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St. Athanasius
On the Incarnation of the Word, 43-44

43. Now, if they ask, Why then did He not appear by means of other and nobler parts of creation, and use some nobler instrument, as the sun, or moon, or stars, or fire, or air, instead of man merely? Let them know that the Lord came not to make a display, but to heal and teach those who were suffering. 2. For the way for one aiming at display would be, just to appear, and to dazzle the beholders; but for one seeking to heal and teach the way is, not simply to sojourn here, but to give himself to the aid of those in want, and to appear as they who need him can bear it; that he may not, by exceeding the requirements of the sufferers, trouble the very persons that need him, rendering God's appearance useless to them. 3. Now, nothing in creation had gone astray with regard to their notions of God, save man only. Why, neither sun, nor moon, nor heaven, nor the stars, nor water, nor air had swerved from their order; but knowing their Artificer and Sovereign, the Word, they remain as they were made. But men alone, having rejected what was good, then devised things of nought instead of the truth, and have ascribed the honour due to God, and their knowledge of Him, to demons and men in the shape of stones. 4. With reason, then, since it were unworthy of the Divine Goodness to overlook so grave a matter, while yet men were not able to recognise Him as ordering and guiding the whole, He takes to Himself as an instrument a part of the whole, His human body, and unites Himself with that, in order that since men could not recognise Him in the whole, they should not fail to know Him in the part; and since they could not look up to His invisible power, might be able, at any rate, from what resembled themselves to reason to Him and to contemplate Him. 5. For, men as they are, they will be able to know His Father more quickly and directly by a body of like nature and by the divine works wrought through it, judging by comparison that they are not human, but the works of God, which are done by Him. 6. And if it were absurd, as they say, for the Word to be known through the works of the body, it would likewise be absurd for Him to be known through the works of the universe. For just as He is in creation, and yet does not partake of its nature in the least degree, but rather all things partake of His power; so while He used the body as His instrument He partook of no corporeal property, but, on the contrary, Himself sanctified even the body. 7. For if even Plato, who is in such repute among the Greeks, says that its author, beholding the universe tempest-tossed, and in peril of going down to the place of chaos, takes his seat at the helm of the soul and comes to the rescue and corrects all its calamities; what is there incredible in what we say, that, mankind being in error, the Word lighted down upon it and appeared as man, that He might save it in its tempest by His guidance and goodness?

44. But perhaps, shamed into agreeing with this, they will choose to say that God, if He wished to reform and to save mankind, ought to have done so by a mere fiat , without His word taking a body, in just the same way as He did formerly, when He produced them out of nothing. 2. To this objection of theirs a reasonable answer would be: that formerly, nothing being in existence at all, what was needed to make everything was a fiat and the bare will to do so. But when man had once been made, and necessity demanded a cure, not for things that were not, but for things that had come to be, it was naturally consequent that the Physician and Saviour should appear in what had come to be, in order also to cure the things that were. For this cause, then, He has become man, and used His body as a human

instrument. 3. For if this were not the right way, how was the Word, choosing to use an instrument, to appear? Or whence was He to take it, save from those already in being, and in need of His Godhead by means of one like themselves? For it was not things without being that needed salvation, so that a bare command should suffice, but man, already in existence, was going to corruption and ruin. It was then natural and right that the Word should use a human instrument and reveal Himself everywhither. 4. Secondly, you must know this also, that the corruption which had set in was not external to the body, but had become attached to it; and it was required that, instead of corruption, life should cleave to it; so that, just as death has been engendered in the body, so life may be engendered in it also. 5. Now if death were external to the body, it would be proper for life also to have been engendered externally to it. But if death was wound closely to the body and was ruling over it as though united to it, it was required that life also should be wound closely to the body, that so the body, by putting on life in its stead, should cast off corruption. Besides, even supposing that the Word had come outside the body, and not in it, death would indeed have been defeated by Him, in perfect accordance with nature, inasmuch as death has no power against the Life; but the corruption attached to the body would have remained in it none the less. 6. For this cause the Saviour reasonably put on Him a body, in order that the body, becoming wound closely to the Life, should no longer, as mortal, abide in death, but, as having put on immortality, should thenceforth rise again and remain immortal. For, once it had put on corruption, it could not have risen again unless it had put on life. And death likewise could not, from its very nature, appear, save in the body. Therefore He put on a body, that He might find death in the body, and blot it out. For how could the Lord have been proved at all to be the Life, had He not quickened what was mortal? 7. And just as, whereas stubble is naturally destructible by fire, supposing (firstly) a man keeps fire away from the stubble, though it is not burned, yet the stubble remains, for all that, merely stubble, fearing the threat of the fire—for fire has the natural property of consuming it; while if a man (secondly) encloses it with a quantity of asbestos, the substance said to be an antidote to fire, the stubble no longer dreads the fire, being secured by its enclosure in incombustible matter; 8. in this very way one may say, with regard to the body and death, that if death had been kept from the body by a mere command on His part, it would none the less have been mortal and corruptible, according to the nature of bodies; but, that this should not be, it put on the incorporeal Word of God, and thus no longer fears either death or corruption, for it has life as a garment, and corruption is done away in it.

CHRISTOLOGICAL MONOTHEISM, NUMERICALLY THE SAME DIVINE SELF, AND JOHN'S GOSPEL

Neil B. MacDonald*

This essay is a contribution to Christological monotheism of a certain kind, namely the kind that wants to hold YHWH-God and Jesus together in one singular self-same self. The first section sets the scene of the argument. The biblical texts pertaining to Jewish monotheism did not have anything to say about numerical sameness within the being of God, though such sameness was clearly consistent with covenantal monotheism *per se*. The absence of numerical sameness is a sufficient condition of the possibility of distinction within the being of God. But is its absence a necessary condition? The second section demonstrates that self-same essence and distinction can coexist within the being of God. The root metaphysical vocabulary of the classical Christian tradition of trinitarian theology shows how this is so. Aquinas's exposition in the *Summa Theologiae* is the benchmark of what this kind of trinitarian monotheism is. The third section is the conceptual core of the essay. It demonstrates that the abiding truth to be found in the conceptual language of the classical trinitarian tradition is satisfied by a particular theological formulation definitive of the modern tradition, namely one whose objective is to hold YHWH and the human Jesus together in an authentic Christological monotheism. The focus is Wolfhart Pannenberg's meta-christological reflection on divine self-revelation understood in terms of the subject-object distinction.[1] If one understands self-same divine self in terms of numerical sameness—in a sense akin to Pannenberg's understanding of divine self-revelation—one has a conceptual language which may be able to do justice to the biblical witness of that most profound but not easily penetrable of Gospels, the work of genius that is John's Gospel. This is the subject of the fourth and fifth sections which together comprise a large part of the essay and may be taken to be its ultimate focus. It seeks to show how the conceptual language of self-same self and the distinction of subject and object are instantiated by a particular interpretation of John's Gospel. Herein lies the rationale for the subtitle of the section: "Jesus is the Invisible God's Visible Conception of Himself." If such an intentionality can be attributed to John's Gospel we would have grounds for affirming that its author not only affirmed a high Christology (and therefore distinction within God) but also conceived of it in such a way that was compatible with a high monotheism, precisely one that insisted upon monotheism of a numerical kind. This may be the truly revolutionary aspect of John in comparison with the Synoptic Gospels, though all affirm the divinity of Jesus.

I. Jewish Monotheism of the Biblical Kind Not 'Unitary' Monotheism

In the history of trinitarian monotheism, specifically the period prior to its christological

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[1] A point of clarification. In this essay I have employed the subject-object schema in the context of the self-reflexive self. This conveys God's conception or knowledge of himself and therefore refers to an intra-trinitarian phenomenon. Alongside this, in Part IV, I introduce a non-object/object distinction to explain YHWH's revelation to Israel in the Old Testament and human knowledge of Jesus in the New Testament; it therefore refers to an extra-trinitarian phenomenon.

form, Jewish monotheism did not presuppose any kind of numerical sameness within the being of God. N. T. Wright observes of the period between the Maccabean Revolt and Bar Kochba (167 BCE-135 CE) that,

> Jewish monotheism in this period was not an inner analysis of the being of the one true God. It was not an attempt at describing numerically what this God is, so to speak, on the inside. Instead it made two claims, both of them polemical in their historical context. On the one hand, Jewish monotheism asserted that the one God, the God of Israel, was the only God of the whole world; that therefore the pagan gods were blasphemous nonsense ... and that the true God would one day decisively defeat these pagan gods....[2]

Jewish monotheism of the biblical kind affirmed monotheism in the sense of "YHWH alone is God" (Deut. 6:4) without affirming numerical sameness within the being of God. Insofar as we describe the latter kind of monotheism as "unitary" monotheism, such a category is anachronistic for describing Jewish monotheism of the first century. "It was only with the rise of Christianity", Wright says, "and arguably under the influence both of polemical constraint and Hellenistic philosophy, that Jews in the second and subsequent centuries reinterpreted 'monotheism' as the 'numerical oneness of the divine being.'"[3] Wright's point is: numerical oneness cannot be employed to claim that when the first (Jewish) Christians affirmed the divinity of Jesus, they affirmed a belief incompatible with Jewish inclusive of biblical monotheism of that period. As Richard Bauckham puts it, the biblical texts representative of Second-Temple Judaism "are concerned for the unique identity of God, not for the unitariness of God, which became a facet of Jewish monotheism only later. In other words there is no reason why there should not be real distinctions within the unique identity of God."[4]

The absence of numerical oneness or sameness is a sufficient condition of distinction within the being of God. But is it a necessary condition? Could Jewish monotheism—without accommodation—have embraced distinction within the being of God even had it embraced numerical oneness in some way? As in numerical sameness? Is it inconceivable that at least some of the biblical witness—the late first-century or second-century biblical witness, of the Gospel of John, for example—wanted to affirm the divinity of Jesus *to the extent* that this Jesus was understood in some way as numerically the same with the Father (a high Christology *and* a high monotheism)? These are questions that arise in sections IV-V. But in order to frame conceptually them in the way I want, I need first to provide a synopsis of two ways—classical and modern—in which numerical sameness has been understood in the context of trinitarian and christological monotheism respectively.

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[2] N. T. Wright, *What Saint Paul Really Said: Was Paul of Tarsus the Real Founder of Christianity?* (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1997), 63.

[3] N. T. Wright, The *New Testament and the People of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 259.

[4] Richard Bauckham, 'The Throne of God and the Worship of Jesus', *Jesus and the God of Israel: God Crucified and Other Studies on the New Testament's Christology of Divine Identity* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2008), 50.

II. Numerically the Same Divine Essence: the Classical Trinitarian Tradition of Aquinas and Augustine

Certainly, distinction within numerical sameness was deemed possible as measured by the standard of the classical trinitarian tradition. It could be said that western *and* eastern trinitarianism of the Patristic era—Augustine and Gregory of Nyssa respectively—espoused a form of trinitarian monotheism embracing this principle.[5] In the case of Augustine's trinitarianism, it culminated in the Athanasian creed where the three persons—the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit—are numerically the same in the one being of God. Nevertheless, it is Aquinas's statement of this particular species of monotheism which constitutes the conceptual benchmark for the classical tradition.[6] The unbegotten Father or the first person of the trinity communicates "his" perfections (those discussed in the first twenty-six questions of Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae*) to the Son or second person of the trinity (begottenness); and to the Holy Spirit or third person of the trinity (procession)—*in such a way that this constitutes their respective being.*[7]

The communication of the perfections is to be understood to occur in accordance with the doctrine of divine simplicity: God has attributes only in the sense that he *is* his attributes (God is the same as his essence or nature).[8] But crucially, the first person, identical with unbegotten essence, communicates the self-same essence in constituting the Son and the Holy Spirit. The identity in question is a numerical identity, not a generic one. What Aquinas,

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[5] See Richard Cross, "Two Models of the Trinity?" in Michael Rea (ed.), *Oxford Readings in Philosophical Theology Volume 1: Trinity, Incarnation, and Atonement* (Oxford: OUP, 2009), 107-126. "The Eastern teaching … seems unequivocal: that the divine essence is a shared universal property. It seems to me that, despite their explicit claims to the contrary, the Western theologians accept this too. Thus in denying *ex professo* that the divine essence is a universal, the Western theologians are not denying the theory accepted by the East. Rather, they accept a different theory of universals, and deny that the divine essence is a universal *in the sense of 'universal' accepted by the West*, not in the sense accepted by the East", Ibid, 116. Cross's argument on this specific point is that Augustine and Aquinas rejected the claim that the divine essence was a universal because they understood the latter to mean something divisible. Had they understood it in the sense the East understood it, they would have affirmed it. The disagreement is terminological (semantic) rather than real. Nevertheless, it may be argued that the presence of the Eastern view of universals in the Western view is as an implication of the generation of self-same essence as, say, Aquinas understands this; whereas for the East construing the divine essence as a universal is a means of understanding—a mode of interpreting—the generation of divine essence in terms of numerical singularity. The West may think the self-same essence thus generated is therefore a universal —but not other (created) essences. The East holds that all essences are universals, and are therefore numerically singular. Cross, "Two Models", 119.

[6] Cross writes: "By the time of the middle ages, the established western view—springing from Augustine—is that the divine essence is a numerically singular property shared by all three persons. And this, of course, is precisely the Eastern view too." Ibid, 126.

[7] Gilles Emery writes: "The Father does not communicate in his begetting part of his divine nature to the Son but the fullness of the divine nature; thus the 'the nature of the Father is in the Son, and conversely, the Father is in the Son and reciprocally. It works in the same way for the spiration of the Holy Spirit: here too the Father and the Son communicate the divine nature in its fullness. The communal presence of the divine persons is thus a presence of complete equality", Gilles Emery, *The Trinitarian Theology of St Thomas Aquinas* (Oxford: OUP, 2010), 303-4.

[8] Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*. In *Basic Writings of Saint Thomas Aquinas*, edited by Anton Pegis (New York: Random House, 1945), q. 3 (hereafter ST).

for example, has to say about creaturely generation at ST 1. q.39. a. 5 is consistent with the generation of a generic identity (secondary substance as defined by Aristotle in his *Categories*). But it is precisely this sense of sameness that is not applicable to God's essence. The sense in which the begetter and the begotten have the same essence or nature is that they have *numerically* the same essence or nature.[9] Aquinas writes:

> In creatures the one generated has not the same nature numerically as the generator, but another nature, numerically distinct, which commences to exist in it anew by generation, and ceases to exist by corruption, and so it is generated and corrupted accidentally; whereas God begotten has the same nature numerically as the begetter. So the divine nature in the Son is not begotten either directly [*per se*] or accidentally [*per accidens*].[10]

This truly is trinitarian monotheism. The communication of the divine essence is to be understood in such a way as to preclude the possibility of three sets of identical divine perfections. What is communicated is not two identical copies of the divine essence—as in two clones with identical divine DNA. Rather, what is communicated is numerically the self-same essence, self-identical divine essence.[11] Numerical sameness according to essence guarantees monotheism. The divine relations are the means of guaranteeing distinction.[12] In other words, the former ensures that we have trinitarian *monotheism*; and the latter ensures *trinitarian* monotheism. Herbert McCabe defines the contribution the divine relations makes to trinitarian distinction in the following way (what he says about the being of the Son can be said *mutatis mutandis* about the Holy Spirit): "The Son is the relation of being generated *by*

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[9] For "divine nature" we can also read "divine essence." See ST 1, q. 3 a. 3 where Aquinas uses the terms *essentia* and *natura* as synonyms. In *De ente et essentia* he says that nature "is seen to signify the essence of a thing according as it has relation to its proper operation" (Aquinas, *De ente et essentia*, cap. i). Aquinas does in fact refer to this qualification at ST 1. Q 39. a. 5 ad. 1 but in the case of the triune God [*ad intra*] acting *ad extra* in creation what Aquinas says here would mean the same had he used *essentia* here since he is talking about generation *ad intra*.

[10] ST I, q. 39, a. 5 ad. 2; see also: ST I, q. 42, a. 5; ST I, q. 33, a. 1.

[11] See Emery, *Trinitarian Theology*, chapter 7 "Trinitarian Monotheism", 128-50, esp. section 4, "The Consubstantiality of the Persons", 141-5. Emery writes: "Following the lead of Athanasius, Hilary of Poiters and Augustine, St Thomas strongly applies the 'numerical unity' of the essence to the three persons. The essence of the three persons should be 'one in number' (*una numero*). This phrase means that the three divine persons are not just of one specific nature, like the human persons in whom one recognizes 'the same nature' because they have the same humanity. In the Triune God, the essence is not 'multiplied' by the three persons, but the three persons are one and the same identical essence." Ibid, 143-4. See also the section entitled "The Essential Unity of the Three Persons", 303-4. Emery writes: 'The communal presence of the persons rests on their *consubstantiality*. For what is implicated in this is that the three divine persons do not just have a similar nature, but the very same nature, identically one, that is to say, *numerically one*', Ibid, 303. See also Brian Leftow, "Anti Social Trinitarianism", in Stephen Davis, Daniel Kendall and Gerald O'Collins (eds), *The Trinity* (Oxford: OUP, 1999), 203-249, esp. 203-5; Leftow, "A Latin Trinity", in Michael Rea (ed.), *Oxford Readings in Philosophical Theology Volume 1: Trinity, Incarnation, and Atonement* (Oxford: OUP, 2009), 76-106.

[12] ST I, q. 28, a. 3; ST I q. 40, a. 2, esp. ad 3. See Emery, *Trinitarian Theology*, 96-99; 121-123. See also Russell Friedman, *Mediaeval Trinitarian Thought from Aquinas to Ockham* (Cambridge: CUP, 2010), 172.

the father."[13] Where divine essence is first-order, the divine relations are second-order.[14]

If one wanted to put flesh on the purely formal requirements or benchmark identified in Aquinas's trinitarian theology one could say that divine generation (and procession) is so "pure" that unbegotten essence generates itself not as an exact copy of its essence, but the very same (self-same) essence:[15]

> It is manifest that generation receives its species from the term which is the form of the thing generated; and the nearer it is to the form of the generator, the truer and more perfect is the generation; as univocal generation is more perfect than non-univocal, for it belongs to the essence of a generator to generate what is like itself in form. Hence the very fact that in the divine generation the form of the Begetter and Begotten is numerically the same, whereas in creatures it is not numerically, but only specifically, the same, shows that generation, and consequently paternity, is applied to God before creatures. Hence the very fact that in God a distinction exists of the Begotten from the Begetter as regards relation only, belongs to the truth of the divine generation and paternity.[16]

This is the central irreducible mystery of classical trinitarian theology. As Richard Feynman said of another mysterious subject, quantum mechanics: whenever the strangeness of the conceptual conclusions of quantum mathematics overwhelms you, remember the phenomenon that is the double-slit experiment![17] Nevertheless, analogies for a trinitarian phenomenon that yet preserves monotheism can be found. Augustine finds one in his theory of mind.[18] The inspiration is John 1:1-3.[19] Augustine provides the analogy of memory as dispositional knowledge whose specific content can be focussed on and in this manner willed into formation as a mental word or concept. The crucial point is that the "word and the knowledge in the memory from which the word is born are identical in every way except that the word is formed while the knowledge is not formed."[20] "Knowledge from

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[13] Herbert McCabe, "Aquinas on the Trinity", Oliver Davies and Denys Turner (ed.), *Silence and the Word: Negative Theology and Incarnation* (Cambridge: CUP, 2004), 76-93. [Emphasis mine].

[14] The divine relations are the reason Aquinas can be understood as espousing a trinitarian theology in terms of numerical sameness without Leibnizian identity. See Jeffrey Brower and Michael Rea, 'Material Constitution and the Trinity', in Michael Rea (ed.), *Oxford Readings in Philosophical Theology Volume 1: Trinity, Incarnation, and Atonement* (Oxford: OUP, 2009), 128-147. 'As is well known, respected Christian philosophers and theologians— such as Augustine, Anselm, and Aquinas—habitually speak of the Trinity in ways that require the introduction of a form of sameness that fails Leibniz's Law' Ibid, 140.

[15] Thus for Aquinas (ST 40 a. 2 ad. 3) distinction pertaining to self-same essence must be the "'smallest possible distinction' insofar as the difference it entails is concerned, that is, a distinction which is 'closest to unity.'" Emery, *Trinitarian Theology*, 97. Only this is consistent with self-same essence. Whether this is in fact a necessary condition of an authentic trinitarian monotheism has to be evaluated in the light of the modern trinitarian tradition which places Jesus in the trinity *ad intra*.

[16] ST 33.2. reply to objection 4.

[17] Richard P, Feynman, Robert B. Leighton and Matthew Sands, *The Feynman Lectures on Physics: Vol III, Quantum Mechanics* (Reading, Massachussets: Addison-Wesley, 1965), xii.

[18] Augustine, *The Trinity*, trans. Stephen McKenna *The Fathers of the Church* vol. 45 (Washington D C: Catholic University of America Press, 1963), Book 15, 12, 22.

[19] Friedman, *Mediaeval Trinitarian Thought from Aquinas to Ockham* (Cambridge: CUP, 2010), 52-6.

[20] Ibid, 53-4.

knowledge" (and indeed "vision from vision")[21] in this context is to be understood in terms of numerical sameness. It is the *self-same* thought generated.[22] Central to his trinitarian theology is how "the Son's generation from the Father also involves the Father and the Son being of one substance."[23] For Augustine it is his understanding of divine simplicity as a conceptual framework that supplies the explanation: the Wisdom of the Son is the self-same Wisdom of the Father identical with the self-same essence.[24] Articles 13-16 of the Augustine-inspired Athanasian creed sum up the tradition's fundamental conclusion with great succinctness and clarity:

13. … the Father is almighty, the Son almighty, and the Holy Spirit almighty.
14. And yet they are not three almighties, but one almighty.
15. So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God;
16. And yet they are not three Gods, but one God.[25]

The classical trinitarian tradition is a conceptually clean demonstration of the co-existence of numerical sameness and distinction. Augustine's exegesis of John 1:1-2 is framed by the numerical sameness of thought or word in memory and thought or word generated from memory. *Mutatis mutandis*, it may be a conceptual parallel to Richard's Bauckham's affirmation of the distinctions of God's Word or Wisdom or Spirit within the being of God ("Christology from above").[26] The inclusion of Jesus within the identity of YHWH is a qualitatively different matter ("Christology from below"). This particular distinction within the being of YHWH may be consistent with "non-unitary" monotheism but not with the "unitary" kind. Jesus—the human, historical Jesus—as a distinction within the being of YHWH does not seem to sit with numerical sameness according to essence.

III. Pannenberg's Conception of Christological Monotheism

Yet there is a modern trinitarian tradition that speaks of Jesus and YHWH held together in a singular divine self. Though YHWH and you are two "things" and YHWH and I are two "things", YHWH and Jesus are not—or rather: they are not merely two "things"; they are also one "thing." Numerical sameness according to divine essence ensures that Aquinas's trinitarian theology is a species of monotheism; while the divine relations guarantee the distinction of the persons. Insofar as there exists a modern counterpart to Aquinas's meta-trinitarian reflections it is to be found in Wolfhart Pannenberg. It is precisely because of the centrality of the historical Jesus in this particular species of christological monotheism (the impact of the modern biblical tradition), that it was an insight of genius to use the

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[21] Ibid, 54.

[22] Brian's Davies' account of Aquinas on the Trinity notes the presence of the begotten Word of John 1 in ST 1. q. 27. 1 where he discusses the Father's generation of the Son. See Davies, *The Thought of Thomas Aquinas* (Oxford: OUP, 1992), 195-7.

[23] Lewis Ayres, *Augustine and the Trinity* (Oxford: OUP, 2010), 225.

[24] Ibid, Chapter 8, titled "Essence from essence", the section, "Wisdom from Wisdom" (*TRIN*. 6. I.1-7. 2.3)', 221-227; see also Ayres, *Nicea and its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford: OUP, 2005) 375-81.

[25] The Athanasian creed, see e.g. http://www.ccel.org/creeds/athanasian.creed.html. See also Brian Davies' citation of this creed as a fundamental creedal presupposition of Aquinas's doctrine of the trinity, Davies, *The Thought of Thomas Aquinas*, 185-7.

[26] Bauckham, "God Crucified", *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 16-17.

conception of a self-reflexive divine self as a means of conceptually bridging the apparent ontological "gap" or "difference" between Jesus and YHWH-God.[27] Here I speak of the self-reflexive self instantiated by self-revelation.

Fundamental to Pannenberg is the theological claim that *self*-revelation reveals *self-same self*.[28] In *Revelation as History* he writes that divine self-revelation is to be "so *strictly understood* that it is no longer permissible to think of a medium of revelation that is distinct from God himself. Or rather: the creaturely medium of revelation, the man Jesus Christ, is caught up in God in his distinctiveness and received in unity with God himself."[29] Self-revelation is to be so strictly understood that it also excludes other revelations being self-revelation—on the grounds that, otherwise, *self*-revelation is thereby excluded: "Speaking of many revelations is no longer thinking of revelation in the strictest sense. A multiplicity of revelation implies a discrediting of any particular revelation, for then the form of the divine manifestation is no longer the singularly adequate expression of the revealer."[30] Pannenberg continues:

> Barth's strict conception of self-disclosure issues in a novel stress on the *uniqueness of revelation.* Those rejecting Barth's conception that revelation in Christ is the truly unique one *have obviously not properly considered that the uniqueness of revelation is already implied in the context of 'self-revelation.'* If God is already totally revealed in the special decisiveness of the Christ-event, then he cannot in consistency be 'also' revealed in other events, situations, and persons.[31]

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[27] For a comprehensive account of the modern trinitarian tradition to which Pannenberg belongs, see Samuel Powell, *German Trinitarian Thought* (Oxford: OUP, 2005), chapter 6. Barth's trinitarian theology is a conceptually clean example of self-revelation guaranteeing both trinitarianism and monotheism: "The Name of Father, Son, and Spirit means that God is the one God in threefold repetition, and this in such a way that the repetition is grounded in His Godhead, so that it implies no alteration to His Godhead, and yet in such a way that He is the one God only in this repetition, but for that very reason He is the one God in each repetition." Barth, *Church Dogmatics* I/1 (Edinburgh: T and T Clark, 1975), 350 (hereafter *CD*). He adds that "… we employ the concept of repetition to denote 'the persons'", Ibid, 350. This is numerically self-same sameness in repetition rather than modalism. The charge that Barth espouses a form of revelatory modalism does not stick. For it would imply that Augustine and Aquinas respectively hold a species of modalistic trinity *ad intra*. But they do not. One must distinguish between 'numerical' monotheism and modalism. Nevertheless, it is not *prima facie* obvious how Barth's particular trinitarian reflection here holds together God and Jesus. It is really, I think, in Pannenberg that we find meta-trinitarian reflections that self-consciously penetrate to the essence of this matter.

[28] This understanding of divine self-revelation remains in place as a fundamental presupposition of Pannenberg's systematic theology. See Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology* Vol 1 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 222-57.

[29] Pannenberg, "Introduction", Pannenberg (ed.), *Revelation as History* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1969), 5. [Emphasis mine]. The sense in which the second sentence is meant is that the difference the human Jesus represents in his humanness is cancelled or abolished at a higher level, i.e., at God's level, and posited as identity. This is a reality represented by the movement of Hegelian *aufhebung* which, crucially, posits, in this case, an *a posteriori* identity of the kind discovered by Saul Kripke (Saul Kripke, *Naming and Necessity* [Oxford: Blackwell, 1982]). In Pannenberg the difference posited by the human Jesus is cancelled or abolished at the divine level within God's being—difference as identity. From the divine 'perspective', distinction is subsumed as distinction—to be an identity.

[30] Ibid, 6.

[31] Ibid. [Emphasis mine].

Revelation is unique in this sense precisely because it is self-revelation: God reveals *himself*. There is no "gap" between revealer and revelation. In *Jesus—God and Man,* Pannenberg continues to think of self-revelation as self-same self:

> Self-revelation in the strict sense is only present where the medium through which God makes himself known is not something alien to himself ... but on the contrary, results in the knowledge of the divinity of God for the first time. That happens when the distinction between the revealing medium and God disappears with the coming of a more precise understanding.[32]

Crucially, Pannenberg unites the language of self-revelation with the trinitarian vocabulary of the classical tradition, in this case the philosophical language of essence. In *Revelation as History* he writes that: "the unity of Jesus with God is a unity-in-revelation and as such implies a unity of essence."[33] Similarly, in *Jesus—God and Man*, he speaks of an "identity of essence" between Jesus and God[34] held together by self-revelation: "That revelatory presence and essence belong together is expressed by the concept of self-revelation."[35] But the revelatory presence of God includes the idea of substantial presence, of "an essential identity of Jesus with God."[36] This means that Jesus' relation to God is an "identity of essence ... with God in the revelatory event."[37] If we understand self-revelation in the strict sense we should understand that "the Revealer and what is revealed are identical."[38] Hence:

> ...to speak of a self-revelation of God in the Christ-event means that the Christ-event, that *Jesus*, belongs to the essence of God himself. If this were not so then the human event of God's life would veil the God who is active therein and exclude his full revelation.[39]

Pannenberg speaks of "unity of essence" (or "oneness of essence") and "identity of essence." Both terms are consistent with numerical and generic sameness. But in the context of his affirmation of self-same self, Pannenberg is to be interpreted with conceptual language commensurate with numerical sameness. Here is the substance of his argument:

> To say God knows *himself* is to speak of self-same self. This corresponds to the numerical sameness of monotheism. Here is the really important proposition: to say God knows *himself* as object to be this object, Jesus Christ, is *also* to speak of self-same self; but it is *also* to speak of distinction. This is the core of Pannenberg's christological monotheism and constitutes the counterpart to classical trinitarian monotheism (distinction compatible with numerical sameness of essence).[40] The Father reveals *himself* in the Son—Jesus—even given the distinction between the two (just as in the classical tradition: the Father and the Son are self-

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[32] Pannenberg, *Jesus—God and Man* (London: SCM, 1968), 130;

[33] Pannenberg, "Introduction", 7.

[34] Pannenberg, *Jesus—God and Man*, 127.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid, 129. [Italics mine].

[40] We know from classical trinitarian monotheism that numerical sameness can accommodate distinction. So the answer to the question whether *mutatis mutandis* numerical sameness can be also be true of Pannenberg's christological monotheism is, yes.

same essence yet the Father reveals *himself* in the Son). Where Pannenberg is to be distinguished from the classical trinitarian tradition is that he does not hold the hypostasis of the human Jesus to be the Logos or Word (Jesus is not enhypostatic—has his existence in—the Word); rather—in his identity with the Son—he exists substantially (has his life) in God the Father.[41] The core proposition above is to be distinguished from Praxean modalism (Pannenberg clearly rejects this kind of numerical sameness because it is one that excludes distinction).[42] The reality represented by *aufhebung* guarantees this.

Notwithstanding then, the apparent ontological gap between YHWH and Jesus, self-revelation—understood in the strict sense Pannenberg insists has to be the case if it is to be *self*-revelation—holds them together in one singular divine self. Self-revelation in this sense issues in numerical sameness and thus ensures monotheism. And, *notwithstanding distinction within the being of God*, self-revelation is a sufficient condition of 'unitary' monotheism. This is precisely what Pannenberg presupposes when he writes: "If *Jesus' history and his person now belong to the essence, to the divinity of God, then the distinction Jesus maintained between himself and the Father also belong to the divinity of God*."[43]

The distinction Jesus maintained is one of "obedience" (the Pannenbergian parallel to Aquinas's oppositive relations):

The relation of Jesus as Son to the Father may be summarized with primitive Christianity as 'obedience.' It is therefore a relation proper to the essence of God himself. God is not only 'Father' but as the God who is revealed in the resurrection of Jesus he is in his eternal essence also 'Son'[44]

A little later he adds:

In contrast to the modalists' position, the differentiation of Father and Son, which is characteristic of the relation between the historical Jesus and God must be characteristic of the essence of God himself if Jesus as a person is God's revelation.[45]

Nevertheless, I wonder whether there is a suppressed premise in Pannenberg's argument at this point. The ultimate horizon of Pannenberg's christological monotheism is the apocalyptic horizon identified in God's general resurrection of the dead at the end of history. YHWH reveals *himself* in the general resurrection of the dead (one profound implication of the end of history being *this* event is that God reveals *himself* as omniscient and omnipotent). But *one* of these dead is resurrected in the middle of history—Jesus. In this sense, Jesus is the first-fruits of the dead (1 Cor. 15:20). But crucially, in this sense he is indirectly identical with YHWH himself who is directly identical with the end of history which, by virtue of its very nature, includes within itself the totality of history.[46] We can conclude that YHWH's revelation of himself at the end of history is precisely his self-same self—numerically the same self; and in this context, by the above logic, YHWH and Jesus are bound together in

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[41] Ibid, 337-44.
[42] Ibid, 160.
[43] Ibid, 159. [Pannenberg's emphasis].
[44] Ibid.
[45] Ibid, 160.
[46] See Pannenberg, "Dogmatic Theses on the Doctrine of Revelation", Pannenberg (ed.), *Revelation as History*, 125-58.

one singular numerically the same divine self. Indeed, YHWH and the general resurrection are future: that self-same self hasn't been revealed *yet*—except it has, of course: *in Jesus* (our *faith* in the general resurrection is not in vain'; but in this context the resurrected Jesus is not a matter of faith but is distinguished from it in being *actual history*).

But this means that YHWH's self identified in the general resurrection of the dead is *YHWH as object*. YHWH reveals *himself* as object in the general resurrection of the dead. Just as numerically the same divine essence guarantees monotheism in the classical tradition, numerically the same divine self constitutes a sufficient condition of monotheism in the modern tradition. The self-reflexivity of the divine self guarantees *monotheism. But that this numerically the same self-reflexive self incorporates within itself a subject-object distinction vouchsafes for christological monotheism.* This is the suppressed premise in Pannenberg's argument which needs must frame his conclusion of Jesus' obedience as "distinction within the numerical sameness of the divine self." *Distinction within the numerical sameness of self is already guaranteed by divine self-differentiation defined by the subject-object schema* (together they constitute a self-reflexive theological subject-object schema).

YHWH as subject—this subject—knows himself as object to be this object, Jesus (or: "knows himself to be this object, Jesus, and *therefore* as object"). YHWH as subject, *YHWH*—and YHWH as object, *Jesus*—are held together by numerically the same self-reflexive self. The subject-object distinction is necessary because we are talking about YHWH and (the human) Jesus respectively. But if divine self-reflexivity is a sufficient condition of numerical sameness of the divine self then the latter holds *notwithstanding non-indiscernibility* in Leibniz's sense[47] that is implicit in the subject-object distinction. If God knows *himself* to be this—if this is true—then numerical sameness applies to God and Jesus.[48] Moreover: the subject-object distinction is necessary if God is to be *known*, not merely his effects; self-same self-reflexive self is necessary because it guarantees that it is *God* who is knowable.[49]

The hermeneutical question, whether the apocalypticist *meant* the kind of eschatological monotheism on which Pannenberg builds his Christological monotheism, is beyond the scope of this essay. My remit is to employ Pannenberg's intuitions here as a means of illuminating a biblical text central to christological monotheism, John's Gospel. My question is: what would it mean to say that John's Gospel meant the kind of Christological monotheism Pannenberg espouses? What would it mean say that we are warranted in interpreting John this way?

IV. John's Gospel and Christological Monotheism of a Numerical Kind

As Richard Bauckham has shown, the New Testament witness evidences an early high

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[47] See n. 16.

[48] YHWH as subject—this subject defined as "non-object" in relation to us—knows himself in this relation to be object yet numerically "himself." To give an illustrative example: to say that YHWH knows *himself* to be omnipotent and omniscient implies monotheism but not christological monotheism. But to say that YHWH knows *himself* to be this object, Jesus, does. It implies distinction within 'unitary' monotheism.

[49] One reason Barth rejected natural theology is because he thought that, only if God first knows himself as object, can we know him as object—can he be object for us; otherwise God is unknowable. Barth, *Church Dogmatics* II/1, (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1957), 341.

Christology identifiable in terms of divine-identity Christology. In Mark for example—but also in Paul—Jesus is referred to in terms of the divine name in order to include him in the divine identity, the identity of YHWH-God (by this means—but not only this—the evangelists *mean* to include Jesus in the divine identity).[50] My question regarding John is this. What if John not only endorses this Christology—he is in fact its paradigm-case—but fulfils it in the context of affirming a Jesus compatible with a 'high' monotheism, a 'unitary' monotheism affirming numerical oneness? What if the means by which John does this is to hold together YHWH and Jesus in one singular divine self-reflexive self?

Prima facie, it is not inconceivable that at least some of the biblical witness—the late biblical witness, say, of John's Gospel—wanted to affirm the divinity of Jesus *to the extent* that this Jesus was understood in some sense as numerically the same as the Father (a high Christology *and* a high monotheism). John's Gospel may be the moment when monotheism was re-defined precisely by inspired reflection on the phenomenon of the divinity of Jesus, and as such may already have anticipated any movement of Jewish monotheism in this direction (the author of John indirectly the brilliant creator of monotheism of a "unitary" or "numerical" kind in order to show the 'highness' of divinity of his Jesus). Alternatively: John's Jesus could have been a response not to biblical monotheism but to rabbinic Judaism's formulation of YHWH's oneness traceable back to the Hellenistic theological influences of the kind found in Philo of Alexandria.[51] Or, more specifically: John's Gospel could have been a response to the charge that Christianity propagated a "Two Powers" 'heresy' (and dealt with the aftermath of a situation in which its own particular christological monotheism had been condemned when it was intended as a solution to this problematic).[52]

John's reference to Jesus in terms of the divine name is not merely a way of including Jesus in the identity of YHWH-God as Mark's Gospel may have it; rather, it is a means by which John includes Jesus in YHWH's self-reflexive divine self understood in a sense akin to numerical sameness. Clearly, what it

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[50] Bauckham, "Mark's Christology of Divine Identity", unpublished paper, delivered at Tyndale House, Cambridge, UK, at a conference on divine-identity Christology in December 2008. Relevant material is to be found in Bauckham, "God's Self-Identification with the God-forsaken", *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 264-266, esp. n.41; Bauckham, "Paul's Christology of Divine Identity", *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 182-232.

[51] Philo, *Legum Allegoriae*, II.1.
(http://archive.org/stream/philonisalexand08wendgoog#page/n215/mode/2up). H. A. Wolfson, *Philo: Foundations of Religious Philosophy in Judaism, Christianity and Islam* Vol 1 (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1947), 198; Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Kalam* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1976), 75. Francesca Calabi, *God's Acting, Man's Acting: Tradition and Philosophy in Philo of Alexandria* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), Chapter 1.

[52] See Dunn, *Jesus, Paul, and the Gospels* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 83-91; Larry Hurtado, "First-Century Jewish Monotheism", *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 71 (1998), 23-5; A. F. Segal *Two Powers in Heaven: Early Rabbinic Reports about Christianity and Gnosticism* (Leiden: Brill, 1977). "The use of Scripture in first- and second-century Judaism ... marked a watershed in the biblical doctrine of God. At that time it channelled the imprecise monotheism of the Old Testament and early Judaism in two irreversible directions. On the one hand Jewish-Christian apostles and prophets, via 'corporate personality' conceptions and Christological exposition, set a course that led to the trinitarian monotheism of late Christianity. On the other hand the rabbinic writers, with their exegetical emphasis on God's unity, brought into final definition the unitarian monotheism of talmudic Judaism." E Earle Ellis, *The Old Testament in Early Christianity: Canon and Interpretation in the Light of Modern Research* (Grand Rapids: Baker 1991) 115-6.

means to say that we are warranted in interpreting John in this way must acknowledge that "self-reflexive divine self" and "numerical sameness" are not to be found in John's vocabulary. Nevertheless, the mere fact that it is possible for us as modern readers to interpret John correctly (commensurability exists), implies that we could validly read such concepts out of (not into) John's Gospel even were they not themselves explicitly used by its author. Concretely we can do this because, as James Dunn says, John is straining at the very limits of available language to break through to a new conceptualization or at least to a "conceptualization in transition."[53] *John attempts to articulate a Christology whose outstanding feature is that it comes as close as Christology can to fulfilling a 'unitary' monotheism while remaining Christology (precisely christological monotheism as Pannenberg understands it).* To interpret a theologian whose "conceptualization in transition" is to satisfy just this 'regulative' rule—John attempts to describe a unity between Father and Son so close that Father and Son are numerically the same even as distinctive[54]—is, among other things, to demonstrate that our concepts satisfy the regulative rule as a best approximation to the particular truth or truths John is trying to convey.

V. YHWH and Jesus in John's Gospel: 'Jesus is the Invisible God's Visible Conception of Himself'

Of the canonical Gospels, only John presents Jesus as the *self*-revelation of God.[55] As Dunn puts it, John presents Jesus as "God's self-revelation in its fullest form."[56] But this does not mean that the Evangelist understood Jesus as the self-revelation of the Son of God or the *Logos asarkos* (as the classical tradition has it). Rather, if John's Jesus is the self-revelation of anything, he is the self-revelation of God (the Father).[57] This fact, as Dunn says, makes better sense in a historical context whose 'main issue at that period was monotheism. Was Christianity a monotheistic faith from the start?[58] Jesus as the *self*-revelation of God the Father is in fact a primary piece of evidence for the thesis that John is proposing a Christology that comes as close as Christology can to fulfilling a "unitary" monotheism while remaining Christology. But if this is so—Jesus not as a medium of divine

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[53] James D G Dunn, *Christology in the Making* (London: SCM, 1989), 265. He continues: "Perhaps what we see in John is the clarification of the nature and character of God which Christ afforded brought to the point where the available categories of human language are in danger of simplifying the conception of God and Christ too much. [...] It is a measure of John's inspired genius that he hazarded so much and yet pulled it off so successfully—shaping Christian thought about God and Christ for all time." Ibid, 264-5. And: "In short, we can sum up John's contribution to the beginnings of Christology thus: *John is wrestling with the problem of how to think of God and how to think of Christ in the light of the clarification of the nature and character of God which the Christ-event afforded.* If he runs the danger of over-simplifying, or over-stretching the Jewish belief in God as one, that is more an accident of the conceptualization in transition that he used than deliberate policy." Ibid, 265.

[54] I adapt a phrase from C. H. Dodd: John intends "to describe a unity between Father and Son so close that to see the Son is tantamount to the *visio Dei*." C. H. Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: CUP, 1953), 194.

[55] Dunn, *Christology in the Making*, xxvii-xxviii.

[56] Dunn, *Jesus, Paul, and the Gospels*, 90.

[57] "It would be better to speak of the Johaninne John as the *incarnation of God* … not as the incarnation of the Son of God (which seems to be saying something other)." Dunn, *Christology in the Making*, xxviii. In other words, *saying something other than that which John's Gospel says*.

[58] Ibid.

self-revelation but as the self-revelation itself—then insofar as John holds anything together in one singular self-reflexive divine self it is not the Father and his Son the *Logos asarkos*; rather, it is YHWH and his Son Jesus.

To reiterate. In section III I argued that intrinsic to the modern Christological tradition as delineated by Pannenberg are two parameters: 1) a subject-object distinction; 2) numerically the same self-reflexive divine self. In this section I wish to show how John's Gospel can be understood in terms of these parameters, and hence the way in which christological monotheism as understood by the modern tradition is present in the Gospel. If the argument is valid it allows us to conclude that the Gospel seeks to hold together YHWH-God and the human Jesus together in one singular self-reflexive divine self: "God invisible" and "God visible"—the classical tradition notwithstanding.[59] The hermeneutics of the case is that God's own conception of himself—the Logos who is Jesus—comes into the world (1:9-11) and in this sense becomes flesh (1:14).[60] The basic structure of the argument is:

1. Jesus is the Logos;
2. The Logos is God's visible conception of himself;
3. Jesus is the invisible God's visible conception of himself.

It is essentially a theologian's argument but it draws upon biblical and historical studies when necessary. This is especially true of the first premise.

1. Jesus is the Logos

In order to show that John holds Jesus to be the identity of the Logos, I want to employ the biblical parameter of the historical formation of the biblical text that is John's Gospel and follow its trajectory as a way of constraining the authorial intention or horizon of the Evangelist or redactor with regard to the opening verses of the Prologue. As regards the historical formation of the Gospel, it is the scholarly consensus that the Prologue is a later

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[59] The classical tradition espouses a form of "highest being" theology as understood by the Athanasian creed. I paraphrase: 'The Father is invisible, the Son invisible, and the Holy Spirit invisible. And yet they are not three invisibles, but one invisible.' The modern trinitarian tradition—Pannenberg and Robert Jenson to name but two of its most illustrious proponents—rejects this creed on the grounds that it is incompatible with the reality of the human Jesus, "just as he is", in the trinity. In particular, the Logos is visible, not invisible because Jesus is the Logos—is the argument of this essay. For a detailed analysis of the origins and logic of the essentially invisible trinity in early church doctrine, see Michel René Barnes, "The Visible Christ and the Invisible Trinity: Mt 5:8 in Augustine's Trinitarian Theology of 400", *Modern Theology* 19 (3) 2003, 329-355, esp. 330-42. "Origen is the occasion of a tectonic shift in *Greek* Trinitarian theology when he describes the Son as the 'invisible' image of the [invisible] Father, but it is not until Hilary [of Poitiers]—one hundred and thirty years later—that a Latin will argue that the Son too is invisible, and that the Son must be invisible if he is truly the image." Ibid, 341.

[60] As James Dunn has it, 1:14 can be read as reiterative of 1:9-11. James D. G. Dunn, *Christology in the Making: A New Testament Inquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation* 2nd Edition (London: SCM, 1989), 244. Alternatively, it can be argued that *sarkos* is used in 1:14 to mean "made 'sin' or 'judgement'" and therefore 1:14 is non-reiterative. See Thomas Weinandy, *On the Likeness of Sinful Flesh: An Essay on the Humanity of Christ* (London: Continuum, 1993), 130-1.

prefix to the substance of the Gospel 1:19-20:30.[61] If we follow the authorial intention of the Evangelist (or a later redactor) we can infer that the author understood 1:1-18 in the light of a narrative which can be understood to be autonomous and self-contained (complete) in the sense in which each of the Synoptic Gospels are. The intention in the substance of the Gospel informed and determined his intention behind the meaning and reference of the Prologue rather than vice-versa (the meaning of the substance of the text determines the meaning of the Prologue rather than vice-versa).

One implication of this hermeneutical strategy is that it is the name and person of Jesus that semantically and ontologically fleshes out who the Logos is; rather than (as the classical tradition and, in particular, Chalcedon has it) the name and person of the Logos informing us who Jesus is. This is true both of 1:1-18 and 1:19-20:30.

One substantial piece of evidence that is this so as regards the Prologue pertains to John 1:12 and the clause "... those who believed in his name ...." Dunn proposes a persuasive reconstruction of the once independent Logos poem in which 1:12 appeared with the clause absent.[62] The presence of the clause in the final form that is the Prologue is therefore best understood as a redactional insertion derived from the substance of the Gospel. According to Larry Hurtado the context of the clause indicates that this reference can only be to Jesus' name: those who believed "in his name" believed "in the name of Jesus"—worshiped "in the name of Jesus."[63] This means that the 'he' of the first clause of 1:10 and the 'him' of the second clause both refer to Jesus. The second clause in particular claims that, "though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him." Given 1:12 this must refer to Jesus. But if this is so, so too must 1:3: "Through him all things were made." This is because the second clause of 1:10 is a reiteration of 1:3. The same logic follows for 1:1-2.[64] It is not easy to avoid the conclusion that John wants us to identify Jesus earlier in the narrative than the locus of his birth (the presupposition to him being "in the world" [1:9]), indeed earlier than creation (1:3).[65]

As regards the substance of the text: it is significant that Jesus is never referred to

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[61] The fact that Raymond Brown declared this to be the case in an introductory textbook is surely testimony to this. See Brown, *Introduction to the Gospel of John* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 40; 64. According to Dunn, the Prologue pre-existed or existed independently of John's Gospel as a Logos "poem", Dunn, *Christology*, 239-40. See also Dunn's analysis of the impersonal Logos in 1:1-18 personalised by the personal Son of 1:19-20:30, Ibid, 245-6.

[62] Ibid, 240.

[63] Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 365. Chapter six of this book, "Crises and Christology in Johannine Christianity", 349-426, is hugely informative on the human Jesus as the fundamental referent of John's Gospel.

[64] On the earthly Jesus as the referent of the Logos, see Ibid, 365-9.

[65] The relevant structure in question is:

"[1] In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. [2] He was with God in the beginning.[3] Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. [4] In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. [5] The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. [...]

[9] The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world.

[10] He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. [11] He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. [12] Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God."

anywhere in 1:19-20:30 as the Logos either by himself or by anyone else. It may be true to say that one reason this is true is because of the Logos' association with creation (hence only in the Prologue does it appear).[66] But this is not mutually exclusive of another reason, namely, the Logos is not mentioned in 1:19-20:30 because the Evangelist intends the self-sufficient narrative of 1:19-20:30 to refer to no one other than the human Jesus—this intention holds before the prefixing of the Prologue and it holds afterwards. We can therefore infer that the Evangelist did not understand Jesus' person in the substance of the text to be identical with—in the sense of ultimately reducible to—a person who is the person of the Logos independently of Jesus himself;[67] and this intention holds before the prefixing of the Prologue and it holds afterwards.

Two central scenes from the substance of the Gospel illustrate this. First, Thomas' confession in the resurrection-appearances narrative of chapter 20. When Thomas addresses the eschatologically risen Jesus as "My Lord and my God" (20:28), he is not to be interpreted in that moment as "seeing" beyond the human Jesus to the person of the Logos (nor is Jesus to be interpreted in that moment as revealing himself to be as such). Neither interpretation is germane to the passage. Rather, in his confession Thomas recognizes and addresses the risen Jesus as the one he knew in his immediate past—the earthly Jesus, his earthly Jesus. This is the rationale behind Thomas's reference to the seeing and feeling the nail-marks in Jesus' hands. It is Jesus who is the ultimate referent in chapter 20 not the Logos (there is in fact no explicit reference to the Father-Son Christology either: John's immediate concern is the resurrected *Jesus*).

Second, Jesus' utterance of the absolute "I am" saying at 8:58. The high Christology explicit in the absolute "I am" saying of 8:58—"Before Abraham was I am'—(and elsewhere: 8:24) refers to an "I" that is no one other than Jesus himself. The Evangelist prefixes the Prologue and especially the first two verses in order to refer to Jesus' pre-existence: the "same" was in the beginning with God. 8:58 is to be understood as making a statement about the person of Jesus, not about a person that is the Logos who exists

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[66] Richard Bauckham, "Monotheism and the Gospel of John", Richard N. Longenecker (ed.), *Contours in Christology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 151. Had there been no semantic uncertainty regarding the identity of the Logos in the Prologue—its own hypostasis or Jesus or no hypostasis at all?—the fact that "the Logos" does not appear in 1:19-20:30 but only appears in the Gospel in the context of creation (hence only in the Prologue), would have been perfectly explicable. An obvious counterpart to the Logos of the Prologue and the Jesus of 1:19-20:30 is Elohim in Genesis 1:1-2:4a and YHWH in 2:4b-2:25. Until we encounter YHWH in the Yahwistic narrative we don't know the identity of Elohim in the Priestly one.

[67] Analogously, in the substance of the text itself, the name and person of Jesus tells us who the Son is (Jesus)—rather than the Son telling us who Jesus is (a Son who is someone ultimately *other* than Jesus himself). The natural sense of the text is that it is Jesus who refers to himself as the 'Son'—and who is the Son; not that it is the Son who refers to himself as Jesus (but, crucially, could have referred to himself as someone other than this). In the substance of the Gospel, the ultimate referent that is Jesus refers to himself as "the Son." Subsequently, to this semantic chain is added the Logos of the Prologue. Who is the Logos? The Son. Who is the Son? Jesus.

independently of Jesus. (The resurrected Jesus too is no less the one who was in the beginning with God. He remains the one who says, "Before Abraham was I am.")[68]

The backwards trajectory of 8:58 *to* eternity is complemented by the forward trajectory *from* eternity implicit in another thematic central to the Gospel, namely this protological Jesus is the precisely the one who is sent by the Father. The Johannine Jesus frequently speaks of "him who sent me" (4:34; 5:24, 30, 37; 6:38f, 44). Again: the implication is that insofar as the Logos has personhood, Jesus supplies it. The sending of Jesus means that Jesus is the one who is coming—such that when he comes it can be said: "Jesus Christ has come in the flesh" (1 John 4:2; 2 John 1:7).[69] This inference constitutes a central premise in the argument below.[70]

2. The Logos is God's Visible Conception of Himself

Here is the crucial second premise of my argument. The one who the Father has sent—the bearer of the divine name "I am"—is the one who says: "The one who looks at me is seeing the one who sent me" (12:45); "Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father?'" (14:9). 'Who sees me sees the Father': Jesus—the Son—is to be understood as the mirror of God the Father. If we extrapolate backwards from the substance of the Gospel to the Prologue, and employ these sayings as a constraint on the semantics of the first two verses of the Prologue—especially 'the Word was with God and the Word was God (the same was in the beginning with God)'—we can reach the following theologically significant exegetical conclusion: *The Word that John says was God (and indeed is God) is none other than the visible Word in which (or through which) God conceives himself.*

3. Jesus is the invisible God's visible conception of himself

Within the framework of John's theology, *only* the conclusion at the end of the last paragraph can explain—as in engender—the truth of 12:45 and 14:9.[71] Only this explains *why* it is the case that seeing the Son is seeing the Father. *But in the context of 12:45 and 14:9 the semantics of 1.1-2 do not give us an invisible Logos identical with the Father's conception of himself, but a visible Logos identical with the Father's conception of himself.*[72] The Logos in the exegetical context of the opening verses is none other than Jesus—the Son who is the visible mirror of the

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[68] In conjunction with this, John has Jesus remember pre-existent events (e.g., 8:14; 17:5)—surely theological commentary to the effect that the identity of the Logos is Jesus himself. See Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ*, 365; 368-9.

[69] The argument doesn't seem to be *whether* Jesus is the hypostasis of the Logos or not; it is whether Jesus the Logos has come in the *flesh* apprehensible by the senses as narrated by 1 John 1:1. The referent of this particular verse is the one who is 'the resurrection and the life', Jesus.

[70] Robert Jenson affirms the centrality of the "sending of the Son" motif to theological reflection on the matter of the *Logos asarkos*. Robert W Jenson, 'Once more the *Logos asarkos*', *International Journal of Systematic Theology* (13) 2 (2011), 130–133.

[71] John 12:41 can be interpreted as saying that Isaiah's *visio Dei* described in 6:1-5 is a vision of Jesus, precisely the "glorious/glorified" Jesus. See Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ*, 374-81. The implication is that seeing the "glory" that is the human Jesus is to see the "glory" of God and is, therefore, to see God.

[72] This makes sense of what John means when he says that the Word "was with [*pros*] God [i.e. in relationship with God], and was God" at 1:1. The relationship is none other than the one implied by the particular form self-reflexivity takes—which in turn implies numerical sameness.

invisible Father—and who is himself "God visible" as the Father is "God invisible": "No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known" (1:18). The "divine name" theology embodied in the absolute "I am" sayings—pervasive in the substance of the Gospel—is decisive for the claim in the opening two verses of the Prologue that this self-reflexive self is a wholly divine self. But though one shouldn't over-estimate the influence of Philo's conception of the Logos,[73] it is not coincidental that the Evangelist or redactor employed a conceptual apparatus perfectly fitted to represent the "invisible-visible"/ "transcendent-immanent" dimension of God. Dunn writes:

> The Fourth Evangelist clarified the tension that had always been present in the Jewish conception of God—between God transcendent and God immanent .... For he identified the impersonal Logos with the personal Son, and presented Jesus as the incarnate Logos who explains the unseeable God, the (immanent) Son who makes the (transcendent) Father visible (1:18; 12:45; 14:9).[74]

John's Jesus "explains" the unseeable God by "making" him "visible." The Fourth Evangelist therefore operates with a distinction between God transcendent (invisible) and God immanent (visible). This reality can be materially explained by the invisible God's visible conception of himself.[75]

The Father to whom John refers to in John 1:18 is of course Israel's God, YHWH. John's commentary here is in fact testimony to a fundamental feature of the Old Testament regarding its representation of God: YHWH, "God Invisible."[76] To say that no one has ever seen YHWH is to say among other things that YHWH is essentially invisible (the invisible God to whom Colossians 1:15 refers). But to say that YHWH is invisible is itself to say that YHWH himself is never object for us and can never become object for us.[77] As von Rad put it, the promise of the paraphrase of the divine name at Exodus 3:14, "I will be who I will be", implies that YHWH's "efficacious presence remains at the same time to some extent

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[73] Ibid, 366.

[74] Dunn, *Christology*, 249-50.

[75] Dunn himself puts it this way: "The Word *became* flesh—not merely entered into, clothed himself with (as the Spirit did Gideon, not merely appeared (as Yahweh appeared to Abraham), but became flesh." Ibid, 240-1. Again: "God's utterance not merely come through a particular individual, but actually become that one person Jesus of Nazareth!" Ibid, 243. But John holds the Son to be hypostasis of the Logos in the opening verses of the Prologue only insofar as the latter pertains to the coming Jesus (John 1:9). Jesus' existence does not begin at John 1:14.

[76] For the view that John 1:14-18 is John's interpretation of Exodus 33-34, see Morna Hooker, "The Johannine Prologue and the Messianic Secret", *New Testament Studies* 21 (01) 1974, 40-58.

[77] To be sure, Walter Brueggemann contrasts YHWH's "visibility" as part of Israel's core testimony of the Old Testament to one particular dimension of its counter-testimony, precisely the "hiddenness" of YHWH. He writes: "In ... its own testimony to YHWH, Israel gives evidence that that the God who is known to be direct and visible in the life of Israel, is on many occasions, hidden—indirect and not visible." Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy* (Minneapolis: Fortress: 1997), 333. But the sense in which Israel holds YHWH to be visible to them is in his 'active transformations' and 'dramatic interventions into the life of Israel' (Ibid, 333). YHWH himself never becomes visible as object until Jesus. This is John's point and the rationale behind John 1:18 in particular.

illusive and impalpable."[78] YHWH is "non-objective" in this sense: Moses cannot see YHWH's "face" (the word most commonly translated "presence" in the Old Testament is the regular word for "face"): one cannot see God's presence—see God—for that would mean seeing the "glory" that is identical with YHWH (Ex. 33:18-23).[79] To say that YHWH is never object in the Old Testament is to say that YHWH is always narrated as non-object in the Old Testament. YHWH is *essentially* non-object—*this singular non-object* YHWH.

John attempts to articulate a Christology whose outstanding feature is that it comes as close as Christology can to fulfilling a 'unitary' monotheism while remaining Christology. Can we validly interpret John in this way? Insofar as John holds that Jesus is the invisible God YHWH's visible conception of himself he can be interpreted as holding together YHWH and Jesus in a singular self-reflexive—therefore self-same—divine self. Armed with this insight we can say of John 10:30 ("I and the Father are one"), that these are the words of a Christian theologian who not only wants to include Jesus within the identity of YHWH as understood by biblical monotheism,[80] but wants to say that Jesus is numerically the same as the Father *according to divine self* (as the classical tradition wants to say that the Father and the Son are numerically the same *according to divine essence*). John's Jesus is not a medium of God's self-revelation. He *is* God's self-revelation; or rather, he is God's *self*-revelation— numerically the same self. The available exegetical data entitles us to say that John is intent on embracing Christological monotheism in Pannenberg's sense. The distinction that John makes between YHWH and Jesus is not really or merely the brute fact of the 'two-ness' of them; it is that they are 'God invisible' and 'God visible' respectively. Notwithstanding distinction within the being of God in the form of YHWH and Jesus understood in this way, 'unitary' monotheism is ensured because self-reflexivity of divine self guarantees numerical sameness. To say that Jesus is the invisible God's visible conception of himself is to say that YHWH knows himself as this object, Jesus Christ. And to say this is to say that YHWH is *subject* to this object (this subject YHWH knows himself to be this object, Jesus Christ). This too can be attributed to John.

Concluding Remarks

Gilles Emery observes of the source of Aquinas's theology of trinitarian numerical sameness:

> In the Triune God, the essence is not 'multiplied' by the three persons, but the three persons are one and the same identical essence. St Thomas came upon this claim in his reading of Scripture. This numerical unity is an absolute prerequisite for maintaining the confession of the unity of God and crediting Son and Holy Spirit with their authentic divinity. St Thomas sees it as a strict exigency of the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed ....[81]

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[78] On this point see Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology* vol. 1 (London: SCM, 1975), 180.

[79] John Goldingay, *Old Testament Theology* vol. 2 (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2006), 101. To say YHWH is essentially invisible is to say YHWH is not contingently invisible. It is not as if God visible is what God invisible would look like were he to become visible. That is to misunderstand the logical grammar at work.

[80] See Bauckham, "Monotheism and the Gospel of John", 149; 163; Bauckham, "Biblical Theology and the Problems of Monotheism", *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 104-6.

[81] Emery, *The Trinitarian Theology of St Thomas Aquinas*, 144.

It was above all Aquinas's reading of John's Gospel which impressed this claim upon his mind.[82] When Aquinas read this Gospel what he saw in the figure of Jesus was the embodiment of the hypostasis of the Logos as the Chalcedonian Creed had it. The narrative anchored to the person of Logos moving around on earth—statements made about, and by, this figure—was the scriptural basis of Aquinas's articulation of trinitarian monotheism in terms of self-same essence. The counterpart modern tradition reads the self-same Gospel and infers the self-same conclusions—except that they're not about the Logos but about the irreducible person of Jesus.[83]

Self-same self implies the truth of Jesus in the trinity *ad intra*. Affirming the divine status of Jesus in this way presupposed his eternal identity. Insofar as John succeeded in representing the latter, he was only drawing in his own unique way an inference that reflected Johannine Christianity's continuity with earliest Christianity with respect to the person of Jesus.[84] One specific source of knowledge regarding Christian worship seems to bear this out. This is early Christianity's designation of specific words as *nomina sacra*.[85] The history of this scribal practice both in terms of the original form it took and its development from that original form may illuminate the course of development of Christian worship between Christianity's inception and the period in which John's Gospel emerged. If it does, it turns out that Johannine Christianity remained close to its historical roots. Just as earliest Christianity's focus of worship had been one of devotion to Jesus then so too was Johannine Christianity's (the reference to the name of Jesus at John 1:12 is significant in this respect).

The evidence of virtually all extant Christian copy bearing on the issue, Old and New Testament, is that the earliest Christians distinguished four words—*Kyrios*, *Theos*, *Iesous*, and *Christos*—from all others by abbreviating them and drawing a line over what was left (it may even be the case that the very origin of this practice lay with the *nomen sacrum* "Jesus").[86] The significance of the existence of this practice is that it allows us to make an informed judgement about *who* earliest Christianity worshipped (hence the designation of these specific names as *nomina divina*). What may be especially illuminating are two things. One is that, though over time, other words or names were added to the practice, the four names remained the core of this sacred lexicon—therefore inclusive of the time of John. The other is that the list of other names subsequently added did not include *Logos* (no copy of John's Gospel has *Logos* as a *nomen sacrum*). That it was not added may have been because of another development in its stead: Jesus ultimately and irreducibly identified as the eternal Son.[87] But

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[82] Ibid.

[83] *Mutatis mutandis*, the respective theological exegeses of the traditions concur in the presence of a particular species of christological monotheism: the Father and the Son as one self-same essence; YHWH and Jesus as one self-same self.

[84] As did in their own way the Synoptic Gospels. See Simon Gathercole, *The Preexistent Son: Recovering the Christologies of Matthew, Mark, and Luke* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006).

[85] On the practice of *nomina sacra* and how it provides insight into early christian worship of the human Jesus, see Hurtado, *The Earliest Christian Artifacts: Manuscripts and Christian Origins* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), chapter 3. Hurtado takes the view that their origin may go back to a time "prior to 70 CE." See also Hurtado, *One Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity* 381-392; 625-7. Hurtado, "The origin of the *Nomina Sacra*: a Proposal", *Journal of Biblical Literature* 117.4 (1998).

[86] The origin of the *Nomina Sacra*: a Proposal", *Journal of Biblical Literature* 117.4 (1998), 655-73.

[87] The argument that it was omitted because reference to the word in scripture is infrequent is to my mind unconvincing.

the evidence of an abiding core lexicon of *Kyrios*, *Theos*, *Iesous*, and *Christos* speaks against this development. We know that at a later stage *Yios* (Son) was added to the practice "especially in reference to Jesus."[88] One can reasonably conclude that the Johannine community did not identify Jesus in terms of the Logos. Aquinas says that the Word is the proper name of the Son.[89] Earliest Christianity seems to be saying, the proper name of the Son is "Jesus." John's Gospel does not deviate from this truth.

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[88] Ibid, 97.
[89] ST 34.2.

YHWH AND JESUS IN ONE SELF-SAME DIVINE SELF: CHRISTOLOGICAL MONOTHEISM AS AN EXPERIMENT IN OBJECTIVE SOTERIOLOGY

Neil B. MacDonald*

Christological monotheism as conceived by the classical trinitarian tradition can be understood as affirming a high monotheism, namely numerical sameness according to divine essence: the Father and the Son are numerically the same as regards divinity. I have attempted to employ the rich conceptual framework implicit in this construal of monotheism in order to understand YHWH and the human Jesus as one self-same divine self.[1] This essay continues in a similar vein: it proposes that one way one might want to conceive of this relationship is to hold together YHWH-God and Jesus in one self-same soteriological self. The essay breaks down into five sections. Section I situates self-same self in the context of the unity of the Old and New Testaments understood in terms of the identity of YHWH enacting his presence in the Passion narrative. Section II begins from the insight that Jesus is YHWH's visible conception of himself and contrasts the implications this may have for Jesus as eternal and Jesus as omnipotent. Perhaps paradoxically, what the New Testament has to say about the eternity of Jesus is easier to discern than what it has to say about his omnipotence. For the purposes of this essay I side with modern biblical scholarship's conception of the historical figure of Jesus as a non-omnipotent human Jesus. It is this Jesus who informs the rationale of sections III-V. The context of section III is that conceivably omnipotence is not central to *who YHWH is* conceived in terms of his personal self (though it is essentially to his being God). I attempt to explain this statement in terms of Luther's quintessential Reformation insight that God is truly known in his kindness and love, not in his power and wisdom. Section IV explores the mileage this insight might have for YHWH's character and name as attested in Old Testament narrative independently of the New. Is there a way of construing the Old Testament as emphasizing YHWH's compassion and mercy over his power and might? And if there is, is there a 'metaphysic' that can shed light on YHWH's personal self? Section V returns to the question of Jesus as the visible self-conception of YHWH in the context of the essentially soteriological character of YHWH. Another of Luther's statements provides the inspiration: "Jesus is the mirror of God's Fatherly heart." In the context of sameness according to soteriological self, the compassion of the real historical Jesus made tangible—made visible—during his earthly life can be understood as YHWH's compassion incarnate. Compassion is at the core of YHWH's self, and accordingly, he knows *himself* as this; and we know *him* when we encounter the human Jesus.

I. Holding the Old and New Testaments Together in YHWH's Self-Reflexive Self

One way of affirming the unity of the Christian Bible is to read the New Testament in terms of the Old. It is arguable that this way is in fact fundamental since it parallels how the

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[1] See Neil B MacDonald, "Christological Monotheism, Numerically the Same Divine Self, and John's Gospel", *American Theological Inquiry* 6:2 (2013), 3-22.

early church understood the relation of the Gospel to Israel's scriptures. As Hans von Campenhausen famously put it, "The problem of the early Church was not what to do with the Old Testament in the light of the Gospel, which was Luther's concern, but rather the reverse. In the light of the Jewish scriptures which were acknowledged to be the true oracles of God, how were Christians to understand the good news of Jesus Christ?"[2]

One way of reading the New in terms of the Old is to understand Jesus in terms of the identity of YHWH. I myself put it this way: YHWH is a desisting, forbearing, merciful God who takes his own judgement on himself in the form of his son, Jesus of Nazareth.[3] The key explanatory element here is not that the religious and civil authorities who bring Jesus to his death are really *de facto* instruments of YHWH such that it is YHWH who is "bearing down" on Jesus ("*Abba*, Father," Jesus said, "everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will." [Mark 14:36, NIV])—YHWH it is who is most present in the passion narrative when he appears most absent. Though YHWH's identification in this respect is essential, the key theological factor *is the presence of the divine self-reflexive self*. It is this that requires the language of christological monotheism. John's characterisation of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane makes the point unsurpassably well. Where Mark has 14:36 at the transition between ministry and passion, John has Jesus' repeated self-identification with YHWH's name: "I am [he]" at 18:4-9. Here is John's Jesus' in the face of imminent arrest:

> [4]Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them, "Who is it you want?" [5]"Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "I am he," Jesus said. (And Judas the traitor was standing there with them.) [6]When Jesus said, "I am he," they drew back and fell to the ground. [7]Again he asked them, "Who is it you want?" "Jesus of Nazareth," they said. [8]Jesus answered, "I told you that I am he. If you are looking for me, then let these men go." [9]This happened so that the words he had spoken would be fulfilled: "I have not lost one of those you gave me."

In the context of the witness of the Gospels taken as a whole, we are, I think, meant to infer the following. The Synoptic Gospels identify the religious and civil authorities with YHWH judging Jesus and John identifies this same Jesus with YHWH. The theological circle is complete: YHWH-God takes his own judgement on *himself* in the form of his son, Jesus of Nazareth.[4]

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[2] Hans von Campenhausen, *The Formation of the Christian Bible* (London: SCM, 1971), 23.

[3] "…there is a doctrine of substitutionary atonement objectively present in the synoptic narratives in which ultimately it is YHWH who takes his own judgement on himself in the form of his son, Jesus of Nazareth. Soteriology is to be understood in terms of the soteriological identity of the God of Israel. Jesus of Nazareth is to be understood in terms of the soteriological identity of the God of Israel. In this sense is Christology subordinate to objective soteriology. But…the first and last and therefore prevailing word of God is not divine judgement but divine love." Neil B MacDonald, *Metaphysics and the God of Israel: Systematic Theology of the Old and New Testaments* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), 183-4. And: "The God of Israel reveals himself to be a judging yet desisting, forbearing, and saving historical identity. It is this God who takes his own judgement on himself—in the form of his son, Jesus of Nazareth." Ibid, 184.

[4] "... God himself accepted death in the form of a crucified Jewish manual worker from Galilee ....", Martin Hengel, *The Cross of the Son of God* (London: SCM, 1981), 181; "In the last resort, in the man

II. Jesus is the Eternal God's Visible Conception of Himself—but is He the Omnipotent God's Visible Conception of Himself?

The claim that the Passion narrative enacts self-same self coheres with a more comprehensive truth, namely that the historical figure of Jesus as attested in the Bible—principally the Gospels and Paul—is to be understood as YHWH's self-same self. What kind of christological monotheism delivers this? According to Wolfhart Pannenberg, it must be one that understands self-revelation as revelation of, precisely, self-same self. Jesus is not the *medium* of God's self-revelation, he *is* God' self-revelation.[5] The ultimate theological objective of such a christological monotheism is to understand "YHWH" and "Jesus" as proper names designating the same self in all possible worlds such that the singular name "the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit" designates the one God.

This objective I would argue is the remit entrusted to us by John's Gospel. The Gospel of John wanted to affirm the divinity of Jesus to the extent that it understood Jesus as in some way numerically the same as the Father (a high Christology *and* a high monotheism). John articulated a Christology that comes as close as Christology can to fulfilling a 'unitary' monotheism while remaining Christology (precisely christological monotheism as Pannenberg understands it).[6]

The specific way it did this was to say that Jesus is the Logos because he is the invisible YHWH-God's self-conception visible (Jesus is the invisible YHWH-God's visible conception of himself).[7] YHWH's visible conception is of *himself* such that to see this is what it means to *see* God and see *God*: to see Jesus is "to see the Father" (John 14:9).[8] To say that YHWH knows himself as object to be Jesus must be guided by this insight. There is no sense in which YHWH can know *himself* to be this object and this object not be him (otherwise, it would not be *him* who is this visible conception).[9] Self-reflexivity of self guarantees numerical sameness notwithstanding the subject-object distinction.

The illocutionary stance of the New Testament as a whole—and certainly it seems to me John's Gospel—affirms the eternal identity of Jesus. YHWH is eternal, so too is Jesus (self-same eternity). The name "Jesus Christ" designates an identity of whom it has to be said in accordance with the First Council of Nicea: "there was not when he was not" (Jesus' name

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Jesus of Nazareth God took death upon himself (cf. 2 Cor. 5:18ff; John 1:1, 14; 19:30)." Hengel, *The Cross of the Son of God*, 262.

[5] For Pannenberg on divine self-revelation as self-same self, see MacDonald, "Christological Monotheism, Numerically the Same Divine Self, and John's Gospel", 8-12.

[6] See Ibid, 12-20.

[7] Ibid, 15-20.

[8] The relationship between YHWH and visible self-conception is not 'metaphysically' contingent but necessary; though it is *a posteriori*. It is contended that divine self-knowledge bears the weight of this claim. Demonstration of this will be a matter for elsewhere than this essay.

[9] What we are after is a 'Christology from above' biblically understood which encompasses the kind of thing N T Wright has to say about the relation between YHWH and Jesus: "Thinking and speaking of God and Jesus in the same breath is not, as has often been suggested, a category mistake. [...] ... if you start with the God of the Exodus, of Isaiah, of creation and covenant, of the Psalms, and ask what that God might be like, were he to become human, you will find that he might look very much like Jesus of Nazareth, and perhaps never more so than when he dies on a Roman cross." N.T. Wright, "Jesus and the Identity of God", *Ex Auditu* 14 (1998), 42–56.

like YHWH's is an eternal name). There was not when YHWH did not conceive himself to be this object, Jesus Christ; there was not when YHWH did not know himself to be this object (in this sense Jesus Christ was in the beginning "with [*pros*] God" (John 1:1). Moreover, it *cannot* be the case that there was when YHWH did not *know* himself thus. For then there is a possible world in which "YHWH" and "Jesus" do not designate the same self; in which case, YHWH and Jesus are not held together in one self-same self. But YHWH knowing *himself* must mean in the context of divine self-knowledge that the one he knows as object is one of whom it must be said "there was not when he was not"[10] (and indeed "there will not be when he is not"). If Jesus is to satisfy this concilar statement, self-same self must hold true even of the dead Jesus (there can be no interruption to the continuity of this particular self). And it does—because of Jesus' resurrection from the dead (because in fact his resurrection is pending); outside of this context, speaking of the dead Jesus' self would be false if not meaningless.[11] In this way, we can say that even the dead Jesus is the second person of trinity.

It is less easy to interpret the hermeneutics of the illocutionary stance regarding what the New Testament has to say about Jesus' power and omnipotence. In the Old Testament YHWH is Elohim the greatest God, and therefore true God in virtue of being the creator of all that is. So we can say that YHWH has power and omnipotence. What then of Jesus? The classical answer straightforwardly says that Jesus possesses this attribute because the identity of Jesus is none other than the eternal omnipotent Word, the *Logos asarkos*, the second person of the trinity *ad intra*. He either completely or partially abstains from its use during his earthly life, would be the logic.

But if Jesus is irreducibly the second person of the trinity, we may have to look for another answer.[12] So let me begin with this observation. The resurrected Jesus is the root of the New Testament reference to Jesus' omnipotence and power. What then should we say about the resurrected Jesus in this respect? The resurrected Jesus can be understood as *the*

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[10] Hence a person who came into existence in 6 BCE, for example—as a non-eternal Jesus might have—does not fulfil this criterion. The preeminent proponent of Jesus' place in the trinity *ad intra*, Robert Jenson, argues that "Jesus Christ" designates an identity who is in the beginning with God and who pre-exists being "born to Mary." It is true of the actual world from eternity that Jesus is the one who is "coming into the world" (as attested by John 1:9). Robert W Jenson, *Systematic Theology* Volume 1: The Triune God (Oxford: OUP, 1997), 94-100; 125-7; 141-4. Jenson, "Jesus in the Trinity" *Pro Ecclesia* 8:3 (1999), 312-324; Jenson, "How does Jesus Make a Difference?", William Placher (ed), *Essentials of Christian Theology* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), 191-205; Jenson, "*Once More the Logos Asarkos*", *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 13:3 (2011) 130-33. The latter is an important clarification of *Systematic Theology* vol I, 141-4.

[11] That it makes sense to say this of the dead Jesus—on the basis of his actual resurrection—is the basis of the joyful Christian invitation to conceive of our dead selves in this way (as dead *selves*). Jesus' divinity in effect allows us to speak truly of our dead selves. When Luther conceives of Jesus raising him from the dead, he has Jesus say, "Doctor Martin, get up!" But it is not a matter of Jesus calling Luther into existence as in the manner of creation but rather of presupposing Luther's self in his command.

[12] I put it this way because the Lutheran understanding of the *idiomatum communicatio* allows for the human Jesus to be predicated with divine attributes.

human Jesus in the mode of God.[13] Indeed, properly understood this must be construed as something like a necessary truth. In order to fulfil the truth of "there will not be when he is not", the resurrected Jesus *must* exist in the mode of God, otherwise he will die; the risen Lazarus cannot satisfy this criterion (he will duly die in the fullness of time).

But Jesus in this mode is Jesus being sustained by the power of God. As Matthew 28:18 has it, YHWH gives—assigns—his power to the exalted Lord.[14] But the sense in which 28:18 has Jesus given this power is explained by the New Testament scholar, Raymond Brown. Brown writes of this passage that in it: "... the risen Jesus appears with all the power of heaven—clearly he has already ascended to God's right hand. Passages like Acts 3:13; 5:30-31; Ephesians 1:20; and 1 Peter 1:21 interpret resurrection in the language of glorification, exaltation, and ascension."[15] In other words, the human Jesus has power and omnipotence solely in virtue of being in God's place (and in particular being at the right hand of God). *The core identity of the resurrected Jesus is the human Jesus* (John 20:28). Outside of God's place, Jesus' supernatural power is not his own but YHWH's power (one implication of Mark 3:22). The Jesus of the Synoptic Gospels does not work miracles himself directly but indirectly through the power of YHWH ("Jesus remembered" as James Dunn has it)[16] The reference to nature-miracles (such as "The Stilling of the Storm" [Mark 4:35-41]), in which Jesus is presented as the direct source of the event, are the author's way of including Jesus in the identity of YHWH and therefore affirming Jesus' divinity.[17]

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[13] I want to focus on just one aspect of this concept. For a fuller exposition one cannot better Karl Barth. See Barth, *Church Dogmatics* III/2 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark), 449-52.

[14] As Pannenberg puts it: "As the Father has sent the Son, he has entrusted the cause of his royal lordship to him and given him his own plenary power, especially the power of judgement and resurrection ...." Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, vol 2 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991), 391. It is in exercising these two powers that the resurrected Jesus "exercises eschatological authority over creation." Sean M McDonough, *Christ as Creator: The Origins of a New Testament Doctrine* (Oxford: OUP, 2009), 41.

[15] Raymond Brown, *The Virginal Conception and the Bodily Resurrection of Jesus* (NY: Paulist Press, 1973), 104.

[16] James D G Dunn, *Jesus Remembered* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009).

[17] See Theissen and Merz, *The Historical Jesus: a Comprehensive Guide* (London: SCM, 1998), 295. See also E P Sanders, *The Historical Figure of Jesus* (London: Penguin, 1993), 83. Nevertheless, the reason that the hermeneutics of the New Testament attestation of Jesus' power are not easy to interpret principally resides in the question of whether Jesus has power and might was true before the resurrection. Pannenberg seems to hold that John 5:22 (cf. Vv. 19ff.) gives already to the earthly Jesus the power assigned to the exalted Lord in Matthew 28:18." Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 391. But whether he holds that John is to be understood as saying the earthly human Jesus actually had this power is another question. The dividing line on the whole issue is probably between those who take such statements literally and those who take them to be strictly theological statements. Clearly, relevant to such a debate is the question how such statements came to be included in scripture. One such discussion can be found in Sean McDonough, *Christ as Creator* (see above). Nevertheless, for the purposes of my particular exercise in philosophical theology, closely allied as it is to biblical exegesis, I am going to presuppose that John's 'sign-miracles' are theological statements rather than statements conveying actual historical events. Moreover, I am going to presuppose one of Barth's central insights to the effect that biblical references to Jesus' instrumental involvement in creation are a way of saying the following. It was on the basis of God knowing himself to be Jesus that he created human beings and the world. It is in this sense that Jesus is rationale for the grace that is creation. Barth, Church

So, in contradistinction to eternity: if the historical figure of Jesus does not have omnipotence and power, in what way can "YHWH" and "Jesus" be said to designate the self-same self? If YHWH's visible conception—Jesus—is of *himself* how can this Jesus be a human Jesus whose essence does not seem to include something akin to power and might? This is the question which provides the back-drop for the rest of the essay.

That the 'core' identity of Jesus—whether resurrected or not—is the human Jesus is of considerable importance to systematic theology. I want to pursue this 'core' identity and juxtapose it another 'core' identity, namely the core identity of YHWH. One way of modelling the relationship between YHWH and Jesus might be to think in terms of a christological monotheism that locates: 1) YHWH's 'core' identity in his soteriological identity and not in his power and his might, and 2), understands Jesus self-reflexively in terms of this particular "core" identity (numerical sameness according to soteriological self).[18] In this respect, one can do no better than begin

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Dogmatics III/1 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1945), 50ff. James Dunn provides an exegetical case for reading the 'instrumental' prepositions of 1 Corinthians 8: 6, John 1:3, Colossians 1:15-20, and Hebrews 1:2-3 in this way. See James D G Dunn, *Christology in the Making* (London: SCM, 1989), 193-4. According to Richard Bauckham, John 1:1-5, 1 Corinthians 8:6, Colossians 1:15-16, and Hebrews 1:2-3 are ways of affirming this inclusion in the context of Second Temple Judaism. Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel: God Crucified and Other Studies on the New Testament's Christology of Divine Identity* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2008), 26-7.

[18] Gottfried Thomasius' kenotic Christology serves as a point of reference in this respect in that it provides a historical precedent for this kind of approach—even though it *eliminates* omnipotence, for example, from the essence of God. As a theologian of the middle of the nineteenth century—Schleiermacher behind him and Ritschl in front—Thomasius is concerned to reconcile philosophical theology with modernity as history, a recognizably metaphysical account of God with the historicity of the human Jesus. What I want to foreground in Thomasius' kenotic Christology is the particular rationale behind it. This is that he attempts to preserve *sameness* between God's essence and the historical Jesus by understanding the incarnation as the subtraction of God's non-essential properties—properties that are true of the God only in relation to creation, and therefore are not true of him independently of creation. For Thomasius, the trinitarian Godhead is to be understood in terms of the respective categories of immanent and relative attributes. The former are defined in terms of the divine attributes of holiness, truth, love, and absolute power, and cannot be given up without God ceasing to be God. The latter—omnipotence (relative power), omniscience, and omnipresence—are termed "relative" because they do not belong to the essence of God but are defined in terms of God's relation to the world. Accordingly, when the person of the Logos (the second person of the trinity *ad intra*) empties himself of omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence, he is only emptying himself of his relative attributes, not his immanent (essential) ones. In this way, the Son—identical with the historical Jesus—retains his immanent attributes. In this way sameness of essence is preserved. Gottfried Thomasius, "Christ's Person and Work, Part II: The Person of the Mediator" in Claude Welch (ed) *God and Incarnation in Mid-Nineteenth Century German Theology: Thomasius Dorner Biedermann* (Oxford: OUP, 1965), 31-101; see also: David Law, 'Kenotic Christology' in D A Fergusson (ed.) *Blackwell Companion to Nineteenth-Century Theology* (Oxford: Blackwell: 2010), 251-279. The problem with this Christology is that it assumes something that neither the Old Testament nor indeed Luther assume. This is that it assumes YHWH is not omnipotent *ad intra*. What I will propose in its stead is a model which achieves sameness of divine self between YHWH and the human Jesus by a similar such move—an augmentation to YHWH (God) instead of to Jesus—but without presuming any kind of kenosis; and without giving up the claim that YHWH is omnipotent *ad intra*. This approach might work, it is argued, because though YHWH knows *that* he is omnipotent, he knows *himself* as this soteriological identity. And this soteriological identity, knows itself as object to be the soteriological identity, Jesus Christ.

with Luther's revolutionary Reformation insight that the core of YHWH-God's being is "kindness and love."

III. Luther: "God is truly known not in his power and wisdom but in his kindness and love"

Who is the divine self YHWH who knows himself as object to be this object, Jesus Christ? Who is YHWH in the Old Testament? There is an undoubted paradox in beginning our answer with Luther given the aim is to hear God's word in the Old Testament for itself and indeed prior to the New Testament. But some of Luther's insights can illuminate some of the best of twentieth-century and contemporary Old Testament studies. Here is one: "God is truly known not when we are aware of his power or his wisdom (which are terrible), but only when we know his kindness and his love."[19] God is truly known *only* in his kindness and love; he is *not* truly known when we are aware of his omnipotence and omniscience. To be sure, Luther doesn't mean that one can know God and *not* be aware of his power and his wisdom. But still, you won't truly know God if this is all you know; or if what you do know doesn't include his kindness and love. Indeed one should go further and make the unambiguous ontological claim that you won't truly know God if you don't know that kindness and love is at the core of his being.[20]

Implicit in Luther's thesis is an "order of being" in YHWH-God's self in the sense that YHWH is truly known in his kindness and his love, not in his power and his wisdom. It is this thesis I wish to explore. The exploration must avoid any kind of Christian supersessionism. Luther's impetus is undoubtedly Christocentric because, for him, God is truly known when we know him as the God who justifies us—who declares us righteous—above all in virtue of our trust in the promises of God given in the words of the Last Supper and executed on the Cross. We not do have to follow Luther in his belief that *without* the revelation of Jesus we *couldn't* know a God who is truly known in his kindness and love (there were Jews in the first century other than Jesus who addressed YHWH as *Abba*).[21] However, we can say that the New Testament endorses, corroborates, and indeed elevates Old Testament testimony regarding a centre of gravity of God's being. Confessing that Jesus is "God visible" is unambiguous testimony to the fact that there is a centre to God's being amid the different and not entirely reconcilable kinds of witness in the Old Testament;[22] and that this centre is

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[19] Luther, "A Meditation on Christ's Passion (1519)", *WA* 2, 141.
http://www.lutheranmissiology.org/Luther%20Meditate%20Passion%20of%20Christ.pdf.
For further commentary on this exposition of Luther, see Paul Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1966), 182-191. Althaus describes Luther's theological take on the human Jesus as a "mirror of the heart of" God to be a new—unprecedented—element in the history of the Christological tradition. Ibid, 182.

[20] Robert Kolb and Charles P. Arand write that: "Luther discovered that Christ's death makes manifest an everlasting mercy and love lying at the core of God's being", Kolb and Arand, *The Genius of Luther's Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 36.

[21] See Theissen and Merz, *The Historical Jesus*, 526-7.

[22] Walter Brueggemann speaks of the "irreducible tension" between "core testimony" and "counter-testimony" regarding the character of YHWH in the Old Testament. Notwithstanding that the core testimony of faithful sovereignty and sovereign fidelity is just that—"core"—it stands in tension with the counter-testimony of hiddenness, ambiguity, and negativity (failure to do justice) in such a way that *its very claim to being core testimony* is (sometimes) put in question. But Christians,

kindness and love. To know that Jesus is "God visible"—and therefore God—is to be able to hold fast to this.

IV. "YHWH, YHWH, compassionate and gracious…"

Luther privileges kindness and love over power and wisdom in God's being because of what is true of God in Jesus Christ. Is this insight consistent with what we can read out of the Old Testament itself? YHWH truly known *only* in his kindness and love, not truly known in his power and wisdom (omnipotence and omniscience)? In the light of Luther's conviction about God, can we detect an "order of being" in YHWH-God in the witness of the Old Testament such that his self is to be identified with kindness and love?

If the meaning of a personal name is its referent, one such source of the thesis may be what the Old Testament tells us about the referent of the divine name YHWH through the paraphrases God juxtaposes to its revelation. Perhaps the most famous paraphrase is God's self-declaration, *ehyeh asher ehyeh,* in Exodus 3:14. Its literal sense is "I will be who I will be." But, according to the classical theological tradition, its meaning is other than the simple literal sense. It does in fact refer to "absolute being" or "absolute existence".("I am who AM"; "He who IS"): YHWH is the one who truly exists—the unique self-existent one who defines what "being" means (and what *perfect* being is). Though YHWH could indeed be this, it is likely that this is not the actual authorial intention behind this particular paraphrase. Proponents of the classical view have to explain why Israel does not cite this meaning as a premise in its claim that YHWH is the greatest God ("Elohim", and therefore true God) in the face of its people's *encounter with the gods of the other Near Eastern religions.* For what the authorial intentionality behind the formation of the biblical text does not do is cite "absolute being" as a premise in its claim that YHWH is the greatest god ("Elohim") and therefore true God.[23] It is not merely that it doesn't cite this meaning externally as it were *to the other religions*; it is that it does not even cite it *internally*—in its own representation *to itself* in scripture in its resolution of these encounters. It does not tell itself anywhere that their god YHWH is Elohim because he has revealed himself to be—and therefore is—identical with absolute being or existence. It is not sufficient to say that it was omitted because every religion's god could make such a claim to "absolute being." This is because the same could be said of a claim Israel actually did make: YHWH is Elohim because he is the creator of all that is. In the Deuteronomic and Deuteronomistic tradition YHWH is Elohim because he is the most powerful of all the gods. Deuteronomy. 10:17 sums both traditions up—and indeed affirms the uniqueness of YHWH: "For the Lord [YHWH] your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome." In the Deuteronomistic tradition, 1 Kings 18:24-39 is a pivotal illustration. In the encounter with the god Baal, the question is: who is Elohim—YHWH or Baal?

Brueggemann suggests, have their own irreducible tension in form of the Cross. See Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, and Advocacy* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Press, 1997), 400-3. Notwithstanding this, however, the determinacy of the real Jesus' compassion, for example, is a comfort in this respect if Jesus is God's numerically the same self-revelation.

[23] See Claus Westermann on Elohim as "the plural of majesty": the grammar of the plural is employed metaphorically to say that YHWH is the god of the greatest magnitude: God. Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1-11* (Minneapolis: Fortress), 245-50.

'…you call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the LORD. The god who answers by fire—he is God.' (1 Kgs 18:24)

Then the fire of the LORD fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench. When all the people saw this, they fell prostrate and cried, 'The LORD—he is God (*Elohim*)! The LORD—he is God (*Elohim*)!' (1 Kgs 18:38-39).

It is to be the remit of later traditions, principally the Priestly tradition (but also deutero-Isaiah), to affirm that YHWH is Elohim because he, not another god, e.g., Marduk, is creator of all that is: "In the beginning Elohim created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1)—the greatest god who turns out to be YHWH (YHWH Elohim of Genesis 2). The "nightmare" scenario is averted that the one who is Elohim might be other than the one who is essentially a compassionate and gracious self. (Elohim an omnipotent and omniscient YHWH-counterpart whose core identity is not one of compassion, graciousness, kindness, and love, but malevolence, ill-will—evil.)

It is for the reasons above that one ought to locate the actual authorial intention in the literal sense of the first person singular Qal imperfect *ehyeh* rather than construe the intention to be other than its literal meaning, the perfect *hayah*, "I am." [24] YHWH says here, "I will be who I will be." Rendtorff's exegesis of 3:14 is germane to locating its soteriological significance: "I will be (with you)" as at 3:12.[25] Indeed, as von Rad put it:

…nothing is farther from what is envisaged in this etymology of the name of Jahweh than a definition of his nature in the sense of a philosophical statement about his being (LXX *ego eimi o ων*)—a suggestion of his absoluteness, his aseity, etc. Such a thing would be altogether out of keeping with the Old Testament. The whole narrative context leads right away to the expectation that Jahweh intends to impart something—but this is not what he is, but what he will show himself to be to Israel. It has always been emphasized, and rightly so, that, in this passage at any rate, הָיָה is to be understood in the sense of 'being present', 'being there' and therefore precisely not in the sense of absolute, but of relative and efficacious, being—I will be there (for you).[26]

In the fullness of time—after "I will be (with you)" has revealed himself to be the one who has delivered Israel from the bondage of Egypt—YHWH is more direct about his compassionate identity. Here we encounter another paraphrase. In the primitive formula at Exodus 34:6 we have Yahwist's characterization of YHWH which when collected together

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[24] A relatively recent and influential example of this kind of interpretation is found in Matthew Levering's *Scripture and Metaphysics: Aquinas and the Renewal of Trinitarian Metaphysics* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), 47-65. What is absent from Levering's discussion is precisely that YHWH is Elohim in the sense of the greatest God, (and therefore God). For implicit in the notion of the greatest, most powerful God is the notion of 'highest God.' It is from this tradition conceivably that the incomparability of God in terms of being emerges. But this is a later tradition than that embodied in Exodus 3:12-15. See Richard Bauckham, 'The "Most High God" and the Nature of Early Jewish Monotheism', *Jesus and the God of Israel: 'God Crucified' and Other Studies on the New Testament's Christology of Divine Identity* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2008), 124-126.

[25] Rendtorff, *The Canonical Hebrew Bible: a Theology of the Old Testament* (Leiden: Deo, 2005), 40.

[26] Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology* volume 1 (London: SCM, 1957), 10.

with the other texts reciting the same—Numbers 14:18; Nehemiah 9:17; Psalms 86:15, 103:8, 111:4, 116:5, 145:8; Isaiah 54:10; Jeremiah 32:18; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2; Nahum 1:3; and 2 Chronicles 30:9—represent "an eloquent testimony to the centrality of this understanding of God's self in the Old Testament"[27]: "YHWH, YHWH, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness".

The juxtaposition of the divine name to the first two terms is indicative of the fact that compassion and graciousness are to be understood as another paraphrase of the name: God's personal name is presented in this way because these two adjectives are meant to tell us *who* YHWH is. We can express this in yet another way: if the meaning of a personal name is simply its referent then YHWH's compassionate and gracious self can be understood as the referent of the name. In the language of modal semantics: this is who YHWH is in all possible worlds. YHWH is soteriological in essence. What we discern in 34:6 is the god whom Israel is in personal relationship outside of the context of this people's encounter with the gods of other religions, principally Assyrian and Babylonian gods. This is who the people "Israel" experience as their god in their original state of innocence or emancipated from the question, who is the supreme god, or God. In the Yahwistic account of the exodus tradition, it suffices for Israel that their god is more powerful than Pharaoh (Exodus 12:12 is a later Priestly insertion)—which fact may be a clue to the authentic origin of the core of this tradition. *In relation to themselves alone*—and this holds good from the Yahwistic through to the Priestly tradition—the emphasis is on personal relationship between YHWH and his people "Israel" as expressed in the Priestly covenantal formula: "I will be the god (alone) for you and you (alone) will be my people."[28]

The "core" of YHWH's self is compassion and graciousness: "YHWH, YHWH, the compassionate and gracious God…"). "YHWH" means this because that's *who* it designates: the *meaning* of a personal name is its referent. There is "an order of being" in YHWH in that he *knows himself as subject to be this self*. There is indeed an intrinsic causal relation between the dispositional description of the divine identity at Exodus 34:6 and the central identifying description of the Old Testament: YHWH, "the one who delivered Israel from the bondage of Egypt." It is one identified in the biblical text itself. Exodus 2:23-25 intimates that the overall impetus and rationale behind YHWH's action is nothing other than compassion ("God heard their groaning…and was concerned about them"). YHWH *cared* about them, and showed compassion when he acted to save them. YHWH delivers this people out of compassion.

It is this particular self who is responsible for YHWH's characteristic saving actions. We can extract a "metaphysics" from Gerhard von Rad's seminal insight to the effect that Israel first knew of YHWH as a soteriological identity in the primal encounter that is the exodus tradition; and only later affirmed that this God was the creator of all things.[29] If compassion

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[27] Childs, *Exodus* (Grand Rapids: WJK, 1974), 612. The subsequent clause regarding judgement (34:7-8) is subordinate to what is said at verse 6, and doesn't appear in a number of the above texts. See Childs, *Exodus*, 296-7.

[28] On this theme see Rolf Rendtorff, *The Covenant Formula* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1998).

[29] Gerhard von Rad, 'The Theological Problem of the Old Testament Doctrine of Creation,' *The Problem of the Hexateuch and Other Essays* (London: SCM, 1984), 131–42. Though von Rad's thesis regarding the dependence of creation on soteriology no longer commands the assent it once did (on this, see Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament*, 39-43; 157-62), it is fair to say that the exodus

is the root of deliverance (saving action), the epistemic order indicated by the historical formation of biblical tradition—the historical precedence and therefore *epistemic* priority of the revealing of YHWH's soteriological identity—can be explained by the thesis that God first revealed what is central or "core" to his being, his identity, the core of *who* he is. *Epistemic order is indicative of the ontological status of this particular personal identity in the order of his being.* It is not that YHWH is not the most powerful (omnipotent) and most wise (omniscient) god, it is simply that the divine name YHWH designates who he is as opposed to "what" he is; creational identity inevitably defers to soteriological identity: Who is the creator of all that is? YHWH. Who is YHWH? "YHWH YHWH compassionate and gracious." This is who YWH is *personally.* The meaning of this personal name is its referent and its referent is this compassionate self, the one "who will be with you."[30]

V. Luther: Jesus is "the mirror of God's fatherly heart"

YHWH knows *himself* to be this compassionate gracious self. He is truly known in his kindness and love because he knows *himself* to be this as the subject he is. *It is this self that he knows as this object, Jesus Christ.* Soteriological self as subject knows itself to be soteriological self as object. In particular, Jesus is YHWH's compassion visible:[31] he is "full of grace [*charis*]

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tradition remains the primal encounter between YHWH and Israel: "it is generally agreed that the exodus from Egypt forms the heart of Israel's earliest tradition" (Childs, *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments* [London: SCM, 1992], 130). Indeed, Childs seemed to hold a view not unlike von Rad's original thesis: "Israel's faith developed historically from its initial encounter with God as redeemer from Egypt…and only secondarily from this centre was a theology of creation incorporated into its faith…" (Ibid, 120). In his last book, *Wisdom in Israel*, von Rad acknowledged the ancient and independent status of aspects of creation faith (von Rad, *Wisdom in Israel* [London: SCM, 1972], 153-5). That the one who delivered them from the 'bondage of Egypt' is creator and not another less compassionate god is not a matter of indifference for this reason: YHWH sustains the regularity of creation as against chaos just as his promises are meant to bring profound relief to the hearts of those apprehensive about their future continuation as this people "Israel." In this sense, the reliability and dependability of the creation cannot be a secondary matter though it is, in the broader sense, a soteriological one.

[30] As was claimed earlier, *from the perspective of the people "Israel"*, the identification of YHWH as Elohim averts the 'nightmare' scenario that the one who is Elohim might be other than the one who is essentially a compassionate and gracious self: Elohim an omnipotent and omniscient YHWH-counterpart whose core identity is not one of compassion, graciousness, kindness, and love but malevolence, ill-will—evil. All the passages from deutero-Isaiah and Psalms that von Rad cites in support of his thesis affirm YHWH as the creator of all that is *before* the affirmation of YHWH's soteriological identity. (Von Rad, "Doctrine of Creation", 133-138). The movement of these passages is always: the creator of the universe—Elohim—is YHWH, *the one who delivered us from the bondage of Egypt, the one who is compassionate, gracious, kind, and loving.* But does this mean that another god could have been Elohim—the creator of all that is—even though YHWH would remain the compassionate, gracious god he is., but not Elohim? I don't think this follows: if YHWH is God in the actual world then YHWH is God in all possible worlds in which he exists. Nevertheless, it can still be said that the soteriological character of YHWH captures who God is in a way that omnipotence and omniscience, for example, do not.

[31] Two theologians who make compassion the centre of theology and perhaps the core of God's being are Oliver Davies and Kevin Vanhoozer. See Oliver Davies, *A Theology of Compassion* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), chapter 11, esp. 240-253; Kevin Vanhoozer, *Remythologizing Theology* (Cambridge: CUP, 2010), chapter 9. Both Davies and Vanhoozer point out that compassion is more than just mercy in that it is ontically unconditional (mercy is a response to an action of perceived

and truth [*aletheia*]" (John 1:14). Raymond Brown notes that this recalls the *hesed* and *emeth* of Exodus 34:6:

> These two words are used here in a unique way reflecting the famous OT pairing of *hesed* and *emeth*. God's *hesed* is his kindness or mercy in choosing Israel without any merit on Israel's part and his expression of this love for Israel in the covenant. Suggested translations are: 'covenant love', 'merciful love', 'kindness', and 'loving-kindness'…God's *emeth* is his fidelity to the covenant promises. Suggested translations are: 'fidelity, constancy, faithfulness.' In Exodus xxxiv: 6 we hear this description of YHWH as he makes the covenant with Moses on Sinai: 'YHWH, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and rich [*rab*] in *hesed* and *emeth*.'[32]

Luther wrote in the Large Catechism of 1529 that Jesus is "the mirror of God's fatherly heart."[33] As a mirror-image—the only mirror image (Jesus is God's only son)—Jesus is the exact representation of God's heart, YHWH-God's heart, as the latter is presented to us in the Old Testament. "Heart" here is to be understood in two closely related metaphorical senses: "heart" as something akin to "compassion"; and heart as the "core" or "centre" of God. Jesus is the mirror of God's heart identified as kindness and love. As Paul Althaus puts it: "When Luther leads us to look at the man Jesus, he is not concerned with showing us that Jesus is God but with showing us what he is, that is, with giving us certainty about the character and heart of God"[34] Knowledge of Jesus' Godness is not based on the particularities of Jesus' human character. But *that* Jesus is God enables us to be sure about "the character and heart of God." In particular, this means that "…God himself stands in the same relationship to us as Jesus did to men."[35] Here the focus is Jesus' ministry. It is Jesus' ministry which endorses, corroborates, and elevates Old Testament testimony to the essentially compassionate identity of YHWH. This is why the majority of Luther's sermons are based on texts from the Synoptic Gospels in which "he treats the individual details of Jesus' relationships with men [and women] and of his life history with unusual love and devotion."[36] Jesus' compassionate self is YHWH's compassionate self as object. The logic of this can be understood in the context of John's relationship to the Synoptic Gospels.

Luther's view of the human Jesus as the mirror of God's fatherly heart was in large part inspired by Jesus' declarations regarding his identity as "God visible" (John 12:43; John

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wrong-doing). Vanhoozer refers to Jesus as "the compassion of God incarnate" (Ibid, 439). Compassion as object, to be sure, but numerically the same compassion nonetheless.

[32] Raymond Brown, *The Gospel According to John I-XII, The Anchor Bible* (New York: DoubleDay, 1981), 14.

[33] The immediate context to this claim is Luther's insight between the kind heart of Jesus and that of God: "…continue and rise beyond Christ's heart to God's heart and you will see that Christ would not have shown this love for you if God in his eternal love had not wanted this, for Christ's love for you is due to his obedience to God. Thus you will find the divine and kind paternal heart, and, as Christ says, you will be drawn to the Father through him. Then you will understand the words of Christ, 'For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son.' [John 3:16]." Luther, "A Meditation on Christ's Passion (1519)."

[34] Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, 185.

[35] Ibid, 183.

[36] Ibid, 183.

14:9).[37] Insofar as we can speak of John having a theology of compassion, the focus is on Jesus as "the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25)—perhaps the most significant predicated "I am" saying in the Gospel (c.f. 1 John 1:1). In John 11 it is telling that Jesus raises Lazarus out of compassion (11: 35: "Jesus wept"; 11:38: "Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb"). YHWH's primal soteriological act in the life of the people "Israel" originated in compassion (Exodus 2:24-6); so too does YHWH's eschatological act of raising the dead to life—this too is ultimately rooted in the disposition of compassion. But simultaneously, John's theological commentary on the compassion of God (John's Jesus is God) is based on a perception of the Jesus of the Synoptic Gospels, the "remembered Jesus." Compassion is in fact the emotion that is most frequently attributed to Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels (Mt 9:36; 14:14; Mk 6:34; Lk 7:13).[38] The two great narrative-parables attributable to the real Jesus—"The parable of the Good Samaritan" (Luke 10:29-37) and "The parable of the Prodigal Son" (Luke 15:11-32)—speak volumes of the character Jesus was, and is. The first spoke of showing compassion to our neighbour ("don't ask if he or she is your neighbour; rather ask if you are this person's neighbour"). The second spoke of Jesus' insistence that compassion was central to who YHWH is. Moreover, healing the sick is what Jesus chooses to do with YHWH's power; and healing the sick is what YHWH chooses to do with his power. The Jesus who proclaims the imminence of God's reign (the kingdom of God) in healing the sick (Mark 1-5) proclaims the nearness of the compassionate Father in the beatitudes (Matthew 5): YHWH the compassionate one is the one whose kingdom will come to pass, the one whom Jesus calls *Abba, Father*.[39]

Concluding Remarks

The theological implication of the above experiment is this. As this particular Christological monotheism has it, there is no ontological gap between Jesus' character and YHWH's character. We can be certain that the character of God can be known through the Jesus who tells the parable of the Good Samaritan because the character of Jesus and, in particular, the compassion of Jesus, is YHWH's compassion, the self-same compassion—just as the classical trinitarian tradition holds that the Son's essence is the Father's essence. Notwithstanding the subject-object distinction, it is numerically the same compassion (compassion as object but nevertheless: YHWH's compassion). And because it is YHWH's compassion made visible,[40] we can be certain that YHWH is precisely this self at the core of his being.[41] Jesus literally shows YHWH's compassion in this sense *as a disposition, not merely as*

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[37] Ibid, 184.

[38] See Vanhoozer, *Remythologizing Theology*, chapter 9.

[39] See in particular Marianne Meye Thompson, *The Promise of God the Father* (Louisville: Baker Academic, 2011). Dunn emphasizes the significance of this practice in the Pauline community. Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, 708-18.

[40] With regard to the concept of disposition, see Gilbert Ryle, *The Concept of Mind* (London: Penguin, 1949), 84; 113-120. "Plotting the logical geography" (to use Ryle's phrase) of the concept of compassion in relation to Jesus would reveal that it is neither an "inner" private mental state nor an "outer" bodily state *(*Ibid, 110-11). My contention would be that the logic of compassion as a disposition lends itself to analysis in terms of 'numerically the same self' in a way that events such as thoughts, impulses do not: Jesus is a compassionate self even as he sleeps—and even as he sleeps the sleep of death in the context of his resurrection.

[41] God's compassion and my compassion are numerically distinct; my compassion and your compassion are numerically distinct; but YHWH's compassion and Jesus' compassion are numerically

action. He is visibly there—his dispositional self—in conjunction with his actions in a way that YHWH himself is not (hence the "epistemic indeterminacy" as regards the core of YHWH's character in the Old Testament). But it may be that we can only speak of YHWH and (a particular understanding of) the human Jesus as the self-same divine self in the manner of the classical trinitarian tradition if we can say YHWH's soteriological self is "first in the ontic order of his being", privileged over his power and wisdom.

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the same with respect to the divine self in virtue of the self-reflexive subject-object schema—except YHWH's compassion is the compassion of a non-object and Jesus' is the compassion of a human being (which object is known by this non-object to be itself as object).

CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA AND THE *LOGOS*

Lois Eveleth*

The word *tradition*, in its very etymology, means *to hand down* and *to hand over*. The word has positive overtones, because what is handed down or handed over is something good. It is what our ancestors have handed down to us, through time, something that is good, something to be treasured. In turn, it is something for us to hand down to those who come after us. And so it is with what we may term our *Christian Intellectual Tradition*, i.e. the broad sweep of cultural and intellectual efforts made by vast numbers of individuals to articulate Christian faith and experience, to understand it, and to disseminate its good news to others.

Such efforts in articulating, understanding, and disseminating began right after the Holy Spirit came down upon the apostles, as we read in the New Testament; and the historian Eusebius was the first chronicler of this early history. In the first century, men who had been taught by Christ's apostles or by disciples of the apostles preached the Gospel and founded many communities of Christians within the Hellenistic Roman world. By the time that the first century was drawing to a close, the need to articulate and write down what Christianity entailed was recognized and addressed by scholars who had converted to Christianity. History calls them *Fathers of the Church, fathers,* because these early scholars gave a new form of life to the Church, an intellectual life. "…it became apparent that Christian theology, if it were to survive, must justify itself philosophically…" [1] Ignatius of Antioch, Justin Martyr, and Irenaeus are among the earliest mentioned by Eusebius. What this emerging group of scholars knew was the literature, philosophy, mythology, and cultural life of the Graeco-Roman world; by means of the latter, they shaped an understanding of Christianity.

In our own on-going search for understanding the Christian faith, we may find many principles by which to be guided; one in particular recommends itself to those of us for whom the first two centuries of Christianity may seem, at times, too distant. There are plenty of models to inspire us; Clement of Alexandria is one of these. We can be enabled to appropriate our complex, multi-layered legacy, partly by seeing how Clement appropriated his.

Clement of Alexandria

Clement was one of the earliest Christian scholars who saw the need to construct conceptual-linguistic frameworks suitable for disseminating Christian faith, or, as he would say, Christian wisdom. Titus Flavius Clemens, which was his legal Roman name, was probably born in Athens, in approximately 150 CE, and had the advantage of vast erudition in the philosophy, literature, history, and mythology of ancient Greece; and it was from this

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[1] Robert P.Casey, "Clement of Alexandria and the Beginning of Christian Platonism," *Harvard Theological Review*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (Jan. 1925): 39-101. More recently, Pope John Paul II agreed, writing in *Fides et Ratio*: "Men and women have at their disposal an array of resources for generating greater knowledge of truth so that their lives may be ever more human. Among these is *philosophy*, which is directly concerned with asking the question of life's meaning and sketching an answer to it. Philosophy emerges, then, as one of the noblest of human tasks." (1998). *Fides et Ratio, On the Relationship between Faith and Reason*. Boston: Pauline Books and Media, 1998.

tradition that he selected anything from Hellenistic culture that he considered useful for his task.[2] He was, in the words of Pope Benedict XVI, "…one of the pioneers of the dialogue between faith and reason in the Christian tradition." [3] While the content of his writings is usually complex, rich, and even dense in allusion and quotation, his approach is elegantly simple, viz. a blending of the new with the old. A convert, he was new to Christianity; an intellectual educated in both Athens and Alexandria, he had cultural treasures at his disposal. Such blending, though, could not be considered mere syncretism. His decisions about the blending were guided by, were consonant with, the faith itself, as its intellectualization was emerging in the late-second and early-third centuries. These decisions were part of the faith itself, as he understood it. More specifically, his approach makes an intimate connection between the Christian and the Platonic concepts of *word* or *logos*; this connection is a singular achievement of early Christianity.

This achievement, though, was not without influential precedents. Emerging out of Judaism, Christianity was close to its spiritual origins; this is especially clear in the inspiration offered by the work of Philo of Alexandria (20 BCE – 50 CE). A Jewish Scripture scholar, Philo adopted concepts and expressions from Platonism to his interpretation and commentary on books of the Old Testament, a new approach which brought Jewish scholarship a wider audience among the educated class in Alexandria.[4] Clement was most at home intellectually with Platonism, which, more than any other intellectual tradition of the ancient world, provided a conceptual framework and vocabulary that would allow for the notion of an utterly transcendent and ineffable God. While encouraged by Philo's hellenization of Judaism and personally disposed by background and education to do so, Clement nonetheless would face a more daunting task in accounting for what would develop into a theology of the Trinity.

When Clement, the Greek intellectual, became known as Clement the Christian, he neither rejected the Bible as unsystematic nor Platonism as pagan. He might have done so; he was not blind to limitations in each tradition. According to his book *Miscellanies*, Christians, who were his readers, were both easier and more difficult to address: easier, in that they were already Christian; more difficult, in that many of them distrusted the intellectual life because they associated such efforts with pagans. Wary and fearful of paganism, especially while there were persecutions of Christians within the Empire, they thought that hearing the faith preached was not only necessary but sufficient for their

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[2] For instance, we have some indication of his vast erudition through the labors of historian Adolf von Harnack, in *Die Mission und Ausbreitung des Christentums* (Book IV, Chapter II). Translated and edited by James Moffatt (G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1908):

> The writings of Clement disclose the amazingly broad scope of his knowledge of both classical and Biblical literature. On page after page of his treatises are copious citations of all kinds of literature. According to the tabulations of [Stählin], Clement cites some 359 classical and other non-Christian writers, 70 Biblical writings (including Old Testament apocrypha), and 36 patristic and New Testament apocryphal writings, including those of heretics. The total number of citations is about 8000, more than a third of which come from pagan writers. Furthermore, the statistics reveal that he quotes from New Testament writings almost twice as often as from the Old Testament. [Cited in http://www.ntcanon.org/Clement.shtml. Accessed September 2012].

[3] Pope Benedict XVI, *Church Fathers, From Clement of Rome to Augustine*, Ignatius Press, 2008.

[4] Eric F. Osborn, *Clement of Alexandria*, Cambridge University Press, 2005, page 26.

spiritual well-being and for salvation. "They demand bare faith alone," he complains. Truth, though, "….is a river in which…streams flow from all sides." [5] Neither was he overly patient with his fellow philosophers. Many of them were materialists, making material things into gods. Even the Stoics went wrong, writing that the divine nature permeated all matter. Most philosophers "…babble in high-flown language…" [6] The traditional gods and goddesses are wicked, unholy, and licentiousness; the mystery religions are orgies that are "…full of deception…" [7]; the sacrifices and games are bloodthirsty and profane. Pagan worship generally is degrading of mankind.

Whatever the limitations of each tradition, Clement viewed them both as part of God's total revelation, and we see his best work in the three major works that have generated the most commentary through the centuries. *Exhortation to the Greeks* (*Protreptikos pros Ellenes*) was written for Greeks whom he hoped to convert to Christianity or who had asked to be baptized; *Pedagogue* (*Paidagogos*) named Christ as the Divine Teacher and extracted moral lessons from the Bible. Its original purpose was the instruction of catechumens and the recently-baptized in Alexandria. [8] *Miscellanies* (*Stromateis*) was intended for fellow Christians whose faith would be strengthened, as Clement believed, by familiarity with Platonism. These books were written while Clement was director of the catechetical school in Alexandria, sometime between 190 and 202 CE. His books, as Robert Casey has established, are among "…the first Christian writings that assume the existence of an educated Christian public." [9]

Clement approached his task with an unswerving conviction that God is the ultimate source of all reality and all truths. Wherever and whenever knowledge, wisdom, or truths emerge, Clement maintained that these must have their origin in Him. Like the sower of seed in the Gospel, God "rained down the Word" on all persons. To his fellow Christians he insists that faith alone is not enough. If some of God's wisdom exists among other peoples in other places, we are morally bound to seek out those truths, precisely because they are truths which are grounded in God. No one race or people has all of God's truths, and we must bring everything to bear on our search for truth, culling whatever is useful for guarding the faith. [10] This advice to his readers to remain open to truth is advice that he himself

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[5] *Miscellanies* (*Stromateis*), Book 1, Chapter 9. Accessed September 2012. http://www.earlychristian writings.com/clement.html.

[6] *Exhortation to the Greeks, the Rich Man's Salvation, to the Newly Baptized.* (*Protreptikos*), Trans. G.W. Butterworth. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1919.

[7] *Exhortation*, passim Ch. II-IV.

[8] Annewies Van den Hoek, "The 'Catechetical' School of Early Christian Alexandria and Its Philonic Heritage," *Harvard Theological Review*, Vol. 90, No.1 (Jan. 1997): 59-87.

[9] Casey, 59.

[10] Clement argues that both Moses and Plato were part of God's plan to prepare mankind for Christ. The Mosaic Law "…was a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we should be justified by faith." *(Stromateis*, Book 1, Ch.26). Philosophy also, Plato especially, was part of God's plan: "…philosophy more especially was given to the Greeks, as a covenant peculiar to them— being, as it is, a stepping-stone to the philosophy which is according to Christ.." (*Stromateis*, Book VI, Ch.8). As one might expect, however, there were still some who were wary of blending philosophy with the faith, some even accusing Plato of plagiarizing Moses. See Paul Cicholas, "Plato: The Attic Moses? Some Patristic Reactions to Platonic Philosophy," *Classical World*, Vol. 72, No.4 (December 1978): 217-225.

follows in appropriating his past. His descriptions of Christ as *logos* constitute the best example of this appropriation of his dual legacy.

The *Logos*

The primary meaning for *logos* is *word*, and its use as a metaphysical principle extends back into the pre-Socratic past, in the surviving fragments of Heraclitus (ca. 535 – 475 BCE). Greek and Roman Stoicism refined and expanded the word to account for the reasonability of the cosmos, and it was the Stoic influence on Middle Platonism which accounts for the adoption of the concept of *logos* in Platonism of this period (2nd c. BCE to 3rd c. CE).[11]

Intellectually at home in both ancient and Middle Platonism, Clement took up the question of explaining Christ to Greek catechumens, without lapsing into polytheism; his question was posed in the Prologue to John's Gospel. His special challenge: *The Word was with God…the Word was God.* His question was analogous to that of Philo before him, viz. how to explain how Wisdom is God and yet is an attribute of God. Like Philo, he saw Middle Platonism as offering the best approach to some degree of clarification. Unlike the work of Philo, what he decided to teach about Christ, and what found its way into his three major works would, in time, influence the doctrine of the Trinity.

If we view, with Clement, the *Logos* in a timeless realm, in the absence of a cosmos, *Logos* refers to ideas and plans for creating the cosmos and its human inhabitants in the mind of God. Because God is One and utterly Simple, he is not separated from his own ideas and plans; thus the *Logos* is God, because God cannot be said to have parts. This perspective appears in Clement's *Exhortation*. *Logos* is the pre-existent reasonability according to which God created all things; it was "…before the morning star"… it is "…the divine beginning of all things…"[12] The *Logos* was present at, and necessary to, the creation and governance of the world. Clement has the *Logos* saying, "Give ear, ye myriad peoples…the whole race of men I call, I who was their Creator by the Father's will."[13] His Greek readers were well prepared by philosophy to accept the universe as orderly and reasonable. They were ready to accept that the One emanates the Word, inaugurating the cosmos and everything therein; but, urging his readers forward, Clement here gives the One a new name, i.e. God. The One emanates all things and keeps them in existence; God created all things and keeps them in existence. The One emanated the Word; God gave the world Christ. While both God and the One are metaphysically necessary to their respective systems, God alone is worthy of worship, while Plato's One is not. Platonism was right but not right enough.

This identification of God and the *Logos*, however, is only part of his task. Clearly, New Testament references to Father and Spirit abound, and some account of this distinction must be offered. The Johannine formulation occupies Clement most; not only is the Word God; the Word is just as clearly said to be with God. Focusing thus on understanding Christ, Clement returns to Plato, to the dialogue *Parmenides*, which provides some degree of

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[11] Neo-Platonism did not emerge until the Enneads of Plotinus, later in the third century C.E., introducing the hierarchy of beings, a hierarchy in which the Logos is inferior to the One. It is possible that this basic difference between Middle Platonism and Neo-Platonism helps to account for the great Trinitarian debate that made the Council of Nicaea necessary in the fourth century.

[12] *Exhortation*, Ch.1, 14,17.

[13] Ibid, Ch. XII, 257.

resolution. Plato's doctrine of the Forms allows for two kinds of unity: a simple unity (one and nothing but one) and complex unity (one and many). "Loosely speaking, we may distinguish these as the unity of the pinpoint and the unity of the spider's web…A one is either a bare unity which can be nothing but one, or a universal whole which unites all things." It is best understood as a reciprocity or relation. "For Clement, what John is trying to say is that the relationship of the logos to God joins these two relations. The word is God and in relation to God…Son is in father and father in son." [14]

Clement now feels free to write that Christ is the *Logos*. The significance of Christ being the Logos is that Christ is the self-revelation of God/ the One, a self-revelation that cannot disrupt the doctrine of divine simplicity. God and His self-revelation must be one. "What then is the purpose of this instrument, the Word of God, the Lord, and the New Song….to reveal God to foolish men…"[15] The Word is what God wishes us to know about Himself; it is God speaking about Himself. Christ is all that we can bear to know about God. "The Word is our true teacher…the whole world has by this time become an Athens and a Greece through the Word."[16] God has communicated something of Himself as recorded in Scripture. Christ is the completeness of truth for human understanding.

Accordingly, Clement has to modify the conventional definition of truth: truth is not a characteristic of a successful statement; rather, it is whatever we should know, as well as whatever path in life's journey that we should take, in order to, in Clement's words, "…become God, since God so wills." [17] Truth is defined in terms of the human destiny of being assimilated into God's life, a destiny that Clement calls the *true gnosis* (knowledge). Furthermore, true to the Platonist move to hypostasize, Clement knows that truth is a Person. The Logos is what we should know; it is the path in life's journey that we should take. Being assimilated to Christ, the Christian is assimilated to truth. In a Platonist world-view, each being is not only an emanate from the One but must also return to the One. To a Christian, each person returns to his creator, a return that is shaped by his knowledge and his moral choices.

Such assimilation of persons to the One through the Word proceeds on dual tracks; like all Platonists, Clement makes the intellectual and the moral coterminous. Resisting what he sees as an anti-intellectualism among some Christians of his day, Clement embraces knowledge from any source; all reality and all knowledge come from God. Embracing the great gifts of knowledge and truth, we embrace the Giftgiver; an intellectual life is one more moral obligation. His primary reason for an open-ended search for knowledge is given clearly: all human knowledge is necessary for the understanding of Scripture and for guarding the faith. "I call him truly learned who brings everything to bear on the truth…he brings everything to bear on a right life…". [18] The more he knows, the better he is able "…to distinguish expressions which are ambiguous, and which in the Testaments are used synonymously." Clement names this open-ended search for knowledge *philosophy*; not a

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[14] Osborn, 116-117; 133.

[15] *Exhortation*, I, 14.

[16] Osborn, 239.

[17] *Paedagogus*, III, 1. Accessed September 2012. http://www. earlychristianwritings.com/ clement.html.

[18] *Miscellanies*, Book 1, Ch. 9.

specific discipline or subject matter, philosophy is the process itself of seeking knowledge wherever it may be found. It is not "…a pottering about the arts or learning many things…" [19] Since all knowledge is God's own, the search for knowledge is part of one's search for God. To reject a search for knowledge is to reject part of God's Word.

Not all human knowledge, though, is equally suited for reading Scripture, guarding the faith, or seeking God. All sects contain a germ of truth, just as there are both high notes and low notes in music. Though different, and though they produce harmony when taken together, a culling process is a necessary part of one's search for a wisdom that produces such harmony. Clement identifies the Word as the touchstone. We can know the One only by knowing the Word. Partial knowledge or faulty knowledge can be made complete only by knowing Christ through Scripture and judging all things by His teaching and life. Knowing Christ is the culling process. If this world is like a vineyard, writes Clement, philosophizing in the light of Christ is the fence and wall of that vineyard. [20]

This search for wisdom or philosophizing in the light of Christ has a counterpart in Plato, and Clement draws analogies, and cites precedents frequently. Throughout the dialogues, Plato envisions mankind as on a journey, making an ascent from this material, incomplete world, a cave in which we are prisoners, to a transcendent world of Forms, Forms being the perfection of whatever may be experienced in this material world. Ascending in wisdom, or insight into the Forms, a person ascends also in virtue. Clement transcribes the Platonic journey to the Forms as the ascent of the Christian to God. "Like will be dear to like…and that therefore he that would be dear to God must…become such as He is…It is incumbent to reach the unaccomplished end, obeying the commands—that is, God—and living according to them…" [21] For Plato, the goal is wisdom; to Clement, that wisdom is a Person.

Christ as Logos and Truth is further developed in Clement's second significant work, *Paedagogus* (*The Teacher*). Not only is the Logos the Way; it is our heavenly guide, our paedagogue. His aim is to "…improve the soul…" Those "…who are diseased in soul require a pedagogue to cure our maladies…and then a teacher, to train and guide the soul to all requisite knowledge when it is made able to admit the revelation of the Word."[22] In *Exhortation*, Clement has established a basis for this intimacy of paedagogue and student. Christ is an image of the One; analogously, man is to be an image of Christ. He writes: "And an image of the Word is the true man, that is, the mind in man, who on this account is said to have been created 'in the 'image' of God, and 'in His likeness,' because through his understanding heart he is made like the divine Word or Reason, and so reasonable." [23] This claim involving images is a clear application of Platonism, i.e. that every reality is an image of a perfect Form existing in a transcendent realm. For the Christian, though, there has to be a moral perfectibility that depends on human reason, whether *reason* is defined as faculty or as quality.

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[19] Ibid, Ch. 19.

[20] Ibid, Ch. 20.

[21] Ibid, Book II, Ch. 22.

[22] *Paedagogus*, I, 1.

[23] *Exhortation*, X, 215.

The challenging moral expectations within Christianity are advanced gently in *Exhortation*. His strategy is music. "How in the world is it that you have given credence to worthless legends, imagining brute beasts to be enchanted by music…" The Greeks should be listening instead to "…new music, with its eternal strain that bears the name of God. This is a new Song…" Christ is the new minstrel, God's own. "But far different is my minstrel, for He has come to bring to a speedy end the bitter slavery of the daemons that lord it over us. He is the new, the heavenly minstrel." [24] His is a mighty song, for it once "…composed the entire creation into melodious order, and tuned into concert the discord of the elements, that the whole universe might be in harmony with it." But, the Word accounts for more than cosmic order; He has "…tamed the most intractable of all wild beasts, man." Just as He has given harmony to the cosmos, He has also arranged "…the little world of man too, body and soul together; and on this many-voiced instrument of the universe He makes music to God, and sings to the human instrument." [25] To the extent that men listen to his new song, to that extent there is an end to the corruption of sin, death is vanquished, and disobedient sons are reconciled to God. Obedience has become harmony. Like Plato, Clement identifies three dimensions of the human soul, i.e. the rational, the spirited, and the appetitive. As Plato had done, he associates moral development with a harmonization of the disparate elements within the soul and between the soul and body. The Logos is the source of mind in man, and so Christian virtue is the harmony achieved by each soul.

The Logos, then, as a synthesis of Christian thought and Platonism, is richly layered. It is the Wisdom according to which the universe was created and by which it is harmonized; it is Christ, the self-revelation of God; it is Christ, in whose image the Christian life should be lived; it is the only way to God; it is Truth that must be known; it is the standard by means of which falsehoods are to be culled out of worldly knowledge. The Logos is the accounting of whatever reasonability there is in the universe. If we do not see reasonability, the fault is our own. The Word is the source of harmony in human affairs. If there is no harmony, the fault again is our own. Nothing good emerges in human affairs unless through the Word.

Conclusion

It is appropriate to call Clement the first Christian philosopher. He was convinced that faith must be appropriated intellectually, at a time when many Christians were distrustful of the intellectualization of their faith. His conviction found a solid basis, though, on a deeper belief in God as the source and rational accounting of all knowledge; further, it anticipated Anselm's famous dictum eight centuries later, *fides quaerens intellectum, faith seeking understanding*. Following Plato's lead, Clement held that the intellectual and moral quests were coterminous in human existence. The intellectual life is necessary, but not sufficient; it is necessary, in that the life of the mind distinguishes man and so must be necessary on man's journey to God. Few of his contemporaries would have agreed with Clement that the moral and the intellectual struggles of the Christian life were sufficient for human well-being. What was extraordinary was his perspective that moral striving, also, was necessary but not sufficient. Moral striving is insufficient to the extent that it is unenlightened, or has lost sight of its responsibility to be a human reflection of Him Who is Truth, or has rejected the mandate *Be ye perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect*. Thus the intellectual and moral quests, although not

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[24] Ibid, I, 5-9.
[25] Ibid, 11-13.

sufficient in and of themselves, are sufficient when conjoined together. While the lofty goal called *perfection* in the New Testament can only be a gift, man is to work as if it were attainable by his own efforts; the goal must be genuine motivation for living in, with and for the Word made flesh; it must serve as a criterion to evaluate how well our human quest, out of the cave, is proceeding.

This integrative vision seemed to come easily to this pioneer of the Christian Intellectual Tradition. Clement had access to, and affection for, over five hundred years of scholarship generated by Plato. He lived in a cosmopolitan city with a proud history of libraries, museums, and schools. Director of a catechetical school, he had opportunities for scholarship, research, and influence enjoyed by few. Yet, Christianity did not take to intellectualizing quickly or easily; many feared it as "pagan". Even more frightening were the official persecutions; the Edict of Milan was still over a hundred years in the future. The persecutions of Christians in the African Province during the reign of Emperor Septimius Severus (193-211) shut down the catechetical school. In 202 Clement left Alexandria for Cappadocia, then for Palestine, where he worked for Alexander, Bishop of Jerusalem. Because Alexander referred to Clement in the past tense as "…the holy Clement, my master and benefactor…" [26] it is a safe assumption that Clement continued his work for the Church until his death, sometime between 211 and 215.

Despite the challenges of his world and circumstances, Clement is a model for Christian theologians and educators whose work must aim at fostering integrative and contemplative habits of thinking. The intellectual legacy that he enthusiastically embraced spanned over five hundred years; ours, over two thousand. There is far more on our plates, then. Also, at his time in history, the centrifugal movement of disciplines separating out from one another, losing the ability to speak to one another, had not yet occurred. Our task is to re-introduce the disciplines to one another, using whatever insights from epistemology and ethics that we can muster. His integrative vision was shaped by his faith. We, in a far more secular world, will remain Christian only if our faith is also formative. In this task we have a worthy exemplar in Clement of Alexandria.

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[26] Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 6.14.9. Accessed August 2012. http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/250106.htm.

NEW MONASTIC SOCIAL IMAGINATION: THEOLOGICAL RETRIEVAL FOR ECCLESIAL RENEWAL

Kent Eilers*

In the closing lines of Alistair MacIntyre's *After Virtue,* he cryptically suggests that the moral revitalization of the post-Christian West requires the witness of another "doubtless very different" St. Benedict.[1] The figure of St. Benedict embodied for MacIntyre the ideal of local communities of virtue "within which civility and the intellectual and moral life can be sustained through the dark ages which are already upon us." Three decades on from MacIntyre's remark we are, perhaps, witnessing St. Benedict's return.

This essay explores the possibility of that return among new monastics, most specifically as it is represented in the work of Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove. In what follows, I hope to show that the ecclesial renewal sought by new monastics necessitates *not merely* the formation of monastic-like communities who perform monastic-like practices, but the cultivation and maintenance of a distinctly *theological* imagination sufficient to fund the meaning of its forms of life. In other words, new monastic retrieval requires a community whose shared theological imagination makes its practices intelligible, sensible, and livable. The focus of the essay rests most heavily on the texture of new monastic retrieval, specifically its social dimensions.[2] Close attention to many new monastics suggests that they are involved not merely with the repristination of foregone practices or lost ideals. Instead, they seek to retrieve a social reality in which doctrines and practices are intimately wedded. Retrieval such as this is necessarily social in orientation, and, as I will argue in what follows, necessarily theological, though for reasons that might not be apparent at first.

The essay proceeds in three parts. The first section is largely descriptive. I begin by tracing the outlines of the object of new monastic retrieval (the "monastic impulse") to show it as a past that the new monastics believe we inhabit. I fill out this sketch in the second section by focusing on two books by Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove and bringing him into conversation with Charles Taylor. Taylor's idea of "social imaginary" offers a useful conceptual tool to better understand the interplay between imagination and practices. In the final part, I introduce Etienne Wenger's social theory of learning as an interpretive angle for considering my primary contention: new monastic retrieval requires the formation and

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[1] Alistair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theology.* Third Edition (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007; First Edition, 1981), 263; see also, 199.

[2] This necessitates skirting the origins and ongoing significance of new monasticism. On the origins of new monasticism see the following: Evan Howard, "Introducing New Monasticism" (http://spiritualityshoppe.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/intnm1.pdf. Accessed 5/28/2013); Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove, *New Monasticism: What it Has to Say to Today's Church* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2008); Jonathan Wilson, *School(s) for Conversion: 12 Marks of a New Monasticism*, Routba House ed. (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2005); Philip Harrold, "The "New Monasticism" as Ancient-Future Belonging," in *Theology Today*. Vol 67 (2010): 182-193.

maintenance of a distinct *theological* imagination in order to fund the meaning of its shared practices.[3]

The Monastic Impulse

It is misleading to describe the new monastics as an organized movement, but they nonetheless share broad consistency of mission.[4] New monastics seek to recover a form of life characterized by a particular interplay of ideas and actions, doctrines and practices that shapes—it is believed—both our perception of the world and our life within it. Their retrieval, then, is not narrowly doctrinal, the attempt to recover a lost or underemphasized belief.[5] Nor is it the effort to merely retrieve ancient or distinctly monastic practices.[6] Rather,

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[3] Jonathan R. Wilson emphasizes the importance of theology for new monastics but not from the cultural formation perspective I present here (See, Wilson, *Living Faithfully in a Fragmented World: From After Virtue to a New Monasticism*. Second Edition [Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 2010], 70; Jonathan R. Wilson, "Introduction" in *School(s) for Conversion*, 1-9).

[4] There are at least five related but nonetheless separate expressions of new monasticism (Philip Harrold identifies four [Harrold, "The "New Monasticism"]. (1) The first expression is voiced by Scott Bessenecker, director of global projects for InterVarsity Christian Fellowship. He applies the term "new friars" to describe a swell of young people who leave North America to serve people around the world in extreme poverty (see, Scott Bessenecker, *The New Friars: The Emerging Movement Serving the World's Poor* [Downers Grove: IVP, 2006]; Scott Bessenecker ed., *Living Mission: The Vision and Voices of the New Friars* [Downers Grove: IVP, 2010]. (2) The second expression of new monasticism focuses specifically on the Rule of Benedict. Michel Casey, Dennis Okholm, and Benet Tveldten share no formal relationship, but each commends the wisdom of the Benedictine way for contemporary Christians (see, Michael Casey, *Strangers to the City: Reflections on the Beliefs and Values of the Rule of St. Benedict* [Brewster: Paraclete Press, 2005]; Dennis Okholm, *Monk Habits for Everyday People: Benedictine Spirituality for Protestants* [Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2007]; Benet Tveldten, *How to Be Monastic and Not Leave your Day Job: An Invitation to Oblate Life* [Brewster: Paraclete Press, 2006]); (3) The third expression is expressed by Aaron Milavec who presents the *Didache* as a "life-transforming training program" for Gentile converts. It is not so much the *Didache* that Milavec seeks but the Christian perception of the world that living according to the *Didache* fosters (see, Aaron Milavec, *The Didache: Text, Translation, Analysis, and* Commentary [Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2003]); (4) The fourth expression is The Boiler Room Network that originated in Great Britain and spread to the United States. Taking inspiration from Celtic, Franciscan, Benedictine, and Moravian spirituality and figures like Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Francis Schaeffer, and Lesslie Newbegin, they apply the term "monastic" to describe how the Christian faith is taking shape in their communities (see, http://24-7prayer.us/communities; http://uk.24-7prayer.com/boiler-rooms-and-communities/; Andy Freeman and Peter Grieg, *Punk Monk: New Monasticism and the Ancient Art of Breathing* [Ventura: Regal, 2007]; Peter Grieg and Greg Roberts, *Red Moon Rising: How 24-7 Prayer is Awakening a Generation* [Lake Mary: Relevant Media, 2003]; (5) The fifth expression is Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove who occupies our attention below. Evan Howard suggests that at least three *other* forms of new monasticism exist whose relationship to these five expressions is difficult to discern: Northumbria, Missional Wisdom Foundation/Elaine Heath, and Raven's Bread (email correspondence, 5/11/2013).

[5] For example, (Lutheran) Tuomo Mannermma, *Christ Present in Faith: Luther's View of Justification*, Trans Kirsi Stjerna (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005); (Reformed) J. Todd Billings, *Union with Christ: Reframing Theology and Ministry for the Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011); (Catholic) Lewis Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); (Orthodox) Khaled Anatolios, *Retrieving Nicaea: The Development and Meaning of Trinitarian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011); (Protestant Evangelical) Thomas Oden, *Systematic Theology*, 3 vols. (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1987, 1989, 1992).

new monastics attempt to recover a complex social reality that we can *inhabit*. Regardless of the historical, geographical, or cultural differences that separate new monastics today from the object of their retrieval, they strive to recover an identifiable form of life that entails locating ourselves *within it*. Harrold writes, "It is as if history itself becomes a form of consciousness that involves not only rational thought and action, but a sense of real participation through 're-enactment.'"[7]

New monastics variously name the object of their retrieval as an "attitude of life" (Freeman and Grieg), a "long-established pattern" (Bessenecker), a "training program" (Milavec), a "flexible hermeneutic" (Okholm), or, as Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove calls it, the "monastic impulse."[8] Though new monastics employ various terms to describe what Wilson-Hartgrove calls the monastic impulse, the texture of their retrieval is relatively consistent. The "livable past" they pursue is a distinct way of both expressing the Christian faith and of viewing the world in light of it. Participating in the monastic impulse through re-enactment thus requires both the transposition of a distinct "imagination" (way of viewing) and fitting, appropriate "practices" (ways of expressing).

As it is being used here, "Imagination," refers to human sense-making, not creativity or fancy. As a sense-making dimension, human imagination is intellectual (e.g. "What does democracy mean?") as well as affective and volitional ("What does democracy mean for me?" and "Will I sacrifice for democracy?"). That is, the human imagination is "a life-world employing patterns of thought that are at once conceptual (a way of seeing-things), conative (a set of beliefs and values to which a groups and its members are deeply attached), and action-guiding (we live according to its terms)."[9] Rendering our perception of ourselves and our world, the imagination is "constructive" as well as "receptive."[10] Its receptive character is emphasized by MacIntyre in narrative terms: "I can only answer the question 'What am I to do?' if I can answer the prior question 'Of what story or stories do I find myself a part?'"[11] In like manner, the Bible serves a narrative role for Christians for it has the "productive power of redescribing reality in a way that can engage and lead our imaginations."[12]

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[6] For example, Brian McLaren, *Finding our Way Again: The Return of the Ancient Practices* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2008).

[7] Harrold, "New Monasticism," 190.

[8] Wilson-Hartgrove adopts the term "monastic impulse" from Walter Capps: "a form of human awareness consonant with a specific way of life" (Walter Capps, *The Monastic Impulse* [Lexington: Crossroad Publishing, 1983], 8). Cf. Wilson-Hartgrove, *New Monasticism*, 43.

[9] Joel Green, *1 Peter*, Two Horizons New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 26. Green relies heavily on Owen Flanagan, *The Problem of the Soul* (New York: Basic Books, 2003), 27-55. See also, Bryant, *Faith and the Play of Imagination*, 126; Nicholas Lash, "Interpretation and Imagination," in Michael Goulder ed., *Incarnation and Myth: The Debate Continued* (London: SCM, 1979), 21-2; Miroslav Volf, "Theology for a Way of Life," in Dorothy Bass and Miroslav Volf eds., *Practicing Theology: Beliefs and Practices in Christian Life* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 254.

[10] Bryant, *Faith and the Play of the Imagination*, 5. Bryant develops his account in conversation with the work of Paul Ricoeur and Hans-Georg Gadamar.

[11] MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 216. Cf. Bryant: "Its receptivity takes the form of being shaped by the past in a way that attunes it to the interplay between life and world" (*Faith and the Play of Imagination,* 5).

[12] Bryant, *Faith and the Play of Imagination*, 6.

The term "practice" is employed here in roughly the same manner as MacIntyre which, although cumbersome, has become influential. A practice is:

…any coherent and complex form of socially established cooperative human activity through which goods internal to that form of activity are realized in the course of trying to achieve those standards of excellence which are appropriate to, and partially definitive of, that form of activity, with the result that human powers to achieve excellence, and human conceptions of the ends and goods involved, are systematically extended.[13]

More succinctly stated, practices are "routines and rituals that inscribe particular ongoing habits into our character, such that they become second nature to us."[14] New monastics have something like this in mind when they describe monastic-like activities and rituals as "practices."[15]

Thus, by the term "monastic impulse" new monastics refer to a livable past that has been and is present among a wide variety of monastic movements in which a particular imagination (way of viewing, perceiving) is wedded and intertwined with distinctive practices (ways of expressing).[16] Simply trying to pull forward an attitude or ideal from the past would be inadequate. Recovering the monastic impulse requires that it be lived, re-enacted, and not merely comprehended.

Wayne Meeks has something of this retrieval in mind with the term "hermeneutics of social embodiment." For Meeks, social practices are necessary for communities to effectively interpret the meaning of texts. Interpretation requires, Meeks explains, a "community competent to understand, and that means a community whose ethos, worldview, and sacred symbols…can be tuned" to the way particular texts "worked in the time past."[17] In other

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[13]MacIntyre, *After Virtue,* 187.

[14]James K.A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 80.

[15] Jonathan R. Wilson laments that many within the church do not understand their shared activities (such as worship, studying the Bible, or service) along the lines of MacIntyre's definition. They either fail to see the connection between practices and the Christian conception of the common good, or importance of achieving the "goods" that are "internal" to the practice, or the formative power of practices in partnership with the Holy Spirit to shape individuals toward Christlikeness (*Living Faithfully*, 52-53). The "twelve marks" of a new monasticism developed by the contributors to *School(s) for Conversion* illustrate what might be called the more "visible" side of the monastic impulse, the practices by which we can identify the monastic impulse in play. By themselves, we might suppose new monastic retrieval champions only the recovery of monastic-like practices. This, however, mischaracterizes the function of practices within new monasticism retrieval.

[16]David Hardy calls this a "discourse of "intimate identification," a "kinship," constituted by a diverse array of epistemic practices and ethical structures and norms" (Daniel W. Hardy, "Sociality, Rationality, and Culture: Faith Embedded in the Particularities of History," in Claude Welch and Richard Crouter eds., *Papers of the Nineteenth-Century Theology Working Group* [Colorado Springs: Colorado College, 1992], 1-19. Quoted by Harrold, "Ancient-Future Belonging," 190).

[17]Wayne Meeks, "A Hermeneutics of Social Embodiment," in Allen R Hilton and Gregory H. Snyder eds., *In Search of Early Christians: Selected Essays* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 192-193. See also,George Lindbeck, *The Nature ofDoctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1984), 128-35:"The grammar of religion, like that of any language, cannot be explicated or learned by analysis of experience, but only by practice" (129); William Placher, *Unapologetic Theology: A Christian Voice in a Pluralistic Conversation* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1989), 167;

words, "forms of life" are required that "correspond to the symbolic universe rendered or signaled" by a text.[18]

Extending social hermeneutics such as this to new monastic retrieval provides two immediately insights. First, as a "text" of sorts, comprehending and appropriating the monastic impulse in an entirely new geographic, cultural, and temporal location requires the embodiment of its "forms of life." Not surprisingly, the new monastics are generally recognizable by their appropriation of monastic-like practices in more or less sophisticated ways. Second, and this is the nub, such embodiment requires a community whose collective imagination—ethos, worldview, and sacred symbols[19]—is tuned to the way the monastic impulse was embodied in the past. In other words, new monastic retrieval necessitates a particular interplay between imagination and practices, an interplay found implicitly throughout new monastic literature and, perhaps, most clearly seen in the work of Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove.

New Monastic Social Imagination

The interplay between imagination and practice is readily apparent in two books by Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove. One of the leading exponents of new monasticism in North America,[20] Wilson-Hartgrove is also the Director of School for Conversion,[21] cofounder of the new monastic community Rutba House, and the author of numerous books and articles.[22] The two books I examine represent an evolving portrait of new monastic retrieval,

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James K.A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009), chapter 1; Charles Wood, *The Formation of Christian Understanding* (Valley Forge: Trinity Press, 1993), chapter 1.

[18] Meeks, "Hermeneutics," 193.

[19] See, Clifford Geertz, "Ethos, World-View and the Analysis of Sacred Symbols," *Antioch Review*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (Winter, 1957), 421-437.

[20] North American new monastics associated with Wilson-Hartgrove's influence are broadly identifiable by their association with the Community of Communities network (http://www.communityofcommunities.info/) and their resemblance to the "12 marks" of new monasticism described in *School(s) for Conversion: 12 Marks of a New Monasticism* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2005).

[21] http://newmonasticism.org/about.php.

[22] For example, *The Awakening of Hope: Why We Practice a Common Faith* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012); *The Rule of St. Benedict: A Contemporary Paraphrase* (Brewster: Paraclete, 2012); "A Liturgy for Our Whole Life," with Shane Claiborne, *Liturgy* 26, no. 2 (April 2011): 46-52; *The Wisdom of Stability: Rooting Faith in a Mobile Culture* (Brewster: Paraclete Press, 2010); *Common Prayer: A Liturgy for Ordinary Radicals*, with Shane Claiborne and Enuma Okoro (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010); "Money Enough/Rediscovering our Values" *Christian Century* 127/9 (May 4, 2010): 42-43; *God's Economy: Redefining the Health and Wealth Gospel* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009); "Advent 2009: The End of the World As We Know It." *Tikkun* 24, no. 6 (November 2009): 37-41; "New Monasticism and the Resurrection of American Christianity." *Tikkun* 24, no. 5 (September 2009): 52-53; "Economics for Disciples" *Christian Century* 126 no.18 (September 8, 2009): 22-27; "Together on the Ark: The Witness of Intentional Community" *Christian Century* 126 no. 16 (August 11, 2009): 12-13; *New Monasticism; Becoming the Answer to Our Prayers: Prayer for Ordinary* Radicals, with Shane Claiborne (Downers Grove: IVP, 2008); *Inhabiting the Church: Biblical Wisdom for a New Monasticism*, with John Stock and Tim Otto, New Monastic Library (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2007).

one that maps a mutually informing relationship between a way of "seeing the world" and its fitting practices which together comprise the monastic impulse.

Wilson-Hartgrove's first book on new monasticism was *New Monasticism: What it Has to Say to Today's Church* (*NM*). The order of presentation in this book suggests that the imagination dimension of the monastic impulse is required to *bring forth* particular, fitting practices. On one hand, the monastic impulse is presented in chapters one through four as a hermeneutic for reading the Bible, history, and culture. On the other hand, the practices that occupy the second half of the book are said to fund, generate, and build the new monastic imagination: relocation to urban areas, financial stewardship, peace-making, and ecumenism. Wilson-Hartgrove describes them as means for "*living into* the story of the people of God" and "catalysts for imagination."[23] The texture of the interplay and its *implications* are never developed, but the traffic appears to run both ways. On a different metaphor, the gears of imagination and practice are clearly turning together, but their causal relationship is never clear.

In Wilson-Hartgrove's most recent book, *The Awakening of Hope: Why We Practice a Common Faith* (*AH*), the interplay between imagination and practice is more explicit. *Awakening* is a catechism with a twist. Rather than progress from questions to what Christians believe, it moves from questions to the practices that reveal and shape underlying convictions. "Instead of saying what we believe and how we might apply that to our lives" the book focuses on "practices that inspire hope in our time and ask what convictions undergird a way of life that makes such witness possible."[24] Each chapter elaborates the back-and-forth between a selected practice and the new monastic imagination in order to demonstrate how, on one hand, practices do not merely *flow out from* particular convictions but *shape* and *form* the Christian imagination. On the other hand, Christian practices are shown to *reveal* underlying, supporting, sense-making Christian convictions: "a gospel that *makes sense* of a peculiar way of living."[25]

An example will illustrate. The second chapter in Wilson-Hartgrove's book focuses on shared meals. Following a story of Sojourners Community in San Francisco, Wilson-Hartgrove argues that the practice forms our self-perception:

> Subtle as it might seem at first, eating together is an interruption to business as usual—a constant reminder that God's movement goes against the grain of the status quo, calling us ever deeper into a new reality beyond the available options of this world's systems…As creatures in communion, *we learn the habits that make it possible to know what it means to say Jesus Christ is Lord.[26]*

He concedes that shared meals are traceable to Jesus and the earliest Christians, but argues for a rationale other than a desire to follow an historical pattern or repristinate a lost activity. Rather, the practice shapes our perception of our alliance to Christ and inclusion in the community of Christians. Eating together "remind[s] us of our connections that tie us to the

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[23]Wilson-Hartgrove, *New Monasticism*, 70. Emphasis mine.

[24] Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove, *The Awakening of Hope: Why We Practice a Common Faith* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 15.

[25]Wilson-Hartgrove, *Awakening of Hope*, 27.

[26]Wilson-Hartgrove, *Awakening of Hope*, 36. Emphasis mine.

soil," but more than this, it "should also *point us toward* our source (and end) in the Trinitarian God."[27]

On this manner of conceiving the interplay between practices and imagination, practices *spring out* from theological commitments such as "God's grace sustains and redeems," and they contribute to our perception of and ability to live out from such convictions.[28] Each chapter works backward from practices of the monastic impulse to the collective imagination which makes those practices *sensible.* He explains, "Instead of saying what we believe and how we might apply that to our lives, [I] tried to focus on practices that inspire hope in our time and ask *what convictions undergird a way of life that makes such witness possible.*"[29]

My contention is this: whatever stress is laid upon the retrieval of monastic-like practices, a sufficiently robust theological imagination is required to make sense of those practices.[30] Wilson-Hartgrove works to counter-balance what he sees as an overemphasis on doctrine as a way of galvanizing the renewal of the church by focusing, instead, on the formative potential of practices.[31] However, his approach assumes an implicit imagination that, as he says, "makes *sense* of a peculiar way of living." Thus, new monastic retrieval necessitates not only the recovery of lost practices but the cultivation and maintenance of a theological imagination sufficient to make such practices intelligible, sensible, and livable.

The work of Charles Taylor is helpful for he provides a theory of cultural formation that sharpens the point about the necessity of a collective imagination in order for practices to hold their intended meaning.

Taylor describes our collective participation in social life as a "social imaginary."[32] A social imaginary renders "the ways in which [people] imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows, the expectations which are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images which underlie these expectations."[33] For Taylor, a social imaginary is deeper and more embedded than an interpretive theory we might apply to understand why people share certain beliefs or why particular actions are acceptable and others not. "Imaginary" is more fitting than "doctrine" or "theory" because the shared understandings which comprise our social imaginary are

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[27]Wilson-Hartgrove, *Awakening of Hope*, 43. Emphasis added. Jonathan R. Wilson makes a similar move in the introduction to *School(s) for Conversion.* "The simple task of providing for daily sustenance of life…*reminds us of our dependence.* The tasks of praying, worshipping, fasting, and discerning together also *open the community to God's grace*, though of course they can also be distorted by acts of heroism. Continual openness to others through the central practice of hospitality *makes clear the community's dependence upon grace.* Finally, the monastic vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, whatever form they take in the discernment of new monastic communities, are best understood as *commitment to a way of life made possible only by God's sustaining and redeeming grace*"(8-9. Emphasis added).

[28] Wilson, "Introduction," in *School(s) for Conversion*, 9.

[29] Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove, *The Awakening of Hope: Why We Practice a Common Faith* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 15.

[30] Capps: "a form of human awareness consonant with a specific way of life" (*Monastic Impulse*, 8).

[31] See Introduction of *Awakening of Hope.*

[32] Taylor articulated this first in *Modern Social Imaginaries* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004) and developed it further in *A Secular Age* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2007).

[33]Taylor, *Secular Age*, 171.

indefinite and unlimited. It incorporates "a wider grasp of our whole predicament, how we stand to each other, how we got where we are, how we relate to other groups, etc."[34]

Operating below the surface, a social imaginary is difficult to name. It is the "implicit grasp of social space" which Taylor likens to an intuitive map enabling us to make our way around our home town. We do not have to think which way to turn, and in fact we might not remember the street names, but we nonetheless know how to get there. As a map, the social imaginary tacitly coordinates our complex background understanding of values and norms and the practices which this shared background makes sensible. The "background" is "that largely unstructured and inarticulate understanding of our whole situation, within which particular features of our world show up for us in the sense that they have."[35]

On Taylor's model, the term "social imaginary" holds together both background and practices and provides a way to conceive the relationship between them. Social imaginary "incorporates a sense of the normal expectations that we have of each other; the kind of common understanding which enables us to carry out the collective practices which make up our social life."[36] Within a given social imaginary, certain practices are made possible and indeed sensible, while others are excluded.

It raises the question: do practices form and shape the imagination, or does the imagination lead to fitting practices? Taylor suspects that the causal interplay runs *both ways*. "If the understanding makes the practice possible, it is also true that it is the practice which largely carries the understanding."[37] "In fact," Taylor continues,

> …what we see in human history is ranges in human practices that are both at once, that is, material practices carried out by human beings in space and time, and very often coercively maintained, and at the same time, self-conceptions, modes of understanding. There are often inseparable…Because human practices are the kind of thing that makes sense, certain ideas are internal to them; one cannot distinguish the two in order to ask the question Which causes which?[38]

Taylor summarizes: "Ideas always come in history wrapped up in certain practices . . . even if these are only discursive practices."[39] A transformative theory might enter a social imagination to unsettle and shift its "seeing" of the way things are, or practices might affect slow but nonetheless dramatic changes to the social imaginary.[40]

Cultivating and Sustaining New Monastic Theological Imagination

The foregoing exploration in new monastic retrieval suggests the following insight: the cultivation and maintenance of a community's shared imagination is fundamental for practices to carry their intended meaning. Said differently, a collective imagination is required

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[34] Ibid, 172-173. See also, 174.

[35] Ibid, 173.

[36] Ibid, 172.

[37] Ibid, 173.

[38] Taylor, *Social Imaginaries*, 31.

[39] Ibid, 33.

[40] Taylor, *Secular Age*, 175. James K.A. Smith takes the opposite view, arguing for the directive influence of practices on understanding (Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 67 n. 53).

to *make sense* of practices ("background" on Taylor's terms) and without sufficient attention to its cultivation and maintenance it will simply drop out. Or, an imagination of a different sort will take its place and provide its own, and quite different, sense-making function. Such a challenge calls for the new monastic communities to discover and invest in fitting avenues through which to *theologically* imagine, name, and embrace the practices which constitute the monastic social imaginary.[41]

It is worth pausing to emphasize the latter point. In order for new monastic retrieval to succeed on its own terms—to recover the monastic impulse from past monastic movements—new monastic imagination must be distinctly *theological*. That is, some imagination, Christian or otherwise, will invest the practices of new monastics with meaning(s); the issue is whether that imagination will be theological. This is not to say anything of the actual efficacy of such practices, in other words whether or not they achieve the "ends" or *telos* they are believed to serve (e.g. spiritual transformation, ecological stewardship, community formation, etc.). Rather, the issue at stake is the cultivation and maintenance of a theological imagination sufficient for the task of investing their practices with *meanings* broadly consistent with the Christian tradition and more narrowly with the monastic-like movements in which they see the monastic impulse and seek to retrieve it.

This insight is confirmed by Taylor's idea of social imaginary. Taylor contends that the practices of a social imaginary are "made sense of" by the background elements of theory, doctrine, or ideas, what he terms the "new outlook." This "new outlook" is the "context that gives *sense* to the practices."[42] The "sense-making" function of the social imaginary registers the importance of painting a rich, textured theological vision for communal practices ("theological vision" renders Taylor's phrase, "new outlook" in religious terms). Thus, without the cultivation and maintenance of a theological imagination capable to form the background of new monastic retrieval, their practices have potential, over time, to lose their sensibility.

Etienne Wenger's social theory of learning sharpens the point further still.[43] On Wenger's theory, certain forms of *participation* are available to members of a community at any given time.[44] Some practices are sensible and fitting while others are not, although we might not be consciously aware why this is the case.[45] For example, a first grade teacher might expect her students to raise a hand to speak in class, but their parents might not expect them to do so at their dinner tables. Raising a hand and being called on is a practice in which student and teacher participate during classroom interaction, but the practice rarely fits the repertoire of practices at home. If a child blushes after raising their hand at the dinner table this signals

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[41] Similarly, in the Afterward to the second edition to *Living Faithfully in A Fragmented World*, Jonathan R. Wilson observes the importance of discovering and expositing "a theology native to NMC's [new monastic communities]"(Wilson, *Living Faithfully,* 70. See also, Jonathan R. Wilson, "Introduction" in *School(s) for Conversion*, 1-9).

[42] Taylor, *Secular Age*, 175. Emphasis added.

[43] Etienne Wenger, *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

[44] Wenger, *Communities*, 55-57.

[45] Wenger defines "practice" as "doing, but not just doing in and of itself. It is doing in a historical context that gives structure and meaning to what we do. In this sense, practice is always social practice" (*Communities,* 47. See also, 102).

their awareness that the action is unfitting to the setting; they instinctively know they are participating in the wrong repertoire of practices.

Reification names the process whereby shared ideas, values, and concepts are turned into "material things," such as objects, gestures, or sounds. A child's practice of gaining their teacher's attention is a classroom practice because the values of respect and attentiveness have been reified into the gesture of raising a hand and waiting to be called on.[46] In Wenger's theory, the processes of participation and reification are always interacting as members of a group "negotiate the meaning of their actions with one another."[47]

Over time the processes of participation and reification lead to a *repertoire* of acceptable and meaningful shared practices.[48] "Repertoire (like *habitus*) is a way of naming the patterns inscribed in the way we do things together, and helps to define the boundaries that form between the different communities of practice of which any given individual is a part."[49] The repertoire of fitting practices in a child's home are often different than their classroom repertoire because teachers and students have reified a different set of acceptable practices. In sum: when a group participates together in meaningful practices (such as teaching and learning or eating together) they are actively reifying their beliefs and intentions into a repertoire of acceptable actions.

The background for the entire process is *imagination*. Wenger illustrates with two stonecutters who are asked about *what* they are doing:

> One responds: 'I am cutting this stone into a perfectly square shape.' The other responds: 'I am building a cathedral.' Both answers are correct and meaningful, but they reflect different relations to the world. The difference between these answers does not imply that one is a better stonecutter than the other, as far as holding a chisel is concerned. At the level of engagement, they may well be doing exactly the same thing. But it does suggest that their experiences of what they are doing and their sense of self in doing it are rather different. This difference is a function of imagination.[50]

It is the element of imagination that generates the perspective and sense of *telos* which limits one stonecutter but enables another to "see" the cathedral.

Similar to Taylor, Wenger describes the imagination as a collective possession formed through a collective process. The practices in which a group participates forms the

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[46] Reification includes more than gestures. Wenger illustrates with the concept of "justice"as it is sometimes *reified* in the form of a blindfolded maid holding a scale (Wenger, *Communities*, 58-71).

[47] David I. Smith and James K.A. Smith, "Introduction: Practices, Faith, and Pedagogy," in *Teaching and Christian Practices: Reshaping Faith and Learning,* edited by David I. Smith and James K.A. Smith (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 13.

[48] Wenger, *Communities,* 82-84. Taylor describes a similar set of practices he calls "repertory": "At any given time, we can speak of the "repertory" of collective actions at the disposal of a given group in society. These are the common actions which they know how to undertake […]." (Taylor, *Secular Age*, 173).

[49] Smith and Smith, "Introduction," 13.

[50] "Imagination is this sense of looking at an apple seed and seeing a tree" or "reading a biography and recognizing yourself in the struggles of a character" (Wenger, *Communities*, 176).

imagination and, in the reverse, the imagination provides the perspective that provides meaning and *telos* to their repertoire of actions. "Over time, imagination becomes embodied in repertoire, and repertoire at the same time shapes imagination. Shared imagination is manifest as much in what we do as in what we say."[51] In short, shared imagination sustains the meaning of practices and, in turn, is sustained by them.

Conclusion

Wenger's model elaborates the necessity for new monastic communities to cultivate and maintain the theological imagination which generates the sensibility of their communal practices. This necessity is made especially apparent when considering the challenges to new monastic retrieval. One such challenge is the dissimilarity between the cultures *from which* new monastics seek to retrieve practices and the culture of the recipients *for whom* they are being recovered. For example, North American Christianity is historically individualistic, but monastic communities have entailed a distinctly communal element.[52] Or, prosperity-Gospel Christians understand wealth as blessing, but some monastic communities have historically taken vows of poverty or relocated to abandoned city centers. More deeply still, the sacramental ontology present in most, if not all, Patristic and Medieval monastic movements is scarcely present in most (all?) late modern, North American, Protestant communities.[53] Thus, while new monastics attempt to recover various practices which they find integral to the monastic impulse (e.g. communal living, relocation, etc.), without a theological imagination capable to provide the appropriate sense-making function those practices risk the attachment of divergent meanings.[54]

This could also be said on Wenger's terms. Practices such as communal living or relocation are made meaningful, in part, because they are part of the repertoire of actions made sensible by the monastic social imaginary. Thus, for instance, while a prosperity-Gospel Christian may value care for the poor, that value is not reified into the practice of relocation as it is for new monastics because it is not part of that particular Christian's repertoire of sensible actions. Or, some new monastics recommend ecological stewardship, but they do so without the sacramental ontology of medieval monastics which elevated the value of the terrestrial order by "anchoring [it] in the eternal Logos."[55] In both cases, we might perform the practice but its meaning(s) depend upon the repertoire of practice in which it is nested and the collective imagination which makes those practices sensible.

Thus, whatever effort new monastics expend to recover monastic-like practices (some place the majority of their emphasis here), the foregoing considerations recommend that such efforts are matched by sustained, creative, deliberate attention to the cultivation and

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[51] Smith and Smith, "Introduction," 14.

[52] See, Mark Sheridan, "The Origins of Monasticism in the Eastern Church" (3-41) and Claude Peifer, "Pre-Benedictine Monasticism in the Western Church" (42-64) in *RB 1980: The Rule of St. Benedict in Latin and English with notes*, edited by Timothy Fry (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1981).

[53] See, Hans Boersma, *Heavenly Participation: The Weaving of a Sacramental Tapestry* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), esp. 17-67.

[54] The most robust appreciation and development of this dynamic among new monastics is found in Jon Stock, Tim Otto, and Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove, *Inhabiting the Church: Biblical Wisdom for a New Monasticism* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2007).

[55] Boersma, *Heavenly Participation*, 52.

maintenance of a theological imagination capable of making such practices sensible and fitting. To repeat my contention: the marks of new monastic communities will carry whatever meaning(s) their theological imagination provides. Thus, like stonecutters who may or may not "see" the cathedral, retrieving a monastic social imaginary necessitates that all *see* a shared theological vision.[56] Without such attention, new monastic practices risk floating free from their theological moorings in the Christian confession.

The traditional venues for such attention are many and varied: catechesis, preaching, spiritual direction, parochial education, etc. Among these and a host of others, the potential of one in particular should not be overlooked: liturgy. "It is in and through the worshipping community," Geoffrey Wainwright suggests, "that most believers *catch* the Christian vision."[57] It is also the case that in the liturgy the full trinitarian weight of the Christian confession is found present, at least tacitly. New monastics will find no more thoroughly *theological* venue for the cultivation and maintenance of theological imagination than a liturgy which intentionally and forthrightly celebrates the trinitarian shape of the Christian confession.[58]

Second, the breadth of such trinitarian theological imagination would also remind new monastics that the *efficacy* of church practices do *not* derive from the material process of habituation but from the agency of the Holy Spirit.[59] While church practices are never less than natural, Christians will always want to insist that they are surely *more* than natural.[60] My intention is not to dichotomize God's agency and church practice, but rather emphasize the gracious character of divine initiative to which our embodied practices are always a *graced response*.

A theological account of church practices can be given any number of ways. The issue is complex, and, at least in the modern West, it is complicated by competitive views of divine and human agency.[61] Yet, recent options are available. Buckley and Yeago, for example, identify a mode of theological reflection that is both Evangelical and Catholic. It holds to the unity of divine and human action through the agency of the Spirit: "Such a mode or style of theological reflection must begin *both* from God's always-precedent action and grace

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[56] Craig Van Gelder offers a similar critique (Craig Van Gelder, "How We Hear Mission in North America: Critical Reflections on the Presentations at the 2009 ASM Meeting," in *Missiology: An International Review*, 38, no. 1 [January 2010]: 51-60).

[57] Geoffrey Wainwright, *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine, and Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 435. Emphasis added. See also, T.F. Torrance, *God and Rationality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 204. Walter Brueggemann's definition of preaching as "re-texting" is remarkably similar: "the task of re-texting, or scribal refraction, is to let the text itself be the resource for offering an alternative imagination, energy, and identity for the community" ("The Preacher as Scribe" in *Inscribing the Text: Sermons and Prayers of Walter Brueggemann* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004], 14).

[58] For altogether encouraging signs among new monastics consider, Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove and Shane Claiborne, "A Liturgy for our Whole Life," *Liturgy* 26, no. 2 (April 2011): 46-52; Wilson-Hartgrove, *Common Prayer*.

[59] Nicholas Healy argues similarly concerning the "new ecclesiology" (Nicholas Healy, "Practices and the New Ecclesiology: Misplaced Concreteness?" in *International Journal of Systematic Theology*, 5 no. 3 [November 2003]: 285-308).

[60] Smith and Smith, "Introduction*,*" 15.

[61] See, William Placher, *The Domestication of Transcendence: How Modern Thinking About God Went Wrong* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1996).

(Evangelical emphasis) *and* from the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, which is likewise also always prior to the thinking and pondering of the individual theologian (Catholic emphasis)."[62] Sarah Coakley's trinitarian account of practice seems to fall in this category. Describing Paul's portrayal of prayer in Romans 8 she writes, "the 'Father' … is both source and ultimate object of divine longing in us; the 'Spirit' is that irreducibly—though obscurely—distinct enabler and incorporator of that longing in creation—that which makes the creation divine; and the 'Son' is that divine and perfected creation, into whose life I, as prayer, am caught up."[63] On the same trajectory, but from a Wesleyan perspective, L. Roger Owens writes, "The Church's participation in God is none other than Christ's practicing himself as the embodied practices of the church, in the Spirit, on behalf of the world."[64]

The point is simply this: for new monastics heavily invested in practices, a trinitarian liturgy would remind them through the practice of worship that the *efficacy* of participation derives not solely (or even primarily) from the one practicing but from the triune God into whose life the redeemed community is being drawn through the agency of his Spirit. What is true of original creation is likewise true for Providence, Redemption, Sanctification, and Consummation: all are gracious gifts of divine love. Each indicates the character of divine grace which always precedes, always initiates, always perfects. This is no less true of church practices, monastic or otherwise.[65]

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[62] James J. Buckley and David S. Yeago, *Knowing the Triune God: The Work of the Spirit in the Practices of the Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 17.

[63] Sarah Coakley, "Living into the Mystery of the Holy Trinity: Trinity, Prayer, and Sexuality," *Anglican Theological Review* 80 (1998), 224.

[64] L. Roger Owens, *The Shape of Participation: A Theology of Church Practices* (Eugene: Cascade, 2010), 183.

SAINT ANSELM OF CANTERBURY IN *REDEMPTOR HOMINIS*: AN UNOBSERVED CONNECTION

Benjamin J. Brown*

While John Paul II nowhere in *Redemptor Hominis* (*RH*) cites St. Anselm of Canterbury directly,[1] a persuasive argument can be made that he drew amply from Anselm's thought in his own theology of salvation. Whether his broader soteriology is directly or indirectly indebted to Anselm is the work of a different, historical study. Here, I focus specifically on the substantial similarity of theological thought and language evidenced in *RH*, suggesting at least an indirect, though no less robust, influence of Anselm and/or contemporary Anselm scholarship. Hence, a better understanding of Anselm's soteriology will help significantly in the interpretation of *RH* and, retrospectively, John Paul II's soteriology in general. In the first part of this essay, I examine Anselm's soteriology. In the second part, I turn to *RH* to both draw out the similarities between the two and elucidate how understanding Anselmian thought aids us in interpreting *RH*.

Anselm's Soteriology

Anselm of Canterbury's classic *Cur Deus Homo* (*CDH*) is arguably one of the most influential but misunderstood works of medieval theology.[2] Anselm is sometimes accused of a lopsided and juridical soteriology that truncated the fullness of the Gospel message and reduced the work of Christ to the restoration of justice (in a strictly legal sense).[3] However, a great deal of scholarship over the last few decades has endeavored to develop a fuller, more balanced representation of Anselm's thought, focusing especially on aspects of his thought such as restoration, beauty, love, relationship, and his profound intertwining of justice and mercy in God's work of salvation for humanity.[4]

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[1] However, John Paul II did not often cite any of the fathers or doctors of the church. In the one encyclical in which he does mention many such names, *Fides et Ratio*, Anselm is not only included but is quoted and discussed in particular, with the approbation, "one of the most fruitful and important minds in human history, a point of reference for both philosophy and theology" (14). There can be no doubt that John Paul II was familiar with Anselm's thought.

[2] See Eugene R. Fairweather, "*Justitia Dei* as the *Ratio* of the Incarnation," in *Spicilegium Beccense*, I (Paris, 1959), 327-35.

[3] For example, Karl Rahner, "The One Christ and the Universality of Salvation," in *Theological Investigations*, vol. 16, trans. David Morland, O.S.B. (New York: Seabury Press, 1979), 199-224, who comments on the "so-called Anselmian theory of satisfaction, which in a crude and more subtle form has determined the doctrine of redemption in western Christianity" (208). See also Eugene Fairweather, "Introduction," in *The Library of Christian Classics*, vol. 10, *A Scholastic Miscellany: Anselm to Ockham*, ed. and trans. Eugene R. Fairweather (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1956), 58-62.

[4] For an overview of the common critiques of *Cur Deus Homo* [hereafter *CDH*] and responses to them, see my "Apologia pro *Cur Deus Homo*," *Fides Quaerens Intellectum* 2 (2003): 227-267. John McIntyre's *St. Anselm and His Critics: A Re-interpretation of the* Cur Deus Homo (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1954) is a monumental work and an especially good *CDH* commentary; it has, to my mind, remained unsurpassed in English in the 50 years since its publication. A particularly good short treatment of Anslem's soteriology can be found in the first half of chapter 7 of Raymund Schwager's history of soteriology, *Der wunderbare Tausch: Zur Geschichte und Deutung der Erlösungslehre* (Munich: Kösel-Verlag, 1986). See also especially Gillian R. Evans, *Anselm and a New Generation* (Oxford: Clarendon

Anselm wrote *CDH* particularly to explain to non-Christian theists (Jews and Muslims) why it is not ignoble for God to have become human and died on a cross as a criminal.[5] In offering his explanation for the Christian faith, he is interested not merely in providing a rational defense but also in showing forth "a certain indescribable beauty in this manner of accomplishing our redemption."[6] Anselm is supremely concerned with beauty and right order. He argues that when the creature "wills what it should, it honors God—not that it confers anything on Him, but that it freely subjects itself to His will and plans and keeps its place in the *order* of the universe, and to the best of its power, it preserves the *beauty* of that universe."[7] While he certainly speaks often about justice and honor, those concepts must be understood in the context, and as aspects of, order, harmony and beauty.[8] The evil of injustice, for example, is that it puts things out of joint, that it vandalizes a beautiful portrait, or shatters a priceless vase.[9]

Anselm's argument runs thus: Human beings were made for eternal happiness with God which requires and consists in uprightness of the will which gives to God all that is due Him and is simultaneously the creature's true joy and fulfillment. While Anselm speaks regularly of the creature's obligation, debt, and obedience to God, it must be carefully noted that the debt to which he refers is the debt of love, of self gift, of following God's will. In current times, obedience and love are usually thought to be incompatible. But this was not the understanding of the ancient or medieval Christian world—a fact exemplified in Anselm's thought. To love is to give one's all to another, to freely submit one's will and thus one's being to one outside the self, in other words, obedience. In so doing, not only is justice (i.e., right order) established, but if one's love is well-placed, then one's own fulfillment is

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Press, 1980), 154-92 and *Anselm and Talking about God* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 126-71 as well as Richard W. Southern, *Saint Anselm and his Biographer: A Study of Monastic Life and Thought, 1059-c.1130* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), 77-121 and Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama*, IV, *The Action*, trans. Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1994). Two dozen other books and articles could easily be added. In French and German one might particularly look, respectively, at Michel Corbin, "Liberal arts Nouveauté de l'Incarnation. Introduction á l'Epistola et au *Cur Deus Homo*," in *L'oeuvre de S. Anselme de Cantorbéry* (1988), 3:11-163 and Gilbert Greshake, "Erlösung und Freiheit. Zur Neuinterpretation der Erlösungslehre Anselms von Canterbury," *Theologische Quartalschrift* 153 (1973): 323-45. Finally, I should note that though these works have done much to recover a correct understanding of *CDH*, they are not themselves without debate at certain points.

[5] *CDH* I.1, 3, and 6.

[6] *CDH* I.3.

[7] I.15, my emphasis. See also *CDH* I.3, I.13, I.19, I.24.

[8] See *CDH* I. 15, I.19, I.22-4, II.1.

[9] Anselm is at pains to make precisely that point in some of his other works, for example, *De Veritate*. Unfortunately, there is not sufficient space to develop this idea as it is present in *CDH*. The primary locus is in Anselm's *De Veritate*. For a fuller examination of Anselm's notion of justice, see Southern, *Anselm and his Biographer*, 99, and Joseph Komonchak, "Redemptive Justice: An Interpretation of the *Cur Deus Homo*," *Dunwoodie Review*, 12 (1972): 35-55, here 36-9. Alister E. McGrath, *Iustitia Dei: A History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification: The Beginnings to the Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 55-7, gives a good presentation of Anselm's thought on this matter, but he overly polemicizes against the notion of justice as giving to each his due, failing to see how Anselm integrates that idea into a broader framework. Fairweather, "Introduction," 80, n. 36, provides a brief explanation of how squarely Anselm stands in the patristic tradition on this point. See *CDH* I.11-15.

achieved and true happiness becomes possible. The same applies to the concept of honor which, to the medieval mind (influenced as it was by the feudal system), is an inherently relational concept.[10] To fail to honor those who deserve it is to step outside of the right order and away from those in it, threatening the harmony and beauty of the social order which, for communal creatures, is necessarily a loss of fulfillment at the deepest level. For Anselm, then, the happiness and fulfillment of the human person is to be found in the perfect confluence of love and justice which puts the person into a right relationship with God, humankind, and all creation. This is what establishes a well-ordered, harmonious, and beautiful whole.

Sin has mired the beautiful creation that God made leaving it out of order, confused, lost, disjointed, and corrupted. Sin is not only a failure to love and honor God, but a disruption of the good order of the universe that cannot be fixed simply by an apology, no matter how forgiving the one dishonored is. Part of the nature of restoration is to "make up" for the wrong done. On an intuitive level, few people have a difficult time grasping that when they have said something spiteful to a loved one, they not only need to apologize and go about the business of striving to love that person from then on, but they need to do something more, something special, to "make up" for the wrong done. There is a sense that they should have to suffer for it, not because of some abstract and arbitrary notion of justice, but because their love for the other and their sense of right order compels them. Anselm calls this process making *satisfaction* for sin, and his notion of redemption as a form of satisfaction is a well known aspect of his soteriology.[11]

Satisfaction can only occur through love's own desire to render it. For God to forgive without satisfaction would be to ignore not only justice, which is certainly Anselm's focus, but also love itself. It would say to humans that their sin is not a serious matter and that their profound desire to make things right is misguided and shall find no fulfillment; it would negate the very nature of justice and love and base the supposedly restored relationship on something less than the truth. It would be like a wife throwing away her husband's make-up gift of flowers, saying that the apology and his renewed love are enough. While it seems like a nice gesture on the part of the wife to simply forgive, it diminishes the husband's dignity and fails to appreciate his love; a love which compels him to make a just satisfaction for his failure.

However, because of the nature of the Divine-human relationship, in which humans already owe to God everything that they are and have, it is impossible for them to make satisfaction, for there is nothing that they can give, do, or create that goes "over and above" or "beyond the call of duty." At this point in his argument and in several other places, Anselm is at pains to explain how God can be unable to do things differently without such a situation presenting a restriction on Divine freedom. He argues that if God is going to heal the world, then it must be through satisfaction, not because God is limited, but because anything else is unfitting given the nature of the world that He has made and continuously sustains. God has created the world with a certain order; to forgive without satisfaction would violate that order and thereby fail to respect his own creation (I.8-9, II.17). God's

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[10] *CDH* I.15 as well as I.9, I.11, I.13, I.23 and II.5. Southern, *Anselm and his Biographer*, 113 makes this point well, that honor in the medieval mind is a relational reality.

[11] I.12, I.15, II.15, II.19 and many others.

freedom is so perfect that He would never do anything contrary to the truth that has been expressed in creation. Demanding satisfaction is simply a matter of God being faithful to Himself (2 Tim. 2:13), to his initial free decision to create the world in the manner He has created it.[12] Thus, creation and redemption are closely interrelated and cannot be understood in isolation.

Human beings must make satisfaction, but they are unable to since they already owe to God everything and have nothing "extra" to give. Even more, anything extra to *truly* satisfy the requirements of justice and love would have to be infinite since the disorder caused is in a certain sense unlimited, and thus only an unlimited being, God Himself, can really make satisfaction. This leads to Anselm's famous dilemma: humans are required to make up for sin but are unable, whereas God is able to make up for sin but cannot rightly do so since it belongs to humans to do it; otherwise, it would be like the wife buying flowers for herself. Anselm's astounding solution (conceivable only from revelation) is that only one who is in the unique position of being both fully God and fully human could truly make the necessary satisfaction.

Anselm then develops an extended argument for the necessity of Christ's death, freely willed by him as the only worthy satisfaction. While some of his language and argumentation here sometimes seems overly juridical, he presents the cross as an immeasurably great gift of the Son's entire will to the Father over-and-above anything that justice could demand and thus as an act of pure, self-giving, obedient love. Such a superabundant act of love is the foundation on which the reconciliation of humanity to God is made possible. However, although Christ has accomplished the redemption of the human race already, each person needs to be united to Christ and His work in order to make Christ's satisfaction his/her own.[13] Here Anselm moves to the Christian moral and spiritual life to further illumine how people can unite themselves to Christ and his redemption of them. This occurs in part through imitation of Christ, but even more so in the Eucharist. In a culminating passage at the end of the treatise: "What greater mercy could be imagined … than for God the Father to say to the sinner … having no way to redeem himself: 'Receive my only begotten Son and present Him instead of yourself'; and for the Son Himself to say: 'Take me and redeem yourself'?" This statement, "Take me and redeem yourself" is clearly reflective of the institution narrative's "Take and eat" for the Eucharist is a participation in the sacrificial self-giving love of Christ, in the cross and resurrection, through which the baptized appropriate for themselves the totally gratuitous satisfaction-making work of Christ and make Christ's gift of Himself to the Father their own personal gift and self-gift. Earlier in *CDH*, Anselm used an analogy that suggested something similar about baptism and confession.[14]

Finally, a word must be said about Anselm's integration of justice and mercy. His entire project is aimed at showing how God's redemption of the human race is the pinnacle of

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[12] A hallmark of both Anselm's and JPII's thought is that freedom and truth are necessarily conjoined. See note 21 below.

[13] II.19-20.

[14] II.16. I refer to the story of the king whose subjects rebel, but whose son finds a way for them to be restored to the king's favor through identification with the prince both through a one-time event and through further opportunities later on.

justice, kindness, and mercy.[15] *CDH* begins with the dilemma that if God merely forgives, then justice is not done; but if God demands an impossible recompense as justice requires, then His mercy seems to have been negated. By the end of the treatise, he can say to Boso, his interlocutor: "When we were considering the justice of God and the sin of man, you thought the mercy of God disappeared. But we have found it to be so great and so in accord with His justice, that it could not be conceived to be either greater or more just."[16] Anselm exclaims: "What greater mercy could be imagined!" But at the same time, through a human being making satisfaction and by all others making satisfaction through him, the greatest justice is achieved because sin is made up for or fully made right (i.e., right order is restored). Further, Anselm suggests that part of the mercy and justice involved is in God's respect for the freedom and dignity of his creatures. God loves humans too much to just bring them back to himself by mere forgiveness.[17] For God to ignore the demands of justice would be an unkindness to the creature, a failure to fully restore right relation in which alone can be found true human happiness. Anything other than redemption through the God-man would be a failure to do justice to the dignity of human beings; thus, holding humans accountable to what justice demands, namely satisfaction, is at the same time a great act of kindness, love, and respect (for His own creation) on God's part. For the Son to become human and make satisfaction in a way that allows and even encourages and inspires others to participate in His work is both supreme mercy and supreme justice.

Redemptor Hominis[18]

If we take a step back from the obvious stylistic differences between *RH* and *CDH* and focus on the Christological content,[19] a significant similarity emerges. Both are more

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[15] It is worth noting that discussions of Anselm's understanding of the justice and mercy of God frequently focus on the *Proslogion* without recognizing that Anselm develops and deepens his understanding in *CDH*. If one stops with the *Proslogion* then Anselm's view is indeed incomplete, if not positively inaccurate. See, for example, Gregory B. Sadler, "Mercy and Justice in St. Anselm's *Proslogion*," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 80 (2006): 41-61.

[16] II.20.

[17] In *CDH* I.19 Anselm uses the analogy of a man who drops a pearl in the mud. It would be unfitting and a sort of disorder (injustice) for the man to put the pearl back into his pocket without cleaning it up first. Further, such an act would also show no care for the pearl, whose beauty demands that restoration include cleansing and not mere replacement into its former position.

[18] Some of the commentaries on *Redemptor Hominis* and John Paul II's theology in general upon which this paper draws include: Avery Dulles, *The Splendor of Faith: The Theological Vision of Pope John Paul II* (New York: Crossroad, 2003); Antoine E. Nachef, B.S.O., *The Mystery of the Trinity in the Theological Thought of Pope John Paul II*, *American University Studies*, vol. 211 (New York: Peter Lang, 1999); George Hunston Williams, *The Mind of John Paul II: Origins of His Thought and Action* (New York: Seabury, 1981); J. Michael Miller, "*Redemptor Hominis*: Editor's Introduction," in *The Encyclicals of John Paul II*, ed. J. Michael Miller (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 1996), 31-43; Robert Morneau, "*Redemptor Hominis*: Themes and Theses," *Review for Religious* 39 (1980): 247-62; James V. Schall, "*Redemptor Hominis*: The Amazement of God," *Homiletic and Pastoral Review* 80 (1979): 11-19; Herbert McCabe, "Comment," *New Blackfriars* 60 (1979): 146-47; Jean Honoré, "Christ the Redeemer, Core of John Paul II's Teaching, in *John Paul II: A Panorama of His Teachings* (New York: New City Press, 1989), 12-26; John Saward, *Christ is the Answer: The Christ-Centered Teaching of Pope John Paul II* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995; and Raymond T. Gawronski, "*Redemptor Hominis*," in John McDermott (ed.), *The Thought of John Paul II* (Rome: Gregorian University, 1993), 221-30.

concerned with the work of the redeemer than the nature of Christ.[20] At the same time, though, both stress the uniqueness of Jesus Christ and the importance of the incarnation for redemption.[21] Both works share an emphasis on the cross in the context of the restorative work of Christ. Both use especially the language of making satisfaction, sacrifice, and paying the price for sin.[22] Both are deeply concerned with the unity of justice and mercy in God and in redemption. Finally, both are deeply concerned with the unity of freedom and truth.[23]

The key soteriological sections of the encyclical are found in chapter two and in a portion of chapter four that deals with the sacraments of Eucharist and Penance, which correspond respectively to the distinction between objective and subjective redemption.

Objective Redemption

John Paul II begins chapter two by discussing the importance of Christ the Redeemer of all human beings, Christian and otherwise.[24] The focus here is on his life as a model and as revelatory. Further, the pope expounds on how the cross in particular is revelatory.[25] While the resurrection is also mentioned, the focus is clearly on the crucifixion. In fact, the pope writes with a noticeably greater passion and expressiveness when he speaks about the cross, in which is found "the inscrutable depth of [Christ's] suffering and abandonment."[26]

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[19] I say "Christological content" because *RH* includes much else theological besides Christology, which is not so much the case for *CDH*. *RH* dwells on matters of anthropology, ecclesiology, pneumatology, social justice and sacramental theology, always centered on and related to Christ, to be sure, but nonetheless distinct subjects that Anselm does not examine with anywhere the same attention, if at all. See Schall's and Morneau's articles along with McCabe's "Comment."

[20] Dulles, *Splendor of Faith*, 40, 49; Saward, *Christ is the Answer*, 45.

[21] Saward, *Christ is the Answer*, 103-4, 109; Nachef, *Mystery of the Trinity*, 90-91, 116-17; Morneau, "*Redemptor Hominis*," 248; and Gawronski, "*Redemptor Hominis*," 222.

[22] Nachef, *Mystery of the Trinity*, 87-89.

[23] *RH* 12.3 and all of 19. See Dulles, *Splendor of Faith*, 188-89; John M. McDermott, S.J., "Response to 'The Nuptial Meaning of the Body,'" in *Pope John Paul II on the Body: Human, Eucharistic, Ecclesial*, ed. John M. McDermott and John Gavin (Philadelphia: Saint Joseph's University Press, 2007), 121-53, here 132-35; Miller, "*Redemptor Hominis*: Editor's Introduction," 39; Morneau, "*Redemptor Hominis*," 256-58; Rocco Buttiglione, *Karol Wojtyla: The Thought of the Man Who Became Pope John Paul II*, trans. Paolo Guietti and Francesca Murphy (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997), 129-41, 178-83 and the translators' afterword, 308-19; Nachef, *Mystery of the Trinity*, 117-18 and David Stagaman, S.J., "The Implications for Theology of *The Acting Person*," in John McDermott (ed.), *The Thought of John Paul II* (Rome: Gregorian University, 1993), 213-220, here 216, 218.

[24] JPII's christocentrism has been much noted and discussed. Among many others, see Angelo Scola, "'Claim' of Christ, 'Claim' of the World: On the Trinitarian encyclicals of John Paul II," *Communio* 18 (1991): 322-31, particularly 321-26.

[25] See Honoré, "Christ the Redeemer," 17.

[26] *RH*, 7. In both *RH* and *Dives in misericordia* (hereafter, *DMC*) the cross is mentioned much more frequently than the resurrection. In the Latin, *crux* and its derivatives along with relevant, non-redundant uses of *mortuus* and its derivatives appear 25 times in *RH* whereas *resurrectionis* and *rescucitare* and related words appear only ten times. In *DMC* the ratio is 56 to 21. This is not by itself definitive in any direction, but it is indicative of the focus on the cross that one finds in JPII's theology. Cf. Dulles, *Splendor of Faith,* 46. Saward, *Christ is the Answer*, comments, bringing cross and resurrection together in summarizing the pope's thought, "The cross is still the point of the turning world, but its pivotal power comes from the Resurrection" (51).

The following section focuses on the longing of the entire world for union with its source, God, for which it was made, but which has been "subjected to futility"[27] through sin. The truth about human beings, about what they are and what they are made for, is only fully made known in and through Jesus Christ, the perfect human, and thus the image and model of human nature and fulfillment.[28] Because of the "unique unrepeatable" nature of Christ, he "penetrated … into the mystery of man and entered his 'heart'"[29], uniting every human to himself.[30] The emphasis in this section is twofold: First, Jesus penetrates into humanity and all creation, recreating it,[31] and thus bringing humanity, and all the world as well, into the divine, which is its true happiness.[32] Secondly, Jesus' life, words, and deeds so powerfully reveal the truth about the human condition and destiny that the truth sets the human race free.[33] The truth itself has a freeing, redemptive power, infusing new life and renewing a creation dying in futility. As observed earlier, this union of truth and freedom is another regular theme in John Paul II's writing.

The next section discusses the paschal mystery itself, in which "Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, bec[a]me our reconciliation with the Father," for "he alone … satisfied the Father's eternal love."[34] Here John Paul II uses language that is overtly Anselmian. Anselm's soteriology, as we have seen, hinges on the notion of making satisfaction for sin which means the restoration of right order in a world marred by the failure to love rightly and give oneself totally to God. On several occasions, John Paul II uses the Latin *satisfacere*, which so characterizes Anselm's thought.[35] He deploys it again in the next sentence when he writes of Christ that "he alone also satisfied that fatherhood of God and that love which man in a way rejected by breaking the first Covenant." Writing in an era in which Anselm's soteriology was still largely viewed negatively, it is notable that John Paul II uses the Anselmian buzzword *satisfacere*.

Just as notable as the pope using satisfaction language, which will appear again in paragraph 20, is the rather unusual way in which he uses the word. In a soteriological context, the word generally refers to the establishment of justice, to "satisfying the demands

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[27] *RH* 8.1. All quotations from *RH* are from the translation published on the Vatican website.

[28] See note 50 below.

[29] RH, 8.

[30] See also *RH* 13.2, 13.3, 14.3.

[31] Many commentators have focused on the notion of recreation which certainly characterizes John Paul's thought. See Enda McDonagh, "*Redemptor Hominis* and Ireland" *The Furrow* 30 (1979): 625-40, who teases out some of the dimensions of redemption as new creation. However, McDonagh misses the very traditional language and theology of the pope (as will be shown below), suggesting that "the Pope does not attend, even in the briefest fashion, to the conventional dimensions of redemption and redeemer" (626).

[32] Nachef, *Mystery of the Trinity*, 91, 98-99.

[33] See also *RH* 10.1. Cf. Dulles, *Splendor of Faith*, 43.

[34] *RH* 9.1

[35] Very few scholars have commented on the use of this language or even set John Paul II in relation to Anselm in any way, positive or negative. One would expect at least an explanation of how the pope's thought is different from that of such a significant figure in soteriology as the bishop of Canterbury. Williams, *Mind of John Paul II*, 305-307, is a notable exception. Nachef, *Mystery of the Trinity*, picks up on the traditional language, but does not connect it with Anselm, though he does connect the pope's idea of the debt of sin with Anselm and others (89).

of justice" or the requirements of the law to make satisfaction for sin. Here, however, the pope speaks in turn of satisfying love and then of satisfying fatherhood. What could such phrases mean? How could one satisfy fatherhood?[36] While it is odd that very few commentators make note of the Anselmian language of satisfaction (let alone see any connection to Anselm himself), it is astonishing that almost no one makes any note of the highly unusual turn of phrase about satisfying fatherhood or even quotes it.[37] This is a largely unexplored area of John Paul II's thought.

Anselm's theology, from which the notion of Christ making satisfaction originally derives, provides an interpretive key. Despite misconceptions to the contrary, Anselm himself actually uses satisfaction to refer not only to justice but also to love. Making satisfaction for sin is a matter of restoring justice, but the *mode* of satisfaction is a matter of restoring love. In other words, the way in which one goes about making satisfaction (justice) is by giving one's whole self to God, that is, by loving God. Only this total self-giving love by which the creature gives to God everything, including himself, fulfills God's design for the human race, which is identical to God's desire for the perfect fulfillment, or happiness, of all.[38] For Jesus to satisfy the Father's love is for him to bring about in creation the full realization of the love of God for humankind (a father's love) and the perfect response to that love from the side of the creature.[39] To satisfy the demands of justice is the same as to satisfy the demands of love, that is, to give the creaturely response to God's grace which allows God's will for creation to be fulfilled which allows God's justice and love to reign in the world as they were supposed to from the beginning.[40] Along the same lines, to satisfy the fatherhood of God itself is to give the appropriate response to God's grace—God's own life, which is God's fatherly, eternal, self-giving, outpouring of self to the other—to allow God's fatherhood to be fully active in the world.[41] Thus, "in the mystery of the Redemption man becomes newly 'expressed' and, in a way, is newly created."[42] Only in Christ's perfect reception of that divine self-gift and perfect response of his own self-giving outpouring (*kenosis*) on the cross is the fatherly self-givingness of God realized in creation.[43] One might

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[36] See also *Dives in Misericordia*, 7: "… satisfy the fidelity of the Creator and Father toward human beings."

[37] Williams, *Mind of John Paul II*, is the only exception that I am aware of (307). Interestingly, Williams is one of the few scholars also to look at *RH* in light of Anselm (though mostly by way of contrasting the two, for Williams is prone to many of the modern misunderstandings of Anselm).

[38] For John Paul II's emphasis on self-giving (or *kenosis*), see John Gavin, S.J., "'Directing the Gaze to Christ': *Redemptor hominis* as a Guide for Jesuit Mission," in *Pope John Paul II on the Body: Human, Eucharistic, Ecclesial*, ed. John M. McDermott and John Gavin (Philadelphia: Saint Joseph's University Press, 2007), 379-85, here 380; and Williams, *Mind of John Paul II*, 309.

[39] Nachef, *Mystery of the Trinity*, is the only commentator on *RH* in English to offer a similar interpretation: "The Father's eternal love needs to be satisified not because of an anger that should be calmed; rather in the sense of restoring the Father's original dimension of love by re-creating the ontological status of human creatures" (91). See also Williams, *Mind of John Paul II*, 307.

[40] While this paper focuses specifically on *RH*, JPII is more explicit on this point in *Redemptionis Donum* 4, which is worth quoting: "For this Redemption gives back to God the work of creation which had been contaminated by sin, showing the perfection which the whole of creation, and in particular man, possesses in the thought and intention of God Himself."

[41] See Saward, *Christ is the Answer*, 22-23.

[42] *RH* 10.1.

[43] See Stagaman, "Implications for Theology of *The Acting Person*," 217.

see fulfillment as equivalent to satisfaction; that is, to satisfy justice or love or fatherhood is the same as to bring them to fulfillment in creation, to make them active and real in the world, which is simultaneously the deepest meaning of human existence and the content of human flourishing. God's fatherhood is finally able to come to complete expression in the created order: "The cross … is also a fresh manifestation of the eternal fatherhood of God."[44] In that sense is fatherhood satisfied or made complete in the created order, though one might more correctly say that it is creation itself which is made complete.[45] All is made well, made right, put in good order, and beautified. In the reality of divine self-giving, human beings can then participate through union with Christ, which is the work of subjective redemption. In all of this, John Paul II's thought uses Anselm's language of satisfaction in striking ways that Anselm's theology can help to unfold.

Further, Anselm's fuller understanding of justice is apparent in the same paragraph of *RH*. We read that, "the redemption of the world—this tremendous mystery of love …—is, at its deepest root, the fullness of justice." The pope's soteriology has a thoroughly integrated vision of the justice and love of God,[46] and in this way is fundamentally Anselmian. Justice is thoroughly united to and informed by love and mercy. John Paul II and Anselm are arguably two of the greatest expositors in the Christian tradition of the union of the justice and love/mercy of God in redemption.[47]

John Paul II's most extensive treatment of this theme is actually found in his second encyclical, *Dives in misericordia*, which space does not permit us to explore in depth here, but he provides an overview in *RH* that is worth examining. He argues that God is so good and faithful that he is "faithful to his love for man and the world" with a true love that "does not draw back before anything that justice requires in him."[48] In other words, love has nothing to fear from justice; it does not need to negate or overturn justice in order to have its way. Love enters into justice and forms it so that fulfilling the demands of justice is not only prompted by love and reveals the greatness of love, but also functions as an expression or embodiment of love itself. Justice thereby becomes one of Love's own names.[49]

The Cross is the "fullness of justice" because on the Cross the Son loves the Father in the most profound way, giving all for the glory of the Father. In this way, the fatherhood of

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[44] *RH* 9.

[45] Nachef, *Mystery of the Trinity*, 97.

[46] See Saward, *Christ is the Answer*, 47.

[47] On the depth of Anselm's treatment, see especially Schwager, *Der wunderbare Tausch*. On JPII, see Robert F. Morneau, "*Dives in Misericordia*: Themes and Theses," *Review for Religious* 40 (1981): 670-83.

[48] *RH*, 9.2.

[49] The pope refers at this point to the Son being made to be sin. Unlike some who would interpret that biblical reference to be suggesting that Jesus takes on the guilt of sin or the alienation from God of sin, John Paul II seems to mean in this passage something closer to a more classical understanding, that the Son experiences the depths of suffering and death, the consequences of sin, for the pope in the same breath describes Jesus as "him who was without any sin *whatever*" (*RH* 9.2, my emphasis). In *Salvifici Doloris* 18 he explains in more detail that Jesus *perceived* and to some extent experienced the darkness and abandonment of sinners, while at the same time knowing full well that he was not abaondoned and maintaining perfect, intimate union with the Father (see Nachef, *Mystery of the Trinity*, 106-7). Thus, any sense of the Father punishing the Son as sinner in place of others, an accusation not infrequently leveled against Anselm, is ruled out. See Saward, *Christ is the Answer*, 48-50.

God is satisfied because, for the first time, the depths of God's love and fatherly care for the world are revealed–God is finally given his due as Father. To give the Father what the Father deserves is Christ's rendering of justice, which is nothing other than perfect love; and conversely, to love perfectly is to fulfill the entire law, as St. Paul says (Rom. 13); and to fulfill the law is certainly a form of justice. The two are not only compatible, but are necessary for one another—two sides of the same coin.

Here, John Paul II also emphasizes the unity of creation and redemption just as Anselm did.[50] He argues that "the God of creation is revealed as the God of redemption" not just because God is "faithful to his love for man and the world, which he revealed on the day of creation" but also because God is "faithful to himself".[51] Anselm, similarly, in arguing that it would be unfitting for God to let the human race utterly perish, insists that this is not a limitation to God's freedom, but merely a faithfulness to the commitment that God made in creating to begin with, and thus it is really faithfulness to himself.[52] John Paul II marshals the same argument here in *RH*.

Subjective Redemption

The second side of the picture of redemption, one which is important to Anselm but receives relatively little treatment from him, is what has been called "subjective redemption," or the appropriation of Christ's person and work to the rest of the human race and indeed the entire cosmos.[53] John Paul II gives significant attention to this level throughout the encyclical. The task of every human person is to "enter into him [Jesus] with all his own self" and thus "'appropriate' and assimilate the whole of the reality of the Incarnation and Redemption in order to find himself."[54]

Particular attention is given to this idea towards the end of the encyclical in a discussion of the importance of the sacraments of Eucharist and Penance and their close relationship to one another. In this section, traditional language for the redemption that had not been present earlier appears for the first time with language around "sacrifice" and "paying the price for sin." These passages are rich, but space permits only a brief examination. Here, too, Anselm's understanding of satisfaction can be heard in the background and function as an interpretive tool, showing, for example, that "paying the price" is in no way a legalistic exchange, but a self-offering in love that meets the demands of both justice and mercy simultaneously.

As to sacrifice, John Paul II says that every human person must participate in the sacrifice of Christ: "We unite ourselves with Christ on earth and in heaven … through the redeeming act of his Sacrifice."[55] This occurs especially through the Eucharist which, among other things, commemorates and reenacts the sacrifice of the cross and in so doing is also "the most perfect Sacrament of this union" to Jesus Christ.[56] Thus, sacrifice and communion

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[50] See Schall, "*Redemptor Hominis*," 14 and Nachef, *Mystery of the Trinity*, 88, 98, and 112.

[51] *RH*, 9.2. See also, Nachef, *Mystery of the Trinity*, 98.

[52] *CDH*, II.17.

[53] See Nachef, *Mystery of the Trinity*, 110 and 115-16 and Williams, *Mind of John Paul II*, 307.

[54] *RH*, 10.1. Cf. 18.4: "… constant self-insertion into the full magnitude of the mystery of the Redemption." See Gavin, "Directing the Gaze to Christ," 380.

[55] *RH*, 20.2.

[56] Ibid.

are not opposing realities, but deeply related. Only through sharing in Christ's perfect sacrifice, that is to say his perfect, total, self-giving love ("his Sacrifice, his self-giving to the Father"[57]), can one be truly brought into communion with God and one's fellow human beings.[58] In this light, the pope says that this "Sacrament of love"[59] is "at one and the same time a Sacrifice-Sacrament, a Communion-Sacrament, and a Presence-Sacrament."[60] Through the sacramental presence of Christ in the Eucharist, the believer is united to Christ in his sacrificial love, thereby offering himself in and with Christ, and thereby also being brought into communion with God and all of creation.[61] Though the language is starkly different, the theology is fundamentally the same when Anselm issues his astonishing phrase, "Take me and redeem yourself."[62]

As John Paul II moves into a discussion of the sacrament of Penance, the language of satisfaction emerges again, appropriately so, because now the subjective side of Christ's work is emphasized. All humans must make their own satisfaction, but that can only be done through appropriating Christ's satisfaction of God's love and fatherhood. While the pope does not explicitly connect his use of satisfaction language here to his use of it earlier, he is still operating in the same framework and employs the term in the same kind of way—as an act of personal self-gift by which something is made right, brought back into right order.

In particular, John Paul II emphasizes that the sacrament of Penance is particularly *human*, fitting the needs of the human person for an embodied, personal encounter with Christ in which one hears his words once more, "Your sins are forgiven." Along those lines, the making of satisfaction is specifically human as well, for it "fits in with man's inward truth, … with the desires of the human conscience."[63] That is, human beings, when they know they have done wrong and hurt or offended someone else, naturally have a desire, as an aspect of conscience, to apologize personally, ask forgiveness, and then do something to

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[57] *RH*, 20.6.

[58] Jeremy Driscoll, "The Eucharistic Liturgy as the Source and Summit of the Church's Communion," in *Called to Holiness and Communion: Vatican II on the Church*, ed. Steven Boguslawski and Robert Fastiggi (Scranton: University of Scranton Press, 2009) offers a particularly good account of the unity of communion and sacrifice.

[59] *RH*, 20.5.

[60] *RH*, 20.4

[61] John Paul's theology in general, including his soteriology has a strong cosmic dimension (see Dulles, *Splendor of Faith*, 48-49), as does Anselm's (e.g., Anslem's concern for the "order of the universe" [I.13] , including even a discussion of the angels as part of the total picture [I.16-18]).

[62] Nachef, *Mystery of the Trinity*, writes: "This plan is one of dual responsibilities between God who offers salvation through Christ and man who, by accepting that Redemption, *saves himself* and effects God's plan" (100, my emphasis) only when "the reality of Incarnation and Redemption is assimilated" (116).

[63] *RH*, 20.7. This point about the humanness of redemption (both subjective and objective) is one aspect of a frequently recurring theme of John Paul's theology, his Christian humanism, which sees Christ as the one who "fully reveals man to himself" (*Gaudium et Spes*, 22), probably the pope's most frequently cited line from Vatican II (Nachef, *Mystery of the Trinity*, 110). Relationship with God does not in any way take away from human dignity and greatness; rather, full human flourishing can be found only in such relationship. See George Weigel, "Blessed John Paul II and His Times," *First Things*, June/July 2011: 27-31; Nachef, *Mystery of the Trinity*, 109-12 and 121-22; Honoré, "Christ the Redeemer," 21-22; Gawronski, "*Redemptor Hominis*," 222; Williams, *Mind of John Paul II*, 307; and Dulles, *Splendor of Faith*, 44.

try to make up for the sin and bridge the interpersonal gap that was formed by the sin. Therefore, "the sacrament of Penance is the means to satisfy man"[64]; without it, the human person's longing for righteousness and justice (here, John Paul II cites the fourth Beatitude) would be unsatisfied, that is, unfulfilled. The dignity of the human person would not be fully respected if redemption were accomplished in any other way than by human beings making up for their own sin. Christ's redemption of humanity includes humanity's participation; anything less would be unjust and therefore unworthy of both God and the human person. This is precisely one of Anselm's key principles: justice (right order) demands that humanity (and each particular person) must make up for humanity's sins. If not, then, in John Paul's strong language, "the human soul's individual *right*"[65] would be violated. Human dignity, the source of rights, necessitates as a matter of human rights, that the person be included in redemption through repentance, conversion, and making satisfaction. In this process, justice is satisfied, as are God's love and fatherhood, and humanity is satisfied. As with Anselm, John Paul II presents a theology which is a beautiful confluence of seeming contraries coming together in unity.[66]

If the Eucharist is the sacrament of union, of love's union, then Penance is the corollary sacrament of repentance and conversion—of love's just demand that all be in right order in the beloved. Ultimately, the two are united and interpenetrate one another, for justice and mercy cannot be separated.[67]

Conclusion

We have seen the extent to which Anselm's theology throws light on John Pail II's sometimes elusive language and thought. First, both describe redemption in terms of satisfaction and understand the restoration of right order in the world through giving to God God's due, which is total self-giving love. Second, both see an inseparable unity in justice and mercy that shows forth the beauty of what God has done through the work of redemption. Third, part of the unity between justice and mercy is found in that Christ does not take our place in total substitution, but opens a path in which all can participate and make satisfaction themselves in which is found great dignity, showing again the integral mercy-justice of God. This subjective redemption occurs in a particular way through the Sacraments, especially Eucharist and Penance. Fourth, both conceive of redemption in terms of a restoration, renewal, and new creation that reestablishes the beauty and right order of creation and elevates it. Fifth, the continuity between creation and redemption is an important point for both theologians. Redemption is a completion and even a furthering of God's original plan in creating, to which God is entirely faithful. This leads to a sixth point of contact: the "necessity" of redemption as God's faithfulness to himself which is in no way a restriction on His freedom, and thus serves as a supreme example of the unity of freedom and truth. Seventh, both are concerned to present the Christian faith about Jesus Christ in a way that is intelligible and to Christians and non-Christians alike. Eighth, while for both authors the uniqueness of the person of Christ as the God-man is foundational, *Cur Deus Homo* and *Redemptor Hominis* both focus on the *work* of Christ that his unique position

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[64] *RH*, 20.7.
[65] *RH*, 20.7; my emphasis.
[66] See Honoré, "Christ the Redeemer," 13-14, 15-16.
[67] *RH*, 20.6, 20.8.

enables him to accomplish. Ninth, though they do not by any means ignore other aspects of Christ's saving work, both very much focus on the cross. Interestingly, throughout the encyclical, John Paul II only applies the word "redemption" to the Cross and Resurrection, not to the other important aspects of the Incarnation and life of Christ.[68]

Rightly understood, Anselm's vision is not only very much present in John Paul II's work, but throws abundant interpretive light on it. The pope's use of such phrases as "satisfied [the] fatherhood of God" become more understandable when viewed against the backdrop of Anselm's own way of presenting his notion of satisfaction. When satisfying for sin is actually the restoration of beauty and order through perfect love, or the fulfillment of God's original plan for creation through a recreation from within, then not only justice but love and even divine fatherhood can, indeed must, all be satisfied by Christ the God-man. In this, Christ "sums up" all things in Himself and presents the whole renewed world to the Father so that God may be all in all (1 Cor. 15:28).

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[68] See, for example, *RH* 10.2: "Redemption that took place through the Cross" and "Redemption was accomplished in the paschal mystery" (including Resurrection). Interestingly in 10.1 JPII speaks of "Incarnation and Redemption," seemingly two distinct things. How strongly he sees this distinction and whether he would refer to both as *saving* (as distinct from redeeming) humanity are questions worth pursuing in another study. Certainly, with Nachef, *Mystery of the Trinity*, we can say "Incarnation and Redemption constitute an organic and indissoluble unity" (97). See Honoré, "Christ the Redeemer," 13. Williams, *Mind of John Paul II*, claims, wrongly, I think, that the pope considers Redemption to have been accomplished by the Incarnation itself, seen, he writes, as the true at-one-ment, the true becoming one of humanity with God; however, he acknowledges that "the Pontiff never expressly says so" and that the clear emphasis is "*above all* [on] the Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension" (306, emphasis in the original).

REVIEW ARTICLE

NEW REFLECTIONS ON THE CULTURAL LEGACIES OF THE REFORMATION AS HARBINGERS OF SECULARIZATION: BRAD S. GREGORY'S *THE UNINTENDED REFORMATION*[1]

Andrew Kloes*

As we approach the 2017 quincentenary of the promulgation of Luther's 95 theses, it would be an understatement to say that the variegated religious reforms that transpired within sixteenth-century Latin Christendom have been the subject of sustained investigations by generations of scholars. Indeed, the aggregate scholarly literature, even as pertains to only one aspect of the Reformation, far exceeds what any one individual could ever hope to read in a lifetime. Yet for all of the valuable insights brought forth by highly specialized studies of particular facets of the European Reformations, besides the many integrative historical surveys that are based upon them, far fewer scholars have endeavoured to analyze and reflect on the collective historical significance of these religious developments as a major threshold event in the *longue durée* history of Western Civilization. (Such an approach would mirror the work by evangelical thinker Francis Schaeffer *How Should We Then Live? The Rise and Decline of Western Thought and Culture.*)

This approach is what characterizes this ambitious volume by Brad S. Gregory: not another historical overview of the Reformation, but rather a consideration of the direct (and especially the indirect and unintended) influence that the European Reformations had on setting the subsequent developmental trajectory of Western thought and life—from the unravelling of a predominantly uniform, Christian cultural, intellectual and social consensus that had been inherited from the High Middle Ages, to the contemporary conditions that Gregory characterizes as modern "hyperpluralism." As he makes plain in his introductory remarks, *"The Unintended Reformation* is intended for anyone who wants to understand how Europe and North America today came to be as they are" (2).

Gregory convincingly argues that most attempts to explain the origins of modernity are short-sighted because they employ an insufficient historical scope in their analyses, either by neglecting the medieval period or assuming it to be mostly discontinuous with later (early modern and modern) eras. These eras typically begin, as it were, "too late" by identifying the French Revolution, the Enlightenment, or the Reformation as inaugurating modernity through their enactment of some sort of definitive break, religiously, epistemologically or politically, from the preceding course of European history. Gregory discerns that such periodization is far from neutral, and that it implicitly promotes a "supercessionist" philosophy of history, one that certain scholars, whom Gregory refers to as "secular believers," commonly use to perpetuate a grand metanarrative of a primitive and religious past as having been progressively replaced by an advanced, non-religious, rational, and scientific present. In summarizing his alternative view, Gregory concludes that when "judged on their own terms and with respect to the objectives of their own leading protagonists, medieval Christianity failed, the Reformation failed, confessionalized Europe failed, and

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[1] Brad S. Gregory, *The Unintended Reformation: How a Religious Revolution Secularized Society* (The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2012.

Western modernity is failing, but each in different ways and with different consequences, and each in ways that continue to remain important in the present. This sums up the argument of the book" (365).

To this end, Gregory adopts what he calls a "genealogical methodology," in which he imagines twenty-first-century Western culture to be the most recently added generation to a family tree, one whose ancestry can be parsed into various lineages of cultural evolution that altogether have produced modern Western culture. The distinguishing characteristic of Gregory's methodological proposal is that these lineages themselves ought to be the subject of focused historical study.

Without insisting that the lines of modern descent that he identifies are the only ones that exist, Gregory divides the main body of his study into six chapters, each of which considers cultural changes in certain "domains of human life," which he contends were catalyzed by the Reformation and have profoundly shaped Western historical development: (page 22) "The six strands in the analysis [in this book] focus respectively on the relationship among religion, science, and metaphysics; the basis for truth claims related to human values and meaning; the instructional locus of the public exercise of power; moral discourse and moral behavior; human desires and capitalism; and the relationship between higher education and the assumptions about knowledge." Before proceeding to a discussion of how Gregory explicates the changes in each of these broad areas over the past seven centuries, it will be helpful to first make some brief biographical remarks about Gregory in order to shed light upon the historical perspective from which he works as well as to further illuminate his critiques of certain secular and "scientistic" tendencies within the academy, which (386) "for a century or so" have amounted to a kind of "ideological imperialism masquerading as an intellectual inevitability" (386).

Gregory is currently the Dorothy G. Griffin Professor of Early Modern European History at the University of Notre Dame. He earned his doctorate from Princeton University and completed writing his PhD dissertation while holding a research fellowship at Harvard University, before beginning his academic career at Stanford University in 1996. In an article that appeared in the online version of *Notre Dame Magazine* in 2007, Gregory described why, after he had already received academic tenure at Stanford, that he decided to come to Notre Dame in 2003:

"What drew me to Notre Dame was its Catholic identity…in my experience, there is greater academic freedom at Notre Dame than at leading secular universities…In secular institutions, even to raise questions in the classroom about whether, say, Christian claims about reality might be true or prayer might entail experience of God is to court a reprimand if not formal censure…It's not a secular university's business to instruct students about how they should live or not live…[But this is] not so at Notre Dame, or at any Catholic college or university worthy of the name. To be an educated adult Catholic means to live in a manner that embodies virtues consistent with the following of Christ…Perhaps in the end, that's why I'm here."

One can certainly admire Gregory's holistic vision for the integration of faith and learning and how scholarship could be informed by a position of faith, echoing in some regards the work of Gregory's Reformed Protestant colleague at Notre Dame, George

Marsden.[2] The argumentation of *The Unintended* Reformation is clearly informed by both Gregory's Roman Catholic faith and the concomitant vision it supplies him of how faith establishes an intellectual and spiritual foundation for Christian scholarship.

In chapter one, "Excluding God," which struck this reviewer as the most brilliant of all of Gregory's lucid and highly learned essays, he explores the historical origins of the oft-perceived intellectual conflict between science and religion. Gregory locates the germ of such perceptions in the thirteenth-century philosopher-theologian John Duns Scotus' novel argument that God was not absolutely "other" from his creation, but rather shared with it the attribute of "being," thereby modifying traditional, orthodox understandings of the transcendence of God through the introduction of his concept of univocity, i.e. that the same categories for comprehending the creation were suitable for understanding the Creator as well. This introduced a new paradigm for understanding God as the greatest entity within the universe (rather than the biblical view of God which sees him as, according to Gregory, utterly different from the universe that he rules over and actively cares for). The full effects of this nuance did not become apparent until the intractable doctrinal controversies of the Reformation-era forced seventeenth-century thinkers to set aside what had been the source of long-standing disagreements (the interpretation of special revelation) and consider only what all might be able to agree was evident through reason alone. According to Gregory, the combination of this epistemological move and the assumptions of metaphysical univocity facilitated the advent of deism and pantheism in the seventeenth-century and atheistic materialism in the eighteenth. After developing these points, Gregory further critiques the notion that advances in scientific understanding somehow render adherence to religious beliefs untenable as an unrecognized form of metaphysical univocity in ways that will be of particular interest to those who study Christian apologetics. "The *philosophical* belief that natural laws are necessarily exceptionless is not empirically verifiable in our own or any conceivable configuration of human knowledge, because verification would require the observation of all natural events in all times and places. And were a miraculous event to occur, it would neither contradict nor undermine the findings of science; it would simply mean that overwhelmingly regular natural phenomena are not equivalent to inviolable natural laws" (62-63, emphasis original).

One critique of this section is Gregory's unqualified equation of the biblical idea of divine transcendence with what Gregory calls "Christianity's sacramental view of reality," (30) as the reviewer considers the former to merely be a necessary condition for the latter, but not a sufficient condition of it; however, this is a standard difference between certain Protestant and Catholic understandings of sacramental outlooks.

In chapter two, entitled "Relativizing Doctrines," Gregory treats the topic most readily associated with the Protestant Reformation: its theological dissent from the teachings of the late medieval Roman Church, centering around the principle of *sola scriptura*. Through a wide survey of Lutheran, Reformed, and Anabaptist sources, Gregory demonstrates how the conviction that God could be sufficiently known "through Scripture alone" and that the contents of the Scriptures did not require augmentation from any other source of knowledge

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[2] George Marsden, *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship* (Oxford University Press, 2007). See also the helpful and now-classic work by Stanley Hauerwas, *The State of the University: Academic Knowledges and the Knowledge of God* (Malden, MA & Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007).

did not yield a consensus on what the Bible taught, but rather generated many disparate interpretations that diverged from each other in ways that were judged to be highly significant to contemporaries. Subsequent claims by radical Protestants to have received special revelation or to have been illuminated directly by God through an inner light are argued to have produced the same kinds of epistemological problems as those first introduced by *sola scriptura*. Gregory then links the failure of the attempts to reach a consensus regarding matters of ultimate truth on the basis of *sola scriptura* to the rise of attempts to do so on the basis of *sola ratio*, which he shows to have been no more successful down to the present day. "Here it can simply be observed that in no domain of philosophy since the seventeenth century has there ever been general agreement about what reason dictates, discloses, or prescribes, whether in terms of metaphysics, epistemology, philosophical anthropology, or morality" (123).

This reviewer respectfully objects to Gregory's assertion that "in no sense therefore was 'tradition' for magisterial Protestant reformers an authority to which they deferred relative to their respective readings of scripture, as it was for their Catholic counterparts…Neither magisterial nor radical Protestant reformers modified their hermeneutical judgments when these were at odds with traditional authorities, instead they rejected the latter at each point of disagreement" (95). Such statements seem to imply that Church tradition had been uniform throughout its history to this time and was furthermore congruent with the teachings and practices of the late-medieval Roman Church, two presuppositions that Calvin vigorously contested by way of hundreds of references to patristic and medieval theologians throughout his *Institutes*. Additionally, it would seem that the same critique Gregory here makes of Protestants could also be made of Catholics, regarding how they ignored certain strands of church tradition that did not comport with those which they preferred. For example, when certain Protestants rejected the canons of the 787 Council of Nicaea that affirmed the orthodoxy of venerating images of Christ, Mary, and the saints, they thereby concurred with the traditions of the 794 Council of Frankfurt, the 798 Council of Finchenhalia (held near Durham in northern England), and the 825 Council of Paris, each of which had condemned such practices.

In chapter three, entitled "Controlling the Churches," Gregory pursues the intriguing thesis that the fracturing of Latin Christendom into divergent confessional camps resulted in the hegemony of the State over the Church throughout the Western world and that, albeit in far different ways, the later was circumscribed and controlled by the former no less in liberal democracies than in totalitarian regimes. As G.M. Ditchfield has noted in his 1998 study of evangelicalism (published by University College London Press), by 1580 approximately half the population of Europe had become Protestant, but by 1700 only one-fifth of the population of Europe remained Protestant, the result of a combination of counter-Reformation Catholic evangelistic initiatives, discriminatory policies, and highly successful religiously motivated wars undertaken by the Catholic monarchs of the Holy Roman Empire, France, Poland, and Spain against the Protestant populations of Central and Eastern Europe, the Netherlands, and France. To be sure, Protestant authorities persecuted Catholics and other Protestants with equal verve, but these did not alter Europe's religious demography to the same degree. Gregory argues that an unintended result of these "wars of religion" was a shift in what temporal authorities perceived was actually in the best interests of the State, from compelling uniform religious adherence to the confession that it chose to privilege, to courting the loyalty of subjects by constitutionalizing their religious liberties.

However, these guarantees of religious liberty, first in the Dutch Republic and then in the United States, ultimately led to the privatization of religion and its eventual ghettoization outside the public sphere, with the State acting as the arbiter of what kind of public influence would be permissible for religion.

This reviewer believes that Gregory must have misspoken in this chapter when he states that one of the doctrines Protestants continued to share with Roman Catholics throughout this period was their belief in "the Father's incarnation in Jesus" (159); surely Gregory affirms that it was the second person of the Trinity who became incarnate and not the first. This reviewer also found Gregory's decision to here characterize the Second Iraq War as "secular killing for the sake of the American Empire" (177) to be an odd choice of words, given his earlier stated concerns "about the degree to which people in the United States appear to be growing ever more politically and culturally polarized" (15); without condemning or supporting his criticism as such, it would seem that such rhetoric perpetuates the very problem that this reviewer applauds Gregory for earlier decrying.

In chapter four, entitled "Subjectivizing Morality," Gregory notes that the disintegration of an institutionally uniform expression of Christianity occasioned by the Reformation also engendered a shift in ethics, from a teleological-virtue "Christian ethics of the good," anchored in a biblically-derived metaphysical system, "to a secular ethics of rights" (179) that is asserted today by sheer philosophical fiat and (unacknowledged) borrowed moral capital from Christianity. Gregory's discussion of the origin of the concept of human rights in medieval canon law is impressive, particularly the example he provides of how peasants were said to have the right to steal food from "the rich and powerful" when they faced starvation (197). Gregory's trenchant criticism of Jonathan Israel's interpretation of the ideal ethics of certain proponents of the radical Enlightenment as the epitome of the manifestation of reason will doubtlessly be of interest to those familiar with his encyclopedic contributions to the historiography of European intellectual history.[3]

In chapter five, entitled "Manufacturing the Goods Life," Gregory considers the relationship between the Reformation, the rise of capitalism, and the later appearance of consumerism. After detailing how assessment of Max Weber's famous thesis concerning the economic consequences of the psychology of predestination (he finds Weber unconvincing on this score), Gregory suggests that the religious fragmentation of Christendom was the necessary prerequisite for a new mode of thinking about the accumulation of possessions. Whereas before such behaviour had been viewed negatively as avarice, in a partisan Europe they could be taken as signs of God's blessings upon a particular confessional community (272). Another of Gregory's insights relates to the advance of commerce and domestic consumption of luxury goods in the seventeenth-century helped to bind together peoples whose religious differences had previously divided them and that today consumeristic materialism arguably still furnishes the strongest sort of societal glue.

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[3] E.g. *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650-1750* (Oxford University Press, 2001); *Enlightenment Contested: Philosophy, Modernity, and the Emancipation of Man 1670-1752 (*Oxford University Press, 2006); and *Democratic Enlightenment: Philosophy, Revolution, and Human Rights 1750-1790* (Oxford University Press, 2011).

In chapter six, entitled "Secularizing Knowledge," Gregory discusses how the academic discipline of theology went from being the "Queen of the sciences" in the medieval university to *persona non grata* in almost all modern research universities. Gregory argues that the modern assumption that "knowledge" must be universally accessible and therefore "objective," a criterion which putatively excludes theology, results from how the divisive legacy of the Reformation simultaneously cast doubts over whether theologians could ever find a consensus in religious matters, while local authorities insulated and isolated the discipline itself from other fields of knowledge by ensconcing it in privileged places in their confessional universities. The growth and stunning explanatory power of the empirical sciences and the novel social sciences that aspired to emulate their methods in the nineteenth-century appeared to some to render whatever insights disconnected theology could proffer irrelevant, if not dubious.

The Unintended Reformation is a thoroughly stimulating piece of historical scholarship which renders a great service to its careful readers; students and scholars alike will surely appreciate its 136 pages of detailed endnotes. The impressive breadth of Gregory's historical vision provides us with a far more contextually grounded account of how the Reformations set into motion a series of six mutually reinforcing lines of cultural development, the results of which are contemporary life in Europe and North America. I hope for the warm reception of Gregory's closing plea (386) for an "unsecularization of the academy" in which "all academics" would "acknowledge their metaphysical beliefs as beliefs," whether they be "religious, naturalistic, or sceptical" in nature, in accordance with the academy's commitments "to the open pursuit of intellectual inquiry without ideological restrictions, to critical rationality, to the importance of rethinking and reconsidering, to the questioning of assumptions, [and] to academic freedom."

BOOK REVIEWS

Reading the Epistle to the Hebrews: A Resource for Students. **Edited by Eric Farrel Mason and Kevin B. McCruden. Society of Biblical Literature Resources for Biblical Study. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011, 354 pages. Softcover, $39.95.**

This work is divided into five sections: conceptual and historical background, structure of the text, emerging methodological approaches, major theological issues, and reception history (3). Many essays are condensed versions of a larger work on the topic. Thus, the criticism of any essay is given with the knowledge that the larger work may answer such criticisms or provide a more satisfactory analysis.

First come the essays on conceptual and historical background. P. Gray discusses Hebrews' connection with Greco-Roman culture. He correctly notes several Greco-Roman images (such as a track race in 12:1-4) which give the reader some cultural context to understand their use. The reader gains a better understanding of Hebrews' culture, although some parallels may be forced (e.g., brotherly love [23-24]).

J. Thompson argues that Hebrews' thought is indebted to Middle-Platonism. Throughout the essay, he compares ideas in Hebrews to ideas prevalent in Philo and Plutarch, such as Christ's attributes in 1:1-4, his abiding forever, and his once-for-all sacrifice. His parallels again seem forced to this reviewer and do not provide evidence of direct appropriation.

E. Mason argues that Hebrews expresses Jewish apocalyptic thought in cosmology and Messianism. He argues for reliance upon ideas of a heavenly sanctuary, heavenly sacrifices, and an angelic Melchizedek in apocalypticism, although Hebrews utilizes the ideas slightly differently (56-60). Similarly, Hebrews is "indebted on some level to an earlier priestly tradition" regarding the Messiah, although again with different emphases (68). His use of Melchizedek somewhat lacks originality, since he follows Second Temple portrayals of the King of Salem as an angelic figure (68-76). Mason's article helpfully summarizes cosmological, messianic, and Melchizedekean views of the Second Temple period, but the desire to uncover the "background" of Hebrews' thought diminishes the author's originality and theological acumen.

D. Moffit suggests Hebrews interprets Scripture according to rabbinical methods, although with creativity and mastery in his selection and placement of OT quotations and allusions. Despite the lack of discussion on typology, Moffit introduces the issue well.

Second come essays on structural issues. C. Koester argues Hebrews is structured according to ancient rhetorical conventions. The structure is: *exordium* (1:1-2:4); *narratio* is omitted; *propositio* (2:5-9); arguments and digressions (2:10-12:27); peroration (12:28-13:21); epistolary postscript (13:22-25). The brilliance of Koester's outline is that the arguments are three-fold (2:10-6:20; 7:1-10:39; 11:1-12:27) and correspond to the three points of the proposition: (1) Jesus is glorified through suffering and invites us to follow (2:9a); (2) Jesus' death is for everyone (2:9c); (3) as Jesus hoped in future glory, so should those who are persecuted for their faith (2:8c; pp. 107-08). The problems with his structure are that he considers the warning passages to be digressions rather than the true focus; he omits 3:7-4:14 as a digression and includes it in an argument and 2:1-2 (a warning) should not be included in the *exordium*, which Koester says is supposed to build rapport (104).

G. Gelardini argues Hebrews is a synagogue homily of the "(proto-)*petichta* type" that interprets its two central readings, Ps. 94:7b-11 LXX and Jer. 38:31-34 (140-41). Her evidence suggests a possible structural influence on the author by synagogue homilies, but she does not explain how her thesis coincides with the situational context of the letter. Her thesis also contradicts a more common view that the letter is a sermon centered on Psalm 110 and perhaps also 2:7.

Third come essays on emerging methodologies. J. Neyrey argues that Jesus' high priesthood in Hebrews is expressed in terms of a broker between a client-patron relationship. Again, I find myself unconvinced by this attempt to read Hebrews' thought in terms of Greco-Roman culture. The relationships and concepts can all be understood within a Jewish framework (e.g., p. 148). At best, he seems to establish conceptual parallels between various religions which unsurprisingly exhibit similar relational structures.

K. Schenck analyzes Hebrews from a narrative perspective, suggesting Hebrews "is an argument over the significance of various characters, settings, and events in a common story" (175). He attempts to show that the author re-presents "the story of God's people" in a "sweeping and ingenious" manner (187). While his analysis of the letter is insightful, the narrative approach seems to yield little more than a traditional approach (e.g., a thematically or structurally organized approach). It merely presents the analysis in a different manner.

Fourth come essays on theological issues. F. Matera provides a brief analysis of Hebrews' theology. He presents four main elements: soteriology, which presupposes Christology, and ecclesiology, which presupposes eschatology (204-05). The expository sections focus on Christology and soteriology, while the warning passages focus on ecclesiology and eschatology (198-99). It is on the basis of the former two that Hebrews expresses the latter two (202). Matera's essay is surely correct when he characterizes the author of Hebrews as "one of the great religious thinkers of the New Testament, being on a par with Paul and John" (190) and he follows with a distinctly organized and helpful theology of the epistle.

K. McCruden examines the notion of "perfection" in Hebrews in relation to Jesus and his followers. Jesus is perfected through his exaltation and glorification, but he is also perfected through learning obedience in his earthly ministry (212-13). The nature of his perfection is perfect obedience to God through kingdom service to others, especially through his solidarity with mankind and sacrificial death (229). Jesus' followers will experience perfection in the age to come, but will also experience it now through direct access to God through Christ (225-29). McCruden's essay benefits the reader by mapping out two dimensions of perfection for Christ and for his followers. The chapter would have been strengthened by a clearer analysis of what *perfection* is rather than his emphasis on when and how it is attained.

Fifth come essays on reception history. R. Greer reports how Hebrews was used in theological controversy. He traces its use during the Arian controversy, focusing on Athanasius' arguments from Hebrews as well as those of his counterpart, Theodore of Mopsuestia. The possible contradiction between these views "became actual when Cyril of Alexandria condemned Nestorius" (245). This controversy led to the Definition of Chalcedon of which Hebrews played an important role. His essay is worth the read, if only to note his conclusion that our modern, predominantly historical interpretations of Scripture

are just as circularly based as patristic, theological interpretations are sometimes accused of being (249).

A. Mitchell inveighs against a supersessionist reading of Hebrews. He argues that Hebrews' rhetoric does not suggest the inferiority or obsolescence of the Old Covenant, but rather its value (255-58). He argues that 7:1-12; 8:7-13; and 10:1-10 do not teach that the church has replaced Israel, despite the fact that they are heavily referenced for such an interpretation. While he is probably correct to rule out supersessionism ("replacement of Judaism with Christianity" [261]), he does not consider or effectively rule out a theology that teaches the Church *is* Israel. In fact, Mitchell correctly notes that Hebrews' author calls his audience "children of Abraham" in 2:16 (261) which suggests just such an interpretation.

M. Torgerson surveys the use of Hebrews through the ages of the Church. The most interesting sections of this essay are his discussions on the homilies of Chrysostom on Hebrews, a homily itself (270-72), the use of Hebrews to justify and explain the Roman Catholic priesthood (278-79), and the expression in art of the Melchizedek episode and of Jesus as priest (293-96).

Overall, this collection of essays is helpful for a student wishing to engage in current scholarship on Hebrews. However, the work is slanted toward conceptual and historical backgrounds which is the largest section (the theological section carries only two essays.) The fascination with uncovering the origins of an author's theology or language has loomed large for at least two centuries since the dawn of the Modern era and is rather worn. These essays attempt to ground Hebrews in Middle-Platonism, the Greco-Roman world, apocalypticism, and Rabbinical Judaism. Aside from the lack of material noting the theological ingenuity and uniqueness of Hebrews (Matera is the exception), this volume also suffers from the tired notion that uncovering a cloaked conceptual background is the key to unlocking the lock-box of epistolary meaning. But why stop one step removed from Hebrews, for example, with Middle-Platonism? If Hebrews is based conceptually on Middle-Platonism, can we truly understand Hebrews until we understand the origins of Middle-Platonism? Thus, we can examine the intellectual background of, say, Philo, by examining his appropriation of Plato's ideas. But Plato also borrowed ideas, for example, the idea of the eternality of the soul which he traduced from the Pythagoreans. Once one commits to this search for the origins of an author's ideas (what David Clines has elsewhere criticized under the name "geneticism"), one cannot fully understand the author unless one fully understands the entire history of ideas and the influence from one group or person to the next. Of course, this process becomes more complex when one considers the various backgrounds (at least four) here attributed to Hebrews. Is the student prepared to trace back all four strands of thought *ad infinitum* (or at least as far back as our historical knowledge allows us)?

To clarify, it is certainly a worthwhile endeavor to attempt to understand the conceptual background of an author, and certainly Hebrews has been influenced by these strands of thought to some extent. But the authors sometimes seem to give the impression that this *fully* explains Hebrews as an intellectual. Moreover, it seems to be left unsaid whether this conceptual indebtedness renders Hebrews' ideas false or theologically tainted. Personally, I prefer to grant Hebrews' author a generous amount of ingenuity and uniqueness in his theological expression. I also regret that these essays failed to consider Hebrews' probable connection to the Pauline mission (Heb 13:23) and therefore to the rest of the apostles, all of whom Jesus taught to interpret the Scriptures (Luke 24:27, 44-47; Acts 1:3; 1 Cor 15:6). If

any conceptual background should be given pride of place, it should be the teaching of Jesus mediated through the apostles (Heb 2:3).

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Joseph F. Kelly, *History and Heresy: How Historical Forces Can Create Doctrinal Conflicts* **(Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2012), 215pp.**

I love sausage. As far as I'm concerned, it's one of God's great gifts to us. When I'm eating it, however, I try not to think very much about what's in it or how it was made. In fact, I'm quite sure it's better if I don't think about it. Ever. Why? Well, of course, sausage contains a great many things (unspeakable things!) that, when taken out and held up to closer inspection, complicate my sausage eating pleasure. But when all of this "stuff" is mixed together, placed in their casings—and please don't ask me what those are made of—thrown on the grill, and smothered with onions and peppers? Wow! I can't get enough. How can something I love so much be filled with stuff that I don't understand; stuff that makes me feel a little wobbly?

I thought a lot about my sausage eating dilemma while reading Joseph F. Kelly's book, *History and Heresy: How Historical Forces Can Create Doctrinal Conflicts.* Kelly reminds us that, like sausage, Christian orthodoxy was not delivered to us at once, fully formed, in a complete and delectable package. It instead developed over time, within the muddled, thorny, intricate confines of historical time and space. And the social forces, political issues, ideological complexities, varied institutions, and petty squabbles of human culture in every era through which it passed added and subtracted to what each subsequent generation experienced as "the Christian Faith." There is no way around the (for some) uncomfortable fact that true Christian doctrine has changed over time, and that historical factors have played a defining role in what orthodoxy was yesterday, heresy is today, and the authority structures of the church may think about either tomorrow.

Kelly's book is by no means an attempt to survey the entire scope of Christian history, nor even a summative overview of "major" Christian doctrinal disputes. It instead takes an episodic tour through a few carefully selected eras focusing on defining conflicts in which the peculiar demands of the age gave rise to redefinitions of "orthodoxy," and correspondingly led Christians to recast what would count as "heresy." After an introduction to the problems of defining church authority and heresy within the thick groves of historical context, Kelly moves from the second through the twentieth centuries in five pithy chapters, each covering a representative dilemma of establishing orthodoxy: Montanism, Monophysitism, Catharism, Roman Catholic Modernism, and Protestant Modernism/Fundamentalism.

His focus throughout this brief but surprisingly rich and helpful study is how ecclesial authority has been defined, negotiated, and altered by the varying challenges faced by the church as it confronted the monumental task of defining fundamental standards of "right belief" and "right practice." He describes the ways in which often hazy standards of doctrinal orthodoxy were forged and developed, conflict by conflict. For the purpose of this study, Kelly defines heresy "as the conscious deviation from a publicly proclaimed teaching of a religious group or church" (1). Setting and resetting the boundaries orthodoxy in every

age (including the era in which the New Testament was written) played the important role of clarifying Christianity's official standards so that those who departed from them would not be mistakenly understood as speaking for the church. So there is a perpetually changing idea of "heresy" at various times, in various places, and amid particular traditions relative to what constituted "orthodoxy" within these same spheres.

Most ordinary Christians probably assume that the Faith "once delivered to the saints" (Jude 1:3) is and always has been just that: a complete, intact, and clearly elucidated set of teachings about the meaning and implications of Jesus Christ for the community gathered around his teachings, life, death, and resurrection. But, as Kelly rightly observes, even the book of Acts bears witness to a fair amount of "sausage making" as the apostles wrestled through questions of authority and boundaries in, for instance, determining if the gospel message was intended for only Jews or if it might be spread to all of humanity.

Among those with no particular commitments to the faith, it probably comes as no surprise to learn that the lines between orthodoxy and heresy have been blurred through the centuries, and that the teachings of the church have been subject to the evolving needs, interests, and convictions of mere mortals since (and during) the New Testament era. Like all other ideas in human history, Christian beliefs and practices are time-bound artifacts that have developed and reflect the times in which they were situated. But among those who see the Christian faith as reflecting timeless, transcendent, and absolute truths about the true God and his only begotten son, Jesus Christ—"the same yesterday, today, and forever"—the notion of a historically conditioned Faith is much harder to swallow.

Kelly speaks as someone who is both a hardheaded scholar of historical Christian theology and, as far as I can tell, an observant adherent of Christianity. For him, the development of Christian doctrine isn't a mere academic curiosity. He is willing to describe orthodoxy as a genuine, even normative (albeit changing) category of belief and practice that the church has every right and reason to steward, and speaks of heresy as a real and present threat to the life and survival of the Church. But in doing so, he believes we cannot treat the teachings of the Church as if they "fell from heaven" in their a clear and proper form.

He argues that the rich reservoirs of biblical, theological, and historical scholarship that allow us to unpack some of the complexities of the Church's teachings as they have been debated throughout time must be accounted for and understood. Until we are willing to confront the "historical problem" of Christian doctrine and accept the its evolutionary nature, we run the risk of alienating educated Christians who approach the tenets of their faith with an unflinchingly modern confidence in reason. "The problem with asking people to believe in something that does not make sense," observes Kelly, "is that they will then be less likely to believe in something serious" (201).

The problem, of course, with Kelly's final word on *history* and *heresy* is that human reason, with its unflappable confidence in natural science, the social sciences, and modern historical methods seems, in the end, to have the final word. We're left with only a variation on Kant's impoverished "religion within the bounds of reason." While I admire and find compelling much of Kelly's challenging reading of Christianity's theological past, I can't help wonder if it allows the Christian tradition to retain one of its more powerful features throughout its history: the authority to speak boldly and clearly to the "wisdom" of our own age. And to

assert, despite difficulties and contradictions to this worldly wisdom, that the God's eternal and true purposes are being accomplished, admittedly, through such fragile jars of clay.

Although I bear some responsibility as a thoughtful Christian believer to consider the strange, even repulsive ingredients contained in the "sausage" of Christian orthodoxy, as an act of faith, I will continue to receive and consume it ravenously as a glorious gift from God.

<div align="right">Jay Green
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Evangelism and the Openness of God: The Implications of Relational Theism for Evangelism and Mission. **By Vaughn W. Baker. Wipf and Stock, 2012. 310 pp.**

For at least the past decade, I've been engaged in the conversation around "open theism," (also called the openness of God, open theology, and the open view), as both a biblical studies student and as an urban minister. In April of this year, I was privileged to help organize and lead the first open theology conference specifically for ministry practitioners. A group of us acknowledged that the open theology conversation has centered almost exclusively around professional theologians, philosophers, and scientists. We recognized that for this view to really make a difference in people's lives, it had to take root in the church, not just the ivory tower of academia. We also recognized that more and more ministers were finding the open view a compelling framework for ministry. These currents demonstrate the importance of Vaughn Baker's *Evangelism and the Openness of God*. Regardless of one's personal theological outlook, this work represents the next phase in the open theology conversation; namely, it is an intentional effort to apply the open view to a practical and important area of ministry: evangelism and missions.

Vaughn Baker is Lead Pastor at Silver Creek United Methodist Church in Azle, TX and a Senior Fellow in the Polycarp Community of scholars at SMU's Perkins School of Theology. He writes from the perspective of a scholar, but also a church leader and missions organizer. His main thesis is that "the concepts essential to what is called conventional or classical theology have become an impediment to the church in renewal seeking to understand its experience of God from a theological perspective" (9). Baker briefly alludes to this renewal of the church as taking place largely "outside North America," as one "Pentecostal" in worship expression or in spirituality, and one in which "genuine reciprocity is present in relationality." More specifically, this renewal is one in which God and people are experiencing direct interaction: "Human response matters, whether it is faith or unbelief, obedience to the leading of the Spirit of God, or quenching the Spirit" (10). Open theism, Baker believes, "provides a way forward, if not a necessary revision, of our idea of God and creatures[…].With the church experiencing renewal and growth in the world today, what is needed is a more dynamic understanding of God and the world which more closely approximates both the biblical witness and the current experience of the church" (9).

Evangelism and the Openness of God is organized into eight chapters ranging in content from the historical development of open theism, to the implication of open theism for evangelism and missions, to a theological concept relevant to open theism called "essential kenosis." Baker's introduction has a helpful glossary of terms and he begins with two interesting chapters contrasting the lives and theologies of Clark Pinnock and J. I. Packer. One of Packer's most popular books is entitled *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*, which Baker's

own title clearly appropriates and revises. The two now-deceased theologians shared surprisingly similar upbringings, yet their theological journeys took them in opposite directions. Packer would become known as "the last Puritan" for his intense commitment and contribution to Calvinist theology (29), while Pinnock would go on to become a leader in the "post-conservative" evangelical theological movement (85-94). In many ways Packer and Pinnock represent opposite ends of the evangelical theological spectrum. Packer sought to preserve the traditional Calvinism of the Puritans and defended its explanatory power for the evangelistic task.On the other hand, Pinnock was a theological pilgrim who pushed the boundaries of evangelical inclusiveness and challenged evangelicals to listen to and incorporate theological wisdom from other Christian traditions. In these two chapters, Baker argues that Pinnock's approach is better suited than Packer's to engage the three publics of academy, church, and society with a theology that is, in Baker's words, "both internally consistent and coherent" as well as "externally applicable and adequate" (1).

In chapter four, a wide range of related topics is covered in order to introduce readers to openness theology. A sampling of the topics covered shows just how wide-ranging they are: dynamic omniscience, divine temporality, theodicy, *kenosis*, and libertarian free will. Open theism is also differentiated from both classical theism (e.g. Calvinism, Arminianism, etc.) and process theism. "Open theism stands in a middle position, between classical and process theism," Baker writes. "It seeks to be a mediating proposal and (therefore) attracts criticism from both sides" (99). Not only is open theism shown to be distinct from both classical theism and process theism, it is also shown to be a *distinctly Christian* theology, centered in God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ. "The God who comes to us in Jesus is the real God. [...] The God with us (*quad nos*) is who God is (*in se*). God is always more that we can understand, but if we are to accept

Immanuel, (John 1; Heb 1:3; Col 2:9), then we must take the divine disclosure in Jesus as the way God is unless we have good reasons for doing otherwise" (114-115). This is an important point because many open theists take the self-giving (*kenosis*) of Jesus in Philippians 2:6-11 to be normative for how God relates to the world. "The kenosis was not an exception to God's relating to the world but a clear revelation as to how that relationship takes place" (116). Baker also shows that open theism is a distinctly Christian view due to its emphasis on the relational nature of God as triune. Open theists affirm a "relational ontology, a social Trinitarian metaphysics that views God as both ontologically other [from creation] and at the same time relating actively and responsively to the creation with unmerited love" (118).

Chapter five, "The Implications of Open Theism for Evangelism and Mission," is really the crux of *Evangelism and the Openness of God*. This is the first chapter that directly addresses the book's thesis. Baker's specific goal was to show that open theism provides a more workable and biblical framework for evangelism and missions. However, Baker may have promised too much here. Readers are told they can look forward to Baker addressing the superior "existential fit" of the open view over classical or conventional theism. But aside from restating Pinnock's identical claim, any direct argumentation relating to this claim is conspicuously absent. Baker certainly argues that open theism implies that the decisions of free agents are significant and impact the future. And Baker certainly argues that God co-labors with human agents in carrying out the *missio dei*. But Baker seems to further assert that all free-will theists, which would include classical theists like Arminians, would also affirm

these points (208). In fact, divine temporality might be the only proposal in this chapter that would make some classical theists squirm. (Then again, Nicholas Wolterstorff has affirmed divine temporality and he's a Calvinist!)

It's just not entirely clear that Baker's arguments in chapter five accomplish his goal of setting apart open theism, or any other relational theism, from classical free-will theism like Arminianism. In order to show that open theism is a better framework for evangelism and missions, it would seem that one would need to show precisely why it is critical the future be at least partly 'open' to both humanity and God. This is, in fact, the unique openness claim that sets it apart from Arminianism. Whether or not someone agrees with Baker's claim, compelling argumentation in its support seems to be missing.

Chapter seven might be the first place in *Evangelism and the Openness of God* where readers clearly encounter some of the internal diversity among open theists (125). Baker has already alluded to the fact that theologians like Boyd, Oord, and Pinnock represent different viewpoints under the broader umbrella of relational theology. In this chapter, however, Baker presents one of those nuances as part of his proposal for a more consistent open theology. That nuance is "essential kenosis," and it is something that isn't affirmed by all open theists. Instead, it is a direct challenge to the more commonly held position which Baker described earlier: "Open theism does not believe that God is ontologically limited but that God *voluntarily* self-limits so that freely chosen loving relations might be possible" (94, emphasis mine). In contrast, the view of essential kenosis "affirms *involuntary* divine self limitation." (239, emphasis mine). It's quite possible this form of relational theism is closer to process theism than the other branches of the open view. Therefore, it's not entirely clear that this chapter is helpful if part of Baker's goal is to distinguish open theism from process theism.

Evangelism and the Openness of God concludes with some fascinating case studies. C. Peter Wagner, Ed Silvoso, and Bill Johnson are each profiled with regard to their views on God's relationality and the implications of their views for their ministries and missiologies. However, this section might be a stumbling block to some readers who have preconceived notions of these ministers or their ministries. It is unfortunate, but open theism could be unfairly dismissed due to its association with ministries that have been described as teaching a "health and wealth gospel" or which have been thought to over-emphasize "signs and wonders." It's clear Baker makes no attempt to link these to open theism, but less discerning readers may have trouble navigating their own preconceptions.

Evangelism and the Openness of God represents an exciting and important shift in open theist scholarship from subjects primarily important to the academy, to subjects primarily important to the *ecclesia*. Overall, it does a very good job framing and discussing open theism, its major proponents, and the range and diversity among these thinkers. But Baker could have provided more evidence that open and relational theisms provide a more internally consistent, coherent, and applicable model for evangelism and missions.

<div style="text-align: right">T.C. Moore</div>

The American Muhammad: Joseph Smith, Founder of Mormonism. By Alvin J. Schmidt. Saint Louis: Concordia Press, 2013, 268pp.

In this volume Alvin Schmidt sets out to draw comparisons between the careers and personalities of two important religious figures: Joseph Smith and Muhammad. His discussion is broken into four main sections: Prelude, Religious Parallels, Moral Parallels, and Psychological/Political Parallels. According to the author, "These parallels are not just broad or vague similarities, as the term parallels is sometimes understood. Rather, the parallels between these two men are specific phenomena that were largely the product of their having a similar mindset, a like-minded disposition" (1).

The first few chapters introduce preliminary matters. Schmidt notes that the earliest recorded comparisons between the two figures go back to 1831 (8). Apparently outside observers were quick to take note of certain patterns of similarity between the founders of these two faiths. Documented comparisons continued through the subsequent decades of the nineteenth century (8-13). Schmidt also takes note of several scholarly studies, as well as popular treatments, which have drawn comparisons and analyzed the similarities between Smith and Muhammad in the twentieth century (13-15). Chapter two addresses the background of the two men (21-30), and chapter three presents evidence that Joseph Smith may have self-consciously modeled himself after Muhammad in certain respects (31-49).

Schmidt then dives into the heart of his material. Chapters 4-6 address religious parallels. Both figures sensed they had a prophetic call to restore true religion (53-77); viewed historic Christianity as corrupt (79-114); and viewed the Bible as inadequate (115-39). Chapters 7-8 address moral parallels. Both saw themselves as in some sense beyond accountability to secular law (143-65), and they both eventually abandoned monogamy (167-85).

The final section deals with psychological and political parallels in chapters 9-10. Both had an excessive degree of self-confidence (189-94); appointed one trusted "alter ego," or right-hand man (194-96); had dominant personalities (196-97); wielded charismatic influence over others (197-99); functioned as authoritarian leaders (200-02); pretended to be more than what they were (202-11); were skillful at deception (212-15); insulted outsiders (215-16); provided a sense of identity and social cohesion to their followers (216-18); had ecstatic experiences (218-19); were suspicious of being poisoned (219-21); were unwilling to acknowledge faults (221); and died in a state of anger (222-23). Finally, in terms of political parallels, both profited from the divided state of Christendom (225-29); financially prospered through their place of leadership (229); functioned as military leaders (229-35); enjoyed using swords (235); never bothered to name successors (236); left behind schisms in the aftermath of their deaths (237-40); established theocratic states (240-44); and at times found it necessary to flee from enemies (244-46).

I have mixed feelings about this book. On the one hand, it is an interesting topic to explore, and the book is generally well-organized and adequately researched (especially in the early chapters). On the other hand it has too many typos, grammatical oddities and missing words: "Nauvoo was as [sic] Hebrew word" (47), "Latter-Day [sic] Saints" (instead of Latter-day Saints, 61), "your light [shine] before" (79), also missing a period at the end of the same sentence (79), "in Saudi [Arabia]" (93), "Another of his faulty understanding" (100), "he [sic] also said" (redundant pronoun in the sentence, 104), incomplete sentences (117, 204), missing spaces before numerals (203, 204), nonsense sentences like, "Given these physical

phenomena has prompted some historians to suggest he suffered from epilepsy" (219), and "from you[r] brethren" (227). This book needed a better editor.

But perhaps my most fundamental complaint about the book is the lack of generosity that colors Schmidt's discussion. In analyzing seventy-some parallels between Joseph Smith and Muhammad, was there really nothing *positive* to say about these men? The fact that virtually every one of the parallels casts them both in a negative light gives the impression that this work is something of a hatchet-job.

Did Joseph Smith really admit "receiving at least one revelation from Satan" (74, 85)? (No clear evidence of this is provided.) Is it fair to describe the religious views of Smith and Muhammad as involving only a "token recognition" of Jesus Christ (75)? And why is Lance Owens repeatedly called a "Mormon historian" (87, 112) and "Mormon researcher" (96)? Schmidt seems unaware that Lance Owens is not a Mormon, though he is sympathetic to Mormonism in some respects. Did Schmidt, for that reason, assume that he must have been a Latter-day Saint? Why even mention the LDS proxy baptism of Adolph Hitler (89)? Is it really an appropriate scholarly assessment that, "Misrepresenting Jesus Christ as having a spirit brother can only be understood as a figment of Smith's imagination" (106)? Why is the heresy of modalism automatically invoked when the Book of Mormon calls Jesus Christ "the Father" (106), ignoring the fact that the prophet Isaiah does likewise (Isa. 9:6)? Is Schmidt aware of the range of scholarly opinion on this question in Mormon studies? Akin to his misidentification of Owens, this raises questions about the extent to which Schmidt has a healthy academic curiosity about the subject matter he is analyzing. It is troubling that he cites Kurt Van Gorden (head of a "counter-cult ministry") as the source of his information about "modalism" in the Book of Mormon (107 n. 71), when there is a wealth of scholarly literature on the topic. How does the presence of "factual errors" in the Koran and Book of Mormon advance the discussion of parallels between Smith and Muhammad (130-32)? And is our knowledge really improved by a discussion of the "flawed grammar" of the Mormon and Muslim scriptures (133)? One gets the impression that the author is simply trying to find space for apologetic criticisms of these religions. If that is what he is really doing then he should say so. Why does Schmidt feel the need to put the word "holy" in quotes when he refers to their "holy" books (139)? Is that a respectful way to talk about the books Mormons and Muslims hold dear?

This is a helpful book in some respects, and certainly Schmidt has put his finger on a fascinating topic. But unfortunately, the biased agenda that appears to have dictated his approach makes *The American Muhammad* less than a reliable guide for comparisons between Joseph Smith and Muhammad.

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***God, Freedom, and Human Dignity: Embracing a God-Centered Identity in a Me-Centered Culture.* By Ron Highfield. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2013, 229 pp.**

In *God, Freedom, and Human Dignity*, Ron Highfield seeks to illuminate and alleviate a fear that—though it is especially prominent in our current cultural setting—has been around since the Garden, namely, that God is somehow out to deprive us of our fullest freedom,

dignity, and flourishing. Is God a self-interested superhuman Being with whom humans have to compete in a zero-sum game for all the good things in life? Should God's very existence provoke envy or resentment in humans, since God's power to achieve his will necessarily means less power, less will, less freedom, and thus less dignity for us? This book was written for anyone who struggles with these kinds of questions. In the midst of its nuanced and rigorous discussion, this book makes one central point: God is neither a threat nor irrelevant to human dignity and freedom, but is actually the ultimate source and support of these things. In other words, for anyone seeking rich dignity and genuine freedom, there is no better place to look, according to Highfield, than in the fullness of the Christian faith.

The argument is presented in two parts, roughly equal in length. The first half of the book addresses what Highfield calls "The Me-Centered Self." At first glance, it is natural to think that this terminology is simply referring to selfishness or narcissism. But that intuition is wrong. Instead, by "me-centered" Highfield is referring to a quintessentially modern (and indeed postmodern) way of understanding selfhood in which "who we are" is (re)constructed based mostly on our own desires and preferences rather than on institutions (such as traditional religion, moral law, and family) and the nature of reality (17-18). The first chapter treats the reader to a heavy dose of Catholic moral philosophers Charles Taylor and Alasdair MacIntyre in order to make clear what exactly constitutes this "me-centered self," and how it has arisen historically. I especially appreciated Highfield's use of MacIntyre to show how the modern rejection of Aristotelian, teleological, virtue ethics has left us with nothing more than groundless, emotion-based appeals and sent us into "a night of moral confusion and strife" (37).

Chapters two through four describe three common (post)modern views of the relationship between humanity and God—namely, defiance, subservience, and indifference—each of which, Highfield rightly says, "proves to be at variance with the image of God portrayed in the Christian faith" (39). These chapters flesh out in great detail the various ways these three attitudes can be manifested. In the end, the point is that "the desire to realize oneself according to one's own will underlies and unifies all three attitudes. One defies or obeys or ignores God for the sake of one's own will" (76). In other words, these three approaches treat God as either a threat to or irrelevant to human dignity and freedom, and thus allow a person to preserve his or her supposed autonomy or "pure will." The short chapter on defiance, in particular, offers a helpful reflection on the links between the myth of Prometheus as he relates to Zeus and the mind of Satan as he relates to God.

The fifth chapter of the book (77-89) succinctly explains that these three "me-centered" relations to God are each rooted in a (modern) understanding God in basically "human" terms, except for the crucial distinction that God is far more powerful—that is, God is a "superhuman" Being who has the ability to impose his will over that of humans. On this view, both God and human persons are "empty selves" (87-88) in which selfhood is an abstract, underspecified entity divorced from any actual characteristics or capacities. Any characteristics or attributes of God or human selves, on this faulty view, are accidental, not essential by nature. Such a non-essentialist view of selfhood, especially of God's selfhood, fosters envy, competition, and resentment toward God rather than the worship, adoration, and love he is due. "This way of understanding God and humanity sets the divine will against the human will" (89). Chapters six and seven explain various conceptualizations of freedom and shows how attempts to ground human dignity in freedom—whether the

freedom to realize our desires or a libertarian self-determination of will—leave us "far removed from the happiness and rest we seek" (111).

Part Two, "The God-Centered Self," sets forth an alternative vision for the relationship between God and humanity—one made possible through Jesus Christ and based on mutual love, not on envy or competition. From this point forward, the central claim is: "The Christian picture of humanity empowers us for true selfhood, perfect freedom, and the highest dignity conceivable" (113). In chapters eight through ten, Highfield shows in various ways that the competitive view of God falls away once we understand the good, self-giving character of the trinitarian God (124-126) as it is expressed in the Christian narrative of creation (116-119) and redemption through Jesus (120-121). Even God's omnipotence, Highfield argues, is no threat to his creatures' freedom and dignity (127-138), since God, being Power, "empowers our power" (128). Similarly, God's perfect knowledge of us, and his presence with us, is the source of our truest identity (139-149). The next two chapters articulate an "image of humanity" in which we are not competing with God for our freedom and dignity. Not surprisingly, this image is developed via a brief character analysis of the only perfect human that has ever lived, Jesus, focusing on his faithfulness during temptations (151-158) and what it means to be an adoptive child of God, our Father (159-169).

The final fifty pages of the book attempt to bring it all together. Chapters thirteen, fourteen, and fifteen deal with selfhood, freedom, and dignity, respectively, in light of this Christian view of God and humanity. The basic claims are, first, that in Christianity human selfhood isn't "pure will" or an "empty self," but an entity that only finds its true nature in loving relation to God and other human persons as non-competitors (170-180); secondly, that the human self, understood in this way, is only ever genuinely free—from the enslaving power of sin, for example (176-178)—when it is bound in love to God the Father through Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit, reflecting his good character, and thus aligning with the natural telic end of human personhood (181-190); and thirdly, that human dignity and worth is grounded not in any supposed capacity for autonomy or reason or anything else, but in God's unconditional love for us (191-206). Highfield concludes with a brief reflection on where these insights leave the reader in terms of the original problem of whether God is a threat to human freedom and dignity, or in fact their ultimate source (207-217).

Despite the book's overall success, a few minor points of critique are in order. First, throughout the book, Highfield appeared to use the concepts of "self" and "identity" interchangeably, and for the most part neglected the concept—and ontological reality—of human "personhood." This critique will have little impact on either the average reader or the big picture of the book's message, but in social psychology and philosophical anthropology these two concepts do refer to distinct realities, and so it seems Highfield might have applied this vocabulary with greater analytic purchase. A second critique, related to the first, has to do with the ontological grounds for human dignity. I was glad to see a strong move away from a capacities-based account of human dignity (volition, reasoning, and others), which itself is a needed contribution to ethics literature. Highfield took care to explain why he thinks human dignity is grounded in being loved by God, and not in humanity's (supposed) moral excellence or in the excellence of human nature. He may very well be right, but he did not address the possibility that dignity is grounded ontologically in the *imago dei* as a property of personhood itself, regardless of any comparative excellence this nature might have over non-human animals (192). Highfield notes this possibility: "…[I]t is also important to

recognize the dignity of human nature itself' (198, n. 22), but it does not factor into his larger discussion.

Even in light of these minor issues, Highfield has given us a helpful, learned, edifying book for better understanding how the traditional Christian view of God and humanity relates to questions among postmodern persons about the intersections of human dignity, freedom, and theology. It is about time Christians had a book like this. Highfield states up front that this work is "more meditation than dissertation" (14), and that is precisely what he has delivered. If someone wanted to use this book in a course in seminary or religious studies, I would not envision it taking up more than two class periods. More likely, though, this is a book to read for oneself, meditate on, learn from, be encouraged by, and recommend to a friend or colleague who has been wondering how the notion of God—and especially the triune God of Christianity—connects to human dignity and freedom.

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Pneumatology and the Christian-Buddhist Dialogue: Does the Spirit Blow through the Middle Way? By Amos Yong. Brill, 2012, 301 pp.

Masao Abe famously noted that "mutual understanding" was no longer an adequate goal for interfaith dialogue; it should aim instead for "mutual transformation." In the subsequent decades of scholarship, Abe's (and other's) outlook on the "transformative" character of interreligious study has done the remarkable job of elevating comparative religious work from a suspect (or simply curious) academic undertaking to the status of a nearly full-blown spiritual discipline. Regardless of the theological conclusions reached—and there we find vast variety, to be sure—the endeavor to deeply study another religious tradition and then enter into mutually affecting comparative dialogue with the ideas (or adherents) of that tradition has come to be seen as a logical extension of cross-cultural hospitality, compassion, and understanding. The animating idea—among Francis Clooney, James Fredericks, Peter Phan, *et al.*—has been that truly engaged comparative moments cannot help but change all who engage in them.

Among committed Christian thinkers possessing an interest in interreligious and comparative theological study, a difficult tension has thus emerged: How might the complicated methodological waters of such study be engaged fully without compromising creedal theological convictions? Many attempts to do such work have found themselves stranded on either side of this tension, over-embracing the theological richness of "another" tradition, at the expense of Christian distinctives, or reducing the other's richness, at the expense of helpful engagement. Pentecostal scholar Amos Yong has, for some years now, distinguished himself by balancing this tension through an earnest attempt at formulating a "global theology" which is unafraid to detect the working of the Holy Spirit in all manner of human flourishing and belief, even those found in non-Christian religions. This recent book represents some tremendous constructive advances in the realm of comparative theologizing, and is bolstered by Yong's characteristic cultural sensitivity, critical methodological understanding, theological innovation, and in-depth research.

Pneumatology and the Christian-Buddhist Dialogue begins with a forthright declaration of methodological values, with Yong prizing pneumatology as the lens through which Christian

understanding might be "empowered" for the process of "engaging" with religious others, "understanding" them on their own terms, and "sustaining" a discerning theological program which grows through comparisons of religions that are thickly described along phenomenological lines (8-16). Yong's distinctive entwining of academic concerns with spiritual practice is also on display here, as he claims that "interfaith dialogue is not a luxury but mandatory" and that a pneumatological approach is that which will most readily facilitate real authenticity toward and hearing of the religious other (12). This profitable concern for honoring "difference" or "otherness" is rooted, for Yong, in the "radical alterity" of the Day of Pentecost, in which many tongues spoke and were understood in the midst of the one Spirit being poured out—Yong sees this event as directive for the "dialogical hospitality" he strives for throughout his interreligious work (13). Such preliminaries voiced, Yong proceeds into three topical comparisons, each book-worthy on its own, which make up the three main sections of the book—"Divine Presence" (focusing on creation and humanity), "Divine Activity," (focusing on soteriology/liberation), and "Divine Absence" (focusing on demonology).

The first main section presents, across several well-organized chapters, an inter-disciplinary "trialogue" between science, Christianity, and Buddhism. Yong takes a strongly pneumatological reading of Genesis 1 and 2, seeing God's *ruah* as the thematic "bookends" of the narrative—hovering over the formless depths (Gen. 1:2) as the "ontological or universal ground and matrix of the creative process" and enlivening *ha adam* as well as the animals with the breath of life (Gen. 1:30, 2:7) (39, 41). Yong constructs a cosmological and anthropological outlook where "all [of creation is] bound together in a web of interrelationality" (43). Against Platonic and/or Cartesian dualisms, human nature and the mind-body relationship are cast in light of an "emergence-supervenience model" wherein the mind is "constituted by its parts and relations, albeit irreducible to them" (45-47); similar logic is applied in Yong's articulation of the Spirit's emergent-yet-supervening relationship throughout all aspects of the created universe, leading naturally to a robust understanding of a *relational* creation, imbued, infused, and animated on all sides by Spirit (53-57). This established, Yong's then discusses how the Mahayana Buddhist notion of *shunyata* (often translated as "emptiness," but not intended to convey nihilism; it is a term more concerned with the denial of ontological independence or *self-existence*), which, from Nagarjuna onward, has always emphasized the "interrelationality and interdependency of all things" (67). Dialoguing with various streams of scientific discourse, Yong proposes that all three lines of consideration (Christian, Buddhist, and scientific) allude to a "a dynamic ontology of interrelated fields rather than a static ontology of atomic substances, whether applied to the human person or to the ultimate nature of cosmological realities" (77). Applying such insights more specifically to anthropology, Yong closes out this section with a description (in critical dialogue with both Masao Abe and Lynn de Silva) of true selfhood that is discovered in the bi-directional process of kenotic "self-emptying" (imitating Christ's own emptying, Phil. 2:7) and being re-constituted in God's Spirit—"authentic personhood is both self-emptying and Spirit-filled, simultaneously…[in light of this, Christianity] does not need to reject Buddhist notions of the emptying self" (94).

In the second section, Yong demonstrates acute awareness of the limitations of the comparative enterprise by limiting his examination to two specific religious "samples": the monastic tradition of the Desert Fathers as expressed in the Orthodox *Philokalia* and the arahant tradition of Theravadin Buddhism as expressed in the *Visuddhimagga* of Buddhagosa.

In an adept series of descriptions and comparisons, Yong examines the soteriological "technologies of liberation" (114, 139) in each of these religious works, allowing their shared bedrock of monastic and mystical concern to anchor the investigation. One of the central themes in the ensuing comparative journey is the shared understanding of a threefold progression away from the world and toward the ultimate spiritual goals of each tradition. For desert spirituality, this progression "begins with the purification of the flesh, continues with the illumination of the mind, and concludes with the *theosis* of the person" (113); in the *Visuddhimagga,* the tripartite spiritual development "follows the canonical typology of *sila*, *samadhi*, and *panna* representing respectively virtue or morality, concentration, and wisdom" (139). Most striking amongst the comparative moments to be found in this discussion is the mutual Christian-Buddhist emphasis on perceiving reality aright and not being deceived (by demonic forces and the flesh or by the illusory nature of reality, respectively)—"piercing through the outward forms of things toward their 'spiritual essences' or 'inner principles' so as to determine their true or divinely ordained reasons for being" (166ff). Such similarities are interesting, but mainly formal in scope, and Yong unabashedly acknowledges that, at depth, "the Orthodox goal of *theosis* and the Theravadin quest for *nibbana* [nirvana] summarize the radical divergence between these two spiritual paths" (171). However, he still finds constructive uses for his comparative materials, arguing for the helpfulness of Buddhist practices along inter-monastic lines (170) and for a detection of the Spirit's activity in the midst of Buddhism, insofar as Buddhists are able to manifest certain virtues which are associated throughout the New Testament with the work of the Spirit (174-177).

"Divine Absence" is the lone comparative exploration to pull its Christian materials from Yong's own tradition of Pentecostalism. Mirroring the structure of the foregoing section, Yong offers concise-yet-robust descriptions of the demonological schemas of Pentecostal Christianity and Buddhist thought (centering on Sinhalese and Tibetan forms). Though something of a lacuna in most other Christian traditions, global Pentecostalism considers a theology of the demonic part-and-parcel of its worldview (187-188) and exhibits a wide variety of exorcistic practice, including "the [employment of] the charism of discernment of spirits…presence of the Bible as a sacred object…glossolalic utterance… [and] application of anointing oil…" (199). Possessed (no pun intended) of an impressive variety of harmful or demonic spirits, Buddhist belief also exhibits a powerful range of exorcistic techniques, including dance, the donning of masks, ritual mantras and formulae, etc. (209-210). Throughout this discussion, Yong implicitly highlights a strong correspondence: both Pentecostalism and these Buddhist forms envision the world as thoroughly composed of both material and spiritual realities, furthering the relational cosmology discussed in the book's first section, and expanding ethical horizons to include a "cosmic ethic" that concerns itself with the manifold sources of brokenness and distortion in our world (224-230).

As a contribution to both theology-of-religions and interreligious theology, Yong's work is intriguing, and made more so by the fact that he *is doing* such work, rather than simply theorizing about it. This is a wide-ranging, masterful, and highly detailed project that nonetheless tempers its ambitions by posing its conclusions as open-ended, constructive moments, pointing hopefully toward deeper and more hospitable interreligious engagements. Most remarkably, and here distinguishing himself even from the work of F.X. Clooney and other prominent comparative theologians, Yong knows the questions evangelicals, scientists, and pluralistic thinkers bring to the table, and he is not skittish about giving such questions

place in his theological ruminations. Some characteristic questions that Yong grapples with are: (A) "Can religion with its affirmation of things transcendent engage science with its assumptions about the causal closure of this world?" (95); (B) "Should not the Theravadin experience of crossing over the floods and intoxicants of lust, ill-will, and delusion be attributed to the activity of divine Spirit?"; (C) "Is it not possible that Buddhist exorcisms 'work' and the 'fruits' of moral deeds are manifest in those 'delivered' precisely because the devil uses these mechanisms to keep Buddhists from seeking out the truth and thereby find genuine freedom in Christ?" (228).

Yong's theological proposals in light of such questions are somber, forthright, clear, and though one may disagree with his conclusions, immensely helpful in orienting oneself toward the most crucial questions of cross-religious engagement from a confessional Christian perspective. Several trajectories for vibrant discourse are opened by his pneumatological outlook on these issues, and there is no clear "liberal" or "conservative" label under which one can safely situate his work. He affirms the need for kerygma and, further, does not deny the possibility of legitimate evangelistic practices (see 175n.22), affirming that "there is no question about whether or not the Way of Jesus remains essential for our time; the question is how to understand the nature of this way in a pluralistic world" (27). Yong holds to an "inclusivistic" view of global religious understanding (248), but not uncritically, and in the midst of such soteriological complexities, makes it clear that he is simply seeking "[if] the Holy Spirit might be at work in various and diverse ways in the different Buddhist traditions" (249).

There is not, to my knowledge, another current example of comparative theology that is as constructive, not to mention theologically responsible and dialogical, as what this volume offers. The book's second section in particular would be invaluable for graduate students and scholars as an example of active, constructive, fair-minded comparative theology. For demonstrating how the work ought to be done, and as a partner in theological conversation along the way, Amos Yong again proves himself cutting-edge.

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ECUMENICAL CREEDS OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

The Apostles' Creed (Old Roman Form)

I believe in God the Father Almighty. And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, who was born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary; crucified under Pontius Pilate and buried; the third day he rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father, from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. And in the Holy Spirit; the holy Church; the forgiveness of sins; [and] the resurrection of the flesh.

The Nicæno-Constantinopolitan Creed

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made; who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man, and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; who spake by the Prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins; and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Athanasian Creed

Whoever desires to be saved must above all things hold to the catholic faith. Unless a man keeps it in its entirety inviolate, he will assuredly perish eternally.

Now this is the catholic faith, that we worship one God in trinity and trinity in unity, without either confusing the persons, or dividing the substance. For the Father's person is one, the Son's another, the Holy Spirit's another; but the Godhead of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is one, their glory is equal, their majesty is co-eternal.

Such as the Father is, such is the Son, such is also the Holy Spirit. The Father is uncreate, the Son uncreate, the Holy Spirit uncreate. The Father is infinite, the Son infinite, the Holy Spirit infinite. The Father is eternal, the Son eternal, the Holy Spirit eternal. Yet there are not three eternals, but one eternal; just as there are not three uncreates or three infinites, but one uncreate and one infinite. In the same way the Father is almighty, the Son almighty, the Holy Spirit almighty; yet there are not three almighties, but one almighty.

Thus the Father is God, the Son God, the Holy Spirit God; and yet there are not three Gods, but there is one God. Thus the Father is Lord, the Son Lord, the Holy Spirit Lord; and yet there are not three Lords, but there is one Lord. Because just as we are compelled by Christian truth to acknowledge each person separately to be both God and Lord, so we are forbidden by the catholic religion to speak of three Gods or Lords.

The Father is from none, not made nor created nor begotten. The Son is from the Father alone, not made nor created but begotten. The Holy Spirit is from the Father and the Son, not made nor created nor begotten but proceeding. So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Spirit, not three Holy Spirits. And in this trinity there is nothing before or after, nothing greater or less, but all three persons are co-eternal with each other and co-equal. Thus in all things, as has been stated above, both trinity and unity and unity in trinity must be worshipped. So he who desires to be saved should think thus of the Trinity.

It is necessary, however, to eternal salvation that he should also believe in the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now the right faith is that we should believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is equally both God and man.

He is God from the Father's substance, begotten before time; and He is man from His mother's substance, born in time. Perfect God, perfect man composed of a human soul and human flesh, equal to the Father in respect of His divinity, less than the Father in respect of His humanity.

Who, although He is God and man, is nevertheless not two, but one Christ. He is one, however, not by the transformation of His divinity into flesh, but by the taking up of His humanity into God; one certainly not by confusion of substance, but by oneness of person. For just as soul and flesh are one man, so God and man are one Christ.

Who suffered for our salvation, descended to hell, rose from the dead, ascended to heaven, sat down at the Father's right hand, from where He will come to judge the living and the dead; at whose coming all men will rise again with their bodies, and will render an account of their deeds; and those who have done good will go to eternal life, those who have done evil to eternal fire.

This is the catholic faith. Unless a man believes it faithfully and steadfastly, he cannot be saved. Amen

The Definition of Chalcedon

We, then, following the holy Fathers, all with one consent, teach men to confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in Godhead and also perfect in manhood; truly God and truly man, of a reasonable soul and body; consubstantial with the Father according to the Godhead, and consubstantial with us according to the Manhood; in all things like unto us, without sin; begotten before all ages of the Father according to the Godhead, and in these latter days, for us and for our salvation, born of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, according to the Manhood; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son, and only begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the prophets from the beginning have declared concerning him, and the Lord Jesus Christ himself has taught us, and the Creed of the holy Fathers has handed down to us.