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Peter Martyr Vermigli's *Epistle to the Princess Elizabeth* on her Accession (1558): A Panegyric and Some Pointed Advice

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ABSTRACT. In 1553, Peter Martyr Vermigli fled his post as Regius Professor at the University of Oxford owing to the persecution of Protestant Reformers under Queen Mary. He first went to Strasbourg and finally settled in Zurich as Conrad Pelikan's successor as Professor of Hebrew in the *Schola Tigurina*. Numerous "Marian exiles" from England followed Vermigli to Zurich where they continued to hear his lectures and to promote with him the cause of religious reform. At the accession of Mary's sister Elizabeth in November 1558, Vermigli addressed an effusive panegyric to the young Queen comparing her situation to scriptural models of redemptive kingship. Elizabeth was to be "a holy Deborah for our times". The letter constitutes a notable contribution to Reformation political theology. It also contains some very pointed and practical advice from the old Florentine scholar to the young Tudor prince on how to set the governance of the Church of England in order. To the end of his career, and beyond, Vermigli continued to exercise significant influence on the course of the English Reformation.

Late in the year 1553, at the peak of his very distinguished academic career, Peter Martyr Vermigli departed hastily from England en route to Strasbourg and Zurich. The great Italian reformer had served for six years as Regius professor of divinity in the University of Oxford at the personal invitation of Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury. While at Oxford, Vermigli

had participated in a critical disputation on the Eucharist,¹ assisted Cranmer in the revision of the *Book of Common Prayer* (1552),² and served on a royal commission for the reform of the canon law.³ Following the death of Edward VI, however, the course of the Reformation in England suddenly reversed. During the ensuing persecution of Protestants under Queen Mary, numerous English scholars soon followed Vermigli to Strasbourg and thence to Zurich where they continued to hear his lectures and to promote with him the cause of religious reform throughout Europe. At the death of Edward, Vermigli was in an awkward position. Cranmer, Nicholas Ridley, and Hugh Latimer were all soon to be executed, and there were certainly many old adversaries at Oxford who would doubtless have been happy to see the Florentine reformer consigned to the flames as well.⁴ Before receiving permission to depart the realm, Vermigli

¹ *Tractatio de sacramento Eucharistiæ* (London: R. Wolfe, 1549). See also *A discourse or traictise of Petur Martyr Vermilla Flore[n]tine, the publyque reader of diuinitee in the Vniuersitee of Oxford: wherein he openly declared his whole and determinate iudgemente concernynge the sacrament of the Lordes supper in the sayde Vniuersitee* (London: Robert Stoughton at the signe of the Bysshoppes Miter, 1550). For annotated modern English translation of the *Tractatio*, see Peter Martyr Vermigli, *The Oxford Treatise and Disputation on the Eucharist 1549*, trans. and ed. Joseph C. McLelland, PML vol. 7 (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2000).

² For a discussion of Vermigli's influence on Cranmer's revision of the Prayer-Book liturgy, see McLelland's "The Second Book of Common Prayer", in *The Visible Words of God: An Exposition of the Sacramental Theology of Peter Martyr Vermigli* (Edinburgh, 1957), 28-40.

³ *Reformatio legum ecclesiasticarum ex autoritate primum Regis Henrici. 8. inchoata: deinde per Regem Edouardum 6. prouecta, adauctaq[ue] in hunc modum, atq[ue] nunc ad pleniorum ipsarum reformationem in lucem ædita* (London: John Day, 1571). For a critical edition, see Gerald Bray (ed.), *Tudor Church Reform: The Henrician Canons of 1535 and the Reformatio legum ecclesiasticarum* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press for the Church of England Record Society, 2000). For an historical introduction to the work of the Royal Commission authorized to reform the Canon Law of England, see Bray, xli-cxvi.

⁴ Jennifer Loach, "Reformation Controversies", in *The History of the University of Oxford*, vol. 3, *The Collegiate University*, ed. James McConica (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 368-375. See the Introduction to Peter Martyr

courageously consented to join Cranmer and other Protestant divines in a public disputation with representatives of the new Catholic establishment in defence of "doctrine and order of religion appointed" by Edward VI.⁵ Cranmer, however, was imprisoned and nothing came of the proposed disputation. Vermigli was allowed a passport, and departed for Strasbourg where he was reinstated in his former chair.⁶

Concerning Vermigli's safe conduct from England Josiah Simler observes, "his friendes scarcelie beleueed, that although he had had received the Queens Letters, that he could depart away safe. For his aduersaries said, that so great an enemy of the Popes Religion should not be suffered to scape out of their hands, but should be plucked euen out of the ship to prison and punishment".⁷ After a short period at Strasbourg, Vermigli became embroiled in eucharistic controversy between the Lutheran establishment there and the minority of those who adhered to his own Reformed position. Owing, however, to the recent death of Conrad Pellican, biblical scholar and exegete of the *Schola Tigurina*, Vermigli was finally appointed to succeed in Pellikan's place as Professor of Hebrew at Zurich in 1556.

Vermigli was soon followed to the continent by his disciple and amanuensis, John Jewel. At the accession of Queen Mary, Jewel was charged not only with having preached heretical doctrine, but also with having been a diligent hearer of Vermigli's

Vermigli, *The Oxford Treatise and Disputation on the Eucharist 1549*, trans. and ed. Joseph C. McLelland, PML vol. 7 (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2000).

⁵ Simler, *An Oration of the life and death of that worthie man and excellent Diuine d. Peter Martyr Vermillius, professor of Diuinitie in the Schoole of Zuricke*, in *Another Collection of certeine Diuine matters and doctrines of the same M. D. Peter Martyr*, translated and partlie gathered by Anthonie Marten (London: John Day, 1583), Qq.iiij.recto. See also the excellent biography of Vermigli by Mark Taplin in *ODNB* (2004).

⁶ For Vermigli's description of his flight from England after the death of Edward VI, see his letter to Heinrich Bullinger dated 3 November 1553 at Strasbourg, *LLS*, 126; *Epistolæ Tigurinæ*, 332.

⁷ Simler, *Oration*, Qq.iiij.recto.

lectures and of refusing to attend mass. He was expelled from Corpus Christi College, and after serving as notary to Cranmer and Ridley during their public disputation in 1554, fled to Frankfurt where he joined Richard Cox, the exiled former Dean of Christ Church, Vermigli's former College, and thence to Strasbourg at Vermigli's invitation. Jewel assisted Vermigli as his secretary, and both he and Cox eventually accompanied Vermigli to Zurich. Several of Marian exiles in Zurich were to become prominent players in the Elizabethan Settlement; among them were no less than six future bishops, a clutch of Privy Councillors, and some of the leading lights of humanist, classical scholarship in the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Of twenty-three episcopal appointments made in the period 1559–62, fourteen were returned exiles.⁸ Among Elizabeth's newly appointed bishops six had followed Vermigli to Zurich: John Jewel of Salisbury, Richard Cox of Ely, John Parkhurst of Norwich, Edwin Sandys of Worcester, James Pilkington of Durham, Robert Horne of Winchester.

Some of the events in the final years of his career at Zurich before his death in 1562 indicate Vermigli's considerable stature as a reformer. While Professor of Hebrew at Zurich he was invited by Calvin to take up an appointment at the Geneva Academy, and after the death of Queen Mary in November 1558 Vermigli was invited most cordially by Elizabeth to return to his Regius Chair at Oxford. In April of 1559 John Jewel, lately appointed Bishop of Salisbury, wrote to Vermigli in Zurich to convey that "The Queen both speaks and thinks most honourably of you: she lately told Lord [Francis] Russell that she was desirous of inviting you to England, a measure which is urged both by himself and others, as far as they are able".⁹ Vermigli was not formally invited to return to his post as Regius Professor of

⁸ For an exact analysis of the composition of the Elizabethan bench of bishops, see Scott Wenig, *Straightening the Altars: The Ecclesiastical Vision and Pastoral Achievements of the Progressive Bishops under Elizabeth I, 1559-1579* (New York: Peter Lang, 2000), 22 ff.

⁹ Jewel to Vermigli, 28 April 1559, ZL, 1:20.

Divinity at Oxford until 1561, when he excused himself for reasons of health and his obligations to the Senate of Zurich. In a letter to the Earl of Bedford responding to this royal invitation, he replied "Truelie if I might haue mine owne will I woulde no lesse serue the church of *Englande* than before time I haue done: howbeit neither mine age nor the strength of my body wil any longer indure the same, being not able to indure a viage so long, so diuers and not altogether easie... it seemeth better for me that I remaine where I am [i.e. in Zurich]".¹⁰ At the news of Elizabeth's accession Vermigli penned an effusive panegyric to the young Queen containing both fulsome praise and some fairly pointed advice.¹¹

¹⁰ See also Sir Antony Cook's effusive letter to Vermigli of 12 February 1559, ZL, 2:13. See "Letter to the Right honourable the Duke [sic] of Bedford", *Divine Epistles*, trans. Anthonie Marten (London: H. Denham, 1583), fols. 164-165: See also his reply "to a verie honourable Prince in England", *Divine Epistles*, fols. 127-128: "it standeth thus with mee, that I am appointed to the citie and Church of *Tigure*, and therefore I am not at my owne libertie".

¹¹ Peter Martyr Vermigli, "To the Most Renowned Princess Elizabeth, by the grace of God Queene of England, France and Ireland", published in *Martyr's Divine Epistles*, an appendix to the English edition of *Common Places*, trans. Anthony Marten (London: John Day, 1583), part V, 58-61. For the original Latin version of the letter, see *Martyris Epistolæ Theologicæ*, appended to *Loci communes*, ed. Robert Masson (London: Thomas Vautrollerius, 1583), 1121-24; first edition (London: John Kingston, 1576). For an excellent modern English translation, see Peter Martyr Vermigli, *Life, Letters, and Sermons*, vol. 5 of the *Peter Martyr Library*, trans. and ed. John Patrick Donnelly (Kirkville, MO: Thomas Jefferson University Press, 1999).

In his *Epistle to the Princess Elizabeth*¹² written at Zurich shortly after her accession to the throne of England on 17 November 1558, Vermigli addresses a panegyric to the young Queen containing both fulsome praise and some fairly pointed advice. In an invocation of the *Song of Zechariah* from the Gospel of Luke, Vermigli evokes a striking comparison of Elizabeth's accession to the scriptural trope of redemptive kingship. By means of an appeal to a host of Old-Testament and early-Church examples of kingship he goes on to advise Elizabeth on her duty of religious reform in England. Vermigli extends the metaphor of anointed kingship to the point of identifying England as an "elect nation". It is Elizabeth's divinely appointed task to "redeem" England through the restoration and establishment of her "godly rule". As in the case of King David, successor of Saul and chief Old-Testament exemplar of the anointed godly ruler, Vermigli counsels Elizabeth that the restoration of true religion in the realm of England will rest upon her royal shoulders. In the formulation of his advice, Vermigli maintains that Elizabeth's life will involve a "double service" to God as both servant and ruler. The godly prince's owes a two-fold service of God – namely as human and as wearer of the divine mask of rulership – reveals a duality of nature which has significant theological implications. In effect Elizabeth has "two bodies" – a natural and therefore mortal body as a man, and an immortal

¹² Peter Martyr Vermigli, "To the Most Renowned Princess Elizabeth, by the grace of God Queene of England, France and Ireland", published in *Martyr's Divine Epistles*, an appendix to the English edition of *Common Places*, trans. Anthony Marten (London: John Day, 1583), part V, 58-61. For the original Latin version of the letter, see *Martyris Epistolæ Theologicæ*, appended to *Loci communes*, ed. Robert Masson (London: Thomas Vautrollerius, 1583), 1121-24; first edition (London: John Kingston, 1576). For an excellent modern English translation, see Peter Martyr Vermigli, *Life, Letters, and Sermons*, vol. 5 of the *Peter Martyr Library*, trans. and ed. John Patrick Donnelly (Kirkville, MO: Thomas Jefferson University Press, 1999), 170-177 [cited hereafter as *LLS*]. Donnelly's translation is employed below.

"politique" body as sovereign.¹³ In this way Vermigli's panegyric conveys a messianic analogy. The prince as the anointed of God – as "*christus*" – unites two distinct natures in the identity of his person, that is to say "hypostatically". This account of princely authority might be described not unreasonably as a kind of "political Chalcedonianism". In his peroration he begs the Queen "never to agree with those who pretend that having a care for reforming religion does not pertain to princes".¹⁴ One possible constitutional paradigm for Vermigli's recommendations concerning the authority of the civil magistrate to exercise the so-called "*cura religionis*" is Heinrich Bullinger's Zurich whence Vermigli's letter to Elizabeth is sent.¹⁵ The letter provides evidence of the importance of the "Zurich connection" in shaping the institutions of the Elizabethan religion settlement.

Theodicy of the Marian Exile

Vermigli opens his letter with an Augustinian theodicy of the Marian persecution of English evangelicals during the period 1553 to 1558: "The whole world is something of a school and training ground for our good God where he teaches and trains his people through their performing various labours, occasionally through afflictions, and sometimes through experiencing different sorts of perils".¹⁶ While the sun shines and the rain

¹³ *LLS*, 174: "It is necessary for a king to serve God twice, once as a human being by believing and living with faith, once as a king by ruling over the people, sanctioning with appropriate enforcement laws which command just and godly acts and which likewise prohibit the contrary". On this notion of the "double existence" of the prince see Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1957).

¹⁴ *LLS*, 175.

¹⁵ See the first chapter above, "The Civil Magistrate and the '*cura religionis*'."

¹⁶ Compare, e.g., Aurelius Augustine, *The City of God against the Pagans*, ed. and trans. R. W. Dyson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), I.8, 12: "If every sin were visited now with evident punishment, nothing would be reserved for the last judgment. On the other hand, if no sin were punished now by a clearly divine intervention, it would be believed that there

pours on both the elect and non-elect, God does not permit those whom he loves to "struggle with perpetual afflictions", but rather his providence contrives their deliverance from these dangers "so that he may declare that it is he who leads them up to and brings them back from the gates of death".¹⁷ Moreover, Vermigli continues, God ensures that the image of Christ shines in his "adopted children". According to Vermigli's interpretation of the doctrine of predestination, election is understood to be "*in Christum*", and therefore his elect, consistent with the divine prototype, "are destined to be conformed to his example, to die before rising".¹⁸ The typological pattern of Christ's suffering followed by rising again is exemplified by some eminent examples from the biblical narrative of salvation history: the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt, their deliverance from the wilderness into the land of Canaan, and their eventual return to Jerusalem out of the Babylonian captivity.¹⁹ In the person of Elizabeth herself, "most mighty Queen", God's "ancient custom" is reconfirmed and made even more manifest. According to this conceit Elizabeth is to be likened to Moses, Aaron, Joshua, and even to Christ himself for, as we shall see, the whole realm is understood by Vermigli as in some mystical sense embodied by or rather hypostasized in the person of the godly Prince. Thus the nation's election is to be interpreted as both a mystical "*insitio in Christum*" and an analogous political "*insitio in regem*", for the Prince, like the ancient kings of Israel, also is an "anointed one". Thus in the salvation history of Vermigli's panegyric, the typology of Christ works in both historical directions, that is to

is no divine providence. So too in the case of prosperity: if God did not grant it so some who pray as the clearest possible proof of His bounty, we should say that such things are not His to give. On the other hand, if He were to grant it to *all* who pray, we should judge such things to be no more than the due reward of our service, and such service would make us not godly, but, rather, greedy and covetous". See also XX.2, 967-68.

¹⁷ LLS, 170.

¹⁸ LLS, 170; citing Rom. 8:29.

¹⁹ LLS, 170.

say, both as prefigured in Old Testament kings and as recapitulated in the Elizabeth herself. Through her experience of the vicissitudes of the reign of her sister Mary, the princess Elizabeth was "preserved by divine power and not by human help... for the salvation of Christ's Church and for the restoration of the English Commonwealth".²⁰

According to a hermeneutic such as this, Vermigli is able to pull out all the stops in the development of his encomium. He quotes Psalm 118, a verse reputedly uttered by Elizabeth herself when she received the news of Mary's death and her own accession to the throne: "This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes; the stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner".²¹ Vermigli follows the usual interpretation of this Messianic psalm by applying the verses to Christ and then adds "but since godly persons are counted among his members I think these statements can be applied to them as well, for... other members of his body are honoured and enjoy the distinctions and dignity of their Head. This clearly should be taken as applying especially to those members in the Lord's body whom he has at last wished to appear conspicuously among his people such as Your Majesty".²² The mystical analogy of sacred kingship between Christ and the anointed queen is echoed by Shakespeare in the words of King Richard II:

²⁰ *LLS*, 171.

²¹ *LLS*, 171; qu. Ps. 118:23, 22. See Matt. 21:42 where Jesus cites this Messianic psalm in the presence of the chief priest and Pharisees in the Temple. See also Paul's appeal to the Psalm in Ephesians 2:20. On the significance of Elizabeth's accession as a "new day" in the life of the English church, see Gary Jenkins, "Peter Martyr and the Church of England after 1558", in *Peter Martyr Vermigli and the European Reformations: Semper Reformanda*, ed. Frank A. James III (Leiden and Boston: E. J. Brill, 2004), 47, 48.

²² *LLS*, 171.

Not all the water in the rough rude sea
 Can wash the balm from an anointed king;
 The breath of worldly men cannot depose
 The deputy elected by the Lord.²³

Mystical Headship

For Vermigli, just as the gift of the divine grace is communicated through the mediation of Christ for the benefit of his invisible, mystical body, so also the gift of God in the elevation of Elizabeth to her throne for the salvation of the visible, external Church “is so great that it cannot be shut up in you [i.e. Elizabeth] alone but flows out through you to a great number of the faithful”.²⁴ By analogy with the operation of the mystical headship of Christ in the life of his mystical body the Church, Elizabeth herself is interpreted by Vermigli as a mediator of political benefits to her own body politic, both civil and ecclesiastical:

And kings maie be called the heads of the Commonweale... For even as from the head is derived all the sense and motion into the bodie, so the senses by good lawes, and motions, by edictes and commandements are derived from the prince unto the people. And this strength exceedeth not the naturall power... For vertue springeth of frequented Actions. So when as princes by lawes and edictes drive their subiects unto actions, they also drive them unto vertues. But the spirit of God and regeneration are not attained by manie actions, but onelie by the blessings of God.²⁵

²³ William Shakespeare, *The Tragedy of King Richard II*, Act 3, scene 2, 54-57. See Kantorowicz, *King's Two Bodies*, 24-41. Kantorowicz points out that the deposition scene in *Richard II* “though performed scores of times after the first performance in 1595, was not printed, or not allowed to be printed, until after the death of Queen Elizabeth” owing to the fact that “the conflict between Elizabeth and Essex appeared to Shakespeare’s contemporaries in the light of the conflict between Richard and Bolingbroke”. See esp. 40.

²⁴ *LLS*, 171.

²⁵ *CP*, 4.3.1, 2, fols. 35, 36.

Elizabeth is "God's substitute... anointed in his sight".²⁶ The benefits of Elizabeth's accession *flow* from her to her subjects. And consequently "for all those in that kingdom [i.e. England] who are either born as citizens or wish it well [e.g. Vermigli himself and the Church of Zurich] and those who are seeking nothing except the glory of Christ seem to themselves to be raised from the dead along with you".²⁷ By her accession/resurrection Elizabeth has become by this interpretation "the first fruits of them that slept", that is of those who had endured persecution, punishment, and exile under the rule of Elizabeth's sister Mary.²⁸ This resurrection analogy is central to Vermigli's conception of a messianic kingship. Vermigli proposes that the accession of Elizabeth is nothing less than a resurrection of the entire "*corpus politicum*". As the "body" of the faithful are raised up by virtue of their participation in Christ their common mystical "head", so also by analogy the "*politique bodie*" that is the realm of England is raised through participation in Elizabeth who is their royal or political head. Thus Vermigli draws an analogue between the invisible, mystical, and inward community of the heavenly kingdom is compared analogically to the visible, political and external body of the earthly realm. According to this analogy the Queen is political "type" of Christ.

Just where one might have thought that the panegyric had reached its zenith Vermigli extends the metaphor of the Prince as *Christus* and outdoes himself with an invocation of the prophetic *Song of Zechariah* from the Gospel of Luke. Zechariah is described by Luke as being "filled with the Holy Spirit" when he uttered a song of thanksgiving on the occasion of the birth of his son John, later called "the Baptist", whose own prophetic task was to "go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways", viz. to announce the imminent coming of Christ. This canticle, known to the church as the *Benedictus*, so-called from the first

²⁶ *Richard II*, Act I, scene 2, 37.

²⁷ LLS, 171.

²⁸ 1 Cor. 15:20.

word of the Vulgate translation, the song is traditionally construed as being in “form” an Old Testament prophecy and in “content” a Christian thanksgiving for the realization of the Messianic hopes of the Jewish nation, a celebration of the advent of the Redeemer, and thus the fulfillment of God’s covenant with Abraham.²⁹ In this sense the prophecy constitutes a bridge of sorts between the Old and New Testaments. Within

²⁹ Luke 1:68-79. For an contemporary account of the canticle, see Anthony Anderson, *An exposition of the hymne commonly called Benedictus: with an ample & comfortable application of the same, to our age and people* (London: Henry Middleton, for Raufe Newbery, 1574). Since the time of St. Benedict the *Benedictus* had been sung in the Office of the western Church at Lauds and it was incorporated by Thomas Cranmer into the Order for Morning Prayer in the *Book of Common Prayer* (1549 and 1552); see *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 3rd edn., ed. E. A. Livingston (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 187. Verse numbers from the canticle, given below, are inserted in Vermigli’s text for the purpose of comparison:

- 68 Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people;
- 69 And hath raised up a mighty salvation for us in the house of his servant David,
- 70 As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began:
- 71 That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us;
- 72 To perform the mercy promised to our forefathers, and to remember his holy covenant;
- 73 To perform the oath which he sware to our forefather Abraham, that he would give us,
- 74 That we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear,
- 75 In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.
- 76 And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest, for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways;
- 77 To give knowledge of salvation unto his people for the remission of their sins,
- 78 Through the tender mercy of our God, whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us;
- 79 To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

the logic of the panegyric Vermigli casts himself in the prophetic role at the critical juncture between the old dispensation of Queen Mary and the new order under Elizabeth.

Therefore the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ should be praised for having visited his people who were almost dead and for having opened to the preaching of the Gospel of god's Son a path which had too long been blocked [v. 68]. See, the horn of salvation is again raised in the kingdom of England [v. 69] so that the elect of God by the invincible power of our Saviour Jesus Christ might be delivered from the hand of their enemies [v. 70] and so that they might worship the holy God in a holy way according to what is prescribed in the divine letters [v. 73]. Now may there be glory in the highest, peace in the Church, and God's good will toward the English people so that by the guidance and good government of this godly queen her subjects, adorned with justice and holiness, may always live innocently before him [v. 74]. May he give them so much divine light that those who almost again fell into the darkness and shadow of death during the preceding night may walk his paths without any offense now that the day of peace has arisen [v. 79].³⁰

The accession of Elizabeth "whose people were almost dead" under the rule of her sister Mary is likened to the advent of the Redeemer. England under the "shadow" of the papacy is in need of a restoration of the "evangelical Religion". And consequently, the "horn of salvation is again raised in the kingdom of England".³¹ In this passage Vermigli draws a correspondence between the realm of England and the house of David. Christ is the scion of David's line while Elizabeth inherits the throne of her Tudor forbears. As through the mediation of Christ the hope of humanity is restored inwardly and mystically, so also through mediation of Elizabeth the hope of England is restored

³⁰ *LLS*, 171, 172.

³¹ The horn ("qaran" in Hebrew) is a sign of strength and dominion; see 1 Sam 2:1 and Psalm 18:2. Horn is translated as "mighty" in this passage in the Authorised Version.

politically and historically. That this horn is raised “again” recalls the reign of Elizabeth’s “dear brother”, and Vermigli’s erstwhile patron, King Edward VI.³² The consequence of this “mighty salvation” of Elizabeth’s accession is the prospect of the worship of God according to the authority of sacred scripture. The flow of Vermigli’s adaptation of the *Benedictus* is then briefly punctuated by an invocation of the hymn of the angels, *Gloria in excelsis*, nearly verging upon the ecstatic: “Now may there be glory in the highest, peace in the Church, and God’s good will toward the English people”.³³ By her “guidance and good government” her subjects, “adorned with justice and righteousness”, are to be brought to live “innocently” before God. In a final eschatological flourish, Vermigli then prays for divine illumination “now that the day of peace has arisen”. It lies in Elizabeth’s hand, “after God”, to ensure that this will this gift of illumination will be brought to fulfillment.

³² *LLS*, 175.

³³ The ancient liturgical hymn *Gloria in excelsis deo* was sung from the early centuries of the church in the liturgy of the Eucharist, and was retained by Thomas Cranmer in the vernacular liturgy of the Book of Common Prayer, both in the first version of 1549 and in the major revision of 1552 in which Vermigli himself assisted. In the former liturgy, the *Gloria in excelsis* held its traditional place at the beginning of the mass, immediately following the the *Kyrie eleison*. In the revision of 1552, the *Gloria* was transferred to the post-communion thanksgiving. The opening line is derived from Luke’s account of the song of the angels at Christ’s Nativity. Important theological significance is attached to the re-positioning of this hymn in the revised liturgies of 1552 and 1559. It is arguable that this liturgical alteration reflects Vermigli’s own substantive contribution to the revised theology of a Sacramentarian “real presence” based upon his celebrated disputation on the Eucharist held at Oxford in 1549. According to Vermigli’s theology of “instrumental realism” participants in the eucharist would be enabled to “sing the song of the angels” only after they had “participated” the body and blood of Christ, hence the liturgical repositioning of the *Gloria*. For a discussion of Vermigli’s influence on Cranmer’s revision of the Prayer-Book liturgy, see McLelland’s “The Second Book of Common Prayer”, in *The Visible Words of God: An Exposition of the Sacramental Theology of Peter Martyr Vermigli* (Edinburgh, 1957), 28-40.

More Practical Advice

Following this extraordinary rhetorical flight, the tone of the *Epistle* now takes a more didactic, practical turn. In a manner comparable to Eusebius in his *Oration to the Emperor Constantine*, Vermigli takes pains to remind Elizabeth that she holds her station solely by divine gift.³⁴ Just as to Eusebius the emperor is in some respect a power comparable to the divine Logos, yet not the divine Logos itself, so to Vermigli Elizabeth is a servant of Christ though in her anointed office she functions as the head of her body politic. "It is necessary for a king to serve God twice", Vermigli states, "once as a human being by believing and living with faith, once as a king by ruling over people". In the former role she is herself a subject and servant; in the latter she is God's own vice-gerent, one anointed to rule in God's place. By way of instruction and illustration of her role, Vermigli counsels Elizabeth to model her rule on the "unique and noble example of David... illustrious for his royal power and famous for outstanding holiness".³⁵ David's first and most important task on becoming king was to return the ark of the covenant to its former honours, and thus to restore true religion to Israel.³⁶ The priests failed to perform the task properly until driven to do so by David. Continuing the analogy, Vermigli observes that "this same work, most illustrious Queen Elizabeth, God has handed over to your trust along with the kingdom. For it is your duty to restore to its own place the holy Gospel of Christ,

³⁴ See Eusebius, *Oration in Praise of the Emperor Constantine*, V.1, in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series 2, vol. 1, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, repr. (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1999), 585: "In this hope our divinely-favored emperor partakes even in this present life, gifted as he is by God with native virtues, and having received into his soul the out-flowings of his favor. His reason he derives from the great Source of all reason: he is wise, and good, and just, as having fellowship with perfect Wisdom, Goodness, and Righteousness: virtuous, as following the pattern of perfect virtue: valiant, as partaking of heavenly strength".

³⁵ *LLS*, 172.

³⁶ *LLS*, 173; 2 Sam. 6:3.

which has lain neglected... by the injury of the times and importunity of our adversaries during the past years".³⁷

Vermigli signals his strong approval of the institution of the Royal Supremacy.³⁸ The priests are to take their direction from the godly prince. By pointing out that the priests in David's time failed to fulfill their duty, Vermigli plainly indicates his view that the existing Marian bench of bishops, not yet reconstituted by Elizabeth, "may go astray in the work of restoring the Church". Just as the priests once neglected to carry the ark upon their shoulders "as the divine law prescribed", Vermigli advises the Queen to "be on guard lest such things happen so that, while church leaders fall into error or seek to avoid work and a just discipline, they try to carry the ark of the Gospel not by the word of God or the example of a pure life but by the carts of useless ceremonies..."³⁹ He exhorts her to follow David's example who "corrected the error of the priests, distributed the Levites into certain ranks... these are the things that all godly men are expecting of you, most holy Queen". By her exercise of the sovereign power of ecclesiastical jurisdiction as Supreme Governor of the Church of England, Elizabeth was to realize Vermigli's hopes for the Settlement in the distribution of ecclesiastical offices.⁴⁰ In a scholium titled "Whether there may be two heads of the Church, one visible, the other invisible", Vermigli argues that while the exercise of spiritual headship belongs properly to Christ alone, terrestrial headship of the

³⁷ *LLS*, 173.

³⁸ W. J. Torrance Kirby "'The Charge of Religion belongeth unto Princes:' Peter Martyr Vermigli on the Unity of Civil and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction", *Archiv für Reformationgeschichte* 94 (2003), 131-145.

³⁹ *LLS*, 173.

⁴⁰ After an only partially successful attempt under Queen Mary to dismantle the royal headship, a new Act of Supremacy was passed in 1559 with a change of the title "Supreme Head" to "Supreme Governor", 1 Eliz. I. c.1, "An acte restoring to the crown the ancient jurisdiction over the state ecclesiastical and spiritual and abolishing all foreign power repugnant to the same". See Claire Cross, *The Royal Supremacy in the Elizabethan Church* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1969), 128-129.

Church is the office of the Prince: "...this perhaps is it, why the king of England would be called head of his own Church next unto Christ. For he thought that that power which the Pope usurped to himselfe was his, and in his owne kingdome pertained to himselfe. The title indeed was unwonted and displeased manie godlie men: howbeit if we consider the thing it selfe, he meant nothing else but that which we have now said".⁴¹

Following the deprivation of the Marian bishops in 1559, new appointments to the bench of bishops were made by the Queen's authority.⁴² Several of Elizabeth's new prelates had been close associates of Vermigli during his tenure of the Regius chair of divinity at Oxford during the reign of Edward VI and had subsequently fled along with him to the continent after the accession of Queen Mary. Vermigli had been treated rather better than most in that he had been allowed safe conduct.⁴³ A number of them visited Zurich and enjoyed the hospitality of Heinrich Bullinger during their period of exile.⁴⁴

Testimony to the role of Princes in establishing religion and worship is to be found in the examples of Hezekiah, Josiah, Jehoshaphat, and the king of the people of Nineveh who is mentioned in the Book of Jonah; Darius and Nebuchadnezzar are cited as well. Constantine, Theodosius, and Charlemagne as well as Eli-

⁴¹ *CP*, 4.3.6, fol. 38. See Marvin Anderson, "Royal Idolatry: Peter Martyr and the Reformed Tradition", *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, Jahrgang 69 (1978), 163.

⁴² Of the twenty-three Elizabethan bishops, fourteen were returned exiles, three had been appointed in the reign of Edward of whom just one, Thomas Kitchin of Llandaff, had conformed under Queen Mary. See Scott Wenig, *Straightening the Altars: The Ecclesiastical Vision and Pastoral Achievements of the Progressive Bishops under Elizabeth I, 1559-1579* (New York: Peter Lang, 2000), 23.

⁴³ For Vermigli's description of his flight from England after the death of Edward VI, see his letter to Heinrich Bullinger dated 3 November 1553 at Strasbourg, *LLS*, 126; *Epistolæ Tigurinæ*, 332.

⁴⁴ These include John Jewel, Richard Cox, Robert Horne, John Parkhurst, Edmund Grindal, Edwin Sandys, and James Pilkington.

zabeth's brother Edward are identified as further evidence of this royal office. By embracing the *cura religionis* Elizabeth will "restore Christ's Church which has almost completely collapsed; [she] will win the satisfaction of those in your nation who are godly; and [she] will clearly show to foreign princes by [her] illustrious example a sound and godly pattern for ruling".⁴⁵ Scripture demonstrates and both tradition and philosophy confirm that it is the task of the godly magistrate to defend both tables of the law. For

if the bishops and ministers of the churches have not performed their duty, if in handing down dogmas and administering the sacraments they forsake the just regulation of the divine letters, who will recall them to the right path unless it be the godly prince? Your Majesty should not expect in the current situation that they will be impelled to these things by themselves; unless royal spurs move them they will not rebuild the ruins of God's temple.⁴⁶

Vermigli then invites Elizabeth to "play the role of holy Deborah for our times" and bring her own elect nation, having been oppressed by the rule of her sister, "into the sincere and pure liberty of the Gospel". Jael and Esther both offer encouragement to the young Queen. By way of continuing the balance between scriptural and non-scriptural authorities, Vermigli adds to these the examples of Artemesia who fought at the Battle of Salamis "with a manly heart" and Zenobia, queen of Palmyra, who ruled over the eastern Roman Empire and defeated the army of the Emperor Gallienus in the latter half of the third century.⁴⁷ Vermigli's recollection of Xerxes's remark that "the men in that battle were women, and the women showed themselves the bravest men" presages Elizabeth's famous speech to her troops at Tilbury on the eve of the fight against the Spanish Armada in

⁴⁵ *LLS*, 175.

⁴⁶ *LLS*, 175.

⁴⁷ *LLS*, 176. On Artemesia's distinguished role at Salamis see Herodotus, *The History*, 8.87-88.

1588.⁴⁸ He concludes by urging the Queen to gird herself "for the holy work" before her.⁴⁹ Vermigli ends the epistle by returning to his opening theme of salvation history: "the heavenly Father has the hearts of kings in his own hands, and kings reign through him. By his own decision he transfers empires to whomever he wishes".⁵⁰ He prays that "the English church and nation" will be guided by God's Spirit and that the Queen herself will be kept "safe for a very long time by his saving grace". Elizabeth was to continue on the throne for forty-five more years until her death in 1603.

⁴⁸ See *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, ed. M. H. Abrams, 6th edn., vol. 1 (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1993), 999: "Let tyrants fear, I have always so behaved myself, that under God I have placed my chiefest strength and safeguard in the loyal hearts and goodwill of my subjects; and, therefore, I am come amongst you as you see at this time, not for my recreation and disport, but being resolved, in the midst and heat of battle, to live or die amongst you all – to lay down for my God, and for my kingdoms, and for my people, my honour and my blood even in the dust. I know I have the body of a weak, feeble woman; but I have the heart and stomach of a king – and of a king of England too, and think foul scorn that Parma or Spain, or any prince of Europe, should dare to invade the borders of my realm; to which, rather than any dishonour should grow by me, I myself will take up arms – I myself will be your general, judge, and rewarder of every one of your virtues in the field".

⁴⁹ *LLS*, 176.

⁵⁰ *LLS*, 177.

A Reformed Papacy? Martin Bucer and the Treatment of Papal Primacy in the *Worms Book* (1540)

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ABSTRACT. The Worms-Regensburg Book (1540-1541), better known as the source of an agreement between Catholics and Protestants on the doctrine of justification, contains statements on other controversial topics, including the papacy. Though no agreement was reached on these, a close analysis of the text suggests that it was written to reflect Protestant concerns. The book's section on the papacy bears the hallmarks of the thought of one of its authors, Martin Bucer, and is consonant with views he expressed in biblical commentaries and works contemporary with the book's production. Bucer contemplated the possibility of a Petrine office placed at the service of church's edification and unity, though one always accountable for its exercise to its fellows in the minsistry as well as to godly magistrates.

At the end of his study of Luther's conflict with the papacy, Scott Hendrix remarks that "the formation and establishment of Protestantism was a long process, and a driving force behind that establishment was Luther's unyielding resistance to the papacy. That resistance gave continuity and unity both to the Protestant cause and to Luther's career".¹ It is perhaps ironic that a ministry of unity should have provided the churches of the Reformation with a cohesion less evident in their attempts to find a common voice on a number of other doctrinal issues. Never-

¹ Scott Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy: Stages in a Reformation Conflict* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981), 159.

theless, the mediaeval apocalyptic tradition of the papal Antichrist crystallized in some (though not all) of the Protestant confessional documents as well as in Protestant cultural life.² One thinks, for example, of the impact of Knox's *History of the Reformation in Scotland* and Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* on the Protestantism of the British Isles.³

But the Early Modern papacy also began to occupy a position of centrality in Catholic life that it had not occupied in an uncontested way prior to the Reformation.⁴ Although the papacy had at first been reluctant to embrace the cause of Catholic reform, a succession of activist popes such as Pius V assumed leadership and control of the process. Thus the epithets "Romanist" and "papist", which Luther had used to stigmatize his opponents, offered at least a less unfair description of what it meant to be a Catholic Christian.

Because of this antithesis, it is easy to imagine Catholic and Protestant discussions of the papacy running along gradually diverging trajectories until ecumenical conversations in the late twentieth century saw (perhaps) the beginning of a reconvergence. Because historians have to deal in generalizations at one

² See Bernard McGinn, "Angel Pope and Papal Antichrist", *Church History* 47 (1978), 155-173. See also e.g. *Schmalkaldic Articles* (1537) 4.10-11 in *Die Bekenntnisschriften der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche*, 5th edn. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1963) [hereafter BSELK] 430-431, *Westminster Confession of Faith* 25.6, and John Knox, "Preface" in *History of the Reformation in Scotland*, ed. W. Dickinson, 2 vols. (London: Thomas Nelson, 1949) 1:5.

³ E.g. *Schmalkaldic Articles* (1537) 4.10-11 in BSELK, 430-431, "Haec doctrina ostendit papam esse ipsum verum Antichristum..." See also *Westminster Confession of Faith* 25.6 and Knox, "Preface" in *History of the Reformation in Scotland*, ed. William Dickinson, 2 vols. (London: Thomas Nelson, 1949), 1:5.

⁴ As William V. Hudon, "The Papacy in the Age of Reform, 1513-1644", in K. Comerford and H. Pabel (eds), *Early Modern Catholicism: Essays in Honour of John O'Malley SJ* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 49, points out the degree of papal control over Early Modern Catholicism has sometimes been exaggerated. However, it remains that case that, by reserving to itself the right to interpret the Tridentine decrees and by standardising the procedures for their implementation, the papacy assumed a centrality that it had not possessed prior to the Reformation.

level or another, this is a generally accurate representation of what happened. But it is not a complete one. Certainly Luther's earliest opponents – for example Sylvester Prierias – turned Luther's protest against indulgences into a protest against papal authority, and, in doing so, forced Luther to see his struggle in these terms as well.⁵ However, the status of the papacy in pre-Reformation Catholic thought was in fact less clear cut than one might imagine it to have been.

Laetentur caeli, the Council of Florence's reunion decree of 1439 recognised the pope's "primacy over the whole world" in his capacity as "successor of blessed Peter prince of the apostles... the true vicar of Christ, the head of the whole church and the father and teacher of all Christians", to whom "was committed in blessed Peter the full power of tending, ruling and governing the whole church".⁶ Yet the decree shed no light on the vexed question of the relationship between pope and council. There was widespread, though not general agreement that a general council might in an emergency depose a pope who had fallen into notorious and obstinate heresy. Strictly speaking, such an individual was no longer pope.⁷ But could it depose him for abuse of his authority (e.g. for simony)? Here Matthew 18:15-18 conferred on the *ecclesia* the power to call a wayward brother to account. Was not the pope a brother in Christ?⁸ Yet the very canon (*Si papa*) that conceded a pope could be judged if "drawn away from the faith", also declared that his moral conduct and exercise of office should not be judged – even if by

⁵ Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*, 47-48.

⁶ *Decretum pro Graecis* in H. Denzinger (ed.), *Enchiridion symbolorum et declarationum* 26th edn. (Freiburg i. Breisgau: Herder, 1949) (hereafter *DS*), para. 694.

⁷ F. Oakley, "Conciliarism at the Fifth Lateran Council", *Church History* 41 (1972), 460-461.

⁸ See e.g. Jacques Almain, *On the authority of the church* 6 and John Mair, *A Disputation concerning the Authority of a Council over the Supreme Pontiff in Conciliarism and Papalism* ed. T. H. Burns, *Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 153-156, 285ff.

such conduct he drew countless to hell with him.⁹ Again, on the one hand the Conciliarist attempt to check the papacy through regular and “free” councils (free, at least, from papal control) was losing steam by the beginning of the 16th century. Against the *conciliabulum* of Pisa (1511-1512) Leo X’s decree *Pastor Aeternus* (1516) asserted the papacy’s sole right to convoke, transfer and dissolve councils.¹⁰ On the other hand, as Francis Oakley has pointed out, this apparent *coup-de-grace* to the Conciliar movement did not finally determine whether the pope’s authority was above that of a council once convoked by him. Nor did it put an end to the Conciliarist sensibilities.¹¹ Thus, when the University of Paris condemned Luther’s teaching in 1521, it signally neglected to mention his attacks on the papacy.¹² As Luther was aware, this was because the University of Paris was a stronghold of Conciliarism and would have found the exaggerated terms in which Sylvester Prierias had defended papal power as distasteful as it found Luther’s views on justification. Likewise, it is worthy of note that, despite the papacy’s prominence in the Reformation debate, the Council of Trent never promulgated canons or a decree on the matter. This is remarkable when one considers the broad range of controverted doctrinal and disciplinary matters on which Trent *did* reach a verdict.¹³

The advent of Catholic Humanism complicated matters still further. Although, Harry McSorley has argued that Erasmus was not finally sceptical about the papal primacy, it remains the

⁹ *Decretum Gratiani* 1, d. 40, c. 6 in *Corpus iuris canonici*, ed. E. Friedberg, 2 vols. (Leipzig: Tauschnitz, 1879-1881) [hereafter Friedberg] 1:145.

¹⁰ *DS*, 740.

¹¹ Oakley, “Conciliarism at the Fifth Lateran Council”, 454-461.

¹² Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*, 130.

¹³ See G. Alberigo, “The Council of Trent”, in *Catholicism in Early Modern History*, Reformation Guides to Research 2 (St. Louis: Center for Reformation Research, 1988), 219. The prior existence of a conciliar definition had not prevented Trent from issuing decrees, e.g. on transubstantiation, nor had the absence of prior conciliar definitions or the complexity of the tradition prevented the council from issuing decrees e.g. on justification.

case that his earlier writings had at least placed in doubt the scriptural and patristic foundations of the papacy's claim to exercise its office as it currently did.¹⁴ Certainly, by 1526 Erasmus recognised papal primacy as being "in accordance with Christ" and "a decree of the church" (i.e. Florence), but Erasmus regarded the papacy as an institution, which, like mandatory private confession, had evolved.¹⁵ Even this, as we shall see, was a radical claim when compared with the tendency of Catholic apologists to downplay or deny outright the extent of doctrinal and institutional development in the post-Apostolic period.¹⁶

On the Protestant side as well, matters were not straightforward. In 1537 Luther drew up the *Schmalkaldic Articles* as a kind of position paper for Protestant delegates preparing to attend the recently convoked Council. As one might expect, the *Articles* denounced the pope as the Antichrist of 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 and derided his laws and traditions as silly games.¹⁷ Forty-three Lutheran clergy and theologians signed the *Articles*. Among the signatures was that of Luther's collaborator Philipp Melanchthon, but to his signature Melanchthon attached the following rider:

I, Philipp Melanchthon, approve of the above-written articles as godly and Christian, however on the pope I determine that, if he would agree to the Gospel, for the sake of peace and tranquillity among all Christians, both those who are now under him and

¹⁴ H. McSorley, "Erasmus and the Primacy of the Roman Pontiff: between Conciliarism and Papalism", *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 65 (1974), 37-53.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 42. Cf. Erasmus *Spongia* (LB, 9:387C, 1080F-1021D) and *Hyperaspistes I* (LB 10:1305AB).

¹⁶ See below. Cf. e.g. Johannes Eck, *De poenitentia et confessione secreta semper in ecclesia Dei observata contra Ludderum* (Rome: Jacobus Mazochius, 1523). See also his reply to Luther's objection that "Peter did not ever exercise the primacy as the pope does..." in *Enchiridion locorum communium adversus Lutherum et alios hostes ecclesiae* 1525-1543, in *Corpus Catholicorum* [hereafter CCath] 34 (Münster i. Westfalen: Aschendorff, 1982), 62.

¹⁷ BSELK, 427-433.

those will be under him in future, he could have superiority over the bishops which even we admit he has by human law.¹⁸

In 1534 Melanchthon and the Strasbourg Reformer Martin Bucer had sent memoranda on church unity to the French king Francis I expressing similar views on the status of the papacy in a reunited Christendom. Melanchthon, for example, told the king:

Our side concedes that the present constitution of the church is legitimate: in other words, that individual bishops preside over several churches; again that the Roman Pontiff presides over all churches. In my estimation no prudent man disapproves of this canonically sanctioned structure as long as it remains within its limits: that is, as long as the Pontiff and the bishops do not abuse their authority to suppress true doctrine... The church needs governors to examine and ordain those called to ministries in the church, to reach judgements on ecclesiastical affairs, and to scrutinize the doctrine of priests... In my judgement the monarchy exercised by the Roman Pontiff could be of use in restoring a consensus on doctrine among the many nations. For this reason concord can easily be reached on this article about the superiority of the papacy, if there can be a meeting of minds on the other articles of faith.¹⁹

¹⁸ *BSELK*, 463-464. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations in this article are my own.

¹⁹ *Consilium de moderandis controversiis religionis* in *Corpus reformationum* [hereafter CR] 2:744-745: "Concedunt nostri, politiam ecclesiasticam rem licitam esse, quod videlicet sint aliqui episcopi, qui praesint pluribus ecclesiis; item quod Romanus pontifex praesit omnibus episcopis. Hanc canonicam politiam, ut ego existimo, nemo prudens improbat, neque improbare debet, si intra fines suos maneat, hoc est, si pontifex et episcopo non abutantur auctoritate sua ad opprimendam veram doctrinam... Opus enim est in ecclesia gubernatoribus, qui vocatos ad ministeria ecclesiastica explorent et ordinent, et iudicia ecclesiastica exercent, et inspiciant doctrinam sacerdotum... Prodesse etiam meo iudicio illa monarchia Romani pontificis ad hoc; ut doctrinae consensus retineretur in multis nationibus. Quare facile potest constitui Concordia in hoc articulo de superioritate pontificia si de caeteris articulis conveniri poterit."

In his memorandum for the king, Bucer wrote:

As far as we are concerned the Roman Pontiff and other bishops may legitimately keep all their power and, indeed, their authority – as long as they use their power to edify the church, and not for its certain destruction... as long as they live, discharge and manage their dealings with other authorities in such a way that their performance of their sacred duties is tolerable, or at least consistent with their own canon law.²⁰

Of course, one must note both the explicit and the implicit qualifications in these statements. Melanchthon concedes the pope's authority over the bishops but does so as a matter of human law (*ius humanum*) rather than divine law (*ius divinum*). In other words, the papacy might be an expedient and even commendable constitutional arrangement, but it is not an absolutely essential one. Moreover, Melanchthon makes his concession on the provision that the papacy is to be exercised in accordance with the Gospel and subject to agreement on "other articles". What does he mean by "Gospel" here? What, indeed, does Bucer have in mind when he speaks of the pope using his authority to "build up" the church? Again, what does Bucer mean when he demands that a pope exercise his ministry in a way that is at least "tolerable" to other authorities in the church? What, for example, would a king or a bishop living in Conciliarist France have regarded as the "tolerable" exercise of papal authority?

²⁰ *Consilium de pace ecclesiae in Defensio adversus Axioma catholicum, id est criminationem R. P. Roberti Episcopi Abricensis, 1534*, ed. W. I. P. Hazlett, *Martini Bucer opera latina* 5 [hereafter BOL] 152. Cf. 2 Cor 10:8, "Per nos licet pontifex romanus et caeteri episcopi omnem suam potestatem, imo et ditiones retineant – tantum potestate sua utantur ad aedificationem, non ad certam destructionem... sicque vivant, illaque ab externis ditionibus negotia ita admittant et procurent, ut in eiusmodi sacris muneribus vel iuxta ipsorum canones ferri possint."

Nevertheless, because even these qualified Protestant overtures seem to accord poorly with what we know of later Protestant confessional writing, it is easy to dismiss them as strategic formulae rather than to read them as expressions of a genuine willingness to enter negotiations. In other words, it is easy to suppose that Melanchthon and Bucer did not genuinely foresee a reformation of the papacy. Rather, they were using these reports simply to make the Evangelical movement appear respectable to European rulers like Francis I, thereby drawing them into negotiations with the Protestant princes of Germany. But to read the statements in this way is to forget what a protracted business the Reformation was. In fact the decades between 1520 and 1555 were a period of uncertainty, during which it was not clear that the result would be the long-term division of Western Christendom. Even then, as Reformation and Counter-reformation degenerated into the carnage of the Thirty Years War, memories of a theoretically united Christendom were fresh enough that the prospect church union continued to fascinate an increasingly eccentric group of European intellectuals.²¹ If the complete elimination of one's opponents by force of arms was impossible, then negotiation seemed an attractive alternative. Five centuries of religious fragmentation in Europe were as unthinkable then as the pursuit of Christian unity by military conquest might be now.

The high water mark of this reunion movement came during the 1530s and early 1540s in the period immediately prior to the Council of Trent (1545-1563). In part the movement was an expression of Charles V's frustration at the fact that almost a decade would elapse between the Council's convocation in 1536

²¹ See e.g. the essays in H. P. Louthan and R. C. Zachman (eds), *Conciliation and Confession: the Struggle for Unity in the Age of Reform, 1415-1648* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2004) and W. B. Paterson, *King James VI and I and the Reunion of Christendom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

and its first sitting in 1545.²² It is also likely that ecumenically-minded Protestants hoped by negotiation to have some role in pre-empting the agenda for a meeting they feared would work solely to agenda set by the papacy.

In the Holy Roman Empire the movement for church union found its expression in a series of religious colloquies. The first of these met during the Imperial Diet of Augsburg in 1530 and the last of them met in Worms in 1557. Similar Catholic/Protestant colloquies also met in France and Poland during the later 16th century. The colloquies spawned a considerable literature that continued to be read and cited well into the 17th century and as far abroad as Scotland.²³ The best known of these discussions was held at Regensburg in 1541 in the presence of the papal legate Cardinal Gasparo Contarini as well as a who's who of Reformation luminaries. Among them was the young Calvin. In May 1541 the colloquy famously reached an agreement on the doctrine of justification which Cardinal Contarini described as "catholic and holy", while Calvin, in a letter to Guillaume Farel, marvelled at "how much the adversaries have conceded".²⁴

However, for all involved in the colloquies the sincerity and motives of those on the opposing side were constantly in doubt. The threat of a violent settlement of the dispute in hand also remained a real possibility. Even the common ground that the ne-

²² For an excellent recent summary of scholarship on the era of the religious colloquies, see V. Ortman, *Reformation und Einheit der Kirche: Martin Bucers Einigungsbemühungen bei den Religionsgesprächen in Leipzig, Hagenau, Worms und Regensburg, 1539-1541* (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 2001), 1-6.

²³ See e.g. G. H. M. Posthumus Meyjes, "Jean Hotman's Syllabus of Eirenical Literature", ed. and trans. J. C. Grayson in *Reform and Reformation: England and the Continent, c. 1500-1750*, ed. D. Baker, *Studies in Church History*, Subsidia 2 (Oxford: Blackwell, 1979), 175-193; N. Thompson, "The Long Reach of Reformation Irenicism: the *Considerationes Modestae et Pacificae* of William Forbes (1585-1634)" in Ian Breward (ed.), *Reforming the Reformation: Essays in Honour of Principal Peter Matheson* (Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Press, 2004), 125-147.

²⁴ F. Dittrich, (ed.), *Regesten und Briefe des Cardinals Gasparo Contarini* (Braunschweig: Von Hues, 1881), 620 and CR, 39:215.

gotiations established had yet to be sold to those who regarded any concession as inadmissible. Moreover, those who participated risked complete loss of face with the members of their own party. The literature of self-exculpation and mutual recrimination that emerged in the wake of the collapse of the Colloquy of Regensburg makes for less-than-edifying reading.²⁵

The first Colloquy of Regensburg used as its basis a document known to recent historiography as the *Worms Book*.²⁶ Its authorship was kept anonymous; indeed it was claimed that the authors were now conveniently dead. Because Protestants would suspect a document drawn up by Catholics and Catholics would suspect a document drawn up by Protestants, and the intransigents would suspect a document drawn up by moderates, the *Worms Book*, like Melchizedek, was without father or mother. In fact, as many guessed, it was the work of two moderates who had struck up a friendship during a failed colloquy at Hagenau a few months earlier. The Catholic moderate was Johannes Gropper (1503-1559) and it was he who had drawn up

²⁵ See especially Bucer, *Acta colloquii in comitiis Imperii Ratisponae habiti, hoc est articuli de religione conciliati, & non conciliati omnes...* (Strasbourg: Wendelin Rihel, 1541); J. Eck, *Apologia... adversus mucrores et calumnias Bucer...* (Paris: Jean Foucher, 1543); J. Gropper, *An die Roemsche keyserliche Maiestat... Wahrhafftige Antwort vnd Gegenberichtung... vff Martini Bucer freueliche Clage vnd Angeben...* (Cologne: Jaspas Gennepaeus, 1545).

²⁶ Although older Anglophone scholarship has tended to refer to the *Regensburg Book*, modern continental scholarship distinguishes between the *Worms Book* composed by Bucer and Gropper in a secret meeting at Worms in December 1540 and its final draft, the *Worms-Regensburg Book*, presented to Charles V at the Colloquy of Regensburg in May 1541. The book's discussion of the papacy was not significantly reworked for the final draft, so it is to the *Worms Book* I shall refer below. Regarding the genesis of the book see Ortmann, 8-9, 181-191. See also N. J. Thompson, *Eucharistic Sacrifice and the Patristic Tradition in the Theology of Martin Bucer, 1534-1546* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 172-176. The best edition of the various drafts can be found in C. Augustijn & M. de Kroon (eds), *Religionsgespräche (1539-1541) in Martin Bucer's Deutsche Schriften* [hereafter *BDS*, 9.1] (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1995).

the first draft of the text.²⁷ Gropper's Protestant collaborator was Martin Bucer (1491-1551).²⁸ As I will suggest below, the reworked draft that appeared as the *Worms Book* gives ample evidence of Bucer's contribution.

The Text of the Article *On the Bond of Love*

The *Worms Book* can be divided into two parts. The articles in the first deal with the doctrine of justification and related questions such as original sin and free will. The articles in the second part are grouped under the heading: *On the church, her marks and authority*. Here the book deals with topics such as the sacraments and church order. The papacy is not given an article of its own. Rather it is dealt with in a section headed: *On the bond of love, which is the third mark of the church*.²⁹ The first two marks are "sound doctrine, and right use of the sacraments".³⁰

The ordering of the two sections was probably significant. It is likely that Gropper's first draft of the book ordered the topics in a way that reflected his Catholic priorities: the church and its authority first, then the doctrine of justification, and then other questions such as order and sacraments.³¹ The priority that the *Worms Book* and the redrafted *Worms-Regensburg Book* give to the article of justification represents at least a nod towards Luther's claim in the *Schmalkaldic Articles* that justification is the doctrine on which "is situated and established everything that we have taught, testified and done in our lives against the papacy, the devil and the world".³² In other words, any agreement

²⁷ For Gropper see W. Lipgens, *Kardinal Johannes Gropper, 1503-1559 und die Anfänge der katholischen Reform in Deutschland* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1951).

²⁸ For Bucer see M. Greschat, *Martin Bucer: a Reformer and His Times*, trans. Stephen Buckwalter (London: Westminster John Knox, 2004).

²⁹ *BDS*, 9.1:445, l. 15ff.

³⁰ *BDS*, 9.1:405, l. 12-13.

³¹ See Gropper's "articles" in *BDS*, 9.1:484-501. The same ordering of subject matter can be seen in Eck's *Enchiridion locorum communium* (Landshut: [s.n.], 1525) and subsequent editions.

³² *BSELK*, 416.

between the two sides had to be reached on the basis of a prior agreement on justification. But it also reflects Bucer's conviction in this period that, if the Catholics could be persuaded to accommodate a reformed doctrine of justification, much else could be tolerated, at least for the time being:

What can or might in some way coexist with the article on justification, the protesting estates [i.e. Protestants] must leave uncensored or reproached in these churches, as long as justification and the proper Christian usage of every ceremony is always taught lucidly, clearly and completely faithfully.³³

As already mentioned, just such an agreement was reached on the 5th of May 1541. However, a few days later on 11th May, negotiations collapsed over the doctrine of transubstantiation. Any hope of a settlement had now evaporated. The Protestants submitted alternative position papers known as "counter-articles" in which they set out their position in terms far less ambiguous than anything found in the *Worms Book*. It is worth pointing out, however, that the Protestant counter-articles were still negotiating documents; they continued to indicate what concessions could be made to the Catholics in a reunited German church. For example, on the papacy their approach is more characteristic of Melancthon's rider to the *Schmalkaldic Articles* than of Luther's fierce denunciation of the papal Antichrist.³⁴

³³ *Consilium Bucerj* (BDS, 9.1:75, l. 27-31), "Was auch in einigen weg kont ader mocht mit vnd beÿ dem artickel der justification bestehen, dasselbigemusten die protestirenden diesen kirchen vnuorworffen vnd vngetadelt lassenn, So fern das die justification vnd recht Christlicher gebrauch aller Ceremonien jmer hell, klar, vnd gantz getrewlich gelert wurden".

³⁴ See Counter-article E "De unitate ecclesiae et ordine ministrorum evangelii" (CR, 4:367-369), esp. 368, "Ut autem omnia ordine fierent in ecclesia iuxta Pauli regulam, et ut pastores inter se magis devincti essent et onus gubernationis plures inter se partirentur, ac alii aliorum curam susciperent et dissidia seu schismata vitarentur, accessit utilis ordinatio, ut ex multis presbyteris eligeretur episcopus qui regeret ecclesiam docendo evangelio et retinenda disciplina, et praesset ipsis presbyteris. Plures deinde gradus facti sunt,

Nevertheless, Melanchthon, who led the Protestant negotiators at Regensburg, was said to have described the *Worms Book* in jest as the “Talmud” because, in his words, it seemed such “a hotchpotch”.³⁵ It is true, as we shall see, that all of the articles in the book were carefully balanced to address the concerns of both of the negotiating parties. Moreover, where the parties could not agree, for example on the private Mass, communion under one kind, or the necessity of annual private confession, the drafters noted this, outlined their differences and simply called for further discussion. There were also points at which the *Book* deftly avoided controversial topics. One of these was the question of whether or not the papacy was divinely instituted. Yet these shortcomings – if in fact they were shortcomings – should not make us to overlook the evidence at other junctures of a genuine rapprochement between the *Book’s* authors.

As already noted, the *Worms Book’s* treatment of the papacy is located within a discussion of the third mark of the church: “the bond of peace (Ephes 4:3) and love” (*vinculum pacis et caritatis*).³⁶ It is probably significant that the book’s discussion of the papacy steers shy of neuralgic headings such as *De potestate et primatu papae*, used, for example, as the title of Melanchthon’s tract of 1537, or *De primatu Petri*, the title of an early *opus mag-*

videlicet Archiepiscopi, et supra hos patriarchae [but no mention of papal primacy]... hae ordinationes, si hi qui praesunt, faciant officium suum, utiles sunt ad retinendam unitatem ecclesiae... Sed hi praesides serviant vocationi suae, doceant, inspiciant doctrinam et mores ecclesiarum, quibus praesunt, corrigant errores et vitia, exercent iudicia ecclesiastica. Nam pontificibus et episcopis, qui adversantur piae doctrinae, tribuere auctoritatem non possumus”.

³⁵ Burckhardt to the Elector, 13th May 1541 (CR, 4:290), “Und hat es Magister Philippus einmal oder zwei in einem Scherz den Talmud genennet, dieweil es also ein Gemenge ist zum Gleichniß des juedischen Talmuds”.

³⁶ BDS, 9.1:445, l. 16, “Tertia nota, qua dinoscitur Ecclesia, est *vinculum Charitatis et pacis* (Eph. 4:[2-3]), inter caetera Ecclesiae charismata longe prestantissimum...”

num by Eck, who now led the negotiators on the Catholic side.³⁷ Papal primacy, as Gropper and Bucer understood it, was not to be discussed in isolation from the broader question of order, and order, in its turn, was not to be discussed in isolation from the church's edification in faith and love. The whole discussion is framed by passages from 1 Corinthians 12-13 on the diversity of the spiritual gifts and their orientation towards the unity of the body in love, and Ephesians 4:1-16 on the orientation of the various ministries of the church towards the perfect unity of Christ's body, members and head.

I would not want to make too much or too little of the fact that the *Worms Book* treats the papacy in this context. The phrase *vinculum pacis et caritatis* has its origins in Augustine's anti-Donatist polemic.³⁸ As the *Augsburg Confession* (1530) suggests, "Donatism" (i.e. separatist sectarianism) was a charge that Catholics had levelled against the Protestants and it was one that Protestants wished to reject.³⁹ Moreover, remarks from the Protestant party negotiators at Regensburg suggest that they were afraid that "the bond of peace and love" was simply code for the disciplinary institutions with which they had dispensed. Besides, they asked, what kind of bond of love was it, when the church sanctioned the execution of those who were accused of breaking it?⁴⁰

³⁷ Johannes Eck, *De primatu Petri aduersus Ludderum... libri tres* (Bavaria: [s.n.], 1521).

³⁸ See Augustine, *De baptismo contra Donatistas* 1.10 [14] (PL, 43:117) and *Contra epistolam Parmeniani* 3.2 [4] (PL, 43:86).

³⁹ *Augsburg Confession* 8 "Quid sit ecclesia" in BSELK, 62.

⁴⁰ *Etliche Punkt, so in den verglichnen Artikeln im Buch in margine verzeichnet oder uebergangen sind* (CR, 4:502), "Aber hernach under dem titel "Von der Kirchen herrschung" etc. beduenkt uns, das Band der Liebe werde von Menschensatzungen verstanden... Weiter, welche das Band der Liebe zerreißen, beweiset die That. Papst und etliche Bischoffe toedten die Unsern, und hetzen die großen Herren wider uns; darnach ruehmen sie sich sie halten das Band der Liebe". See also Caspar Cruciger to the Legates of the Elector of Saxony, 24 June 1541 (CR, 4:434), "Locum de Ecclesia reiicio. Transformat enim Ecclesiam in politiam externam similem aliis regnis. Ait esse

At the same time, the Reformers themselves had been shaken by the potential for disorder and schism within their own camp. This had led some, Bucer chief among them, to think somewhat more sympathetically about the role of instruments of unity – principally of ministry, tradition, and even a form of apostolic succession – within a reformed church. Bucer had, for example, experienced the disruptive potential of religious radicalism in Strasbourg and this had drastically altered his perception of the need for what the *Worms Book* calls *politia*: i.e. of structures and norms for the promotion and maintenance of order, and indeed the bond of peace and of love, within the community. It was for this reason that the scriptural passages just mentioned (Ephesians 4 and 1 Corinthians 12) assumed a tremendous prominence in his theology; particularly in his insistence that the mystical unity of Christ's body began here and now, not just as an invisible spiritual reality, but as a politically concrete community.⁴¹ Bucer would come to insist that this unity was normally, though not necessarily, manifest in and through the ministry and disciplinary structures of the church.

congregationem bonorum et malorum connexam vinculo caritatis. Deinde interpretatur illud vinculum obedientiam sub Rom. Pontifice in traditionibus humanis. Ergo Ecclesiam vult esse politiam Papae..." In contrast the leading Catholic collocutor Johannes Eck, *Apologia... adversus mucos et calumnias Bucerii...* (Paris: Jean Foucher, 1543) f. 41vr worried that the article's allusion to the *vinculum pacis caritatis* concealed a Protestant attempt to define the Church as the invisible congregation of the elect, who alone were capable of being bound together in charity. He noted that Aquinas and Cajetan had argued that the unity of the church was the product of *caritas* rather than *caritas* itself. Cf. Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* 2a 2ae q.39 & *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique* 14.1:1286-1311.

⁴¹ Gottfried Hammann, *Entre la secte et la cité: le projet d'Église du Réformateur Martin Bucer, 1491-1551* (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1984), 97, "Nous verrons que la spécificité communautaire de l'Église est soulignée chez Bucer par la notion de 'corps'. Cette insistance provient d'une série de prédilection... 1 Co. 12 (avec la référence constante à Ro. 12), 1 Co. 14, Ép. 14 et Ép. 5 sont les chapitres les plus largement cités." Hammann develops this argument, *Ibid. passim*.

Now it could quite properly be argued that this is no more than to say – as Reformed Protestantism subsequently would say – that discipline is the third mark of the church.⁴² Thus the *Worms Book* speaks in accents that are neither specifically Catholic or Protestant when it declares:

those who preside have the mandate to establish and to maintain diligently the discipline which depends on the jurisdiction of the keys, through which subordinates should obey those in charge of them, [and] without which the vitality of the Gospel would not last long in the church.⁴³

Indeed the Protestant counter-article, the alternative to the article in the *Worms Book*, goes still further and claims that, “in the preservation of discipline, obedience is due to pastors by divine law (*de iure divino*)”.⁴⁴ Johannes Eck, who subsequently published an extremely hostile commentary on the *Worms Book* and on the Protestant counter-articles, found the inclusion of this phrase surprising. Luther, he remarked, would never have conceded *de iure divino* authority to pastors in the matter of discipline. Eck concluded that this must reflect the handiwork of “Pope Bucer” (*pontifex Bucerus*) rather than the Lutheran negoti-

⁴² Cf. *Gallic confession* (1560) 29 & 33, “Quant est de la vraye Eglise, nous croyons qu’elle doit estre gouvernee selon la police, que nostre Seigneur Iesus Christ a etablie: c’est qu’il y ait des pasteurs, des surveillans et diacres, afin que la purete de doctrine ait son cours, que les vices soyent corrigez et reprimez, et que les povres et tous autres affligez, soyent secourus... et que les assemblees se facent au nom de Dieu, esquelles grands et petits edifiez... Enquoy nous avouns a suivre ce que nostre Seigneur a declare quant a l’excommunication, laquelle nous approuvons, et confessons estre necessaire avec tout ses appartenances” in *Die Bekenntnisschriften der reformierten Kirche* [hereafter *BRK*] ed. E. F. K. Müller (Leipzig: A. Diechert, 1903), 229.

⁴³ *BDS*, 9.1:451, l. 12-14, “Item de disciplina, quae a clauē iurisdictione pendet Et sine qua Euangelicus vigor in Ecclesia non subsistit, constituenda ac diligenter retinenda presides ac obediendi prepositis subditi mandatum habent (Hebre. 13[17]; 1 Corin. 11)”.

⁴⁴ *CR*, 4:368, “Debetur enim jure divino obedientia Pastoribus in hac conseruatione disciplinae”.

ators. The experience of handing down excommunications at Strasbourg, Eck surmised, had gone to Bucer's head.⁴⁵

So how was one to prevent such authority from becoming arbitrary and tyrannical? Luther's protest against indulgences had become a protest against the papacy because some of his Catholic opponents had challenged his assertion that the pope had acted against a consensus of Scripture, the fathers and canon law. Most of Luther's Catholic opponents assumed *a priori* a harmony between Scripture, tradition and papal authority. Thus Luther's claim to have identified disharmony must simply be wrong.⁴⁶ Some, like Prierias, put it far more sharply:

Whoever does not rely on the teaching of the Roman church and of the Roman Pontiff as an infallible rule of faith from which even Scripture draws its strength, is a heretic... Just as he who holds an evil opinion of the truth of Scripture is a heretic, so he who holds an evil opinion of the actions and teaching of the church in matters pertaining to faith and morals is a heretic. The correlative of this is that anyone who says that the Roman church cannot do what it actually does in the matter of indulgences is a heretic.⁴⁷

Most Catholic apologists did not go as far as to claim that Scripture drew its strength from the papal office. Nearly all, how-

⁴⁵ Eck, *Apologia*, 58r.

⁴⁶ See Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*, 173, n. 68, citing Otto Pesch, "'Das heisst eine neue Kirche bauen': Luther und Cajetan in Augsburg", in *Begegnung: Beiträge zu einer Hermeneutik des theologischen Gesprächs*, ed. M. Seckler et al. (Graz: Verlag Styria, 1972), 645-661, esp. 651-652.

⁴⁷ *Ad Leonem X pontificem maximum resolutiones disputationum de uirtute indulgentiarum ac sacrae theologiae doctoris Martini Luther Augustiniani Wittenbergensis fratris patris Syluestri* ([Strasbourg: Matthias Schürer, 1519]), liv, "Fundamentum tertium. Quicumque non innititur doctrinae Romanae ecclesiae ac Romani pontificis tanquam regulae fidei ineffabili [sic: i.e. infallibili] a qua etiam sacra scriptura robur trahit et auctoritatem hereticus est... et consequenter quemadmodum hereticus est male sentiens circa scripturarum veritatem, ita et male sentiens circa doctrinam et facta ecclesiae in spectantibus ad fidem et mores hereticus est. Corelative: Qui circa indulgentias dicit ecclesiam Romanam non posse facere id quod de facto facit hereticus est".

ever, assumed that, since Christ had promised to remain with his church to the end of the age, and since he had promised it the Spirit to guide the church in the truth, then whatever the church presently did in matters pertaining to faith and morals – from papal authority to Mass vestments – was done at the Spirit's behest and could be questioned.⁴⁸ As we have suggested, with the exception of Erasmus and his ilk, the Catholics afforded little recognition to the possibility of a distinction between the substance of the Christian faith and the historically contingent aspects of its expression.

Protestant anxiety on this score is reflected in the *Worms Book* where it declares that:

Ceremonies and discipline [should be] instituted and administered with this end, that no-one trust in them for his salvation, which resides in the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ (that would be to worship God in vain according to the commandments of men against the commandment of the Lord...) but only so that *all things be done decently and in order* (1 Cor 14:[40])... and this is what they shall be as long as they agree with the purity and simplicity of the Gospel and do not ensnare consciences or diminish Christian freedom (1 Cor. 7:[35]).⁴⁹

Now, there is little here with which a sixteenth-century Anabaptist or Spiritualist would have disagreed in principle. The Reformation's radicals recognized the need for both authority and order within a Christian community. But the crucial differ-

⁴⁸ See e.g. Hieronymus Emser, *Schriften zur Verteidigung der Messe* (CCath, 28) (Münster i. Westfalen: Aschendorff, 1959), 34, l. 6-13.

⁴⁹ *BDS*, 9.1:451 l. 20-450, l. 6, "...Sic tamen, vt hae ceremoniae et disciplina hoc fine in ecclesia instituantur et administrentur, non vt in illis fidutia salutis, quae in gratia Domini nostri Jesu Christi consistit, reponatur, hoc enim esset Deum frustra colere mandatis hominum contra mandatum domini... Sed tantum ut *omnia* in ecclesia pie, *decenter*, *honeste* et ordine *fiant* (1 Cor. 14 [40]). Quae tales quoque erunt, ne vllatenus ab euangelica puritate et simplicitate dissentiant neue laqueum conscientijs injciant et Christianae nihil derogent libertati (1 Cor 7 [35])."

ence between the Anabaptists and Bucer lay in their understanding what it meant to “agree with the purity and simplicity of the Gospel”.

For Bucer the church described in the New Testament was far from perfect. This imperfection was apparent not only in the church’s false members (eg. Annanias and Saphira) but in its elect as well.⁵⁰ Thus, if the New Testament provided Bucer with a model of anything, it was of the fallible and sinful ministers of the Gospel labouring to build up the body of Christ from unpromising material, and quite frequently in unpromising circumstances. When taxed with the Catholic objection that the Reformation was an affront to Christ’s promise to remain with his church, Bucer responded *not* with an argument about the invisibility of the true church, but by pointing out that the true church had prevailed against the gates of Hell (Matt. 16:18) even when Jesus’ disciples had made the catastrophic error of imagining that salvation was for Jews only (cf. Acts 11).⁵¹ The true church was thus indefectible and infallible only in the following sense:

the true community of Christ – that is, the church which is established and fixed on Christ – does not err on the principle points and necessary articles of the faith, namely that divine Scripture is true, and she never yields on what it teaches: that through Christ alone, by grace, we become good and holy.⁵²

Not only, then, was the church of the elect almost invariably to be found in the midst of Christendom’s *corpus permixtum*, but even its faith in Christ was always to some extent deficient. Thus the true church *in via* was always to some extent in violation of the chief commandment to love God with its whole

⁵⁰ See e.g. *Ein kurtzer wahrhafftiger Bericht* (BDS, 2:85, l. 25-27, 89, l. 19-24, 103, l. 18-22). See also Hamman, 164-174.

⁵¹ BDS, 2:105, l. 33-37; 108, l. 2-4.

⁵² *Ibid*, 103, l. 18-22.

heart.⁵³ The import of Ephesians 4:11-15 was that, "the body of Christ, which is the true Christian church, must daily be improved, that is, we must increase and grow in the knowledge of Christ".⁵⁴

The fact that even the *Gemeinde Christi* at the heart of a national or civic church contained both "stronger" and "weaker" suggested to Bucer that ministers of the Gospel must learn to follow Paul's example in becoming all things to all people in order to bring some to the fullness of the truth (1 Corinthians 9:22). Without such moderation, a true common weal was impossible. Bucer described this sensitivity to the needs of particular persons, places and times as *epieikeia* or equity: the principle that he found Jesus enunciating when he declared that the sabbath was made for man rather than man for the sabbath (Mark 2:23-28).⁵⁵ Bucer maintained that the chief command and word of God was that we should love the Lord with our whole heart, whole soul and love our neighbour as our self (Matt 22:37, 39): "all other ordinances and regulations which promote godliness are only explanations and interpretations of this law of love".⁵⁶

By this measure *both* the Reformation's zealots *and* the papists stood condemned. On the one hand, the *Worms Book* declares:

...so that the bond of love... may be more fitly maintained, Christ created for his ministers and the church the power to ordain polity. This consists in godly ceremonies and Ecclesiastical discipline. Now as to ceremonies, those who preside have the mandate and

⁵³ *Ibid*, 106, l. 38, 107, l. 1.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 106, l. 32-34.

⁵⁵ *Furbereytung zum Concilio* (BDS, 5:321, l. 7-322, l. 13) i.e. in apparent violation of the third commandment of the Decalogue (Catholic/Lutheran enumeration).

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 318, l. 18-19, 21-23, "Nun, so das hauptgebot und wort Gottes ist, das wir sollen Got lieben auß gantzem hertzen, gantzer seelen und allen krefften und den nechsten als uns selb... wer kan anders sagen, dann das alle die ordnungen und satzungen, so zur Gotseligkeyt fürderen, nur erklarung und auslegung seind dises gebots der lieb."

the power, having met with the prior consent of the churches, not only to create ceremonies which they think suitable for stirring up godliness, for the purposes of establishing order and decency [1 Corinthians 14:40], but also of guiding and presenting the outward rituals that are found expressly in Scripture in accordance with the rule of faith and charity...⁵⁷

From Bucer's perspective this meant that the Anabaptists as well as the Swiss Protestants were wrong to tax the patristic and even the mediaeval church with having introduced structures and rituals that had no express warrant in Scripture. Here he included the office of the papacy. An all-or-nothing ecclesiology might be sufficient to maintain the bond of love within a pared-back Christianity of the perfect, but to restore a "catholic" Christendom – and that was Bucer's aim – required a certain amount of pastoral adaptability. Indeed, where Christ's ministers had genuinely established rituals and institutions with the end of building up the church in faith and love, they could claim, (as had Paul, 1 Cor 7:40; 14:37) to be acting on the au-

⁵⁷ *BDS*, 9.1:451, l. 7-14, "Caeterum vt vinculum istud charitatis... commodius retineretur, Christus ministris et ecclesiae potestatem fecit policiam ecclesiasticam ordinandi, quae in pijs ceremonijs et disciplina ecclesiastica consistit. Iam quod ad ceremonias attinet, mandatum habent et potestatem qui praesident ecclesiarum accedente consensu, nedum ceremonias, quas ad excitandam retinendamque pietatem facere arbitrabuntur, ordinis et decoris causa constituendi, sed et ritus externos in diuinis literis expressos ad fidei et charitatis regulam dirigendi et exhibendi..." Cf. *Gallic Confession* 32 & 33 (*BRK*, 229), "Nous croyons aussi, qu'il est bon que ceux, qui sont esleux pour estre superintendans advisent entreux quel moyen ilz devront tenir pour le regime de tout le corps... et toutesfois qu'ilz se declinent nullement de ce que nous en a este ordonne par nostre Seigneur Iesus Christ. Ce qui n'empesche point qu'il n'y ait quelques ordonnances particulieres en chascun lieu, selon que la commodité le requerra. Art. XXXIII. Cependant nous excluons toutes inventions humaines, et toutes loix, qu'on voudroit introduire sous l'ombre du service de Dieu, par lesquelles on voudroit lier les consciences, mais seulement recevons ce qui faict et est propre pour nourrir concord et tenir chascun depuis le premier iusques au dernier en obeissance."

thority of the Holy Spirit.⁵⁸ As Bucer observed in his 1536 *Romans commentary*, asking whether the church had primacy over Scripture or *vice versa* was like the citizens of a commonwealth asking whether the laws given by the king had priority over the commonwealth or *vice versa*. In fact both had their authority from the king. Likewise if the king were to send out legates with his commands one would not ask whether the legates had priority over the commands or *vice versa*. Again, both had their authority from the king. The same was true of the church and its ministry.⁵⁹

On the other hand – and the *Worms Book* insists on this point – if ministers could legitimately establish structures to promote the bond of love, they must also have the freedom to reform or abolish them when they no longer served this purpose or indeed ran counter to it. Those who presided over the church had the “mandate and power”:

to manage and guide [ceremonies] in accordance with what they recognize to be beneficial and sufficient for the salvation of the faithful in accordance with the demands of time and place, to which the passage, *for the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath* (Luke 6:[5]) is pertinent.⁶⁰

Although this might be claimed by the Catholic side as warrant for institutions and rituals deemed “unscriptural” by the Reformers, it simultaneously underwrote the Reformers’ claim to have abolished what was no longer beneficial to the faithful. For Bucer the words *Dominus est filius hominis etiam Sabbati* were

⁵⁸ *Bericht auss der heyiligen Geschrift* (BDS, 5:221, l. 10-29).

⁵⁹ Bucer, *Metaphrasis et enarrationes in Epistolam D. Pauli Apostoli ad Romanos...* (Basel: Petrus Perna, 1562), 18-19.

⁶⁰ BDS, 9.1:451, l. 14-19, “Ac prout secundum temporum et locorum rationem fidelium saluti expedire et sufficere nouerint, disponendi ac moderandi; quo spectat illud Euangelij; *Quia dominus est filius hominis etiam Sabbati* (Lucæ 6 [5]). Jtem de disciplina, quae a clauē iurisdictionis pendet et sine qua euangelicus vigor in ecclesia non subsistit, constituenda ac diligenter retinenda presides ac obediendi prepositis subditi mandatum habent”.

an indictment of all Pharisaism, whether of the Anabaptists or of the papal tyranny that refused to lift a finger to relieve the people of the burdens it had imposed on them.

Thus Bucer was willing to consider the reform of the papacy “in accordance with the demands of time and place” along lines that he found developed in the writings of the fathers, and even in canon law. For Bucer this material represented the attempts of earlier ministers of the Gospel (i.e. the fathers) to establish a *politeia* within which the body of Christ might be edified in faith and love. These structures might be far from perfect, but Bucer was not looking for perfection, and what he found in the patristic material was at least preferable to what he found in the current churches as yet *sub tyrannide papae*.⁶¹ At the same time he made no secret of the fact that he thought the contemporary papacy had become the dominion of Antichrist, because it no longer bore any reference *at all* to living faith in Christ or love of God and neighbour. Instead it had become a vast self-referential system under which any judgement against the *plenitudo potestatis* claimed by the popes was deferred until the Last Day, and under which the slightest criticism met with condemnation, persecution and even execution. Thus Bucer, when he chose to, could be quite as excoriating about the papacy as Luther or Calvin. In his commentary on Matthew 16:18-19, at the end of an account of the evolution of papal tyranny, he declared:

How [the pope’s] kingdom has raised itself up! How it has suppressed and overthrown anything remotely related to true religion, anything that was left of honesty, not only in the ecclesias-

⁶¹ Regarding the collection of patristic and canonical literature to which Bucer appealed in this period see P. Fraenkel, “Zwischen Altkatholizismus und Caesaropapismus: zu Martin Bucers Materialsammlung über die Rolle der Papsttums in der alten Kirche”, in Remigius Bäumer (ed.), *Reformatio ecclesiae: Beiträge zu kirchlichen Reformbemühungen von der alten Kirche bis zur Neuzeit: Festgabe für Erwin Iserloh*, 597-613 (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1981) and *Martin Bucer et Matthew Parker: Florilegium patristicum* [BOL, 3] (Leiden: Brill, 1988), esp. ch. 17-19.

tical order, the whole of which must now be utterly deadly for the church, but in every order of the Christian commonwealth! May the Lord destroy him by the breath of his mouth as soon as possible, and may He enable His people to acknowledge Him as their true shepherd and bishop of their souls, and may anyone who has His Spirit administer His teachings to us in good faith! Amen.⁶²

Yet, earlier in this same passage Bucer wrote:

As soon as there are Roman Pontiffs in our time, who do as Peter and his holy successors once did, leaving everything for Christ and confessing Christ alone with all their heart as the Saviour of the elect, and freely and diligently preaching this, then we, too, shall call them, "pillars of the church", and, if it please them, its "foundations", though in Christ and on account of Christ's word.⁶³

Thus, when the *Worms Book* describes Peter as "chief" (*vertex*) and "spokesman" (*os*) of the apostles, and notes the special charge committed to him in John 21:15-17 and Luke 22:32, it goes on to cite the references to Peter in Acts 9:32 and Galatians 2:9 as evidence of the nature of his charge. It was an itinerant ministry of supervision, seeking neither to subject the ministry of others to its own nor to undermine them, but to strengthen

⁶² Bucer, *In sacra quatuor evangelia, enarrationes...* (Basel: I. Hervagius, 1536), 403. "Huius [i.e. pontificis Romani] regnum interea quam extollit se, quam oppressit, et evertit quicquid uspiam verae religionis, quicquid honestatis fuit reliquum, non solum in ecclesiastico ordine, quod ipsum tamen totum ecclesiae exitiosissimum sit oportet: sed in omnibus quoque reipublicae Christianae ordinibus. Dominus destruat eum spiritu oris sui quam primum, et donet suis se agnoscere verum pastorem et episcopum animarum suarum, et in ipso, quicumque ex ipsius spiritu, placita ipsius bona nobis fide administraverint. Amen".

⁶³ *Ibid*, 401, "sint ergo Romani pontifices hodie, quod Petrus et sancti olim huius successores fuere, pro Christo omnia relinquant, ipsum solum Christum, id est, servatorem esse electorum, tum ex animo confiteantur, tum libere et diligenter praedicent, et columnas ecclesiae, sique libuerit etiam fundamenta, sed in Christo, et propter verbum Christi, ipsos vocabimus".

and edify them by ensuring that their ministry remained founded on the one Gospel common to all.⁶⁴

In this respect, Bucer did not reject outright the Catholic interpretation of Matthew 16:18-19 as the basic proof-text for papal authority (*Tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram aedificabo ecclesiam meam...*). Rather he re-framed it. On the one hand, *anyone* built on Christ the living stone and foundation of the church by faith in him was a stone – a *petrus* – in a secondary sense (cf. 1 Peter 2:4-6).⁶⁵ Out of such living stones the church was built and Christ thus promised his keys, his power of binding and loosing, not just to Peter, but to all his disciples (John 20:21-23).⁶⁶ On the other hand:

God willed it that among his people all things should fit together in an orderly manner, and because we always need to learn, we always need to be reminded that there are among us some who will teach and stir us with authority. Thus God wished Peter to be chief in the assembly of the apostles. Peter spoke for the others, and he undertook the edification of the group. But his was not a lordship of the kind found among the gentiles [cf. Matthew 20:25 etc.] but a

⁶⁴ *BDS*, 9.1, l. 1-17.

⁶⁵ *In sacra quatuor evangelia*, 399, “Primum enim ne Petrus quidem ecclesiae fundamentum fuit, quum nemo aliud queat ponere, quam positum est, Dominus noster Iesus Christus (1 Cor 3 [11]) quem pater electum lapidem in fundamentum ecclesiae verae Tzion (Isa 28 [16]; 1 Pet 2 [6])... fide ergo in ipsum solum connituntur quotquot electi sunt... Idem autem est, aedificari super fidem et super Christum. Qui enim ecclesiae, ceu vivus lapis inseritur per fidem, is utique imponitur Christo... Unde credere Christo, nihil aliud est, quam ipso, ceu fundamento solet super positus lapis, niti. Positus vero ac situs ipse, fides est... Certe sancti patres, qui Petrum hic Petram et ecclesiae fundamentum a Domino vocatum intelligunt... ii id tamen sic intelligunt, quod Christus hoc illi ut credenti et confitenti largitus sit... nimirum quatenus ille in Christum veram petram credens, communionem accepit huius, ut aliis per evangelium ad salutem in Christo fundamenti loco esset.”

⁶⁶ *Ibid*, 401.

duty of care and fatherly concern, the true ministry of a shepherd, and the attraction of his own example.⁶⁷

In the same part of his Matthew commentary Bucer also quotes approvingly from *On the unity of the church* by the third century father Cyprian, in which Christ's words to Peter in Matthew 16:18-19 are read simultaneously as a promise to all of the apostles, and to Peter in particular "so that the one church may be designated" (*exordium ab unitate profiscitur, ut ecclesia una monstretur*). The same passage is quoted in the *Worms Book*.⁶⁸

Bucer then, had no objection in principle to a ministry of unity in the church. He acknowledged that Peter's captaincy at least was part of God's design and he recognised a similar ministry operating successfully in the early Roman episcopate. On the other hand, he rejected any necessary connection between such a ministry and the bishops of Rome. He could understand that:

great deference was given to Saint Peter among the apostles, wherever he was; for it is necessary in any rightly constituted body that one person is in overall charge. Thus in later times defer-

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 402, "Deus vult apud suos omnia ordine constare, et quia semper discedendum, semper monendi sumus esse inter nos qui doceant et moveant auctoritate. Sic in coetu apostolorum Petrum voluit principem esse, is pro aliis loquebatur, communemque aedificationem curabat: nullo quidem dominio, uti inter ethnicos fuit, sed cura et sollicitudine paterna, veroque pastoris ministerio, et invitatione proprii exempli."

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, and *BDS*, 9.1:447, l. 24-29. Cf. Cyprian, *De catholicae ecclesiae unitate* (PL 4:499-500). Bucer refers to the work as *De simplicitate praelatorum*. Note that the text omits the following words in italics, which would have been less patient of Bucer's reading: "tamen ut unitate manifestaret [i.e. Jesus], *unam cathedram constituit*, unitatis eiusdem originem ab uno incipientem sua auctoritate disposuit". *Unam cathedram constituit* might be read as implying not only Peter but those who hold his chair. However, Fraenkel (*BOL*, 3:111, n. 54) seems to suggest that these words are not included in the 1537 edition of Erasmus' *Opera Divi Caecilii Cypriani episcopi...* 2 vols. (Lyon: Gryphe, 1537) used by Bucer. I have not been able to check this or earlier versions of Erasmus' edition.

ence was given to the Roman Pontiffs partly on account of the greatness of the city of Rome, because it was the seat of imperial power, and partly in honour of Saint Peter, but in such a way that absolutely nothing was done to compromise what belongs to the pastoral office or ecclesiastical authority. As Saint Cyprian has written, all bishops always had equal power, equal jurisdiction... Bishops were elected by people and presbyters. Godly princes later prescribed the form... godly princes were devoted to their religious duty to see that bishops fulfilled their office properly and that the ecclesiastical laws were regarded as sacrosanct.⁶⁹

Thus, from Bucer's perspective, any ministry of unity had to be located within the college of the apostles and of the bishops, who were their successors. The bishops in their turn were to be accountable to the Christian commonwealth, the laity who elected them and the Christian monarchs who ensured that they fulfilled their duties, as defined by canon law, faithfully and licitly. The papacy was to be held accountable for its fidelity to Christ, and, as far as Bucer was concerned, any bishop of Rome who put himself beyond such accountability relinquished his claim to be in any sense Peter's successor and vicar. Christ might have established Peter in a unique office, but Scripture said nothing about an "hereditary" line of successors to Peter's power.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ *In sacra quatuor evangelia*, 402-403, "Ex his omnibus [i.e. from the patristic data] istuc abunde liquet, sicut divo Petro inter apostolos, et ubicunque fuisset, ab omnibus plurimum delatum fuit. Ordinem esse in omni recte instituta multitudine, praeire unum aliquem oportet. Sic postea partim ob urbis Romae maiestatem, et quod sedes imperii esset, partim ob honorem divi Petri plurimum etiam delatum fuit cunctis Romanis pontificibus, id tamen sic, ut caeteris episcopis eo nihil prorsus, quod ad pastorale munus, aut potestatem ecclesiasticam pertinet, detraheretur. Par omnibus episcopis potestas, ut divus Cyprianus scripsit, par iurisdictio... Eligebantur episcopi ex plebe et praesbyteris, formam postea praescripserunt pii principes... Pii denique principes... pro officio suo, his quoque religiosam curam impendebant, ut episcopi suo munere rite fungerentur, et ecclesiasticae leges sacrosanctae haberentur."

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 401, "Nam de successione haereditaria illa, nulla extat scriptura".

The *Worms Book* is accordingly careful to avoid claiming that the papacy *as such* was established by Christ. Rather:

Because Christ wanted this unity of the church to last until the end of time in a hierarchical order, bishops succeeded the Apostles by divine dispensation. As Jerome says, individual bishops were placed over individual churches as a *remedy against schism lest anyone break up the church by drawing it to himself*.⁷¹

The Roman primacy is said to have evolved from the divine institution of *the episcopate*:

Of these the bishop of Rome was judged the primate, because as the one who was Peter's vicar by succession he held, as it were, his chair. This was not because he was thought to exceed the others in dignity of priesthood, but more because he surpassed them in the size of his charge and the prerogative of his jurisdiction for the maintenance of the church's unity.⁷²

Although the account of the origins of the papacy is similar in structure, and sometimes phraseology, to that found in Johannes Gropper's *Enchiridion* (1538) there are significant differences. Firstly, while the article alludes to the pope's *praerogativa iurisdictionis* it goes no further in defining it. Gropper had been quite clear that this involved the contemporary papacy's claim to *plenitudo potestatis*; the Worms article, however, avoids the question.⁷³ Here the article goes somewhat further than Bucer

⁷¹ BDS, 9.1:449, l. 18-22, "Et quia Christus ecclesiae hanc vnitatem hierarchico ordine vsque in finem durare voluit, idcirco in locum apostolorum diuina nimirum dispensatione successerunt episcopi, qui singuli singulis ecclesiis, vt Hieronymus inquit, in *schismatis remedium* praepositi sunt *ne unusquisque ad se trahens ecclesiam Christi rumperet*." Cf. Jerome 146.1 (PL, 22:1192-1193) known in this in period *via Decretum Gratiani* 1 dist 93, c. 24 (Friedberg 1:328).

⁷² BDS, 9.1:449, l. 25-450, l. 3.

⁷³ Gropper, *Enchiridion* 170r, "Quamobrem [re. John 21:15-17] caeteri episcopi recte dicuntur vocati in partem solitudinis, summus vero Pontifex in pleni-

would in referring to the “prerogative” of the bishop of Rome for the maintenance of unity. Nevertheless, the description of the pope as the vicar of Peter is qualified by *iudicatus est* (“was adjudged”) suggesting, as Bucer insists, that papal claims to succeed Peter were not absolute. The article keeps its description of Peter’s exemplary fulfilment of Christ’s commission in Matthew 16 and John 21 separate from its description of what Christ willed for his church in perpetuity, namely an apostolic succession and hierarchical order of *episcopi* as the fundamental custodian of the bond of love. Again, the Protestants at Regensburg were not committed to accepting that the primacy of the bishop of Rome was absolutely necessary for the church, however theoretically desirable it might be to have an itinerant and preaching superintendancy of the kind exemplified in the scriptural office of the apostle Peter.

Moreover, while talk of a hierarchical order of “bishops” succeeding the apostles may sound un-Protestant (or at least, un-Reformed) it should be recalled that the vocabulary of “episcopate” was fairly fluid in this period. As noted above, the *Worms Book* quoted from a letter of Jerome. This letter to the presbyter Evangelus described a mono-episcopate evolving from a college of co-equal presbyters or elders in order to preserve unity within individual communities.⁷⁴ This, of course, accords with Calvin’s account of the origins of the episcopate in the *Institutes*, but it should be recalled that there was no definitive Catholic position on whether the mono-episcopate (as opposed to the *sacerdotium* or priesthood) had been established by Christ.⁷⁵ Gropper, Bucer’s Catholic counterpart, held that the episcopate had

tudinem potestatis; habent enim illi sibi assignatos greges singuli singulos; huic universi crediti sunt”. Gropper’s *Enchiridion* is found in *Canones concilii provincialis Coloniensis... quibus adiectum est Encheridion* [sic] *christianae institutionis* (Cologne: Nicholas Wolrab, 1538).

⁷⁴ Jerome, *Epistola* 146.1.6 “to Evangelus” (*PL*, 22:1193) known to the Reformation period primarily by way of the *Decretum Gratiani* 1 dist. 93, c. 24 (Friedberg 1:328).

⁷⁵ See Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 4.4.1-4.

evolved from the presbyterate.⁷⁶ While the Council of Trent would anathematise those who denied that bishops were superior to presbyters, Jerome's presbyterian "canon" carried sufficient authority that the Council consciously avoided a decision on whether this superiority was *de iure divino* or *de iure humano*.⁷⁷

Thus, where the *Worms Book* describes Christ establishing the episcopate, it follows this immediately with an allusion to Jerome's presbyterian "canon". This left the window open to the Protestant understanding of apostolic succession of the kind we find enunciated in the writing of Melanchthon and Bucer. There, succession is tied not to particular offices, individuals or places (e.g. Rome) nor simply to an abstract succession of pure doctrine, but to an historical succession of ministers of word and sacrament, who were also *episcopi* or "bishops" in the most fundamental (i.e. presbyterian) sense of the word. While the succession itself was no guarantee of the truth of their doctrine, it was evidence of the church's perserverance in the truth and

⁷⁶ Gropper, *Enchiridion*, 169r. [bis] "Non est putandum episcopos alium in ecclesia ordinem a presbyteris consituisset. Nam in primitiva ecclesia iidem erant episcopi et presbyteri, quod apostolorum Petri et Pauli epistolae [e.g. Philippians 1:1; 1 Peter 5:1] divus quoque Hieronymus, ac ceteri fere omnes veteres ecclesiastici scriptores praesertim locus ille I Petri 5:[1] ad hoc commonstrandum est... Qam ob rem sacerdotium summus ordo in ecclesia existimatur". Cf. Bucer, *Furbereytung zum Concilio* (BDS, 5:324, l. 21).

⁷⁷ See Sessio 23 "doctrina de sacramento ordinis" c. 6-7 (DS, 966, 967). Like Gropper and the Worms article, canon 6 anathematizes those who deny that the hierarchy is "ex divina ordinatione". It adds that this hierarchy "constat ex episcopis, presbyteris et ministris". However, the syntax does not commit the Council to the claim that the threefold ministry *as such* was divinely ordained. Canon 7 anathematizes those who deny that bishops are superior to priests or claim that they have the power of confirming and ordaining in common with priests, but it says nothing about the basis of this difference. See Josef Freitag, "Schwierigkeiten und Erfahrungen mit dem 'Sacramentum ordinis' auf dem Konzil von Trient", *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 113 (1991), 50.

thus of Christ's promise to remain with her to the end of the age.⁷⁸

Conclusion

I began by suggesting that the familiar account of papal anti-christ and papal Catholicism, while accurate in its broad contours, does not give us a complete picture of the status of the papacy in the Reformation period. In this paper I have described one side of a conversation at the margins of this debate. In this conversation the principal Protestant partner did not claim in an unqualified way that the papacy at Rome was an institution founded by the devil. Bucer agreed that Scripture and the fathers described a papacy which had once functioned as an instrument of visible unity. While Bucer saw no necessary connection between Peter's ministry and the Roman papacy, he granted that the bishops of Rome might once have exercised a ministry that approximated Peter's, though within the college of bishops and a wider *respublica Christiana*. As Pierre Fraenkel suggests, Bucer was an ecclesiastical republican, who believed that papal or episcopal presidency was legitimate only when exercised in collaboration with the secular magistracy and, indeed, the whole body of the faithful, whose responsibility was to ensure that bishops remained faithful to canon law and, above all, the Gospel. Bucer's, however, was not an Erastianism

⁷⁸ Although Gropper *Enchiridion* 24a ruled out a bare succession of doctrine, Melancthon argued that such a succession was never without a ministry of *praedicatores verbi*. See P. Fraenkel, *Testimonia patrum: the Function of Patristic Argument in the Theology of Philip Melancthon* in *Travaux d'humanisme et renaissance* 46 (Geneva: Droz, 1961), 180f. Moreover, Gropper's use (*Enchiridion* 24a) of the presbyterian canon and the following citation from Irenaeus suggest that he was unwilling to tie apostolic succession to the mono-episcopate as such: "Et ne quis putaret solius fidei successionem sufficere [Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses*] lib. 4. cap. 43 [sic] ait: *His tantum presbyteris obediendum, qui successionem habent ab apostolis, cum episcopatus successione, charisma veritatis certum secundum placitum placitis acceperunt...*" See *Adversus haereses* 4.26.2 (PG, 3:1053). On this question see Bucer, *Constans defensio ex s. Scriptura* (Geneva: Saracen & Pernet, 1613), 49, 51.

avant la lettre. The church's ministry rather than the magistrate was responsible for the governance of the church, and owed its obedience in ecclesiastical affairs to the Gospel rather than to the magistracy. The magistrate's role was to ensure that the ministry remained faithful to this vocation, intervening only in cases of emergency and for the purposes of restoring a godly ministry.⁷⁹ On these conditions Bucer entertained the theoretical, though highly unlikely possibility that the papacy might be reformed as a ministry in the service of the bond of love and peace in a Christian Europe. This conversation was joined by a Catholic who, while insisting on the papacy's *plenitudo potestatis*, attempted to describe a Roman episcopate integrated with the other organs of unity within the church rather than sitting above them, in the words of Innocent III, "midway between God and man... less than God but more than man".⁸⁰

My aim in describing this conversation is not to idealise or sentimentalise it. As I have already suggested, these negotiations were conducted in an atmosphere of deep mistrust and frequently collapsed into bouts of recrimination and self-exculpation. The vision of a single Christendom, on which the *Worms Book's* vision of the papacy rested, had always been something of a chimaera. Moreover, as Calvin's struggles in Geneva would shortly reveal, godly Christian magistrates and ecclesiastical republicanism were not always what Bucer had cracked them up to be.

Bucer, however, was no ecclesiastical idealist. In his account of church history there were certainly better and purer forms of the church, but there was no *best* this side of the Last Day. In a letter to Thomas Cranmer Bucer scoffed at what he called the, "theoretical theology" of the Anabaptists and Zurich theologians. Platonic republics were for the sectaries. Any one wanting to restore a national or European Christendom should de-

⁷⁹ Fraenkel, "Zwischen Altkatholizismus und Caesaropapismus", 610-613.

⁸⁰ Innocent III, *Sermo III de consecratione pontificis maximi* (PL, 217:658A).

ploy a “practical theology”.⁸¹ Certainly all things in the church should promote a living faith in Christ, but the baptised were such that it required an almost infinite persistence and inventiveness on the part of Christ’s ministers to ensure that this faith was brought to fruition in the unity of love and peace. If the papacy stood in the way of this end it must be repudiated; if it could be harnessed to this end, however imperfectly, it might be restored.

⁸¹ Bucer to Cranmer, 23rd October 1537, *Epistolae Tigurinae de rebus ad ecclesiae Anglicanae Reformationem pertinentibus* (London: Parker Society, 1848), 342.

Mystical Elements in Richard Hooker's Theology

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ABSTRACT. One word that draws together Hooker's understanding of divine mystery and secrecy is his use of the term "participation". Hooker uses it to speak of the hiddenness of God disclosed in Christ and the anticipation of divine/human union to which the instruments of divine grace are always "mysticallie yeat trulie, invisiblie yeat reallie" effecting the worshipper's "participation" in the Godhead. Such a "conjunction" was only possible for Hooker if "that small *vitall odor*" of the Holy Spirit was preveniently given by God so that grace secretly mediated by the Holy Spirit was always, "*both working inwardlie, and preventing the verie first desires, or motions of man to goodnes*". Hooker invited a return to the "foundation" of Christian thought and the promise of union with God through the Holy Spirit, not by absorption but by personal transformation and participation in Christ. He simultaneously rejected as arbitrary and circular the Puritan claims of independent spiritual insight, while directly positioning himself to rehearse a doctrine of the Holy Spirit that directly depended on the "sensible meanes" of grace accepted by both Puritans and Hooker, namely, word and sacrament, but did not remain there. The achievement of Richard Hooker moved the debate beyond the question of valid "meanes" to the goal of the Gospel, and life in the believing community which is "participation" in the Godhead. Hooker's indispensable doctrine of the Holy Spirit made the saving knowledge of God possible for all people, not only the "godly".

Introduction

Richard Hooker (1554–1600), author of the *Lawes of Ecclesiastical Politie*, is typically recognised as the defender of the Elizabethan Settlement. The *Lawes* represent his assessment of Puritan divinity during the closing years of Elizabeth's reign and a defence

of the governance, ministry, and theology of the English Church, especially sacramental theology. In particular, Hooker expends significant effort developing a theological trajectory that locates the Church within the broad base of Genevan reform while maintaining an attitude of critical engagement with the Church of Rome. Hooker is known for his polemic against the Puritans¹ and numerous authors have drawn attention to the rationalist tone by which he defends the role of reason in both the gathered life of the church and also the personal experience of the believer. This aspect of Hooker is well-established and forms the basis of the oft-quoted Anglican triad that the basis for Christian understanding and knowledge of God lies in the interplay of Scripture, tradition and reason. However, Hooker himself does not express the matter in exactly this way since he observes that,

What successe God may give unto any such kind of conference or disputation, we cannot tell. But of this we right sure, that nature, scripture, and experience it selfe, have all taught the world to seeke for the ending of contentions by submitting it selfe unto some judicall and definitve sentence, whereunto neither part that contendeth may under any pretense or coulour refuse to stand. This must needes be effectual and strong. As for other meanes without this, they seldome prevaile.²

Practically speaking, Hooker was looking for some means where he could maintain a conversation with the Puritans that would satisfy their concern for rigorous biblical Christianity while simultaneously acknowledging the sources of knowledge available to the church. His proposal for “a conference” offered

¹ Hooker rarely makes any distinction between the Puritans and never acknowledges that many Puritans remained firmly within the embrace of Canterbury.

² Richard Hooker, *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity: Preface, Books I to IV*, vol. 1 of *The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker*, ed. Georges Edelen, gen. ed. W. Speed Hill (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1977), Preface, 6.1:29.23-28.

no guarantees but the epistemic terms for such a gathering he insisted would include a mutual commitment to the role of "nature, scripture, and experience". Of course, for Hooker, these terms had very specific referents. By "nature" he implied nature redeemed by grace and the associated role of reason, similarly constrained by the Holy Spirit since "*reason be the hand which the Spirite hath led them by*".³ Likewise, "experience" was a thoroughly rational term that acknowledged the act of observation as a source of knowledge. It was not a subjective term, or an internal religious condition. "Experience" could also be used to mean knowledge obtained by experimentation. Hooker used the word in its objective sense. Neither terms carried any sense of revelation except in the special case where apostolic recognition came through a process of "intuitive revelation".⁴ This was however, a very special circumstance involving the self-disclosure of God that Hooker would not concede to be normative for human processes of decision making especially when they themselves were called upon to adjudicate truth. Hooker entertains no concept of private truth. But Hooker's primary source for revealed truth was the Scriptures. He held that, "we have no *word of God* but the Scripture"⁵, "that most blessed fountaine, the book of life"⁶ and furthermore that

³ Hooker, *Lawes*, Preface, 3.10:1.17.22f.

⁴ Hooker, *Lawes*, Preface, 6.3:1.31.12 Hooker's use of the term "revelation" means that which could *not* be attained by the processes of natural reason or experimentation – it could only be disclosed. "Intuitive revelation" as it relates to the meaning of Christ's death and the manifestation of his resurrection could not, in his view, and with Calvin, was *sui generis* as to the apostolic witness of these things. Scripture was therefore the only secure guarantor for the believer as Spirit-laden testimony.

⁵ Richard Hooker, *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity: Book V*, vol. 2 of *The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker*, ed. W. Speed Hill, gen. ed. W. Speed Hill (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1977), V.21.1:2.84.17f.

⁶ Hooker, *Lawes*, Preface, 2.1:1.3.18f.

all good necessarilie to be either knowne or don or had, this one coelestiall fountaine yeldeth. Let there be any grieffe or disease incident unto the soule of man, anie wounde or sicknes named, for which there is not in this treasure house a present comfortable remedie at all tymes readie to be found. Hereof it is that we covet to make the psalmes especiallie familiar unto all.⁷

This was the language of Puritan conviction concerning Scripture and Hooker simply followed the example of Calvin who was himself prepared to exalt the counsels of God beyond the reach of human wisdom. He noted, as had Calvin, that human reason had its limits and that the appropriation of the divine could never be constrained by the limits of human intellectual powers. After all, did not Calvin declare that

the testimony of the Spirit is more excellent than all reason so also the Word will not find acceptance in men's hearts before it is sealed by the inward testimony of the Spirit. The same Spirit, therefore, who has spoken through the mouths of the prophets must penetrate into our hearts to persuade us that they faithfully proclaimed what had been divinely commanded.⁸

Not only that, Calvin understood the Scriptures to be "self-authenticating" such that,

those whom the Holy Spirit has inwardly taught truly rest upon Scripture, and that Scripture indeed is self-authenticated; hence it is not right to subject it to proof and reasoning. And the certainty it deserves with us, it attains by the testimony of the Spirit. For even if it wins reverence for itself by its own majesty, it seriously affects us only when it is sealed upon our hearts through the Spirit.⁹

⁷ Hooker, *Lawes*, V.37.2: 2.150.16-31.

⁸ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion Vol. 1*, vol. XX of *The Library of Christian Classics*, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960), *Institutes*, 1.7.4.

⁹ Calvin, *Institutes*, *Institutes*, 1.7.5.

Hooker also accepted the self-authenticating power of Scripture which in his language came close to what he meant by "intuitive revelation". Nevertheless, he was just as aware as the Puritans that the "Councels may erre",¹⁰ as much as individual thoughts and speculations can err. "Thinke yee are men, deeme it not impossible for you to erre"¹¹ and furthermore, since we are so prone to error, Scripture must be,

... our chieftest direction... for nature is no sufficient teacher what we shoulde doe that we may attaine unto life everlasting. The insufficiencie of the light of nature is by the light of scripture so fully and so perfectly herein supplied, that further light then this hath added there doth not neede unto that ende.¹²

Part of the integrity of Hooker's thought lies in the strength of his commitment to theological investigation, to the proper and judicious use of the given sources, that is, "nature, scripture, and experience", combined with the sort of intellectual humility that allowed him recognise the limits of knowledge. This never resulted in an abandonment of scholarship but pressed the gift of intellect towards higher goal. In so doing, Hooker rescued theology from what he regarded with grave suspicion as the Puritan propensity to identify private opinion with the will of God. He concluded that the goal of Christian faith was not defined by the mere acquisition of knowledge, or facts, and certainly not with a prescriptive view of Scripture, but by the movement of the soul towards God, "extending it selfe unto all that are of God".¹³ It was to this goal that the Gospel drove those who believed it and that in doing so, they must acknowledge the partiality of all human knowing and the secrecy by which God achieves the deification of the believer. Those forms of Puritanism that exhibited more extreme charismatic forms of

¹⁰ Hooker, *Lawes*, Preface, 6.3:1.31.6.

¹¹ Hooker, *Lawes*, Preface, 9.1:51.29.

¹² Hooker, *Lawes*, II.8.3:1.188.2-7.

¹³ Hooker, *Lawes*, Preface, 3.10:1.17.17f.

religious expression were viewed with disdain by Hooker. Egil Grislis identifies this aspect of Hooker's theology when he says that for Hooker, "subjective rapture and ecstasy do not disclose insights that are universally valid".¹⁴ However, Hooker's view of what was universally valid was, as noted, confined to nature, Scripture, and experience, since these were accessible to all people, and that in general, people should accept the conclusions of ecclesiastical councils if only for the sake of unity and the public reputation of the Gospel. This remarkably relaxed attitude is not evenly distributed in Hooker but it is present since he is quite sanguine about the finitude of all human affairs. As often noted, Hooker simply thought that the Puritans had mishandled their sources, even to the ironical extent of failing to properly understand Calvin.

Mysticism in Richard Hooker

Egil Grislis¹⁵ has suggested the contours and categories that best describe Hooker's mysticism, but it is appropriate to pause and consider some working definitions that anticipate the special uses to which Hooker puts the term, since he commonly uses the word to describe the inner or secret experience of God in the soul. W. Speed Hill has noted:

Another facet of the traditional view largely missing from our portrait is that of Hooker the theologian, the English Aquinas. One could not produce a volume like Nicholas Lossky's analysis of the "mystical theology" of Lancelot Andrewes based on the *Lawes*. It is not that Hooker was not an innovative theologian. Topics like God's essential nature, the authority of Scripture, the extent to which original sin had impaired human reason, the definition of the church are implicit throughout the *Lawes*.¹⁶

¹⁴ Egil Grislis, "Richard Hooker and Mysticism", *Anglican Theological Review* 87/2 (2005), 258.

¹⁵ Grislis, "Richard Hooker and Mysticism".

¹⁶ W. Speed Hill, "Richard Hooker in the Folger Edition: An Editorial Perspective", in *Richard Hooker and the Construction of Christian Community*, ed.

However, the idea of Hooker's mysticism cannot be recast only as innovation since, with Grislis, mystical elements are to be found throughout Hooker whether in his sacramental theology, Christology, or pneumatology. To be sure, Hooker worked creatively with all the theological categories available to him, including the thought of Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventure, and Calvin, but he still added a dimension that can properly be described as mystical, producing a hermeneutic that synchronised rational theological discourse with the language of transcendent union. This meant that his theology was always grounded in, but never limited to, human intellectual capacity because while Scripture existed to teach us theology,¹⁷ and theology existed to discipline the mind's speculations, the goal of such activity was for Hooker the movement of the soul toward God through his self-disclosure in Christ. The transcendence and wonder of God, and the trajectories of divine purposefulness therefore define the language he uses.

Richard Hooker used the terms "secret" and "mysticall" in relation to the human knowledge of God's being, and also with respect to the human perception of God's actions discernible in creation. The exact sense he intended is generally built on the context, but there are occasions of some obscurity.

From a contemporary perspective, the terms "secret" and "mysticall" tend to be associated with the practitioners of mysticism and secret, esoteric ritual not available to those uninitiated in its intellectual and spiritual framework. This view of religious mysticism is derived from the human claims upon the divine. For example, Evelyn Underhill thinks of the mystic as one

Arthur S. McGrade, *Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies* no. 165 (Tempe, AZ: SUNY, 1997), 18f. See also a very brief appreciation of Hooker and Andrews' "mystical theology" in Arthur M. Allchin, *Participation in God: A Forgotten Strand in Anglican Tradition* (Wilton, CT: Morehouse-Barlow, 1988), Arthur M. Allchin, *Participation in God: A Forgotten Strand in Anglican Tradition* (Wilton, CT: Morehouse-Barlow, 1988).

¹⁷ Hooker, *Lawes*, III.8.14:1.229.33-230.1.

who has "an overwhelming consciousness of God and of his own soul: a consciousness which absorbs or eclipses all other centres of interest"¹⁸ built upon the conviction of "a personal self capable of communion with God".¹⁹ The essential feature of mystical experience is that it is experienced and rooted in:

...the way the mystic feels about his Deity, and about his own relation with it; for this adoring and all-possessing consciousness of the rich and complete divine life over against the self's life, and of the possible achievement of a level of being, a sublimation of the self, wherein we are perfectly united with it. This is the common factor which unites those apparently incompatible views of the Universe [the mystic's] intuition of the divine is so lofty that it cannot be expressed by means of any intellectual concept".²⁰

While the aim of the mystic is "the establishment of special relations with the spiritual order"²¹ it is to be noted that such a relationship is established by the intensity of the mystic's desire and openness to the domain of the Spirit. The transcendental aspects of this relationship are attained by "immediate knowledge far more than by belief"²² and which results in "unmediated intercourse with the Transcendent".²³ Underhill does not make a case for the abandonment of the intellect, but it is clear that the assurances of relational union with the Godhead cannot as such be imparted by membership in a group and that mystical experience, in turn, cannot be imparted. Such assurances are therefore secret and highly personal. The hiddenness, or secrecy, of divine knowledge is well-known in Christian literature, including the Bible, and Richard Hooker draws upon this tradition. However, notwithstanding the Christian mystical tradi-

¹⁸ Evelyn Underhill, *The Essentials of Mysticism* (New York: AMS Press Inc., 1920), 2.

¹⁹ Underhill, *Mysticism*, 3.

²⁰ Underhill, *Mysticism*, 4f.

²¹ Underhill, *Mysticism*, 27.

²² Underhill, *Mysticism*, 25.

²³ Underhill, *Mysticism*, 25.

tion, Hooker's use of the idea points to that of an "open" secret in which revelatory knowledge, disclosed by the Holy Spirit to those having faith, is actually the repair of knowledge lost in the Fall²⁴ and now restored by divine grace, apart from the merits of the mystic. Thus, while Underhill's conception of "mysticall" is primarily directed "from below", inasmuch as mystical qualities reside "wholly in the temper of the self who adopts them",²⁵ it is the object of such contemplation that directs Richard Hooker.

Hooker's use of the terms was consistent with John Calvin and frequently simply means that which is hidden, abstruse, disguised, or concealed either through lack of initiation, or because the object is beyond ordinary human comprehension, thus requiring special assistance to know or understand the object. In the context of transcendent union with God, Hooker often applies the term in relation to the sacraments and the church as the mystical body of Christ which is to say that their true identity is actually hidden behind the symbolic or analogical referents of, for example, bread and wine, or the community of belief in communion with itself and the object of worship. The initial point of departure from Underhill's view of the matter is that Hooker's mysticism does not view the divine-human union as an achievement of "personal temper" but as a gift of grace. Thus there is never an unmediated relationship between man and God even if, as Calvin affirms:

²⁴ Since noetic depravity was also at the heart of Reformation theology and especially prominent amongst the seventeenth century Puritans. What constituted for the Puritans an *absolute* collapse of human epistemic and moral capability, was for Hooker the, "... foggie damp of originall corruption". Richard Hooker, "A Learned and Comfortable Sermon of the Certaintie and Perpetuities of Faith in the Elect", in *Tractates and Sermons*, vol. 5 of *The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker*, ed. Egil Grislis and Laetitia Yeandle, gen. ed. W. Speed Hill (The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1990), 71.17. Naturally, such a fog could vary in its intensity, but it was still a fog!

²⁵ Underhill, *Mysticism*, 5.

Manifold is the nimbleness of the soul with which it surveys heaven and earth, joins past to future and devises things incredible. These are unfailing signs of divinity in man. What ought we to say here except that the signs of immortality which have been implanted in man cannot be effaced.²⁶

So Calvin is clear about the capability of relationship and man's inner desire for it, but the initiative and imperative that secures the relationship belongs to God, not in mere generality, nor by the manipulation of fortune or chance but according to Calvin, since "all events are governed by God's secret plan",²⁷ desire itself he understands to be from God because, "philosophers teach and human minds conceive that all parts of the universe are quickened by God's secret inspiration".²⁸

In language that anticipates Richard Hooker, Calvin addressed the need for mediation as he discusses the mystical union of the believer with God and the doctrine of justification:

...it pleased God to reveal in the Mediator what was hidden and incomprehensible in himself. Accordingly, I usually say that Christ is, as it were, a fountain²⁹ open to us, from which we may draw what otherwise would lie unprofitably hidden in that deep and secret spring, which comes forth to us in the person of the Mediator.³⁰

The mystical comprehension of God outlined by Underhill resulted in a spiritual union with the Godhead which he took to be deeply personal. A similar sentiment is found in Calvin but having argued for the priority of divine initiative in such mystic contemplation Calvin, like Hooker, grasped its significance not so much personally, as corporately:

²⁶ Calvin, *Institutes*, I.5.5.

²⁷ Calvin, *Institutes*, I.16.2.

²⁸ Calvin, *Institutes*, I.16.1.

²⁹ "Fountain" is a term also used by Hooker to describe Christ.

³⁰ Calvin, *Institutes*, III.11.9.

...that joining together of Head and members, that indwelling of Christ in our hearts – in short, that mystical union – are accorded by us the highest importance, so that Christ, having been made ours, makes us sharers with him in the gifts with which he has been endowed. We do not contemplate him outside ourselves from afar in order that his righteousness may be imputed to us but because we put on Christ and are engrafted into his body – in short, because he deigns to make us one with him.³¹

And it is this sense of “mysticall” that Hooker reproduces, that the “secret” knowledge of God ultimately manifests itself in personal acts of glorification and worship through the creation of a mystical community formed through the gift of the Holy Spirit. Again, as Calvin declares:

...God reforms us by his Spirit into holiness and righteousness of life. First it must be seen whether he does this by himself and directly or through the hand of his Son, to whom he has entrusted the whole fullness of the Holy Spirit in order that by his abundance he may supply what is lacking in his members. *Righteousness comes forth to us from the secret wellspring of his divinity...* [emphasis mine].³²

Hooker shares Calvin's vocabulary and though at times lacks Calvin's precision, attempts to redirect the Puritan emphasis on the trustworthiness of inner illumination back to the essential features of Calvin's mysticism which, like Hooker, was willing to acknowledge its authenticity, but was suspicious when spiritual insight was disconnected from the constraints of Scripture and the collective wisdom of the church.

³¹ Calvin, *Institutes*, III.11.10.

³² Calvin, *Institutes*, III.11.12. Calvin may be echoing the sentiments of St. Paul in Ephesians 3:14-19.

Hooker and the Deification of Nature

We can see that Hooker was deeply indebted to Calvin and adopted his use of language when discussing the secret working of God. The point of such secrecy was to annul any speculation that mystical union with God was a human achievement. Still, the language of union supplied the vocabulary of desire in Hooker's theology, partly because he believed Puritan theology had wrongly suppressed human desire as good in itself, but also because he thought the goals of such desire might serve to commend some basis for a theological common ground.

The incarnational character of Christian claims regarding God was central for Hooker. The Puritan claim to godliness and special wisdom, particularly in its incipient Quaker expression, naturally gave rise to questions of the hermeneutical and epistemological limits with respect to Scriptural sources of truth, and also the limits of assurance with respect to faith.³³ This was, however, preempted by Hooker's own conjunction of rationalism and mysticism between which he moves comfortably. He is quite prepared to follow the incarnational logic of Chalcedon and apply it in a manner that anticipates the later Puritans, where he asserts "The union... of the flesh with deitie is to *that flesh* a guift of principall grace and favor. For by vertue of this grace man is reallie made God..."³⁴ and so the outcome of the incarnation is the redemption of sinful flesh in the glorified flesh of Christ yet without loss or alteration in God's nature "from [man's] so neere copulation with deitie".³⁵ So in Hooker, this startling proposal for the salvation of man is accounted for primarily in the Trinitarian formulations that he took to be normative for any theology, and which he continued to develop in his understanding of the role of the Holy Spirit. Hooker's im-

³³ W. J. Torrance Kirby, "The Paradigm of Chalcedonian Christology in Richard Hooker's Discourse on Grace and the Church", *Churchman* 114/1 (Spring 2000), 22-39.

³⁴ Hooker, *Lawes*, III.54.3:2.222.19-21.

³⁵ Hooker, *Lawes*, III.54.5:2.223.29.

mersion in what Peter Munz has called Thomistic rationalism³⁶ needs to be qualified by the place Hooker assigned to the Holy Spirit in his larger theological schema. Hooker understood the Holy Spirit to be the source and agency for a restored humanity. By pointing to the indispensable role of the Holy Spirit in the hermeneutical process, he succeeded in reflecting the true dynamic of divine-human "participation", to use one of Hooker's favourite expressions, which by nature defied containment, but was Christologically defined as "that mutuall hold which Christ hath of us and wee of him, in such sort that ech possesseth other by waie of speciall interest propertie and inherent copulation".³⁷ It was therefore necessary for Hooker to proceed with a sophisticated development of revelation and epistemological limitation so that the significance of the liberty implied in "inherent copulation" could be made tangible in Elizabethan society while avoiding the religious chaos he thought would follow upon Puritan reforms. Thus, as John Booty has noted, the Spirit was the divine gift which brought "power to restore clarity to reason and ability to will".³⁸

If there is one word that draws together Hooker's understanding of divine mystery and secrecy, it is his use of the term "participation". In some respects, this is a catch-all term because Hooker uses it in a variety of contexts, but invariably, it speaks to the hiddenness of God disclosed in Christ and the anticipation of divine/human union stimulated by the gift of the Holy Spirit. In the following quote, Hooker is thinking of Eucharistic transformation and while continuing to adopt the language of transubstantiation, applies it to the worshipper.

³⁶ Peter Munz, *The Place of Hooker in the History of Thought* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1952), 171.

³⁷ Hooker, *Lawes*, V.56.1:2.234.29-31.

³⁸ John E. Booty, "Richard Hooker", in *The Spirit of Anglicanism: Hooker, Maurice, Temple*, ed. William J. Wolf (Wilton, CT: Morehouse-Barlow Co. Inc., 1979), 25.

...Christ assisting this heavenlie banquet with his personall and true presence doth by his owne divine power ad to the naturall substance thereof supernaturall efficacie, which addition to the nature of those consecrated elementes changeth them and maketh them that unto us which otherwise they could not be; that to us they are made such instrumentes as mysticallie yeat trulie, invisiblie yeat reallie worke our communion or fellowship with the person of Jesus Christ as well in that he is man as God, our *participation* [emphasis mine] also in the fruit grace and efficacie of his bodie and blood, whereupon there ensueth a kind of transubstantiation in us, a true change both of soule and bodie, an alteration from death to life.³⁹

The instruments of divine grace are always “mysticallie yeat trulie, invisiblie yeat reallie” effecting the worshipper’s “participation” in the Godhead.

...our conjunction with Christ to be a mutuall *participation* [emphasis mine] wherby ech is blended with other, his flesh and blood with ours in like sort with his, even as reallie materiallie and naturallie as wax melted and blended with wax into one lump, no other difference by that this mixture be sensiblie perceyved the other not.⁴⁰

Such “conjunction” was impossible for Hooker unless “that small *vitall odor*”⁴¹ of the Holy Spirit were preveniently given by God so that grace secretly mediated by the Holy Spirit was al-

³⁹ Hooker, *Lawes*, V.67.11:2.338.16-340.1.

⁴⁰ Richard Hooker, “A Learned Sermon of the Nature of Pride Abac. 2.4”, in *Tractates and Sermons*, vol.5 of *The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker*, ed. Egil Grislis and Laetitia Yeandle, gen. ed. W. Speed Hill (The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1990), 1:5.326.20-327.4.

⁴¹ Richard Hooker, *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity: Attack and Response: Dublin Fragments*, vol. 4 of *Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker*, ed. John E. Booty, gen. ed. W. Speed Hill (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1982), 4.12.111.23.

ways, "...both working inwardlie, and preventing the verie first desires, or motions of man to goodnes".⁴²

In a recent article by Rowan Williams in which he discusses Hooker's theological method, the Archbishop of Canterbury considers Hooker to be "... perhaps the first major European theologian to assume that history, corporate and individual, matters for theology; and he is one of the inventors of that distinctive Anglican mood... called 'contemplative pragmatism'..."⁴³ In so doing, Williams depicts Hooker as stepping softly between legitimate epistemological uncertainties at a time where Geneva promised the certainty of heaven through the propositions of election and the absolute truth of Scripture, and Rome promised certainty through an absolute trust in the labyrinth of ecclesiastical formulations and philosophic theology unattainable to most people. Hooker invited a return to the "foundation" of Christian thought and the promise of union with God through the Holy Spirit, not by absorption but by transformation and participation, "becoming what we profess".⁴⁴ The achievement of Richard Hooker was not only the development of a theological tradition built on inquiry, Scriptural evidence, and the experience of faith, but also the safeguarding of an imaginative (mystical?) and historically connected community of belief. The unity of its citizens, although not absolutely tied to ideological or intellectual conformity,⁴⁵ was simultaneously constrained by Scriptural revelation and liberated, to be sure, by the foundational and preemptive soteriological acts of God in history and the incarnation. Hooker was quite

⁴² Hooker, *Dublin Fragments*, 4.12.111.8f.

⁴³ Rowan Williams, "Hooker the Theologian", *Journal of Anglican Studies* 1/1 (August 2003), 106.

⁴⁴ Hooker, *Lawes*, V.64.2:2.295.1f.

⁴⁵ Williams notes that "... Hooker's cautious defences of tradition and usage is substantially offset by the genuinely Reformed emphasis that underlies the whole, the appeal to the priority of divine action as the true locus of unity for the Church". Williams, "Hooker the Theologian", 114.

willing to accept the reality of the secret and hidden character of the divine transactions between heaven and creation:

Christ and his holie Spirit with all theire blessed effectes, though enteringe into the soule of man wee are not able to apprehend or expresse how, doe notwithstandinge give notize of the tymes when they use to make accesse, because it pleaseth almightie God to communicate by sensible meanes those blessinges which are incomprehensible.⁴⁶

Thus Hooker simultaneously rejected as arbitrary and circular the Puritan claims to independent spiritual insight, while directly positioning himself to rehearse a doctrine of the Holy Spirit that directly depended on the “sensible meanes” of grace accepted by both Puritans and Hooker, namely, word and sacrament, and which ultimately moved beyond the question of “meanes” to the goal of the Gospel, which is “participation” in the Godhead. Hooker’s indispensable doctrine of the Holy Spirit made the saving knowledge of God possible for all people, not only the “godly”. With such gracious reception, the collective actions of believers had significance because under such circumstances, they tended toward the goal of their own createdness – union and participation with God.

⁴⁶ Hooker, *Lawes*, V.57.3:2.246.15-20.

“How the Lord Revealed his Secrets to Me, One after Another”: The Life and Thought of Johanna Eleonora Petersen (1644-1724) in Recent Scholarship: a Review Article

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ABSTRACT. This article examines four recent books devoted to the life and thought of German Pietist author Johanna Eleonora Petersen (1644-1724). In the last four years two monograph studies of Petersen and two source editions of her autobiography have appeared in print. The monographs by Albrecht and Martin pursue gender and literary questions rather than strictly theological ones, a welcome advance. However, Petersen's radical Pietist spirituality demands a more creative, more multi-disciplinary approach than we find in these two books. Readers would do well to bypass the English translation of Petersen's *Leben* by Becker-Cantarino in favour of the earlier one by Cornelia Niekus Moore or the 2003 German edition by Prisca Guglielmetti. The latter is a welcome resource for professors and students.

Ruth Albrecht, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen: Theologische Schriftstellerin des frühen Pietismus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005), 432 pages, Bibliography, Index;

Lucinda Martin, “Women's Religious Speech and Activism in German Pietism” (A Dissertation Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the University of Texas at Austin in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The University of Texas at Austin, De-

- cember 2002), 367 pages (pages 157-225 are devoted to Johanna Eleonora Petersen), Bibliography;
- Barbara Becker-Cantarino (editor and translator), *The Life of Lady Johanna Eleonora Petersen Written by Herself: Pietism and Women's Autobiography in Seventeenth-Century Germany* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 140 pages, Bibliography, Index;
- Prisca Guglielmetti (editor), *Johanna Eleonora Petersen, geb. von und zu Merlau. Leben, von ihr selbst mit eigener Hand aufgesetzt* (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2003), 114 pages, Bibliography.

Introduction

This review article focuses on four recent books devoted to the life and thought of German Pietist author Johanna Eleonora Petersen (1644-1724). After suffering from centuries of neglect, in the last four years two monograph studies of Petersen and two source editions of her autobiography have appeared in print. These works reflect the international scope of current Pietism research: one monograph and source edition are in German, while the other monograph and source edition are in English. Ruth Albrecht's study grows out of her habilitation thesis presented at Hamburg University in 1999; Lucinda Martin's study of Petersen and Anna Nitschmann represents her 2002 doctoral dissertation at the University of Texas, soon to be published in revised form; Cantarino's English translation of Petersen's *Leben* appears in the University of Chicago series on women writers, "The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe"; and Prisca Guglielmetti's German edition of the *Leben* belongs to a new series of German source texts representing the diversity of the Pietist movement.

German Pietism has been called the most significant Protestant renewal movement after the Reformation. Under the inspiration of such figures as Philipp Jakob Spener (1635-1705), August Hermann Francke (1663-1727) and Nikolaus Ludwig Graf von Zinzendorf (1700-1760), Pietism played a complex but im-

portant role in the rise of the Enlightenment and in the beginnings of modern education, politics, culture and religion. Pietism research has made significant advances in recent years. This can be illustrated by the two International Congresses for Pietism Research held in Halle in 2001 and 2005, by the recently completed four volume *Geschichte des Pietismus*,¹ by achievements in the sub-field of “radical Pietism” under the aegis of Marburg Professor Hans Schneider, by the formation of the Pietism Studies Research Group in North America, and by advances in the study of women as key figures within the Pietist movement.² But along with these achievements must go the recognition that in many ways Pietism is still a young research field. Ruth Albrecht recently lamented that there is “little or no use of the methods of gender history” in Pietism scholarship. “It still remains to investigate the individual personalities of Pietist women, and their writings, readership, and support networks”.³

Johanna Eleonora Petersen is highly deserving of the scholarly attention represented by the works here under review. She was recognized in her day as the most significant Pietist woman author. “The amount and intensity of her writing were incomparable... Her outstanding Bible knowledge was highlighted by everyone”.⁴ She and her prolific husband, pastor and

¹ Edited by Martin Brecht, Klaus Deppermann, Ulrich Gäbler and Hartmut Lehmann, the four volumes were published in 1993, 1995, 2000 and 2004 by Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht in Göttingen. For an account of the celebration held in Berlin on January 20, 2004 upon completion of the final volume, see Paul Raabe, “Rede zur Vollendung der *Geschichte des Pietismus*”, *Pietismus und Neuzeit* 31 (2005), 218-224.

² See Barbara Hoffmann, *Radikalpietismus um 1700. Der Streit um das Recht auf eine neue Gesellschaft* (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 1996) and Ulrike Witt, *Bekehrung, Bildung und Biographie: Frauen im Umkreis des Halleschen Pietismus* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1996).

³ Ruth Albrecht, “Women”, in Hartmut Lehmann, ed. *Geschichte des Pietismus*, Bd. 4 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004), 523.

⁴ Ruth Albrecht, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen: Theologische Schriftstellerin des frühen Pietismus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005), 136f.

theologian Johann Wilhelm Petersen (1649-1727), pushed Spener's thought and practice in more radical directions. Spener's innovative gatherings in his home in Frankfurt were intended to nurture Bible study and prayer among the laity in realization of the priesthood of all believers. In his manifesto, *Pia Desideria* (1675), Spener expressed his post-millennial confidence that better times were ahead for the church. He anticipated the conversion of the Jews, the decline of the Roman Catholic Church and confessional differences, and a new age of Christian harmony. While Spener remained a life-long pastor in the state Lutheran Church, Johann Wilhelm Petersen's outspoken millennialism and support of the prophetess Juliane von Asseburg resulted in his dismissal from his position as pastor and superintendent in Lüneburg.⁵ The Petersens would spend the next thirty years on their estate in Electoral Brandenburg,⁶ where they welcomed a host of colourful Pietist leaders and personalities. Through their letters and writings they promoted a Philadelphian piety that was sharply critical of the conflicts, divisiveness and low level of piety within the state Lutheran churches; they anticipated a new "Philadelphian" age of ecumenical peace, and God's redemptive restoration of all creation. Johanna authored some fifteen books while her husband published sixty-seven works with an additional one hundred in ms. In 1718 the Petersens both published autobiographies, providing scholars with unique access to their life and thought.⁷ Given Jo-

⁵ Petersen was dismissed from office in January 1692. See Markus Matthias, *Johann Wilhelm und Johanna Eleonora Petersen. Eine Biographie bis zur Amtsenthebung Petersens im Jahre 1692* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993).

⁶ Ruth Albrecht, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen: Theologische Schriftstellerin des frühen Pietismus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005), 92-96.

⁷ Johann Wilhelm Petersen, *Das Leben Jo. Wilhelmi Petersen, Der Heil. Schrift Doctoris*, 1717; Johanna Eleonora Petersen, *Leben Frauen Joh. Eleonora Petersen Gebornen von und zu Merlau, Hrn. D. Io. Willh. Petersen Eheliebsten; Von Ihr selbst mit eigener Hand aufgesetzt, und vieler erbaulichen Merckwürdigkeiten wegen zum Druck übergeben, daher es als ein Zweyter Theil Zu Ihres Ehe-Herrn Lebens-Beschreibung beygefüget werden kan. Anno MDCCXVIII. Auf Kosten guter Freunde.*

hanna's prominence and productivity, it is surprising that till recently she has been almost totally neglected by scholars.

The purpose of this article is to examine recent scholarship on Johanna Eleonora Petersen and to assess its achievements in advancing our understanding of Pietism in general and of Johanna Eleonora Petersen in particular. For the two monographs we shall consider the purpose, argument, sources and method of each work, followed by an assessment of its contribution to the field. In examining the two source editions, we shall note the quality of the translation or edition and the accompanying introduction and apparatus, as well as the work's value as a resource for scholars and students. We shall argue that in terms of advancing the Pietism field, the contribution of this recent scholarship on Johanna Eleonora Petersen is mixed. Guglielmetti's edition of Petersen's autobiography is a welcome advance. Also welcome is the way the two monographs pursue questions and methods marked by gender and literary interests rather than strictly theological ones. However, it is clear that the religious, psychological and social questions that Petersen's life and piety raise demand a more creative, more multi-disciplinary approach than we find in the two monographs under consideration.

The Two Monographs

Ruth Albrecht takes as the focus of her study the "theological work" of Johanna Eleonora Petersen, illuminating the setting and conditions, results and achievements of Petersen's theological writing.⁸ The book has three parts: a biography of Petersen (83 pages), an examination of gender specific limitations that she encountered as a woman writer (79 pages), and a chronological examination of Petersen's writings (158 pages). This last part discusses Petersen's early writings up to 1691, writings during her main period of literary activity from 1691 to 1715, and her later writings from 1715 to 1719. Albrecht seeks to revise the

⁸ Albrecht, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen*, 19.

caricatures of scholars who fail to take Petersen's theological writing seriously and who view her as a personality driven by emotional and visionary experiences.⁹

Albrecht argues that Petersen should be characterized not as a theologian *per se*, but as "a woman writer who addressed theological subjects" (*theologische Schriftstellerin*). Neither her training nor her involvements permit the former designation.¹⁰ Petersen's theological profile was determined by two poles: the word of God, and her own experiences, which became "the hermeneutical key to understanding holy scripture".¹¹ There is a complexity to Petersen's theology. While grounded in biblical interpretation, she availed herself of such resources as the original languages, personal experiences, visions, and contemporary notions from people like Jane Leade. "A distinguishing mark of her theological work is the tension between the effort to understand the Word of God, and to combine this with ideas that she drew from contemporaries".¹²

In the biographical section, Albrecht provides a detailed portrait of the Petersens' life on their estate in Niederndodeleben where they lived in relative peace and security. They were not only tolerated, but actually supported thanks to the confessional and political structure of Brandenburg-Prussia. Their estate became a "communications center for radical Pietists". Some visitors who lived with them on the estate for extended periods of time include Anna Margaretha Jahn from Halberstadt who lived there in 1695; Adelheid Sybilla Schwartz and her husband in 1697; Gottfried Arnold in May 1698; Swiss Pietist Samuel König in summer 1700; the radical Swiss preacher Samuel Guldin

⁹ Albrecht, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen*, 17.

¹⁰ Albrecht, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen*, 14f. Albrecht goes against Martin Jung who describes Petersen as "Die Theologin Johanna Eleonora Petersen" and "eine Laientheologin des radikalen Pietismus". See Martin H. Jung, *Nachfolger, Visionärinnen, Kirchenkritiker* (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2003), 59-63.

¹¹ Albrecht, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen*, 354.

¹² Albrecht, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen*, 357.

and his family; Niklaus von Rodt with his daughter and son-in-law; and the Hessen radical theologian Heinrich Horch.¹³ With so many visitors coming and going, it is not surprising that Petersen should emphasize the importance of having her own room in which to read, work and pray. Jane Leade, as well, noted the importance of having her private place where she could meet with God, and he with her.¹⁴ This was a practical requirement for a successful woman author, yet much harder for a woman to come by than a man at this time.

Albrecht examines the Petersens' relation to English Philadelphianism and Jane Leade. Albrecht's argument is ambivalent and somewhat unclear on this point. She states that the Petersens undoubtedly "considered themselves to be Philadelphians who were bound up with like-minded people in the spirit of these ideas". Johanna Eleonora and Johann Wilhelm Petersen were supporters of the Philadelphian notion that people from various faith backgrounds and from different places should join with each other. Their many contacts, maintained in person or by letter, and their vigorous book production, were all intended to prepare for "the Philadelphian epoch of the church, which they imagined as in some measure already at hand".¹⁵ Both of the Petersens exchanged letters in German with Jane Leade which were translated for her by Loth Fischer.

Leade believed that the return of Christ would not occur until a Philadelphian Church was established on earth to receive Him. When she sought to extend the Philadelphian organizational network to Germany, the Petersens drew back. They were opposed to any new church or sect structures. Indeed, they never fully separated themselves from the Lutheran Church, nor did they join a particular Pietist group, pursuing rather "an independent and non-committed existence". What they did establish was a reading community [*Lesergemeinde*] throughout Ger-

¹³ Albrecht, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen*, 104f.

¹⁴ Albrecht, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen*, 103f.

¹⁵ Albrecht, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen*, 112, 113.

many. "To this extent, the two Petersens cannot be reckoned among the members and champions of the London-based Philadelphian Society, even if their strivings in many respects agreed with Leade and her disciples".¹⁶ So, according to Albrecht, the Petersens saw themselves as Philadelphians, but they really were not.

In discussing questions of gender in Part II, Albrecht observes that among late 17th century women writers, Johanna Eleonora Petersen was "the only one who sought to provide careful exegetical legitimation for her writing".¹⁷ She used Gal. 3:28 to show that the distinction between men and women had no significance for the gifts of the spirit and for the grace of God. "She understood herself as a woman directly blessed by God who felt she should and must use the gifts he had bestowed for the good of her neighbour".¹⁸ Leade, on the other hand, grounded her writing upon her visions to which she attributed the same authority as the Old Testament and New Testament. She described God as the "author" of her writings. Like Leade, Bourignon considered herself to be God's medium of revelation. Van Schurman defended the educational abilities of women and her own abilities as an educated woman. Finally, Guyon saw her mystical commentary on the Bible as being guided by the divine author.¹⁹

In Part III, Albrecht pursues a chronological examination of each of Petersen's fifteen works, published between 1689 and 1718, in terms of context, ideas, and the responses they prompted from friends and enemies. Petersen's 1696 book, *Anleitung zu gründlicher Verständniß der Heiligen Offenbahrung Jesu Christi*, an interpretation of the *Apocalypse*, is her most extensive discussion of chiliastic/millennialist ideas. Albrecht suggests that the book crossed a barrier for a woman writer in the early modern

¹⁶ Albrecht, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen*, 113, 114 and n. 491.

¹⁷ Albrecht, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen*, 181.

¹⁸ Albrecht, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen*, 192, 197.

¹⁹ Albrecht, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen*, 181-183.

period. Although the work did not follow the traditional genre of a commentary, Petersen was blazing new ground in commenting on a portion of Scripture.²⁰ Johanna would later identify the *Anleitung* as the most significant and important of all her works. J. H. Feustking brought a 3-fold critique against the work: the subject was too difficult for a woman; the commentary was written in German; and the book was not subject to pastoral censor. She was incapable of true theological argument, or “Elenchus”, the preserve of academic theologians.²¹

The idea of a final restoration of all creation, including the devil and the fallen angels, found its first Pietist expression in Petersen’s *Ewiges Evangelium* of 1698 and *Bewährung des Ewigen Evangelii* of 1701. Emanuel Hirsch called this notion “perhaps the most important theological-historical contribution of radical Pietism”.²² Johanna published the *Ewige Evangelium* anonymously, possibly due to Spener’s request that she avoid public promotion of these ideas. Petersen’s main argument derived from the love of God, which embraces all creation including the devil, and the redemption of Christ, which redeemed all creation including the devil.²³ The work called forth a flood of criticism. Territorial authorities, including Brandenburg-Prussia, Württemberg, Nürnberg, and Bern, subjected the book to censor to prevent its publication in their territories.²⁴ Her teaching on this point drew opposition and enmity from friends such as Spener, Francke, Gichtel, Breckling and Horch.²⁵

Equally significant and innovative is Petersen’s autobiography, first written in 1689 and expanded in 1718. In Pietism one sees a blossoming of autobiographical literature as men and

²⁰ Albrecht, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen*, 264, 245.

²¹ Albrecht, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen*, 261.

²² Albrecht, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen*, 271, 273 and n. 403. Hirsch stated that the doctrine of a universal restoration (*Wiederbringung*) is “vielleicht der bedeutendste theologiegeschichtliche Beitrag des schwärmerischen Pietismus”.

²³ Albrecht, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen*, 285.

²⁴ Albrecht, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen*, 290-294.

²⁵ Albrecht, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen*, 300f.

women document their piety and experience of God as part of a program of renewal. Gustav Benrath considered Johanna Eleonora Petersen's *Leben* to be one of the most influential of all Pietist autobiographies, alongside those by Johann Konrad Dippel and Johann Henrich Reitz. Petersen's 1689 autobiography "belongs to the early phase of Pietist autobiographical writing, while the autobiographies of A. H. Francke, P. J. Spener, Gottfried Arnold and Johann Wilhelm Petersen belong to the later period". Petersen was herself influenced by the earlier autobiographies of Anna Maria van Schurman and Antoinette Bourignon.²⁶

Albrecht's work deserves commendation on many grounds. This is the first study of Johanna Eleonora Petersen that takes into account all of her published writings. As well, Albrecht consulted unpublished sources, mainly letters, found in archives in Frankfurt, Gotha, Halle, Hamburg, Kiel, Schneeberg, Schönaue and Wolmirstedt. Albrecht admits that she was only able to make selective use of the couple's extensive and wide-reaching correspondence due to the lack of a comprehensive edition.²⁷ Albrecht's bibliography offers an invaluable listing of previous Pietist scholarship; she has obviously mastered this vast field of scholarly literature.

Albrecht raises some questions that invite further research. The Petersens' attitudes towards Jews, and hopes for the conversion of the Jews, invite further study. When Johann Wilhelm first met Johanna, he was surprised to learn that she had a good command of the Hebrew language which, he said, she had learned "from a man very experienced in the oriental Hebrew language". Frankfurt was a center of Jewish scholarship and it is likely that it was a Jewish scholar who taught her.²⁸ When a former house guest, Johann Peter Späth, converted to Judaism, he claimed it was due to the influence of Johanna Eleonora Pe-

²⁶ Albrecht, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen*, 336-338.

²⁷ Albrecht, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen*, 38.

²⁸ Albrecht, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen*, 63.

tersen. Her claim that she herself had borne a child of promise, "in purity", who would be a "new messiah", convinced Späth that the virgin birth of Christ was no argument for his divinity; Christ too could simply be a human messiah.²⁹ The whole complex of radical Pietist-Jewish relations demands further research. Also inviting further study is the phenomenon of radical Pietists moderating their views and practice in later life. The Petersens returned to the Lutheran church in their later years. One finds the same pattern in Friedrich Breckling, Gottfried Arnold, Heinrich Horch, Samuel König and Johann Philipp Marquard.³⁰ This pattern begs for further investigation.

There are, however, some problems with Albrecht's book, most notably in the way she has organized her findings. Her decision to discuss Petersen's biography, gendered experience, and published writings in three discreet parts is unfortunate and surprising given Albrecht's emphasis that Petersen's experiences became "the hermeneutical key to understanding holy scripture".³¹ As a result, Albrecht's investigation provides few illuminating insights into the intersection of these slices of Petersen's experience. Her life was lived whole, but the whole escapes Albrecht's grasp. The intersection of context, life and thought remains elusive. Albrecht offers little sense of significant development and change in Petersen over time. There are no startling interpretations, no arguments that one can sink one's intellectual teeth into and engage with in terms of the how and why of Petersen's career.

One wishes, for example, that Albrecht would speculate about the conjugal relationship between the Petersens. Johanna's attitudes to sexuality and marriage beg for some psycho-historical discussion. Did she engage in normal sexual relations with her husband or not? If not, does the accusation against him of impregnating a servant girl make some sense? Also,

²⁹ Albrecht, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen*, 87, 110, 252f.

³⁰ Albrecht, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen*, 114 n. 493.

³¹ Albrecht, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen*, 354.

what of their conflicts with the servants?³² The conflicts they experienced in *Niederndodeleben* suggest in the Petersens a certain self-centered distance from the common crowd, an attitude that stands in contrast to the way Spener dealt with his servants.³³ Unfortunately, none of these questions is pursued.

Finally, it is surprising that a gender historian would so quickly surrender use of the designation "theologian" in the case of Johanna Eleonora Petersen. Martin Jung has argued convincingly that Petersen belongs to a tradition of "lay theologians"; the academic variety cannot lay sole claim to the title. Jung describes Petersen as "Die Theologin Johanna Eleonora Petersen" and "eine Laientheologin des radikalen Pietismus", preferring the term "theologin" to "Erbauungsschriftstellerin". He notes that Protestantism from early on had a tradition of lay theologians that included the likes of Caspar Schwenckfeld, Menno Simons, Jakob Böhme, Nikolaus Ludwig Graf von Zinzendorf and Gerhard Tersteegen. This tradition is consistent with Luther's priesthood of all believers. Petersen deserves to be included among these, for she involved herself in the theological disputes of her day. "If ever a woman deserved the title, then it is she".³⁴

Lucinda Martin's 2002 dissertation, "Women's Religious Speech and Activism in German Pietism", addresses social and gender issues in relation to early modern Pietism and Enlightenment, fields in which women's experience and contribution have long been neglected. Noting that German scholarship has tended to view Pietism as a "strictly *German*, exclusively *Lutheran*, mostly *male* phenomenon", Martin challenges each one

³² Albrecht, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen*, 106f.

³³ See Douglas H. Shantz, "'Back to the Sources': Gottfried Arnold, Johann Henrich Reitz and the Distinctive Program and Practice of Pietist Historical Writing", in C. Arnold Snyder (ed.), *Commoners and Community* (Kitchener: Pandora Press, 2002), 89.

³⁴ See Martin H. Jung, *Nachfolger, Visionärinnen, Kirchenkritiker* (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2003), 59-63. "Klar ist: Wenn überhaupt eine Frau des Pietismus diesen Ehrentitel verdient hat, dann sie" (page 60).

of these assumptions.³⁵ She draws parallels between Pietism and movements in England such as Quakerism and Philadelphianism. She argues that women played leading roles in Pietist dissenting circles, supporting the movement financially and through their writing. To make her argument, Martin pursues case studies of “two of the most influential Pietist women” – the chiliastic prophet Johanna Eleonora Petersen and the Moravian “Mother” Anna Nitschmann. The case studies demonstrate that Pietist women “claimed and used social and religious power through their words and deeds”.³⁶ Martin concludes that women’s contributions to Pietism were “at least as important as those of their male counterparts”.³⁷

In Chapter 3, “Johanna Eleonora Merlau Petersen as Prophetic Author and Activist”, Martin summarizes Petersen’s early life, relying on the account provided in her *Leben*. Following Günter Niggel, Martin contrasts Petersen’s autobiography with those of Spener and Francke: Spener’s is focused upon devotional edification, with few intimate details of his inner life; Francke’s offers details of his inner experience according to a rigid conversion scheme; while Johanna’s focuses on her conflicts and dealings with a sinful world.³⁸ Martin emphasizes Johanna’s connections with the Frankfurt Pietists, including her early leadership role alongside Philipp Jakob Spener (1635-1705) and Johann Jakob Schütz (1640-1690). She shows that it was only gradually that Johann Wilhelm Petersen “came to adopt the chi-

³⁵ Lucinda Martin, “Women’s Religious Speech and Activism in German Pietism”, A Dissertation Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the University of Texas at Austin in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (The University of Texas at Austin, December 2002), 3.

³⁶ Martin, “Women’s Religious Speech and Activism in German Pietism”, 7.

³⁷ Martin, “Women’s Religious Speech and Activism in German Pietism”, Abstract.

³⁸ Martin, “Women’s Religious Speech and Activism in German Pietism”, 175f and n. 58. See also Günter Niggel, *Geschichte der deutschen Autobiographie im 18. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler, 1977), 6-11.

liasm that Schütz and Merlau were promoting in Frankfurt".³⁹ After their marriage, Johanna and he enjoyed "an extraordinary intellectual and spiritual partnership". On their many evangelistic trips, Johanna Eleonora was responsible for leading discussions with the women while Johann Wilhelm met with theology students and craftsmen. Johanna's noble family connections "opened many doors for the couple in their promotion of Pietist causes".⁴⁰ Martin speculates that "perhaps most of their books should be considered co-productions because of the couple's unique working relationship".⁴¹

Martin identifies the key influences on Johanna Eleonora Petersen as the English Quaker William Penn and Jane Leade. "Petersen drew upon the writings of Leade the English Philadelphian as well as "aspects of Quakerism that she learned directly from William Penn during his visit to Frankfurt in 1677".⁴² It was a Quaker strategy to gain admittance to continental religious circles through aristocratic women activists, illustrated by Penn's trip to Frankfurt to visit Petersen.⁴³ If the Quakers provided Merlau a working model for mystical, non-hierarchical religion, the Philadelphians offered her a theological basis for such a religion".⁴⁴

³⁹ Martin, "Women's Religious Speech and Activism in German Pietism", 177.

⁴⁰ Martin, "Women's Religious Speech and Activism in German Pietism", 188.

⁴¹ Martin, "Women's Religious Speech and Activism in German Pietism", 11, 180-182. Martin claims that Johanna Eleonora Petersen "published at least 20 theological treatises in her lifetime and collaborated on many more with her husband". Albrecht finds 15 treatises authored by Petersen, and emphatically rejects the idea that she published some of her works under her husband's name, or co-authored his works. See Albrecht, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen*, 122.

⁴² Martin, "Women's Religious Speech and Activism in German Pietism", in "Introduction", 11f.

⁴³ Martin, "Women's Religious Speech and Activism in German Pietism", 194.

⁴⁴ Martin, "Women's Religious Speech and Activism in German Pietism", 197.

In the final section of the chapter, Martin argues that Petersen and other women Pietists “severed religious authority from the male-dominated institutions to which it had long been bound”.⁴⁵ In her *Glaubensgespräche* Johanna justified her religious speech and writing. These activities were based not upon her ordination or education but upon her faith and experience of the Holy Spirit. “Precisely by invoking their lowly status as women, as mere ‘vessels’ or ‘tools’ for God’s work, women Pietists elevated their status above that of male ministers”.⁴⁶ Johanna asserted that in coming days women would prophesy in ever greater numbers. Martin concluded that “the Petersens were instrumental in unleashing the wave of prophetic and mystical activity that began in the early 1690s, but the couple also exercised influence on the Pietist movement in other ways – providing models of organization and contributing ideas to other Pietists and their surrounding cultural milieu in general”.⁴⁷

There are some concerns with Martin’s work. Her source research is inadequate; she makes little use of archival sources⁴⁸, and examines only five of Petersen’s published theological works, including (in order of discussion) the autobiography, *Leben Fr. Joh. Eleonora Petersen* (1689, 1718), *Das Geheimniß des Erst-Gebornen der von Anfang ist, und der da ist Gott das Wort der Gott-Mensch Jesus Christus* (1711), *Der Geistliche Kampf der berufenen, auserwählten und gläubigen Überwinder* (1698), *Gespräche des Herzens mit Gott* (1689), and *Glaubensgespräche mit Gott* (1691). Surprisingly, Martin overlooks Petersen’s 1696 commentary on *Revelation*, *Anleitung zu gründlicher Verständniß der Heiligen Offenbarung Jesu Christi* (1696), considered by Albrecht to be Peter-

⁴⁵ Martin, “Women’s Religious Speech and Activism in German Pietism”, 217.

⁴⁶ Martin, “Women’s Religious Speech and Activism in German Pietism”, 219.

⁴⁷ Martin, “Women’s Religious Speech and Activism in German Pietism”, 223.

⁴⁸ Martin’s chapter on Anna Nitschmann makes impressive use of archival source materials located in the Unitätsarchiv in Herrnhut.

sen's most significant work. Martin would do well to expand her source base to include the rich archival and published materials cited by Albrecht. Also, Martin's conclusions about women's contributions to Pietism tend to go beyond the limits of her evidence. Two case studies do not provide a basis for broad generalizations about women and Pietism. Finally, Martin is overly dismissive of German scholarship and its approach to women and religious radicals within Pietism. With her provocative and insightful arguments, Martin complements the work of Albrecht. One wishes that Martin's conclusions were moderated a bit, and had a less strident tone. Any further evaluation should await publication of her book.

The Two Source Editions

In examining the two source editions, we shall consider the quality of the translation or edition and the accompanying introduction and notes, as well as the work's value as a resource for scholars and students. The only previous English edition of Petersen's autobiography is the one by Cornelia Niekus Moore, published in a 1990 source collection of European women writers. Based upon the 1718 expanded version of Petersen's autobiography, Niekus Moore only translated about two thirds of the work, with much of the second part left out.⁴⁹ Thanks to Barbara Becker-Cantarino's 2005 edition, English readers now have access to the complete text of Petersen's 1718 *Leben*. Becker-Cantarino provides an introductory essay and bibliography amounting to fifty-seven pages, followed by her translation and notes which take up forty pages.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Cornelia Niekus Moore, "The Life of Johanna Eleonora Petersen" in Jeanine Blackwell and Susanne Zantop, eds. *Bitter Healing: German Women Writers, 1700-1830* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), 57-78.

⁵⁰ Unfortunately, the series editors chose to add their own 14 page bibliography and a 21 page introduction in which they offer "a framework" for understanding texts published in the series, *The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe*. The editors present in brief compass the three thousand year history of the derogation of women in Western culture, with a glimpse of the

Becker-Cantarino's essay, "From Noblewoman to Radical Pietist", presents Petersen as one of the few early modern women who "found her own voice". "She insisted on her right as a believer, though a woman and a layperson, to publish her readings of the Book of Revelation and of theological questions".

In her autobiography Petersen defended her "other path", her choice of becoming a Pietist, of a marriage outside of her class, and the publication of her religious thoughts against the accusations and lies of other people. She described in detail her secular life: her rather desolate childhood in the wake of the Thirty Years' War, her service at court, her life as a Pietist in Frankfurt, and her marriage. Her religious visions concluded the volume as a climax of her inner biography, her destiny since childhood.⁵¹

Becker-Cantarino recounts Petersen's experience in Frankfurt with the emerging Pietism of Philipp Jakob Spener. Her own gatherings in the Saalhof palace attracted visitors such as William Penn, George Fox, Robert Barclay, George Keith and other Quakers. Petersen was the first German woman writer to publish an autobiography, probably influenced by an earlier autobiography by the learned Dutch woman Anna Maria van Schurman (1607-1678).⁵² Petersen's *Leben* recounts her visions and dreams, three from before her marriage and three after. Becker-Cantarino concludes that "Johanna Eleonora Petersen gave a voice to Pietist women; she was not a feminist but helped prepare the way for women's individual and collective expressions in the religious community and beyond".⁵³

"other voice" up to the time of Queen Elizabeth I. The result is a cluttered and incohesive book.

⁵¹ Barbara Becker-Cantarino, editor and translator, *The Life of Lady Johanna Eleonora Petersen Written by Herself: Pietism and Women's Autobiography in Seventeenth-Century Germany* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 1.

⁵² Barbara Becker-Cantarino, *The Life of Lady Johanna Eleonora Petersen Written by Herself*, 1.

⁵³ Becker-Cantarino, *The Life of Lady Johanna Eleonora Petersen Written by Herself*, 43.

Compared to Niekus Moore's English edition, Becker-Cantarino's edition is disappointing on several counts. The editor brings to the work a superficial and dismissive understanding of German Pietism as a world of thought. On two occasions Becker-Cantarino observes that Petersen's theological debates are of interest today "only to specialists" and theologians. What is important is that "Petersen's life story contains a new understanding of spirituality and self-worth", and "It helped to change perceptions about women".⁵⁴ Becker-Cantarino's view of things is unfortunate, for theological concerns lie at the heart of Petersen's life and spirituality; these cannot be understood without taking her theological notions seriously.

In terms of the translation itself, Becker-Cantarino's English rendering is wooden and jarring. Her stated goal as translator was to stay as close as possible to Petersen's original style, grounded as it was in the language of the German Bible – "Luther's German".⁵⁵ But the result is a non-idiomatic English translation, with long, complex sentences which often make little or no sense.⁵⁶ Three examples follow, but many others

⁵⁴ Becker-Cantarino, *The Life of Lady Johanna Eleonora Petersen Written by Herself*, 2, 43.

⁵⁵ Becker-Cantarino, *The Life of Lady Johanna Eleonora Petersen Written by Herself*, 60.

⁵⁶ The following passage offers an example of this complexity: "But when I realized that my friend's mind and God's word were one, that all doubts about not knowing anyone had disappeared, that he followed the word of the Lord in all simplicity and talked to me as if it were not so simple to understand that one should do it, and that there was enough knowledge though I saw no one using it – then I was strengthened by my new friend in believing that we should not look at men as examples, but that we should look at the example of the Lord, the word of truth. Compared with him, all men are liars". See Becker-Cantarino, *The Life of Lady Johanna Eleonora Petersen Written by Herself*, 75. Niekus Moore's translation of this same passage is as follows: "But I noticed in this friend that his intentions agreed with the Word of the Lord, and all doubts I had hitherto felt were dispelled. As I had known no one who lived according to the Word of the Lord in true simplicity, I had become convinced that it was not meant to be followed in all simplicity that it was sufficient to know of it. But this friend convinced me

could be added: "I prayed to God that he save me from the Popish"; "I had not yet entered the following of Christ"; "May the Lord himself reveal his truths clearer and clearer to us, for his sake".⁵⁷ In each case, Niekus Moore's translation is much better in terms of clarity, idiom and grammar: "I prayed to God that he would protect me from such papism"; "I had not yet begun my true imitation of Christ"; "May the Lord reveal his truths to us ever more clearly for His sake".⁵⁸ Becker-Cantarino often misses Biblical allusions; in some cases, nuances of meaning are lost as a result. The Biblical text from Matthew 10:24, "The disciple is not above his Master", reads in her translation, "a youth is not better than the master".⁵⁹

Finally, Becker-Cantarino's edition is marked by sloppy copy-editing; numerous typos and errors turn up throughout the book.⁶⁰ She refers to Prisca Guglielmetti, editor of the recent German edition of Petersen's life, as "Guglia" Guglielmetti.⁶¹ Three times in the introduction and notes Becker-Cantarino refers to Philipp Jakob Spener as "Johann" Jakob Spener⁶²; on two other occasions she gets the name right. Given Spener's important place in the Petersens' lives, and his prominence as the leading Pietist spokesman of the era, it is disconcerting that an editor could confuse his name. The overall effect of Becker-Can-

that one should not look to the examples of others, but to the example of the Lord, and to the Word of truth, against which all men are liars". See Niekus Moore, "The Life of Johanna Eleonora Petersen", 66f.

⁵⁷ Becker-Cantarino, *The Life of Lady Johanna Eleonora Petersen Written by Herself*, 69, 70, 98.

⁵⁸ Niekus Moore, "The Life of Johanna Eleonora Petersen", 64, 65, 78.

⁵⁹ Becker-Cantarino, *The Life of Lady Johanna Eleonora Petersen Written by Herself*, 78.

⁶⁰ Becker-Cantarino, *The Life of Lady Johanna Eleonora Petersen Written by Herself*, 3, 6 n. 12, 8, 29 n. 70, 55, 57, 60, 69.

⁶¹ Becker-Cantarino, *The Life of Lady Johanna Eleonora Petersen Written by Herself*, 60.

⁶² Becker-Cantarino, *The Life of Lady Johanna Eleonora Petersen Written by Herself*, 2, 61, 81.

tarino's edition is that of a working draft that needs a couple of more drafts before it is ready for the light of day.

Modern German editions of Johanna Eleonora Petersen's *Leben* have been few and far between.⁶³ Martin Jung's 1999 edition appeared in his collection of Pietist women autobiographies. Jung takes liberties in modernizing the texts in order to ease the way for the modern German reader.

The original texts are quite difficult to understand because the women of the 17th and early 18th centuries had no higher education. They wrote as the ideas came to them, without consideration for grammatical construction. The texts, therefore, have been revised by me in such a way that they can be more readily understood by readers today.⁶⁴

Jung provides a brief one page historical introduction to Petersen's work, and minimal footnote apparatus and bibliography.

Prisca Guglielmetti's 2003 edition of Petersen's *Leben* is a welcome resource for professors and students. The series in which Guglielmetti's Petersen edition appears, the *Kleine Texte des Pietismus* (KTP), is aimed at "those interested in the history of piety and culture, students and teachers of theology, literature, cultural studies and history in universities, colleges and schools, and school and church libraries".⁶⁵ In keeping with the approach used in other volumes in the series, Guglielmetti first

⁶³ Guglielmetti identifies five of them, published in 1812, 1816, 1866, 1921 and 1999. See Prisca Guglielmetti (ed.), *Johanna Eleonora Petersen, geb. von und zu Merlau. Leben, von ihr selbst mit eigener Hand aufgesetzt* (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2003), 111.

⁶⁴ Martin H. Jung, *"Mein Herz brannte richtig in der Liebe Jesu": Autobiographien frommer Frauen aus Pietismus und Erweckungsbewegung* (Aachen: Shaker Verlag, 1999), v: "Die Originaltexte sind teilweise äußerst schwer zu verstehen, weil die Frauen des 17. und frühen 18. Jahrhunderts keine höhere Bildung hatten. Sie schrieben, wie ihnen die Gedanken kamen, ohne überlegt zu gliedern und auf den Satzbau zu achten. Die Texte wurden deshalb von mir so bearbeitet, daß die heutige Leserinnen und Leser unmittelbar verstehen können".

⁶⁵ Guglielmetti, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen*, 116.

offers the German text of Petersen's *Leben* (pages 5-48), followed by line by line commentary (pages 50-88), a "Nachwort" (Afterword, pages 89-109), and a list of relevant primary and secondary sources (pages 110-114).

Guglielmetti's approach to text editing is restrained in an effort to offer readers the complete text as it appeared in 1718. "The peculiarities of the printed original have been retained, such as spelling, use of capitals, punctuation, and double hyphens".⁶⁶ The differences in Guglielmetti's and Jung's editions of Petersen's *Leben* can be illustrated in the following paragraph, which reads in Guglielmetti's edition as follows:

Etliche Zeit hernach kam meine Schwester nacher Stuckgard, bey des seel. Vaters Bruder, und ich muste die Haußhaltung über mich nehmen, und von allen Rechnung thun, welches mir sehr schwehr war, weil der seel. Vater, so oft er nach Hause kam, mir sehr hart begegnete, und alles was zubrochen, oder sonst nicht gleich recht nach seinem Sinn war, von mir foderte, und oft unschuldig sehr hart straffte...⁶⁷

The same passage in Jung's modernized edition reads:

Etliche Zeit hernach kam meine Schwester nach Stuttgart zu des seligen Vaters Bruder, und ich mußte die Haushaltung auf mich nehmen und von allem Rechnung ablegen. Das war mir sehr schwer, weil der selige Vater, sooft er nach Hause kam, mir sehr hart begegnete und alles, was zerbrochen oder sonst nicht gleich recht nach seinem Sinn war, von mir foderte und mich oft unschuldig sehr hart strafte...⁶⁸

Guglielmetti and Jung represent two sides of an on-going scholarly discussion about editing early modern texts. The same de-

⁶⁶ Guglielmetti, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen*, 49. "Die Eigenheiten der Druckvorlage bleiben insofern gewahrt, als Orthographie, Groß- und Kleinschreibung sowie Zeichensetzung, inclusive Doppelbindestrich, beibehalten wurden".

⁶⁷ Guglielmetti, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen*, 13.

⁶⁸ Martin H. Jung, "Mein Herz brannte richtig in der Liebe Jesu", 52.

bate has also taken place between Anselm Steiger and Thomas Kaufmann.⁶⁹ Steiger and Guglielmetti advocate offering texts that are as true to the letter of the original as possible; aids to understanding can be provided in the introduction, commentary and notes.

Guglielmetti's line by line historical commentary is impressive for its thoroughness and usefulness. She captures the many biblical allusions in Petersen's writing; they abound on every page.⁷⁰ Especially prominent are Petersen's references to the Psalms and to Paul's epistles. Guglielmetti identifies historical, literary, political and geographical allusions in the text. Over against Becker-Cantarino, Guglielmetti frequently cites relevant contemporary scholarship to illumine the context of passages, including works by Markus Matthias, Hans Schneider, Martin Brecht, Andreas Deppermann and Hans-Jürgen Schrader. The editor's "Nachwort" discusses the prominent place of autobiography in German Pietism, especially among Pietist women writers. Guglielmetti observes that in contrast to the autobiographies of English Puritan women, which follow a carefully prescribed process of conversion and make little reference to everyday life, Petersen's autobiography is not primarily a conversion story. There is no reference to a spiritual battle or crisis of conscience. The emphasis is rather upon her growth in understanding and her conflicts with the authorities.⁷¹ Rather than comparing Petersen's *Leben* with Puritan models, Guglielmetti suggests comparison with the *Schelmenromane*, the pica-

⁶⁹ See Ralf Bogner, Johann Anselm Steiger, "Prinzipien der Edition von theologischen Texten der frühen Neuzeit: Mit einer Vorstellung und Begründung der Prinzipien für die geplanten Editionen von Werken Johann Gerhards", *Editio: Internationales Jahrbuch für Editionswissenschaft* 12 (1998), p. 97-105.

⁷⁰ For example, Guglielmetti notes Petersen's allusion in paragraph 23 to Jesus' words, "The disciple is not above his Master". Guglielmetti cites Matthew 10:24, Luke 6:40, John 13:16, and John 15:20 as Biblical sources for Petersen's allusion. See Guglielmetti, 26 l.35, 69.

⁷¹ Guglielmetti, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen*, 96-98.

resque adventure stories of the day, as well as with medieval saints' lives.⁷² Petersen's *Leben* highlights events from her life which reveal the working of God's grace, sometimes in miraculous ways. In all, Guglielmetti's is an exemplary text edition, and highly commended.

Conclusion

We conclude that recent scholarship on Johanna Eleonora Petersen represents a mixed contribution in terms of advancing the Pietism field. One must welcome the pursuit of questions and methods marked by gender and literary interests rather than strictly theological ones. It is unfortunate, however, when this pursuit takes a step back in relation to previous scholarly achievements as in the case of Becker-Cantarino's edition. It has also become clear that Petersen presents huge challenges to scholarly interpreters. The religious, psychological and social questions that radical Pietist religion raises demand a more creative, more multi-disciplinary approach than we find in the two monographs under consideration. Finally, readers would do well to bypass the English edition provided by Becker-Cantarino in favour of the earlier one by Cornelia Niekus Moore or the German original edited by Guglielmetti.

⁷² Guglielmetti, *Johanna Eleonora Petersen*, 100-103.

Revisiting Luther's Theology of the Eucharist

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ABSTRACT. In this paper the author analyzes several key aspects of the theology of Martin Luther, specifically, the concept of the “presence” of Christ in the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. The study also attempts to identify the factors that influenced Martin Luther in reaching his conclusions, in particular, the influence of Thomas Aquinas, as well as his polemical relation with Zwingli and other Reformers. The paper also attempts to understand the theology of the Sacraments as one particular element within the larger construct of Lutheran theology. In this sense, the argument takes into account theological issues such as faith, salvation, anthropology, and the like.

Introduction

To understand a historical person requires understanding the history of his or her times. To understand Luther’s theology of the Eucharist requires that one become familiar with the religious background which surrounded him. By this, we have in mind not only the immediate theological environment of his time, but also – and even more so – the wider historical spectrum of Roman Catholic thought. In essence, the theological vision of Luther on the Eucharist took shape in the Roman Catholic environment of the times, and this makes it almost necessary that one first hear the theological voices who contributed to what Luther later had to say on this topic. We believe that, when read from this perspective, the Reformer’s writings, never abstract, but always polemical and contextual, will make better sense. To this we may add the fact that it was not only the Ro-

man Church, but possibly well known reformers like Karlstadt and Zwingli who stood against some of Luther's ideas (see the Eucharist, the role of the Holy Spirit, Worship, Images, etc.). In this paper, questions will also be raised concerning his theological development, his critique of the Roman Mass, his view of the true Eucharist, the Real Presence of Christ and the relevance all these have with respect to the believer's spiritual and eternal life.

The Philosopher and the Angelic Doctor: a short theological background

A sacrament, argued Thomas Aquinas (1226-1274), is "the sign of a holy thing so far as it makes men holy"; indeed, "the sacred sign of the invisible sacrifice".¹ And since "it is part of man's nature to acquire knowledge of the intelligible from the sensible", sacraments must be sensible things: "just as in the Divine Scriptures spiritual things are set before us under the guise of things sensible" (Art. 4). But Aquinas intended his definition to address more than abstract semeiotical concerns. For him the sacraments contain "the very *cause* of our sanctification, which is Christ's passion; the *form* of our sanctification, which is grace and the virtues, and the *ultimate end* of our sanctification, which is eternal life. And all these effects are generated by the sacraments (art. 3)", since Christ, who is the very character of the sacraments, imprints Himself on the soul of the believer (Quest. 63).² It is not insignificant that Luther too will later speak about the believer's transformation wrought by the Holy Spirit (pouring in love) through the proclamation of the Word in the sacraments.

¹ *Summa Theologica*, trans. by Fathers of the English Dominican Province (Westminster, MD: Christian Classics, 1981), Part III, Quest. 60, art. 1.

² Peter Lombard elaborated in a similar manner before Aquinas. In his Sentences he argued that sacraments "were not instituted merely in order to signify something, but also as a means of sanctification". From *The Catholic Tradition – Mass and the Sacraments*: vol. 1, Rev. Charles J. Dollen et al (eds), (Willmington, NC: Consortium, 1979), 194.

Another aspect that becomes essential in understanding Luther's later break with the Roman doctrine of the Mass may be traced to the belief of Aquinas that the Lord's Supper embodies Christ's very sacrifice and "works in man the effect which Christ's Passion wrought in the world" (Q. 79, Art. 2, Pt. III). It has the "nature of a sacrifice inasmuch as in this sacrament Christ's Passion is represented, whereby Christ offered Himself a Victim to God (Eph. V.2)" (Art. 7). It could be said, therefore, that "in this sacrament the body is offered for the salvation of the body, and the blood for the salvation of the soul [acc. To Lev. Xviii.14, 'the life of the animal is in the blood'], although each works for the salvation of both, since the entire Christ is under each". Willful and conscious sinning may preclude one's receiving any benefits from the Lord's Supper. The sinner must first repent and be reconciled with the Church before partaking from the Lord's Supper. Concerning the effects, as a *sacrifice* the sacrament "has satisfactory power" (Art. 5). Aquinas qualifies this assertion by further explaining that "although this offering suffices of its own quantity to satisfy for all punishment, yet it becomes satisfactory for them for whom it is offered, or even for the offers, according to the measure of their devotion, and not for the whole punishment". Though Aquinas' ideas here do not fully reflect the theology of "works righteousness" that Luther later attacked in the controversy over the Mass, one can still perceive an inherent tendency to expect that the sinner amend his spiritual life before approaching the sacraments.

Furthermore, we must not overlook the fact that Aquinas employed Aristotelian metaphysics in order to elucidate how bread and wine could enclose the physical body of Christ while remaining unchanged in their external aspects.³ In his view, the

³ For Aristotle an individual, that is, a particular being like "this chair", is a *primary substance*, whereas "chair", as an abstract concept delineating the whole class of chairs is a *secondary substance*. The primary substance consists of a synthesis between *matter* – or substratum, the ground of all being – and *form*, "the shape present in the sensible thing". The substratum exists only as a potential entity until joined by form. Hence form is its principle of actuali-

expression of Christ, "this is my body", ought to be interpreted literally, just as it was originally intended. In addition, one must show faith that what comes to be present in the sacraments it really is the body of Christ.⁴ Luther too will speak about taking the words of Jesus seriously and approaching the sacraments in real faith. Furthermore, common sense teaches one that the substance of the bread (matter plus form) could not change by itself in the substance of the body of Christ. But such a change "can be made by the power of an infinite agent, which has control very all being, because the nature of being is common to both forms and to both matters" (S.T., Q. 75. Art. 4, Part. III). The act of transformation, then, occurs because the very words of Christ, "this is my body", are repeated by the priest at consecration. Hence, by divine power, the substance of the bread and wine is sacramentally converted into the substances of the body and blood of Christ in such a way that the accidents of both bread and wine remain visible.⁵ In other words, the "new sub-

zation, giving the substratum (matter) its shape and individual configuration. Belonging to the same individual being there are such things as qualities; for example color, height and the like. Aristotle called them accidental attributes, because they were dependent on the substance in which they inhere. In other words they are relative, or temporary properties, "something which may either belong or not belong to any one and the same-self thing". In the case of whiteness, for example, "there is nothing to prevent the same thing from being at one time white and at another not white". See *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, Barnes, J. ed. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton, 1984), vol. 1, 170 ff; vol. 2, 1624 ff.

⁴ Thus Aquinas explains that "the presence of Christ's true body and blood in this sacrament cannot be detected by sense, not understanding, but by faith alone, which rests upon Divine authority" (Quest. 75, Art. 1, Pt. III).

⁵ However, Aquinas had to specify that these accidents do not inhere in their original substance any more; the new substance is now Christ's body and blood. The accidents "continue in this sacrament without a subject" because "God who is the first cause both of substance and accident, can by His unlimited power preserve an accident in existence when the substance is withdrawn..., just as without natural causes He can produce effects of natural causes" (Q. 77, Art., Pt. III). This argument is essential to understanding Luther's objection against Scholastic "sophistry".

stance" of the accidents is the Divine power which now sustains them. This argument is essential to understanding Luther's objection against both Scholastic sophistry and the misuse (or misunderstanding) of Aristotelian metaphysics.

Martin Luther: From Indulgences to the Mass and Sacraments

Much like Paul himself, Luther often took up his pen and wrote on the spur of the moment, in order to preserve the purity and Scriptural commitments of the movement he sparked in Germany. In a sense, then, the theology of Martin Luther took form and often changed amidst historical circumstances he rarely anticipated. At this point, Althaus identifies two important stages that underlied the formation of Luther's theology of the Eucharist. In the first stage, "Luther was fighting to preserve the genuine meaning of the sacrament as a gift of God in opposition to the doctrine of the mass".⁶ Later on he was answering the Enthusiasts and the Swiss (see also Zwingli), emphasizing "the bodily presence of the body and the blood of Christ in the bread and wine over against its abandonment in the symbolic theory". Perhaps it may be helpful to visualize this process – in a summary form – from a selective, historical reconstruction of Luther's attempt to define his theology in response to a number of controversies and events.

1519, *The Blessed Sacrament of the Holy and True Body of Christ, and the Brotherhoods*

- the laity should be allowed to receive both kinds in the sacrament
- significance of sacraments determined by fellowship with Christ exercised in faith
- Luther does not yet address the controversies on *the mass* or Christ's *presence*

⁶ Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1966), 375.

1520, *Treatise on The New Testament, that is, the Holy Mass*

- first attack on the mass as a good work or sacrifice which men perform
- mass is a testament or *promise* of God sealed by the death of His Son
- the word (proclamation of promise) is greater than the sign (sacrament)⁷

1520, *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*

- doctrine of transubstantiation is a “captivity” of the sacrament; a piece of philosophy
- the Lord’s Supper taken captive through withholding the cup from laity
- third form of captivity is the concept of mass as a sacrifice

1521, *The Misuse of the Mass*

- the words of institution forbid any interpretation of the mass as sacrifice
- this false interpretation is derived from misunderstanding of priesthood

1523, *The Adoration of the Sacrament*

- worship is proper where the Word is so revered that the real presence of Christ in the sacrament is acknowledged

1525, *The Abomination of the Secret Mass*

- wrong emphasis of consecration words led to their being read in secret
- lay people neither heard nor knew its words; but the word is most important

⁷ *Luther’s Works*, vol. 35, “Word and Sacrament”, Theodore Bachmann ed., Helmut T. Lehmann, general editor, (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1976), “Introduction to volume 35”, xvii.

1526, *The Sacrament of the Body and the Blood of Christ – Against the Fanatics*⁸

- critique of Karlstadt, Zwingli, and Oecolampadius' views on Christ's presence as merely *symbolical*, where the word "is", in "this is my body", only signifies.

1527, *This is My Body*

- Luther realizes that "the fanatics" are posing a more serious threat than he first anticipated
- simple Christians are beginning to ridicule the Mass due to their reading Zwingli and others
- Luther attacks Zwingli's symbolism, his misunderstanding of the concept of "flesh" and "spirit" in the New Testament, and his refusal to take Jesus' words "this is My body" seriously⁹

1529, *The Marburg Colloquy and the Marburg Articles*

- the debate between Luther and Swiss reformers fails to produce any theological consensus

The Lord's Supper for the Church: Sign, Significance and Faith

Luther's *The Blessed Sacrament of the Holy and True Body of Christ, and the Brotherhoods* is insightful, devotional and practical. In essence, for Luther a sacrament must be composed of three parts, namely, *sign*, *significance*, and *faith* (LW, 35:49). The *sign* is nothing else but the external and visible elements of the Eucharist, that is, the bread and the wine. Apart from being used as elements of the Passover Supper Jesus celebrated on the night before his death, the bread and the wine help believers reflect on the life and passion of Christ, which may in turn help one truly understand his or her own personal experience. The bread reminds the believer of Jesus' own life and good works, while the

⁸ *Ibid*, vol. 36, summary of Luther's Works (on cover).

⁹ *Ibid*, vol. 37, Introduction to "This is My Body", 5f.

blood points to His passion, martyrdom and death (*Ibid*, 59). But there is more here. Luther reveals his profound insight into the spiritual struggles – at times personal – the believer endures while living in this fallen world. For when “I” see these signs, Luther exclaims, “I” am reminded that amidst all misery and tribulation and Satan’s attacks “I have on my side Christ’s righteousness, life, and sufferings, with all holy angels and the blessed in heaven and all pious men on earth” (*Ibid*, 54).

He also shows that, apart from philosophical speculation, the elements teach that “Christ and all saints are one spiritual body” (*Ibid*, 51). Thus to “receive this sacrament in bread and wine... is nothing else than to receive a sure sign of this fellowship and incorporation with Christ and all saints”.¹⁰ At this point it is essential to understand that the *significance* of the sacraments should be understood against Luther’s ideas of sin, fallenness and human despair (observe Luther’s reasoning of *simul justus et peccator*). He argues that, “though I am a sinner and I have fallen, though this or that misfortune has befallen me, nevertheless I will go to the sacrament to receive a sign from God that I have on my side Christ’s righteousness, life, and sufferings” (*Ibid*, 54). But how does all this work?

Luther’s understanding of *faith*, the third part of the sacrament, becomes an important criterion here. He argues that “it is not enough to know what the sacrament signifies”, but one “must also desire it and firmly believe that you have receive it” (*Ibid*, 60). Luther’s concept of faith seems to differ from the Catholic idea of “intellectual assent” to a revealed truth or Church teaching. Faith, for Luther, conveys one’s existential trust in the person of Christ, an attitude often born out of one’s suffering or guilty consciousness. Here too the believer trusts in Christ’s ability to help him or her overcome the conflict; for “as if he were what we are, he makes whatever concerns us to concern him as well, and even more than it does us” (*Ibid*, 59). But Luther does

¹⁰ One may note some old Catholic vestiges here, since this work comes in the beginning of Luther’s career as a Reformer.

not end on a note of despair. In his words "This is my body which is given for you, this is my blood which is poured out for you. As often as you do this, remember me", it is as if Christ were saying "I will make your suffering and misfortune my own... And I leave you this sacrament as a sure token of all this, in order that you... may be strengthened, and also bear one another in the same way" (*Ibid*, 55).

In conclusion, through the *sign* of the sacrament we "are pledged, granted, and imparted Christ", his life, good works along with his passion and martyrdom, in order that we may be strengthened in tribulation and in turn strengthen others as well. Finally, "just as the bread is made out of many grains ground and mixed together, ...we become one loaf, one bread, one body, one drink, and have all things in common" (*Ibid*, 58). As such, the Lord's Supper is a pledge which assures the Christian that he or she truly belongs to the kingdom of God; a sure union with Christ's sufferings, death, and resurrection.

Who is Worthy of the Cup?

In Thomas Aquinas' thought, sin may pose a serious problem for the one who unworthily desires the benefits of the Lord's Supper.¹¹ As medicine, the sacrament has the power to strengthen the one in his or her spiritual life. But Baptism and Penance can and indeed do function as "purgative medicines, given to take away the fever of sin". Logically, once this is accomplished the believer will avail himself or herself of the grace conveyed by the Lord's Supper, provided that sin is renounced. Therefore professing sinners, according to Aquinas, should "not be allowed to touch this sacrament", and the priest must not share the Lord's body and blood with them (Q. 80, Art. 4, Pt. III). Only those who confess and renounce their sins and are

¹¹ Aquinas quotes 1 Cor. 11:29, "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself", and concludes that "if anyone, while in mortal sin, receives this sacrament, he purchases damnation, by sinning mortally".

reconciled with the Church can approach the Lord's Table and receive Christ's grace.

On the other hand, in Luther's worldview, the Christian believer does not have to struggle to reconcile with the church or perform works of penance in order to earn his or her worthiness before approaching the holy altar. On the contrary, "this holy sacrament is of little or no benefit to those who have no misfortune or anxiety, or who do not sense their adversity" (*LW*, 35:55). Despair and sin should draw to, rather than alienate one from, the Lord's Supper. Sin "assails us as long as we live", that is, "the sin which remains in our flesh after baptism: the inclination to anger, hatred, pride, unchastity, and so forth" (*Ibid*, 53). And it is exactly to "strengthen and encourage us against sin" that God gives us this sacrament. God Himself knows the afflictions which press upon believers; sin included. And it is also God, believes Luther, who says "take this sign by which I give you my pledge that this sin is assailing not only you but also my Son, Christ". Unlike Aquinas (who may have adhered to a more optimistic view of redeemed humanity), Luther places the Lord's Supper before sinners and saints alike. In fact, Luther views this sacrament as a powerful means of confronting sin directly, not as an instance of grace available only to those who already solved the sin problem. And again, this tendency goes back to his struggle with the concept of "works righteousness". He cannot but emphasize the fact that one can do nothing, "indeed nothing", to gain his or her favor before God. And why should one do so? Or why must one perceive God as an angry judge eager to punish unless we offer something to appease Him? (See the *Misuse of the Mass*). In Luther's view, the believer must begin by hearing anew the words of Christ, "'Which is given for you. Which is poured out for the forgiveness of sin'" (*Ibid*, 176). This "sweet and mighty promise", Luther believed, is given to all, especially to those who are daily assaulted by sin and Satan. The Lord's Supper, then, should be an occasion in which sin is conquered and the believer strengthened and assured of Christ's presence.

The Mass: Sacrifice and Works versus Promise and Grace

In *Treatise on the New Testament*, that is, the Holy Mass Luther divides the Mass in seven basic elements: 1. the testator (Christ), 2. the heirs (the Christians), 3. the testament (the words of Christ), 4. the token (bread and wine), 5. the blessing (remission of sins and eternal life), and 6. the duty, or that we should proclaim his love and grace, meditate and live be them (*Ibid*, 86-87). Luther believes that of all six elements the Word of Christ is the most essential and determinative for the Christian's life and destiny. For in Christ's words "... this is the cup of the new and eternal testament in my blood, which is poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sin" one finds spiritual food for soul and a firm faith. Here God unfolds the mystery of grace and destroy any human pretense of good works. For it is not as if "man begins and lays the first stone", ascending to heaven by works and moving Him to be gracious (*Ibid*, 82). God simply comes and makes *the promise*; and "this word of God is the beginning, middle, and end of all works and righteousness". The sacrament is primarily a *promise* where Christ proclaims forgiveness of sins and life everlasting (*LW*, 36:40 [*The Babylonian Captivity*]). That faith is sufficient which relies confidently on this promise and which "believes Christ to be true in these words, and does not doubt that these infinite blessings have been bestowed upon it". What follows, then, is "a most sweet stirring of the heart, whereby the spirit of man is enlarged and enriched (that is love, given by the Holy Spirit), ...and made a thoroughly new and different man".

For Luther, however, since the Lord's Supper has the form and the force of a promise, it may not be a *sacrifice* offered up by the priest on behalf of the people. Christ "has sacrificed Himself once [Heb. 7:27; 9:25-26]; henceforth he will not be sacrificed by anyone else" (*The Misuse of the Mass*, 146). The only sacrifice offered on the believer's part is his or her praise, thanksgiving, and prayer. "We do not", Luther argues, "offer Christ as a sacrifice, but... Christ offers us" and he offers Himself (imp.!) wil-

lingly on our behalf (*LW*, 35:99). In other words “we lay ourselves on Christ by a firm faith in his testament and do not otherwise appear before God with our prayer, praise, and sacrifice except through Christ and his mediation”. Luther’s ideas of divine initiative and unmerited grace underlie the logic of his concept of sacrament and help one understand better the radical difference between promise and sacrifice. On the one hand, in the promise one receives God’s forgiveness simply by faith; on the other hand, in the sacrifice, “we present and give to God something of our own” (*Ibid*, 169). The believer can bring nothing except his or her faith in God’s mercy and in Christ’s forgiveness; no purchase or exchange of favors, no human work. Finally, by simply one obtains assurance that Christ “will fulfill what he has promised us and what he has confirmed with such a precious pledge and seal” (*Ibid*, 175). In the sacrifice one confronts an angry God in need of appeasement by this sacrifice, which in turn forces the believer to perform more in order to reconcile with God. But “when they make a sacrifice out of the mass, do not we become uncertain whether our sacrifice is pleasing to God or not?” The only path to obtain forgiveness, then, is faith, that is, believing that “God is trustworthy and cannot lie [Num. 23:19], that he keeps his promise” (*Ibid*, 176). The Lord’s Supper is a gift to be received in faith; it is divine grace which heals a troubled conscience and brings in “peace, life, inheritance, eternal honor and blessedness in God”. Evidently, to understand this reasoning one must set Luther’s thought against the wider context of his polemics with Roman theology on the subjects of faith and salvation.

“This is My Body”: ubiquity explained

Dillenberger remarks that “it is in the mode of Christ’s presence in the Lord’s Supper that Luther’s views set him in marked contrast to both the Roman Catholic and other Protestant tradi-

tions".¹² Although dissatisfied with the literalism of *transubstantiation*, Luther sought to "preserve the truth of the 'Real Presence' found in the Roman position", and thus take Christ's words seriously.¹³ He gradually realized that the "opinions of the Thomists, whether approved by the council, remain only opinions, and would not become articles of faith even if an angel from heaven were to decree otherwise (Gal. 1:8; from *LW*, 36:29).¹⁴ In working out his doctrine of consubstantiation Luther too had to begin with the premises of faith and a literal interpretation of Christ's words "this is my body". "For my part", he confessed, "if I cannot fathom how the bread is the body of Christ, yet I will take my reason captive to the obedience of Christ [2 Cor. 10:5]..., and firmly believe not only that the body of Christ is in the bread, but that the bread is the body of Christ" (*Ibid*, 29). Even the human soul is "at the same time present throughout the whole body, even in the smallest toe" (*Ibid*, 338).

Naturally, the question was raised whether Christ could be present in the Eucharist and sit at the right hand of the Father simultaneously.¹⁵ To answer this question, Luther asked further

¹² *Martin Luther: Selections from His Writings* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1962), xxxii.

¹³ Rob Staples, *Outward Sign and Inward Grace* (Kansas, MI: Beacon Hill Press, 1991), 217.

¹⁴ Luther observed that Aristotle's accidents could not subsist apart from their subject; in other words, the accidents would have to be the accidents of this or that subject. But in Aquinas' interpretation, the accidents of bread and wine inhered not in their original substance, but in the divine power which sustained them in union with the new substance of the body and blood of Christ. And, Luther pointed out, this is a plain contradiction of what Aristotle meant on this subject.

¹⁵ Oecolampadius, Luther's critic on the subject, could not grant him this premise, for "the nature of a body is to be in one place. A body which can be at the same time in many places will not be regarded as a true body" (*LW*, 37:55). Luther's argument came to depend on the classical formulation of the communication idiomatum (the interchange of attributes) developed by Cyril in 431. Cyril sought to defend the dual nature of Christ – God and man – against the heresy of Monophysitism. Hence he argued that because of the

what does “the right hand of the Father” mean, after all? Is it not to be understood metaphorically, as power? And is power not at one and the same time everywhere?¹⁶ For power “is un-circumscribed and immeasurable, beyond and above all this or what may be” (LW, 37:57). As Creator and Sustainer of the universe God “must be present and must make and preserve His creation both in its innermost and outermost aspects”. It also seemed that one’s acceptance or rejection of the *ubiquity* of Christ would depend on his or her concept of body. Luther believed that as God, Christ “is above body”, and “above spirit, above everything man can say or think”. Wherever Christ is the Godhead “itself is essentially and personally present”, just as Christ was present in the womb of Mary and in the Godhead at the same time.

“In Memoriam”: Zwingli’s Symbolism

It is important to mention at this point that Zwingli too condemned the sacrificial value of the Mass as defined by the Catholic church (i.e., the believer could obtain forgiveness through Christ’s death on the cross reenacted in the sacraments). Hence Zwingli argued that “‘Christ, who offered Himself once for all on the cross, is for ever the effectual sacrifice and victim for the sins of all the faithful’”.¹⁷ But if this reenactment is an illusion, and if the bread and wine do not cleanse the sins of the participants, then why exactly would the Church celebrate the Eucharist?

union of the two natures in one hypostasis, predicates belonging to one nature could be applied to the other. In this way Luther thought he was right to contend that Christ’s divine attributes could be conjoined with the physical bread and body, just as his divine nature coexisted with the human nature in Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

¹⁶ Luther believes that, as God’s very activity manifested in the universe, power must be essentially present “even in the tiniest tree leaf”.

¹⁷ From Darwell Stone, *A History of the Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist* (London: Longman Press, 1909), vol. 2, 38.

In Zwingli's view, there exists no reason to invoke the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist any more. Speaking rather of "commemoration", he argued that "the blood of Christ is given to us for drink that we may have a *sign* that what was once done on the cross holds good and is effectual for ever" (*Ibid*, 41). Essentially, personal faith is the basis for salvation and the presupposition for the possibility to receive divine grace. The Eucharist, which is not an instance of perpetual expiation and forgiveness of sins, must always presuppose one's personal reconciliation with God through faith in the death and blood of Christ. Also, the words "this is my body" suggest nothing but a *semnificative* meaning by which Christ did not *identify*, but *associate* his body and blood with the bread and wine of the Passover Meal. Zwingli agreed that there was grace bestowed at the cross, but that event cannot be replicated any more. Since the bread and wine function only as a sign by which the church remembers the real grace bestowed at the cross, it is doubtful whether they are able to convey grace any further. The "sacraments are given for a public testimony of that grace which is previously present to each individual" (*Ibid*, 41-42). Grace and salvation are conferred by the Holy Spirit through personal faith, even before any sacramental act takes place.

Against the Fanatics

Luther, of course, rejected Zwingli's memorialist and symbolical interpretation of the Lord's Supper, thus risking the unity of the already feeble Reformation. In doing so, argued Althaus, Luther believed he remained obedient to God's word and will to the very end. "The substance of the words of Scripture themselves compelled him to take the position that he did", and reject Zwingli's symbolism (*Ibid*, 383). For Luther, Zwingli's refusal to take Christ's words in all seriousness betrays human pride which "places [itself] above God" (*Ibid*, 389). Christ's words of promise, which embody the Gospel itself, bring forgiveness of sins, and this is realized by faith in God's own pledge, when the believer acknowledges his or her sins and

despair and manifests a sincere desire for eternal salvation. In his view, the Enthusiasts failed to realize "that the Lord's Supper is God's gift to the man who is struggling to achieve the joy of faith" (*Ibid*, 392). Standing before the Lord's Supper and remembering with "'such passion and seriousness that I sweated blood and become feverish'" could be another form of human works, which in effect refuses the pure gift presented for faith (see page 392 from *LW*, 40:205, 213). From the perspective of Luther, both the Roman and Zwinglian understanding of the Mass – though essentially different – are guilty of inspiring an attitude or "works-righteousness". Luther also asks "What becomes of my conscience... which would like to have a good, sure foundation?" (*LW*, 37:344). To set this argument in the larger context of Luther's theology, one may say that the costs of ignoring Christ's promise are too high; one cannot play with words when matters such as faith and eternal salvation were at stake.¹⁸

Luther also argued that the inordinate emphasis that Zwingli put on the Spirit hindered his understanding of the meaning of "flesh" in the New Testament – an aspect that was fundamental for his understanding of the Lord's Supper. Luther may not have been totally incorrect. Althaus argued that "Zwingli and his followers were teaching the dualism and spiritualism of late classical antiquity" (*Ibid*, 395). They conceptualized the spirit "as the opposite of flesh in the sense of sinfulness". For Luther, however, the notion of "flesh" often refers to human corrupt thinking; at least this is how Paul understood "the mind" which is in the service of sin. As a counter-example Luther pointed to various non-physical connotations of flesh expressed in vices like *heresy*, *envy*, *jealousy*, and the like (*LW*, 37:99). Therefore, when Zwingli claims that "'if Christ's flesh is eaten, nothing but flesh comes of it'" he does nothing but betray a shallow grasping of the New Testament meaning of "spirit" and "flesh". For Christ was born from the Holy Spirit, and therefore He is "pre-

¹⁸ Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, 386-387.

eminently a spiritual flesh". As such He is also an spiritual and eternal food, for He said "I am the living bread which came down from heaven" (John 6:51); and again, "If anyone eats of me, he will live for ever". In light of the sacrament, then, Luther concludes that "whether Christ's flesh is eaten physically or spiritually, then, it is the same body, the same spiritual flesh, the same imperishable food which in the Supper is eaten physically with the mouth and spiritually with the heart" (*Ibid*, 100).

Conclusions

It has become clear by now that, to reach his views of the Eucharist, Luther interpreted the Scripture through the lenses of his Catholic upbringing. In spite of much disagreement, some elements essential to his doctrine of the Lord's Supper were already at work in the Catholic Scholastic tradition. That there is grace bestowed in the sacraments, that Christ is *really present* in the elements and the like – all these were sacred truths that the Roman Church carefully guarded. Likewise, Luther believed that "by the eating of this bread" the believer has a share in everything that Christ's body has and does and suffers, "by virtue of God's promise" (*LW*, 36:283). In this sense it may be asserted that, with respect to Christ's Presence and the effects of the Lord's Supper in the believer's life Luther came closer to the Roman Church than to his Reformed opponents.

Secondly, one will notice that at times Luther appears rather pessimistic in his portrayal of the Christian life; in particular, in his views on *holiness* and *sanctification*. Note, however, that when he writes about sacraments he seems willing to concede that a real transformation occurs in the believer's life; something which transcends the legal category of imputation. Whether or not this last remark is accurate – or logical, in the larger construct of his thought – is difficult to say. Luther's dialectical style – which at times incorporates paradoxes and opposites together – makes his theology as a whole rather difficult to systematize. What may be stated with certainty is that he vehemently fought to preserve the idea of Christ's real presence, of-

ten in spite of risking to alienate some of his own Reformed followers. Luther genuinely believed that Christ was present (for so He promised, after all!) in sacrament and that real forgiveness, empowering, love, joy and willingness to suffer hardships were conveyed through the powerful Word of Christ.

Third, Luther also wrote against what he saw as a perversion of the divine grace, namely, using the Lord's Supper as an occasion for us human beings to "perform" something in order to obtain forgiveness and grace. He thus distinguishes between the Lord's Supper as *testament* (promise) and *sacrifice*. The first is able to preserve the "gift" character of the divine initiative manifested in the Lord's Supper and acknowledge the human inability to ascend to God by itself. The second, however, precludes the possibility of simply "taking" because instead we are "offering". Human pride is again asserted. Luther calls for one's abandoning any efforts of lifting himself or herself up to God. In his view, this is also detrimental for one's peace of mind and assurance of divine acceptance. Furthermore, the mass as a *sacrifice* perverts the loving character of God and transforms Him into an angry, offended deity waiting to be appeased. Luther will finally remain true to his doctrines of justification and salvation and assert the priority and superiority of divine grace even in matters like the Lord's Supper.

Questions remain, of course, especially concerning the final outcome of the debate between the Reformers' *symbolical* and *memorialistic* interpretation and Luther's literalistic emphasis on the presence. Why did Luther remain loyal to some Catholic trends of interpretation on this issue? Was it because of personal conviction, or the pressure of realizing that he may alienate those followers who would be unwilling to follow the Reformation if it altered the doctrine of transubstantiation? He also faulted Thomas Aquinas for his interpretation of Aristotle, while maintaining an uncritical view of the theory of the "real presence" – obviously an essential Catholic element of this doctrine. One may also object to Luther's pessimistic view of the redeemed humanity, in that he saw sin as a unavoidable element

in one's life on this earth. This may, in effect, create problems for his views on biblical holiness and on how God deals with sin and fallenness in the lives of His children. However, behind all this controversy, one can see a man with a sincere pastoral heart, a genuine concern for the spiritual welfare of his German people. Behind the high spirited polemics, sophistry and technicality that Luther employed in this debate, his devotion and faithfulness to bring the Word of God to his people reflect a desire to fulfill the call of God and proclaim the Gospel of Christ to a fallen world in need of redemption.

Making Sense of the Study of Theology: Guidelines from Ludwig Crocius

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ABSTRACT. This article is just a personal study of some recommendations which Crocius has for those who earnestly want to study theology. He is primarily concerned with the aspects which hinder people from studying theology in a proper manner and he lists three: human nature, laziness and confusion. Crocius warns against the peril to confuse philology and philosophy with theology but he nevertheless stresses the crucial importance of both philology and philosophy for a better understanding of theology. At the end, however, what really counts for all those who are ready to embark in a genuine study of theology is earnest, constant and sincere prayer which should be done with a happy heart.

When it comes to the study of theology, one of the crucial points which Crocius wants to make is that the first impediment to the study of theology is our own human nature. Thus, we do not have a tremendous power which could cause our minds to understand Scripture and nature (*quamvis enim talem vim magneticam non habemus naturaliter insitami qua mens nostra scripturam sacramentum ejusque naturam penetret ea*). Nevertheless, God's power is placed upon all those, whose hearts are regenerated to this exchange (*tamen vis divinitus inditur omnibus iis, quibus ad hoc commercium corda regenerantur*). For Crocius, those who study theology within an academic context should be very careful with their own behaviour, in the sense that they should discern the life they lead if they live together in a context which resembles that of a family (*est autem studiosis theologiae in acade-*

miis caute discipiendum, quibuscum familiariter vivant). Thus, whoever studies theology is advised to choose good people as friends. Actually, they should look for friends among good ones, who are of the same condition [as they themselves are] or not much superior [to themselves] (*e bonis sibi sodales quaerant qui ejusdem sint conditionis aut non multo superiores, quique eisdem literis operentur, etsi plusculum profecerint*). If the students befriend good people, then they will have whom to follow and imitate (*sic enim habebunt quos sequantur, quos imitentur*). Crocius knows this is true for everybody so he includes himself in his own conclusion. As such, he affirms that we should have many friends like these because if we end up doing so, this will determine the way we live on a daily basis (*horum enim ut plurimum similes evadimus, quibuscum quotidie versamur*).¹ To conclude, the student of theology should pick up his friends from among good people so that they lead a godly life.

The second impediment of theology is laziness. Crocius does not elaborate on this topic but he does offer a brief definition of laziness, which consists of two possibilities. Thus, we are lazy either when we do not learn the necessary things or when we attempt to learn them but we do so carelessly and superficially (*socordia est, qua vel non discimus necessaria; vel discimus, oscilanter et perfunctorie*).

The third impediment of theology is confusion. According to Crocius, confusion is of many kinds (*confusio est varia*), and he identifies at least four. Thus, confusion can be generated firstly by the variety of studies (*diversorum studiorum*), secondly by the variety of the parts which constitute these studies (*diversarum cuius studii partium*), thirdly by the large number of books available for study (*diversorum librorum*) and fourthly by time itself (*denique temporum*).

Regarding the first confusion, which is generated by the variety of studies, Crocius notices that some people inadequately mistake theological studies for philological and philosophical

¹ Crocius, *Syntagma*, 4.

studies (*quidam studium theologicum cum philologico et philosophico perperam confundunt*). The problem identified by Crocius was that people used to start in the ordinary way, which is nowadays common, with the study of philosophy (*cum a studio philosophico via ordinaria, hodieque usitata, inchoandum*). Then, they would continue to study philology and, in the end, they would get stuck in theological studies exclusively (...*in theologico demum persistendum*).

The second confusion is the result of the fact that some students of theology cannot distinguish properly the various parts of theological studies (*quidam partes cujusque studii conturbant*). Thus, they get involved in disputations and controversies without learning the fundamental principles of philosophy first, to which they should get acquainted on a regular basis and in a disciplined way (...*ut in disputationes et declamationes sese immergant, priusquam in philosophia apprehenderint principia τῆς ἐγκυκλοπαιδείας* [*tès egkuklopaideias*, or the principles of the encyclopedia of theology] *singularumque disciplinarum*). Crocius stresses that both teachers and students must be dedicated to these things (*quae res tradunt docendas ac discendas*). Furthermore, these things should determine both the way of teaching and the way of learning (...*vel modum docendi ac discendi*). Thus, philology should be studied with an eye to its historical aspects and students should accelerate the pace of learning all sorts of classical authors (*in philologia ad historicam et omne genus classicorum autorum festinent*). These must be done before touching or, to say the least, before eagerly studying in depth the technical aspects of philology (...*priusquam technicam attigerint, nedum devorarint*). Crocius warns that, as far as theology is concerned, too many people hasten unwisely in polemics and public disputations without firstly getting acquainted to the basics of catechetical instruction (*in theologia vero quamplurimi in plemica et panegyrica se praecipitent, antequam vel catehetica*). His advice is that the students of theology should begin with fundamental catechetical aspects, which are pure and are to be found in the church. For Crocius, this is quite reasonable a suggestion because we are all

members of the Church and we live in the Church (...*quibus pura et in Ecclesia, cujus membra sumus et in qua degimus*). In addition this, catechetical teachings contain a small amount of controversial truths (*certa minimeque controversa veritas continetur*). Thus, on the one hand, the students of theology should nourish themselves from the very text of Scripture and the symbols of the apostles (*ex ipsissimis scripturae textibus et symbolo apostolorum imbiberint*). On the other hand, they should strive to understand the fundamental concepts and principles of theology which distinguish between the doctrines of theology and the Holy Scripture itself (*vel ideam locorum communium, qua univsum theologiae corpus e sacra scriptura delineatur, comprehenderint*). At the end, it is vital for Crocius that the students of theology should first of all examine the sacred scriptures very carefully (*ipsasque imprimis sacras literas perlegerint*).²

As far as the third confusion is concerned, Crocius mentions that some judgments are featured by the added choice of good authors and this can be seen by the intimate inspection of their libraries (*Quidam iudicii quadam ...peteiai bonorum autorum delectum insuper habent, ut ex vero dicas de plerisque, si modo in illorum bibliothecas te familiaris penetres*).

The fourth confusion has to do with time and the organization of time in view of effective learning. From Crocius perspective, some people do not manage to sufficiently adapt their theological studies to their age and condition (*quidam studiorum sacrarum curriculum non satis ad aetatem et conditionem suam aptant*). Thus, they are unable to give enough time to the individual parts of their studies so that they could deal with the foundations of their learning, calling, science and faith (...*ut singulis illorum partibus idoneum et sufficiens tempus tribuant captusque, vocationis, et mensurae scientiae fideique sue rationem habeant*). Crocius is convinced that the best antidote for confusion is the love of order, which must be sought necessarily in the teaching of theology, or to use his rendering, in "sacred dialectics" (*verum*

² Crocius, *Syntagma*, 5.

enim vero optimum confusionis antidotum est amor ordinis, qui in didactica sacra sequendus est).

In order that theological studies should be detached from the harmful consequences of confusion, Crocius displays a list of general tactical rules which must be followed if effective results are to be obtained (*regulae tacticae generales, secundum quas in studio theologico sine noxia confusione proceditur sunt istae*).

Technical aspects of theology must be earnestly impressed in the mind of the student after he reached the end of common training but before learning anything else (*postquam ad paedagogei sive scholae trivialis fastigium deventum est, ante omnia discendi probe inculcetur technologia theologica*). Learning the technical vocabulary of theology is absolutely necessary if the student wants to reach his final goal, namely if he desires to understand by himself all the things he must learn, and in doing so, to get a foretaste of them (*ut totum finem sibi propositum, totumque ambitum rerum discendarum animo suo comprehendat, ac veluti praegustet*).

The student of theology is advised to master the analysis of principles, namely to get acquainted to the introductory knowledge of the Holy Scripture even from childhood (*analysis principii, hoc est, sacrae scripturae isagogica cognitio a teneris unguiculis inculcata praesupponatur*). This step is compulsory because later on he will have to continue and increase his knowledge of these things (... *per omnem aetatem horis quibusdam continuetur atque augeatur*).

Crocius is convinced that the mind is lifted up by means of philosophy and catechetical instruction, which must always be taught at the beginning (*mens vero elevetur philosophiae et catecheticae adminiculis, quae eo usque inculcentur in principio*). All other things or side issues (details) must be followed gradually and adequately in the course of theological studies (*ut deinceps [παρέργα] ad instar in studii theologici cursu comitentur*).³

³ Crocius, *Syntagma*, 6.

Every student of theology begins his biblical lessons with prayer on a regular basis (*si cum precibus praemissa quotidie lectione biblica*). Then he should move to a certain part of doctrine (*studiosus certum aliquod doctrinae genus*) and a specific author; he should do this continuously or every day and every month (*certumque auctorem a capite ad calcem per dies aut menses aliquot continue evolvat*). This must be done until the student of theology undertakes his task constantly, learns earnestly and continues his studies faithfully (*dum id quod semel discendum suscepit, probe didicerit, animoque suo fideliter commiserit*). Consequently, the student of theology should not ignore rational thinking, which is common in academic institutions where students must pursue it and they must not neglect any opportunity to expose it publicly (*nisi forsitan temporis et loci ratio dissuaserit, ut si in Academia, ubi publicae docentium ratio habenda est, nequid in occasione propositum negligatur*).

Crocus warns that it is very harmful for the student if he wanders in his studies without a certain amount of order, which should characterize his efforts every day, month and year (*aeque noxium est, et sine certo ordine in studiis vagari, et uno eodemque anno, mense, dei omnia*). Thus, if the student wants to read many and diverse things at the same time, then he has to put some order in his studies (*aut certe multa atque diversa simul legere atque adducere velle*). Thus, most useful things can frequently be overwhelmed and torn apart by the multitude of books and authors as well as by the variety of lessons (*certe librorum, auctorumque multitudine et lectionum varietate praestantissima quoque ingenia non raro obruuntur ac distrahuntur*). If this is true, the student may end up knowing something about many things but nothing in totality, so he will have a fragmentary knowledge, while he will miss the wholistic perspective on his studies (*de omnibus aliquid, de toto nihil*).

The next rule is very practical. Crocius advises the student that his library should not be impressive but it should comprise only a selection of the most necessary authors (*bibliotheca non*

tam somptuosa, quam selecta ex optimis, maximeque necessarius auctoribus comparetur).

The general principles extracted both from the Holy Scripture and secular writings should be brought together maturely and attentively in order to prove themselves necessary (*loci communes, tum e sacris literis, tum e profanis scriptoribus, ad usus necessarios, mature diligenterque colligantur*).⁴

Crocius underscores that the time which is dedicated to private studies should not be allotted to the hearing or the organization of public gatherings (*privatis studiis ne tribuantur illud tempus, quo vel publica lectio audienda, vel concio disponenda est*). Instead, the student of theology must have enough time so that he does not neglect visiting, teaching, and comforting the sick and those afflicted with serious temptations (*neque his posthabendus est agrotorum aut gravibus tentationibus vexatorum visitatio, institutio, consolatio*). All these pastoral duties are compulsory if he wants to be appointed minister in the church (*si jam ecclesiae minister constitutus sit*).⁵

When it comes to approach all the parts of theological studies, the student himself should carefully weight his physical and psychical abilities (*in omnibus studii theologici partibus vires corporis et ingenii expendantur*). This assessment should be done so that the student does not take upon himself more or less things than he can handle (*ne plus minusve, quam par sit, suscipiatur*). The idea is that the student of theology should dedicate himself only to that amount of information which is bearable physically and psychically.

Theology should be practically oriented towards the study of Scripture. Thus, the student is advised that in the morning he should exclusively deal with theology (*ante meridiem mere theologica tractentur*). To be sure, he should attentively read the Scripture on a daily basis. Crocius even suggests that the student should read a chapter of Scripture from the Old and the New

⁴ Crocius, *Syntagma*, 7.

⁵ Crocius, *Syntagma*, 7-8.

Testament from the original Hebrew, Greek and even the Latin Vulgate, as he had done to that moment (*ita ut caput biblicum ex. V. et N. [ex Veto et Novo] Testamento ex fontibus, siquidem eos jam imbibisti, Hebraeis Graecisque aut versione Latina vulgata et vernacula sua quotidie perlegas*). The student is strongly advised to dedicate himself to secretly memorizing important sayings from Scripture, which he should either interpret by himself or he should discuss them with his teachers (*praecipua dicta ex eo memoriae commendes et in obscuris vel interprete consulas vel praeceptores vivos adeas*). The purpose of all these things is that theological ideas, general principals and controversies, as well as moral failures and all the things which are linked to the practical side of theology should be approached in an orderly fashion so that they become a habit to the student (*inde ideam theologiae, locos communes, controversias et casus conscientiae et quae ad praxin proprius faciunt, justo ordine persequaris, dum in singulis tibi habitum acquisiveris*).⁶

According to Crocius, the student should continue his research at noon and especially two hours after lunch lest digestion should be hindered and the head (evidently the thinking process) burdened (*a meridie et quidem horis duabus a prandio ne concotio impediatur et caput gravetur*). Thus, he is advised to consider two aspects. Firstly, he should pay attention to historical texts, which are of three kinds: theological, natural, and human. Actually, the purpose of theological historical texts is religion, the purpose of natural historical texts is science, while the purpose of human historical texts is knowledge and art (*incumbes 1. Lectioni historiae, tum divinae cuius finis est religio, tum naturalis, cuius finis scientia, tum humanae, cui finis prudentia et ars*). At this point, Crocius acknowledges his dependence upon the writings of Gerhard Vossius.⁷ Secondly, the student should pay attention to the study of languages and arts (*incum-*

⁶ Crocius, *Syntagma*, 8.

⁷ Gerhard Johann Vossius (1577-1649) was a Reformed theologian, historian and philologist, mainly known for his work in Leiden, Oxford, and Amsterdam. Crocius mentions here Vossius' *Artis historicae*.

bes... 2. *Studio linguarum et artium*). As far as languages are concerned, the student of theology should know enough Hebrew to be able to understand the biblical text (*ubi in Hebraeis sufficit textum biblicum intelligere*). It may be relevant to notice here that, for Crocius, Hebrew is important to the ministry of the church. Consequently, he advises those who want to be involved in pastoral ministry not to reckon the study of Hebrew as a burdensome task (*neque hoc studio omnes qui ad sacrum ministerium adspirant, onerandi videntur*). Likewise, the study of Greek should be done to the extent that the student understands the New Testament, in the sense that he knows its exact and proper interpretation (*et in Graecis satis erit, si Novum Testamentum Graecum... ad veram tamen interpretationem exacte intelligas*). There is no need for the student to be permanently acquainted to the details of biblical criticism (*etsi non ad criticas minutiae usque*); he only has to understand the New Testament. However, the student of theology is strongly advised to strengthen his natural abilities, to find enough time for research and to get hold of opportunities for study in order to be able to pursue zealously the process of getting acquainted to Greek and Hebrew if he ever wants to learn these languages at his true capacity later on during his studies (*siquis tamen ingenio valeat, otio abundet et occasionem nanciscatur in utriusque linguae... contendere poterit, maxime si in scholis forsán linguas aliquando docere velit*). The example of the entire Hebrew and Greek antiquity lies open before the student of theology, so he is urged to read heavily from the writings of old Latin philosophers, orators, poets, historians and philologists (*et hic tali patet universa antiquitas hebraica, graeca. E latinis potissimum legat veteres philosophos, oratores, poetas, historicos, philologos*). Crocius gives some names but he admits that there is always the possibility to try to make a better selection of such intelligent people in order to write about them and examine their works (*nonnunqua sepositis ingenii vires scribendo et disputando experiatur*).

Then, Crocius explains that it would be superfluous to lay a foundation without further building on top of it (*quia vero super-*

foraneum fuerit fundamentum potuisse nisi superstruxeris). This is why the student of theology must be constantly involved in mature reflection (*etiam atque etiam cogitandum est*). Moreover, he must complete what he started, in the sense that all the things which belong to the course of his theological studies and which he began with a happy heart must always and permanently progress all the way to their expected end (*quod in stadio feliciter coepto constanter progrediendum usque ad metam*).

At the end, Crocius highlights that this will happen if one values the theological study with worthy prayers (*hoc fiet, si studium theologicum dignis precibus aestimaveris*) for nobody will have put much work in something he does not possess above other things (*neque enim quisquam multum laboris collocaverit in eo, quod ante res alias non habet*).⁸ Thus, the student of theology should pray first, then work.

⁸ Crocius, *Syntagma*, 9.

Postmodernism in a Nutshell

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ABSTRACT. The purpose of this essay is to present some of the main themes found in the postmodern tradition which is analyzed from three key standpoints: historical postmodernism, methodological postmodernism and positive postmodernism. Because of the overlap between the challenges of historical postmodernism and those of the later perspectives, the former is just briefly defined, while the later two are explored in more detail. This paper argues that the major debate of postmodernism is that over relativism towards knowledge and truth. In today's pluralistic society, where the role of universal and normative ethics is criticized, methodological postmodernism does not offer solutions that succeed in avoiding the threat of social fragmenting. Empirical fragmenting of society endangers the establishing of public institutions that cannot accommodate conflicting moral or truth claims. Positive postmodernism, tries to prove the limits of knowledge, while attempting to avoid relativistic incoherence, advocating the role of intercultural dialogue and responsibility. However, in the absence of absolute truth responsibility and consequently morality becomes a mere exercise of power.

Postmodernism represents the juncture of recent developments such as deconstruction, liberal history and philosophical neo-pragmatism. It would be impossible to capture the depth and complexity of the postmodern tradition in just a few pages. The purpose of this paper is to summarize some of the main themes. In the effort to systemize the broad array of cultural and intellectual approaches that are found in art, architecture, mass-media, social sciences, hermeneutics, philosophy and theology, the concept of postmodernism will be portrayed as comprising three major perspectives: historical postmodernism, methodological postmodernism and positive postmodernism.

Historical postmodernism

Historical postmodernism maintains that the latest social, political and cultural changes signify the emerging of a new era fundamentally different from that of modernism.¹ This historical reasoning is based on an awareness of the changes encountered in society. However, there are authors that believe that any attempt to periodize the present is essentially an attempt at a historical narrative. In other words, the theorist of postmodernism either explicitly tells a historical narrative about how contemporary artists and/or philosophers react against their essentialist and/or foundationalist predecessors, or the postmodernist theorist assumes such a narrative. Consequently, it is the aim of the global postmodernist theorist – global in the sense that it is not restricted to one sphere of practice, but it refers to an ensemble of practices in art, economics, society, politics, ethics, and so on – to propose a history of the present. Noel Carroll argues that if we consider the logic of historical narration, than periodizing the present is impossible.² Regardless of the disagreement concerning the beginning and ending of modern age, Daniel Bell maintains the validity of the historical assumption.³

Methodological postmodernism

Methodological postmodernism includes a variety of approaches, that despite variations, are in accord regarding the rejection of any notion of objective basis for knowledge, or that a person could somehow attain certain and unchanging truths. Therefore, it declines all promises of real and certain knowledge, and renounces the belief in a distinctive and stable “es-

¹ Lawrence Cahoon, *From Modernism to Postmodernism: An Anthology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), 17.

² Noel Carroll, *CLIO* 26/2 (1997), 143.

³ Daniel Bell, *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society*, cited by Lawrence Cahoon, *From Modernism to Postmodernism: An Anthology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), 427.

sence" called "self".⁴ Also, methodological postmodernism abandons expectations of fixed textual or verbal meaning and expresses a preference for local, specific and transitory to universal and unchanging. Methodological postmodernism denies the transcendent or objective dimension of truth, beauty, justice and rationality choosing the relativistic epistemology that legitimizes divergence and diversity instead.

The term "postmodernism" first entered the philosophical lexicon in 1979, with the publication of *The Postmodern Condition* by Jean-François Lyotard.⁵ He employs Wittgenstein's model of language game-and concepts taken from speech act theory⁶ to account for what he calls a transformation of the game rules for science, art, and literature since the end of the nineteenth century. He describes his text as a combination of two very different language games, that of the philosopher and that of the expert. Where the expert is aware of his knowledge the philosopher is not, but poses questions. In light of this uncertainty, Lyotard states that his portrayal of the state of knowledge "makes no claims to being original or even true", and that his hypotheses "should not be accorded predictive value in relation to reality, but strategic value in relation to the questions raised".⁷ On Lyotard's account, the computer age has transformed knowledge into information or coded messages within a system of communication. Analysis of this knowledge calls for a pragmatics of communication insofar as the phrasing of messages, their transmission and reception, must follow rules in order to be accepted by those who judge them. However, as Lyotard points out, the position of a judge is also a position within a language game, and this raises the question of authority. As he insists,

⁴ Michael Devitt, *Realism and Truth*, 2nd edn. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), chapter 1.

⁵ Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984).

⁶ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical investigations*, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1953).

⁷ Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition*, 7.

"there is a strict interlinkage between the kind of language called science and the kind called ethics and politics"⁸ The author also observes that while science has sought to distinguish itself from narrative knowledge in the form of tribal wisdom communicated through myths and legends, modern philosophy has sought to provide legitimating narratives for science in the form of "the dialectics of Spirit, the hermeneutics of meaning, the emancipation of the rational or working subject, or the creation of wealth".⁹

The French school of literary critics, known as deconstruction, is, according to D. A. Carson, the result of the *new hermeneutic*.¹⁰ Hermeneutics was, traditionally understood as the art of biblical interpretation. Gradually, the meaning of the word has extended to the point where it referred to almost all interpretative actions, regardless of their object. At the same time, the intellectual development of the western world continued to call attention to the subjectivity of interpretation, and as a result, in its final expression "the new hermeneutic" came to signify the schism between classical and "radical" approach. Traditional hermeneutics belongs to the modern era when science was considered capable of answering the majority of questions. Radical hermeneutics acknowledges the subjectivity of all interpretations that are additionally shaped by the interpreters' cultures and subcultures. Postmodernism goes beyond advocating relative truth to promoting plural truth. As a consequence, not only is every perspective particular, but also, all perspectives are equally true and equally valid. In other words, that which is true for a particular group, may have a completely different meaning for another group found in the same setting. Along these lines, Zigmund Bauman notes that, "the collective moral res-

⁸ Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition*, 8.

⁹ Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition*, xxiii.

¹⁰ D. A. Carson, *The Gagging of God, Christianity Confronts Pluralism* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1996), 19.

possibility, just like the moral responsibility of each individual, is struggling in a vast space of uncertainty.¹¹

Deconstruction, being closely tied to radical hermeneutics came to represent almost all interpretative actions, regardless of their object. Jacques Derrida maintains that the purpose of deconstruction is to prove that texts, institutions, traditions, societies, faiths and religious practices do not have a definite meaning or a determined mission, but always extend beyond the present boundaries.¹² Subsequently, deconstruction tries to demonstrate that language and meaning are, at the very end, products of society and comprehension is not to be found in reality of in the texts. Therefore, it is admitted that the interpreter can draw certain parts out of their original context – deconstruct the text – and rearrange the fragments after his/hers own liking, generating a new perspective that may either revitalize or critique the original text.

In philosophy, neo-pragmatism sustains that the meaning of words do not refer to extra-linguistic entities and objects but to other words. Derrida, for example, argued that, “nor language, nor truth is ‘centered’ on the object, but are both generated by a continual fluctuation of variable”.¹³ As a result, the meaning is always postponed. Richard Rorty, argues that,

We can never overcome the spheres of our own knowledge by comparing it to an objective reality in order to test its accuracy. Our access is always mediated by our conceptual and linguistic constructs.¹⁴

¹¹ Zygmund Bauman, *Postmodern Ethics* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), 222.

¹² John D. Caputo (ed.), *Deconstruction in a Nutshell, A Conversation with Jacques Derrida* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1997), 31.

¹³ Jacques Derrida in Anthony C. Thiselton, *Interpreting God and the Postmodern Self* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), 11.

¹⁴ Rorty cited in Timothy R. Phillips and Dennis L. Okholm, *Christian Apologetics in the Postmodern World* (InterVarsity Press, 1995), 134.

Michel Foucault's application of genealogy to formative moments in modernity's history and his exhortations to experiment with subjectivity place him within the scope of postmodern discourse. In the 1971 essay "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History", Foucault presents his adaptation of the genealogical method in his historical studies. First, he says, genealogy "opposes itself to the search for 'origins'."¹⁵ That is, genealogy studies the accidents and contingencies that converge at crucial moments, giving rise to new epochs, concepts, and institutions. Second, in regard to subjectivity, he says that to name something produces violence against that which is named. In a similar way, social institutions are in themselves violent as they impose their own interpretations over the array of experiences. Foucault considers that each assertion of knowledge is an act of power and he shows suspicion towards any "present leadership"¹⁶

In conclusion, methodological postmodernism states that we can never rise above the inability of language to refer to anything outside itself, and as a result objective knowledge becomes impossible.

Positive postmodernism

Positive postmodernism tries to overcome the tendency of methodological postmodernism of denying the presuppositions of modern epistemology, and instead proposes a positive reinterpretation of all major problems in accord with postmodern presuppositions and values.¹⁷ In trying to prove the limits of knowledge, the supporters of this perspective attempt to avoid relativistic incoherence. This is one of the reasons why this current is

¹⁵ Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History", in Paul Rabinow (ed.), *The Foucault Reader* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 76-100.

¹⁶ C. G. Prado, *Starting with Foucault. An Introduction to Genealogy* (Boulder: Westview, 2000), 55-67; see also Thomas Lemke, "Foucault, Governmentality and Critique", in *Rethinking Marxism* 14/3 (2002), 49-64.

¹⁷ David Ray Griffin, "Introduction: Constructive Postmodern Philosophy" in *Founders of Constructive Postmodern Philosophy* (Albany, 1993), 1-42.

also called constructive postmodernism.¹⁸ Deconstructive postmodernism, found especially in Derrida's writing, is characterized by its opposition towards both traditional-rational philosophical certainty and modern preoccupation for general fundaments. Due to deconstructive analysis' terminology and methodology, deconstructive postmodernism is defined in predominantly negative terms. However, Martin Schirally notes that in the pursuit of revealing the chronic uncertainty that accompanies any thought-system, the deconstructive critic tries to free the intellect and the text in order to find new creative and stimulating ways of analysis.¹⁹

If "deconstructive postmodernism" refers specifically to those writings and critiques that use the same exegetical strategies as Derrida, then, notes Schirally, philosophical texts belonging to Dewey or Wittgenstein represent a divergent opinion.²⁰ Dewey or Wittgenstein accept uncertainty in a positive and productive way and, in consequence, their writings are part of "constructive" postmodernism. Constructive or positive postmodernism did not abandon the effort of improving comprehensive, systematic and epistemological structures of justification and explanation, even if, philosophers that are, from a conceptual standpoint similar to Dewey – such as Stephen, Toulmin, or Wittgenstein – hesitate in placing the foundation of these structures in fundamentally stable principles. Constructive postmodernism, regardless of how it is perceived – as a new phase of modernity or as a "distinctive post-modern chapter",²¹ rejects the rational model that defined modern philosophical and scientific thought.

¹⁸ Nancey Murphy, *Anglo-American Postmodernity: Philosophical Perspective on Science, Religion, and Ethics* (Boulder: Westview, 1997).

¹⁹ Martin Schirally, *Constructive Postmodernism: Toward Renewal in Cultural and Literary Studies* (Wesport: Bergin & Garvey, 1999), 46.

²⁰ Schirally, *Constructive Postmodernism*, 46.

²¹ Stephen Toulmin, *Cosmopolis: The Hidden Agenda of Modernity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 200.

However, in contrast to the critiques of deconstructive postmodernism, constructive postmodernism tries to outweigh the plateau of productive stability and turns its attention to the potential of cultural studies and philosophical discourses. Dewey maintains that intellectual progress does not have to be abandoned simultaneously with artificially-made certainty. The author considers that by embracing uncertainty we have the opportunity of reconstructing the project of philosophical analysis on a more natural and sustainable platform.

Any philosophy that in the pursuit of certainty ignores the reality of uncertainty found the processes of nature, denies the conditions out of which it is born. By trying to include all that is doubtful inside the boundaries of theoretical certainty constitutes an insincere and evasive perspective, and in consequence, will be refuted due to internal contradictions.²²

Toulmin notes that from an intellectual point of view, “unreconstructed modernity has three functions: certainty, formal rationality and the desire for a new focus”.²³ As soon as the reconstruction process began, constructive postmodernism makes its presence known with the following defining characteristics:²⁴

1. The acceptance of particular, situational and local complexities as evidence for the abundance of human experiences.
2. The exploration of ways in which thought, feelings and values coexist with the actual human experience
3. The representation of a naturalistic model (similar to Dewey) or a juries-prudential model (similar to Toulmin) instead of a logical-mathematical model.

²² John Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty: A Study of the Relation of Knowledge and Action* (New York: Capricorn, 1960), 244.

²³ Toulmin, *Cosmopolis*, 183.

²⁴ Schiralli, *Constructive Postmodernism*, 67, 68.

4. Considering the truth assertions as being provisional and not invariable.
5. Pursuing the relevant merits for supporting epistemological assertions instead of absolute foundations.
6. The desire to discover, exploit, and develop other areas for the productive unity in the area of empirical and normative judgments in a non-relative manner; and the stressing of a conceptual analysis in a constructive way – the operative form of question should be “What possibilities are there for us in saying what we want through X?” and not “What we want to say through X?”

In a well defined concept of constructive postmodernism, the evaluating activities have a central epistemological importance, and can be applied in the empirical and normative domain. The positive postmodernist hope is for a renewed logical capacity of value evaluations and modest expectations toward the status of truth in conventional knowledge presuppositions.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it seems that one of the major debates of postmodernism is that over relativism towards knowledge and truth. In the light of methodological postmodernism, in the process of imputing meaning to our world there seems to be a hermeneutic schism between our basic understanding of the world and our basic interpretation of our experiences. What is accepted as knowledge, in a postmodern society, is based on the private and public acceptance of a wordviews, philosophical discourses, and implicitly subjective premises. However, we observe the fact that in today's pluralistic society methodological postmodernism does not offer solutions that succeed in avoiding the threat of social fragmenting. Empirical fragmenting of society endangers the establishing of public institutions that can not accommodate conflicting moral or truth claims. The contemporary culture criticizes the role of universal and normative ethics, although we remark an emergent awareness of justice and in-

justice or of receptivity in the face of suffering and dishonoring of humans.

Positive postmodernism, however, maintains that although knowledge is developed in traditions, and there is no universal neutral scientific language, there is still good reason to believe that each tradition is developing ever better and more true theories. In other words their hope is that while people deal with unrecorded diversity, they will build their moral identity, with the help of intercultural dialogue, on the foundation of responsibility. However, history attests that in the absence of a paradigm for legislating morality the society can slide toward a jungle pattern where the rule is, survival of the fittest. Also, because of the absolute truth void, ethics and consequently, legislating morality becomes an exercise of power struggle or arbitrage.

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