* and *sufficientia* or *perfectio* of the Scriptures,[54] together with the right of tradition, i.e. the validity of what may with legitimate consistency be deduced from the Bible.[55] To him, these deductions implied the entire Christian tradition, within which he just as easily looked for support among the Church Fathers as among medieval theologians such as Peter Lombard, William of Ockham, Thomas Aquinas, John Duns Scotus, Gabriel Biel, Albertus Magnus, and contemporary theologians – Catholic, Lutheran and especially Reformed.

Dogmatic Purity in Academic Context

Like most antisocinian polemicists Crocius knew the incriminated writings in detail, and showed scholarly objectivity in quotations and references. In an exemplary manner (and with some recognition?) he stuck to the maxim of the philosopher Cornelius Martinius, quoted by himself: "Nothing is more criminal than to attribute a statement to your opponent that he denies to be his view."[56] Crocius' professionalism contrasts sharply with the tone of some who did not write in the language of scholarship, Latin, but in the vernacular, such as the Leiden minister Petrus de Witte, who exhibited "an unprecedented virtuosity in vituperation and abuse."[57] Aside from possible other motives, Crocius was clearly (also) concerned with the scholarly dispute and with maintaining a pure doctrine in an academic context.

Conservation of Heritage vs. a Radicalised Self-Image

In his by now classical *A History of the Reformation* of 1907, Thomas Lindsay states:

> Socinianism, unlike the great religious movements under the guidance of Luther, had its distinct and definite beginning in a criticism of doctrines, and this must never be forgotten if its true character is to be understood. [...Whereas] the central thing about the Protestant Reformation was that it meant a rediscovery of religion as *faith*, [... Socinianism] was from first to last a criticism [...] of doctrines.[58]

This criticism was a radicalization of what had started with the Protestant Reformation. Whereas this was primarily about the liberation of the believers from an institutional Church and the dogma from a totalitarian doctrine, the Socinians went one step further and struck at the basis of that doctrine; their criticism was fundamental.[59] This was also the image Socinians had of themselves. They praised their leader because he had outdone the other Reformers in destructive thoroughness, also witness the following double hexameter, quoted via Comenius (1660):

> *Alta ruit Babylon; destruxit tecta Lutherus,*
> *Muros Calvinus, sed fundamenta Socinus:*[60]

"Lofty Babylon (the Catholic Church) has fallen; Luther broke the roof, Calvin destroyed the walls, but the foundations were shattered by Socinus." To this fundamental criticism established Protestantism reacted by "defending the foundation of the Christian religion", to quote Lubbertus,[61] by conserving the Reformation heritage against the "extirpation of the Christian faith."[62] We who look back from the 21st century see clearly what largely remained vague to Crocius and his generation: that this fundamental criticism made Socinianism not really (retrospectively) a

return to an old heresy, but rather (prospectively) a first beginning of the transformation of the Christian faith into secularised, Humanist ethics.[63]

Consequently, there is not much mildness to be found in antisociniana such as that of Crocius. The conclusion must be that also for irenic theologians such as Crocius, as well as Comenius and Coccejus, the chasm separating them from Socinianism was too wide and deep; that advocating a moderate predestination doctrine and emphasizing personal responsibility and morality, also stressed by Socinians, did not imply tolerance towards them. This means that there is little irenic rationalism and "enlightenment" to be found in Crocius (taking him as a *pars pro toto*). On the contrary: he maintained that the "mysteries of faith are the objects of pure revelation and unique belief"[64] and that "the Scriptures cannot elicit faith and obedience in people without internal illumination and particular revelation of the Holy Spirit."[65] Consequently, the accusation of Socinianism addressed to the Bremen Academy by the Provincial Synod at Rotterdam of 1641[66] was no more than confessionalist calumny. Apparently, the Calvinist brothers had not read Crocius' *Antisocinismus Contractus* of 1639. It was to be more than half a century before confessionalism had abated and a climate had materialised in which fundamental Socinian criticism had been translated for wider circles into a less dogmatic use of the Bible.[67] By that time, Socinianism itself had dissolved into the wider stream of the Enlightenment, whose course it had helped to determine.[68]

Notes

[1] Earlier versions of this paper were presented at the 2004 Sixteenth Century Studies Conference, Toronto, October 31, 2004, and the Leiden Conference "Socinianism in the Netherlands: Conference on the 400th Anniversary of the Death of Faustus Socinus (1539-1604)", November 5, 2004.

[2] For overviews, see L. Szczucki, "Socinianism", in: H. J. Hillerbrand (ed.), *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation* 4 (New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 83-87; E. Schadel, "Socinians", in: K. Ganzer/B. Steimer (eds), *Dictionary of the Reformation* [Encyclopedia of Theology and Church] (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 2004), 292-293; G. A. Benrath, "Die Lehre des Humanismus und des Antitrinitarismus", in: C. Andresen (ed.), *Handbuch der Dogmen- und Theologiegeschichte* 3 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1988), 1-70, esp. 49-70. For literature, see J. Tedeschi (ed.), in ass. with J. M. Lattis, *The Italian Reformation of the Sixteenth Century and the Diffusion of Renaissance Culture: A Bibliography of the Secondary Literature (ca. 1750-1997)*, with intr. by M. Firpo (Modena: Panini, 2000); P. Visser (ed.), Ph. Knijff/S.J. Visser (comp.), *Bibliographia Sociniana: A Bibliographical Reference Tool for the Study of Dutch Socinianism and Antitrinitarianism* (Hilversum: Verloren/Amsterdam: Doopsgezinde Historische Kring, 2004) (hereafter cited as: *BS*).

[3] See, for instance, M. Balázs, *Early Transylvanian Antitrinitarianism (1566-1571): From Servet to Palaeologus* [Bibliotheca Dissidentium. Scripta et Studia 7] (Baden-Baden/Bouxwiller: Koerner, 1996); H. Hotson, "Arianism and Millenarianism. The link between two heresies from Servetus to Socinus", in J. C. Laursen/R.H. Popkin (eds), *Continental Millenarians: Protestants, Catholics, Heretics* [Millenarianism and Messianism in Early Modern European Culture 4] (Dordrecht/Boston/London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2001), 9-35.

[4] See, for instance, A. de Groot, "Die Aufnahme des Sozinianismus in den Niederlanden im 17. Jahrhundert", in W. Deppert/W. Erdt/A. de Groot (eds), *Der Einfluss der Unitarier auf die europäisch-amerikanische Geistesgeschichte: Vorträge der ersten deutschen wissenschaftlichen Tagung zur Unitarismusforschung vom 13.-14. Juni 1985 in Hamburg* [*Unitarismusforschung* 1] (Frankfurt am Main/Bern/New York: Lang, 1990), 113-124.

[5] See, for instance, W. Nijenhuis, "Saravia and James I's moves against the appointment of Vorstius", in Nijenhuis, *Ecclesia Reformata: Studies on the Reformation II* [*Kerkhistorische Bijdragen* 16] (Leiden/New York/Köln: E. J. Brill, 1994), 205-224; W. van 't Spijker, "Conradus Vorstius als Vertreter reformierter Theologie zu Steinfurt und in den Niederlanden", in: *Symposion 400 Jahre Hohe Schule Steinfurt 18. und 19.09.1988 Schloss Burgsteinfurt* [*Steinfurter Schriften* 17] (Steinfurt: Stadt Steinfurt, 1991), 176-190.

[6] Cf. I. Weekhout, *Boekencensuur in de Noordelijke Nederlanden. De vrijheid van drukpers in de zeventiende eeuw* (Den Haag: SDU Uitgevers, 1998).

[7] According to the Reformed theologian Samuel Maresius (1599-1673): "ut tota Rakovia nunc Amsterodamum adnatasse videatur", cited after D. Nauta, *Samuel Maresius* (Amsterdam: H. J. Paris, 1935), 353, n. 108.

[8] *BS* 2000-2011.

[9] See *BS* 2000-2150; *BS* 3000-3160. Cf. P. Visser, "'Blasphemous and pernicious': The role of printers and booksellers in the spread of dissident religious and philosophical ideas in the Netherlands in the second half of the seventeenth century", in: *Quaerendo* 26 (1996), 303-326.

[10] Cf. Siegfried Wollgast, "Der Sozinianismus in Deutschland", in: S. Wollgast, *Philosophie in Deutschland zwischen Reformation und Aufklärung 1550-1650* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2nd edn. 1993), 346-422.

[11] E. M. Wilbur, *A History of Unitarianism, I: Socinianism and its Antecedents* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1945, repr. Boston: Beacon Press, 1977), 526; S. Wollgast, "Zur Widerspiegelung des Sozinianismus in der lutherischen Theologie und Schulmetaphysik im Reich, Danzig und Preussen in der ersten Hälfte des 17. Jahrhunderts", in: L. Szczucki (ed.), *Socinianism and its Role in the Culture of XVI-th to XVIII-th Centuries* (Warsaw-Łódź: PWN Polish Scientific Publisher, 1983), 157-168; L. Mokrzecki, "Sozinianismus in den Diskursen der Danziger Professoren im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert", in: Szczucki (ed.), *Socinianism*, 183-191.

[12] See *BS* 4000-4414.

[13] Cf. H. Grotius, *Defensio fidei catholicae de satisfactione Christi adversus Faustum Socinum Senensem* [(Leiden: Ioannes Patius, 1617)], ed. E. Rabbie; English transl. H. Mulder (Maastricht/Assen: Van Gorcum, 1990).

[14] S. Lubbertus, *De Iesu Christo servatore, hoc est cur, & qua ratione Jesus Christus noster servator sit, libri quator, contra Faustum Socinum* (Franeker/Arnhem: Gillis van den Rade, Jans Jansz, 1611) (*BS* 4251; cf. 4252), cited after C. van der Woude, *Sibrandus Lubbertus. Leven en werken, in het bijzonder naar zijn correspondentie* (Kampen: Kok, 1963), 140.

[15] Van der Woude, *Lubbertus*, 141.

[16] W. J. Kühler, *Het Socinianisme in Nederland* (Leeuwarden: De Tille, 1980; facsimile of the 1st edn. Leiden: Sijthoff, 1912), 222.

[17] So, among others, by Lubbertus and Maresius; on them, see below, n. 35 and 37; cf. Van der Woude, *Lubbertus*, 146-147; Nauta, *Maresius*, 351.

[18] Cf. P. Bayle, "Socin (Fauste)", in his *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (Nouvelle édition, Paris: Desoer, 1820-1824; repr. Genève, 1969) 13, 345-371, there 348: "[...] il y a eu des orthodoxes qui se sont plaints que certaines réfutations de ses livres ont notablement contribué à l'augmentation de sa secte"; cf. the adstruction at 369-371.

[19] Kühler, *Socinianisme*, 222.

[20] W. Janse, *Grenzeloos gereformeerd. Theologie aan het Bremer Gymnasium Illustre, 1528-1810* (Amsterdam: VU Boekhandel/Uitgeverij, 2004). On Crocius, see *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* 4 (1876), 601; *Neue Deutsche Biographie* 3 (1957), 418; *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (herafter cited as: *RGG*), 3rd edn, 1 (1957), 1884; *Biographisch-Bibliographisches Kirchenlexikon* 1 (1990), 1163; *RGG*, 4th edn, 2 (1999), 497.

[21] Janse, *Grenzeloos gereformeerd*, 17.

[22] L. Crocius, *Antisocinismus contractus, Hoc est, Errorum Socinianorum privatarum consequentiarum nebulis involutorum examen & brevis ostensio principiorum, quibus illi XXVIII. disputationibus in illustri schola Bremensi habitis solidé refutantur & dogmata*

catholicae fidei defenduntur (Bremen: Bertholdus Villerianus, 1639). I.8, 10 = disputatio 1, quaestio 8, page 10.

[23] Crocius, *Antisocinismus contractus*, I.8, 10-11: "per Dei gratiam in ecclesiis nostris Germanicis cum Socinianis nullum nobis est commercium, nulla necessitudo, ideoque & illorum dogmata neque scire, neque aliis coram populo vel refutando tradere atque disseminare, reip. Christianae hactenus interfuit."

[24] Crocius, *Antisocinismus contractus*, I.8, 10: "1. quia scatent dogmatis manifestò blasphemis. 2. quia strophis & sophismatis diabolicis imperitiores facile perturbare possunt."

[25] Crocius, *Antisocinismus contractus*, Praefatio ad lectorem, 6b, in distinction to the tractatio analytica of Scripture as the source and foundation of theology (4b) and the tractatio aphoristica of Scripture, containing "the concept of dogmas" (5a).

[26] An exception is Wollgast, "Zur Widerspiegelung", 159: "Mag auch gelegentlich Freude an der Disputation Anlass für die antisozinianische Polemik geliefert haben: [...]."

[27] As to Bremen, see A. Schmidtmayer, "Die Beziehungen des Bremer Gymnasium Illustre zu J. A. Comenius und den mährischen Brüdern", in: *Bremisches Jahrbuch* 33 (1931), 305-347; A. Schmidtmayer, "Bremen als "Herberge der Kirche" im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert", in: *Bremisches Jahrbuch* 34 (1933), 103-117.

[28] See, for instance, J. A. Cramer, *De Theologische Faculteit te Utrecht ten tijde van Voetius* (Utrecht: Kemink, [1932]), 494; Van der Woude, *Lubbertus*, 136-137; P. Wrzecionko, "Die Sozinianer und der Sozinianismus im Widerstreit der Beurteilungen", in: P. Wrzecionko (ed.), *Reformation und Frühaufklärung in Polen. Studien über den Sozinianismus und seinen Einfluß auf das westeuropäische Denken im 17. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1977), 244-272, there 256.

[29] A. de Groot, "Franeker als Irenopolis. F. Socinus, De officio hominis christiani, 1610", in W. Otten/W.J. van Asselt (eds), *Kerk en conflict. Identiteitskwesties in de geschiedenis van het christendom* [*Utrechtse Studies* 3] (Zoetermeer: Meinema, 2002), 102-114.

[30] Cf. Wrzecionko, "Die Sozinianer", 254.

[31] For an early example, see W. Janse, "'Ik wil liever blijven by den wortel van den boom, dan hoog klimmen.' Een beroep op de predestinatieleer van Heinrich Bullinger en Albert Hardenberg in Noord-Holland in 1596", in: *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse Kerkgeschiedenis* 6 (2003), 121-125. See also M. Th. Uit den Boogaard, *De Gereformeerden en Oranje tijdens het eerste stadhouderloze tijdperk* (Groningen/Djakarta: J. B. Wolters, 1954), 156-165.

[32] P. Zimmermann, G. B. a Pelckhoven, A. C. Pierius, H. Flocken and E. Cancrinus (Bremen) to the professors of the Utrecht Theological Faculty, October 12, 1638, in: Cramer, *Theologische Faculteit*, Appendices 29-31, 164-209.

[33] E. Schadel, "Einleitung", in: Johann Amos Comenius, *Ausgewählte Werke*, IV: *Antisozinianische Schriften*, I (Hildesheim/Zürich/New York: Olms, 1983), 7-71, there 31.

[34] J. Wallmann, "Pietismus und Sozinianismus. Zu Philipp Jakob Speners antisozinianischen Schriften", in: Szczucki (ed.), *Socinianism*, 147-156, there 148.

[35] See, for instance, Lubbertus, *De Iesu Christo servatore*. On him, see Van der Woude, "Lubbertus"; *Biografisch lexikon voor de geschiedenis van het Nederlandse protestantisme* (herafter cited as: *BLGNP*) 1 (1978), 143-145.

[36] See, for instance, J. Polyander van Kerckhoven, *De Essentiali Iesu Christi [...] Concertatio, Decem disputationibus contra Ioh. Crellium, & totidem contra Ioh. Volkelium comprehensa* (Leiden: Joannes Maire, 1643) (*BS* 4303). On him, see A. J. Lamping, *Johannes Polyander. Een dienaar van kerk en universiteit* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1980); *BLGNP* 2 (1983), 366-368.

[37] See, for instance, S. Maresius, *Hydra socinianismi expugnata: sive Johannis Volkelii Misnici, de vera religione, [...] quibus praefixus est Johannis Crellii [...] liber de Deo & ejus attributis, [...]. Cum eorundum refutatione exacta per additas annotationes & censuras necessarias, [...],* I-III (Groningen: Jan Claessen/Frans Bronchorst, 1651-1662) (*BS* 4259). On him, see Nauta, *Maresius*; *BLGNP* 1 (1978), 158-160.

[38] See, for instance, A. Calow, *Scripta anti-Sociniana, quibus haeresis in illa pestilentissima non tantum ex ipsis Socinistarum scriptis bona fide detegitur [...],* I-III (Ulm: Kühn, 1684). On him, see *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* 7 (1981), 563-568; V. Jung, *Das Ganze der Heiligen Schrift. Hermeneutik und Schriftauslegung bei Abraham Calov* (Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1999), 1-9.

[39] Wallmann, "Pietismus und Sozinianismus", 154.

[40] See, for instance, J. Hoornbeek, *Socinianismi confutati [...]*, I-III (Utrecht/Amsterdam/Leiden: Janssonius van Waesberge, 1650-1664) (*BS* 4194). On him, see J.W. Hofmeyr, *Johannes Hoornbeeck as polemikus* (Kampen: Kok, 1975); *BLGNP* 2 (1983), 259-261.

[41] J. C. van Slee, *De geschiedenis van het Socinianisme in de Nederlanden* (Haarlem: De Erven F. Bohn, 1914), 288-289.

[42] See Comenius, *Antisozinianische Schriften*, I-II.

[43] Marta Bečková, "Zur Problematik der Comenius Beziehungen zum Sozinianismus", in: Szczucki (ed.), *Socinianism*, 169-181; Schadel, "Einleitung".

[44] So, still, the Lutheran J. H. Zedler, "Socinianer", in: J. H. Zedler, *Grosses vollständiges Universal-Lexicon* 38 (Leipzig/Halle, 1743; repr. Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1962), 243: "Socinianer, Socinisten, Lat. Sociniani, sind diejenigen, welche in den neuern Zeiten die alten Ketzeryen des Paul Samosatenus, Photinus und anderer, welche die Gottheit Christi geläugnet, und denselben für einen blossen Menschen gehalten, wiederum aufgewärmet haben. Man leget ihnen bisweilen auch andere Nahmen bey, und nennet sie Neo-Samostenianer, Neo-Photinianer, Smiglisten u.s.f. Doch haben diejenigen Unrecht, welche sie Neo-Arianer zu nennen pflegen; weil ihre Lehr-Sätze nicht so wohl mit des Arii als des Photiniani seinen Meynungen übereinstimmen"; cf. Schadel, "Einleitung", 24.

[45] Crocius, *Antisocinismus contractus*, I.4-5, 3-8.

[46] Crocius, *Antisocinismus contractus*, I.5, 6-8: "Utrum Sociniani sunt haeretici, an verò prorsus infideles? Prius nobis sit verisimilius, [...] quia cum haeresiarchis manifestè colludunt, & quidam variè cum antiquis & recentioribus. Cum antiquis, Gnosimachis, scripturam etiam sine Spiritus S. revelatione intellectu facilem asserunt; Noëtianis, negata S. Trinitate, unam duntaxat personam Deitatis summae asserunt; Aëtianis Filium Patri 'heterousion kai kata panta anomion' fingunt, de persona illius cum Ario, Manete, Ebione, Cerintho, Samosateno, eadem tradunt; Macedonio personam Spiritus sancti eunt inficias; Pelagianis, immortalitatem hominis in statu innocentiae negant, in statu corruptionis peccatum originis negant & libertatem arbitrii nondum per Christum libertati in spiritualibus asserunt; Manichaeis, Donatistis & aliis hujus furfuris negant à Christianis magistratuum, siquidem sine caede & bello administrari nequeat, bonâ conscientiâ geri posse. Cum recentioribus, Papistis, definiunt fidem justificantem per observationem mandatorum Dei, non exspectantem gratuitum Dei donum propter obedientiam Christi, sed merentem peccatorum remissionem, & satisfactionem Christi & gratuitam justitiae imputationem irrident; cum Anabaptistis necessitatem vocationis ad ministerium ecclesiasticum negant, & cuivis non vocato idiotae sacramentorum administrationem permittunt; ut omittam sexcenta alia, quae suis locis tangi poterunt."

[47] Crocius, *Antisocinismus contractus*, I.1, 1: "Quid est Socinismus? Haeresis perniciosa è multis & monstrosis haereticorum erroribus conflata, qua summa Jesu Christi & Spiritus sancti deitas & satisfactio pro peccatis nostris abnegatur & propriâ vitae obedientiâ vita aeterna perperam affectatur."

[48] The titles of the 28 disputations are: 1. Socinianism and its foundations. 2. Knowledge of God. 3. The divinity of Jesus Christ. 4. The divinity and personality of the Holy Spirit. 5. Creation and the image of God. 6. The Fall of Adam and the sins originating from it. 7. The power of free will and God's foreknowledge. 8. Predestination. 9. The Incarnation, conception and birth of the Son of God. 10. Christ's ordination to the prophetic office; His demands and promises. 11. Christ's priesthood and satisfaction. 12. Christ's Resurrection, Ascension and reign. 13. The conversion and rebirth of sinful man. 14. Justification. 15. The formal and final causes of justification. 16. Justifying faith. 17. Good works. 18. Penance. 19. The sacraments in general. 20. Baptism. 21. Infant baptism. 22. The Lord's Supper. 23. The Church. 24. The ministry. 25. Government and civilian matters. 26. Economy and public life. 27. Eschatology: death, resurrection, Hell and eternal life. 28. Discussion of various points, concluding the preceding.

[49] Ph. J. Spener, *Vertheidigung des Zeugnüsses von der ewigen Gottheit unsers Herrn Jesu Christi, als der Eingebohrnen Sohns vom Vater [...]; so wohl gegen den Angriff seiner hievon gehaltenen Predigten, welche hier mit beygedruckt sind, als auch am meisten gegen Enjedinum, Freyherrn von Wollzogen, Jer. Felbinger, Jo. Preussen, u.a.; in den letzten Jahren seines Lebens verfasset und kurtz vor seinem seel. Ende geschlossen, so nun an das öffentliche Licht gestellet wird, sampt einer Vorrede Pauli Antonii* (Franckfurt am Mayn: Johann David Zunners seel. Erben, 1706), III. Anhang, 23; see also n. 50.

⁵⁰ Wallmann, "Pietismus und Sozinianismus", 154.

⁵¹ Crocius, *Antisocinismus contractus*, Praefatio ad lectorem, 6b: "[...] postmodum verò Socinismum [...] à me contrahi ac principiis analyticis, recti & obliqui indicibus, hoc est, sacrae scripturae testimoniis dexteré adhibitis enervari voluit." An example of this method: Crocius' answer to the question "whether the mysteries of faith, which are the objects of pure revelation and unique belief, are contrary to human reason" was to distinguish between, on the one hand, "the light, judgment and verdict of the true and illuminated reason as such, which partly are remnants of God's image, partly the first fruits of the Spirit of rebirth, on the other hand the darkness and corruptions that have befallen Man since the Fall, which are his lot before he will be enlightened and corrected by the Word and the Spirit of God. The mysteries of Faith do not contravene the first type of reason, 1. because God's gifts are not mutually incompatible, 2. because the light does not extinguish that which is more, but completes that which is less; they are incompatible with the second type of reason, as becomes clear from 1. the blindness of the human spirit, Eph. 4:17; 2. the rebellion of human reason, Rom. 7:22; 3. the depravity of human nature, Gen. 6:6; 4. the hostile affect towards the divine; 5. the continual objections of sinners, Hebr. 12:3, especially the Jews, Acts 13:45".

⁵² Crocius, *Antisocinismus contractus*, I.9, 12: "Haec, quia nihil scriptis illorum familiarius est, quam scripturarum sacrarum detorsio ac depravatio. Ex innumeris cape paucula. Luc. XXIII. 22 [sic] corrumpunt interpunctionem, ut hodie connectant cum praegresso verbo dico, ut sensus sit, hodie tibi dico, eris aliquando mecum in paradiso, cùm videlicet venero ad judicium. Ejusdem furfuris est expositio Joh.I.1 & VIII.58 & XX.28, itemque Act.VII.59."

⁵³ With this appeal Crocius concluded most of his disputations; see, for instance, I.23, 19-21: "Quaenam remedia venenosis Socinianorum dogmatis adhibenda sunt? I. Fontes remediorum sunt sacrae literae [...]. IV. Orthodoxa antiquitas [...]."

⁵⁴ Crocius, *Antisocinismus contractus*, I.16, 16-17.

⁵⁵ See, for instance, Crocius, *Antisocinismus contractus*, I.19-23, 17-21.

⁵⁶ Crocius, *Antisocinismus contractus*, Praefatio ad lectorem, 6a: "Neque enim, inquiens, sceleratius quicquam in eum, qui cum disputas, committere potes, quàm si opinionem vel sententiam ei affingas, quam is neget esse suam", taken from Cornelius Martini, *De Analysi logica tractatus, in quo multis illustribus exemplis ostenditur, quid sit analysis logica [...]* (Helmstedt: Rabe, 1619); on him, see H. J. De Vleeschauwer, *Cornelius Martini en de ontwikkeling van de protestantsche metaphysica in Duitschland* (Brussel: Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten van België, 1940); Wollgast, "Zur Widerspiegelung", 157-158, 166-168.

⁵⁷ Kühler, *Socinianisme*, 223. On him, see *BLGNP* 3, 405-406.

⁵⁸ T. M. Lindsay, *A History of the Reformation*, II: *In Lands Beyond Germany* (repr. of the 2nd edn, Edinburgh: Clark, 1914), 473-474.

⁵⁹ Schadel, "Einleitung", 26.

⁶⁰ J. A. Comenius, *De Irenico irenicorum. Hoc est: Conditionibus pacis à Socini secta reliquo Christiano orbi oblatis, ad omnes Christianos facta admonitio a Johan-Amos Comenio* (Amsterdam: Henricus Betkius, Christoffel Cunradus, 1660) (*BS* 4129), 191; also cited in Van Slee, *Socinianisme*, 296, and Schadel, "Einleitung", 26.

⁶¹ Van der Woude, *Lubbertus*, 140.

⁶² J. Trigland, A. Heydanus and J. Coccejus (Leiden) to the States of Holland and West Friesland, April 3, 1653, in: A. Eekhof, *De theologische faculteit te Leiden in de 17de eeuw* (Utrecht: G.J.A. Ruys, 1921), 245-250, there 247.

⁶³ Wallmann, "Pietismus und Sozinianismus", 156; cf. Z. Ogonowski, "Der Sozinianismus und die Aufklärung", in: Wrzecionko (ed.), *Reformation und Frühaufklärung*, 78-156, there 133-139. Some inkling of this seems to have been felt by the deputies of the Synod of South and North Holland, who in March 1653 reported to the States of Holland and West-Friesland on the Socinians: "ende maken van de godtsalicheyt maer een heydenssche zedenkonst" [they reduce salvation to a heathen ethic]; see "Remonstrantie van de gedeputeerden [...] betreffende het weren der Socinianen", in: Eekhof, *De theologische faculteit*, 239-244, there 240, cf. 64*. To Spener, too, half a century later, Socinianism was "wenig mehr [...] als eine Ethic und sittenlehr, die man eben so wohl aus Seneca, Epicteto und andern Heyden schöpfen könte", Spener, *Vertheidigung des Zeugnüsses*, III. Anhang, 23, cited via Wallmann, "Pietismus und Sozinianismus", 156.

64 Crocius, *Antisocinismus contractus*, I.10, 12: "An mysteria fidei, quae sunt merae revelationis & solius fidei objecta, sunt contra rationem & ratio humana iisdem vicissim repugnat?"

65 Crocius, *Antisocinismus contractus*, I.13, 15: "An scriptura sine interna illuminatione & singulari revelatione Spiritus s. fidem & obedientiam in hominibus operari potest? Osterod. affirmat inst. cap.1. n.5. Nos negamus."

66 The synod summed up as objections: "Dat men invoert een Sociniaensche verlocheninge van de voldoeninge Jesu Christi van onse sonden. Dat de genade Gods algemeen is. [...] Dat alle menschen door Jesum Christum gerechtveerdight zijn, ende vrijheyt ende recht vercregen hebben tot het eewige leven. Dat men in alle religien can saligh worden." [that one introduces a Socinian denial of the satisfaction for our sins by Jesus Christ; that God's grace is universal; (...) that all men are justified by Jesus Christ and have secured freedom and a rigth to eternal life; that people can be saved in all religions]; W. P. C. Knuttel, *Acta der particuliere synoden van Zuid Holland 1621-1700*, I-VI (Den Haag, 1908-1916), II, 307 (Art. 23).

67 For an overview, see A. Th. van Deursen, "Die widerspenstigen Niederlande", in: A. Schapendonk (ed.), *Die Widerspenstigen Niederlande: Frühneuzeitlicher niederländischer Buchbestand der Universitätsbibliothek Marburg* (Marburg: Universitätsbibliothek, 1998), xv-xxxi; W. Janse, "Facettenreichtum niederländischer Religiösität", in: Schapendonk (ed.), *Die Widerspenstigen Niederlande*, xxxii-xliii.

68 Cf. G. Mühlpfordt, "Arianische Exulanten als Vorboten der Aufklärung (Zur Wirkungsgeschichte des Frührationalismus polnischer und deutscher Arianer vom 16. bis ins 18. Jahrhundert)", in: J. Irmscher (ed.), *Renaissance und Humanismus in Mittel- und Osteuropa. Eine Sammlung von Materialien*, II [*Deutsche Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin. Schriften der Sektion für Altertumswissenschaft* 32] (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1962), 220-246; Ogonowski, "Der Sozinianismus und die Aufklärung", in: Wrzecionko (ed.), *Reformation und Frühaufklärung*, 78-156; P. Schellenberger, "Zur Funktion des Sozinianismus im Bildungsprozeß der Frühaufklärung", in: *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie* 36 (1988), 743-746.

A Survey of Recent Discussion regarding the Christian Nature of the Book of the Revelation

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Approaches to Revelation

Serious doubts have been expressed about the inclusion of the Book of the Revelation in the New Testament canon. The work has been regarded as sub-Christian, if not unchristian, in content and tone. These difficulties are not just a modern phenomenon. Revelation, after early acceptance, experienced problems in being recognised as canonical, especially in the East.[1] Also at the time of the Reformation one notes Luther's comments, "My spirit cannot accommodate itself to this book. There is one sufficient reason for the small esteem in which I hold it, that Christ is neither taught in it nor recognised".[2] Again, Calvin passed over the book in eloquent silence in his exposition of the New Testament. It is interesting that in June 2004 a new translation of the New Testament, *Good As New,* was published in England by retired Baptist minister, John Henson. This translation excludes the book of Revelation entirely from the canon on the grounds that it is contrary to the mind of Jesus, making particular reference to Luther's comments noted above. Our purpose is to survey recent discussion, to examine again the book that has been a "frightening enigma"[3] for many scholars. Even Ladd in his well-known commentary on Revelation could write, "Revelation is the most difficult of all New Testament books to interpret, primarily because of the elaborate and extensive use of symbolism. How are these strange, often bizarre symbols to be understood?"[4]

Excessive Emphasis and Unbalanced

C. H. Dodd claimed that the excessive emphasis on the future had the effect of relegating to a secondary place the elements of the gospel which are central to Christianity.[5] For Dodd, the book's conception of the character of God and his attitude to man falls far below the level, not only of the teaching of Jesus, which is said to reflect the new understanding of the infinite loving-kindness of our heavenly Father but also of the best parts of the Old Testament. Therefore:

> The God of the Apocalypse can hardly be recognised as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, nor has the fierce Messiah, whose warriors ride in blood up to their horses' bridles, many traits that would recall him of whom the primitive kerygma proclaimed that he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, because God was with him.[6]

Bultmann also adopted a similar stance, regarding the book as a "weakly Christianised Judaism" in which "the peculiar between-ness of Christian existence has not been grasped".[7]

However, rather than simply viewing the Apocalypse as "too Jewish" or "more Jewish than Christian" should we not take greater note of the Jewish roots of Christianity? The fact that particularly distinguished the early Christian community from Judaism was the way Christians understood traditional hopes were coming to fulfillment in Jesus the Messiah. Dodd may claim that the book's teaching falls far below the teaching of Jesus and the best parts of the Old Testament, but it should be remembered that in its judgement passages Revelation does exhibit a certain restraint when compared with other Jewish apocalypses, which detail the punishment of the wicked.[8] Even if many scholars hesitate to fully endorse Beasley-Murray's view that the judgement of the seals, trumpets and the bowls cover a short period in history,[9] the majority will see a great deal of recapitulation in these three series of judgements. Again, we should note that it is easy to lose sight of the fact that in the gospels, Jesus himself is presented as not always just expressing words of love, but also at times warnings of judgement.[10]

The Judas of the New Testament?

D. H. Lawrence's treatment of Revelation provided evidence that many modern writers have had negative views about the Christian Apocalypse.[11] He described the book as "the Judas of the New Testament". Lawrence explained that while authentic Christianity claims salvation is to be completed hereafter, but is already present and tangible now (11 Cor. 5:17, Col. 3:1), Revelation seems intoxicated with the future, the hope of reigning in glory hereafter compensating the frustrated desire to reign now.

He found in the book a vindictive harping on the torture and destruction of enemies (6:10, 14:11, 20; 18:20; 15:17-21), and claimed that the titles of God and of Christ in Revelation are always titles of power, never of love. He maintained that there are two kinds of Christianity in the New Testament: the Christianity of tenderness, focused on Jesus and the command to love one another, and the other focused on the Apocalypse, i.e. the undying will to power in man. So for Lawrence, the devil has slipped into the New Testament at the last moment, in apocalyptic disguise! "Just as inevitably as Jesus had to have Judas Iscariot among His disciples, so did there have to be a Revelation in the New Testament".[12]

In his commentary, Sweet responded to these criticisms.[13] As for the absence of a Christianity of tenderness, Lawrence has lost sight of the master image of the slain lamb, signifying the power of redemptive love. Again, he has also failed to grasp that the structure of the book makes the severity of chapters 6-20 subordinate to the pictures of creation and redemption in chapters 4-5 and of healing fulfillment in chapters 21-22.[14]

Pre-Christian?

A rather unique approach to the question of the Christian character of Revelation was found in J. Massyngberde-Ford's commentary.[15] She maintained that Revelation is not primarily a Christian book. The authorship of chapters 4-11 originated in a trance-like revelation to John the Baptist, recorded by a disciple, before Jesus commenced his public ministry. Chapters 12-22 was written by a disciple of John in the mid sixties, who may or may not have been converted to Christianity. Chapters 1-3, 22:16a, 20b, 21 were added later by a Jewish Christian disciple, who still retained the fiery, somewhat pessimistic outlook of his former master John. Therefore, Massyngberde-Ford placed Revelation earlier than the gospels and most of the New Testament. It was "a prophetic link between the Old and New Covenants, and prepares the way for the gospel".[16]

The problem is that there are clearly Christian statements and references to Jesus in the book, which many are not ready to explain simply as interpolations. Also the majority of scholars have not accepted Massyngberde-Ford's view that the lamb of chapter 5 is simply the unnamed divine-human Messiah of Jewish apocalypticism, with no direct reference to the triumph of Jesus and his sacrificial death. Jesus appears indeed to be the central figure in the Apocalypse and the determination of the future depends upon and issues from his enthronement and victory highlighted in chapters 4-5.

Massyngberde-Ford has more recently abandoned her "Baptist" thesis. David Aune explains that in the revision of her Anchor Bible Commentary she also has discarded her previous proposal of sources and regards Revelation as a unity, apart possibly for the seven letters.[17]

Margaret Barker in her recent commentary[18] has confessed a greater sympathy with Massyngberde-Ford than at her first reading of her above work. She now maintains that the Revelation is not a late text from Asia Minor, but the earliest material in the New Testament. It belongs to that time of religious and nationalistic fervour in Palestine, before the war with Rome. However, the book, contra Massyngberde-Ford's 1975 commentary, is made up of visions collected and preserved by John the Beloved Disciple and the prophets, the greatest of whom was Jesus himself. He had spoken of what he had seen and heard in heaven (John 3:32), but the people did not believe his witness. So Barker stresses that not all of Jesus' teaching was recorded in the New Testament. Some was deliberately kept secret,

especially the "secrets of the kingdom" (Mark 4:10-11), the heavenly places and the angels. Jesus in fact saw himself as the heavenly High Priest Melchisedek. Barker maintains that he appeared and was baptised when the Qumran Melchizedek text (11 Q Melck) claimed he would appear, the first week of the tenth Jubilee. He came to teach about the last days, establish the kingdom of God and make the great atoning sacrifice. The book of the Revelation unveils the things to come. For Barker, the seven letters are visions to his prophets in Jerusalem by Jesus, which he then sent to pillars of the churches in Asia Minor. Also before the destruction of Jerusalem, John received his own personal experience of the coming of Jesus. He refers to it as the vision of the Mighty Angel coming in the clouds of heaven (10:1). John received a new teaching, some to be kept secret and some to be used to reinterpret the teaching of Jesus.

Essential Truths or Timeless Relevance

Another approach to Revelation has been an appeal to the value of its "essential truths" or its "abiding message" for today. For example, Hunter in his work, *Interpreting the New Testament* suggested that John was involved in a particular historical situation and was sure that God is going to intervene catastrophically very soon, with the result that Rome's end and the world's end will come.[19] For Hunter, John's prognostications were not fulfilled as he expected. Rome did not fall. Yet if the seer's lurid vision of the outpouring of God's wrath on Rome was not literally fulfilled, his promises of divine succour for the stricken church were realised in the essential truths which he proclaimed through his apocalyptic imagery. Beneath that imagery the seer can emphasise that (a) all history is divinely controlled; (b) the world is a scene of great conflict between good and evil; (c) in the end of the day God will finally cope with evil bringing it to an end and (d) heaven is the most real place of all! According to Hunter, this "modern understanding" of Revelation makes us value it higher than the Reformers did.[20]

A similar approach is adopted by Sweet,[21] whose criticisms of Lawrence we have already noted. He asks whether this book, if based on the assumption, evidently wrong, that the world was about to end has any further importance or value? In reply, he likens Revelation to the writings of modern ecologists. Their predictions of disaster may fail to come off, but their basic perceptions of disaster may still be sound. Therefore, "in spite of its timebound imagery and unfulfilled promises of Christ's return, Revelation may still be saying things which are of timeless relevance to the world's health".[22]

Not all New Testament scholars will be content just to defend Revelation's place in the canon by affirming simply its "essential truths" or some "timeless relevance" for today.

Astral Prophesy

Bruce J. Malina has suggested a completely new approach to viewing the Book of Revelation.[23] He contends that John's milieu was one of fascination with the sky. The constellations, planets, comets, the sun and the moon were "beings" which controlled the destiny of man. John "the seer" had his own convictions of the sky and interpreted the planets not along the lines of the Greco-Roman myths, but the Jewish and Christian story of God's salvation. This "astral prophet" interprets the sky in accordance with what has come about through the advent of Christ. He rejects the categories "apocalyptic" and "eschatology" as the theological jargon of the nineteenth century which fossilise perception and misdirect interpretation.[24] For many scholars Malina's approach involves reading a great deal more astrological myth into Revelation than is clearly there. In addition, his attempt to move Old Testament prophetic books and Jewish apocalypses in an astrological direction and into astrological contexts has not been convincing to many. For example Beale is doubtful about finding a primary lens in an astral setting instead of a background in the Old Testament and Judaism.[25] He cannot see the altar of 6:9 as equivalent to the Milky Way, or the four horsemen and the seven trumpets and bowls as representing comets. Clear verbal allusions and parallels have long been recognised in the book.

Persuasive Rhetoric and New Interpretive Approaches

E. S. Fiorenza has produced an impressive number of articles on Revelation over many years.[26] In recent work she continues to acknowledge the difficulties theologians and preachers have with Revelation's "bizarre imagery and bloody content".[27] The approach to Revelation which Fiorenza now adopts can be described as involving "rhetorical reading". This "rhetorical" approach for Fiorenza does not mean interpreting Revelation as "mere rhetoric" or something that does not correspond to fact or truth. She proposes that "rhetorical" be understood in its classical sense of "the art and power of persuasion".[28] Revelation should be understood as a dramatic poem to be read aloud, whose language is to be approached as apocalyptic, which is, for her, not predictive descriptive language but mythological-imaginative language. It has been developed by John to persuade his audience to accept his prophetic interpretation of their situation.[29] It appears however, that for Fiorenza, when all is said and done, John's dramatic poem is only *his* interpretation.

Fiorenza's work is one of a number which involve new interpretative approaches to the book of Revelation. In the past the traditional method of interpreting the book was through a study of its history, i.e. its original author, sources he employed, purpose and the *Sitz im Leben* from which he wrote and what he intended to reveal to his original audience. This has been

called the diachronic approach. More recently commentators have adopted a new emphasis, i.e. what the text says to the reader in its present form. As the contemporary individual encounters the text he can be challenged, encouraged or comforted by the truth. This is identified as the synchronic approach.

Gilbert Desrosiers assesses the new methods of interpretation and their contribution to the study of Revelation.[30] First, narrative criticism belongs here, focusing as it does more on the story and what it is saying. The narrative critic is interested not in the historical author but rather in the image of himself he unconsciously projects upon the text, the implied author. Also there is a focus on the ideal reader that the writer had in mind. Therefore, the book of Revelation can be interpreted as consisting of a story with a plot (the battle between good and evil, God and Satan), setting, characters, with power in its images.

Liberation theologians have tended to consider the book as outlining an account of resistance which can be exemplified by how Revelation 6:9-11 is interpreted. The souls under the altar are identified as the poor, the landless who suffered at the hands of corrupt governments, powerful landlords, often backed by European and North American economic and political interests. For Desrosiers, their reading of Revelation is a powerful message that should be taken seriously, making western Christians deeply concerned for the poor of the world.[31] But many scholars, while sharing their concerns are not willing to so interpret this book in this manner.

Feminist Theology also when considering Revelation tends to concentrate on gender issues in the book. For example, 14:1-4 pictures the 144.000 "who have not defiled themselves with women". Desrosiers explains that Feminist critics see in this a condemnation of sexual contact with women and are not ready to understand it in a metaphorical sense of sexual immorality as a symbol for idolatry.[32] Again, in 17 John presents to his readers the Great Harlot. But feminist critics see her raped and killed in the end, all within God's plan. In 2:20 the false teaching leading astray the church in Thyatira is said to be propagated by "Jezebel" the prophetess. Adela Yarbro Collins considers John's name-calling has obscured the fact that we have here an important indication of the leadership of women in the early church of this region![33]

Feminists also find positive images of women in Revelation, i.e. 12:1, the woman clothed with the sun, who gave birth to the man-child; 19:6-9, the bride, the Lamb's wife. For Desrosiers the motive of all this is to affirm the spiritual equality of men and women in Christ.[34]

Care is needed with the new interpretations of Revelation. If certain guidelines are not followed then it is possible to read a great deal into the text. As Paul R. Noble has suggested:

> The text was produced in a particular historical-critical situation, knowledge of which is indispensable for a sensitive synchronic reading; and conversely, historical reconstructions of what lies behind a text are dependent upon an accurate literary appreciation of the texts final form.[35]

A Perceived Social Crisis in the Mind of John or the Community?

Biblical studies, which examine the social situation reflected in a particular work, have become quite popular in recent years. This "sociological perspective" has also been adopted in the study of the book of the Revelation. In addition, several recent discussions seem even less concerned with the historical or social realities of the situation as with John's perception of it. We have already mentioned Fiorenza, who sees the communities to which John wrote facing persecution in the reign of Domitian (AD 95), but focuses more on the "rhetoric" by which the author seeks to persuade them to remain faithful. Others are not so certain that actual persecution was even happening at the time. Collins can speak of a "perceived crisis" in the writer's own mind.[36] Although, admittedly, she does suggest that the situation may not be all that different from that in 1 Peter, i.e. the conviction from present experience that there were more and greater trials still to come.

Thompson in *Apocalypse and Empire*, clearly concludes that the crisis is only in the mind of John and his community, which he sees as a "cognitive minority" far from representative of Christians generally in Asia Minor.[37] This minority saw the main body of Christians who conformed to Asian society as compromisers, while the Jews were a synagogue of Satan. Ramsey Michaels also takes a similar approach.[38] He acknowledges that we have all known individuals in our own time who lead quiet and peaceful lives in prosperous suburban communities and yet can speak constantly of "spiritual warfare" or "attacks of Satan" and the like. He suggests that most of us would be reluctant to think of John as such a person. Yet he confesses that when the book of the Revelation is stripped of actual historical references "we are tempted to conclude that it is merely the expression of a mood or an eccentric world view and is not about anything".[39] We should, however note his acknowledgement that there is always the possibility, disturbing to some, that a "naive" approach to Revelation may be right after all.[40]

It is difficult to accept that this book is only about the expression of a mood when one sees the claims the author makes for the origin of his visions. They are God-given, through Jesus Christ (1:1) via an angel and in the Spirit (1:10; 4;2; 17:3 and 21:10). The conjunction of God, Jesus Christ and his angel has, as Beasley-Murray explains, the effect of according an unheard-of authority to the content of John's prophecy or "perceptions".[41]

In this context we should mention Stephen Smalley's recent book on Revelation, *Thunder and Love*.[42] He also focuses to a large extent on the Christian community in Asia Minor. This community is seen as beset with theological and ethical problems to which Smalley believes the apostle John gives an early response, before the composition of his Gospel or the Johannine Epistles. He seems able to explain any reference to a "vindictive

tone" in this book, which he sees for example in Rev. 18, as John's own reaction to his Patmos experience. "Such rage would be in line with the Psalmist's hatred of God's enemies (as in Ps. 58), and the holy anger of Jesus when he cleansed the temple (John 2:12-22)".[43]

A Truly Christian Book?

David Aune in the introduction to his three volume commentary discusses what he claims to be the stages or the history of the composition of Revelation, further identified as "diachronic composition criticism".[44] He sees the text as the end product of a literary process over an extended period of time. He suggests an initial stage in the composition, probably in the 1950s or 1960s, involving the production of twelve self-contained independent textual units, followed by the formation of a "first edition" and a "second edition". The first edition, thoroughly apocalyptic in character, comprised approximately 1:7-12a and 4:1-22:5, where the twelve units were included, and was possibly anonymous or pseudonymous. The second edition, which has a strongly prophetic and parenetic emphasis added 1:1-3, 1:4-6, 1:12b-3:22 and 22:6-21, plus a number of expansions in the text of the first section. The author-editor, whose Palestinian Jewish origin is demonstrated by his familiarity with the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, plus the influence of both Hebrew and Aramaic on his Greek style, moved from Judaism to Christianity at some time in his experience. This changing theological perspective explains why parts of Revelation have a thoroughly Jewish character and other sections a thoroughly Christian character. The author has become an early Christian prophet, demonstrated in the striking differences in the early and later Christology. In the "second edition" probably completed during the 1990s titles and attributes normally reserved for God in Judaism are applied to the exalted Christ.

With regard to the Christology of Revelation, to achieve the separation of two editions Aune must acknowledge the presence of "exceptions", "interpolations", "explanatory glosses" and "Christianising additions" in both, e.g. 1:4; 1:11; 11:8; 12:11; 13:10; 14:12-13; 16:6, 15; 17:6; 18:24 and 20:4-6. Not all scholars will be ready to follow him here, but appreciate the emphasis on the Christian nature of both "sections".

Certain earlier scholars have taken a more positive approach in seeking to arrive at an understanding of the Book of Revelation. G. R. Beasley-Murray argued for the acceptance of a truly Christian interpretation.[45]

He examined the supposed sub-Christian nature of its Christology, its eschatology and its doctrine of God, which has been claimed obscures the apostolic gospel, lying at the heart of the New Testament. In considering its eschatology, he compared the portrait of the Messiah as a lamb in the Jewish apocalyptic work, *Testament of The Twelve Patriarchs* (2nd century BC), with that in Revelation chapter 5. In the Testament of Joseph ch. 19 we have in fact two Messiahs, one from Aaron and another from Judah, a lamb

and a lion. The lamb arises to destroy the mighty nations and bring deliverance to Israel by way of orthodox conquest in battle. It has nothing to do with sacrifice, but is the young champion of the Flock of God. In Revelation 5 the two figures of the lamb and the lion are fused together and unlike the lamb in the *Testament of Joseph*, John's Lamb "stands as it had been slain", i.e. it has been slaughtered but lives again. Since Exodus typology is common in the Book of the Revelation, it seems clear that John intends his readers to recognise here also God's Passover Lamb, in 5:9 the Lamb ransomed men to God. The Warrior Lamb has thus conquered by accepting the role of Passover Lamb and so has made possible a second Exodus. For Beasley-Murray this transformation of the orthodox viewpoint of apocalyptic cannot be exaggerated. "It is more than the change of an apocalyptic figure into a Christian symbol for the Saviour. The very nature of eschatology and salvation has been transformed in this change of concept of the Messiah".[46] The eschatology of Revelation is proclaiming that the long awaited deliverance that initiates the new age has already been achieved!

Beasley-Murray also maintained that the Christology of Revelation is "very lofty".[47] Worship is offered to the Lamb such as belongs to God alone. He is Alpha and Omega (22:13), mediator of creation (3:14) as of redemption (ch. 5) and of the final kingdom (19:11ff), which is the kingdom of the Lord and of his Christ (11:15). Again, the doctrine of God in the Revelation should not be viewed by itself, but rather in the light of the Christology, soteriology and eschatology presented in the book. The God of creation (ch. 4) is also the God of redemption (ch. 5). It is God in Christ who delivers mankind and God in Christ who judges mankind.

For Beasley-Murray, Revelation's unfolding of the judgement of God has often been misunderstood. Although, as we have mentioned already, not all will readily accept this view, for him, the three series of messianic judgments, seals, trumpets and bowls, present *from three different aspects* a single, short period of judgement in history. Most however will be happy with Beasley-Murray's further insight that the brief period in Revelation of whatever length, ought to be seen as a repetition of Israel's experience in Egypt. Antichrist is another Pharaoh, who resists God and brings judgment on himself and those associated with him, like the plagues of Egypt. But, as in Exodus, the crucial event is not the plagues, but the redemption which brings deliverance.

These arguments which Beasley-Murray has presented make a strong case for seeing the true Christian nature of Revelation. Its purpose will not only have been the encouragement of the saints in their dark hour but, for him, the bringing of men to their senses (9:20) and to belief in the gospel (14:6), that they might share in the blessings of Christ's redemption (ch. 5) and future glory (ch. 21-22) – a truly Christian book.

Kümmel also examined the Apocalypse of John as an apocalyptic and prophetic book.[48] In a masterly way, he outlined how the Christ event has meant Christian modification to the apocalyptic view. As others have, he

found many links in Revelation with this genre. However, he stressed the fact that "at more than one point the seer of the Apocalypse frees himself in a characteristic way from the scheme of apocalyptic literature and sketches an historical picture of quite a different sort from Jewish apocalyptic".[49] Some notable differences are the fact that Revelation is not a pseudo-nymous book. John writes under his own name, he presents what he has seen, not secret wisdom allegedly from primitive times. The book is intended for a large circle and its literary framework, a preface (1:4f) and conclusion (22:21) is reminiscent of the epistolary form of much early Christian literature. For Kümmel, it is in its view of history that the Apocalypse contrasts even more sharply with the Jewish type. What we have in Revelation is "a total recasting of the apocalyptic view of history out of the Jewish into the Christian mold".[50] The apocalyptic view of history has received a new substructure through the historical appearance of Jesus. The apocalyptic character of Revelation is distinct from the normal pattern in Jewish apocalypticism where, for example, 1st century works like 1 Ezra or 2 Baruch were penned as if by their original heroes. Here in Revelation there is no look back into the past or predictions of the future written after the event or as Kümmel put it "no forward view out of the fictional past into the present. For John, the point of departure for his eschatological hope is rather the belief in the saving act of God in Jesus, and in his redemptive work which signifies victory".[51] In the light of this, we must acknowledge that while apocalyptic has been strongly influential in this book, it has experienced significant modification because of its presentation of Christ's appearance or God's intervention in world history in him. The apocalyptists looked forward to the end of the age for deliverance and blessing. John stresses that this deliverance has already been achieved in Christ.

Morris also acknowledges that with its interest in end-time events, its symbolism and the revelations made through angels, Revelation has generally been classed as an apocalyptic book.[52] Yet he sees a different emphasis here. Apocalyptists were normally very pessimistic about this age, with the present world dominated by evil. John however, while recognising that there will be an outbreak of increasing satanic activity in the last time, still sees history as the sphere in which God has accomplished his redemption. "The really critical thing in the history of mankind has already taken place, and it took place here, on the earth, in the affairs of men".[53]

These are vital insights from both Kümmel and Morris. It is so important to grasp the fact that for John the lamb has already been victorious and all future history flows from this. As one who shares "the tribulation and the kingdom" (1:9), he wishes to assure the threatened church that it is not Rome which rules, it is God who rules (see 4:2, where a throne stood in heaven), in fact, in his understanding, it is the Lamb who rules, for he has taken the book out of the right hand of him who sits upon the throne (5:7). The Lamb will execute the future purposes of God for the world. Recent commentaries have also adopted this understanding. Beale in his recent major work on Revelation clearly accepts this, for he entitles the

subsection on 5:1-14, "God and the Lamb are glorified because they have begun to execute their sovereignty over creation through Christ's death and resurrection, resulting in inaugurated and eventually consummated judgment and redemption".[54] Aune also in Excursus 5A, Christ as the Lamb, suggests that the author of Revelation has fused both sacrificial and apocalyptic or messianic associations together in the single figure of the Lamb.[55] The scroll of God's redemptive purpose given to the Lamb who is worthy consists of "the entire eschatological scenario extending from 6:1 through 22:9".[56]

Desrosiers, while acknowledging that many commentators have been uneasy with the images of God and Christ found in the book of Revelation, accepts that these images can be reconciled with Gospel passages and traditional faith.[57] The book is one of the most theocentric in the Bible, with God as Eternal ruler, Almighty and Creator. It also affirms the centrality of Christ and could be said to be more a book about him than the end of the world. Some of the titles bestowed upon Christ are original to this work. "The book is a repository of information concerning Christ's role in God's redemptive history as well as in his sharing in God's divinity and sovereignty".[58] In addition, the Holy Spirit is presented as the agent of John's visionary experience. In the letters he is mentioned at the end of each which suggests that he is closely associated with the prophetic mandate of John. The phrase "seven spirits of God" has been interpreted by certain scholars as affirming that the Spirit is God's and the Lamb's agent in the world.[59]

Finally, Smalley adds support for accepting Revelation as a Christian writing in concluding that the beloved disciple and apostle wrote both it and the Gospel on the basis of significant similarities between the two books.[60] He highlights the Exodus-Moses Motif, eschatological ideas, its presentation of Jesus as Word, Lamb and Son of Man, the fact that he is glorified also through his death and the manner in which they use early exegetical traditions.

Revelation therefore is an optimistic book and the message is that the God's purposes are sure and cannot be overthrown.

True Prophesy

The final positive approach to Revelation we should note is by Richard Bauckham. John is a prophet himself with a fresh revelation to contribute (1:1-4; 22:6, 9).[61] He was convinced that God's purposes in history were consistent and therefore His great acts of salvation and judgement in the past could be understood as models for what He would do in the future. John could therefore echo the Old Testament imagery and prophesies, for example, of the exodus or the fall of Babylon or Tyre. This does not mean that he was ignorant of their original reference to the great pagan powers contemporary with the prophets who pronounced these oracles. But he saw

Rome as the successor to Babylon in its political opposition to the church. For John, since the evil of such cities was echoed and surpassed by Rome, God's judgement would certainly also fall upon her. As Bauckham explains, "The city which the prophetic cap fits must wear it", and adds further, "This principle allows prophetic oracles to transcend their original reference, without supposing that somehow when Jeremiah referred to Babylon he meant Rome".[62] Again, as Bauckham explains, Old Testament prophetic promises frequently *exceeded* the fulfillment. In other words, what was promised was not fully realised in the return from exile and in this lay the roots of John's further visions as to how they would be fulfilled.

Bauckham also makes clear with regard to the prophecies of Revelation that the book still has a kind of *eschatological excess*. This is seen in the use of universalistic language that was not fully relevant at the time, since the church was not yet truly universal. It is however this language which gives it power to reach as far as the parousia.[63] For Bauckham, we can only understand this if we grasp the true nature of biblical prophecy. Biblical prophesy always both addressed the prophet's contemporaries about their own present and the future immediately impending for them, but it also raised hopes which meant that the readers were able to transcend their immediate relevance and continue to direct them and later readers to God's purpose for the future. This is also so when we come to the Book of the Revelation. Should the question be asked as to whether we can accept that Revelation is true Christian prophecy, Bauckham in *The Climax of Prophecy* maintains that this matter cannot simply be answered by the judgment of individuals or groups.[64] The use of the book as scripture by the church over many centuries in a wide variety of historical situations vindicates, for him, its ability to convey the Word of God to God's people today.

Concluding Comments

It was common in the past in seeking to interpret the book of the Revelation to outline four main approaches. Those who adopted the Historicist approach sought to find throughout the book the entire history of the church until the return of Christ. The Idealist view avoided having to find any such historical fulfillment in the symbols of Revelation and saw only a symbolical portrayal of the spiritual cosmic conflict between the kingdom of God and the powers of evil. The Futurist interpretation views the seven letters as successive periods of church history followed by the rapture of the church as John is caught up into heaven in 4:1. The rest of the book is future and leads up to the millennial reign of Christ, the judgement and the end of the world. Finally, the Preterist view understood the book as a "tract for the times" written in response to the persecutions which God's people were experiencing. The beast was imperial Rome and the Asian priesthood promoting the worship of Rome was the false prophet. The book

proclaimed that God would intervene, Christ would return, the beast would be destroyed and the kingdom of God would be established. The fact is that God did not intervene, Christ did not return and Rome was not overthrown. Many today who would adopt a positive approach to Revelation suggest that there may very well be elements in all four views that are useful in interpreting the book. However it seems important to clearly grasp that the book should be read in the light of its own time and the particular situation of the Christian community under the cruel might and power of the Emperor and Rome. The author's purpose is to give a prophetic interpretation of the difficult situation of the church in the end-time *from the perspective of the eschatological future*. The real point here is that to begin to understand Revelation one must be transported back to John's day and see him prophetically addressing the threatened church as to what will happen in the future. What we have here is "a prophesy cast in an apocalyptic mold and written down in a letter form".[65] Thus the people of God are being made aware how God will undertake for them, since the future of the world is in his hands. Rather that compromise with the Roman powers, which some may have been advocating, as the letters express, the Lord calls for faithfulness unto death (e.g. Rev. 2:10). Therefore, in understanding Revelation we must seek to get back into John's time and see what God revealed about the future from that perspective.

It is possible then that the best approach to Revelation is a blending of the preterist and the futurist view. A moderate futurist view will find no need to only see the church in chapters 1-3. The seven churches cannot be only a forecast of the seven ages of church history. They were actual churches in a threatened situation, but the church as the people of God will also be seen in the later chapters. The primary purpose of John throughout the whole book is to call God's people to be faithful until the final outworking of God's purpose and the end of the world.

It is here that the reader must appreciate the blending of two approaches, the diachronic approach and the synchronic. As one encounters the text today he must, as has been explained, read the message from John's point of view, but allow it to speak into the present situation and to be moved to remain true to the Lord God through its inspiring message.

It is time, in the light of our discussion to turn afresh to the book of the Revelation. Even if we will still have difficulties with not a few of the details of the book, the overall message (the Lord God omnipotent reigns) and it subsequent call to faithfulness is vital and no doubt will become increasingly more so, in the age in which we live.

Notes

1 For an outline of these difficulties see W. G. Kümmel, *Introduction to the New Testament* (London: SCM Press, 1975), 469ff, and R. H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation* (Grand Rapids, 1977), 36ff.

[2] Preface to the Revelation of St. John, 1522 ed. German Bible. See also G. R. Beasley-Murray, "How Christian is the Book of the Revelation?", in *Reconciliation and Hope: Essays presented to L. Morris*, R. J. Banks ed. (Exeter, 1974), 275.

[3] J. J. Megivern, "Wrestling with Revelation", *BTB* 8 (1978), 147.

[4] G. E. Ladd, *A Commentary on the Revelation* (Grand Rapids, 1972), 10.

[5] C. H. Dodd, *The Apostolic Preaching and its Development* (London, 1936), 86ff.

[6] Dodd, *The Apostolic Preaching*, 33.

[7] R. Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, 175.

[8] M. Himmelfarb, *Tours of Hell: The Development and Transmission of an Apocalyptic Form in Jewish and Christian Literature* (Philadelphia, 1983), 68ff.

[9] Beasley-Murray, "How Christian?", 146.

[10] E.g., see Matt. 8:11f; 11:5-24; 12:28-32, 38-42; 13:10-17, 24-30, 47; 18:1-9; 25:1-13, 14-30, 31-46.

[11] D. H. Lawrence, *Apocalypse* (Penguin Books, 1931).

[12] *ibid.* 14.

[13] J. M. Sweet, *Revelation* (London, 1979).

[14] *ibid.* 48f.

[15] J. Massyngberde Ford, *Revelation*, Anchor Bible Series (New York, 1975).

[16] *ibid.* 37.

[17] D. Aune, *Revelation*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas, 1997), p.cxi.

[18] M. Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000).

[19] A. M. Hunter, *Interpreting the New Testament* (London, 1958).

[20] *ibid.* 103ff.

[21] Sweet, *Revelation*, 2.

[22] *ibid.* 4.

[23] B. J. Malina, *On the Genre and Message of Revelation: Sky Visions and Sky Journeys* (Hendrickson Publishers, Massachusetts, 1995).

[24] *ibid.* 12.

[25] G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation* (Grand Rapids, 1999), 42.

[26] See E. S. Fiorenza, *The Book of the Revelation: Judgement and Justice* (Philadelphia, 1985) for a collection of her essays.

[27] Fiorenza, *Revelation: Vision of a Just World* (Edinburgh, 1993), 2.

[28] *ibid.* 20.

[29] *ibid.* 36.

[30] Gilbert Desrosiers, *An Introduction to Revelation* (London: Continuum, 2000), 72.

[31] *ibid.* 31

[32] *ibid.* 79.

[33] Adela Yarbro Collins, "The Book of Revelation", in John J. Collins (ed.) *The Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism*, vol. 1, *The Origins of Apocalypticism in Judaism and Christianity* (New York: Continuum, 1998).

[34] Desrosiers, *An Introduction to Revelation*, 81.

[35] Paul R. Noble, "Synchronic and Diachronic Approaches to Biblical Interpretation", *Literature and Theology* 7/2 (1993), 131.

[36] Adela Yarbro Collins, *Crisis and Catharsis: The Power of the Apocalypse* (Louisville, 1984), chapter 3.

[37] L. L. Thompson, *The Book of Revelation. Apocalypse and Empire* (New York, 1990). See ch. 12 and 13.

[38] R. Michaels, *Interpreting the Book of Revelation* (Grand Rapids, 1992), 49.

[39] *ibid.* 49.

[40] *ibid.* 49.

[41] G. R. Beasley-Murray, *The Book of the Revelation* (London, 1974), 51.

[42] S. S. Smalley, *Thunder and Love, John's Revelation and John's Community* (Milton Keynes, 1994).

[43] Smalley, *Thunder and Love*, 144, n. 137.

[44] Aune, *Revelation*, cxviii-cxxxiv.

[45] Beasley-Murray, "How Christian?", 275-284 and *Book of the Revelation*, 23-29 and 125-126.

[46] *ibid.* 279.

[47] *ibid.* 282.

[48] Kümmel, 458f.

[49] *ibid.* 459.

[50] *ibid.* 461.

[51] *ibid.* 461.

[52] L. Morris, *Apocalyptic* (London, 1973).

[53] *ibid.* 93.

[54] Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, 337.

[55] Aune, *Revelation*, 368.

[56] *ibid.* 374.

[57] Desrosiers, *An Introduction to Revelation*, 95-100.

[58] *ibid.* 97.

[59] *ibid.* 99.

[60] S. Smalley, "John's Revelation and John's Community", in *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library* 69 (1987), 549-71.

[61] R. Bauckham, *The Theology of the Book of the Revelation* (Cambridge, 1993).

[62] *ibid.* 153.

[63] *ibid.* 156.

[64] R. Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy* (Edinburgh, 1993), 9.

[65] D. A. Carson, D. J. Moo, L. Morris, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992).

Ekklesia: An Eastern Orthodox Perspective

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Jaroslav Pelikan argues that "as the twentieth century began, each of the major churches of the divided Christendom was obliged, for reason of its own, to address anew the doctrine of the church, its place in the mind of Christ, its essential message, its nature and identity, its mark of continuity, its authority and structure."[1] Whilst the doctrine of the church has been part of the Christian confession ever since the Apostle's Creed,[2] ecclesiology, as a doctrine, has developed in sporadic episodes within the history of Christianity.[3] It is the particular mark of the twentieth century to be called the century of ecclesiology: practically speaking, the doctrine of the church has become the leitmotif of this age.[4] It appears, however, that three prominent factors have influenced the development of the doctrine of the church during this period: ecumenism, modernism/postmodernism and internal dynamic.

Firstly, the shift from an ecclesiology of expansion (mission) in which emphasis is laid upon denominationalism and distinctiveness[5] toward an ecclesiology of integration and interdenominational cooperation represents without doubts one of the greatest achievements of the ecumenical movement ever since Edinburgh 1910 ("Faith and Order") and Stockholm 1925 ("Life and Work").[6] However, since the ecumenical movement had to address, also, those issues that caused division within the Church, the initial quest for unity took often the form of apologetic debates. Consequently, each tradition (church) appealed to the past in order to legitimise its present and, eventually, to offer its own model as a valid solution to the quest for the unity of the Church.[7]

Whilst the intended unity is far from being realised, Kärkkäinen argues that the ecumenical movement has been effective both to create a platform for dialogue and to stimulate theological clarifications and rapprochements between different traditions within Christendom.[8] However, from an Orthodox perspective, the crux of the ecumenical dialogue appears to be the question of authority. Thus, Konstantinidis affirms that:

> It is well known that from the Orthodox point of view the question of authority in the Church is not only considered as an absolutely critical point of dialogue, but it also stands out as a condition of entering into theological dialogue with them [Catholics and Protestants].[9]

Secondly, the Church has also been confronted by Modernism and Post-modernism; confrontation which among other aspects questioned both the Church's claim to possess the truth,[10] and its role within the society.[11] Consequently, from a modern perspective, the Church came under close scrutiny of the secular society: its teachings were subjected to the same criteria of truth that operate in the scientific world.[12] Especially, the development of the social sciences, the rising of Rationalism and literary and historical criticism have determined the Church to formulate the essential meaning of the Christian Tradition and also its relations, whether positive or negative, to contemporary thought.[13] Alternatively, the culture of Post-modernity with its pluralism and relativism has challenged the Church's claim to the absolute truth.[14]

And thirdly, the internal dynamics characterised by the emergence of separatist, reforming, or renewal groups has influenced the doctrine of the church yet from another perspective; namely the relevance of the Church's teachings and praxis for its own members.[15]

One particular aspect which has been challenged in this multi-faceted encounter between Christianity and the above mentioned factors concerns the role of the Church in establishing what is authoritative for faith and morals; in other words to establish a dynamic relation between theological epistemology (*episteme*) and religious practice (*praxis*) [16]. Thus, if *episteme* is concerned to identifying the truth ("ultimate reality"), and *praxis* with the way in which that truth becomes normative, *ecclesia* represents that community which, being more or less institutionalised, exercises authority in maintaining the balance between them. However, this raises the question concerning the Church's credentials to exercise such authority.

Whilst in the Western world it appears to be impossible to give a clear answer to this question due to the fact that the views of scholars vary not only from one tradition to another, but even within the same tradition,[17] the Orthodox Church claims to speak with one voice due to the fact that regardless "temporal circumstances [...] Orthodox Christians live in the same ecclesial and spiritual worlds."[18] Moreover, Gavin argues that:

> There can be only one Church founded by our Lord, and in that Church there can be but one single Faith. This one Church is the Orthodox Church; the one Faith is the whole Orthodox doctrine.[19]

The Orthodox affirm that the unique authority of their Church to present the apostolic faith and practice lies in its christological and pneumatological constitution, that is, the Church is at the same time both the Body of Christ and the Temple of the Spirit.[20] In other words, the Church's authority to maintain the balance between *episteme* and *praxis* is determined by the relations between Christ and the Church, on the one hand, and between the Church and the Spirit, on the other. Methodologically, these relations will be investigated from the perspective of space between the "Head" and the "Body", and between the "spirit" and the "Institution." The mode in which

this space is conceived in ecclesiology can lead not only to relatedness and freedom between the divine and human spheres but also to separation or fusion. If the space is too big it leads to separation and the Church becomes only a social-historical institution, whereas if the space is too small it leads to merging and the Church runs the risk to undertake the prerogatives of Christ and the Spirit.

Orthodox Ecclesiology: The Body of Christ

Timothy Ware writes that "the Orthodox Church in all humility believes itself to be the "one, holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church", of which the Creed speaks: such is the fundamental conviction which guides Orthodox in their relation with other Christians."[21] Consequently, the Orthodox Church attempts to demonstrate that its faith and practice express the infallible embodiment of the divine truth. As Bulgakov puts it: "The Church, truth, infallibility, these are synonymous."[22] This brings us to the question of Orthodox ecclesiology.

Historical Background

Compared with the Western Church, the Eastern Church knows only relatively feeble development in ecclesiology.[23] Not only that the Greek Fathers and the Ecumenical Councils produced no systematic presentation of the doctrine of the church, but Zizioulas affirms that "during the patristic period, there was scarcely mention of the being of the Church."[24] One implication of this fact, as Florovsky points out, is the impossibility to find an Orthodox definition of the Church that could claim any doctrinal authority.[25] Consequently, Jay asserts that the Church is "a fact that is lived rather than theologised or dogmatised."[26] Similarly, Bulgakov affirms that one recognises the Church not by definition but by experience.[27]

However, in the last few decades of the twentieth century a large number of books have been published which illustrate the emergence of a vigorous theology of the church within Orthodoxy. Three major trends are particularly influential. Firstly, there is a trend which attempts to establish the identity of the Orthodox ecclesiology in contrast with Catholicism and Protestantism.[28] Consequently, it emphasises certain distinctive features of Orthodoxy such as; iconography, the transfiguration of creation, a spirituality of *kenosis* and *theosis*, a personalist view of society and the ecclesiology of *sobornost*.[29] Secondly, there is another movement which explores both the internal and external factors which have generated the contemporary crisis of the Orthodox Church.[30] The third group emphasises the role of trinitarian theology as the ground for a new approach to the ontology of the Church. The contribution of this group to contemporary theology, particularly its role in the shift from an christological to a trinitarian ecclesiology,[31] is openly acknowledged by Western scholars.[32] However, it has to be pointed out that

the simple rediscovery of the doctrine of Trinity does not in itself resolve the problem of ecclesiology. C. E. Gunton, for instance, argues that the Eastern Fathers failed to carry through their theology of the Trinity by developing a theology of community, conforming instead "their views to those of the world around, with baneful consequences."[33] Similarly, Nissiotis affirms that the Orthodox tradition has "excellent theological models of a very profound ecclesiology but fail to use them, fail to put them to work."[34]

In conclusion, one can observe that within traditional Orthodoxy there is neither an "officially accepted" definition of the Church, nor a universally accepted ecclesiological model. Therefore this paper interacts with those views and authors that are widely accepted by the Eastern Orthodox churches.

A Theandric Being – The Body of Christ

Description

Orthodox theologians underline the fact that the Church is not a purely "earthly" institution to be studied as a social group, or as a simple historical reality.[35] Rather it is a "human-divine" being which although not exactly definable nevertheless can be described.[36] In the Byzantine tradition, for instance, the Church is

> a sacramental communion with God in Christ and the Spirit, whose membership (the entire Body of Christ) is not limited to the earthly *oikoumene* ("inhabited earth") where law governs society, but includes the host of angels and saints, as well as the divine head."[37]

This sacramental communion, affirms Bulgakov, has a visible part and an invisible one: the visible part is the historical church whereas the invisible is the universal church.[38] Alternatively, other Orthodox scholars reject this combination of Roman Catholic and Neo-Platonic categories[39] and point out that there is but one Church, visible and invisible. The distinction is made simply from a human point of view.

> The Church, the Body of Christ, manifests forth and fulfils itself in time, without changing its essential unity or inward life of grace. And therefore, when we speak of "the Church visible and invisible", we so speak only in relation to man.[40]

Whilst avoiding a dualistic image, this view "spiritualises" the Church as a changeless being[41] running thus the "danger of historically disincarnating the Church."[42] Alternatively, other Orthodox scholars argue that a correct approach to ecclesiology has to include both the mystical and historical aspects of the Church, as well as to establish the link between them.[43]

The Body of Christ

The key toward an understanding of Orthodox view of the Church is the synergistic concept "divine-human" or "theandric", developed by analogy to the Christological definition of Chalcedon.[44] The Church, as a divine-human being, belongs to the history of salvation as the fifth event after Christ's Incarnation, Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension into heaven.[45] Therefore the Orthodox speak about the Church as the body of Christ.[46] As Staniloae puts it: "the Church is Christ, understood as Christ extended into humanity."[47] This thought is deeply rooted in patristic tradition, especially in the writings of Cyril of Jerusalem, Cyril of Alexandria, Augustine and Anastasius of Antioch.[48]

> **(God) assumed our whole race in a single individual, having become the first-fruits of our nature [...] For his purpose was to raise up in its totality what has fallen. Now what had fallen was our whole human race. Therefore he mingled himself completely with Adam, Life itself with the dead, in order to save him. He penetrated into the totality of him to whom he was united, like the soul of the great body, vivifying it throughout, communicating life to it wholly in all its perceptive faculties. This is why mankind is called "the body of Christ and his members in particular" (1 Cor. 12:27), the body of the Christ who both diffuses himself equally in all together, and dwells individually in each one according to the measure of his faith.[49]**

Between Christ and the Church there is the closest possible bond; Christ "mingled" himself totally with men in so far that it is impossible to distinguish between them. In fact Andruțos affirms that the Church is

> **the centre and the organ of Christ's redeeming work; [...] it is nothing else that the continuation and extension of His prophetic, priestly, and kingly power [...] The Church and its Founder are inextricably bound together [...] The Church is Christ with us.[50]**

And as such, continues Andruțos, the Church has the same authority as its Founder.[51] Moreover, founded upon the mystery of God itself, and God's being as communion, the Church is also a reflection of the Holy Trinity and the life of God, which is love and communion.[52] Communicated to the Church through the work of the Son and the Spirit,[53] God's love expands to the entire creation in order to bring it to communion with God.[54] In other words, the Church is also the organ of the Holy Spirit to mediate the saving energies of Christ, that is, to lead the whole creation to *theosis*.[55] Orthodoxy regards *theosis*[56] as being, first and foremost, the result of the work of the Holy Spirit. Lossky writes, "The Son has become like us by the incarnation; we become like Him by deification, by partaking of the divinity of the Holy Spirit."[57] Similarly, Stavropoulos affirms that *theosis* is offered by Christ, but realised only with the Holy Spirit: "Only in the Holy Spirit will we reach the point of becoming gods, the likeness of God."[58] In other words, Christ has achieved our salvation and deification in an objective way whilst the Spirit applies it in

a subjective way, through the agency of the Church, to our persons.[59] However, Meyendorff argues that "it is not the Church which through the medium of its institutions bestows the Holy Spirit, but it is the Spirit which validates every aspect of Church's life, including the institutions."[60] Thus, one can be confident that one does receive grace by means of sacrament, precisely because it is through the Church that the Spirit works.

> The Church is God's temple, a sacred enclosure, house of prayer, a gathering of the People, body of Christ, his Name, Bride of Christ, which calls the people to penitence and prayer; purified by the water of holy baptism and washed by his precious blood, adorned as a bride and sealed with the ointments of the Holy Spirit [...] The Church is an earthly heaven wherein the heavenly God dwells and walks; it is an anti-type of the crucifixion, the burial and the resurrection of Christ [...] The Church is a divine house where the mystical living sacrifice is celebrated [...] and its precious stones are the divine dogmas taught by the Lord to his disciples.[61]

However, since the Church is a divine-human being, the question which arises concerns not only the link between these two aspects, but also the distinction between them. In other words, can one predicate to the human aspect of the Church whatever is true about its divine element? These aspects will be analysed in the following methodological, theological, and sociological observations.

Observations

Methodological

The first observation related to Orthodox ecclesiology refers to the use of images in order both to safeguard the mystical character of the Church and to rule out any tendency to reduce it to a simple, historical institution.[62] However, due to the fact that little has been done by Orthodox scholars[63] in the area of hermeneutics[64] in general and linguistics in particular,[65] the critical reflection that lead to a more accurate discrimination between the valid and invalid application of images,[66] is, to a large degree, absent from the Orthodox writings.[67] Thus, whilst the New Testament contains, for example, dozens of images of the Church[68] such as bride of Christ, building, plant, priesthood, race, temple, people of God, it appears that Orthodox ecclesiology prefers the figure of the Church as the Body of Christ. Paradoxically, however, the concept of "the Body of Christ" has not been carefully studied from an exegetical point of view within the Orthodox tradition.[69] Ware, for example, speaks in one place about the "Body of Christ" in two different senses: first, the eucharistic Body of Christ, and second, the Church as the Body of Christ.[70] The relation between the two is a causal one: "*Because* we eat from the one loaf, *therefore* we are made one Body in Christ."[71] In order to support his view, Ware quotes from G. Galitis:

> [...] Communion [...] makes us according to Paul one body, the Body of Christ. And this Body of Christ [...] is the Church. Consequently, participating in the Body of Christ, that is in the Church, and partaking of [...] the Body of Christ through the Eucharist are two ways of same thing [...] Thus the Eucharist is the *Sacrament of the Church itself.* It is through this Sacrament that the Church realises itself, that the Body of Christ is built and held together.[72]

However, if the eucharistic Body of Christ and the ecclesial Body of Christ are one and the same thing, then the logic of the discourse is absurd. The Church eats the Church in order to build up the Church.

Elsewhere, Ware makes an attempt to distinguish between the three senses of the concept "Body of Christ": incarnated Christ, the ecclesial Body of Christ, and the eucharistic Body of Christ. First, the distinction between the incarnated Christ, and the ecclesial Body of Christ:

> The dogma of Chalcedon must be applied to the Church as well as to Christ. Just as Christ the God-Man has two natures, divine and human, so in the Church there is a synergy or cooperation between the divine and the human. Yet between Christ's humanity and that of the Church there is this obvious difference, that the one is perfect and sinless, while the other is not yet fully so. Only a part of the humanity of the Church, the saints in heaven, has attained perfection, while here on earth the Church's members often misuse their freedom.[73]

This explanation, indeed, attempts to differentiate between the incarnated Christ and the ecclesial Body of Christ. In order to defend his view that the Church is the Body of Christ, Ware uses a Platonic image of the Church with two distinct entities: the invisible perfect and the visible imperfect. However, in reality Ware identifies the Church with its changeless nature.

> [...] The sin of man cannot affect the essential nature of the Church. We must not say that because Christians on earth sin and are imperfect, therefore the Church sins and is imperfect; for the Church, even on earth, is a thing of heaven, and cannot sin. Saint Ephraim of Syria rightly spoke of "the Church of the penitents, the Church of those who perish", but this Church is at the same time the icon of the Trinity. How is it that the members of the Church are sinners, and yet they belong to the communion of saints?[74]

In order to answer this question, Ware quotes Meyendorff:

> The mystery of the Church consists in the very fact that *together* sinners become *something different* from what they are as individuals; this "something different" is the Body of Christ.[75]

Consequently, in affirming that the nature of the Church is not affected by the life of its members, Ware and Meyendorff follow a Platonic approach in which the invisible essence of the Church subsists independent of its particular visible mode(s) of expression. Alternatively, the argument that in mysterious way sinners *in communion* becomes saints suggests that the

divine element "so overwhelmed humanity that it became a mere cipher."[76] As Bria argues:

> The key issues facing Eastern Christianity today are linked with the tension between a defensive and magisterial way of presenting the church as a symbolic, mystical reality, and the history, life and mission of the concrete communities that form the visible church. We cannot idealise the church by ignoring the people who carry the burden of tradition in different situations. We must reflect on what people are actually doing to identify what is emerging in contemporary Christianity.[77]

And further,

> A deeper comprehension of holiness, repentance and sin in the institutional life of the church is needed. The view that the objective holiness of the church cannot be spoiled by the sin of Christians fails to take account of ambiguities in the life of the church, the sinful duality of human history.[78]

However, the view that the Church is a perfect sinless being, totally separated from the sinful life of its members still dominates the Orthodox ecclesiology and constitutes the main argument of the doctrine of the infallibility of the Church.[79] As Meyendorff puts it:

> The mystery of the church consists precisely in the fact that sinner, coming together, form the *infallible Church*. They constitute the Body of Christ, the Temple of the Spirit, and the Column and Foundation of Truth. No analogy can possibly be drawn between individual member, who is a sinner, and the Church, the Body of Christ.[80]

Second, the relation between the incarnated Christ and the eucharistic Body of Christ is described by Ware using the words of the Orthodox Liturgy: "Thine of Thine own we offer to Thee, in all and for all."[81] Ware interprets the line from the Liturgy as follows:

(1) We offer *Thine of Thine own*. At the Eucharist, the sacrifice offered is Christ himself, and it is Christ himself who in the Church performs the act of offering: he is both priest and victim." Thou thyself art He who offers and He who is offered."[82]

(2) We offer *to Thee*. The Eucharist is offered to God the Trinity, not just to the Father but also to the Holy Spirit and to Christ himself. Thus if we ask, *what* is the sacrifice of the Eucharist? *By whom* is it offered? *To whom* is it offered?, in each case the answer is Christ.

(3) We offer *for all*: according to Orthodox theology, the Eucharist is propitiatory sacrifice offered on behalf of both the living and the dead.[83] In this explanation, however, there is no distinction between the incarnated Christ and the eucharistic Body of Christ. Consequently, the discourse runs thus: Christ sacrifices Christ and offers himself to Christ. In addition, if we keep in mind that there is no distinction between the incarnated Christ and the ecclesial Body of Christ, then the discourse is even more confusing: Christ

sacrifices Christ and offers it to Christ in order to be eaten by Christ.[84] These methodological aspects have significant theological implications to which we now turn.

Theological

First, the theandric ecclesiology built around the analogy of the "body" offers a model of union between God and man: Christ is the "Head" and the Church is the "Body". Yet, in the absence of a clear distinction between Christ and the Church the analogy of the body runs the risk of an "ecclesio-Christomonism."[85] In fact Barth warns against such a risk when he writes that the Church: "Even in its invisible essence it is not Christ nor a second Christ, nor a kind of extension of the one Christ."[86]

Consequently, the figure of the "body" needs to be balanced by other images that convey clearly the idea of *otherness* of the Creator in relation with creation. For example, the Catholic Church adopted since Vatican II the image of the "People of God" which allows for a clearer distinction between the Church and its divine head.[87] Lossky himself tried to resolve this aspect when he turned toward the image of the "bride." Thus, he affirms that Christ is the head of the body in the same sense in which the husband is the head of a single, unique body of the man and woman in marriage.[88] Nevertheless, Lossky realised that the union of a man and a woman in marriage implies two distinct persons (*prosopa* or *hypostaseis*). The problem, then, is to identify the hypostasis of the Church. Drawing from the patristic interpretation of the Song of Songs as referring to Christ and the Church, Lossky considers that the hypostasis of the Church in this case can be neither the hypostasis of the Son nor of the Holy Spirit but only the hypostasis of the Mother of God.

Thus it would seem that until the consummation of the ages, until the resurrection of the dead and the Last Judgement, the Church will have no hypostasis of her own, no created hypostasis, no human person having attained to perfect union with God. And yet, to say this would be to fail to perceive the very heart of the Church, one of the most secret mysteries, her mystical centre, her perfection already realised in a human person fully united to God, finding herself beyond the resurrection and the judgement. This person is Mary, the Mother of God [...] In two perfect persons, the divine person of Christ and the human person of the mother of God, is contained the mystery of the Church.[89]

The "spiritualised" hermeneutic of the Fathers[90] combined with Lossky's attempt to offer the Church a hypostatic identity, led to one of the most unfortunate conclusions reached by an Orthodox theologian. Besides the fact that Lossky personifies the Church into the hypostasis of Mary and thus transforms Mary into a kind of "macro-anthropos", he also portrays the relation between Christ and his mother in concepts that resemble the story of Oedipus marrying his mother.[91]

Alternatively, most Orthodox theologians accept the image of the "body" without the necessary correctives for a balanced ecclesiology and

consequently divinise the Church. The Church is one organism with its head. In fact some theologians went as far as to speak about the Church as a new hypostatic union.[92] Elsewhere Lossky asserts:

> Thus, all that can be asserted or denied about Christ can equally well be applied to the Church, inasmuch as it is a theandric organism, or more exactly, a created nature inseparably united to God in the hypostasis of the Son, a being that has, as He has, two natures, two wills and two operations which are at once inseparable and yet distinct.[93]

This approach, however, fails to draw the distinction between the incarnated Christ and the ecclesial Body of Christ.[94] Moreover it leads easily to the personification of the Church either as "the Incarnation itself"[95], or as a new hypostatic union.[96] Consequently, the uniqueness of the historical Christ is endangered by this fusion between the incarnated Christ and the Church. Further, the divinization of the Church leads to a takeover by the "body" of the attributes of its "head." Subilia points towards the shift from Christ to Church, from apostles to bishops, from revelation to dogma:

> The grand New Testament phrases, "through Christ", "in Christ", "with Christ", "in the sight of Christ" undergo a change from a Christological to ecclesiological reference, and take on the meaning, "through the Church", "in the Church", "with the Church", "in the sight of the Church."[97]

One other aspect of an ecclesiology construed by analogy to the body refers to the role of the Holy Spirit. In the absence of a clear distinction between Christ and the Church, the Orthodox emphasis on pneumatological ecclesiology leads to the conclusion that the Holy Spirit is the life-principle of the Church.[98] Bulgakov argues that:

> The Church, in her quality of Body of Christ, which lives with the life of Christ, is by that fact the domain where the Holy Spirit lives and works. More: the Church is life by the Holy Spirit because it is the Body of Christ.[99]

The risk of this approach lies in the fact that there is no space between the Holy Spirit and the institution in order to make possible a critical reflection upon the ministry of the Church. Moreover, the Church is perceived as the only channel (instrument) whereby the Spirit realises the relation between creation and deification.[100] Yet, whilst such an approach provides a theological framework for the relation between creation and new creation,[101] the absence of space between the Church and the Spirit leads to realised eschatology.[102]

Sociological

According to the Orthodox tradition the threefold office of Christ (Prophet, King and Priest) is continued by the Church.[103] Scholars agree that in order to

fulfil its role the Church has always had some forms of organizational features such as recognised ministers, accepted confessional formulas and prescribed forms of public worship.[104] This is what is generally called the institutional aspect of the Church. However, historically speaking, this institutional aspect developed from a charismatic and diversified form into a more hierarchical model.[105] Thus the teaching, sanctifying and governing ministries of the Church became the [exclusive] prerogatives of the hierarchy being thus institutionalised.[106] Subsequently, the Church developed the view that the institution is both sacred and represents the sphere of the operation of the Spirit.

> From the christological point of view, as the body of Christ and the grounds of organised sacramental life, the church is a sacred institution; from the pneumatological point of view, as the temple of the Spirit and the field where the Spirit of God operates, the Church is a continuous Pentecost.[107]

Hence the Orthodox agree with Cyprian's conclusion that *Extra Ecclesia nulla salus*,[108] or, "a man cannot have God as his Father if he does not have the Church as his Mother."[109] Similarly, Florovsky asserts that "outside the Church there is no salvation, because *salvation is the Church.*"[110] This view is supported, among others, by Pheidas who argues that the canonical limits of the Church coincide with its charismatic boundaries.[111] However, there are other Orthodox theologians, such as Zizioulas, Karmires, and Metropolitan Damaskinos of Switzerland, who are in favour of a distinction between the canonical limits and the charismatic boundaries of the Church.[112] Thus, whilst Orthodox theologians agree that the Orthodox Church is the only true Church[113] and that outside the Church there is no salvation, Ware asserts that there are disagreements among them concerning the situation of those who do not belong to their communion.[114] First, there is a "rigorous group" who hold that "since Orthodoxy is the Church, anyone who is not an Orthodox cannot be a member of the Church."[115] This view seems to be consistent with the Orthodox teaching that *Extra Ecclesia nulla salus*, because the Church mediates the saving grace of Christ through the Holy Spirit. But once this view is accepted it leads to strong institutionalism, which implies that the work of the Holy Spirit is circumscribed to an institution. Second, the "moderate group" holds that it is true to say that Orthodoxy is the Church but false to infer from this that those who are not Orthodox cannot possibly belong to the Church.[116] This view allows for a little more space for the freedom of the Spirit, but it does not clarify the relations between the Spirit and the institution; between the believer and the institution; and between the believer and the Spirit. The clarification of these aspects would imply a significant shift in Orthodox theology. So far the preparatory commission of the great and holy Council of the Orthodox Church produced a document (1971) on *oikonomia* in the Orthodox Church, in which it affirms that "the Holy Spirit acts upon other Christians in very many ways, depending on their degree of faith and hope."[117] However, Zizioulas believes that thus far Orthodox theology does not have a satisfactory solution to the problem of the

limits of the Church and their implications for those individuals and communities who exist outside those limits.

> It is certainly not easy to exclude from the realm and the operation of the Spirit so many Christians who do not belong to the Orthodox Church. There are saints outside the Orthodox Church. How can we understand that theologically? How can we account for it without saying that the canonical limits of the Church are not important?[118]

The best way to describe this model would be "open ended institutionalism", which without doubt renders a more favourable ecumenical rapprochement between different traditions.

Furthermore, an institutionalised approach to ecclesiology promotes what can be called an "institutionalised hermeneutic." According to this approach the task of the theologian is "to show how a doctrine defined by the Church is contained in the sources of Revelation."[119] There is however a difference between the "institutionalised hermeneutic" of an "over-institutionalised" Church, as in Roman Catholicism, which tends to canonical formulation of its entire teaching inventory, and the "moderate institutionalism" of the Orthodox Church, where the dogmas includes only the major doctrines of the Church. Bulgakov affirms that the Orthodox Church has only a small number of dogmas that are absolutely binding for the whole church; the rest of its teaching is in the area of *theologoumena* (theological opinions).[120] However, Orthodox theologians do not speak with a single voice on this issue. Those who upheld the "one-source" theory of revelation affirms that, strictly speaking, the minimum dogmatic teaching consists of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan symbol and the definitions of the Ecumenical Councils,[121] whilst other who adhere to the "two-source" theory of revelation argue that "the dogmatic teaching of the Orthodox Catholic Church is identical with the teaching of the one, ancient and undivided Church, this teaching having been preserved integrally and without change over the centuries in Orthodoxy."[122] And further, the "Orthodox dogma is the sum total of all the truth of Scripture and Tradition, all Orthodox doctrine is "equally obligatory for all believers, as absolutely necessary for salvation."[123] Yet, in spite of these contradictions the Orthodox Church still considers that it contains the entire deposit of truth which is binding on all believers.[124] In this context, Stăniloae explains the task of the Orthodox theologian:

> Thus Orthodox theology still remains faithful to the dogmatic formulations of the first centuries of the Church, while nevertheless making continuous progress in their interpretation and in the revelation of that ineffable mystery which they only suggest [...] Orthodox theology today understands that every dogmatic term and every combination of dogmatic terms indicates the boundaries and safeguard the depths of the mystery in the face of a one-sided and rationalist superficiality that seeks to dissolve it.[125]

In other words, Orthodox theologians are free to find new meaning in old dogma, but are not free to question or critique them. As long as theologians accept the binding character of the definitions of the councils, they are free to hold contradictory views on the meaning of these definitions. This is indeed one of the advantages of the "moderate institutionalised hermeneutic", although any dogma that has unsatisfactory and contradictory explanations will lose its internal authority and subsequently will rest upon the external authority of the office.

Notes

[1] J. Pelikan, *Christian Doctrine and Modern Culture (since 1700)*, vol. 5, in *The Christian Tradition. A History of the Development of Doctrine* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), 282.

[2] "I believe [...] in the Holy Church". See J. H. Leith (ed.), *Creeds*, 22-25.

[3] The initial credal formula "I believe in the Holy Church" had been expanded into "I believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church" and formed the underlying ecclesiological foundations during the Patristic period. The later episodic development includes the issue of baptism of heretics, the authority of the bishops and patriarch, the schism between East and West in 1054. It was during the Protestant Reformation that the doctrine of the church became the subject of explicit theological concern, but during the following centuries (seventeenth and eighteenth) ecclesiology became relatively peripheral, with the exceptions of the vigorous polemics generated by Jansenism, Puritanism and Pietism. The doctrine of the church, however, reawakened during the nineteenth century as a result of the emergence of the strong theological schools of the Russian Orthodoxy (Khomiakov, Soloviev), the Tübingen School in German Catholicism (Mohler), German Lutheranism (W. Loehe), the Anglican Oxford Movement (H. Newman) and the Mercersburg theology in the Reformed Church of America (Schaff). See J. Pelikan, *Christain Doctrine and Modern Culture (since 1700)*, 289.

[4] Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *An Introduction to Ecclesiology* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2002), 7. See also J. Pelikan, *Christian Doctrine and Modern Culture (since 1700)*, 289.

[5] See H. Küng, "A New Basic Model for Theology: Divergencies and Convergencies", in H. Küng and D. Tracy (eds), *Paradigm Change in Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1989), 450ff; A. M. Allchin, *Participation in God* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1988), 25.

[6] See W. Walker (ed.), *A History*, 686-694.

[7] The recapitulation of the entire doctrinal tradition from the preceding centuries became a priority task of each major church in the attempt to prove its continuity with the apostolic Church. Therefore the criterion of apostolic continuity has been re-analyzed under the heading: Apostolic Scriptures, Apostolic Tradition and Apostolic Office. In an oversimplified form each of the three components of the definition of the apostolic continuity has became dominant in one of the major branches of Christendom. Thus, the Protestant Reformation elevated the authority of Scripture over that of Tradition and Apostolic Office. The Roman Catholic Church, although professed to retain all three criteria of apostolic continuity (as defined by the Council of Trent) in fact elevated the authority of the Apostolic Office in laying the dogma of papal infallibility. Meanwhile the Orthodox Church has elevated the authority of Tradition as the sole norm of biblical interpretation and the limits within which the bishops can exercise their authority. See J. Pelikan, *Christian Doctrine and Modern Culture (since 1700)*, 282-283. D. Stăniloae, *Theology and the Church*, 221; C. Patelos (ed.), *The Orthodox Church in the Ecumenical Movement* (Geneva: WCC, 1978), 9; R. Rouse and S. C. Neill (eds), *History of the Ecumenical Movement (1517-1948)*, vol. 1; H. E. Fey (ed.), *A History of Ecumenical Movement*, vol. 2.

[8] Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *An Introduction*, 8.

[9] C. Konstantinidis, "Authority in the Orthodox Church", in T. F. Torrance (ed.), *Theological Dialogue Between Orthodox and Reformed Churches*, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1985), 74. See also Patriarch Pimen of Moscow, "An Orthodox View of Contemporary Ecumenism", in C. Patelos (ed.), *The Orthodox Church*, 331.

[10] The question concerning religious truth came about in a variety of forms ranging from doubt about the existence of God. See M. Peterson (eds), *Reason and Religious Belief* (Oxford: OUP, 1991), through epistemological aspects of knowledge that it is not scientifically proved, to the analysis of the cognitive aspects of religious language. See A. Platinga and N. Wolterstorff (eds), *Faith and Rationality* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983); J. Runzo, "World Views and the Epistemic Foundation of Theism", in *Religious Studies* 25 (1989), 31-51.

[11] C. E. Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 2: "Enlightenment and Alienation"; M. Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge: The Tacit Dimension*; T. F. Torrance, *Belief in Science and in Christian Life: The Relevance of Michael Polanyi's Thought for Christian Faith and Life* (Edinburgh: The Handel Press, 1980).

[12] A. Walker, *Enemy Territory: The Christian Struggle for the Modern World* (London: Holder & Stoughton, 1987), 190-216.

[13] See H. R. Niebuhr, *The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry* (New York: Doubleday, 1956), 17-27; *Christ and Culture* (New York, 1951); A. Walker (ed.), *Different Gospels* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1988), 4; P. Berger, *Facing up to Modernity* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1979).

[14] See D. Wells, "Introduction: The Word in the World", in J. H. Armstrong (ed.), *The Compromised Church* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1998), 30-31.

[15] Within the Catholic Church the movements that emerged from the theological controversies about infallibility and authority are very significant. See H. Küng, *The Church-Maintained in Truth* (London: SCM Press, 1980), 75-87. Within the Protestant churches the emergence of the conservative evangelical movement in 1970s with it's emphasize on the Bible, mission and evangelism reached its climax at the International Congress on World Evangelisation, held at Lausanne in 1974. The Congress adopted the "Lausanne Covenant" which affirms "the divine inspiration, truthfulness and authority of both Old and New Testament Scriptures in their entirety as the only written Word of God without error in all that it affirms, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice". See J. D. Douglas, *Let the Earth Hear His Voice* (Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1975), 3-9. The issues raised at Lausanne in 1974 had a strong impact on the World Council of Churches because some of the latter's members were also involved at Lausanne. Subsequently the encounter between "Conservatives", "Liberal" and "Liberation" theologies took a more dynamic aspect. See D. McGavran (ed.), *The Conciliar-Evangelical Debate: The Crucial Documents, 1964-1976* (South Pasadena, 1977); C. R. Padilla (ed.), *The New Face of Evangelism: An International Symposium on the Lausanne Covenant* (London, 1966). Another aspect of the dynamic of internal movements is the rapid growth of Pentecostal denominations and charismatic movement which spread rapidly within Episcopal, Lutheran, Anglican, Methodist, Catholic, Presbyterian churches. See A. C. Piepkorn, *Profiles in Belief: The Religious Bodies of the United States and Canada*, vol. 3 (San Francisco, 1979). Special attention was given to the place of worship in the life of the Church leading to the exploitation of the "ways of worship" not only for ecumenical purposes but also for a redefinition of the Church as "the worshipping community." See J. Pelikan, *Christian Doctrine and Modern Culture (since 1700)*, 295. Within the Orthodox Church besides the tension brought about by the Uniate Church, there are other separatist groups of the Old Believers in Russia (the *popovtsi*, who accept priests but derives their own episcopate from a Greek bishop, the *bezpopovsti*, the "priestless ones" who hold that the apostasy had destroyed the orders of the Church and limited themselves to such rites that the laymen could administer), and the *duckhobors* (a variety of extreme groups, some of whom picked up pagan practices). Further, there were long lasting tensions between the "Tichonite" Church in USSR, which co-operated with the Communist regime, the Regenerated Church organised in opposition to the Patriarch Tichon the Karlovici Synod in exile which did not recognised the hierarchical authority of neither of these two churches in Russia. In addition, Metropolitan Eulogius of Paris broke his relation with Metropolitan Sergius of Moscow and the former became the exarch of the Ecumenical Patriarchate for the Russian Orthodox in Western Europe. In Greece the internal dynamic revolved around "Zoe" Brotherhood which attempted to form an "elite" of preachers for the Orthodox local Churches and the movement that emerged from the ministry of Apostolos Makrakis who was eventually condemned by the Holy Synod. See W. A. Visser 't Hooft, *Anglo-Catholicism and Orthodoxy* (London: Student Christian Movement, 1933), 79-84; George A. Maloney S. J., *A History of Orthodox Theology Since 1453*, 56-87; 190-193; W.

Walker, *A History*, 677-678. In Romania within the Orthodox Church there is a dynamic renewal group called "The Lord's Army". See P. I. David, *Călăuza*, 165-186.

[16] D. G. Bloesch, *The Church: Sacraments, Worship, Ministry, Mission* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2002), 31-33.

[17] Within Western Christianity in both its major traditions (Roman Catholic and Protestant) there are a variety of trends such as: hierarchical authoritarian institutionalism (Roman Catholic), conservative evangelicalism (Protestants), liberation theologies, clublike (social) approach, and the belief that the Church should dissolve its function totally into the world. See P. Hodgson and R. Williams, "The Church", in P. Hodgson and R. King (eds), *Christian Theology*, 223-246.

[18] T. Hopko, "God and Gender: Articulating the Orthodox View", in *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 37/2-3 (1993), 141.

[19] F. Gavin, *Some Aspects of Contemporary Greek Orthodox Thought* (Milwaukee: Morehouse Publishing Co., 1923), 259-263.

[20] Zizioulas asserts that the Church is in-stituted by Christ and con-stituted by the Spirit. See J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, 140.

[21] T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, 315.

[22] S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, 64.

[23] Kelly thinks that Eastern ecclesiology remained immature and archaic, having more a popular form. See J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 401. See also V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, 9-25; C. S. Calian, *Icon and Pulpit* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1968), 46.

[24] J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, 15. This is one of the aspects that Harnack underlies pointing out that even John of Damascus in his treatise *On the Orthodox Faith* failed to develop an Eastern Orthodox ecclesiology. See A. Harnack, *History of Dogma*, vol. 3, 235; J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, 79. There are, however, in Greek Patristic literature, writings that use a language of imagery to describe the Church as a divine-human mystery. Among these are the *Mystagogies* (mystical interpretation of the Church), commentaries on the liturgy and symbolical descriptions of different parts of the building. Maximus the Confessor expounds the symbolism of the Church as building in which the nave represents the earthly and the sanctuary the heavenly, both being brought together in the act of worship. As the image of God who is all in all and holds all things together in unity, the Church unites within single body men of every age, condition and race by the grace and energies of God. The Church is also the image of the cosmos because like the universe unites things visible and invisible: the visible things of the Church (hierarchy and sacraments) are symbols of invisible, spiritual realities. As the image of man, as God intended him to be, the nave, the sanctuary and the altar are the image of the body, soul and mind (nous). Man must approach God through his mind which is represented by altar. Also Maximus sees the nave and the sanctuary as images of the Old and New Testaments, and he interprets the liturgy as symbolically representing the whole saving work of Christ. See Maximus the Confessor, *Mystagogy*, *PG* 91, 658-718. Even today there are Orthodox theologians who consider that any other approach to ecclesiology is inappropriate and could be compared with a monk trying to live outside monastery. See I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, 1.

[25] See G. Florovsky, *The Universal Church in God's Design* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1948), 43. This is not an exclusively Orthodox problem, because, generally speaking, there are disagreements among theologians from different backgrounds concerning the possibility of an adequate definition of the Church. The discussion revolves very much around the issue if a being with both "natural" and "supernatural" essence can be properly expressed in words. See Y. Congar, "The Church: The People of God", in *Concilium* 1 (1965), 1, 7-19; A. Dulles, *Models of the Church: A Critical Assessment of the Church in All Its Aspects* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 1976), 14-15; M. D. Koster, "Ekklesiologie im Werden", in H.-D. Langer and O. H. Pesch (eds), *Volk Gottes im Werden: Gesammelte Studien* (Mainz, 1971), 245-253.

[26] Orthodox writers have produced nothing comparable with the ecclesiological treatises of the Western theologians. It is interesting to observe that John Damascene in his treaties On the Orthodox Faith has no chapter on the Church. See Yves Congar, *L'Ecclesiologie du haut Moyen-Age* (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1968), 324-325; E. G. Jay, *The Church: Its Changing Image Through Twenty Century*, vol. 1 (London: SPCK, 1977), 148.

[27] S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, 3. In contrast to those who advocate for a feeble development of ecclesiology in the Orthodox tradition, there are other authors who suggest

that the Eastern Fathers approached the doctrine of the church from a different perspective than the Western Church. This difference goes back to Ignatius and Tertullian. The first emphasized the importance of the apostolic office and the apostolic tradition whereas the second saw the Church in the light of the relationship between the theory and the practice of penance. Moreover, Meyendorff asserts that the Eastern Church was more interested in communion with God in Christ through the Holy Spirit (a Trinitarian ecclesiology) while in the West the accent has been laid upon the institutional aspect of the Church. See J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, 79; V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, 174-175; B. Hagglund, *History of Theology* (St. Luis: Concordia Publishing House, 1966), 107-108.

[28] Some of the best known approaches to Orthodox ecclesiology include: "ecclesiology of Sobornost" of Bulgakov, Zernov, Florovsky and Stăniloae; the "eucharistic ecclesiology" of Afanasieff and Zizioulas; the "pneumatological ecclesiology" of Nissiotis and the "ecclesiology of communion" of Clement. See I. Bria, "Living in the One Tradition", in *The Ecumenical Review* 26/2 (1974), 224-233; V. T. Istavridis, "The Orthodox Churches in the Ecumenical Movement, 1948-1968" in H. E. Fey (ed.), *A History of the Ecumenical Movement*, vol 2 (London: SPCK, 1970), 287- 309; *The Orthodox Church and the Churches of the Reformation* (Geneva: WCC, 1975; M. Asad (ed.), "Tradition and Renewal in Orthodox Education" (consultation report published by the WCC, 1977); C. Patelos (ed.), *The Orthodox Church in the Ecumenical Movement: Documents and Statements 1902-1975* (Geneva: WCC, 1978); G. Tsetsis (ed.), *An Orthodox Approach to Diakonia* (Geneva: WCC, 1978); *Orthodox Thought: Reports of Orthodox Consultations Organised by the WCC, 1975-1982* (Geneva: WCC, 1983); I. Bria (ed.), *Go Forth in Peace: Orthodox Perspectives on Mission* (Geneva: WCC, 1986); O. Clement, *Deux Passeurs: Vladimir Lossky et Paul Evdokimov* (Geneva: Labour et Fides, 1985); G. Limouris (ed.), *Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation: Orthodox Insights* (Geneva: WCC, 1990); *Icons: Windows on Eternity* (Geneva: WCC, 1990).

[29] I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, 2.

[30] Bria points towards a more critical attitude undertaken at several theological centres, including Thesaloniky (Greece), Holy Cross (Brooklin, Massachussetts, USA), St. Vladimir (New York) and New Valamo (Finland). See I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, 2.

[31] The renewed interest for Trinitarian theology has been observed among all the major churches during the first part of the twentieth century: Protestant, see K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics* (Edinburg: T&T Clark, 1975, first German edn in 1932), vol. 1, part 1, ch. 2; Catholic, see K. Rhaner, *The Trinity* (London: Burns and Oates, 1970), and Orthodox, see V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (London: James Clarke, 1957). More recently there have been treatises representing the trinitarian theologies of the main churches of Christendom: Roman Catholic, see W. Kasper, *The God of Jesus Christ* (London: SCM Press, 1984); W. J. Hill, *The Tree-Personed God. The Trinity as the Mystery of Salvation* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1982), Orthodox, see J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion. Studies in Personhood and the Church* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1985), Lutheran, see R. W. Jenson, *The Triune Identity* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982), Reformed, see J. Moltman, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God* (London: SCM Press, 1981), and Anglican, see D. Brown, *The Divine Trinity* (London: Duckworth, 1985).

[32] See C. E. *Gunton, The Promise of Trinitarian Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1990), 1-16. Following the decline of the Augustinian theology, with all its implication for ecclesiology, many Western theologians have turned to the Greek patristic tradition, particularly to their doctrine of the Trinity. See C. E. Gunton, *Yesterday and Today. A Study of Continuities in Christology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 1-8; "The Church on Earth: The Roots of Community", in C. E. Gunton and D. W. Hardy (eds), *On Being the Church* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1989), 48-81.

[33] "The Church on Earth", in C. E. Gunton and D. W. Hardy (eds), *On Being the Church*, 50. There are aspects of Orthodox ecclesiology which reflect non-Christian ontologies. Gunton mentions two such rival ontologies that filled the vacuum created by the failure of the Church to implement into its ecclesiology the doctrine of the Trinity: the first is the neoplatonic doctrine of reality as graded hierarchy and the second is the legal-political approach introduced mainly by Cyprian. See C. E. Gunton, "The Church on Earth: The Roots of community", in C. E. Gunton and D. W. Hardy (eds), *On Being Church*, 53.

[34] N. A. Nissiotis, "The Theology of the Church and Its Accomplishment", in *The Ecumenical Review* 29/1 (1977), 63-76, here 75.

[35] Orthodox scholars reject the idea of the Church as a "perfect society" developed since the Middle Ages, especially by the Roman Catholic Church. Thus Bellarmine affirms that the Church is a society "as visible and palpable as the community of the Roman people, or the Kingdom of France, or the Republic of Venice." See Robert Bellarmine, *De controversiis*, tom. 2, liber 3, *De ecclesia militante*, cap. 2 (Napoli: Giuliano, 1857), vol. 2, 75. Consequently, the Church as a historical society has to have "a constitution, a set of rules, a governing body, and a set of actual members who accept this constitution and these rules as binding on them [...]" See B. C. Butler, *The Idea of the Church* (Westminster: Newman, 1962), 39.

[36] V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, 174-175. If the Church is a theandric being, the epistemic approach has to be appropriate for this task. The approach that seems to receive a wide support among theologians is the method of analogy (images) and description. It appears that the idea of some kind of description of the Church that would lay down the foundation for further reflections on the Church is gaining more and more support with the scholars. Among the metaphors taken into account "the People of God", "the Body of Christ", "the Mystical Body of Christ", and "the Bride" are further explored. See H. Rikhof, *The Concept of Church* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1981), 220.

[37] J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, 79.

[38] S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, 5-6.

[39] This approach goes back to Clement of Alexandria and Origen who distinguished between the "church on earth" (the historical, empirical, observable) and the "church on high" (the mystical, spiritual body of Christ, which exist in heaven), and was theologically developed by Augustine who described the visible and invisible church. See Origen, *On First Principles*, G. W. Butterworth (ed.), Preface, 2 (London: SPCK, 1936), xl, xli; *Hom. on Ex.* 9,3; *PG*, 12, 297-396; *Hom. on Jeremiah* 20, 3; *PG*, 13, 255-606; Augustine, *On Baptism* 3, 18, 26, in NPNF, 1st series, vol. 4, 443-444; *City of God* 10, 6 in *NPNF*, 1st series, vol. 2, 183-184; *On Rebuke and Grace*, 9, 22, in *NPNF*, 1st series, vol. 5, 474, 480; *On the Gift of Perseverance*, 2, in *NPNF*, 1st series, vol. 5, 525-552. Bulgakov is of the opinion that the Church existed even in Paradise, before the fall, and it continue to exist throughout the Old Testament and even in the darkness of paganism as a "pagan sterile church". See S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, 5-7. For a comparison with Origen's Platonism see W. H. C. Friend, *The Rise of Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 376-384; G. Maloney, *A History of Orthodox Theology*, 62-65; T. Hopko, "Foreword" in S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, xii.

[40] A. Khomiakov, *The Church is One*, section 1. Cf. T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, 247.

[41] Cyril of Alexandria, *In Isaiam* V.I, 52.

[42] J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, 20.

[43] See J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, 80; I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, 42.

[44] Calcedonian Christology develops the image of "one person in two natures", humanity and divinity united in a unique hypostatic reality of the "God-man". It is important to observe the distinction made between "nature" and "hypostasis" previously being considered synonyms. Now Christ was described as "one hypostasis (or prosopon) but he exists in two natures". See J. Breck, "Reflection on the 'Problem' of Chalcedonian Christology", in *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 33 (1989), 147-157; A. T. Hanson, "Two Consciousness: The Modern Version of Chalcedon", in *SJT* 37, 471-483; G. Havrilak, "Chalcedon and Orthodoxy: Christology Today", in *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 33 (1989), 127-145; J. Moulder, "Is Chalcedonian Christology Coherent?", in *Modern Theology* 2/4 (1986), 285-305; W. Walker (ed.), *A History*, 162-172; P. Gregorios, (ed.), *Does Chalcedon Divide or Unite? Toward Convergence in Orthodox Christology* (Geneva: WCC, 1981).

[45] D. Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă*, vol 2, 195.

[46] E. G. Jay, *The Church*, 150.

[47] Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică*, vol. 2, 208-209.

[48] E. G. Jey, *The Church*, 150.

[49] Anastasius of Antioch (d. 599), *De nostris dogmatibus veritatis*, Oratio III; *PG*, 98, 383f.

[50] C. Andruţos, *Dogmatic Theology* (Athens, 1907), 262-265. Cf. T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, 245.

[51] H. Andruţos, *Simbolica*, I. Moisescu trad. (Craiova: Editura Centrului Mitropolitan al Olteniei, 1955), 66.

[52] A. Keshishian, "The Assembly Theme: More Orthodox Perspectives", in *The Ecumenical Review* 3-4 (1990), 197; Bishop Maximos Aghiorgoussis, "East Meets West", 9.

[53] Lossky argues that this love is communicated to the Church through the "two economies" of the Son and the Spirit. The economy of the Son achieves salvation (or redemption) in our nature, whereas the economy of the Spirit brings deification (theosis) to our person. See V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, 174-195. Zizioulas criticises Lossky's sharp distinction between the "two economies" and proposes a new synthesis between christology and pneumatology. Accordingly, "the economy [...] insofar as it assumed history and has history, is only one and that is the Christ event" (Z. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, 130). The work of the Holy Spirit is just the opposite: "The spirit is beyond history, and when he acts in history he does so in order to bring into history the last days, the eschaton" (J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, 130). In other words, Christ is the One who institutes the Church, whereas the Spirit is the One who constitutes the Church, as a communion and an eschatological community. See J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, 140.

[54] The Orthodox Church follows the Patristic trinitarian view according to which the Father is the "primordial cause" of creation, the Son is the "creative cause", and the Holy Spirit is the "perfecting cause" of creation. In other words, the world is created for and destined to the life of *theosis*, that is life in communion with God. See Bishop Maximos Aghiorgousis, "East Meets West", 6.

[55] "Mediating salvation to the world on behalf of its founder, Christ, the church sanctifies and transfigures the world, leading it to a life of theosis in communion with God, and leading it to God's holy kingdom, of which the church is a partial manifestation, epiphany, and inauguration." See Bishop Maximos Aghiorgoussis, "Orthodox Soteriology", in J. Meyendorff and R. Tobias, (eds), *Salvation in Christ: A Lutheran-Orthodox Dialogue* (Augsburg: Fortress, 1992), 52.

[56] "God became man so that man might became God." Athanasius, *De Incarnatione*, 54. For a clear account of the doctrine of theosis in its Eastern Orthodox form, see G. I. Mantzaridis, *The Deification of Man: St. Gregory Palamas and Orthodox Tradition* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1984).

[57] V. Lossky, *In the Image*, 109.

[58] Archimandrite Christophoros Stavropoulos, *Partakers of the Divine Nature*, S. Harakas trans. (Minneapolis: Light and Life Publishing Co., 1976), 29.

[59] Bishop Maximos Aghiourgousis, "Orthodox Soteriology", in J. Meyendorff and R. Tobias (eds), *Salvation in Christ*, 48.

[60] J. Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church*, 28.

[61] *Historia ekklesiastike kai mystike theoria* (Intro.), a work attributed to Germanus (634-733), Patriarch of Constantinople, in *PG* 98, 383f. See also D. Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică*, vol. 2, 208.

[62] A. Dulles, *Models of the Church*, 16.

[63] See "Consultation on "Education in the Orthodox Church" (Utrecht, 1972), in C. Patelos (ed.), *Orthodox Church*, 101-102; H. S. Alivistos, "Orthodoxy, Protestantism and the World Council of Churches", in C. Patelos (ed.), *Orthodox Church*, 199-208.

[64] Bria argues that one of the reasons why the Orthodox Church feels marginalised within WCC is the fact that the Orthodox members are not familiar with the theological framework and methodology used by WCC. See I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, 46.

[65] In the recent years some Orthodox authors tried to overcome this problem. See C. Scouteris, "Image, Symbol and Language in Relation to the Holy Trinity", in *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 36/3 (1992), 257-267.

[66] See A. Dulles, *Models of the Church*, 20; W. G. Jeanrond, *Text and Interpretation as Categories of Theological Thinking* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1988).

[67] There are recent attempts amongst the Orthodox theologian to give a more careful reflection to the use of images in Orthodox theology. See S. A. Harvey, "Feminine Imagery for the Divine: the Holy Spirit, the Odes of Solomon, and Early Syriac Tradition", in *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 37/2-3 (1993), 111-140; T. Hopko, "God and Gender: Articulating the Orthodox View", in *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 37/2-3 (1993), 141-182; V. Harrison, "The Fatherhood of God in Orthodox Theology", in *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 37/2-3 (1993), 183-212.

[68] P. Minear lists some ninety-six such images. See P. Minear, *Images of the Church in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960).

[69] For Paul the figure "the body of Christ" seems to be at the root of his Christology. Thus for him the suffering, death and resurrection of Christ were not merely historical events, but also cosmic events. Consequently, Christ's disciples must suffer with Christ, die with Christ (in baptism) and rise with Christ in order to reproduce in some sense Christ's life in their life. Using the figure "the body of Christ" or "members of his body", the Apostle Paul described the Christian as someone who is "in Christ." See also, R. Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament* (London: SCM Press, 1952), vol. 1, 192, 302-308; W. G. Kummel, *Theology of the New Testament* (London: SCM Press, 1974), 210. See A. Richardson, *Introduction to the Theology of the New Testament* (London: SCM Press, 1958), 286-290; L. Thornton, *Common Life in the Body of Christ* (Dacre Press, 1941), 298; E. Mersch, *The Whole Christ* (Dobson Books, 1949); J. A. T. Robinson, *The Body* (London: SCM Press, 1952); H. Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology* (London: SPCK, 1977), 366-380.

[70] K. Ware, "Church and Eucharist, Communion and Intercommunion", in *Sobornost*, 7/7 (1978), 550-565 (here 555-556).

[71] K. Ware, "Church and Eucharist", 553.

[72] G. Galitis, *The Problem of Intercommunion from an Orthodox Point of View. A Biblical and Ecclesiological Study* (Athens, 1968), 14-16, Cf. K. Ware, "Church and Eucharist", 553.

[73] T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, 248.

[74] *ibid.* 248.

[75] J. Meyendorff, "What Holds the Church Together", in *Ecumenical Review* 12 (1960), 298. Cf. T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, 248-249. Similarly, in his *Catholicity and the Church*, Meyendorff affirms that "she [the Church] is what the Holy Spirit makes her to be. In her being she is not man-made. Human beings and human communities can rebel against her, but they cannot change her being". See J. Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church*, 10.

[76] Position held by classic Apollinarianism. See C. E. Gunton, *Yesterday and Today*, 92.

[77] I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition*, 42.

[78] *ibid.* 95.

[79] See J. Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, 221.

[80] *ibid.* 221.

[81] T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, 292.

[82] From the priest prayer before the Great Entrance. Cf. T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, 293.

[83] *ibid.* 293.

[84] More recently Zizioulas pointed out that the concept "body of Christ" has been used in Christology (the historical Jesus), ecclesiology and Eucharist, without a clear distinction between them and also without an attempt to provide a synthesis. J. Zizioulas, "Ecclesiology. The Mystical Body of Christ", paper presented at King's College, 16th February, 1993.

[85] This tendency is clearly seen in the *Mystagogy* of Maximus the Confessor when he asserts that in relation to God the universe is arranged in concentric circles about a centre which is occupied by the Church. See Maximus the Confessor, *Mystagogy*, cap. II-IV, V, *PG*, 91, 658-718. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, 178. It appears that Zizioulas is aware of the risk of identifying the Church with Christ if the figure "the body of Christ" is taken too literally or in a metaphysical sense. Consequently, Zizioulas suggests than any attempt to explain the meaning of the concept "the Body of Christ" has to maintain the tension between created and uncreated, divine and human. See J. Zizioulas, "Ecclesiology. The Mystical Body of Christ."

[86] K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1962), vol. IV/3ii, 754.

[87] *Lumen gentium*, Art. 9.

[88] V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, 192.

[89] *ibid.* 193-195.

[90] See Cyril of Alexandria, *Hom. to Mary*, 4; Ambrose, *On Virginity*, 1,6,31 in *NPNF*, vol. X, 368; Augustine, *PL*, 38.1010.

[91] Hopko asserts that it "occurred in Orthodox Christian tradition, particularly in mystical contemplation and doxological poetry, a 'conflation' of the Holy Spirit, the Church and Mary in a complex of symbolism and images which manifest what may indeed in some sense appropriately be called the 'divine feminine'." See T. Hopko, "God and Gender", 158.

[92] A. Dulles, *Models of the Church*, 51.

[93] V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, 187. "The Church, in its Christological aspect, appears as an organism having two natures, two operations and two wills." See V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, 186.

[94] Lossky speaks about the "enhypostasized" union between Christ and the Church. See V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, 185.

[95] See S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, 2.

[96] V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology*, 186-187.

[97] V. Subilia, *The Problem of Catholicism* (London: SCM Press, 1964), 121.

[98] See A. Dulles, *Models of the Church*, 46.

[99] S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, 2.

[100] Bishop Maximos Aghiorgoussis, "Orthodox Soteriology", p. 48; G. Tsetsis (ed.), *Orthodox Thought: Reports of Orthodox Consultations Organised by the WCC, 1975-1982* (Geneva: WCC, 1983), 38ff. "Throughout the two thousand years of its tradition, the Orthodox church has been deeply conscious of the fact that the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost inaugurates a new time for the whole humanity and cosmic history. From Pentecost on, the church-and with it the whole creation-has been experiencing the pains of childbirth "until Christ is formed in each one of us, the single humanity is restored and the universe becomes, in Him, by a Christological cosmology, the Body of Christ." See B. Bobrinskoy, "The Holy Spirit-in the Bible and the Church", in *The Ecumenical Review* 42-43 (1990), 357-362 (here 361).

[101] J. Breck, "Divine Initiative: Salvation in Orthodox Theology", in J. Meyendorff and R. Tobias (eds), *Salvation in Christ*, 118.

[102] See J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, 219.

[103] Bishop Maximos Aghiorgoussis, "Orthodox Soteriology", 44-45.

[104] See A. Dulles, *Models of the Church*, 32.

[105] See J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity*, 39-40.

[106] See A. Dulles, *Models of the Church*, 34-35. The difference between institution and institutionalism has been characterised by Bishop Emile De Smedt by three terms: clericalism, juridicism and triumphalism. Generally speaking, the Orthodox Church opted for a "moderate institutionalism" and consequently its clericalism, juridicism and triumphalism are not as developed as in Roman Catholicism. See Bishop Emile De Schmedt of Bruges, in *Acta Concilii Vaticani II*, vol. 1, part 4 (Vatican City: Typis Polyglottis, 1971), 142-144.

[107] Bishop Maximos Aghiorgoussis, "Orthodox Soteriology", 52.

[108] Cyprian of Carthage, *Epist.* 71, 2, in *ANCL*, vol. VIII, 257-259.

[109] Cyprian of Carthage, *On the Unity of the Catholic Church* 6, in *ANCL*, vol. VIII, 382.

[110] G. Florovsky, "Sobornost: the Catholicity of the Church", in *The Church of God*, 53. Cf. T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, 351.

[111] V. Pheidas, "The Limits of the Church" paper presented at the Third International Theological Conference of the Orthodox Theological Schools (1987), 14. Cf. E. Clapsis, "Boundaries of the Church", in *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 35/2 (1990), 120.

[112] See E. Clapsis, "Boundaries of the Church", 117-120.

[113] See S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, 1, 9; E. Clapsis, "Boundaries of the Church", 122.

[114] See T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, 315-316.

[115] T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, 317.

[116] *ibid.* 316.

[117] *Toward the Great Council. Introductory Reports of the Inter-Orthodox Commission in Preparation for the Next Great and Holy Council of the Orthodox Church* (London, 1972), 45. Cf. E. Clapsis, "Boundaries of the Church", 122.

[118] J. Zizioulas, "Orthodox Ecclesiology and the Ecumenical Movement", in *Sourozh* 21 (1985), 22-23.

[119] Pius XII, *Humany generis* (1950), No. 36.

[120] See S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, 107-109.

[121] S. Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, 100.

[122] J. Karmiris, *A Synopsis of the Dogmatic Theology of the Orthodox Catholic Church* (Scranton: Christian Orthodox Edition, 1973), 1.

[123] J. Karmiris, *A Synopsis*, 2.

[124] Stamoolis argues that some documents of the past are considered secondary simply because they were influenced to a certain degree by the particular historical setting and thus express the spirit of their own age. See J. Stamoolis, *Orthodox Mission*, 17. Alternatively, Gavin asserts: "There can be only one Church founded by our Lord, and in that Church there can be but one single Faith. This one Church is the Orthodox Church; the one Faith is the whole Orthodox doctrine." See F. Gavin, *Some Aspects of Contemporary Greek Orthodox Thought*, 259-263.

[125] D. Stăniloae, *Theology and the Church*, 215.

Augustine Again?

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Can the "Augustine era" ever be surpassed? This is a question worth reflecting on today, when some criticise Augustine virulently and others idolise him. It is an apt question, especially now when we see a resurgence of interest in his work within the university context.

Augustine's perspective on time, philosophy of language, relation between faith and reason, problem of evil and original sin, predestination and free will, ontology, triadology, psychology, ctisiology, epistemology, hermeneutics, ethics, sociology and political philosophy, namely almost every field addressed by Augustine via his tireless pen, rekindles passions and summons scholars in dialog.[1] Recently, a list was developed regarding Augustine's "top ten" contributions to philosophy.[2] It includes his theory of time, language, the relationship between faith and reason, the ontological argument, refutation of skepticism, the argument for God's existence derived from the eternal truths, the answer to the problem of evil, the role of divine illumination in understanding, creation *ex nihilo*, and the study of the "self" in relation to God. Theologians hardly find an area of study in which Augustine had nothing to say. Philosophers also quickly place him in the majority of currently disputed ideas.

Eulogies and reproofs of Augustine are represented alike in the last ten to fifteen years.[3] During the swing *toward* and *away from* Augustine, a question is raised, to which an answer is almost impossible to find: how would theology or philosophy look without Augustine? What would the European intellectual structure look like with or without him? We cannot easily imagine the past leaving aside his work, but can we imagine the future? Does the bishop of Hippo still have something to say for our times, to inseminate our minds as he has done for so many centuries to thinkers such as Aquinas, Descartes, Leibniz, or Wittgenstein? It is perhaps possible to imagine the future of theology and philosophy without Augustine, but it would be much more scanty without his lessons, which we still have not learned well enough, and without his project, which we still have not understood as intended by the master.

The aim of this article is limited by the intention to accomplish a merely speculative reflection on the potential profit that theology and philosophy might achieve if these disciplines would listen attentively to Augustine's writings re-interpreted in their own light. What needs to happen is a kind of de-intoxication of the presuppositions built up around his ideas over the

many centuries. We do not intend to provide a comprehensive study of Augustine's influence over time, nor a projective analysis of the future of Augustinian studies, for both of these options would take us quickly beyond the confines of this essay. Rather, we will provide an improvisation, somewhat like a musical improvisation, on the chances Augustine may still have to produce fruitful study in synthesizing philosophy and theology, or the chances some of the humanities would lose, if they continue to regard Augustine as has been done in the past. Another aim of this brief study is to provide novice scholars with several suggestions for interpreting the Augustinian corpus. These humble suggestions are the fruit of personal study, often attended by failures or by observations from the research of other researchers. The less than fruitful research that was previously done was the consequence of posing the wrong questions, operating with assumptions and wrong approaches, or simply the shortsightedness produced by an ideological, parochial interpretation.

A fresh reflection upon Augustine's studies today is timely and potentially fruitful for the university at large. When we are tempted to enter in various thickets on secondary paths, or in a labyrinth created by the gigantic wall of books written on Augustine and his work, we find ourselves on the cutting edge of a double-edged sword. It is precisely this mountain of books and articles that becomes, paradoxically, a hindrance in our endeavor to understand Augustine.

The approach from a modern perspective of Augustine's ideas, the abuse of minor citations as pretense for speculative demonstrations, over-evaluation of his contributions to certain fields of knowledge, the interpretation of the theological and philosophical writings in light of the secondary sources, and the borrowing of his ideas by branches of study in order to reproduce them limited by the boundaries of that field of study are primary obstacles in allowing us to hear him. These are traps that may cause us to stumble in separating his ideas from those of his imitators or his interpreters, which may be more or less well entrenched with his thoughts. Paradoxically, Augustinian studies can stifle Augustine.

Should We "Forget" Augustine?

We are not referring to Augustine, neither the person nor his work, but *Augustinianism.* More precisely, we are referring to the false *Augustinianism.* What is Augustinianism? This answer has not been without attempts; thus we may talk either about Augustinianism in the Middle Ages, a "post-medieval" Augustinianism, or modern Augustinianism:

> By "post-medieval augustinianism" I shall mean characteristically Augustinian concepts, questions, arguments, responses, and ways of thinking that are prominent in various modern philosophers, whether or not those philosophers ever acknowledge the Augustinian provenance of these aspects of their own thinking.[4]

In other words, the concept "Augustinianism" includes terms, arguments, ideas, and solutions, organised in such a way that we believe they belong to Augustine as part of a larger body of work that we attribute to him. How can we find the definition of the authentic Augustinianism among the so many ideas given to him? How can we separate the "Augustinian stream" for the purpose of analysis when we find ourselves riding the wave of his thinking as it passed through so many centuries? This is one of the main challenges for any researcher who finds himself at the beginning of a journey towards analyzing the Augustinian corpus today. During a few research projects regarding theological Augustinian terminology, I encountered great difficulty in separating authentic *augustinianisms* from the false ones, terms and concepts that belong to others but have been attributed to Augustine via tradition.

It is daring to claim that Augustine has been lost in *Augustinianism.* However, a quick look at an up-to-date bibliography on Augustine reveals a series of themes that are *eisegetically* "injected" in the overarching themes of his thinking. Through these interpretations Augustine often appears to talk to us as if he read Descartes or Freud and not vice-versa. More than ever we need a correct interpretation of his literary corpus, so we can reconstruct the paradigm he attempted to promote to posterity. Lack of consultation of primary sources, speculation regarding commonalities, preconceived ideas, and analyses of certain texts to the exclusion of others similar in importance for filling in a picture of his ideas led to a distorted image of Augustine. Even some of the most influential authors provide merely cursory and sometimes sorrowful proofs: Augustine's texts are sometimes dubiously translated, forced to fit certain arguments, and taken out of context without researching thoroughly a motif in the entire Augustinian corpus.[5]

A more productive rediscovery of Augustine can happen only after a vigilant de-intoxication from an Augustinianism contaminated by reductionistic perspectives generated by the structure of our contemporary culture, yet foreign to Augustine. The groundless criticisms and the eulogistic studies alike, while lacking the foundations of rigorous research of his work, have the same negative effect abducting certain ideas to form conclusions acceptable to a worldview that needs pretenses, or to make arguments of the *magister dixit* type.

We do not have time to analyze the cultural frames that confine our interpretive horizons, but it is an observation accepted by most analysts that there is a culture gap between us and Augustine that cannot be surpassed simply by a theological, philosophical or philological training. Regardless of our proficiency in Latin, we can miss the image of Augustine's mental clarity and order. In the best scenario we read Augustine with presuppositions closer to his thinking. Accepting some of LaCugna's criticisms, Muller makes the following observation:

> It is not really Augustine who is being presented to the reader but some body of Augustinian interpretation. This point is not trivial. One of the clouds that Augustinian scholarship has in the last few decades come out from under the tendency to read Augustine in fully Thomistic terms. It is indeed fair to criticise that scholarship and deplore some of the confusions it has visited upon modern theology.[6]

Some of the most published and well-known texts have fallen pray to eisegesis rather than exegesis. Catholic, Orthodox or Protestant theologians, or free thinkers alike have found in Augustine equal support for their own doctrines of time, eternity, happiness, soul, creation, depravity, evil, salvation, and man. It is from here that the Augustinian tradition transformed itself in traditions of interpretation of Augustine. Augustine has been confiscated by the denominations. What exactly would ensure the mediation of these interpretations? Perhaps an ecumenical council, or a symposium would lead to reconciliation around the spiritual and Augustinian heritage. To such an endeavor I have heard the slogan "to remain in the spirit of Augustine." *In necessariis, unitas; in non necessariis, libertas; in utrisque, caritas.*[7] The problem lies precisely here. Even the most "celebrated Augustinian passages", as we can discover upon a rigorous study, do not belong to Augustine.

The interpretive traditions of Augustine throughout the centuries cannot be repealed, but they can be re-evaluated with greater caution. No one can adopt a radical solution for researching the Augustinian corpus, but we can look with greater skepticism at some of the monumental studies conducted by the most respected authors. We should also look into the original context of Augustine's phrases. The modern student has to look into the primary sources, re-verifying both the correctness of the text, translation, and also the coherence of the interpretation in the context of the Augustinian thinking. We need, therefore, to "forget" an Augustine whose name and texts have been abused in order to motivate clashes of ideas not always inspired by noble intentions, or an Augustine who falls pray to the scientific ignorance and negligence.

Let Us Re-Read Augustine!

The interpretation of Scripture offers us worthy lessons to remember for the hermeneutical process on Augustine. We live in a theological culture that is both "augustinianised" and "augustiniant"[8], a culture that on the one side wants to free itself of Augustine, but on the other side, cannot distinguish between the elements that belong to the authentic Augustine and those that have been augustinianised throughout the centuries. The desire to isolate them and come out of the Augustinian shadow exists, but the method for achieving does not. Thus a vicious cycle takes shape. Our "augustinianised" culture "augustinianises" if we are not prudent in reading

the primary texts. For this reason, the hermeneutical grid that we use must go through several revisions to arrive at a fresh reading of Augustine.

We read Augustine without reflecting much on the reading process. In this way, due to several mental models, we step in the footsteps already trodden by previous commentaries, thus "augustinising" the texts, which could otherwise benefit from a fresh reading. This process of introducing prefabricated conclusions obtained from other dimensions of the Augustinian corpus is devastating for the less read texts. The obscure texts could shed light on the more popular texts instead of having these latter ones overshadowed by the others, which were less fortunate in regard to translations and successive editions than say the *Confessiones, De Trinitate, De Civitate Dei, De Doctrina Christiana, De Dialectica*, and others.

For a restoring reading of the Augustinian texts we could draw upon the general and biblical hermeneutics and the sciences that paid a large tribute to the process of interpretation. The contemporary understanding of Augustine's work should be slowed down a bit for the purpose of bringing to light the hermeneutical presuppositions. We cannot talk about Augustine and Augustinianism without acknowledging the existence of nuances. Many attempts to summarise the bishop of Hippo miss the richness of nuances he assigns to his words, which may not be conveyed by a traditional dictionary understanding. In interpreting a text we must proceed to repeated circumscriptions: What kind of text are we reading? From what period? For what audience? and so forth. Augustine's work is like a precious stone with numerous facets; it is like a mountain with many slopes. For example, his Trinitarian construction or his psychology cannot be supported by any texts. When talking about the Holy Trinity we can argue more strongly with texts from *De Trinitate*, and use more caution when citing from *Sermones* or *Epistulae*. All this should be done without imposing a regime of interpretation and analysis of his earlier texts but instead keeping in mind his mature ideas.[9] The phenomenon experienced in interpreting Scripture also happens with Augustine's writings because they have become popular texts.

Augustinian studies has experienced the same tendencies (although not to the same degree) that biblical theology experienced at the end of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century: the emergence of word studies, a method that benefited the contributions of certain well-known philologists and generated an optimism which today seems unwarranted, regarding the identification of an era's thinking, or of a generation or of an author. In *Biblical Words and Their Meaning*,[10] Moises Silva speaks about a correction that needs to be brought to the methods of defining theological terms. Until recently any discussion about a theological subject had to start with "terminology." The author, in reference to the work of James Barr, argues that this method of approach is inadequate. We cannot outline a framework of Plato's philosophy by simply analyzing a few of terms. Why then would we do this in theology? The study of a few terms

may be an effective method of duty if it is attended by other investigations. However, complex studies of a conceptual apparatus belonging to an author cannot be undertaken by only utilising minimal philological instruments, a dictionary, and a systematic analysis of terms. The words isolated from the minimal context, the entire corpus, or of the context of the author's mindset can lead to false conclusions. Why should we then do this in Augustine's case? Let's take an example: attributing certain "traditional" meanings to the word *virtus* in Augustine's work can lead us to erroneous conclusions, unless we understand the term in the larger context of his writings and in the context of the author's intellectual evolution. We may discover for instance that a certain term has different meanings in the work of the same author, but also that the author may distance himself from the traditional meanings, shifting in surprising directions from what he has claimed to that point and from what dictionaries usually provide.

The Barr-Silva discussion on the research of Cremer[11] and Kittel[12] addresses precisely the method of identifying the "nature" of the term, the source of its origin in the work of a certain author, by examining the external route to the work in which the word is used. Barr as well as Silva penalises this approach.[13] Both notice the twin perils that jeopardise a precise scientific result: the trap of exaggerating the etymologic excursus, and then illegitimately transferring some of its meanings that have nothing to do with the meaning the author intended to develop in the context which he created for himself.[14] This method of approaching the meanings of theological terms applied to Plato's works, Aristotle's or Augustine's can also lead to an insensitivity to shifts in meaning, which may appear in the same passage for the same term. Also, we may loose sight of interrelated terms (from the semantic point of view) because we have focused only on a single term. The dilemma that concludes Silva's discussion is generated by the tension between term and concept, words and ideas. What exactly will we study? An exercise of analysis over some terms such as *ousia, hypostasis,* and *prosopon* as they are reflected in the works of the Cappadocians and *essentia, substantia,* and *persona* as they appear in Augustine, may provide fascinating, but false conclusions.

The inventory of Augustinian theological and philosophical terms can be an instrument debated in its formation and in its use in studying the author's worldview. The problem of meaning that we can attribute to Greek terms such as *pathos* or *apatheia,* which are reflected in Latin through *passio, perturbatio* or *impassibilitas,* can be debated starting from the Greek-Latin dictionary and applied to Augustine's work. Then it can be analyzed from the perspective of the transference that Cicero makes, or it can be analyzed only from the context of Augustine's work. The answer to the problem of meanings of certain Augustinian terms cannot be found in dictionaries, exception being made to those dictionaries specialising in Augustine's works, but even in their case, we encounter theoretical problems similar to those found in Kittel's dictionary. The meanings of key terms, which point to key concepts for understanding Augustine's work, can

be discovered in studying the terms within the realm of different contexts created by the author himself.

An answer to these types of problems would be to draw upon the solutions that biblical theology has found in similar situations. A concept that can be used in the future for researching Augustine's work is that of *universal discourse*, a concept borrowed from Peter Cotterell and Max Turner's *Linguistics and Biblical Interpretation*.[15] To the universe of Augustinian intellectualism corresponds a universe of discourse, a conceptual apparatus mirrored by different terms. A concept may not always be reflected by a single term. As already stated, defining terms cannot be done solely by using lexicons or by transferring upon a word the understanding from our lexical culture. The accurate identification of meaning (for a word) can be realised only in the context in which the term was loaded with the connotations intended by the author (the "intentional connotation"). As we also claimed, the meaning of the words *ousia* and *hypostasis* cannot be identified by studying the manner in which the Cappadocian fathers used them, nor their meaning in Aristotle or Cicero, but only in the context developed by Augustine, because it was Augustine who "raised" these terms in his text and in his intellectual universe, being influenced by Plato, by Aristotle, by Cicero, by the apostle Paul, by Marius Victorinus and others.

In this context we can talk about authentic *Augustinianisms*, terms which were created, utilised, and redefined with a richer meaning in Augustine's work. We can also talk about false *Augustinianisms*, terms which by form correspond to some words from his work but do not reflect the manner in which they were understood and used by Augustine. As Olegario Garcia de la Fuente showed, Augustine inherits a Christian neologistic vocabulary taken over from Lactantius and gives a list of examples, some of them formed by the suffix *-tio* from root words already present in Latin: *carnalis, carnalitas, carnatio, coronatio, incarnatio, peregrinatio, praedestinatio, regeneratio, resurrectio, retributio, revelatio, sanctificatio, spiritualis,* and *spiritualiter*.[16] Such words can very easily be missed by those unfamiliar with the early Christian vocabulary and be considered as belonging to Augustine. All this is done without mentioning some of the "christianisms" from the treasure of the Vulgate, also attributed to the bishop of Hippo.

The re-reading of Augustine's texts could be "corrected" by a holistic approach, integrating the entirety of his work. However, as we claimed already, before engaging in any other endeavor, we must revisit the reading of "Augustine" in the Augustinian works. We believe that Augustinian studies would greatly benefit, and we would likewise enjoy new discoveries, given that we return *ad fontes* not only from the philological perspective (via studying the original texts) but also through a study of themes and motifs, recipes of ideas, patterns of thinking, and modular constructs that form the framework of the Augustinian mindset. We need to cross beyond the "classic" interpretations of his work. In order to understand Augustine,

we need to pass beyond the lectures that start from a harmful systematising of his inner universe or from shaping his mindset into conformity with our mindset.

Augustine Again?

Some have had enough of Augustine, just as others had enough of Plato or Aristotle or the apostle Paul. We could leave them aside if by so doing we could understand ourselves, since each of these had such an impact upon the European culture.[17] We still experience "augustinomania", an exacerbated passion, either for idolising him, or for denigrating him. Some authors are very generous in giving praises, even in very short studies that do not allow for detailed argumentation; others, in manuscripts that have caused unexpected controversies,[18] are not only reserved but also very acidic in their appreciations regarding Augustine's contribution to the development of the Western theological mindset.

Augustine again? Yes, it is necessary again to take his texts to refresh the perspectives not only of the areas he addressed, but also of the relationships between them, as he conceived them. Augustine, in a new interpretation, can offer us lessons for systematising the theological and philosophical mind, or perhaps, the theoretical model for leading us to new paths of the humanities: interdisciplinary fields, considered from a fresh, holistic, integrating perspective. *Nihil novi sub sole.* The movements within today's scientific world could benefit from an acquiescent mind uniquely formed and yoked to a relentless diligence.

When, if ever, will Christian philosophy come out of Augustine's shadow? Should it come out? Some fields of knowledge must indeed go through an elimination of Augustine from the table of discussions, because the modern scholar reads the bishop of Hippo through the eyes of the "specialist." Augustine is engaged in a series of debates within the realm of humanities because he expressed himself largely to an intellectual world that did not make a distinction between "polyglot and specialist." Therefore, in some fields, Augustine is indeed indispensable. However, not many of his ideas have achieved the status of capstone for the philosophical or theological construct in discussion.

> Augustine often exhibits this quality of indispensability. He seems to shed light in any direction: ethical, theological, devotional and spiritual, philosophical, practical. He appears throughout the Roman Breviary and the Anglican Prayer Book. Protestants claim him as the key to theological liberation, while Roman Catholics claim him as the source and substance for everything Thomas Aquinas reasoned through seven centuries later.[19]

Augustine was a prolific and a multi-faceted writer but it does not mean that he must become involved in any discourse that gives an account of the shaping of the European ideology. Augustine can be called "our

contemporary" but the ideas from his work must not be overly "contemporanised." The monographs and comparative studies must keep in mind the peril of simplifying some relations which describe the paths of ideas to and from Augustine: the relation between Augustine and Plato, or Cicero, on the one side, and Aquinas[20] on the other, cannot be dispatched schematically, but it can neither be extended. Researching the Augustinian framework for most theological problems can be a good starting point, but it can also be a dangerous pretense.

Are we moving towards "liberating" ourselves of the canons of his thinking? Attacked and loved, the bishop is both a burden and a fascination. He is old fashioned for some, but considered our contemporary by others. He startles the European's mind game who want to escape from the fourfold enclosure shaped by the limits imposed by Plato, Aristotle, Augustine and Aquinas, so that later he can return to the "home" of reflection in the same courtyard. Augustine's authority is domineering, but luring, it is nourishing and toxic at the same time. Perhaps some territories of our common minds can be re-conquered and tamed only under the scepter of the bishop of Hippo. The authority that we want to deny can be a guide for finding our way out of the labyrinth of our lostness. This exaggerated veneration of Augustine is the greatest foe of a valid interpretation; therefore, out of reflex, and to remain scientifically "objective", we are tempted to reject him. O'Donnell, writing about challenging Augustine's authority, argues:

> There are those who admire him without believing a word he says; and then there are those who do not admire him at all but, believing him to be a powerful influence, feel they must attack him precisely because he embodies all that is wrong with – what? Modern Christianity? Or the society that Christianity shaped? It is often very hard to tell, when Augustine is being attacked, just what his crimes really are, or why he matters so much. I would argue that we live in an age that has discovered in itself a curious need for Augustine's authority, precisely among those who would attack it.[21]

This kind of "love-hate" relationship is a kind of Oedipal complex for modernity and postmodernity. It is a projection of our own restlessness regarding the church father, a "father" we can only love after we rebel. We will rediscover our identity through a literary patricide or through a running away from "home" like the prodigal son who apprehends it not when he is in the "far country" but when he is received back by the father. "Forgetting" or "forsaking" the framework of the Augustinian mind can be therapeutic for redeeming humanities from both idolising Augustine and unfairly sacrificing him on the altar of the "reader" who appears warranted in projecting his desires on the Augustinian text.

A deepening and a synthesis, the promise of an original construction with the bricks of tradition, will reward our run. Augustine must be appraised in a new manner. This cycle must be carried through in order to break the roadblock of eulogies founded in common places or the

passionate detractions. Perhaps this project should be also extended to Plato, Aristotle, and Aquinas, or to the apostle Paul.

What else does Augustine have to say to the eastern theologian who discovers the rigor of the West, and the western theologian who is fascinated by the adventuresome reflections of the Cappadocians, to the philosopher or politologist, to the semiotician, to the musician, or to the rhetorician? Quite a lot. He may talk to us because of his "multi-faced" intellectual profile, his holistic perspective on knowledge and sciences, his integrative holistic vision from which postmodern theology and philosophy could take nourishment for healing. We will come back on this point, but it is worth remembering the fields in which Augustine's contribution is reevaluated again: his view of community (either the *societas* or the *ecclesia*), ontology, ctisiology and cosmology, the doctrine of sin and the origin of evil, the relation between faith and knowledge, reason and will, and history and eternity. We could continue with further aspects, which could make Augustine's voice resonate even louder in our times.

What could silence Augustine's voice? As many others demonstrated throughout the centuries, he can be extinguished and drowned, paradoxically, in his own work through a hermeneutics foreign to his spirit. Much can be written today regarding his person and work, citing him for supporting our own projections, but not for saying what he intended.

> It is safe to say that Augustine is now more quoted, either to be attacked or to defend something he would never have defended, and read, when he is actually read, in ways that go far astray from the original contexts and purposes of the works.[22]

His texts, both the most well known and the least known, become pretenses for theses that are more and more queer. Unfortunately, Augustine's popularity makes him hard to be understood today apart from clear rules of interpretation. In order to interpret him "correctly" we need to exorcise ourselves of him, an act, which some western theologians have tried already,[23] and we must return to the entire Augustinian corpus and especially to the pages where he tells us the way we ought to read him. No exegete of Augustine should overlook the *Retractationes*, pages where Augustine reflects on his own work and offers us keys of interpretation. Rarely do we encounter an author that guides us in his own thinking, in order that we may explore today the nuances of his mindset. The attention given to this exercise of diachronic reflection offered by Augustine can bring the necessary "corrections" to the hermeneutical framework in which we operate.

> The old Augustine observing the young Augustine at a distance, qualifying and rephrasing but for the most part affirming: he is not a bad model for his later students to follow. Not all of his readers have been so indulgent to his faults, though to be sure not all have been so cautiously attentive to the nuances of what he said.[24]

What can give new resonance and new reverberations to his voice today, when the entire European culture was marked by his figure? The European culture stood at his feet admiring his intellectual construct, if not a perfect one, at least exemplary articulated. It is hard to move Augustine from the pedestal, but we can swing around him. These two moves have characterised the academic world in the last ten to fifteen years, swinging between detraction and idolization and the attempt to "shift" the Augustinian intellectual construct in various directions in order to procure him for a reductionistic and simplifying perspective.

Philosophy and/or Theology according to Augustine

Another more courageous step follows: we must view Augustine and his work beyond the false divisions of the humanities, which we find in modern day universities, divisions which have placed this man addicted to the truth to a variety of fields of knowledge. Perhaps Augustine ought to be analyzed beyond theology, philosophy, politology, sociology, music and psychology.

After an apparent "forgetting" on the shelves dedicated to the classics in favor of other authors that became the point of the majority of studies, again Augustine aroused waves of interest. This time though, his work was analyzed from perspectives other than the theological and philosophical. What became interesting at the end of the nineteenth century was the fact that a number of scholars from different fields of knowledge, which did not appear to be indebted to Augustine, were added to those interested in his work. Linguists, literary critics, musicians, psychologists, psychiatrists, sociologists, physicists, and mathematicians joined the exclusive club that used to be open primarily to philosophers, theologians, apologists, and historicists from various backgrounds.

Some rediscover the depth of the theological discourse, others the modernism of his approach and the way in which the tension between concept and word is developed. Augustine is being compared to Cicero, Aquinas, Dante, Descartes, Kant and others. Moralists deal with the internal and social ethics of Augustine or the "moral responsibility" during dreams. Because Augustine is both a philosopher and a theologian, bringing him back is no longer a battle just among theologians and philosophers. Among various branches of the humanities, and due to the new perspectives from which the university is viewed, a new path is emerging that makes more room for Augustine's research: *interdisciplinarism.*

The problem Plantinga raises is very insightful for continuing to explore Augustine: "Is there such a thing as Christian philosophy, or are there only Christians who are philosophers? How should Christianity and philosophy be related? Should they be related?"[25] In other words, we may restate the problem in the following way: is there a theological philosophy or are there only theologians who use philosophy for theologising? Should we strive to

put the two "sciences" in relation to one another? This would be a recovery of the authentic Augustinian tradition. We believe that the solution is right in Augustine's work, which philosophises without getting too far from theology, and theologises by philosophising.

After Callahan, Augustine was a supporter and a transmitter of Greek philosophy to the Medieval Age and the western world. Yet, is this all? Augustine is "great" because he had the courage to break the tradition of the Greek thinking entirely from the Latin philosophical and theological tradition in favor of a new construct.

> He carried further the anthropocentric tendency of Greek Christian thought to make his own philosophy, one might say, Augustinocentric. Yet in so doing he not only infused new concreteness and vitality into this tradition, but he also gave it a more universal validity and a wider appeal. If philosophy, which with good reason might be called a Greek way of looking at things, has been able to span the gap of the centuries to the Middle Ages and to our own world, it has found no stronger support or one more deeply needed at a given time than it has in Augustine.[26]

Callahan shows that Augustine was capable to take over the fundamentals of the Greek philosophy and to re-write it "into something that was an original creation in its own right and at the same time a source of inspiration for those who came after him."[27] As later studies show, what we call "Augustinian philosophy" represents more than a Latin interpretation of Greek philosophy contaminated and fertilised by various other ideas, and it represents more than an accumulation of ideas taken over from Plotinus, or later, from the Cappadocians; it is a system of interpretation yoked to the project of thinking about God.

The Romanian author Anton I. Adămuţ shows in his work *Filosofia Sfântului Augustin* that "Augustine was for a period of time a philosopher without being a theologian, in order to become a theologian without ceasing to be a philosopher."[28] Upon his conversion to Christianity, Augustine never "liberated" himself from the spirit of pagan philosophy. Therefore, we will discover contexts "contaminated" by his love to free thinking beyond the limits imposed by Christian dogma, which start to take a clearer shape not only in the East, but also in the West. *Studium Sapientiae* will be intertwined with the meditation *De Deo*, the true philosophy. As Adămuţ argues, the opposition of *Augustine the philosopher* to *Augustine the theologian* is too easily fabricated and artificial. Augustine does theology with tools sharpened in the realm of philosophy and philosophises beginning from premises founded by a biblicised culture.

This state of being opens the way toward the philosophical-theological Augustinian project: a systematic theology in the true sense of the word, a systematic theology with the help of the classical categories. This kind of philosophical theology and theological philosophy had to be easily understood by the mind of the catechist (the beginner in faith) and simple enough to be passed down to others. Augustine's project deserves to be

evaluated by both modern theologians and philosophers. Both philosophy and theology, captive in ivory towers built in the university must be made accessible in the common vernacular again. The chance of both of them again becoming a public good could be the marriage proposed by Augustine. What exactly determines the "ignorant" to listen to Augustine preaching in church for three hours? Certainly it is not only the charm and the charisma of the preacher, but also the way he presents the line of argumentation, a perspective of what we today call either theology or philosophy.

Augustine is not a *philosophos*, but he is a *philosophiser*, a lover of philosophy, and a true *amátor*. Augustine can be considered a philosopher only to the extent in which *philosophy* can receive from the church fathers another sense, that of thinking about God, the true wisdom, *id est* Christian theology.

There was a time in Augustine's formation when he claimed *hoc esse philosophari: amare Deum*[29], in which he tried to separate the old philosophy. However, for this new philosophy he needed a new technical language because the technical language of the old philosophy was no longer adequate for the new mental categories emerged with Christianity. Therefore, at this point we cannot only talk about a *lingua christiana*, but also about the origins of a *philosophia christiana*.

To call Augustine a *theologian* or a *philosopher* is indeed a dilemma discussed in recent studies by scholars other than Rist and Adămuţ. Such studies are more and more reserved in describing a philosophical Augustinian system detached from his theology: Augustine is either the *theologian-philosopher* or the *philosopher-theologian*, depending on what we are reading. To name him theologian or philosopher or to judge his work in monographs entitled *The Philosophy* or *Theology of Augustine on this or that issue* means to operate with distinctions, which he not only rejected, but could not even recognise. The clustering of sciences that took place in the modern period positions us to view Augustinian philosophy as a chapter isolated from his mental system, in a way that later we have to divide it again into the classical division of chapters, like a course in modern philosophy. Any such artificial divisions spoil the harmony of his work. Therefore, it is necessary to talk about *theological philosophy* and about *philosophical theology* as well as about their instruments: a theologico-philosophical Augustinian language and philosophico-theological terms, which change their semantic load based on their own context.

To the Augustinian mindset is attributed the conquering of new territories from the realm of knowledge. The claim that we owe Augustine a Christian philosophy that is sufficiently articulated became common. The greater gain, which we should explore in new research projects, is the fact that we owe Augustine the symbiosis between theology and philosophy. The relationship between the two disciplines, abusively forced to be divorced in the framework of the modern university, is a topic of increasing interest in

Augustinian studies and it can be one of the galleries from which to dig new treasures for re-organising the map of the humanities.

> Augustine makes genuine contributions to several fields not because he is multifaceted so much as because his thought is seamless. That, too, appeals to us; that attracts us. From the impulse in physics to find a general field theory to the popular use of the word holistic, we have evidence of a yearning for the comprehensive, catholic vision, a frustration with the compartmentalization and departmentalization which have so characterised modern thought.[30]

Beyond philosophy and theology approached separately, Augustine presents a *theological philosophy* and a *philosophical theology*, which can give a new impulse not only to Augustinian studies, but can fertilise theological and philosophical studies alike. These fields can be challenged by bringing closer at the level of interface the branches of study that are traditionally isolated.

> The enduring tradition of Augustinianism is often understood as representing broad philosophical themes rather than exact positions. In fairness to Augustine, however, he never intended to isolate his philosophical views from their broader theological context, or from the important context of his life experiences. Augustine is uniquely a Christian philosopher and/or a philosophical theologian.[31]

The Augustinian spirit is elastic. We cannot reduce it to ideas stoned in slogans; they are themes and motives like in the musical world. Therefore, the boundary between philosophy and theology is crossed so naturally by the one who inspires us today. Augustine is the best example of a complete man, a good employer of integrated philosophical concepts, after a solid biblical exegesis, with truths of systematic theology. The integration of philosophy with theology and of theology with philosophy in a traditional sense can give a new hope to contemporary theology. The holistic approach and interdisciplinarism can be lessons that we can learn from revisiting the work of Augustine, reading it beyond theology or philosophy, but as the *philosopher-theologian* and *theologian-philosopher*.

Augustine and/or the Cappadocians?

If we enter the gallery of theology and dig deep in our study, we will discover the same spirit. When we are talking about "Augustine's Christology" or "Augustine's pneumatology" or even the "Augustinian triadology", the didactic simplification is legitimate to a certain point. Already the more recent authors are avoiding such titles for articles or monographs, which can lead to dead ends in interpreting Augustine. Christology, pneumatology, Augustine's doctrine of the Holy Trinity are simplistically measured up to the Christology, pneumatology, and triadology of the Cappadocians.

In the last decade of the twentieth century a special interest was the theology of the Cappadocians among the western theologians, which led not only to translations, analyses, and studies on their work, but also to a wave of interest to reevaluate the Augustinian theology, which came to be obsessively compared and contrasted with the theology of the Cappadocians. As Barnes comments in a recently published article, this polarity is not new and has brought great disservice to the analyses of the Cappadocians' theology, but especially to the theology of Augustine.[32]

Barnes raises a problem that we believe deserves more attention in the future studies of Augustine's theological work. There is still a prevalent tendency to lecture on Augustine starting from the schema of simplifying polarities, schema proposed by Regnon, which opposes the Latin theology and favors Greek theology. This schema does not need to be rejected fully, but a rigorous analysis of the Augustinian corpus must consider such nuances. We cannot claim that the Latin triadology is represented by Augustine and the Greek by the Cappadocians because Augustine proposes a different theological paradigm, parallel indeed, but one that cannot be compared with that of the Cappadocians (primarily because they have different presuppositions).

> French scholastic Augustinians have rejoiced that, as they saw it, Augustine left behind the inhibiting concepts of Nicaea, in particular the constraints imposed by the watchword *homoousia*.[33] For these scholars, the development of the doctrinal era described by de Regnon in his Latin, i.e. his Augustinian and protoscholastic paradigm is the development of a happy separation from the earlier orthodox consensus.[34]

As the author well observed, when we talk about a paradigm shift we must see whether the initial paradigm exists. Similar to Muller, Barnes reprimands Augustine's critics who are able to talk about Augustine without being informed by the primary sources and without reading Augustine inside his context. That is why it happens that authors such as Oliver du Roy become "a mediating authority in the reading of Augustine's theology."[35] Due to these "mediating agents" between source and scholar, Augustine is "crucified", being laid on torturing devices invented by our need for systematising. Augustine does not develop his motifs systematically, thematically, or progressively. These show up from place to place among other themes of thinking, beyond the parameters of the most printed texts, and yet not in all the texts devoted to a theme. For instance, not all of Augustine's triadology is in the *De Trinitate*, and *De Doctrina Christiana,* which is surprisingly a treaty on hermeneutics, without resembling any features of a modern treaty on dogmatics. Therefore, we argue that it is necessary to approach cautiously those studies that offer us "structures" of the Augustinian mind or inventory lists of the subjects addressed by the bishop.

Augustinus Redivivus: a "New Augustine" for a New Generation of Augustinians

Throughout centuries and for different generations Augustine either was analyzed in domains he never tried to conquer or was praised for reasons not well-founded, such as being recognised for accomplishments of his predecessors or belonging to less well-known writers. Augustine was overly evaluated because this was the intellectual fashion of an intellectual *augustinianised* world. Today he is minimalised, not due an enlightened scientific objectivism gained through analysis, but due to an intellectual tendency that emerged a generation before us, which we hope will leave deep marks in theological understanding, namely the rediscovery of the eastern Patristics by the latinised west. Perhaps even Colin Gunton is partially correct in sustaining that generations following Augustine were hit by blindness due to the greatness of his work. The pedestal on which Augustine's figure stood had to be demolished in order to be reconstructed, so that it could be given what it deserves from history. We hope that the analyses conducted by the scholars of the upcoming generations will prevent us from erring either through over-evaluating or through under-evaluating Augustine's impact upon his era and the centuries that followed him.

It has often been claimed that the entire European culture stood under Plato's influence. Another way of stating it is that the philosophical European tradition represents a series of footnotes to Plato's work. In the same way we can claim, without exaggerating, that the entire theological tradition of Europe stood under the influence of Augustine.

> It is arguable that Augustine is the most influential philosopher who ever lived. His authority has been felt much more broadly, and for a much longer time, than Aristotle's, whose role in the Middle Ages was comparatively minor until rather late. As for Plato, for a long time much of his influence was felt mainly through the writings of Augustine. For more than a millennium after his death, Augustine was an authority who simply had to be accommodated. He shaped medieval thought as no one else did. Moreover, his influence did not end in the Middle Ages. Throughout the Reformation, appeals to Augustine's authority were common place on all sides, his force was and is still felt not just in philosophy but also in theology, popular religion, and political thought.[36]

Therefore, we need to return to Augustine. We cannot hide from the shadow of a giant who can be either Gulliver or Goliath. Our cultural identity is still intimately tied to his work. We believe that an evaluation of the treasures left by Augustine to posterity is not at all an enterprise void of risks, and not approachable through tools from only one branch of knowledge. Augustine choked by our own exegesis must be brought back to the attention of the younger scholars, theologians and philosophers, without treating him as a dissectible mummy or as an idol, but as a living

friend that still lives in his writings and beyond his history. His texts still represent promises yet not fulfilled and treasures yet not explored.

> To speak of his influence in the past and make no mention of the message he brings us today and the help we expect from him tomorrow would be to betray him, to treat him as a corpse, whereas he is, in fact, the most alive and living and has no need of our purple cerements. All that he asks is that he may continue to help us and he has more to give us than ever.[37]

A new generation can draw near to Augustine with enthusiasm, yet it will go toward failure if it denies the principles of discipleship. We can rediscover what was studied by enlightened minds many centuries before us. We must use the results of previous works, but the phase of research must proceed with caution and prudence. This new generation of Augustinians could discover an Augustine who has still much to say to those who are "on-line but disconnected", primarily through the structure of his mindset. The new generation of scholars, practicing a moderate skepticism but encouraging a lucid scientific curiosity, has the chance for new discoveries, if they gather around accomplishable projects in collective efforts of research with a team spirit in which any forms of vain pride and parochialism would be dissolved. To my research colleagues and future partners of dialogue and exegesis in Augustine's work, I dare to make the following suggestions, at the end of this meditation, in the hope of enjoying the greatest benefits from a potential meeting with the work of our friend and master:

1. A first step that ought to be taken by the scholar who wants to approach the Augustine's writings would be the liberation of false presuppositions regarding his creation. Augustine should be studied beginning with his own texts. His writings must be reinterpreted in light of his own work. This means reading the primary materials and employing more caution in using the results of certain studies that are considered as a starting point, instead of those texts written by Augustine himself.

2. Augustine should not be interpreted through the prism of ideologies. He must be restored to the universal culture. Liberation from the limited hermeneutical framework of the protestant, or catholic, or orthodox, or representatives of feminist theology, liberation theology, or Freudian psychology, assumes working in collective efforts of editing and analyzing his work. These teams, given the technological progress, need not be in the same institutional location. Dialogue can be facilitated at great distances. This does not presuppose necessarily a "sweaty" ecumenical project, nor a dogmatic compromise, nor lack of adversities but a scientific curiosity and reciprocal respect. Such collective efforts could work together with specialists from various traditions of interpretation of Augustine's work, traditions that we must recognise and utilise. Augustine cannot be confiscated by denominations that wage war based on texts that are defectively interpreted. The correction of interpretation can be done precisely because of the competition and differences.

3. Researching Augustine's work is a process full of intellectual traps precisely because of the popularity his writings enjoy. Many of the paths open to research may in fact prove false, if the system of his mindset is not understood holistically. Some texts, which Augustine did not consider crucial, were used as key texts for interpreting his later works. We need a discipline of interpretation and of using certain texts that have become anthological (viz. part of anthologies) and have been abused. We need to reevaluate the criteria used for considering certain texts as important and others as secondary. We need a reordering of the Augustinian texts, order which should be kept in mind even in editing and interpretation, according to criteria well established by time, genre, intention and so forth.

4. We need a redefinition of *Augustinianism*. Authentic Augustinianism is the one which Augustine himself offers. It may appear as truism, but we must become aware of the fact that one of the obstacles that hinders our understanding his work is exactly the mental blueprint that we extend to Augustine's work. We propose a "forgetting" of the traditional, "classic" Augustinianism, the one that most of the time represents a lecture on Augustine through the lenses of a culture foreign to the era he represents. Today's researcher "systematises" Augustine's mindset, which he then reapplies to his own work, thus creating a vicious cycle. Just as many lists of terms were elaborated with authentic and false augustinianisms, we need to elaborate a list of concepts and theoretical models that do not belong to Augustine.

5. For the purpose of retrieving the authentic Augustinianism, we propose a long-term exegetical project that must start from the establishment of a very rigorous hermeneutical discipline upon the Augustinian writings. This re-projection of the hermeneutical framework could be drawn from the experience of biblicists. The study of certain terms must be replaced by the study of models of thinking. In parallel with this effort, Augustine's writings must be followed not only by an impeccable philological critical apparatus, but also by substantial efforts from specialists of other fields of study other than philosophy or theology (i.e. musicians for *De Musica*).

6. Augustinian studies must be liberated from the traditional conception of the humanities. Augustine is neither "polyglot" nor "specialist". He is a theologian-philosopher and a philosopher-theologian. His project must be approached from an integrative perspective. Therefore, a collective effort to study his work can bring together theologians who ought to have a solid philological and philosophical perspective, philosophers with significant biblical knowledge, and philologists interested of theology and philosophy. These ought to make room for the mathematician, the musician, the esthetician, the ethicist, the sociologist and so forth. The Augustinian scholar is obligated by Augustine to expand his or her horizons. Interdisciplinarism is a difficult solution to obtain, but the most valid is the case of Augustinian studies.

7. The relationship between theology and philosophy in Augustine's writings is reflected in the relationship between pneumatology and Christology within the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. His triadology is complex, not complete, and has been misunderstood primarily because of a simplistic polarised comparison with the triadology of the Cappadocians. These kinds of analyses have been unproductive both for Augustinian studies and Cappadocian theology alike. The theological Augustinian paradigm ought to be analyzed "inside its writings". The scholar who approaches Augustine today should be less simplistic, schematic, and radical in analyzing Augustine. Preciseness and rigidity were foreign to the bishop whom we now have to approach with an acute sensitivity, with a highly-developed sense of nuances. Such a monumental work cannot be easily dispatched in monographs and syntheses with pretensions of exhaustiveness. Such an author cannot be regarded as a chapter in a handbook or a paragraph in the history of literature. Augustine is not an object of study, he is a master who can disciple us, he can "tame" us in the sense in which the Fox from "The Little Prince" of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry speaks about, through a luring proximity.[38]

Notes

[1] See Eleonore Stump and Kretzmann Norman, *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge Press, 2001) or Gareth B. Mathews (ed.), *The Augustinian Tradition* (Berkley, Ca.: University of California Press, 1998).

[2] Kenneth Richard Samples, "Augustine of Hippo: Rightly Dividing the Truth", in *Facts for Faith* 2/6 (2001), 34-39.

[3] Theologians like Christos Yannaras in *Philosophie sans rupture* (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1986) blames Augustine of all the "errors" of the Western theology. See also Colin E. Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993) and Catherine Mowry LaCugna, *God for Us: The Trinity in the Christian Life* (San Francisco, Ca.: Harper, 1991) for a criticism of the Augustinian trinitarian theology.

[4] Gareth B. Mathews, "Post-medieval Augustinianism", in *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, E. Stump and N. Kretzmann eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2001).

[5] Earl Muller gives a very acidic response to LaCugna in "The Dynamic of Augustine's De Trinitate, a Response to a Recent Characterization", *Augustinian Studies* 26 (1995), 65-91.

[6] *ibid.* 65-91.

[7] The slogan belongs to Rupertus Meldenius, not to Augustine, as it has been widely accepted. See the discussion in Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, vol. 7 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 650-653.

[8] When we talk about an augustiniant culture we are referring to those syntheses that describe the intellectual Augustinian schematic universe, reductionistic, lacking the nuances that the model ought to have if we kept in mind that Augustine had phases of intellectual developments.

[9] Cf. Kenneth Burke, *The Rhetoric of Religion: Study in Logology* (Berkeley, Ca.: University of California, 1970). Burke shows that the Augustinian terminology is relatively simple, and indeed familiar to those who have a basic exposure to biblical language (see 257). It is possible for one to read Augustine with great joy and understanding, even when lacking a technical training in the field of Latin patristics. What readers should avoid is attributing the complexities of theology and philosophy developed later, upon Augustine's writings, which exhibit simplicity and are thus road openers in these fields.

[10] Moisés Silva, *Biblical Words and Their Meaning: An Introduction to Lexical Semantics* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1983).

[11] Hermann Cremer, *Biblisch-theologisches Wörterbuch der neutestamentlichen Gräcität* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1867). Translated by William Urwick as *Biblico-Theological Lexicon of New Testament Greek* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1883).

[12] Gerhard Kittel and Friedrich Gerhard (eds), *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, vol. 9 (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1933-1973). Translated by W. G. Bromiley as *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1985).

[13] James Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961).

[14] He uses as an example the overly commented ekklesia that is unwarrantedly loaded with meanings never intended by the authors.

[15] Peter Cotterell and Max Turner, *Linguistics and Biblical Interpretation* (Downers Grove, Ill.: Intervarsity, 1989), 85-87.

[16] Olegario Garcia de la Fuente, *Introduccion al Latin Biblico Y Cristiano* (Madrid: Ediciones Classicas, 1990), 332.

[17] "The safest general characterization of the European philosophical tradition is that it consists of a series of footnotes to Plato", cf. Alfred N. Whitehead, *Process and Reality. An Essay in Cosmology. Gifford Lectures in the University of Edinburgh during the Session 1927-1928* (New York: MacMillan, 1979), 39.

[18] Colin E. Gunton, "The History, Augustine, The Trinity and the Theological Crisis in the West" in *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991), 31-48.

[19] C. W. McPherson, "Augustine our Contemporary", *Cross Currents* (Spring-Summer, 2000) 170.

[20] The relation between Augustine and Aquinas must also be debated. The balance and prudence of any analysis of this type is highly recommended, especially to the scholar who comes from outside the realm of Latin Patristics. Here are a number of theoretical problems, which are beyond the purpose of this essay.

[21] James O'Donnell, "The Authority of Augustine", in *Augustinian Studies* 22 (1991), 7-35.

[22] *ibid.* 7-35

[23] Colin Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991). See especially ch. 3 "The History: Augustine, The Trinity and The Theological Crisis of the West", 31-57.

[24] James O'Donnell, "Reconsiderations", Augustine (Boston: Twayne's World Author Series, Twayne Publishers, 1985).

[25] Alvin Plantinga, "Augustinian Christian Philosophy", in *The Augustinian Tradition*, Gareth B. Mathews ed. (Berkley, Ca.: University of California, 1999), 1.

[26] John F. Callahan, *Augustine and the Greek Philosophers* (Villanova, PA, Villanova University Press, 1967), 94-95.

[27] *ibid.* 1.

[28] Anton I. Adămuţ, *Filosofia Sfîntului Augustin* (Iaşi: Polirom, 2001) 80-86. Translated as *The Philosophy of Saint Augustine* (personal translation of title and citation).

[29] *De civitate Dei*, CL 0313, SL 47, lib. 8, cap. 8, linea 33.

[30] C. W. McPherson, "Augustine our Contemporary", *Cross Currents* (Spring-Summer, 2000): 170.

[31] Kenneth Richard Samples, "Augustine of Hippo: Rightly Dividing the Truth", *Facts For Faith* 2/6 (2001), 34-39.

[32] Muller Barnes, "Augustine in Contemporary Trinitarian Theology", *Theological Studies* 56/2 (1995), 237 ff.

[33] Referring to Henri Paissac, *Theologie du Verbe: Saint Augustine et Saint Thomas* (Paris: Cerf, 1951); Andre Malet, *Personne et Amour dans la theologie trinitaire de saint Thomas d'Aquin* (Paris: Vrin, 1956); also M. J. Le Guillou, "Reflexions sur la theologie trinitaire", *Istina* 17 (1972), 457-64.

[34] Barnes, "Augustine in Contemporary Trinitarian Theology", *Theological Studies* 56/2 (1995), 240.

[35] Barnes is reffering to the work of Olivier du Roy, *L'intelligence de la foi en la Trinité selon Saint Augustin* (Paris: Etudes Augustiniennes, 1966).

[36] Anthony Kenny (ed.), *The Oxford History of Western Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1994), 57-59.

[37] Maurice Blondel, "The Latent Resources in Augustine's Thought", in *A Monument to St. Augustine* (New York: Meridian Books, 1960), 319-353.
[38] This article was translated by Viorel S. Clintoc.

For a Minimalist Christian Realism

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There has been a lot of recent interest in the question of realism and anti-realism.[1] Plenty of authors have wholeheartedly accepted non-realism as a viable framework for the reinterpretation of Christian theology. The present article expresses a concern about such developments and argues that it goes against the meaning of some specific Christian teachings. I have picked four detrimental theses and I will explore these in light of both Christian theology, but also from a purely philosophical point of view. The argument below does not seek to establish a coherent form of realism. There are a multitude of possible realisms out there. There is realism as a metaphysical thesis about the *existence* of a mind-independent reality. Then there is realism as an epistemological thesis, about our cognitive ability to know that reality. But realisms are not only separated by their scope, they are also divided by contradictions. This fact has lead analysts like Jarrett Leplin to comment that "realism is a majority position whose advocates are so seriously divided as to appear a minority."[2] However, I am not interested in the coherence of the realist programme. What follows is a discussion of four areas which present or should present difficulties for any Christian who considers becoming a non-realist.

A Realism of Intent

I choose to begin this discussion of realism with what Peter Byrne calls a hermeneutical thesis.[3] A contagious revisionism is affecting theological and religious studies circles. Ever since the Enlightenment cast doubt upon the existence of God, the resurrection of Jesus, or the reliability of the Scriptures, Western theology embarked upon a programme of re-interpretation of its claims, now in danger of being shown to be simply false. Bultmann's existential interpretation of faith, Tillich's re-symbolisation of religion, Cupitt's similar attempts, all strike in a single direction. The truth of what Hans Frei calls "external" and what Bruce Marshall calls "alien" discourses is accepted. It is now up to theology to respond to what philosophy dictates. On a tendentious interpretation, what we have here is simply a group of professional theologians attempting to persuade people that they need not be put out of a job simply because the object of their work has proved to be an illusion. A sophisticated philosophy

of meaning is drafted into the service of this reinterpretation of what theology has been doing all the while, albeit without being aware of it. Theology never intended to refer to an object existing independently of human cognition after all. Theological talk is just a roundabout way of talking about human existence, self-transcendence or self-assertion. Feuerbach's reductionist argument has been adopted as theology's own. The reason a sophisticated philosophy of meaning is drafted into service is to forestall "simplistic" objections like: just ask the people what they are referring to. It is thus argued that a mere survey of opinion, or of intent, would not do. By now the claims of this hermeneutics are common place: we cannot really trust people to know their own intentions. Language is not simply something we master, but we are in fact mastered by it. The upshot is that people cannot simply object to this reinterpretation by saying: "but I mean what I say!" It is understandable that they would so object: they are not sophisticated enough to understand what the hermetic prophets of this new generation hold. It is not surprising that the new climate is ripe for analogies to Gnosticism.

I want to argue that this denial of realist intent simply begs the question. Why cannot we simply ask people what they mean and expect to know it? A tremendous amount of work within the area of analytic philosophy, but not only there, suggests that Wittgenstein was right to say that "When we say, and *mean*, that such-and-such is the case, we (and our meaning) do not stop anywhere short of the fact; but we mean: *this-is-so*".[4]

In analytic philosophy this suspicion with regard to the intent of religious talk is derivative of a global suspicion about the realism of talk about common sense objects. This global suspicion is in fact a suspicion about mental entities and it has resulted in an empirical, even naturalistic, reorientation of philosophy. Since meanings are not simply in the head, but in fact are "emerging" in the practical activities of life, they do not exhibit a stable fabric such that they are accessible at any given time. Furthermore, although convention goes some way towards explaining the stabilty of meaning, it is in itself inadequate for an explanation of meaning, being itself intensional.

But it is not simply a suspicion of meaning that stands in the way of a realism of intent. There is also a suspicion of reference, what is commonly called the doctrine of ontological relativity. Not only can we not be confident in the meaning of our sentences, but we can be even less confident in the reference of these sentences. To use Quine's famous example, we do not know if "Tabitha" refers to our cat, Tabitha, or to the whole world-minus-the-cat-Tabitha. It would appear, therefore, that if one would want to argue for a realism of intent, at least these two strands of the global suspicion must be addressed. The reference issue, however, is complicated by a certain confusion, which Rorty does well to point out: there is a certain ambiguity of the term *reference* which leads us to expect our words to refer to reality, as it were, automatically, aside from the intentions and meanings ascribed to these words by agents. Thus

"reference" is ambiguous between "what people are *really* talking about" and "what these words *actually* refer to (quite independently of what people may think they refer to)". Rorty actually does a great job of pointing out the incoherence of speaking about reference as if it denotes some mysterius relationship which obtains between words and things. Signification is a cognitive act involving human subjectivity.[5] Putnam too says that there is nothing inherently representational about words. These represent only insofar as they are part of a practice of representation, which is itself diverse.

I do not want to settle these issues in this paper. They are far too complicated to even attempt that. Furthermore, this is not the point of the paper. What I am interested in is whether one can coherently *from a Christian point of view* hold anything less than such a minimal realism. In a sense, this is an intra-textual undertaking, an examination of the consistency of non-realism with Christian faith. Whether in fact such a realism of intent will turn out to be false is another issue. That may indeed lead us to revise our Christian claims, or their usual interpretation, but I would suggest it will more likely lead us to abandon them.

How should we know whether to take seriously the claim of religious adherents to refer to an extra-mental transcendent reality of an appropriate type? Why should we grant the realism of their intent? We may start by arguing that we have no less reason to be confident of the meaning of our religious statements than do most of the people in uttering sentences about mundane things. Without rehearsing the verificationist debate, it may be pointed out that Christians can easily imagine situations which could falsify the sentences they hold true.[6] Should there be evident that there is no transcendence, believers would have naturally to recognise that they have been unsuccessful in refering to such a transcedent being.[7] Christians do not, as it is often supposed, think of their God as being wholly removed from this world, but as being creatively, providentially and redemptively engaged in the empirical world. This empirical availability of God, supremely in the person of Jesus Christ, opens Christian talk to potential falsifying circumstances.

However, as the history of the verification-falsification debate has shown, we are not permitted to know what we mean only by being able to specify what would falsify our beliefs. There is also an account of meaning which connects it to use. It is perhaps oportune to realise that, as Davidson explains, truth-conditional accounts of meaning should not be regarded as being in competition with use accounts. Whether he was forced to accept this as a result of criticism leveled against the restriction of meaning to truth conditions, or whether this has been his intention all along is less important. We cannot simply reduce meaning to either truth conditions, or to use. Truth conditions are severely restricted by the problems attaching to the notion of ostensive definition. How, to be brief, can we specify truth conditions in the absence of some practice of e.g., "pointing"? On the other hand, use accounts of meaning do little justice to the variance of meaning.

As Putnam shows, there are several constraints placed upon an account of meaing, one of which is the so-called "constraint of publicity" which stipulates that meanings should be implicitly known, or associated with the relevant words or sentences by every competent speaker of a language.[8]

Putnam initially thought that the best argument against ontological relativity is the notion of the mastery of language. However, he soon came to see that "use", for all its promise and benefits, is too wide a concept and allows of too much variation. He eventually abandoned this attempt in favour of a return to "intentionality", internally ruled, of course. I know that I use "Tabitha" to refer to the cat and not to the whole-universe-minus-the-cat precisely because I see the cat.

All of the above were philosophical arguments. They do not bear directly on my thesis. Can and should Christians accept that their talk of God does not refer to God (as we mean it to) but to some other object? Is there something in the Christian teachings which might block such a hermeneutic?

Our question is not one concerning the success of reference, but one about the intent of reference. It is not as if the success of reference can be established without clarifying the intention of the speaker, but these are distinguishable tasks. However, Byrne outlines the problem in somewhat misleading terms: can we take seriously the intent of theistic religious adherents to refer to a transcendental entity of the appropriate kind? Byrne should have simply asked: do religious adherents mean to refer to such-and-such an entity? To speak in terms of whether we should take their intent seriously invites confusion between the presence of the intent and the success of the intention, which is precisely what Byrne would want to avoid. It does this by inviting a judgment of value on our part, when in fact this should be a purely descriptive question: do they, or do they not understand their talk as refering to an ontologically independent being?

When the realist holds that his intention is to refer to an extra-linguistic reality, he will inevitably reject all revisionist projects as involving an unpermissible loss of traditional meaning. In deciding on whether some reading is revisionist or reductionist, two sorts of considerations might be invoked: a historical/semantic one and a functional one. The historical consideration goes something like this: revisionist claims involve a culpable departure from the classical meaning of religious talk. Byrne does not think this consideration can settle the issue, since "Many interpretations of traditional theistic claims and concepts offer themselves precisely as revisionary exercises in the light of the presumed failings in traditional thinking."[9] In other words, some such revisionist interpretations take issue precisely with the way meanings were currently ascribed. However, this is not enough to make us hesitant in applying the first criterion, *pace* Byrne. For the burden of proof is still on the revisionist, to show that meaning-ascription is *difficult* rather than easy, mysterious (some might say esoteric) rather than natural. In any case, since Byrne accepts this restriction, he

does however find resources to answer the revisionist in the second, functional type of considerations. According to these,

> such revisionary exercises fail in the initial requirement of providing an appropriate object for theistic discourse. Appropriateness in this instane may be a matter of whether the fundamental and distinctive role religious symbols play in human life can be preserved in any account of what the governing intent behind theistic symbols is or ought to be. Only this level of analysis will allow us to provide a rationale for "transcendence" as a criterion for divinity.[10]

Appealing though this argument might be, I see no reason why the revisionists who would dare challenge meaning and ascription of meaning should have a problem challenging "appropriateness" or what the function of religious symbols may be. The revisionist might well accept that his meanings do not fulfill specifically theistic functions, but also hold that such functions were poorly understood in the first place. Indeed, it is much easier to contest function, which allows of much theoretical variance, than to contest meaning, which has the advantage of being more "obvious".

What are we to say, then, of such revisionist strategies? It may be argued that Byrne grants the revisionist too much, accepting to do battle on his own turf. He assumes that the initial supposition of the revisionist, that which made the whole situation possible, namely that meaning ascription is something mysterious and problematic, that we may not be sure (as a rule) about what we mean when we say something. Such an assumption is related to what has now become an outdated option, that words mean what they do independently of our wishing them to do so. However, if as Putnam argues, there is nothing mysterious about representation, then meanings and references are indeed public.

I cannot hope to dismiss revisionism by association, not least because it is also allied with a dominating trend in the philosophy of mind and language, made influential by Quine: ontological relativity. I will have to suspend the argument at this point, as the issue of ontological relativity will be addressed in a separate section. If what was said above about our confidence in the meaning and reference of our talk is valid, and if it can be shown that the doctrine of ontological relativity is false, then the realist intent of theistic talk can indeed be taken seriously, even granting Byrne's scruples.

The Cosmic "Porridge" Metaphor

Not only is a non-realism of intent dissatisfactory for a theist, but so is the so-called "cosmic porridge" view of reality[11]. This view holds that reality is an unstructured "something", possessing no inherent characteristics, which knowledge is supposed to "pick out". Human beings, then, are free to impose their own structure upon this "cosmic porridge", without being in the least responsible for how they do it. A minimal realism, however,

involves the claim that there exists a reality prior to thinking. This reality, furthermore, is a structured one. Christians, I hold, are bound to the notion of such a structured reality through the doctrine of a God who creates *particular* things out of nothing. It is difficult to see how a Christian theist, accepting as she does a minimal doctrine of creation which holds that God has created the universe, but without specifying the precise manner of this act, can hold that reality is unstructured.

The porridge view is related to both an anti-realism of intent, as well as with the theory of ontological relativity and instrumentalism. They all form a cluster of concepts. Since I shall offer reasons against them which substantially differ in their logic, I shall treat them separately. Byrne also associates this view with the notion of conceptual relativity, as it is espoused by Putnam. As it will be shown, this view can hardly be imputed to Putnam. Byrne's interpretation of Putnam provides a useful background to this discussion. He points out that realists hold that there must be something differentiated in the world, before knowledge structures it. This view is incompatible with a strong version of conceptual relativity which adopts a porridge view. What troubles Byrne about Putnam's conceptual relativity seems to be that "A view which states that truth, and hence reality, is relative to a conceptual scheme must hold that human conceptual activity creates what is real as it creates conceptual schemes."[12] This appears to permit us to mold the world anyway we want, which is what Byrne calls "Promethean constructivism".[13] Byrne echoes McDowell's concern that we must ensure that thought is not left unconstrained, but that it remains responsible before the world as it figures in experience. An immediate confusion is, however, apparent here: Byrne takes Putnam to claim that reality itself is relative to a conceptual scheme. While Putnam does indeed say that truth is conceptually relative, he cannot claim that reality is as such relative. Reality is what it is, or as he would put it: the world is not simply a product, it's just the world. Speaking about the different temptations, one the one hand to suppose that we make the world, on the other to imagine an unconceptualised world, he writes:

> In this situation it is a temptation to say, "so we make the world", or "our language makes up the world", or "our culture makes up the world"; but this is just another form of the same mistake. If we succumb, once again we view the world – the only world we know – as a *product*. One kind of philosopher views it as a product of a raw material: Unconceptualised Reality. The other views it as a creation *ex nihilo. But the world isn't a product. It's just the world.*[14]

Putnam seems to be urging us to refuse the reduce the world to epistemic constructions and in this he looks like an enemy rather than an ally of the cosmic porridge view. Yet it is not as if he did not give us plenty of reason to think otherwise. Byrne is particularly bothered by the notion of plural and inconsistent truths: "The notion of plural sets of truths which are incompatible with each other makes sense if what these truths are true of is realities which are different – because they are shaped by different systems

of representation."[15] But it was already pointed out that for Putnam the notion of constructing a reality is a temptation to be resisted. Should we then suppose that there is an internal inconsistency in Putnam, caused by his holding of both (a) We do not construct reality, reality is independent of our epistemic productions; and (b) We only have reality under a description?

Sometimes Putnam's endorsement of (b) comes more to the fore, as in one of his discussions of quantum physics. Different philosophers seem to draw different conclusions from what is still set of empirical results with an unclear interpretation. Putnam's own take on it is that from the fact that the measuring apparatus is inhenrently connected to the sorts of results one gets at the level of quantum phenomena, it follows that every property of the system is considered to have meaning and existence only in relation to a particular measuring apparatus in a given experimental situation. Putnam prefers the counter-intuitive Copenhagen interpretation, which gives up on trying to find a God's eye view on the different perspectives one ends up with − with no obvious way of reconciliation. By way of generalisation, this shows that the notion of an object, or of a property, for that matter, is inherently extendable. One cannot come up with a theory which gives the criteria by which we could count how many objects there are in the world. This is a direct rejection of a certain interpretation of realism which holds that there is a fixed totality of mind-independent things in the world. But for Putnam, we can talk about objects and we can talk about their inherent properties only once we have settled on an ontology, that is only from whithin an already existing theory.

It is not hard to see why this raises fears of eating porridge. The implication might be that if there is no non-conceptual way to speak about reality, then there is no reality to speak about. Or, if we can speak about properties only once a theory has been adopted, then there are no properties of things in themselves. As Byrne rightly puts it: "That we need human values to discover these facts does not at all entail that those facts are constituted by those values."[16] The menacing spectre loses some of its force once one realises that the very notion of property, or the very notion of structure is a conceptual one. Putnam should then be taken as simply glossing on a Kantian insight, namely that we have a reality in itself on the one hand, but on the other hand we can only *know* that reality, through our conceptual abilities. Putnam in a sense is just stating the obvious: the notion of a property is an *epistemic* notion, which we apply to *ontological* things. But like all epistemic notions, it's application to things can only be partial and provisional. But this is perfectly consistent with realism.

It is important to distinguish between two distinct theses: (c) The world is an unstructured whole, devoid of properties, devoid of any sort of distinction; and (d) All the properties of the world, the number of "objects" in the world depend on how we chose to describe such a world, in other words, they depend on a conceptual scheme. We can still be realists, as Putnam himself wishes to remain a realist, if we grant that (c) does not

follow from (d). The first thesis does not follow from the second thesis for a simple reason. If one argued that the world is an unstructured whole, that would already mean imputing a property to the world: its being unstructured. Clearly the thesis is only interesting as not a mere perspective, but as a thesis from a God's eye point of view, as it were. But then, the thesis would be holding (from a God's eye point of view) that the world has properties independent of any conceptual schemes, which would be a denial of the premise (d). I take Putnam to be endorsing (d) without concluding (c). His argument is quite compatible, and in fact requires, as we shall see, the notion that the world is well-differentiated before our representations. Not only is it illogical to draw the porridge conclusion, but the very notion is incoherent, as Byrne points out. Talk of a world without a structure is hard to understand and it is also difficult to distinguish it from talk about no world. How is an unstructured world different from a world that did not exist at all?

My thesis so far, then, is that although Putnam has given us reason to find substance in such accusations, he can plausibly be interpreted as putting forward the less controversial (and at the same time Kantian) thesis that we simply divide the world differently. The following quote better explains what he intends to mean by conceptual relativity: "What I am saying, then, is that elements of what we call "language" or "mind" *penetrate so deeply into what we call "reality" that the very project of representing ourselves as being "mappers" of something language-independent" is fatally compromised from the very start.*"[17] It is not that there is not a reality which is structured prior to our perception, but that in our cognitive activity we blend the deliverances of receptivity with the operation of spontaneity to such a degree that we can no longer distinguish a part of truth which belongs to the world and a part of truth which belongs to our thinking. Whether one is entitled to draw relativist conclusions from this is entirely another matter. But the cosmic porridge view cannot be that easily imputed to Putnam. These next observations further corroborate this thesis.

Besides Putnam's support of conceptual relativity there is a vigurous defense of elements absolutely essential to a realist ontology. For example, he argues against deflationist theories of truth, suggesting that truth must indeed be thought of as a property. This is one insight of metaphysical realism that he acknowledges he is not prepared to give up.[18] Furthermore, "Accepting the ubiquity of conceptual relativity does not require us to deny that truth genuinely depends on the behaviours of things distant from the speaker, but the nature of dependence changes as the kinds of language games we invent changes."[19] It looks like Putnam's notion of conceptual schemes should not be taken as something which blocks perception of reality, but their diversity is simply a showcase for the multiple ways in which this one reality can be represented. This is an important point, for it can be turned into a point which the realist might find congenial: reality itself is multi-valenced. The various vocabularies we use to describe it do

not so much reflect a weakness of human mind, as they exemplify that reality itself is rich in meaning. It follows that *a minimal realism should not burden itself with the notion that there is a single correct description of reality anymore than with the notion that there is a fixed totality of objects in the world.* Unfortunately Putnam imputes both of these claims to metaphysical realism, or what Byrne means by innocent realism. If realism holds that there is a reality which is structured before perception, such a claim does not falsify the claim that we can employ various correct descriptions of that reality which are nevertheless incompatible with one another. Importantly, however, this incompatibility becomes trivial and does not lead into either relativism, perspectivism, or into an epistemization of truth. This indeed is where I dissent from Putnam, as section 4 will show.

Spontaneity is not unbounded in Putnam. It is already connected to the things in the world. Putnam also refuses to naturalise the mind, or intentionality, thus blocking a rampant holism. He views the mind not as an organ, a picture which invites the idea of mental intermediaries. The mind is a "structured system of object-involving abilities".[20] There is a natural way, a specifically human ability to pick out objects in the world. The fact that there is more than one vocabulary does not mean that one cannot talk about how those vocabularies relate to familiar objects in the world.

The above should be enough to rescue Putnam from interpretations which attribute to him the porridge view. As he has himself admitted, he has gradually moved from an initial physicalism, to an internal realism and eventually to a firmer realism.

I have not said anything yet about why Christians should be reluctant to accept the porridge view. Christians believe that the world was created by God. In the Christian worldview, or in the Christian conceptual scheme, the world is defined as creation. It is not clear when the notion of creation *ex nihilo* became the dominant understanding of the origin of the world for the Christian. As Alister McGrath shows, *creatio ex nihilo* only became the dominant view for the Jewish community only around the 15th century.[21] Within the Christian tradition the notion of a creation out of nothing developed partly as a reaction against Greek theories of the eternity of the world, although there was less consensus about the Old Testament teaching on the matter. However, regardless of the manner of creation, the bare conviction that God created the world has serious implications for one's ontology.

McGrath lists four implications of a doctrine of creation[22], two of which bear directly on our issue. If God created the world, then human rationality was also created with an inherent ability to reflect theologically about God. Secondlly, there is an ordering of creation such that there is something about the world and about human mind which allows patterns within nature to be discerned and represented.[23] While one may object to this thesis on the grounds that the doctrine of creation says nothing (by itself) about human ability to represent that creation, one consequence of creation

is beyond doubt. This is the fact that creation presupposes an ordering. It may be argued that the notions of "creation", and of "making" presuppose the notions of "structure" and "differentiation", perhaps even that of "property". If creation would be without any order, or without any structure, then the act of creation cannot be said to be an intentional, rational and free act. At best it would only make sense to speak of emanation, but even this would be problematic. What is emanated is assumed to have some sort of difference from that from which it emerged. But this difference presupposes differentiation, it presupposes limits and at least the property of being emanated.

It follows that the Christian doctrine of creation, understood minimally as the world being shaped by God, entails the fact that it has a structure before human cognitive powers represent it. Add to this the philosophical difficulties associated with the porridge view and one has a pretty compelling case for ontology.

Ontological Relativity and Instrumentalism

Instrumentalism is involved in certain denials of the realist intent of religious or theological talk. It is not necessarily involved in all such denials, for it is conceivable to deny that religious adherents have a grip on what they mean by their terms, while insisting that this holds only for such metaphysical language. Concurrently, neither is a denial of realist intent necessarily entailed by all versions of instrumentalism, since instrumentalism is not so much a claim about the existence of an intention, but one about its success. Briefly stated, instrumentalism is the claim that words, sentences, or semantic units in general do not refer individually to parts of reality, but their use is restricted to allowing us to predict future experiences. What we take to be tokens of our linguistic types are merely useful fictions which play a part in our linguistic affairs. However, we have no way of making sure that they exist in reality, independently of our cognition. To do so would imply, as Rorty declares, that we are able to get outside of our skins, or to leave language behind as we experience an "immaculate perception".

It is not difficult to imagine the effect of such claims in the field of religion. "God" does not refer to a transcendent being which exists prior to our cognition. It is merely a fiction that enables us to find regularities in our patterns of experience. In the same sense, however, "grass" is fraught with the same difficulties and so is "Peter". This shows that we may distinguish between different instrumentalist scopes. We may be instrumentalist with respect to certain notions, while being less "scrupulous" with respect to others. Byrne helpfully points out that it is enough for the realist nature of religious talk that at least *some* of its concepts are taken to refer to independently existing realities, especially the most central notion of "God". McGrath also points out that acknowledging the fact that not all religious or

scientific concepts successfully refer is consistent with realism as long as some are believed to refer, especially the more common-sensical ones.[24] This somewhat relaxes the demands of realism and as Putnam would say, humanises it.

For the instrumentalist challenge to be interesting, it has to hold that no concept refers. To restrict the scope of instrumentalism to theoretical concepts makes it entirely uninteresting, for it is entirely plausible to expect the growth of science to shift the border between theory and empirical reality, revising our notions of "empirical availability". This has in fact routinely happened in science. But if interesting instrumentalism extends to all objects, not simply to theoretical or abstract entities, but to grass, to snow, to people as well, then it may be shown how deeply problematic it is. Hilary Putnam brings a distinctively ethical perspective upon this debate in "Does the disquotational theory solve all philosophical problems?"[25] He points out that examples of instrumentalism involving such concepts as electron, tables, pencils and so on, might tempt us to believe that a phenomenalist reduction of our talk about objects makes no difference to our lives. While we can be skeptical about the reference of such terms, this should be indifferent to how we run our lives. But, Putnam observes, there is a skepticism that does make a difference. If we can be enticed into accepting such a phenomenalist reduction of language about *material* objects, it may be less forthcoming to do so with language involving *persons*. I should allow Putnam himself to explain:

> The point is that some forms of skepticism *matter*. Consider the following difference, in essence one pointed out by Cavell in *The Claim of Reason:* (1) Suppose I were to be convinced by some brilliant philosophical argument that the phenomenalist program can actually be carried through, and that all sentences about "material objects" can be transtaled into a phenomenalist language. This would be exciting stuff, intellectually speaking, but it would make virtually no difference to our *lives*. (2) Suppose, instead, that I were to be convinced that *other people* were just logical constructions out of my sense data (or, alternatively, that talk about other people is just a game that is useful for predicting my future sense impressions); this would make an enormous difference to my life. (The whole question of hurting other people would be "displaced"; and so would the whole question of companionship.) As Cavell put it, skepticism about other minds can be (and, in a way, often is) a real problem, while skepticism about "middle-sized dry goods" is an utterly unreal problem.[26]

Putnam goes on to clarify that realism about such objects is an indispensable part of our picture about the world and in fact of our human nature. Yet it is not as if Quine is oblivious to this fact, which is why he insists he is a robust realist. He finds it very difficult, Putnam points out, to pass over those very realist sounding statements in natural language, statements about people, about cars and, indeed, about Cavell's middle-sized dry goods. However, the interpretation he gives to those realist-sounding statements betrays the fact that he is only paying lip service to his correct intuitions. Putnam correctly draws the moral: "to preserve our

commonsense realist convictions it is not enough to preserve some set of "realist" sentences. The interpretation you give those sentences, or, more broadly, your account of what understanding them consists in, is also important."[27]

This brings us close to a diagnostic to the problem. On the one hand we have "robust realists" like Quine who hold that we have particular languages and all we can do is work out for each their particular ontological commitments. However, no language-neutral description of the *success* of their commitment is possible. We have no idea whether, or to what our terms, theoretical or empirical refer to. On the other hand, Putnam, Cavell and a number of other philosophers which Rorty calls "intuitionist realists"[28] who cling to what they take to be very strong intuitions about reality and about how our language embraces it. Yet for Rorty, intuitions can be sociologically and culturally shaped. This means that they make no serious philosophical contributions. They come together with the language one has learned. While he may indeed be correct about the unreliability of such intuitions, Putnam is indeed right that both the positivist and the phenomenalist revisionist programmes have ended up in solipsism. He claims that it is simply a *non-sequitur* that since we are not in a position to stand outside language, the idea that language represents something outside of itself is empty.

The solipsism Putnam envisages translates into a skepticism that we can ever know whether the common sense things we believe our cognitive abilities to pick out actually exist. It is difficult to overestimate the grip that this notion has on contemporary analytic philosophy. Ever since Kant it comes terribly easy to dissociate thought from things, or language from the world. Philosophy is proper only insofar as it operates on thought, language, but not on that which is presumably outside its scope, namely a reality existing prior to these. But since philosophy cannot forever sustain a nihilism which supports such fictions as the brain in a vat, it soon had to figure out ways to reconnect the mind to the world. But once the world was redefined as being of a completely different stuff from mind, the relationship could either seem mysterious, or one could attempt to naturalise it. The dominant conceptualisation of this relationship is adopted by Quine, Rorty and Davidson and it holds that the relationship between the mind and the world is causal, rather than conceptual. Nature is within the realm of law, whereas reason is free. Thus a dualism emerges between mind and the world. However, as Catherine Pickstock comments, this dualism is unsustainable and it threatens to collapse either into a physicalism which entails a complete reduction of the mental, or into what she calls a species relativism and which acurrately describes McDowell's fear of "unconstrained coherentism". If the latter will be the case, then "the one "coherence" we are locked into, perhaps discloses nothing whatsoever concerning the world and is itself radically inexplicable."[29] For Rorty, for example, such a dualism means that we cannot get our of our skins and compare our thoughts with reality in a piece meal fashion. It follows that

truth is not a property in the sense that it denotes a special relationship (of correspondence in most cases) that our sentences enjoy with reality. We do not know whether our words actually pick out objects in the world[30]. All that we know is that we use words in connection to repeated patterns of events. A revisionism with respect to the world comes into operation in such forms of dualism: the world is the absent cause of batches of sensorial experience, which delimit the range of the known.

There remain two options for the continued use of the notion of truth: deflationism or disquotationalism. In deflationism, truth becomes redundant, it is merely an abbreviation. In disquotationalism, on the other hand, truth is still important, but it cannot be defined other than by the austere T-sentences. Disquotationalist austerity does not allow oneself the luxury of such clarifying notions as "the world makes true statements true". All that we are permitted is to connect sentences to other sentences. We do not have access to a world in itself, but, as it were, only to whatever shows up on the conceptual end of the causal chain linking mind to world.

Putnam describes the situation with the help of the metaphor of a measuring apparatus. The concepts we use and the entities we postulate as existing are nothing but methods of predicting the outcome of future experiences. In the language of the metaphor, they are predictions within a calculus. They allow us to predict certain values indicated by the measuring apparatus" needle. We do not as such have access to what the apparatus measures, but only to the output of values. In other words, all we have access to is our own skins, by which Rorty normally means our social customs, our upbringing, education and so on. These leave a permanent imprint upon what we are trying to know. But all that we know is that we are mostly successful in employing such concepts which help us cope. We should not, however, load this success with too much significance. Realism is not an explanation of the success of science, for Rorty.[31]

So much for the diagnosis. Now we have to ask, how may one respond to instrumentalism and the associated thesis of ontological relativity? Let me start with Putnam's earlier attempt to refute ontological relativity. It involved the notion of use and our ability to master how we use our terms. He thought he was being able to respond to Quine's denial that we could know whether Tabitha referred to the cat or to the whole-world-minus-the-cat by invoking the fact that the rules governing our talk are such that they ensure we know what we mean by our words. However, Putnam eventually came to recognise that this recourse to the notion of use was useless, since it was too theoretical. Ironically, Putnam was repeating the same mistake made by both positivists, by Quine and the so-called Neo-Wittgensteinians: he assumed that the use of words can be described in terms of what speakers are allowed to say in certain observable circumstances. How is this complicitous with the instrumentalism he rejects? The instrumentalist holds that rational agents can cope with reality by employing words in a ruled way in observable circumstances. Should certain circumstances obtain, one would presumably know what words to use. In this sense, use is

a theoretical notion and there is a standard way of describing the use of expressions in an arbitrary language game.[32]

"Nothing could be father from the picture of a language-game as an automatic performance, like the execution of an algorythm", Putnam eventually realises.[33] The neo-Wittgensteinians mistook some remarks made by Wittgenstein for a *theory* of meaning, when it was never intended as a theory. One must realise that language does not consist of a strict system of rules, but also allows for rule-transgressions and such trans-gressions are not ruled by anything, in most cases anyway. The question put by Putnam is certainly valid: what happens when the measuring apparatus goes wrong? It is a common fact that we have come to distrust our measurements on more than one occasion. If reality is utterly hidden behind the indicated values, how is it that we sometimes revise our measuring techniques, or that we find our tools obsolete? Quantum mechanics is one such example of the fact that we are able to perceive that which is, so to speak, outside our skins, in this case that which does not make any sense by our present cognitive lights. John Polkinghorne points out that "the very idiosyncrasy of the quantum world reminds us of its stubborn, if subtle, facticity over against us. [...] the quantum world asserts its reality by its very opposition to our common sense expectation"[34] Frederick Will points out what Waissmann has called the "open texture" of concepts, which is a phenomenon also noticed by Leibniz, Locke, Wittgenstein and Austin and which describes those cases in which words literally fail us.[35] This reveals something about the nature of language, namely that it never stands isolated from the environments in which we use it.

Now Rorty would grant that there is an external world. But he has come up with no satisfactory answer to Putnam's question: how does this admission help him cope? If it is merely a trivial consequence of Rorty's currently accepted world-picture, then it remains too vague, because the currently accepted picture does discriminate between various chuncks of reality, such as trees, churches and people. If, on the other hand, it is merely a futile gesture made in the direction of an abandoned realism, such as Quine's discourse is, then how, if we deny that our relation to these discrete hunks is piecemeal, can we argue that our ability to get in touch with electrons is different from our ability to get in touch with 19th century paintings?[36]

My suggestion echoes that of Frederick Will, an often neglected resource in the debates between realism and pragmatism. It is that once one isolates language from reality in such a fashion, then the attempt to reunite the two can only produce "crazy" solutions. Will points out that Putnam himself, when he invokes such model-theoretic arguments, is guilty of the same mistake. It is not as if one first adopted and learned a natural language and only *then* one thought about how this language is to be interpreted. The dualism between mind and world has to be abandoned. "Our cognitive predicament is not one of establishing a link between our thoughts and

their supposed objects, it is instead one of exploiting the links our thinking does and must have with things in order to discriminate the genuine characteristics of things."[37] Thought is already connected to reality, otherwise it would have no content. As both McDowell and Putnam point out, without a rational connection between individual thoughts and bits of experience, there would be no content to our thought, or no thinking at all.[38]

Will questions the following basic assumption of philosophers like Quine, Sellars, Davidson, Rorty, but many others too: if there is no knowledge by acquaintance, then there are no individual facts to be known. Antirealists tend to affirm the precedent, while realists deny the consequent, while both find the inference compelling. But Will shows that the assumption itself is wrong. Hilary Putnam, John McDowell, William Alston and others argue along the same lines that it is wrong to hang the possibility of knowledge on the possibility of immaculate perception. Will invokes the metaphor of cartography to illustrate how words connect to reality. This is better suited than the metaphor of picture, or portraiture: "What is explicitly represented, drawn on the map, is a basis, a skeleton of information defining, but not fully defining, the feature of the quadrant, continent, or whatever is its object. It is not inconsistent with its character as a map, but rather essential to it, that it leave room for refinement, details, and even in some cases revision of basic outlines."[39] As McDowell and Putnam argue, the fact that perception is socially-conditioned does not mean that the very notion of fact disappears. It only means that a greater variety of modes of knowledge[40] has to be envisaged.

To sum up, it can be shown that instrumentalism is one of the inevitably crazy possible solutions to the problem of the dualism between mind and world. Once one refuses this dualism, one will no longer feel compeled to reconstruct the relationship from one side (a model-theoretic view of language) thus necessarily ending up with a drastically modified notion of world (e.g., those plancks of the boat which are at the moment not being moved about). Instead, language can only be understood in connection to the world, and, of course, to speakers.

Truth and Warranted Assertability

The last requirement of a minimal realism concerns the notion of truth. Putnam has been something of an ally throughout the essay, but on the question of truth I shall have to reject, or at least re-interpret his views. Alvin Plantinga has suggested that the question of realism is really one about truth, how we define it, how we understand and use it. We might indeed accept that truth is one of the major issues in realism, if not necessarily, the only important one. Plantinga takes issue with Putnam's earlier insistence that we do not have a notion of truth which outruns the possibility of justification. According to Putnam, truth is nothing but

idealised warranted assertibility, or *idealised rational acceptability*. He believes he is drawing the consequences of an important intuition, which is that truth must somehow be knowable, that it must be accessible. Davidson appreciates this insistence that truth must be connected to belief, intention and desire, although he finds Putnam's proposal ultimately unsatisfactory.[41] One must indeed grant the strength of this intuition. What Putnam calls metaphysical realism does not do it proper justice, but it supposes that truth must be radically non-epistemic. Rorty has similar difficulties with this notion and concludes that for the realist the world must be utterly unknowable since our best and most completely verified and justified theories might still turn out to be false. The implication is that since (metaphysical) realism leads into a sort of global scepticism, it refutes itself.

In response, Peter Byrne points out that global skepticism is certainly possible from the realist point of view, but it is boring. Realism as a thesis about the nature of truth remains unnaffected about the difficulties we might have when we try to determine particular truths. Paul Horwich explains the tension: on the one hand it is argued that we know a great deal about the world, on the other that we do not have awareness of great many facts. This is what Rorty has called a conflict of intuitions. It must indeed be conceded that the anti-realist intuitions are not easily discarded. That truth is possibly utterly unknowable is bound to raise certain verificationist eyebrows. The verificationist question is: how do we know what truth is, if we have no way of knowing when we have found it? What precisely is the meaning of such intuitions about truth?

This predicament is acknowledged by Plantinga, who accepts that it is very difficult to speak about truth without also speaking about a person who knows such truths. Sometimes realists seem to believe that there are truths which exist somehow independently of any cognition. Plantinga believes this to be a contradictory notion. The very notion of true proposition involves the notion that someone holds that proposition, or has held it at one given time. The notion of proposition does not make sense independently of noetic activity. Is there any solution to this dilemma? Are we simply caught between conficting intuitions, with no rational way of reconciling them? Rorty seems to believe this and he writes, in characteristic style: "This upshot of the confrontation between the pragmatist and the intuitive realist about the status of intuitions can be described either as a conflict of intuitions about the importance of intuitions, or as a preference for one vocabulary over another. The realist will favor the first description, and the pragmatist, the second."[42] Rorty would want us to believe that this is in fact a pseudo-problem, that we do not have an interesting debate after all. The illusion is generated by the fact that we speak different conceptual languages and that we tend to "irrationally" prefer one way of speaking rather than another. However, the choice itself is only aesthetically mediated. Intuitions themlselves do not disclose anything illuminating about how our mind connects to the world, but they are socially constructed. Just as we can learn another language and

forget one, we can also learn to have different intuitions and discard older compulsions.

This rhetoric might have been compelling in the hey day of relativism and pluralism, but there are signs that the post-structuralist consensus is weakening, at least in America. Donald Davidson points out that the way we use the notion of truth does not differ from language to language, or from vocabulary to vocabulary, as Rorty would want us to believe. In fact there is something about the notion of truth which makes it fundamental to other notions we employ, such as meaning and belief. I do not have time to get into the discussion here, since my target is not Rorty, but Putnam. In my opinion Davidson has ably resisted Rortyan "vocabularies rhetoric". The fact that he has done this without recourse to other intuitions shows that in this respect he is superior to Putnam. The latter perhaps places too much weight on what he thinks is intuitively right, thus forcing the debate into a deadlock. It is not after all merely a conflict of irreconcillable and socially conditioned intuitions. The conflict is real and it needs a resolution.

Putnam's solution is to reduce truth to idealised warranted assertibility. He argues that the metaphysical realist claim that a theory which would meet all standards of verification could still turn out to be false is wrong. To establish this claim he has produced his famous model-theoretic argument for truth as warranted assertability. I shall turn my attention to this argument and the various criticism that it raised. I will then show that the argument fails, but that there is another way to solve this conflict of intuitions. Finally, it will be shown that Putnam himself realised the shortcomings of his earlier definition of truth as IWA and has modified his views as a result.

Putnam has offered more than one version of the model theoretic argument. Let us take the one that figured in the 1976 Eastern Division (American Philosophical Association) presidential address, "Realism and Reason" as our guide.[43] Let T be an epistemically ideal theory. The argument is as follows:

> I assume THE WORLD has (or can be broken into) infinitely many pieces. I also assume T1 *says* there are infinitely many things (so in this respect T1 is "objectively right" about THE WORLD). Now T1 is *consistent* (by hypothesis) and has (only) infinite models. So by the completeness theorem (in its model theoretic form), T1 has a model of every infinite cardinality. Pick a model M of the same cardinality as THE WORLD. Map the individuals of M one-to-one into the pieces of THE WORLD, and use the mapping to define the relations of M directly to THE WORLD. The result is a satisfaction relations SAT – a "correspondence" between the terms of L and sets of pieces of THE WORLD – such that the theory T1 comes out *true* – true of THE WORLD – provided we just interpret "true" as TRUE (SAT). So what becomes of the claim that even the *ideal* theory T1 might *really* be false? (p. 485).

If the argument seems too complicated, the moral is that "It is possible to assign an interpretation for the singular and general referring expressions

of a theory such that the resultant "model" of the theory is internally consistent and makes every statement in the theory come out true."[44] There are plenty of counter-arguments to the model theoretic argument on the market[45], from saying that it proves too much to saying that it proves too little. The following argument builds on the fact that Putnam imagines an impossible situation in which we have a language/theory for which we have not yet picked an interpretation. The task is therefore to establish such an interpretation. Plantinga points out that the model theoretic argument is actually a question addressed to the realist: how do our terms acquire the extensions that they do? But the very felicity of this question is dubious. Here goes the argument.

Let us say that we have a theory which excellently meets all epistemic constraints. We are granting this to Putnam, although, as Plantinga points out, there is still no consensus about what these constraints should be. If this theory is to make any sense as a theory about the world, it must have already divided the world. That is, it has already "assigned" extensions to its terms, while it has also adopted a counting convention. This means that it has adopted a definition of what it takes to be "objects" in the world. The theory has already assumed a certain model of reality. This raises a very serious difficulty for Putnam's argument. In order to make that more apparent, some labeling is necessary. Let us call the model of reality which the theory initially presupposes R1. I will call R2, R3... Rn the infinitely various possible models of reality, it might come up with. Now Putnam assumes that we have a T1 which is epistemically excellent. But for any theory with such a quality, Putnam believes we can come up with an Rx unto which we can map each of the singular and general terms of T1. The problem is that one would have to account for the relationship between R1, the initial model of reality and Rx, the putative model which "makes" the theory true. There are two possibilities: either R1 and Rx are irreconcilable, or they are compatible/commensurable.

> (a) If R1 and Rx are irreconcilable, can it still be said that Rx fits the theory which presupposes R1? It would seem impossible to map unto Rx all those terms which had initial extensions in R1. Furthermore, forcing such a mapping would involve a certain loss of the original meaning of the terms of T1. And this would mean we no longer have the same T1 which is mapped unto Rx. Putnam would not be proving a point about T1 – the epistemically adequate theory, but he would simply be showing that for any model of reality we can devise a theory that can be mapped unto it. This is certainly not what he was after. (b) If, on the other hand, R1 and Rx are compatible, that is, if one can be translated into the other,[46] then the statements made about R1 could just as easily be translated into statements about Rx, whether by quantification, by logical deduction, or what have you. But this only means that such statements can be made of whatever model of reality (Rn) compatible (or commensurate) with R1.

Putnam's argument makes sense only if we have a theory which does not (yet) assume any model of reality. We then find such a model unto which

the theory is mappable, a model which satisfies the theory. But if the theory does not assume any initial model (our R1), then how can we say about it that it is epistemically excellent? On the other hand, if it does assume such a model, then the Rx model of reality (which makes it true) would have to be commensurate with R1, otherwise we have just changed the theory. But if it is compatible with R1, it only shows that we can find a commensurate model for our initial one. It says nothing about whether the initial model is true, or false.

Putnam's argument assumes that extensions are fixed by the way we use our terms. He thinks that there is nothing else to fix the reference of our terms other than use. However, as I have pointed out, he realised that this is not good enough a defence against ontological relativity. While he initially thought that use is sufficient to settle questions of reference, this proved to assume a much too theoretical account of use, i.e., as a disposition to respond in certain ways to certain stimuli. By contrast, the realist understanding of reference was discarded as mysterious. For Plantinga, on the other hand, there is nothing mysterious about our perceptive abilities: "But why should the power of grasping properties be thought of as non-natural?"[47] On the contrary, it is more non-natural to suppose that one first has a theory and then decides on an interpretation for that theory. This goes against what we know about the nature of language, how it is used and how it is learned. How we interpret a language should not depend on use alone, as Alston also argues, but on both use and what is distant.[48]

It may be that the Putnam of the late seventies and early eighties, the Putnam of the model theoretic argument and of the ideal rational acceptability, may have given too much weight to stong intuitions about the accessibility of truth. Strong and compelling as these are, they should not prevent one from imagining a further possibility. The notion that truth must somehow be connected to belief entails anti-realist consequences only if one imagines belief anthropocentrically. William Alston suggests that Putnam's efforts are vitiated by this anthropocentrism which holds that truth is idealised warranted assertability by *our* standards and by *our* abilities, even idealised. The very introduction of "idealised" perhaps shows that Putnam is uneasy about this reduction and attempts to compensate by invoking an ideal limit. The problem, as is well known, is that this is no less a non-epistemic conception than a realist one. Alston's suggestion brings God into the debate:

> If an omniscient deity were brought into the picture, the position would lack the antirealist bite it is designed to have. Realism should have no hesitation in recognising that a necessary condition of the truth of a proposition is that it would be known (accepted, believed...) by an omniscient cognitive subject. And with the restriction to finite subjects in place we still have to take seriously the idea that there are aspects of reality that are inaccessible in principle to *any* such subjects – actual or possible. The essence of God has been a popular theological candidate.[49]

This theological reflection shows that realism needs theism as a supporting hypothesis. If theism were wrong, realism about truth would make no sense, for it would involve the incoherent idea that there are true propositions which are not believed by anyone.

I am not sure whether Putnam's recent theological, or more correctly religious, interest is partly responsible for his change of views with respect to realism. It seems that he has simultaneously moved towards an "increasing realism"[50] as well as towards more emphasis on ethics and religion. But it is a fact that he has recanted his earlier reduction of truth to idealised warranted assertability. He has also become less confident that the extensions of our terms are fixed largely by use. This means that an appeal to our mastery of linguistic use is not enough to refute ontological relativity. Putnam now argues that we can be sure that "Tabitha" refers to the cat because we *see* the cat.[51] If that is the case, this also reflects on his model theoretic argument which assumes that reference is fixed by use. But if there is something else besides use to fix reference, if there is a fact of the matter about distant objects in the world which serves that purpose[52], then we can be confident that our terms have the extensions they do not simply because we have a convention that says so. Our words refer to objects because we always use language within an environment, being engaged in the world. The world is not simply the product of our theoretic modeling, it is simply, as Putnam himself says, the world.

This also reflects on Putnam's understanding of truth. He is no longer willing to endorse defining the concept of truth as idealised warranted assertability.

> In *Reason, Truth, and History* I explained the idea thus: "truth is idealised rational acceptability". This formulation ws taken by many as meaning hat "rational acceptability" (and the notion of "better and worse epistemic situation", which I also employed) is supposed (by me) to be more basic than "truth"; that I was offering a reduction of truth to epistemic notions. Nothing was farther from my intention. The suggestion is simply that *truth and rational acceptability are interdependent notions*. Unfortunately in *Reason, Truth, and History* I gave examples of only one side of the interdependence: examples of the way truth depends on rational acceptability. But it seems clear to me that the dependence goes both ways: whether an epistemic situation is any good or not typically depends on whether many different statements are true.[53]

The same holds for Rorty's pragmatic explanation of truth in terms of success. He fails to understand that success itself, like the notion of an excellent epistemic situation, is a cognitive notion, that is, it depends on certain statements coming out true. Some, like Alston and Byrne[54], have pointed out that it is not clear what Putnam means by interdependence. Some clarification is provided by an adjacent discussion about disquotational semantics. Rejecting the dualism between truth conditions and assertibility conditions, Putnam argues that truth and assertibility are

internally related notions. To understand one presupposes understanding the other. These notions are learned together with learning a language, hence the "internal" character of their relation.[55] This seems to bring Putnam and Davidson closer in terms of their respective elaboration of intuitions about truth.

Conclusion

The four considerations briefly discussed above in no way exhaust the range of what realism requires. Nor should one take their presence together to signify that they bear on a single sort of realism. Indeed, it may be objected that no coherent form of realism was presented in this paper, but a variety of forms of realisms. To my defense it may be replied that it was not my concern to present a coherent version of realism (of any type), but to suggest certain views which should be unacceptable for any Christian theologian, of whatever kind. I have not restrained my reasoning to specifically Christian arguments, although, where possible, these were invoked. The final section has indicated that Christian theology still has important insights to contribute to the philosophical discussion of truth. It seems clear to me that realism presupposes theism in order to make any sense. In the absence of the notion of an omniscient God it becomes unintelligible to speak of propositions, or sentences, which are true irrespective of whether anyone holds them. By the same token, however, it has to be recognised that realism itself is just another narrative in the sense that it cannot be established without doubt. This realisation of the fact that realism does not require foundationalism should relieve a certain anxiety with respect to the former.

Notes

[1] This paper was first read at the International Postgraduate Theological Symposium, held at Valea Draganului, Romania, 5-6 May, 2005.
[2] Quoted by Alister McGrath, *A Scientific Theology*, vol. 2: *Reality* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 199.
[3] P. Byrne, *God and Realism* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003).
[4] L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1953), § 95.
[5] For an account of how this bears on the project of theological realism, see Ken Surin, "Is it true what they say about 'theological realism'?", in *Turnings of Darkness and Light: Essays in Philosophical and Systematic Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 49ff.
[6] We may speculate about such situations. Bruce Marshal gives one such example in the form of the discovery of an authentic letter from Peter to Paul describing that the resurrection was in fact a hoax. Of course, the mere discovery of such a letter would not in itself immediately falsify belief in the resurrection. But if this is conceivable, it is also conceivable that a number of such serious falsifications could occur.
[7] Pace E. Appelros, *God in the Act of Reference: Debating Religious Realism and Non-Realism* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), 8. She rests her case on a dubious replacement of the "strict line" which separates entities that exist from those that do not with a "gradual scale". But it is difficult to speak about degrees of existence, while it is certainly possible to speak of types of existence. Appelros unwittingly inherits the scholastic doctrine of existence as an attribute.

[8] H. Putnam, "Meaning holism", in H. Putnam, *Realism with a Human Face*, James Conant ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994), 284ff, esp. 286.

[9] Byrne, *God and Realism*, 12.

[10] *ibid.* 12.

[11] Robert Kirk's term.

[12] Byrne, *God and Realism*, 27.

[13] Discussing Cupitt and Joseph Runzo, *Religion Without Revelation*.

[14] H. Putnam, "Realism with a human face", in *Realism with a Human Face*, 28.

[15] Byrne, *God and Realism*, 40.

[16] *ibid.* 47.

[17] H. Putnam, "Realism with a human face", 28.

[18] H. Putnam, "A defense of internal realism", in *Realism with a Human Face*, 32.

[19] H. Putnam, "The question of realism", in *Words and Life* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994), 309.

[20] H. Putnam, "The question of realism", 305.

[21] A. McGrath, *A Scientific Theology*, vol. 1: *Nature* (Edinburgh and New York: T&T Clark, 2001), 156.

[22] A. McGrath, *A Scientific Theology*, vol. 1, 193-240, esp. 196-232.

[23] *ibid.* 218.

[24] A. McGrath, *A Scientific Theology*, vol. 2: *Reality*, 160ff.

[25] H. Putnam, in *Word and Life*.

[26] H. Putnam, "Does disquotational theory solve problems?", 277. See also "The Question of realism", *Words and Life*, 299.

[27] H. Putnam, "Richard Rorty on Reality and Justification", in Robert B. Brandom, *Rorty and His Critics* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), 83.

[28] R. Rorty, *Consequences of Pragmatism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), xix, xx.

[29] C. Pickstock, John Milbank, *Truth in Aquinas* (London: Routledge, 2001), 2f.

[30] See Putnam's ontological relativity and inscrutability of reference.

[31] See for example R. Rorty, *The Consequences of Pragmatism*, xxiv.

[32] H. Putnam, "Does disquotanional theory solve problems?", 269.

[33] H. Putnam, "Does disquotational theory solve problems?", 270.

[34] J. Polkinghorne, *Reason and Reality: The Relationship between Science and Theology* (Valley Forge: Trinity Press International, 1991), 97, 98.

[35] F. Will, *Pragmatism and Realism*, Kenneth R. Westphal ed. (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 1997), 10-11.

[36] H. Putnam, "Richard Rorty on reality and justification", 83.

[37] F. Will, *Pragmatism and Realism*, Kenneth R. Westphal ed. (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 1997).

[38] Putnam, "The question of realism", 306; "Why is a philosopher?", 111.

[39] F. Will, *Pragmatism and Realism*, 31-32.

[40] For Putnam, there is not one single mode of representation, but different modalities of representation.

[41] Davidson, "Truth rehabilitated", in Robert B. Brandom, *Rorty and His Critics*, 67.

[42] R. Rorty, *Consequences of Pragmatism*, xxxvii.

[43] *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* (August, 1977).

[44] Byrne, *God and Realism*, 78.

[45] See William P. Alston, *A Realist Conception of Truth* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1996), for a useful survey.

[46] This would obviously involve some counting technique which unified the two couting techniques used to generate R1 and Rx.

[47] Plantinga, "How to be an anti-realist?", 61.

[48] Alston, *A Realist Conception*, 144.

[49] *ibid.* 202.

[50] Putnam, "The question of realism", *Words and Life*, 306.

[51] Putnam, "Realism without absolutes", *Words and Life*, 284.

[52] Putnam, "Why is a philosopher?", *Realism with a Human Face*, 109-110.

[53] quoted in Alston, *A Realist Conception*, 207ff (my italics).
[54] Alston, *A Realist Conception*, 208; Byrne, *God and Realism*, 79.
[55] Putnam, "Does disquotational theory solve problems?", 271.

Pigeonholing Richard Hooker: A Selective Study of Relevant Secondary Sources

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Those interested in Richard Hooker (1554-1600), the reputed author of the famous *Lawes of the Ecclesiasticall Politie*, will notice at a very early stage that it is quite difficult to place his theology in a certain category. Part of the problem consists of the nature of Hooker's works, which may be chronologically organised in three different categories. The first category is formed of tractates and sermons, which include *The Two Sermons Upon Part of S. Judes Epistle* (1582-1583), *A Learned and Confortable Sermon of the Certaintie and Perpetuitie of Faith in the Elect* (1585), *A Learned Discourse of Justification, Workes and How the Foundation of Faith is Overthrown* (1586), *Master Hooker's Answer to the Supplication that Master Travers Made to the [Privy] Counsell* (1586), and *A Learned Sermon of the Nature of Pride* (1586).[1] The second category is occupied by the *Lawes of the Ecclesiasticall Politie*, which consist of eight books written probably up to 1597. The third category is made up of manuscript responses to attacks on the *Laws*.[2] Thus, Hooker wrote a response to *A Christian Letter*, published anonymously in 1599, whose authors accused him of spreading ideas opposed to the *Thirty-Nine Articles*. Later on, Hooker began to write a defense of the *Laws*, now called the *Dublin Fragments*, which he did not complete as he died after a short illness in 1600.[3]

Though recent studies have shown that Richard Hooker should be understood in relation to Reformed theology,[4] this does not necessarily ease one's efforts to clarify whether Hooker was a Reformed theologian or not. Thus, Richard Hooker scholars have been divided into three main approaches which are frequently connected to his doctrine of justification: some view Hooker as a non-Reformed theologian but rather as a *via media* Anglican or even as a Catholic thinker, others suggest he was Reformed but not entirely so because his thought was on the verge of Arminianism, while the rest seem to be convinced Hooker was Reformed as his theology was very much in line with that of Calvin.

Hooker as Non-Reformed Theologian

John Keble, the noted theologian of the Oxford Movement, is one of the first scholars who attempted to connect Hooker and his theology to *via media* Anglicanism. He did so under the obvious influence of Laudian exegesis, whose main position was to portray Hooker as utterly unfriendly both to Reformed theology and Catholicism. Though he tried this mainly from an ecclesiological perspective by advocating the divine right on episcopacy, Keble did say some things about the doctrine of salvation and mentioned that Hooker made a distinction *in re* between justification and sanctification. In reality, *in tempore*, they are inseparable and simultaneous. According to Keble, Hooker also uses the phrase "imputed righteousness" and has a sort of dual hermeneutic (the righteousness of justification is mainly a feature of Paul's writings, meanwhile the righteousness of sanctification is primarily a characteristic of James' epistle) as a means of reconciling aspects of Catholicism and Protestantism, which is essentially the core of the Anglican middle-way.[5]

In recent years, Lee Gibbs has likewise argued that Hooker's complex doctrine of justification incorporated insights and aspects of both Catholic and Protestant traditions. Thus Hooker advances a genuine *via media* between Rome and the Reformation. Nevertheless, Hooker is critical of the Catholic doctrine of justification by inherent righteousness, which dismisses the comfort of salvation, makes the righteousness of Christ superfluous, and undermines the very foundation of Christian faith.[6] Regarding the concept of righteousness, Hooker identifies three aspects. Firstly, there is a glorifying righteousness in the world to come, which is perfect and inherent. Secondly, there is a justifying righteousness in this world, which is perfect, but not inherent. Thirdly, there is a sanctifying righteousness in this world, which is imperfect and inherent. This is what Gibbs calls "a synthesis between Paul's doctrine of justification by faith alone without works and James" doctrine of works and not only faith."[7] In Hooker, the internal righteousness of sanctification and the external righteousness of justification of Jesus Christ, which is imputed, are always united *in tempore* and received simultaneously.[8] Actually, the righteousness of justification is necessarily inferred by the habitual righteousness of sanctification. The righteousness of justification necessarily presupposes the habitual righteousness of sanctification. For Hooker, good works are inevitable and a necessary part of a justified person's life but human merits are not necessary for the attainment of justification righteousness.[9]

Using an even more radical approach, Arthur P. Monahan believes Hooker was a Counter-Reformation political thinker. Monahan suggested three main reasons for this assessment. Firstly, Hooker placed a particular emphasis on popular consent as the basis for his political authority. Secondly, he emphasized the element of limit as the essential qualifier of legitimate authority. Thirdly, Hooker used the medieval corporation theory,

especially as elaborated in the 14th- and 15th-century conciliarist thought. Monahan argues that Hooker was more a Counter-Reformation than a Protestant theologian "in terms of his general theory of the nature and origins of temporal polity", namely in his political thinking. Such a conclusion would somehow infer that Hooker's theology may still be Protestant while his political thinking is rather Catholic but Monahan is not saying this. By writing that Anglicanism, of which Hooker is a respected representative, "retained the greatest resemblance in theology, ecclesiology and institutional structure to the medieval church of Rome from which it was separating" Monahan is attempting to establish the idea that Hooker's entire theology is more Catholic than Protestant.[10]

One of the latest attempts to place Hooker outside the Reformed tradition was proposed by Edmund Newey. Newey considered Hooker's doctrine of participation, which he defines as an essentially Platonic concept. Hooker follows Aquinas in using both Platonic and Aristotelian traditions because, in Hooker, Newey suggests there is no rigid dichotomy between Plato and Aristotle. Again, following Aquinas, Hooker allegedly attempts to reconcile the Platonic notion of participation with the Aristotelian interpretation of causality by the use of analogy. Thus, Newey suggests Hooker is pre-modern as he shares with Aquinas the medieval thesis that *causa est in causato* (the cause is in the thing caused). Newey also argues that, in defining participation, Hooker works with a dual concept of grace: the grace of union and the grace of unction. Based on his analysis of Hooker's Book V of the *Lawes of the Ecclesiasticall Politie*, Newey writes that the grace of union belongs to Christ alone, while the grace of unction is shared by us with Christ. Actually, we receive the grace of unction from Christ and we are conformed to him by the grace of unction: this is the way humanity participates in God. Participation is the action of grace, which is both imputed and imparted (or infused). We are able to understand this reality by means of reason, which is a faculty given by God and assures a passive reception of God's grace.[11] If Hooker is premodern, as Newey contends, he is closer to the theological tradition of late medieval Catholicism than to the Reformation.

Hooker as Partially Reformed Theologian

The second approach to Hooker is that which views Hooker as partially Reformed and it was initiated by writers like Egil Grislis and Dewey D. Wallace.[12] Grislis begins by affirming Hooker's Reformed features, which are evident in the fact that Christ provided the basic and central foundation for salvation. The believer's ultimate assurance is obtained only in reference to Christ. The very centre of providence is the atonement of Christ, namely the historical event by which Christ paid the ransom for all members of fallen humanity. Thus, providence and atonement, the essentials of salvation, are thoroughly acts of divine love. Furthermore, faith and

repentance are not merely autonomous human decisions. Election is the ultimate source of faith and repentance, and the guarantee of assurance. Grislis also writes that, in Hooker, the life of faith is an ongoing and dynamic relationship with God. By means of his word, God converts, edifies and saves souls. In matters of faith, human assurance cannot be absolute because it also works by reason and any information processed by reason is open to inquiry and doubt. For Grislis, Hooker is Reformed because he calls attention to the universal presence of sin, attested by Scripture and human experience. Moreover, grace is indispensable for human salvation but reason is critically important for the appropriation and understanding of grace. Thus, since humankind fell and human reason became disoriented in self-love, right reason is no longer a natural possession but a supernatural gift. In this, Grilis contends, Hooker is not entirely Reformed because he continues the theological tradition of Augustine, Aquinas and Luther.[13]

Dewey D. Wallace discusses Hooker's theology from the standpoint of previous English theologians (for instance, John Bradford and John Whitgift, one of Hooker's tutors) who had been significantly influenced by Reformed figures like Bullinger, Calvin, Peter Martyr, Martin Bucer and Theodore de Beze. Wallace admits Hooker was indeed a rather peculiar thinker but his ideas were not so drastically different from the early English tradition as to place him beyond the limits of Reformed theology. Thus Wallace writes that, in Hooker, the basis of salvation, namely election, is in Christ and one is not actually included among the redeemed until incorporated into Christ by means of adoption, which is a formula entirely consonant with the Reformed tradition. Furthermore, according to Wallace, the whole plan of salvation is fundamentally placed in God as he acknowledges that, in Hooker, God wills in line with his own wise counsel and reasons although these are totally unknown to the representatives of sinful humanity. However, for Wallace, Hooker is not entirely a Reformed divine because he supposedly places too strong an emphasis on the importance of reason and the assurance gained of physical things by the senses to the detriment of the assurance of faith.[14]

The same ideas occupied the interest of Michael T. Malone, who also noticed that Hooker theology does not surpass the boundaries of Reformed theology. Thus Malone wrote that Hooker emphasized the priority of the goodness of God in relation to his justice. According to Malone, Hooker's primary concern was to safeguard the eternal decrees of predestination on the basis of God's prescience. For Malone, Hooker enabled God to take into consideration all future actualities of humanity. If applied to predestination, it means that man's salvation is placed firmly within God's means of realization, so election and reprobation precede actual creation but not in the sense that creation is just a stage for the enactment of these decrees. Moreover, in Hooker, salvation is by grace, and this is asserted firmly throughout Hooker's entire theology of salvation. Consequently, Hooker advocated the seriousness of human depravity and the inefficiency of man's moral efforts. This is to say that Hooker was very clear about the

fact that all men are sinners, which is evidently in line with Reformed thinking. Malone seems to have inspired Wallace in saying that Hooker was only in part a Reformed representative because, as Malone clearly suggests, Hooker is said to have argued that God ordained or permitted evil in the sense that he also permitted the possibility of it in freedom. Malone also wrote that Hooker based his soteriology on God's foreknowledge of the deeds of men, which leads to a sort of salvation by works. In Hooker, Malone continues, God has the general inclination to save all, but the incredible and essentially incurable malice of some people somehow forces God to act against them in reprobation. Thus, according to Malone, Hooker introduced a sort of duality within God's will because this general will is to save some but his particular will only saves a few. Furthermore, Malone's arguments seem to be very close to the semi-Pelagianism of Arminianism and Catholicism when he argues that, in Hooker, the malice of some people can be said to overmatch God's grace.[15] In conclusion, for Malone, Hooker's theology is semi-Calvinist and semi-Arminian, as Voak also notices.[16]

Malone's approach was extended by David Neelands who attempted to place Hooker within the influences of Thomism and humanism. Thus, Neelands writes that Hooker appreciated the value of reason to such a degree that he put it next to Scripture. In Hooker, Neelands suggests, Scripture and reason are not in conflict because both have their origin in God. In this sense, Scripture does not destroy nature but perfects it. Neelands is convinced that Hooker appreciated secular wisdom and pagan philosophy which is evidently a humanist trend in line with Erasmus and Zwingli.[17] If this places Hooker within the Reformed camp, there is something else which makes him less Reformed and much more Catholic, namely the consonance between Scripture and reason, on the one hand, and nature and grace, on the other. For Neelands, this is clearly a Thomistic influence in Hooker. Again, as Neelands suggests, Hooker is Reformed because he defends the absolute necessity of divine grace, the state of humanity being totally dependent on the grace of God. In the end, however, Hooker is not entirely Reformed because his doctrine of grace presupposes the existence and potential perfectibility of human nature. In this sense, salvation seems to be dependent, at least to some degree, on general revelation, which is available to heathens, and on Christian morality.[18]

Peter Lake continued this trend which granted Hooker only part of the credentials of Reformed orthodoxy. Thus, Lake notices that in Hooker a correct understanding of doctrine is necessary for salvation. As such, doctrines like the Trinity, the coeternity of the Father with the Son, infant baptism (which Hooker admits cannot be proved literally from Scripture but rather from the in-depth study of the totality of the books contained in Scripture) must all be correctly understood in order for salvation to become effectual in the life of the believer. Lake tried to place Hooker correctly within English Protestant theology from the standpoint of his ecclesiology. So Hooker stands between John Whitgift, who said that the English Church should be located between Rome and Anabaptism, and Richard Bancroft,

who claimed that the English Church should be understood as located between Rome and Genevan-style Protestantism; for Lake, Hooker is the first Conformist who located the English Church between Rome on the one hand and the Presbyterianism of the Genevan-style Protestant extremism on the other. In other words Hooker tried to distance himself from a church which claimed to be Calvinist but enjoyed the edge of sectarianism. The English Church and its theology however are clearly Reformed, though Hooker himself was not entirely Reformed.[19] So, even if he stands within the Reformed tradition, Hooker is not a classical Reformed theologian but rather a Calvinist who comes very close to Arminianism. Lake reached this conclusion from Hooker's strong christocentric approach, which implies that since Christ died for all men, everybody is potentially a member of Christ's church.[20]

Nigel Voak supports Lake's interpretation of Hooker in his doctoral thesis, which was published as *Richard Hooker and Reformed Theology: A Study of Reason, Will and Grace*. With this, he produced an excellent guide to Hooker's entire theology of salvation, which is particularly interesting as it underlines that the reader must be aware of Hooker's theological development.[21] Thus, Voak makes a clear distinction between Hooker's early theology of justification (as presented in his *A Learned Discourse of Justification*) and his later or mature theology of justification (as contained in the *Lawes of the Ecclesiasticall Politie*, his marginal notes to *A Christian Letter* and the so-called *Dublin Fragments*). Voak is ready to concede that Hooker's early theology is Reformed or Calvinist but he is very careful to emphasize that Hooker's later theology marked a decisive step outside the Reformed tradition.[22] While he openly admits that his understanding of Hooker differs from that of Torrance Kirby and Atkinson and is closer to that of Peter Lake (who was one of Voak's doctoral examiners), Voak attempts to establish his own position by saying that Hooker should not be understood as "thoroughly "Anglican" or as thoroughly Reformed." Instead, as Voak suggests somehow ambiguously, Hooker "should be taken on his own terms, in all his complexity, as a major if somewhat enigmatic contributor to the theological self-understanding of the Anglican Communion."[23] Voak agrees that Hooker is "at least in part a Reformed theologian" but only in reference to his early doctrine of justification, because his later works, in Voak's view, distance him from the Reformed tradition.[24] Voak is right when he identifies a development within Hooker's theology but I do not think this distinction should be made sharper than it is. In the end, however, one has to decide whether Hooker was a Reformed theologian or not. More importantly, in his later theology of the *Lawes of the Ecclesiasticall Politie* Hooker never mentioned explicitly that his view of justification expressed in his early theology of *A Learned Discourse of Justification* changed at all or, at least, should somehow be understood differently. Voak himself admits Hooker does not give a systematic presentation of his mature teaching of justification in the *Laws* and in the *Dublin Fragments*,[25] which (as Voak infers) supposedly contain a different

view of justification than that of *A Learned Discourse of Justification.*
Actually, Voak's entire theory of the development of Hooker's early doctrine
of justification from the *A Learned Discourse of Justification* into what he
calls the mature view of justification from the *Laws* and *The Dublin
Fragments* is based on Hooker's stronger emphasis on repentance. This
makes Voak suggest that in the mature Hooker "it is possible for a justified
person to sin and fall from the state of grace, lose his or her justification,
and require that he or she be justified again."[26] In order to support this
radical understanding of Hooker's doctrine of justification in his later
works, Voak resorts to a text from Book VI of the *Laws*, where Hooker
wrote that "if God be satisfyed, and doe pardon sinne, our justification
restored, is as perfect, as it was att the first bestowed. For the Prophett
Esaiah wittnesseth, *Though your sinnes were as crimosin, they shall bee
made as whyte as snow, though they were all scarlett, they shall be as
whyte as wool.* And can wee doubt councerning the punishment of revenge,
which was due to sinne, but that if God be satisfyed, and have forgotten his
wrath, it must bee as St. *Augustin* reasoneth, *What God hath covered hee
will not observe, and what he observeth not he will nott punish.*"[27] It must
be noticed that Hooker does not say justification can be lost in any way. He
only mentions justification can be restored but this, I repeat, does not mean
justification can be lost. It only means that justification can be affected or
flawed because of sin. The fact that the justified believer commits a sin does
not cancel the original work of justification realised by God. In the end, sin
is a reality of the justified believer's life and this does not disannul
justification. On the other hand, sin does affect one's relationship with God
and implicitly his or her justification before God but this does not lead to
the annihilation of that justification. Again, sin needs pardoning and when
God forgives a particular sin committed after regeneration, the sinner is not
justified again (as if he had lost his justification because of sin) but his
justification is restored (because it had been flawed by sin) to its original
state. This is certainly in line with the Reformed view of the final
perseverance of saints because the elect, who are called effectualy, are also
kept by God in view of their complete salvation. In conclusion, Voak does
not seem to be entirely right when he distinguishes so sharply between
Hooker's early and mature view of justification. And so, Hooker is not
partially Reformed but genuinely Reformed as presented next.

Hooker as Reformed Theologian

This brings us to the third approach to Hooker's theology, namely to that
which gives full credit to Hooker's Reformed understanding of salvation.
One of the earliest scholars to support this view was L. S. Thornton.
Concerning Hooker's doctrine of salvation, Thornton stresses the crucial
role of faith as a gift of God and the hypostatic union between humanity
and divinity in Christ as guarantee for the union between Christ and the

believer.[28] According to Thornton, Hooker was careful to underline the work of Christ from the perspective of his role as mediator, which again stresses the reality of the union between Christ and the justified believer. Thornton writes that, in Hooker, salvation is grounded in the person and the work of Christ, but although God has the initiative in saving man, the latter must display a rational faith, which should also inform his reading of Scripture.[29] Even if the justified believer lives in union with Christ, the nature of the two does not blend. As God, Christ remains God, eternal and unchanging, and man remains human.[30]

Gordon Rupp tackles many theological themes in Hooker but the doctrine which concerns this research the most is justification. Rupp notices that, in Hooker, justification is forensic. Thus, it is important to underline that justification consists of the remission of sins and the acceptance of the sinner before God. Justification is not realised by the practical application of man's righteousness, which is defiled by sin, but by the imputation of Christ's merits and perfect righteousness. Rupp also observes Luther's influence in Hooker as he proposes that justification is the result of the theology of grace and the theology of the cross. Consequently, in the entire process of salvation, justification is not the work of man but of God from beginning to end. According to Rupp, Hooker managed to maintain the delicate balance between the objective doctrine of the merits of Christ and the subjective doctrine of faith in all matters of justification. The union with Christ is vital for the justified believer. Christ dwells in the believer and the believer is in Christ from the point of view of eternal life; this is a great comfort for any human being. In Hooker, the righteousness of Christ is utterly external to humanity but this does not cancel out the fact that justification implies a new life which proves to be the fundamental change in the believer's existence.[31]

C. F. Allison's main concern is Hooker's doctrine of justification, explained in comparison to the decrees of the Council of Trent. First of all, it should be noted that there are some basic areas of agreement between Hooker and the Trent formula. Firstly, all men have sinned and lack the righteousness of God. Secondly, it is God who justifies, in other words it is God who offers justification. Nobody has ever attained God's justice, except for Christ. The work of Christ must be applied to sinners. There are, however, two major areas of disagreement that Allison notices. Firstly, the nature or essence of justification, and secondly, the manner of applying justification to sinners. Hooker's position is that Christians are justified by the righteousness of Christ, whereby they dwell in him and have a right standing before God. The righteousness of justification is that by which Christians grow in grace, on the grounds that they are in Christ. For Hooker, the formal cause of justification is the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, when we are accepted in Christ's body, the church. According to the Trent formula, the formal cause of justification is the inherent righteousness infused in man by means of sacramental grace, and this is supposed to be the righteousness of justification. Hooker strongly

disagrees and writes that this doctrine perverts the truth of Christ. Nevertheless, Hooker goes on to say that there is an inherent righteousness in sanctification, but not in justification.[32]

For Patrick Collinson, the most important aspect of Hooker's doctrine of justification is his Christology. Everything else which traditionally pertains to salvation revolves around the person and the work of Christ. For instance, faith is valid and the salvation of the believer is efficient if he or she is found in Christ. Basically, salvation is the work of God in Christ, not the work of sinful human beings. God is the one who finds man and he is also the one who finds man in Christ. Nobody can place man in Christ except God. This is a clear indication that Hooker's soteriology is strongly rooted in grace and does not favour human justice. As far as humans are concerned, they need faith, which must be true and lively. Faith, however, although existent in man, is not part of him, but is given to him as a gift from God himself. Collinson notices the dual aspect of Hooker's view of salvation, namely justification and the necessarily consequent sanctification, which consists of good works based on faith, hope and love. In Hooker, good works are not the cause of justification but its result. Thus far, Collinson has acknowledged the Protestant features of Hooker's soteriology. The last touch of Collinson's interpretation of Hooker is concerned with predestination and election, which in Hooker's thought are expressions of God's grace and show that his theology is Reformed.[33]

Philip E. Hughes provides us with the image of Hooker which is Protestant and specifically Reformed. He argues that Hooker was influenced by John Jewel and was concerned not to ascribe any importance to meritorious works which cannot justify man before God. Should man want to work in addition to what God requires from him, those works, which supposedly acquire a surplus of personal merit, are utterly ineffective towards salvation. Justification is accomplished by God only through the imputation of the righteousness of Christ which is perfect and thus able to save the unworthy sinner on the basis of his faith. Hughes draws attention to the double language of justification in Hooker, namely the imputation of Christ's righteousness and the consequent non-imputation of the believer's righteousness, which is fundamentally unworthy of any merit before God. The justified believer, however, is not idle. Once he was justified, he will begin to perform good works not to earn merits for his salvation, but to prove it in love.[34]

Stanley Archer argues that Hooker placed a strong emphasis on faith, a position that he will never change, and also that Hooker underlined the importance of grace, which according to his understanding of Hooker, is available to everyone. According to Archer, one of the most important aspects of salvation is sanctification, which requires one's whole life for its development. Archer insists upon Hooker's understanding of the foundation of faith, which is nothing but the very person and work of Christ. Thus, Hooker directs our attention to Christ himself, whom he describes as Saviour because he was crucified on the cross for the salvation

of the entire world. Archer also tackles Hooker's controversial argument about the salvation of some Catholics. Archer explains that, according to Hooker, nothing in the theology of the Roman Church rejects the foundation of faith directly. This seems to be an influence of Calvin, whose theology was close to Hooker's. Archer writes about the nature of pride and the nature of justice in Hooker's thought, and also presupposes that Hooker was influenced by Aquinas in his view of God, so that God is described as being consistent, reasonable and just. For Archer, Hooker is in line with the main Magisterial Reformers, mainly because he promotes faith as a necessary aspect which God requires for one's personal salvation.[35]

Torrance Kirby builds an image of Hooker as a Reformed theologian, because he makes a parallel between Hooker's thought, on the one hand, and Luther's and Calvin's on the other hand. Thus, he shows that the main Reformed features of Hooker's theology are his insistence on man's depravity, the problem of mediation (or the work of Christ as mediator), and man's union with Christ, which is an actual incorporation in Christ. Torrance Kirby rightly notices Hooker's classification of the three types of righteousness (of justification, of sanctification, and of glorification) and his two modes of grace (by imputation for justification, and by infusion for sanctification). He also makes a thorough analysis of Hooker's justification and sanctification, in opposition to the theology of Thomas Aquinas and his view of grace as a habit of the soul.[36] In favour of a Reformed reading of Hooker, Torrance Kirby demonstrates Hooker's insistence on *Sola Scriptura*, the doctrine that Scripture contains all things necessary to salvation, which should be coupled with an informed understanding of the role of reason in biblical interpretation.[37]

Like Torrance Kirby, Nigel Atkinson argues that Hooker is a Reformed theologian. However, he is more interested to show this on the grounds that Hooker defended the full sufficiency and authority of Scripture. Thus Christians must give credit and exercise obedience towards Scripture as a primary source of authority even if the church says otherwise. According to Atkinson, "Hooker was most concerned to protect the supreme and final authority of Scripture."[38] Hooker's concern was to refute both the Catholic and the Puritan view of Scripture. For Hooker, the Catholics considered Scripture to be insufficient and held that tradition was necessary to complete it. On the other hand, the Puritans ascribed to Scripture things that did not pertain to it. Atkinson thinks that Hooker's doctrine of Scripture has a pastoral finality and is concerned with the consciences of weaker people. Scripture becomes an instrument of psychological and spiritual torment should it contain all simple things.[39] Moreover, Scripture has a soteriological purpose. The only goal of Scripture is to provide a fallen humanity with the proper knowledge of salvation. Thus Atkinson argues that Hooker clearly places Scripture above nature. Scripture teaches things that reason cannot perceive.[40] One of the most important aspects of Hooker's doctrine of Scripture, which accounts for his Reformed theology, is that special revelation, namely Scripture, must be taken into account and

closely obeyed when Christians want to glorify God as Saviour and Redeemer.[41]

Anthony Milton believes the doctrine of justification is traditionally the core of the Church of England's theology against that of the Church of Rome. Richard Hooker perceived the importance of the doctrine and, besides treating it extensively, he also tried to reconcile it with the reality of the Church of Rome. Thus, Hooker explained how God's salvation works in history, as reflected in the Church of Rome and the Protestant Churches.[42] Milton is also interested in the way Hooker was regarded immediately after his death. According to Milton, Hooker was treated with respect in Calvinist circles throughout the Jacobean period, even if the ceremonialist elements of his theology were not highly appreciated before the 1630s.[43] English Calvinist theologians agreed that Hooker had been an apologist of the Church of England, but they avoided making use of his works in matters of crucial importance. As far as Milton is concerned, Hooker was not particularly interested in Lutheran theology, which he used only to complete his case against Rome[44] but he seems to have convinced many of his followers of his Reformed understanding of Christianity.

Conclusion

Summing up, Hooker scholarship has been divided in three main categories. In the first category, one meets theologians who think Hooker was not a Reformed theologian. John Keble, for instance, the famous representative of the Oxford Movement, was the first who attempted to present Hooker as a defender of *via media* Anglicanism, which is fundamentally opposed to Reformed and Catholic theology alike. This approach was continued in recent times by Lee Gibbs whose entire argument is based on the idea that, in Hooker, he sees the righteousness of justification as being necessarily inferred by the habitual righteousness of sanctification. As such, at least in his mind, Gibbs is sure about the fact that the foundation of justification is the righteousness of sanctification. Thus, according to Gibbs, in Hooker sanctification is the source of justification, not vice versa, a feature of Catholic soteriology. Arthur P. Monahan stays within the same approach as he tries to prove Hooker was a Catholic thinker. Actually, he says firstly that Anglicanism retained many theological and institutional features from medieval Catholicism and secondly that Hooker is a respected representative of Anglicanism. As Anglicanism is essentially Catholic, Hooker is predominantly a Catholic thinker. Another significant attempt to see Hooker as a theologian professing at least some Catholic ideas is that of Edmund Newey. Based on his theology of grace and participation, Newey saw Hooker as a pre-modern theologian, closer to late medieval Catholicism than to the Protestant tradition.

The second category includes theologians who suggested Hooker was indeed a Reformed theologian but only partially. The first who came

forward with this proposal was Egil Grislis, who examined Hooker's doctrine of grace, election and assurance, which seem to be Reformed. Hooker is not, however, entirely Reformed because he supposedly ascribed too powerful a case to reason, so he is in line with Augustin, Aquinas and Luther, not with the Reformed tradition. Dewey D. Wallace continues this reasoning by insisting that Hooker was Reformed in the sense that he took over his main theological insights from top ecclesiastical figures like John Whitgift, who was indeed very knowledgeable of Reformed theology. Like Grislis, Wallace is convinced the importance of reason places Hooker only partially within the Reformed tradition thus still displaying ideas which are more Catholic than Protestant. Wallace seems to have been inspired by Michael T. Malone, who saw Hooker as semi-Arminian and semi-Calvinist at the same time. Malone based his arguments on two proposals: firstly, Hooker acknowledges the necessity and utter importance of God's grace but secondly, it seems that the grace of God cannot do anything about the malice of some people who are accordingly condemned to eternal death. Another recent scholar who suggested Hooker was partially Reformed is David Neelands, who said Hooker appreciated the value of reason a little bit too much to be considered a devout Reformed. Thus, according to Neelands, Hooker is closer to humanism and Thomism though he retains the Reformed feature of God's sovereign grace. One of the most distinguished representatives of this position which defines Hooker as partially Reformed is Peter Lake. Lake's basic argument is that Hooker's theological position stands between that of John Whitgift, who suggested the English Church should be placed between Rome and Anabaptism, and Richard Bancroft, who wrote that the English Church should stand between Rome and Geneva. Thus, Lake advanced the idea that Hooker was the first Conformist who placed the theology of the English Church between Rome and Geneva, or between Catholicism and the Reformed tradition. The latest promotor of such a view is Nigel Voak, who is convinced Hooker is only partially Reformed because his early theology is indeed Reformed while his later theology is somehow more Arminian. Voak, however, writes that Hooker is neither Anglican, nor Reformed but has a distinctive theological position, which is his own.

The third category is made up of theologians who believe Hooker was thoroughly Reformed. Some of the most outstanding representatives of this position are L. S. Thornton, Gordon Rupp, C. F. Allison, Patrick Collinson, P. E. Hughes, Stanley Archer, W. J. Torrance Kirby, Nigel Atkinson and Anthony Milton. They all share the same basic ideas about Hooker as a Reformed theologian, of which the most important are the imputation of Christ's righteousness to the believer, the forensic character of justification, the superiority of Scripture over nature, the sufficiency of Scripture for salvation, the priority of justification over sanctification, the necessity of personal faith for one's salvation, the fundamental importance of predestination and election, and the vital role of Christ's work for justification.

Notes

[1] For details, see W. Speed Hill (ed.), *The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, Belknap Press, 1977-1993), hereafter referred to as *Works*. See also *Works* V, 59; *Works* V, 83 and *Works* V, 299.

[2] See also *Works* V, vi.

[3] *Works* IV, xxviii-xxxviii.

[4] See, for instance, Nigel Voak's, *Richard Hooker and Reformed Theology. A Study of Reason, Will, and Grace* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 10.

[5] Keble, *The Works*, xcviii-xcix.

[6] Lee Gibbs, "Richard Hooker's Via Media Doctrine of Justification", *Harvard Theological Review* 74/1 (1981), 212-213.

[7] *ibid.* 216.

[8] For further information, see *ibid.* 217-219.

[9] *ibid.* 220.

[10] Arthur P. Monahan, "Richard Hooker: Counter-Reformation Political Thinker", in Arthur Stephen McGrade (ed.), *Richard Hooker and the Construction of Christian Community* (Tempe: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1997), 203-218.

[11] Edmund Newey, "The Form of Reason: Participation in the Work of Richard Hooker, Benjamin Whichcote, Ralph Cudworth and Jeremy Taylor", *Modern Theology* 18/1 (2002), 1-26.

[12] Dewey D. Wallace, *Puritans and Predestination: Grace in English Protestant Theology, 1525-1695* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1982).

[13] Egil Grislis, "The Assurance of Faith according to Richard Hooker", 239-246.

[14] Wallace, *Puritans and Predestination*, 77.

[15] Michael T. Malone, "The Doctrine of Predestination in the Thought of William Perkins and Richard Hooker", *Anglican Theological Review* 52 (1970), 109-113.

[16] Voak, *Richard Hooker and Reformed Theology*, 6.

[17] David W. Neelands, "Hooker on Scripture, Reason, and 'Tradition'", 76.

[18] *ibid.* 76-83.

[19] Peter Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans? Presbyterians and English Conformist Thought from Whitgift to Hooker* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1988), 151-163.

[20] Lake, "Calvinism and the English Church 1570-1635", 179-207.

[21] Voak, *Richard Hooker and Reformed Theology*, 321.

[22] *ibid.* 190.

[23] *ibid.* 324.

[24] *ibid.* 319.

[25] *ibid.* 180.

[26] *ibid.* 180.

[27] For details, see Hooker, *Laws* (*Works* VI, 3:57.5-23).

[28] L. S. Thornton, *Richard Hooker. A Study of His Theology* (London: SPCK, 1924), 91.

[29] *ibid.* 26.

[30] *ibid.* 66-67.

[31] E. G. Rupp, *Studies in the Making of the English Protestant Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1949), 166-191.

[32] C. F. Allison, *The Rise of Moralism. The Proclamation of the Gospel from Hooker to Baxter* (London: SPCK, 1966), 2-5.

[33] Patrick Collinson, *Archbishop Grindal 1519-1583. The Struggle for a Reformed Church* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1979), 41.

[34] Philip E. Hughes, *Faith and Works. Cranmer and Hooker on Justification* (Wilton: Morehouse-Barlow, 1982), 40-45.

[35] Stanley Archer, *Richard Hooker* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1983), 22-33.

[36] W. J. Torrance Kirby, *Richard Hooker's Doctrine of the Royal Supremacy* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1990), 41-53. See also W. J. Torrance Kirby, "Supremum Caput: Richard Hooker's Theology of Ecclesiastical Dominion", *Dionysius* XII (1988), 94-109, W. J. Torrance Kirby, "Richard Hooker as an Apologist of the Magisterial Reformation in England", in Arthur

Stephen McGrade (ed.), *Richard Hooker and the Construction of Christian Community* (Tempe: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1997), 219-233, W. J. Torrance Kirby, "Richard Hooker's Theory of Natural Law in the Context of Reformation Theology", *Sixteenth Century Journal* 30/3 (1999), 681-703, and W. J. Torrance Kirby, "The Paradigm of Chalcedonian Christology in Richard Hooker's Discourse on Grace and the Church", *Churchman* 114/1 (2000), 22-39.

[37] For details, see Kirby, "Richard Hooker as an Apologist of the Magisterial Reformation in England", 219-233.

[38] Nigel Atkinson, *Richard Hooker and the Authority of Scripture, Tradition, and Reason*, 99.

[39] *ibid*. 100.

[40] *ibid*. 101.

[41] *ibid*. 28.

[42] Anthony Milton, *Catholic and Reformed. The Roman and Protestant Churches in English Protestant Thought 1600-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 211.

[43] *ibid*. 533.

[44] *ibid*. 440.

NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Articles for *Perichoresis* can be submitted on disk and in hardcopy to the Board of Editors. However, we advise all contributors to send their articles by email to the Managing Editor at perichoresis@emanuel.ro. Each submission will be acknowledged in this format.

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