Wordtrade Reviews: End-Time Nonnus' Myth as Magic

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THE *CHRONOGRAPHIA* OF GEORGE THE SYNKELLOS AND THEOPHANES: THE ENDS OF TIME IN NINTH-CENTURY CONSTANTINOPLE by Jesse W. Torgerson [Series: Brill's Series on the Early Middle Ages, Brill, 9789004501690]

The ninth-century *Chronographia* of George the Synkellos and Theophanes is the most influential historical text ever written in medieval Constantinople. Yet modern historians have never explained its popularity and power. This interdisciplinary study draws on new manuscript evidence to finally animate the *Chronographia*'s promise to show attentive readers the present meaning of the past.

Begun by one of the Roman emperor's most trusted and powerful officials in order to justify a failed revolt, the project became a shockingly ambitious re-writing of time itself—a synthesis of contemporary history, philosophy, and religious practice into a politicized retelling of the human story. Even through

radical upheavals of the Byzantine political landscape, the *Chronographia*'s unique historical vision again and again compelled new readers to chase after the elusive Ends of Time.

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Scholars have looked to the *Chronographia* for a specific sort of historical truth: the sort of historical truth which can be placed onto a timeline. But making the pursuit of historical accuracy the aim and end of work on the *Chronographia* is merely to seek our own historically conditioned ends. While we may desire and indeed have a use for such data, our methodologies must acknowledge when our ends are not what the *Chronographia* (or any other text) set out to facilitate. My account of the *Chronographia* has not assessed its transmission of objective chronological data about events. The *Chronographia* was written to tell the truths of the past for its own present, not ours. It gives no indication that its ultimate goal was to establish the past as a series of ancient events that could be used as a guide for accurate time travel. Instead of promising objectively true historical data, the *Chronographia* promised to equip the reader to reap no small benefit (οὐ γὰρ μικρὰν ὠφέλιαν … καρποῦται). It offered readers an account of the past which would reliably or trustworthily convey how the present lay in relation to the living eschaton of the divine. In the end the *Chronographia* was written to explain, through a specific treatment of the past, a vision of the present which made a new present possible.

Though my account of the *Chronographia* has prioritized analysis over narrative, I have done so because it can be difficult to initially identify narrative strategies and purpose in works that are largely compilations of other sources. But indeed, there has been a story behind my analysis. In order to let the analysis stand on its own terms, I have largely refrained from explaining what I have discovered as a story. Nonetheless, here at the end I would sketch as clearly as I can the outlines of the plot.

In AD 808 George the Synkellos started writing the *Chronographia*. We do not know his story, or the story of what caused him to write. George might well have been an émigré to Constantinople from the educated Greek-speaking elites of Syria. While this is probable, we will not ever know if it is true.

George might well have been suffering, while writing, from the physical abuse, financial ruin, and banishment from Constantinople inflicted upon those who played a role in the conspiracies against Nikephoros I, conspiracies uncovered and prosecuted from AD 806–808. While this is probable, we still do not know. What we do know is that George was the *synkellos* to patriarch Tarasios (r. 784–806) and while this is as certain as anything we can know, we do not know exactly when during Tarasios' reign George served in his capacity as the imperial liaison in the patriarchate. We can, as I have in this book, recover what this bare information about the authorial persona would have signaled to readers in the early ninth century. But while that is essential for a historicized reading of his text, the little we can know about George is not the most interesting or certain thing to arise from a prolonged investigation into the *Chronographia*. The story about how the *Chronographia* came to be is not recoverable, though we can state that the *Chronographia* was given its impetus by our mysterious *synkellos* George—whoever he was and whatever he had done.

What about the *Chronographia* itself? The *Chronographia* was an incredibly ambitious project. It was explicitly written to supplant the *Chronicle* of Eusebius of Caesarea. Eusebius' *Chronicle* had served as the definitive reference work on historical time for nearly half a millennium, for at least four linguistic communities around the Mediterranean and the Black Sea: Greek, Latin, Syriac, and Armenian. But in the final decades of the eighth century, Eusebius' oeuvre had been charged with iconoclast sympathies. This was the opportunity for the *Chronographia*'s revisionism, the opportunity to supplant an ancient, internationally acclaimed record of human time with both a new conception of time and a new definition of the present.

The *Chronographia*'s new time was, at first glance, simply a repackaged old time.
The *Chronographia* reaffirmed the older Alexandrian tabulation of world chronology which Eusebius' reckoning had supplanted: Julius Africanus and Annianos' calculation that there were 5,500 years between the Creation of the world and the Incarnation of the Christ. But the stakes were not *just* between two different ways of tallying years; the argument was not merely an antiquarian return. The *Chronographia*'s re-assertion of the Alexandrian tabulation of *anni mundi* provided a new understanding of the relationship between human chronology and the divine present. By bringing the philosophy of Aristotle and the astronomy of Ptolemy into conversation with the liturgical theology of the day, the *Chronographia* proposed a time that was philosophical, scientific, and theologically astute: the new historical time of the First-Created Day. By using a new time to craft a new era the *Chronographia* changed the definition of the present, and thus of the future.

The *Chronographia*'s new epoch for the present did not initiate the modern era with the Incarnation in AM 5500 but with the conquest of Judea by Pompey in AM 5434 (in 63 BC). This beginning defined the present age by Roman rule over Judea via the establishment of Herod as king in Jerusalem or, in its own terms, the era of the rule of a non-Jew over Judea. In other words, the *Chronographia* asserted that the present began when the age of Jewish rule ended and rule by the Romans began. It presented a new polity under the special favor of God in the terms which O. Irshai has connected to the "concept of the elect nation." To ensure that readers did not miss this point, the chronological division was made manifest in the structure of the codex: the *Chronographia* circulated in codices that bound George's account of the beginning of the present era—from AM 5434 (63 BC) to AM 5777 (AD 284)—with his continuator's completion of the account to AM 6305 (AD 813).

What was the story of the present? The *Chronographia*'s story turned the reigns of past Roman emperors into images, figures, or types. As no surprise either to Byzantinists in general, nor to scholars of the *Chronographia* in particular, the reign of the emperor Constantine I was paradigmatic. However, the *Chronographia* did not make the reign of Constantine I into a single type but into a multivalent image. As argued in chapter 5, in the longer narrative trajectory of the *Chronographia*, the portrait of Constantine I was joined to that of his son Constantius, and as such the pairing established a type of the pious emperor who was nonetheless deceived during his reign into promulgating bad policies (whether ecclesiastical or fiscal), and who then bequeathed those evils to the empire in the form of a successor implementing evil policies from the start and then continuing them throughout their reign. This imperial type or figure—in the specific sense articulated by E. Auerbach—would be repeatedly fulfilled through later emperors including Heraclius and Constans II, Leo III and Constantine V, and Nikephoros I and Staurakios.

Constantine I also established the positive image for imperial power in the *Chronographia*: the image of a mixed-gender collaboration (chapter 6). Here Constantine's following of the divine injunction given to his mother Helena established a type that was fulfilled in the sharing of power between Theodosius II and Pulcheria, and Irene and Constantine VI. Though the type was compromised by greed (by Theodosius and Irene), the paradigmatic image was nonetheless clear. The *Chronographia* presented a story of empire in which the ideal type of imperial power consisted in a man and a woman working in conjunction to stay the course of merciful and just rulership, a type unsurprisingly reminiscent of the theological image of Christ and the *Theotokos* Mother-of-God.

The *Chronographia* juxtaposed these positive and negative types of emperors. That is, imperial types could be contrasted between emperors, or within emperors' own reigns. In this manner the story of the *Chronographia* was created by using these types to explain how the present emperor, Nikephoros I, came to power and exactly why and how he was evil. Nikephoros came to power because of the destruction of the ideal mother-son type of Irene and Constantine VI. His evils made manifest the greed of all previous evil emperors. The final story the *Chronographia* had to tell used a coda to rearrange these types in a message to the new emperor Leo V: to support a fiscal policy of low taxation and ecclesiastical control over social services, and to listen to the empress (Theodosia) in matters of religious policy.

The story of the *Chronographia* is a story about a unique idea of political life communicated as a vision of an *oikumene* that could transcend the boundaries of empire. As we have seen, the *Chronographia* is too self-evidently complex, clever, and self-aware to fit into any simple dichotomous analytical categories we might use to try to categorize it: monastic vs. lay, ecclesiastical vs. political, male vs. female, Roman vs. non-Roman, and (as in chapter 8) even pro-icon vs. anti-icon. Its vision was of an *oikumene* incorporating diasporic Christian communities of Armenians and Syrians and protecting them from oppressive regimes. It told a story of the empire as a present and future community that was bound together with a shared understanding and experience of time. The story of the *Chronographia* was a story about truth, narrative, power, and belonging.

The Past Study

This study asked what the *Chronographia*'s formulation of the past tells us about its present, for "those who write history write the present." What does the *Chronographia* tell us about its present, about the years 808 through 815? I have argued that the *Chronographia*'s remaking of the present through its

presentation of the past is significant not only for a history of its own age but for a history of ages after: the *Chronographia* would dominate historical writing in Greek for centuries after it was written. This made it necessary to address not only how this re-presentation of the past reshaped perceptions of the past, and how in doing so remade its present, but to address how the work's vision of the present became a lasting historical paradigm, a framework in the subsequent decades when it was actively edited, adapted, repurposed, and continued.

I began this study arguing that the *Chronographia*'s self-presentation as well as the history of its transmission oblige us to read it as a joint project shared between George the Synkellos and Theophanes (chapter 1). While the conclusion of this argument itself is not new to scholarship, what is entirely new is to avoid merely reapplying that point to asking (again) whether this means the *Chronicle* attributed to Theophanes should be *actually* attributed to George. Instead, I pursued a new question. Rather than asking who wrote the *Chronographia*, I asked how it was read. I turned to the manuscript evidence to formulate my answer, asking what the surviving manuscripts could tell us about how the work's contemporary audience would have read it. From this evidence two paths diverged and I set out to travel both.

First, over the course of Part 1, I articulated a new approach to the *Chronographia* and its account of the past in the present by working through the implications of my redefinition of the work. That is, Part 1 started with a concrete example of how the section of the project attributed to George the Synkellos— known as the *Chronography*—defined the present age from the epoch, the starting point, of the conquest of Judea by the Romans. Further pressing implications of George's governing idea of the chronological project were addressed: how would George's authorial mask or *persona* be read by a contemporary reader (chapter 2); how would George's theory of time—the First-Created Day—communicate meaning to a ninth-century Constantinopolitan; and, how would that meaning direct readings of his account of the past (chapter 3)? I brought a study of George's office of *synkellos*, and of his understudied programmatic preface, to bear on the *Preface* of Theophanes. Though the *Preface* of Theophanes has been exhaustively debated, my approach meant re-reading it as a guide for a reader who encountered it when they were already part way through the work. Studied as a reading of George's project, the *Preface* became an invitation to contemporary readers to rethink not only past events, but the entire relationship of past to present (chapter 4). In articulating *how* the work's audience was invited to read the present in the past, this conclusion to Part 1 set up the eventual analysis of the ends for which this invitation was made (chapter 8).

Seeing how way led on to way, Part 2 then returned to the starting point and took up the second path. Taking up a different set of initial expectations from Part 1, I turned to the task of analyzing the *Chronographia*'s account of Roman history down to its present, starting with the beginning of its account of its own present age. I then performed an extended reading of the work's account of the Roman past on the basis of the second premise established by chapter 1: that the unique form of the *Chronographia* in the earliest surviving manuscript (*PG 1710*) is likely more similar to the original form of the work than the form in later surviving manuscripts (on which our critical editions and translations have depended). The difference is significant. If the text was written in year-by-year annual entries—as in later manuscripts—then our readings of the work must take annual entries as the core narrative structural unit. However, if the text was written in emperor-by-emperor narrative units—with annual notices serving as subdivisions therein—then the account of each emperor's reign can be read as

a coherent portrait or image. Literary-minded scholars have long called our attention to the latter option: there are obvious and unmistakable narrative strategies in the arrangement, editorial comments, and re-phrasings of source material in the *Chronographia*'s accounts of individual emperors. To date this point had, however, only been proposed as a possibility for the narratives of three emperors: Constantine I, Justinian I, and Herakleios. By bringing the original layout of the text into this discussion I provided a means to ask the question of narrative strategy of the entire *Chronographia*. I duly found an obvious congruence between the conclusions of narratological readings of specific emperors' reigns, and the form of the entire *Chronographia* in the manuscript *PG 1710*, which is divided emperor-by-emperor.

On this basis I used chapters 5, 6, and 7 to identify not only coherent narrative structures within the reigns of specific emperors, but to define the shared narrative strategies which join together these imperial reigns. The clearest narrative strategy was typology. Tracking the use of typologies made it possible to identify rhetorical goals sustained throughout the entire *Chronographia*, and so to see the whole as much greater than the sum of the parts. Part 2 concluded by showing that patterns in the typological progression of portraits of emperors culminated in a juxtaposition of the reign of the Empress Irene (r. 780–802) with that of her successor Nikephoros I (r. 802–811). The previously-perplexing invective against Nikephoros I—who reigned at the time of the *Chronographia*'s inception— was found to present a carefully-crafted, long-anticipated image of Nikephoros as the fulfillment of Pharaoh and so the Antichrist of time's end.

Up to this point I had contextualized the *Chronographia*'s vision of the past within its present. The images in the *Chronographia*, its portraits of emperors, were thus not merely new readings of the past but a new vision of how the world *is* and how it *could be*: a different idea of the present which contained new possibilities for the future. An explanation of how all of this made meaning in the work's present remained. What were the ends to which its framing of time were, and could be, put?

My final two chapters responded to this question by considering the afterlife of the *Chronographia*. As such they built from the fact that soon after the invective against Nikephoros I was written it would have been rendered moot by the fact of the emperor's annihilation in battle against the Bulgar ruler Krum in AD 811. Chapter 8 thus argued that the entries which stand as the current ending were added within a few years of George the Synkellos' death in order to redirect the *Chronographia* to the new political contexts of the early reign of Leo V (ca. 815). This argument made it possible to sketch out the contours of the likely intellectual circle in which and for which the work was produced: a powerful group closely connected to Leo V who nonetheless expressed dissent to certain of Leo's policies through a claim to the legacy of the Empress Irene. Possessed of a coherent explanation for how this work achieved the status of a masterwork of chronographical genius, I then considered how its reception through the subsequent decades could help explain the exact form of the work that comes down to us. In chapter 9 I argued that the *Chronographia* was significantly edited once more during the regency and reign of the Empress Theodora (ca. 843–858). This editing brought the work into alignment with Theodora's own ideological program to rewrite the past to fit her present: the Triumph of Orthodoxy.

I have proved the ends of time in the *Chronographia* by combining the methods of textual criticism, manuscript studies, and literary analysis to demonstrate not merely *that* the *Chronographia* was composed and read as a unified whole, but *how* it was that this masterwork was a reaction to its initial present and an active agent in shaping perceptions of the past in at least two additional present

moments. These adaptations of the work, these several ends, make it possible to see that the *Chronographia* achieved its power as the definitive historical paradigm of its age *because* its presentation of the past could be adapted anew. I have explained how this chronography worked in order to open up a window onto how early medieval Byzantines debated and communicated the relationship between past and present, and the ends to which they deployed that intellectual labor. This new window onto the past connects the composition of a chronography to political discourse and political action in Constantinople during the period the work was composed and repeatedly re-edited: from 808 into the mid-ninth century. In this way *The Ends of Time* not only rehabilitates modern study of the *Chronographia* but opens up multiple new directions for future research into its socio-political environment.

By following the evidence of the present in the *Chronographia*'s account of the past, this study found that the work transmitted a different sort of *correct* or *accurate* information than that which modern historians have tended to prize. Perhaps this is because we are now better primed to follow a text such as the *Chronographia* than we have been. In our era of the quoted tweet, shared post, and viral meme, we would seem more intuitively attuned to the idea of authorship and *auctoritas* as a fluid, communally constructed concept. We may well be better equipped to think through a historical compilation or a compendium of chronology now than in all the centuries since the printing press came to dominate the dissemination of written texts. The real historical value and significance of the *Chronographia* lies in its evidence of the present moments of the *Chronographia*'s initial writing by George the Synkellos and Theophanes (in 808–815), and then its re-writing (in ca. 843), inherent as they are in the form and content of the *Chronographia* transmitted to us today. As long as historians continue to look primarily for a literally true account—an objective history—in the pages of the *Chronographia*, we will miss much of its meaning. The meaning which the *Chronographia* communicated was non-literal, and non-explicit. The story at the close of AM 6302 of the Parable of the *Keroullarios* and the emperor Nikephoros I, for instance, cannot have been included for the purpose of ensuring that future generations knew that the emperor once met with a wealthy candle-maker. It was composed to help readers understand what Nikephoros I *meant*. The verification of this meeting by modern historical critical methods will never happen. We can *never* know whether such an encounter took place; the literal meaning is lost in every way. But that was never what the *Chronographia* meant to convey. Its purpose was not to convey information about Nikephoros' agenda of a noonday in AD 810, but to convey the truth of the man within the truth of the world.

The Present Discourse

The aim of this study is to directly supplement the collective endeavor to re-write the story of ninth-century Constantinople. This remains a subtle process. Until the Macedonians, the historical works of the Roman Empire that do survive from this period seem most often to be articulating a minority report, a critique, more than apologia or myth-making at the service of the political *status quo*. This makes our surviving Byzantine histories troublesome candidates for providing us with direct evidence for concepts such as 'identity formation.' The *Chronographia* wrote history less in the service of identify formation than political critique. Thus, it is difficult to see how to contextualize the *Chronographia* with comparative historical projects, such as those undertaken under the Carolingians. The Carolingian coup engendered an entire reformulation of the past in order to explain why one powerful family of magnates should be sanctioned in taking power from a recognized kingly line. The answer to this question was the formation of an identity—the Franks—out of the elements of the "Roman, Christian, and Merovingian

past" so strong that its heritage could be said to have created the very idea of Europe. The Carolingians' approach to the past seems rather more similar to what might be found under the tenth-century Macedonians, or amongst Charlemagne's ninth-century contemporaries the ʿAbbasids, whose overthrow of the ʿUmayyad dynasty necessitated a comprehensive reformulation of identities: political, religious, and ethnic. In other words, even when considering the Carolingian world or works from adjacent communities such as the *Liber Pontificalis* of Rome, of Ravenna, or even the *History* of Paul the Deacon, nevertheless the *Chronographia* and the historical culture of early ninth-century Constantinople appears—at least at present—to be more *sui generis* in its era than not.

Identity is not the only analytical category from which this study has intentionally abstained. Productive, wide-ranging studies of (primarily Latin) historical discourses have also considered these discourses under such categories as: resources and use; memory and remembrance; transmission and exchange; perception; and, community-formation. But it remains unclear which of these would be the most appropriate or productive for comparative analysis of and juxtaposition with the *Chronographia*. There is clearly much serious work yet to be done to establish the terms and the framework for such discourses. For instance, despite the obvious literariness of Constantinople, and of Byzantinists' predilection for working with original manuscripts, there is as yet no equivalent study to R. McKitterick's *The Carolingians and the Written Word*, and it is quite possible that there never will be. Given the vastly different survival rates for early medieval manuscripts from the Carolingian world and from the Byzantine world, scholars working comparatively will need nuance and creativity to set commensurate terms for comparative study. Readers of the present study could find evidence for calling the *Chronographia* both Roman and Constantinopolitan. The work can be read as proposing an identity both internal and external to the center of political power. It is both ecclesiastical and imperial. Even the single most common summary statement that scholars have made about the identity promoted by the *Chronographia*—that it is an iconophile work—is surely true, and yet it is also misleading. To take just one example, in R. J. Lilie's seminal article "Reality and Invention in Byzantine Historiography," the author discussed how Constantine V's birth was presented in the *Chronographia*. Lilie read the account through the lens of a "fervent advocate of the veneration of icons" seeking to denigrate Constantine V as "its most vehement adversary, a heretic, whom the chronicler vilifies accordingly." And yet we have seen that reading the *Chronographia* as so characterized by an iconophile identity has caused even scholars such as Lilie to suppress the work's much greater vitriol for the iconophile emperor Nikephoros I. Furthermore, as we saw in chapter 8, reading the *Chronographia* through an iconophile identity causes one to miss the complexities that appeared in my close reading of the final entries covering AM 6303–6305 (our AD 810–813). This coda to the *Chronographia* teased out both a pro-icon position *against* the pro-icon emperor Nikephoros I, *and against* the dominant pro-icon faction in Constantinople (the Stoudite monks under Plato and Theodore of Stoudios). Adding to the complexity, when the entries for AM 6303–6305 were written a few years later, they did so in a way that reshaped that already-complex pro-icon position into an accommodation of the rule of the anti-icon emperor Leo V. Does the *Chronographia* promote an iconophile identity? Yes, but not exclusively. In short: little about the *Chronographia* easily accepts a label. Perhaps more importantly, labels seem little use in helping understand it and may yet directly obscure our vision.

This is not to say that there is no wider context for this Romano-Byzantine project. Framing the *Chronographia* through a descriptive method invites comparative and generalized observations, but along different lines. For instance, by following lines of communication it is possible to sketch the

outlines of a textual community for the *Chronographia* which eschews any simplistic identification. The text's own terms to describe the forms which it communicated to and with its present world show us shared interests between the text and the implied readers of the narrative. For the *Chronographia* articulated a vision of a supra-political economy, or civilization: the Christian community and body of the οἰκουμένη. The *Chronographia*'s idea of the present οἰκουμένη was enlivened by an expansive reanimation of a chronological order emanating through time. This chronological order was centered in space in Constantinople, but it was seen as radiating out into all the world: to Armenia, to Persia, to Syria-Palestine under the ʿUmayyads, to the ʿAbbasids in Baghdad, to Italy under the Lombards, and to Francia and Rome under the Carolingians. Taking the *Chronographia* as a product of an entire intellectual milieu allows us to see the intended audience for the *Chronographia* superseding even the bounds of the Roman Empire.

This ecumenicity would seem to resonate with the fact that the *Chronographia* was constructed within an eschatological framework that operated within a shared web of meaning. Scholars have long connected the *Chronographia* with the region of Syria-Palestine but less emphatically with the deep tradition of Syriac historiography. Nevertheless, this larger conceptual connection now seems obvious given the rich apocalypticism embedded in that tradition. Furthermore, given the connections that have been established between the representation of the past in the *Chronographia* and the powerful Armenian networks of Constantinople, it will also be essential for future studies to set the work more directly in dialogue with the apocalyptic traditions of historical thought resonant in those communities. Future paths for this work will be able to move beyond the older framework of apocalypticism as instigated by and framed around the advent of Islam, and rather articulate the perspicacity and variety that J. Palmer has found in this progressive model for historical thought, from the quotidian to the policy-forming. Studying the apocalyptic through a range of genres reveals that the concept is not so much about the chronology of the end as the mentality of living with an ending. For we have found the progression of time not only embedded in the narrative of the *Chronographia* but in its multiple endings that tell of different ends for different times. That is, the *Chronographia* exemplifies both uses which L. di Tommaso distinguished in apocalyptic historical frameworks: an imperial or *insider* identity, and an oppressed, or *outsider* identity. Both of these are embedded in a work which moved its point of view from that of persecuted rebels against the emperor Nikephoros I to denizens of the palace under Leo V. This flexibility is what made an apocalyptic framework so appealing to a chronographer seeking to comment upon imperial power, directly in line with what P. Ubierna has pointed out concerning the "politicization" of the apocalypse in the Syriac apocalyptic tradition into the eighth century.

On the other hand, we might consider that the *Chronographia*'s explicitly apocalyptic concept of the historical eschaton coincides with its implicit constitution of its audience as a *people* within the framework of the "elect nation"—or to use the terms of the period, of God's Περιούσιος Λαός (Peculiar People). This resonates with certain aspects of Carolingian self-conception in the same period. A people joined together in their participation in and expectation of the revelation of truth and true time also connects to the implicitly apocalyptic practice of the liturgical thought and practice of the Eastern Mediterranean. If the historical apocalyptic is the grand end of all time, the liturgical practices which fulfill a constant practice of the end create a people synchronized in their sense and practice of the daily, weekly, and annual fulfillment of time. The liturgical paradigm has been shown to both form and critique the body politic.

Finally, this study has worked to ask what expectations for truth and accuracy did the *Chronographia* set for itself and its original audience, and how did those work. It has been "concerned less with the accuracy of the past thus fashioned" than it has been concerned with what the *Chronicle*'s "various types of engagement [with the past] can tell us about the wider intellectual and cultural framework within which they took place." In this way I have proposed new ways of thinking about the genre of early medieval chronography. By assessing the work on its own terms I found the *Chronographia* cannot be understood if it is thought of as a way of telling history, for it is a way of telling time. Not, however, telling time in the sense with which scholars have been concerned up to now, primarily considering time in terms of the relative accuracy of the work as a report on events. On these terms, the *Chronographia* is a distinctly inaccurate and untrustworthy historical source. But this is not the sort of time that our chroniclers were after. Our chroniclers wrote in pursuit of the ends of time, of finding the meaning of the past in and for the present.

My method has thus been to set aside analytical categories in favor of describing practices. For it is less through categories of analysis than through the description of practices, and through hypothesizing the habits that shaped those practices and the habits which those practices in turn formed, that we might propose descriptions of past humans. Practices of reading and writing transmitted ideas, formed perceptions, ordered memories, and thereby constituted a community around a particular way of remembering, talking about, or writing the past. There is yet much work to be done to uncover the varieties of ways in which the past was written and explained in Greek in the Early Middle Ages, the variety of groups who wrote and explained it, and the variety of ends which each pursued. For now we are still in the middle, deeply embedded in the ongoing process of unveiling the variety of the past.

An End for the Future

"Men in the middest make considerable imaginative investments in coherent patterns which, by the provision of an end, make possible a satisfying consonance with the origins and with the middle." Contrary to expectation, in positing an end that swallows all pasts an apocalyptic approach to the past relies on a recti-linear idea of time that actually permits of no ending. The end can neither be merely the next moment in a series of past moments, nor can it simply annihilate the past. The eschaton fulfills and re-integrates and completes all past times. As Frank Kermode famously put it, the unique chronos of the apocalyptic means that stories have "continually to be modified by reference to what is known." Such stories are "perpetually open to history, to reinterpretation." This present middle necessitates a continual re-understanding of the past under the ballooning fullness of a now when all times are present and yet in the shadow of the about-to-be. This present turns the *imminent* end into *immanent* ends, the perspicacious pervasive presence of all times at once.

Allegory, what I have discussed in this book as typology or *figural* thinking, is essential to this historical mode of thought for "the historical allegory is always having to be revised; time discredits it." Allegorical thinking is what allows apocalypse to be "disconfirmed without being discredited … its extraordinary resilience." Indeed, as laid out in detail in the previous chapter it can "absorb changing interests, rival apocalypses," such as moving from the *end* that was the imperium of Nikephoros I to the *end* that was the new regime of Leo V and his resurrection of iconoclasm (so literally depicted in the *Chronographia* as the attempted resurrection of Constantine V from within his tomb within the church of the Holy Apostles). The sort of truth-making which accounts for the past in the present is not so much a discovery as a new creation.

I have re-framed the *Chronographia*'s idiosyncrasies in the context of its express theories of chronology, historical narrative, and participatory reading as *The Ends of Time*. I did so in order to allow something of the work's genius to be understood on its own terms. I hope that unveiling the creativity and intelligence invested in this indelibly Byzantine work might finally permit the *Chronographia* to stand in its rightful place as one of the most complex and carefully constructed historical works of the Middle Ages writ large. There is the sort of historical accuracy which is a reliable roadmap of events on a timeline. There is also the sort of historical accuracy which is the significance of events, or moments, in the grand scheme of things, for the present moment. We are now trained to privilege the former, and exercise utmost caution in expressing the latter. This hierarchy is reversed in the *Chronographia*. Both its authors looked to make sense of the past by explaining the past in present terms, and as we have seen they were explicit and unapologetic in their insistence on this point. The *Chronographia* was created in order to change how its readers perceived and understood their present, and to then explicitly invite readers to bring it even further into their own renewed present. And to do so in a fully literal sense: to actually complete what was missing (ἀναπληρῶσαι τὰ ἐλλείποντα).

My distinction between *now* and *then* is not meant to adjudicate difference but to identify *différance*. Consider that despite its acknowledged importance as a source for the history of the Eastern Mediterranean in the seventh to ninth centuries, the jointly authored ninth-century *Chronographia* of George the Synkellos and Theophanes has resisted comprehensive readings. This is the case for a number of reasons. Modern scholarship has long been of two minds about the work: on the one hand acknowledging its importance, while on the other insisting that the *Chronographia* is ultimately a collection of historical excerpts and anecdotes without a unified narrative or thematic vision. Thus, though the *Chronographia* is well-known far beyond the field of Byzantine studies, no scholar has yet treated the work as a literary whole, nor has a study yet utilized this 'universal chronicle' as a source on the milieu that produced it.

As a result we have neglected to marvel at and appreciate how the *Chronographia* presented its truth. This is a loss. We can yet learn something with present benefit from how Early Medieval accounts of the past such as the *Chronographia* explained the significance of past figures and events for their present. For when we look up into the night sky we call what we see space. But we might just as well call it time. I would suggest that chronographers saw the past as present similarly to how we accept that an astronomer looks at the ancient emanations of stars as present light, though they do not see those stars as they are in the present but only via emanations long past. Even the light of *proxima centauri* now hitting our stratosphere is over four years old. The stable North Star of today's sky is in fact light emitted in our own AD 1700. Astronomers study the traces of the stars' pasts as pasts that are now present. The astronomer and the chronographer both make sense of how past is present. How is it here, and what does it tell us about the universe, about ourselves now, about ourselves to come? Just as the light emitted by the North Star is in our past, that past is in our present. Neither is the present that past's final end: there are futures that are past, pasts already here, and pasts yet still to come.

This is not merely an analogy. As I have argued elsewhere, the sister-science to chronography is not history but astronomy. Or, as P. Varona has recently put it: the Byzantine chronographic tradition, like the Hellenistic, was "halfway between astronomy and history." We have something to learn from the chronographers, and what we have to learn from them is not only scientifically important, it is politically urgent. History, our academic study of the past, no longer addresses itself to the synthesis of times.

History, in formulating itself as an academic discipline, accepted a Newtonian supra-human time as an unquestioned given, as its chronological premise. Despite the emergence and acceptance of the general theory of relativity, History remained unconcerned with its Enlightenment-era idea of time. History has since silenced its ancient dialectic with students of time, and packed chronology away into the attic of antiquarian pursuits. Until recently.

Historians are now beginning to articulate the urgency with which humanity must devote itself to new chronologies. When S. Tanaka writes in favor of a *History without Chronology*, he advocates for a destruction of our reliance on Newtonian time and calls instead for a return to the sort of thinking about time and history in which (in the idioms of their own era) George the Synkellos and Theophanes engaged. Tanaka and others call on us all to recover "the multiple times and various temporalities that simultaneously operate in our worlds." The unique message of George and Theophanes' project, their chronography's grand but idiomatic synthesis of past and present, was for their own time, not ours. Their conclusions will not be ours, today. But that is not the point of my representations. I did not labor to translate this ninth-century work into the terminology of the twenty-first in order to resurrect it as a paradigm to follow literally, but as an allegorical type to be re-fulfilled. In the *Chronographia* I see creativity that is worthy of aspiration. The perspicacity therein, crossing every field of knowledge available, and the determination to construct a vision of the past in the present, is a perspicacity and a determination which we will need if we are ever to construct a new argument for who *we* could be. We can condemn the 'enlightened' colonizing ends which modern history writing long served, even as we deploy its narratives of universality to the work of greater justice. The present study offers the image of the *Chronographia* as a type to be used in this work. Even though its vision of a universalizing political community is in many devastating ways an antitype, in important aspects the *Chronographia* can serve as a prototype if its image inspires us to pursue anew the past in the present. Perhaps this study might inspire students of time to write new pasts, pasts different from those which currently predetermine the possibilities of meaning in and for our own times. Nevertheless, if the reader can find that this study has at least uncovered something previously unseen, or provoked a question previously unasked, then it has fulfilled its purpose. Its end was merely to inspire new beginnings. <>

POETRY, BIBLE AND THEOLOGY FROM LATE ANTIQUITY TO THE MIDDLE AGES edited by Michele Cutino [Millennium-Studien / Millennium Studies, De Gruyter, 9783110687194]

This volume examines for the first time the most important methodological issues concerning Christian poetry – i.e. biblical and theological poetry in classical meters – from a diachronic perspective. Thus, it is possible to evaluate the doctrinal significance of these compositions and the role that they play in the development of Christian theological ideas and biblical exegesis.

This volume contains the proceedings of the International Symposium "Poetry, Bible and Theology from Late Antiquity to the Middle Ages" organized on 25– 27 January 2018 in Strasbourg by ERCAM, "ResearchTeam on Ancient and Medieval Christianity", belonging to UR 4377 of Catholic Theology and Religious Sciences of Strasbourg, in collaboration with several French institutions (IEA, "Institut d'Études Aug ustiniennes "-LEM,"Laboratoire d'études sur les monothéismes"-UMR 8584; ÉcoleNationale des Chartres; THAT Association Texts for the History of Late Antiquity"; CARRA EA 3094- University of

Strasbourg) and international Institutions (Facultad de Literatura Cristianay Clásica "San Justino" (FLCC) of Madrid; Universidad Complutense de Madrid). This conference was attended by the greatest specialists in late ancient and medieval poetry, involving a total of 33 papers, divided into three full days.

All methodological questions concerning Christian poetry– i. e. Christian, Greek and Latin, ancient and medieval, poetic texts, in classical metres– with biblical and theological content, were approached from a diachronic perspective which made it possible to evaluate the doctrinal significance and the role that these compositions play even in the development of Christian theological ideas and biblical exegesis. From a chronological point of view, we have taken into account the period from Late Antiquity to the Middle Ages, with particular attention to the adaptation of classical to their writing of the Bible in all its forms by Greek and Latin poets of Late Antiquity, and to the new forms of biblical poetry promoted in the West, from the Carolingian Renaissance to the 12th-13th centuries, when the Charters legitimized the use of poetry in the theological debate, and to the later polemics between scholastic theologians (such as Giovanni Dominici and Jean Gerson) and Christian "humanist" poets.Indeed, it can be noted that the use of poetic genres by Greek and Latin-speaking Christians begins much later (especially from the end of the 3rd century/ beginning of the 4th century) than the birth of Christian literary production in prose, which accompanies the very birth of this religion. This "delay" reveals a real difficulty for Christian culture: the creation of a code adapted to the expression of biblical contents, central in this religion, through the cultural tools of Greek and Latin literary production inverse. This difficulty is often reflected in declarations of radical incompatibility between the two areas of reflection of Sacred Scripture and poetry, which is the instrument of expression privileged by profane culture (just think of certain statements hostile to poetry by important authors, such as Jerome or Augustine, who will have a follow-up to the Middle Ages, as M. Zink Poésie et conversion au Moyen Âge, Paris 2003. has clearly shown). On the other hand, poetry is at the origin of attempts to integrate the style of biblical poetic texts, psalms, and classical literary forms (this is the path followed, for example, by the type of Responsorial Psalm, which will not be very successful. The solution that ultimately prevails over the others gives rise, using a remarkable expression of Herzog, to the third cycle of poems of Western literature, which flanksthe Homeric and Carolingian-Arthurian cycles: the cycle of biblical poetry in classical meters. This is a literary field of vital importance, which, after having encountered prejudices from a certain classicizing perspective, especially from the middle of the 20th century, has been established in the panorama of critical studies because of its chronological cross-cutting. Indeed, the "canons" of biblical poetry developed in Late Antiquity will dominate medieval schools and even those of the humanist era, finding also a favourable ground in the culture of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, to enter definitively into crisis with the cultural renewal of the Enlightenment. This has also been established thanks to the interaction that the field has promoted between emerging cultures, biblical-Christian and Germanic, and Greek-Latin civilization in its expressive forms.

The symposium highlighted the socio-cultural importance of this transposition of scriptural content into poetic forms: in fact, according to various modalities and purposes, and in relation to different recipients and reference environments, this transposition aims, first of all, at the "vulgarization" of the biblical interpretation and theological speculation in favor of the rudes, i.e. people who are foreign to catechetical schools or to the ecclesiastical careers, but who belong to the cultured/educated elites of their time, through the expressive instrument privileged by them, that is, the production in verse. This is the reason why Christian literature inverse is of great interest in the in-depth evaluation even of the phenomenon of the Christianization of the ruling classes, especially from the fourth/fifth century. A

literary genre such as the 'epic' or the 'biblical paraphrase' clearly shows the value of this cultural operation: the transposition principally into hexameters of the books of the Old Testament (mention the paraphrases of Genesis by Cyprian the Gaul, Claudius Marius Victorius and Avitus) or of the New Testament (such as the Evangeliorum libri of Juvencus, the Carmen Paschaleof Sedulius, the Paraphrase of the John's Gospel of Nonnos of Panopolis and the Historia apostolorum of Arator) isnot reduced to a simple rhetorical exercise or a literary reading. As M. Roberts (Biblical Epic and Rhetorical Paraphrase in Late Antiquity, Liverpool 1985) and D. Nodes (Doctrine and Exegesis in Biblical Latin Poetry, Leeds 1993) have clearly shown, from different perspectives. Such transpositions into verse   a re-reading of the biblical hypotext, an "update" of Scripture in relation to the requirements and expectations of the reference environment. So, this production associates scriptural interpretations and doctrinal commentaries with paraphrasing in verse, so that for this genre, we can also speak of a true biblical exegesis inverse, which is often accompanied by very precise theological objectives.

The study of Christian biblical poetry, therefore, requires a global and organic scientific approach, that is, an approach not limited to examining the formal questions related to the transposition into scriptural content, but also to showing how poetic form and exegetical-theological content support each other. On the other hand, there isa need for reflection on the very legitimacy of calling Christian poets true theologians. This is an issue that challenges even our notion of theology. Indeed, from the essay Gloria. Pour une esthétique théologique (ed.1962) by the theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar, anew attempt was made to recover, within the theology, the aesthetic dimension of theology, underlining how symbolic and metaphorical language can be a very effective instrument of theological language. This is an aspect that medieval theologians were already very familiar with: thus, since Carolingian times, Jean Scot Erigène (PL122,146 B-C) has brought the theology of poetry (theology veluti quaedam poetria) closer together through this particular use of language for teaching purposes.

CONTENTS

Abstracts

interested in the relationship between literature and in general classical culture and Christian novelty, which testifies to a learned – and ideologically oriented – choice on the part of the one who made this collection, a choice that deserves to be carefully studied.

Nicole Hecquet-Noti (Genève), L'auteur et son public. Les différentes lectures de l'épopée biblique selon Avit de Vienne

In the two prologues of his poem De spiritalis historiae gestis , Avitus of Vienne defines, as the target audience of his epic, his peers, the Christian literati of the Gallo-Roman aristocracy. He also specifies that his poem serves a double purpose: to transmit Christian teaching and to display its author's rhetorical mastery of the epic genre. He thus proceeds by inserting moral exegetical comments into the various sections of his epic narrative, as has already been well appreciated. Our study focuses on the epic narrative itself to show how these two goals are constantly pursued. In the 5 books of the poem, we find two remarkable "mirror descriptions": the description of the Garden of Eden (1.188 – 298) and that of the Flood (4.425 – 540). These ekphraseis should be understood as a rhetorical amplification of the corresponding passages of Genesis (2,8 – 15 and 7,17 – 24); they also take as a model the epic descriptions of the locus amoenus and the storm. In the depiction of the Garden of Eden, Avitus firstly continues the tradition of the descriptions of exotic mirabilia , by the evocation of the Phoenix ^ a passage that combines allusions to Ovid (Met. 15,392 – 407) and Statius (Silv. 3,2) ^, and then he dialogues with the poetics of Claudian (Carm.min. 33 – 39) and the Anthologia Latina (519– 530), in shaping a short comparison between the beauty of the heavenly spring and crystal. At the same time, this description, like that of the flood, maps the new geography of the Christian world. It conveys a vision of the world that corresponds to the one we know from the cosmographies of this period, especially the Topographia Christiana (4.7) of Cosm as Indicopleustes and the Latin Expositio totius mundi et gentium.

S. Labarre (Le Mans), La réécriture des récits bibliques de guérison chez les poètes latins du IVe au Vie siècle

Latin Christian poetry of the IV-VI centuries draws largely its inspiration from the Bible. The miracles of healing effected by Christ or the Apostles have given rise to various rewritings, in order to defend the faith, to train the believers, or to make known the main orientations of the exegetical discourse. We have identified the different genres that produced them: biblical epics (Juvencus, Sedulius, Dracontius, Arator), didactic or apologetic poetry (Prudentius, Commodianus), hymns or epigrams (Prudentius, Rusticus Helpidius). But while poets sometimes introduce a form of theological commentary, they hardly take part in theologians' debates. They most often practice an allegorical exegesis and their main intention is to prove that the power of Christ is more than human. They use the expressive resources of poetry to make this divine nature visible, whether by epic dramatization, hymnic stylization, or conciseness oftituli (e. g. Miracula Christi).

L. Furbetta (Roma), Avit de Vienne et Dracontius en rapport. 'Chanter' et 'expliquer' la Bible entre formation scolaire et création poétique

In this paper we will try to present some reflections on the De sp iritalis historiae ges tis composed by Avitus of Vienne and on De laudibus Dei written by Dracontius, in order to analyze the poetic treatment of the same passages of the biblical narrative starting from the rhetorical strategies and

processes, that the two poets set up in the structuring of narrative tableaux. Through the study of the loci similes and a deep analysis of Alc.Av. car m. 1.24 – 29 and car m. 3.213– 278 (these verses in particular compared with Drac. laud. 3.49 – 80) we will try to question the possibility of a 'relationship' between the two poems.

Br.Bureau (Lyon), L'autorité apostolique àtravers les discours de l'Historia Apostolica d'Arator

In his Historia Apostolica, Arator intends to give a commented poetic version of the Acts, but, for a modern reader, the poem is more a rewriting of the biblical text than an actual commentary.In this paper, we will discuss the way of rewriting the speeches of the two main characters Peter and Paul. Arator considerably changes the content of the speeches in order to 1- give an epic tone to the words of the apostles, 2- get rid of every detail that is not suitable for his purpose, 3- insert elements that could be of major interest for his 6th century Roman audience. Through quotations from the letters of Peter and Paul and insertions of elements coming from the Patristic tradition, the poet rebuild "his" apostles according to what he considers as the most important part of the apostolic message for his own time.

F.E. Consolino (L'Aquila), Severus (of Malaga?) and narrative construction. The healing of Bartimaeus (VIII.119 – 153)

This enquiry focuses on the way Severus constructs his account of a miracle that appears in two of the Synoptic Gospels, and that is also treated by Sedulius, namely the healing of the blind man Bartimaeus (8.119 – 153 – see the commentary on this section in Bischoff 1994, 82 – 86- , which is described in the Gospels of Mark (10.46 – 52) and Luke (18.35 – 43), and by Sedulius in carm. Pasch. 4, 210 – 221. This comparison between Severus and Sedulius is supplemented with a brief analysis of the same authors' accounts (Severus 9, 163 – 186 and Sedulius 4.251 – 270) of the part strictly related to the miraculous healing of the man born blind recounted in Jn 9. These two comparisons with Sedulius's treatments of the same episodes throw Severus's scarce propensity for reshaping the Gospel narrative for the purposes of theological or exegetic interpretation into sharp relief. All the same, in the course of his verse, Severus does not exempt himself entirely from providing explanations that he clearly believes will interest his readers. Paradoxically,the very admission of few exegetic excursus, on the part of Severus, reluctant as he is to stray too far in his poem from the letter of the Gospels, helps us to appreciate how, with Sedulius, exegesis had become a distinctive and inescapable trait of the Bibelepik.

R. Lestrade (Strasbourg), Usage des sources poétiques classiques et perspectives « théologiques » dans l'Heptateuchos de Cyprien le Gaulois (Ve s.)

The study, through a range of examples, of the reception of classical poetic sources in the Old Testament paraphrase known as the Heptateuchos shows a delicate craftsmanship which can be analyzed, as far as textual strategies are concerned, into four categories: epic amplification, moral characterization, pathetic emphasis, and mythical-epic analogies. Within a Christian reading of the Law, this layer of neoclassical ornamentation implies and enhances attitudes that draw from both psychological and theological motives: a divine and cosmic anthropomorphism, a valuation of the phenomenal world, and a valuation of pity. Last, a comparison is hinted between the Heptateuch Poet's stance toward biblicalhermeneutics and Varro's 'three theologies' theory as attacked by Augustine in book 6 of the The City of God.

D. De Gianni (Wuppertal), Four Variations on the Theme. "The Withered Fig Tree" (Mc 11.12 – 14;20–25; Mt 21.18 – 22) in Juvencus, Sedulius, Avitus of Vienne and Severus of Malaga(?)

This paper proposes a comparative analysis of the hexametrical rewritings of the evangelical account of Jesus cursing the fig tree (Matthew 21.18 – 22; Mark 11.12 – 14; 20 – 25) by Juvencus, Sedulius, Avitus of Vienne and Severus of Malaga (?). The comparison between the four pieces allows us to evaluate the different narrative strategies adopted by these authors, as well as the paraphrastic techinques and their "consonances" with previous classical poetry. The gap between the literal paraphrase by Juvencus, who rewrote the biblical text with few changes, and the work by Severus of Malaga (?), who was attentive to the exegetical and theological implications present in the hypotext, suggests reflections on the evolution of the literary genre of the poetic rewriting of the Bible. The different approaches to the biblical text by these authors reflect their cultural backgrounds and the instances of their audience. If the purpose of Juvencus is to spread the gospel in an acceptable poetic form, then the succeeding poets are motivated by exegetical intents, understandable in light of the theological and doctrinal debate, which is progressively growing in the Latin West.

F. Doroszewski (Warsaw),Dieu rejeté, Dieu triomphant. Réception des Bacchantes d'Euripide dans la Paraphrase de l'évangile de Saint Jean de Nonnos de Panopolis

The Bacchae of Euripides exercised an enormous impact on ancient literature. Christian literature was no exception, especially in the Alexandrian milieu where Philo had already introduced the Dionysian motifs into biblical exegesis. It was there that, starting at least with Clement of Alexandria, the Bacchae was reinterpreted to express Christian beliefs. The Paraphrase of Saint John's Gospel written by Nonnus of Panopolis, a poet influenced by the Alexandrian intellectual circles, follows this exegetical tradition. Nonnus was well familiar with the Bacchae which is confirmed by the three books of Pentheid comprised of Dionysiaca 44^46, his other epic, as well as by numerous references to the play in the Paraphrase. The present paper demonstrates how the narrative of the Bacchae servesNonnus as an importantintertextin paraphrasing the episodes of the Mar riage of Cana (Book 2), of the Feast of Tabernacles (Book 7), and of Jesus' meeting with Martha and Mary in Bethania (Book 11). More specifically,the paper focuses on the symbolic role played by wine, the motif of sadness turning into ecstatic joy,and the opposition between the true and false wisdom.

A. Rotondo (Catania), Salut et prophéties messianiques dans le septième chant de la Paraphrase de Nonnos de Panopolis

In the seventh chapter of the Paraphrase of St. John's Gospel, Nonnus of Panopolis deals with the theme of disbelief through the controversy between Christ and the group of Jews/Pharisees about the interpretation of the messianic promises in the Scriptures and about Christ's messianity. The cause of the dispute, according to Nonnus, is the anger, aroused by envy, of Jews. Therefore, the poet represents the opposition through emotions (for example, anger). He uses emotions as markers to polarize non-believers and believers. All his exegetic work is founded on such polarization. Nonnus interprets Jn 7 emphasizing the dichometis , 'discord', as an outcome of the human ignorance in the face of divine wisdom. The Scriptures constantly reveal divine wisdom, but arrogance prevents human beings from recognizing it. The ground for challenge is the Book/Law with its prophecies about the Messianic advent.

S. Costanza (Messina), Voices, Hearing and Acoustic Epipahny in Nonnus' Paraphrase of St. John's Gospel

In his Paraphrase of St John's Gospel , Nonnus of Panopolis focuses on the appearance of the Lord as a perennial theophany,which also deals with acoustic signs revealing his divine presence. In the Graeco-Roman world, the spoken word corresponds to a fatal voice as kledon. According to a longdating tradition, Nonnus' epiphany reportsremark auditory signs of Christ revelation as Messiah, whose word is defined as Life-giving, as in 10.133 or releasing grief, as in 5.37. Miracles of Jesus are also enacted through his consoling Word. The voice of John, the true witness, is also prophetic. Under a key theological perspective, the Word of Christ shows God's nearness. Finally, Nonnus gives emphasis on auditory revelation as a privileged way to gain access to the divine. At this respect, he follows Greek epic tradition as well as mystical, gnostic or orphic, poetry.

Part II: Biblical Poetry and Theological Aims in other Poetic Genres between Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages

G. Agosti (Roma), La poésie biblique grecque en Egypte au IVe siècle. Enjeux littéraires et théologiques

The paper deals with the early phase of Biblical poetry in the Greek East. The new Christian poems preserved in a papyrus codex from the so-called Bodmer Library (a group of papyri coming from the areaof the city of Panopolis, Upper Egypt), has dramatically shown thatin Egypt verse paraphrases of Biblicalbooks were composed already in the middle of the fourth century. Their author had already attempted to give their answer to the challenge represented by a Christian poetry in classical language and metres. Before the few Biblical poems by Gregory of Nazianzus and the brief season of the fifth century Biblical epic (Nonnos, Eudocia, the Ps-Apollinaris), The Bodmer poet(s) show to be aware of the literary and theological issues involved by the paraphrastic genre. It is questionable whether this is a creative innovation, or the author(s) have been inspired by previous examples. The study of the environment where these poems have been composed (where Latin texts are known) could suggest that the author(s) were aware of the Latin experiments. On the other hand, an analysis of Christian metric inscriptions from the first half of the 4th century points out that some aspects of 'biblical poetry' (namely the juxtaposition of Classical and Biblical expressions) were more common than admitted.

Lefteratou (Heidelberg), Deux chemins d'apprentissage. Le didactisme dans les Centons homériques

This article explores the didactic character of lines 1 – 70 of the first edition of the Homeric Centos. The didactic and ekphrastic potential of the story of the Genesis is treated in a twofold way: by the external narrator, who addresses the reader, and by the embedded one, Satan, who addresses Eve. These two narrators offer a contrasting, albeit similar stylistically ,description of paradise and of paradisalbliss, though their didactic intentions differ diametrically.The discreet narrator of the introit

R. Ricceri (Ghent), Two MetricalRewritings of the Greek Psalms. Pseudo-Apollinaris of Laodicea and Manuel Philes

This paper aims to provide a preliminary insight into the reception of the Psalms from the point of view of two Greek paraphrases. The first text I take into account is the so-called Metaphrasis Psalmorum, written in dactylic hexametres and dating to the fifth century. This text is anonymous, although traditionally attributed to Apollinaris of Laodicea (IV century). The latter is a rewriting of the Psalms in political verses (decapentasyllables) carried out by a well-known Byzantine poet, Manuel Philes (XIII-XIV century). A comparative analysis of the above-mentioned paraphrases can shed light on the appreciation of the Psalms in two different historical contexts. These two texts, whose investigation still lacks some philological work, share remarkable affinities, as they are both versified rewritings of the same literary source and they are both faithful to the original text. However, some major dissimilarities cannot be overlooked. On the one hand, the hexametric metaphrasis conveys some typical elements of late antique Christian poetry.It contributes to the establishment of a highbrow poetry with Christian content, which can benefit from the use of the Homeric metre and the Homeric language. On the other hand, Manuel Philes' Metaphrasis of the Psalms is situated in Later Byzantium and is grounded in a well-established, thousand-year-old tradition of Christian poetry. Moreover, itis connected with the characteristic Byzantine taste for (prose) rewritings. The texts resulting from the process of rewriting are profoundly influenced by the cultural role that they perform in their own historical context. The author of the Homeric Psalter strives to reshape the Psalms by means of an unmistakably epic language. Conversely, Manuel Philes is more cautious when dealing with the biblical text. He adopts the political verse as the main poetic mark of his paraphrase and slightly alters the source text, following the path of Byzantine rhetoricians and hagiographers.

Jesús F. Polo (Madrid), Descent and Ascent in the VIIIth Hymn of Synesius of Cirene

The aim of this paper is to study the 8th Hymn of Synesius of Cyrene. As it is well known, this hymn deals with Jesus' incarnation, descent into Tartarus and ascent to Heaven. Neoplatonism and Chaldean Oracles shape the background of the Hymn. But in its first part, the descent, it is possible to recognize some typical features of the heroic journey to the place of the dead. It is my intention to focus on Jesus journey to Tartarus comparing it with Odysseus journey in Hom. Od. 11 and with the one of Heracles in Bacchylides Victory-ode 5, in order to show how the previous Greek literary tradition could have influenced the first part of this Hymn.

M. Herrero de Jáuregui (Madrid), Gregory of Nazianzus' Hymn to Parthenie (II.1.2.1 – 214). Christianizing Greek Theogonies

Gregory of Nazianzus took classicalliterary genres as m5(o)-5.dels to imitate, and at the same time, to innovate: in the long proem of his Hymn to Parthenie Gregory clearly follows rhetorical theory about hymns, combining different hymnic types in a single poem; also, since the poem deals with Christian account of creation, he explicitly takes Hesiod's Theogony as model to be surpassed. As in the rest of his poetic work, he manages to raise Christian poetry to the height of classical Greek models, and to explain Christian doctrines in a pleasant and elegant form.

J. Prudhomme (Strasbourg), Les personnages bibliques, héros d'une épopée chrétienne dans la poésie de Grégoire de Nazianze

The influence of the traditional epic on Gregory of Nazianzus' poetry is formally undeniable but Gregory's heroes are of a new kind, since they are biblical characters, whom he wants to turn into the heroes of a new, Christian epic.

These figures are at the centre of Gregory's biblical works, which resemble the paraphrase genre. How does the encounter between the traditional epic language and the biblical material take place? The analysis of some poems (I.1.16; I.1.20 – 23) testifies to the flexibility with which Gregory mixes the biblical heritage with the epic language, so that we can speak of "formal syncretism". However, the rewriting is not only ornamental: through the use of stylization, through the choice of active verbal formulas, striking images or personifications, Gregory focuses attention on biblical figures who become heroes performing exceptional feats and successfully fighting against the forces of evil. The Christian dimension of the new heroes is greatly enhanced, so that the figure of Jesus replaces the ancient pagan heroes, and the prophets become heralds of Christ. Finally, the poet Gregory himself is affected by this process of epic heroism: in his autobiographical poems (II.1.15; II.1.19), Gregory uses Old Testament figures as models to stage himself as a Christian hero, whose glory consists in defending the Trinity and enduring adversity.

D. Shanzer (Wien), Grave Matters: Love, Death,Resurrection, and Reception in the De Laudibus Dorini

This paper is best read as a diptych with D.R. Shanzer, "Resurrections before the Resurrection in the Imaginaire of Late Antiquity" forthcoming in The Biblical Annals (Lublin). The point of departure for both articles is the Anonymous Carmen de laudibus Domini's description of a sentimental miracle (situated in Gaul in the territory of the Aedui): the corpse of a dead wife woke up temporarily to welcome her loving husband's body (De Laudibus 7 – 35). Here it is demonstrated how anomalous details of the description of the burial (rock tomb , wrapped burial) suggest intertextuality with the Lazarus narrative in the Gospel of John mediated through Juvencus (with implications for the date of the Carmen de laudibus). The deceased woman's problematized ability to move her arms echoes an exegetic discussion about Lazarus' locomotion, despite his bound feet. This is to be found in texts such as Ambrose's funeral oration for Satyrus, in Nonnos' Gospel Paraphrase ,and Sermon 65 of Petrus Chrysologus. The discourse of being re-ensouled is also explored, from the philosophical to the erotic. Poets (Prudentius and Severus of Malaga) reacted differently to Lazarus' resurrection and the problem (for example) of his possible stench and how to soft-pedal or transform it into poetry.The paper then turns to the nature of the Gallic couple's marriage (white or not?) and the reception of the base Legende behind Gregory of Tours. The relationship between the Carmen de Laudibus , Tertullian's De Anima 51.6 – 8, is explored with the conclusion that Gregory didn't work from De Laudibus ,but from a (now lost) Vo rl age or Vo rlagen. The paper ends with some attempt to contextualize the double burial and marital continence in epigraphy (with very limited success), but showing that one word (deprehensa Carmen de laudibus 30) teasingly alludes to what does or doesn't go on in the double grave as letto matrimoniale of a Christian couple.

G. Aragione (Strasbourg) – A. Arbo (Strasbourg), Un diner sur l'herbe. Proba et le pouvoir évocateurde la poésie

The description of the Last Supper proposed by the Christian poet Proba in her Virgilian Cento (v.580 – 599) deviates in many respects from the text of the Gospels. This article attempts to show that the reasons for such deviations must be sought above all in the stream of meaning that passes between the hypotext (the Aeneid), and the hypertext (the Cento). Proba did not compose her description with verses borrowed from the entire Virgilian corpus, but privileged specific nuclei of the Aeneid ,already used fora previous biblical episode: the fall of Adam and Eve. The Last Supper in Proba's poem appears thus, thanks to the hypotext, as a replica of the story of the transgressive meal of Eve and the serpent in the Garden of Eden and the symbol of Redemption after the Fall.

M. Crespo Losada (Madrid), Biblicalhypotexts in Prudentius' Contra Symmachum. Case study of C. Symm. II.95 – 96

The theology of creation found in the apologetical writings represented by Lactantius enables us to discover that the nature of an eternal god creator is explained by the inspired or revealed news rendered by Scripture in Proverbs 8.22 – 29. Several passages by Lactantius (Ins titutiones divinae) show that the procedure of presenting notions specific to the Christian deus verus, revealed by faith, is –even in the context of a dialogue with polytheistic paganism– a discursive device which could also have been employed by Prudentius in his disputation with Symmac hus. Generically alluding the deus verus in C. Symm. 1.325 – 327, as well as stating His eternal, creative nature in C. Symm. 2.95 – 96 can be explained because there is a conscious lexical unspecificity overlaying the specificity of the sola fides, according to which there is no question of an eternal, creator God out of the implicit reality of the Son of the Father, the ab aetern o begotten Word, who, without leaving the bosom of the Father, participates in the creation of the world, as shown by the presence of Proverbs 8.22 – 29 in the poetry of Prudentius.

P. De Navascués (Madrid), O crucifer bone lucisator (Prudence, cath. 3.1). Doctrine ancienne en termes nouveaux

The Hymnus ante cibum (Prudentius, Cath. 3), with a refined metric pattern -as used by Ausoniusand containing differents neologisms, was addressed to Prudentius' elite group of Christians. The beginning of the first stanza –O crucifer bone lucisator– leads to the most important issue to us all: the Christological meaning of food. As noted in prior authors (Irenaeus, apocryphal litterature, Maximus, Gregorius Illiberitanus) to Prudentius, Crucifer ,the one who bears the cross, should be understood in light of the traditional equivalence: cross-plaugh (crux-aratrum). According to this, since the very beginning of History, Christ, crucifer and lucisator ,shows up, as the one and the same sower (sator), who bears the plaugh (crux), nourishing the mankind with food from the land and the Light of the Spirit. Thereby Cato's bonus agricola has become Prudentius' crucifer bonus.

A. Leflaëc (Strasbourg), Figures bibliques et idéal familial de la consécration à Dieu. Le protreptique de l'Ad Cytherium (Carm. 24) de Paulin de Nole

Around 400 Paulinus of Nola writes a long versified letter (Carmen 24) to his friend Cytherius who has chosen the priestly life for his son. The poet sends him a series of exhortations in order to prepare Cytherius' son as well as possible for the priesthood. Using different characters of the Old Testament, he paints a well-made portrait of the future clergyman which recalls the ideal of the monk-bishop becoming important at this time. Through the Nazirites Samuel and Samson and the figure of Joseph,

Paulinus underlines the importance of struggling against the flesh and its seductions. The poet's allegorical interpretation of some Old Testament events invites Cytherius' son to spiritually imitate the deeds of his Biblical predecessors and emphasises that, at a time when persecutions have passed, the future priest's hardships are especially in his mind. The chosen examples also involve complete families and thus give a familial dimension to the theme of consecration to God. Paulinus uses the figures of Abraham and Hannah to underline the faith and the obedience to God of Cytherius and his wife and to show how their piety can be achieved through the priestly lifeof their son. Inversely,the poet explains that the son, because of his religious function, can likewise spiritually help his parents. Like Joseph, who arrived in Egypt ahead of his family in order to preserve them against famine, Cytherius' son arrives in God's house ahead of his parents in order to feed them spiritually and help them to live in a way consecrated to God. They are in fact invited at the end of the poem to give themselves wholly to God, not through the priesthood, but through an ascetic life.

Ch.Guignard (Strasbourg), Poétique des listes apostoliques. Les premières énumérations d'apôtres dans la poésie latine chrétienne (Ve-VIe siècle)

Lists are a well-known literary form in Ancient Poetry, both Greek and Latin. For the Christian poets, the New Testament lists of the apostles (Mt 10.2 –4 and parallels) were a potential subject matter for poetic enumerations, but these lists do not seem to have exercised much fascination on them. In particular, no such catalogue is known form the Biblical epic. Indeed, in the Latin poetry of the 4th and 5th centuries, only Paulinus of Nola exploited the literary potential of an enumeration of the apostles, though in a (deliberately) incomplete form (Carmen 19.54 – 56 and 78 – 84). However, it is only with Venantius Fortunatus that the catalogue of the apostles really finds its way in the Western Christian poetry,as a number of Latin and vernacular examples will attest in the Middle Ages.

Part III: The Versification of the Bible in the Latin West in the Middle Age

V.Zarini(Paris), La réception en Afrique, au VIe siècle, du motif apocalyptique de la fin du monde àtravers le poème de Verecundus et l'anonyme « À Flavius Felix »

In 6th centry Africa, two poems provide substantial eschatological tableaux: the Carmen de paeniten tia of Verecundus of Junca and the anonymous verses Ad Flauium Felicem de resurrectione mortuorum et de iudicio Domini – it is neither possible nor, in this case, necessary to determine which poem was written first. This article seeks to set out the respective portions, in each tableau, devoted to the representation of cosmic catastrophe, and to that of the punishments of hell, along with the possible interchanges between these two representations, distinct in themselves. While classical and biblical references naturally underpin the poets' imagination, within the framework of a callto conversion, the influence of Commodian and the preference for euidentia seem to play a greater role, for these poets, than the Latin exegetical tradition on the Johannine Apocalypse.

C. Urlacher-Becht (Mulhouse), La doctrine dans les hymnes de la liturgie wisigothique. Entre tradition patristique et réécriture biblique

As it can be seen from Canon 13 of the Fourth Council of Toledo (633), the creation of a non-Biblicalhymnody was debated in Hispania in the first half of the seventh century.The argument developed in this context by Isidore of Seville to justify the "human" hymnody is based in particular on the idea that the current compositions, following the example of the hymns of Hilaire and Ambrose affirming and defending the Nicene faith, should be an "effective instrument of a pedagogy of the faith". The way in

which Isidore thus inscribed the hymnody of his time in the continuity of the lauds of the great bishops of the fourth century raises the question of the place of doctrine in these poems composed at a time where the heretical threat had largely lost its relevance.

If it was no longer necessary to block the way to Arian heresy, we willsee that part of the ecclesial hymnody continued, as it was the case by the great hymnographic bishops, to be the support of an authentic faith, and resulted in hymns of a remarkable doctrinal elaboration, largely due to the teaching of the Church Fathers. On many occasions, however, in terms of doctrine, the content of several hymns is limited in whole or in part to a versification of the Bible, the modalities and issues of which willbe examined. We will thus measure the vitality of this hymnographic creation, which was able to renew the Ambrosian model by exploring other modes of doctrinal expression, in phase with the liturgy of the time.

P. Bourgain (Paris), La dramatisation de l'histoire biblique dans la poésie carolingienne

The Bible is a huge reserve of poetical meditation. Salvation dramatically concerns the whole mankind and everybody's soul, engaging two exegetic significations, anagogy and tropology. Thence the finaljudgement appears at the end of a majority of poems written during merovingian (with anguish) and carolingian (more serenely) times. Merovingian rythms neglect chronology in favour of eschatologic signification. Carolingian poems are more dogmatic than pathetic, insisting on the actuality of the message of salvation. Penitential poems develop a poetic of complaint. Theatrical pathos appears in rhetorical devices :iterations, interpellations, implorations, favouring interrogations and imperative verbs, thus appropriating the pathos of biblical figures, or execrating the bad ones. Biblical direct speech is paraphrased and extended (it is the origin of dialogic tropes, forerunners of medieval theater). Joseph, Esther, Judith, Lazarus and the Holy Innocents are favorite themes, but their treatment is more theological than sentimental (even Christ's infancy does not generate much emotion, in spite of apocryphal Gospels ; Nicodem's Gospel is the one influential apocryph). Eschatology is the essential point, while tropology and compassion will afterwards become more important.

F. Ploton-Nicollet (Paris), Entre satire del'Église et parodie biblique. l'Apocalypse de Golias

The Apocalypsis Goliae is a long anonymous Latin poem of about 400 lines dating to the twelfth century.It is mainly known as a satire of the ecclesiastical institution parodying the Biblical Apocalypse of John. It apparently consists of three independent parts: an introduction (§ 1–13), in which the visionarysees many ancient authors, and speciallyPythagoras,whose body is covered with inscriptions; the main part of the poem (§ 14 – 104), directly inspired by the Apocalypse of John, in which an angelbrings a book sealed with seven seals and, opening them, shows the poet many allegorical scenes aimed at the clergy's depravity; finally, ashort conclusion (§ 105 – 110), in which the poet is caught away to the third heaven, where he sees various mysteries, but remembers nothing because, being hungry and thirsty, he is offered poppy bread and water from the river Lethe, which cause him to fall back to earth. The only attempt to look further by studying the poem's structure was made by Francis Newman (1967), who argued that the three parts fit the Augustinian theory of vision as exposed in De Genesi ad litteram (12, 3 – 34): Augustine actually defines three kinds of vision: corporeal, which enables to see real things, spiritual, which enables to imagine things that are not present, and intellectual, which enables to conceive invisible things (such as God or concepts). Also according to Newman, the ancient authors, embodying the artes liber ales, correspond to corporeal vision, because their knowledge enables to apprehend the world; the allegoricalvision, similar to a dream, corresponds to spiritual vision, and the

final revelation, which the visionary cannot remember, corresponds to intellectual vision. Newman's hermeneutic explanation of the poem proves very effective. In the same way,the present author wishes to highlight the importance of another structuring detail of the poem, which is the – distinctly apocalyptic – motif of the book: in the first part, Pythagoras' body,covered with inscriptions, is a corporeal (in both senses) book to be read; the book with seven seals is a spiritual (i. e. allegorical) book. Lastly, in the third part, if we refer to the Augustinian theory of vision, we should expect an "intellectual" book; if we refer to the Apocalypse of John, we should expect a book to be eaten (like the "little book" that the visionary eats in Apc. 10). This could be represented by the poppy bread and water. But, whereas John ate the "little book" and kept the word of God, our poet is unable to remember anything thereafter, which signifies that high intellectual activity and bodily care are incompatible concerns.

K. Smolak (Wien), Die Bibeldichtung Aurora des Petrus Riga (P.R.). Beobachtungen zu Stil und Poetik

The late antique genre of Biblical epic, exemplified by Juvencus, Sedulius, and Alcimus Avitus, developed out of metrical paraphrase and was subject to continual innovation and elaboration. In the later High Middle Ages, the genre had reached a point at which the exegetical presentation of biblical passages, selected primarily for poetic reinterpretation based on their exegetical usefulness, had prevailed. This predominance is not only apparent in a quantitative sense, but also because certain interpretations were occasionally implied or even assumed to be familiar to the reader.

One consequence of this fact was that new literary and stylistic means of expression came into use via the reworking of popular exegetical literature. These means of expression conformed to contemporary aesthetics, but they often explicitly engaged the tradition of classical poetry, including that of Vergil and Ovid, in various ways. The "Aurora," aptly christened with an allegorical title, provides an excellent example of this phenomenon in literary and intellectual history. The "Aurora" is a work of biblical poetry covering most of the Old and New Testaments, written by Peter Riga; it represents an incomplete 'work in progress,' already enlarged by the roughly contemporary Aegidius of Paris. In light of the perspective detailed above, selected passages have been analyzed and documented in their close – and more remote – literary and exegetical contexts: Ev(angelium) 409 f.; 2889 f., 2893 – 96; Gen(esis) 7 – 8; 88 – 102; 133 – 176; Ev 31 – 68, 129 – 134. In the latter passages, the description of the beauty of the human physique is treated as an object of the poet's personal reflection: thus representing an application of traditional rhetorical education to biblical figures, including Mary.

F. Stella (Siena), Théologie de la poésie entre Scolastique et Humanisme. Le statut de la poésie biblique

After the condemnation expressed by Isidore, codified in the Decretum Gratiani and generally accepted in the twelfth century,poetry is object of different treatments, based rather on the procedures of the dialectic, in the summae of the thirteenth century of the mendicant orders: Alexandre d'Hales , Albert the Great, Thomas of Aquino, who judges poetry as the infima doctrina (...) q uae minimum contine t veritatis. This presentation extracts and analyzes in short the cultural positions and motivations, highlighting the presence of a trend that goes back to Dionysius pseudo-Areopagite and supports a close analogy between poetry and theology, and an Agostinian current, which on the contrary exalt the contrast. Albertinus Mussatus, more than Dante, forces the interpretation of these arguments for a defense of poetry in the humanistic sense, laying the foundations for Petrarch's and Boccaccio's

rehearsals until Philip Sidney and later. In this discussion, the status of biblical poetry (from Iuvencus to Pierre Riga), which at the theoretical level could solve the problem of truth content, emerges occasionally as a marginal phenomenon, which will not become a true cultural lineage, yet without much success, only with Boccaccio.

D. J. Nodes (Waco), Voice of the Muse, Word of the Church. The Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus in Late Medieval Latin Poetry

Four verse treatments of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus from the Gospel of Luke (Lk 16.19 – 31) offer case studies of the interaction between poetry and theology, overt commentary and allusion, doctrinal fidelity and literary innovation in Christian biblical poetry.Peter Riga (1140 – 1209) wrote a verse commentary in the manner of scholastic exegesis. Giles of Paris (1162 – 1224) supplemented Peter's work through a verse homily or, better, a verse collation. An anonymous poet whose work is included in a thirteenth-century anthology from York Cathedral composed allusive couplets on the theme of reversal. The anonymous poet of the Dyalogus de divite et Lazaro (fourteenth century) prepared dramatic encounter among the rich man, Lazarus, and Abraham in the form of a rhetorical exercise. The distinct and intentional variations of genre and diction in these four examples notwithstanding, all achieve a rich blend of overt commentary and oblique reference, elements offering the patient reader a dynamic interplay between tradition and innovation, theology and poetics. Medieval Latin poems devoted to the various gospel parables, of which these four are representative, constitute a group of texts containing much to be discovered.

I. Fabre (Montpellier), Post vestigia gregum . La poétique de l'image dans le commentaire Super Cantica Canticorum de Jean Gerson (1429)

The last and uncompleted work by Jean Gerson (1363 – 1429), the commentary on the Song of Songs stands as a treatise on God's love that allows for a twofold reading, both theological and poetical. Gerson lays it out in fifty «considerations» or « proprieties» accounting for the sp onsa 's «fruitul love», which goes into ten sympsalma ta or musical sections of sorts, each coming along with a elegiac distic suming up its content and mood. Such a specific layout paves the way for a speculative reading enhancing the poem's anagogical interpretation. It also stems from a so-called «scholastic» stance which deliberately turns its back on common «rhetorical» style and its systematic probing into every single metaphor to aim at a deeper and more synthetic view on the Song of Songs' imagery.To what extent can Gerson's opus ultimum afford for a literary writing avoiding the ornatio' s flourishes while unfolding a rich poetry of its own ? This paper will address this question based on a stylistic analysis of a delineated section of sympsalma 2 commenting on Song 1, 6 – 10 and relying on Bonaventure's Itinerarium mentis in Deum.

I. Iribarren (Strasbourg), Bible, poésie etdoctrine dans la Josephina de Jean Gerson

Based on an analysis of certain passages of the Josephina , an epic poem composed by Jean Gerson at the council of Constance between 1414 and 1417, this article aims at examining three aspects of Gerson's conception of the relation between Bible, poetry and doctrinal development. The first one emerges from the formal structure of the poem, organized in twelve distinctiones as opposed to the classical cantos; the second aspect concerns the Aristotelian notion of aestimatio that governs the composition and serves as basis of Gerson's ars poetica ;finally,the third aspect focuses on the gersonian conception of sensus litteralis in biblical exegesis within the context of the controversytriggered by JeanPetit's justification of tyrannicide. <>

NONNUS OF PANOPOLIS IN CONTEXT: POETRY AND CULTURAL MILIEU IN LATE ANTIQUITY WITH A SECTION ON NONNUS AND THE MODERN WORLD edited by Konstantinos Spanoudakis [Trends in Classics - Supplementary Volumes, De Gruyter, 9783110339376]

Nonnus of Panopolis (fifth century CE) composed two poems once thought to be incompatible: the *Dionysiaca*, a mythological long epic with a marked interest in astrology, the occult, the paradox and not least the beauty of the female body, and a pious and sublime *Paraphrase of the Gospel of St John.* Little is known about the man, to whom sundry identities have been attached. The longer work has been misrepresented as a degenerate poem or as a mythological handbook. The Christian poem has been neglected or undervalued. Yet, Nonnus accomplished an ambitious plan, in two parts, aiming at representing world-history. This volume consists mainly of the Proceedings of the First International Conference on Nonnus held in Rethymno, Crete in May 2011. With twenty-four essays, an international team of specialists place Nonnus firmly in his time's context. After an authoritative Introduction by Pierre Chuvin, chapters on Nonnus and the literary past, the visual arts, Late Antique *paideia*, Christianity and his immediate and long-range afterlife (to modern times) offer a wide-ranging and innovative insight into the man and his world. The volume moves on beyond stereotypes to inaugurate a new era of research for Nonnus and Late Antique poetics on the whole.

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BRILL'S COMPANION TO NONNUS OF PANOPOLIS edited by Domenico Accorinti [Series: Brill's Companions to Classical Studies, Brill, 9789004310117]

The Egyptian Nonnus of Panopolis (5th century AD), author of both the 'pagan' Dionysiaca, the longest known poem from Antiquity (21,286 lines in 48 books, the same number of books as the Iliad and Odyssey combined), and a 'Christian' hexameter Paraphrase of St John's Gospel (3,660 lines in 21 books), is no doubt the most representative poet of Greek Late Antiquity. Brill's Companion to Nonnus of Panopolis provides a collection of 32 essays by a large international group of scholars, experts in the field of archaic, Hellenistic, Imperial, and Christian poetry, as well as scholars of late antique Egypt, Greek mythology and religion, who explore the various aspects of Nonnus' baroque poetry and its historical, religious and cultural background.

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Becoming a Classic by Domenico Accorinti

> I read yesterday in Mr. Joseph Clarke's Sacred Literature, that Nonnus is an author whom few can read, & fewer admire. So that my opinion is nothing outrageous. ^ do not feel well; & look like a ghost. Mrs. Martin called, & thought so too! —ELIZABETH BERRIDGE (ed.), The Barretts at Hope and The Early Diary of Elizabeth Barrett Browning

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In 2002, when the publisher Mondadori undertook to bring out the complete works of Andrea Camilleri in the prestigious series Meridiani (Italian counterpart to the French Ple^^de library),I some critics had strong reservations. How is it—they wondered—that the inventor of the Inspector Montalbano mysteries, who let his character speak the dialect of Vigata (a fictional town near Porto Empedocle,

Camilleri's birthplace), finds a place in a series devoted to classic authors such as Petrarch, Manzoni, Proust, Thomas Mann, Calvino and so on? The coryphaeus of these literary critics was Roberto Cotroneo, for whom labelling Camilleri as a `classic writer' was a rash choice, if not an outrage. But Mondadori choice to give a popular author classic dignity was defended against its critics by, among others, Diego Gabutti: even Goldoni and Shakespeare—he rightly observed—were reputed in their times to be representatives of low culture. And ten years later, after the first of two Meridiani editions of Camilleñ's complete works was published, the Sicilian author has been given the honour of seeing a Companion for his Montalbano novels, edited by Lucia Rinaldi, Teaching Fellow at the Department of Italian at University College London: Andrea Camilleri: A Companion to the Mystery Fiction.

Evoking Camilleri's case, therefore, it is very appropriate to present Grill's Companion to Nonnus of Panopolis, since someone might turn up his nose at the inclusion of a late Greek poet in the series Brill's Companions in Classical Studies, in the illustrious company of Ovid, Herodotus, Cicero, Propertius, Thucydides, Apollonius Rhodius, Hesiod, Silius Italicus, Callimachus, Lucan, Sophocles, Horace, Seneca, Valerius Flaccus, Statius, and Euripides (forthcoming).

Long gone, however, are the days when the Comte de Marcellus, editor and inspired translator both of the Dionysiaca (1856) and the Paraphrase (1861), spoke of Nonnus as `le mieux enfoui des poetes grecs' and relegated his epic poem to the ancillary role of `grand magasin mythologique':

> It is doubtless a strange enterprise to unearth, in the middle of the nineteenth century, the best buried of Greek poets. To try to interest a French public in an outmoded mythology or in the verses of an Egyptian from the Lower Empire, isn't that madness? It is at least moving away resolutely from the subjects that Ares alone are used to touching us; it is in a way, I agree, going back to the century at the height of its current. I don't take a love of rhyming for genius; and it is not my inclination that I manifest here, it is my choice that I justify. As for me, I do not reread the expeditions of Bacchus in such a way as to thin under my studious fingers the margins of their rare editions, very little portable for the rest. I leave them, on the contrary, very often for Pindar, Thecritus, especially Homer, whom they have so much sought to imitate. But I am convinced that the knowledge of this poem (and all those who have read it, since its rebirth, have declared it as I do) can throw real light on certain still obscure points of antiquity. The Dionysiacs should be c^nsidered as a mythological department store.

Many years later, and in a similar disdainful tone, Herbert Jennings Rose, in his `Mythological Introduction' to the Loeb edition of the Dionysiaca (1940), belittled Nonnus' poem as witness to `Greek myths in their final stage of degeneracy, a happy hunting ground for lovers of scholarly mythology:

> The mythology of the Dionysiaca is interesting as being the longest and most elaborate example we have of Greek myths in their final stage of degeneracy.... To the student of religion or mythology, as opposed to the degeneescence of literature, Nonnos has here nothing to offer except the telling after his fashion of a few stories not to be found elsewhere, as the fight between Dionysos and Perseus (bk. xlvii. 475 ff.), of which traces can be seen in earlier art but not many in literature.... While therefore anyone who uses Nonnos as a handbook to any sort of normal and genuinely classical mythology will be grievously misled, the searcher into sundry odd corners will be rewarded for his pains, and even those who are studying the subject more generally cannot afford to neglect this belated product of the learned fancy of Hellenized Egypt.'

Recently, too, Jasper Griffin, in his essay `Greek epic' written for The Cambridge Companion to the Epic (2010), has candidly confessed to not being an admirer of Nonnus:

Florid and repetitive, it [Dionysiaca] has a certain verve and energy, but there are many lost works of Greek literature for which we should be very happy to exchange it. Nonnus also versified, in much the same manner, the Gospel according to St John: that, too, is extant. The juxtaposition of two works, from the same pen and in much the same style, one so pagan, and the other so Christian, has set scholars an essentially insoluble puzzles.

And yet today Nonnus and his shape-shifter Dionysus continue to inspire secets. It is sufficient to mention here Robin Robertson's Hill of Doors (2013), from which I quote in full 'The God Who Disappears, where the Scottish poet

Bs his inspiration in the Orphic myth of the dismemberment of Zagreus by Titans narrated in the Dionysiaca (6.169-205):

> Born to a life of dying, the boy-god's first death came
> when he could barely crawl, the budding horns just there,
> nudged among curls, as he played on the floor
> with his toys: a knuckle-bone, ball
> and spinning-top, golden apples, a tuft of wool, and
> on his other side, the thunderbolts of Zeus.
> They entered the throne-room's dark,
> their round faces smeared with chalk into pale moons,
> and they slid forward, drawing their hungry knives.
> He saw them in the mirror, looming behind him
> in a hundred reflections,
> and he watched his body swim through other shapes:
> a doubled-up ancient with a face of rain,
> a blank-eyed baby, downy youth. Then he saw the mane
> of a lion, jaws opening, the sinewed neck
> of a bridling horse, the darting tongue
> and poison fangs and coils stretching
> for the throat of one of the murderers, then
> twisting, to the leap of a tiger, the shouldering,
> heavy-horned bull, and then suddenly the great bull
> shuddered to a stop,
> and they started slicing him
> to piecemeal; so many blades
> he could see in the mirror,
> working on the bull-shaped Dionysus.
> He followed his image into the glass, and was soon
> split and scattered, divided up, diced
> into the universe.
> He spends his life dying. The god who comes,
> the god who disappears. Dismembered,
> he is resurrected. He is beside us; beside himself.
> Ghost of abandon, and abandoning,
> he shatters us to make us whole.

Thus, the publication of the Companion to Nonnus of Panopolis comes at the right moment. Nonnus of Panopolis (5th century), author of both the `pagan' Dionysiaca, the longest known poem from Antiquity (21,286 lines in 48 books, the same number of books as the Iliad and Odyssey combined), and a `Christian' hexameter Paraphrase of St. John's Gospel (3,660 lines in 21 books), is no doubt the most representative poet of Greek Late Antiquity. The fact that he composed two works which seem to clash with one another, an epic poem on Dionysus and a metrical rewriting of John's text, was in the past considered as a sign of the probable conversion of a pagan author. According to this view, Nonnus was thought to have written the Paraphrase after his conversion to Christianity.

But recent scholarship has discarded the conversion theory definitively—and at the same time the posteriority of the Paraphrase to the Dionysiaca—and generally acknowledges that Nonnus was a Christian. From this perspective a valuable approach to the poet from Panopolis should consist in a parallel reading of both his works as evidence of a complex dialogue between the classical and Christian tradition in Late Antiquity.

Thanks to (a) the admirable nineteen-volume Bude edition of the Dionysiaca under the aegis of the late Francis Vian (1976-2006), (b) the eight volumes so far published of the critical edition with commentary of individual books of the Paraphrase, which Enrico Livrea embarked on in 1989, (c) the four volume BUR Classici Greci e Lanni edition of the Dionysiaca (2003-2004), and (d) a large number of articles and monographs on Nonnus and his poetry that have appeared in the last thirty years, students and scholars can now rely on rich material. The entry 'Nonnos von Panopolis; which I wrote for the Recillexikon fur Antique and Christentum (2013), is an updated supplement to the still fundamental article published by Rudolf Keydell in Pauly's Realencyclopadie der classischen Altertumswissenschau (1936), and offers a critical and detailed survey of the Nonnosforschung. The recent 'Bulletin critique: La floraison des etudes nonniennes en Europe (1976-2014)' is also a welcome and useful addition to Nonnian studies. However, and this may be surprising, scholars of Late Antiquity have not yet at their disposal a wide-ranging work, a reference handbook that takes stock of the most recent scholarship on Nonnus, exploring the historical background in which both the Dionysiaca and the Paraphrase grew out of late antique Egypt, and providing a multi-faceted approach to the 'baroque' poetry of the singer of Dionysus and Christ.

Now the time is ripe for Brill's Companion to Nonnus of Panopolis, 'surely an indication of Nonnus' integration within the classical canon at last', as Calum Alasdair Maciver notes at the beginning of his chapter in this volume. In fact, the biennial International Conference 'Nonnus of Panopolis in Context', inaugurated in Rethymno in 20n by Konstantinos Spanoudakis to promote Nonnian studies, and followed by a second symposium in Vienna in 2013, and a third, recently held in Warsaw (17-19 September 2015), shows, together with the recent flourishing of doctoral dissertations on Nonnus, that there is an increasing interest in this towering, but perhaps still underestimated, poet of Late Antiquity.

In choosing the authors and co-authors of the thirty-two chapters collected here, my aim has been twofold: to line up scholars who have associated their names with Nonnian scholarship in the last fifty years and to involve young people who have recently obtained a Ph.D. or undertaken a research project on Nonnus. Among the former are Pierre Chuvin and Gennaro D'Ippolito. This is not to be wondered at, for Chuvin published the second volume of the Bude edition of the Dionysiaca in 1976, simultaneously with Vian's first volume, and ^ D'Ippolito, on the strength of his book Studi Nonniani: L'epillio nelle Dionisiache (1964), must certainly be considered the doyen of Nonnian studies. Among

the latter are Camille Geisz, Berenice Verhelst, and Fabian Sieber. In this case, too, their recruitment is more than justified. Both Geisz and Verhelst obtained a Ph.D. with a thesis on Nonnus, respectively Storytelling in Late Antique Epic: A Study of the Narrator in Nonnus of Panopolis' Dionysiaca (University of Oxford, 2013) and A Literary and Rhetorical Analysis of Direct Speech in Nonnus' Dionysiaca (University of Ghent, 2014). Sieber, for his part, under took the research project Das M213 der Schrift-Bibel-Paraphrasen and Nonnos Rezeption im Zeitalter der Reformation' at the Gotha Research Centre of the University of Erfurt (2013), and recently completed his Ph.D. with a thesis entitled Von Gott dichten—Nonnos von Panopolis, die Paraphrase des Johannes Evangeliums und die Gattung der Bibelepiqu (University of Leuven, 2015).

Therefore, as a bridge between the old and the new generation of Nonnian scholars, other leading figures, experts in the field of archaic, Hellenistic, Imperial, and Christian poetry, as well as scholars of late antique Egypt and Greek religion, have joined the Companion. Among the latter, I will mention the Dutch overseas papyrologists Jitse Dijkstra and Peter van Minnen, the Danish archaeologist Troels Myrup Kristensen, author of the recent and stimulating Maquing and Breaquing the Gods: Christian Responses to Pagan Sculpture Late Antiquity (2013), and the Spanish scholar Alberto Bernabe, the major authority in the field of Orphic religion.

Thus, this volume provides a collection of essays on Nonnus by a large international group of scholars from Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Cyprus, Denmark, England, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Goland, Spain, and the United States. Among my regrets—why should I not confess it?—is that Adrian Hollis, whom I had invited to write a chapter on N^nnus and Latin Poetry', died on February 5th 2013, probably depriving the Companion of one of its most important contributions.

Finally, here is Brill's Companion to Nonnus of Panopolis: thirty-two chapters (two of which were written by two authors) arranged in seven parts and devoted to various aspects of Nonnus' Dionysiaca (Dion.) and Paraphrase Par.). I have tried to model the individual essays on the interests of the different authors like a tailor who offers his customer a made-to-measure suit.

There is nothing left but to wait for their reception by the reader: habent sua fata libelli. <>

NONNUS OF PANOPOLIS IN CONTEXT II: POETRY, RELIGION, AND SOCIETY: PROCEEDINGS OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON NONNUS OF PANOPOLIS, 26TH – 29TH SEPTEMBER 2013, UNIVERSITY OF VIENNA, AUSTRIA edited by Herbert Bannert and Nicole Kröll [Series: Mnemosyne, Supplements, Late Antique Literature, Brill, 9789004341197]

Nonnus of Panopolis in Upper-Egypt is the author of the 48 books of the last large scale mythological epic in antiquity, the Dionysiaca. The same author also wrote an epic poem on the life and times of Jesus

Christ according to St John's Gospel. Nonnus has an outstanding position in ancient literature being at the same time a pagan and a Christian author, living in a time when Christianity was common in the Roman empire, while pagan culture and traditional world views were still maintained. The volume is designed to cover literary, cultural and religious aspects of Nonnus' poetry as well as to highlight the social and educational background of both the Dionysiaca and the Paraphrasis of the Gospel of St. John.

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Text not seen

NONNUS OF PANOPOLIS IN CONTEXT III: OLD QUESTIONS AND NEW PERSPECTIVES edited by Filip Doroszewski and Katarzyna Jażdżewska [Series: Mnemosyne, Supplements, Late Antique Literature, Brill, 9789004443235

Nonnus of Panopolis (5th c. AD), the most important Greek poet of Late Antiquity, is best known for his Dionysiaca, a grand epic that gathers together all myths associated with Dionysus, god of wine and mysteries. The poet also authored the Paraphrase of St. John's Gospel which renders the Fourth Gospel into sophisticated hexameter verse. This volume, edited by Filip Doroszewski and Katarzyna Jażdżewska, brings together twenty-six essays by eminent scholars that discuss Nonnus' cultural and literary background, the literary techniques and motifs used by the poet, as well as the composition of the Dionysiaca and the exegetical principles applied in the Paraphrase. As such, the book will significantly deepen our understanding of literary culture and religion in Late Antiquity.

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If at the beginning of the 2010s there was no doubt that Nonnian studies were gaining momentum, today we can safely say that, in the last decade, developments in the field have been simply epic. Like many great things in the history of civilization, the boom started in Crete, where the international congress "Nonnus of Panopolis in Context," the first conference devoted solely to the poet and his world, was held in Rethymno in May 2011. After that, events moved swiftly: the subsequent conferences in this series took place in Vienna (2013), Warsaw (2015), and Ghent (2018). Nonnus-related topics were springing up like mushrooms at other conferences on Late Antiquity and Byzantine times—the two periods that claim rights to the poet's legacy. Finally, many books and innumerable papers on Nonnus' works have seen the light of publication, to mention only the proceedings of the two first conferences (*Nonnus of Panopolis in Context: Poetry and Cultural Milieu in Late Antiquity*, edited by Konstantinos Spanoudakis and *Nonnus of Panopolis in Context ii: Poetry, Religion, and Society*, edited by Herbert Bannert and Nicole Kröll) and the bulky *Brill's Companion to Nonnus of Panopolis*, edited by Domenico Accorinti, which secured the Panopolitan a prominent place (if anyone still doubted it) in the pantheon of Late Antique authors. To put it briefly, from an obscure curiosity Nonnus' poetry has grown into a major topic of classical scholarship.

However popular it is now, the Panopolitan's oeuvre has by no means become *terra cognita*. Quite the reverse: without much exaggeration we may say that despite the scholarly work that has been done so far, Nonnus' poetry still poses a major challenge to researchers. On the one hand, the old questions about the poet's identity, the dating of his works, or his attitude toward the Latin tradition remain valid. On the other, once the classicizing prejudice that led scholars to think of the baroque style of the *Dionysiaca* and the *Paraphrasis* as decadent and boring had been abandoned, the poems' originality and depth were acknowledged and provoked fascinating novel questions informed by development of new theoretical approaches. Like every great author, Nonnus offers the reader a universe unto itself—an internally coherent world that can be explored at different levels and from different perspectives. In this world, the classical and Christian traditions form a harmonious and meaningful whole: they legitimize each other as Jesus makes come true what had vaguely been expected of Dionysus. Nonnus' poetry perfectly exemplifies the intricacies and ingenuity of Late Antiquity and provides an invaluable key to understanding a period that had long been forgotten and misunderstood.

With the present volume, Nonnian scholarship takes an important step toward making both Nonnus' legacy and his times more accessible to the modern mind. It brings together twenty-six contributions written by both established authorities and younger scholars engaged in pioneering research. Most of the chapters stem from papers given at the "Nonnus of Panopolis in Context iii: Old Questions and New Perspectives" conference that was held at Cardinal Stefan Wyszynski University in Warsaw, September 17–19, 2015. Most sadly, the great absentee is Pierre Chuvin, whose illness and subsequent death prevented him from contributing to this volume.

The volume opens with an introductory chapter by the doyen of Nonnian studies, Gennaro D'Ippolito. This contribution, which will certainly become a reference for future scholars working on the poet, offers a comprehensive and up-to-date treatment of scholarly discussions concerning the Panopolitan and his works: the authorship of both the *Dionysiaca* and the *Paraphrasis*, the poet's chronology and identity, as well as his sources. The highlight of the chapter is, no doubt, the section addressing the much-debated question of Nonnus' knowledge of Latin poetry. An extensive examination of the topic leads D'Ippolito to conclude that the poet must have known the works of Virgil and Ovid.

The twenty-five chapters that follow have been divided into six thematic sections. Part 1, "Nonnus and the Literary Tradition," consists of six contributions. It opens with a chapter by Berenice Verhelst, who discusses metaleptic passages in the *Dionysiaca*; that is, the passages in which the narrative boundaries are transgressed, either by the narrator or by fictional characters. As the author demonstrates, the effect of Nonnus' metalepsis is frequently humoristic and/or draws the reader's attention to the fictionality of the narrated world. The chapter by Laura Miguélez-Cavero examines Nonnus' use of encomiastic speech in the *Dionysiaca*, in particular in the episode of Staphylus in books 18 and 19. In her contribution, Anna Lefteratou takes up the transformation of Aura in book 48 of the *Dionysiaca* to show Nonnus' creative use of the metamorphosis literature that results in an ingenious variation on the theme—classicizing and rich in Christian allusions at the same time. The relationships Dionysus has with young men (especially Ampelus) in books 10 and 11 of the *Dionysiaca* provide the subject for the chapter by Benjamin Acosta-Hughes, who demonstrates how Nonnus' verse is linked to Hellenistic models. The Ampelus episode is also the focus of Katerina Carvounis and Sophia Papaioannou, who trace in it the possible influences from the Latin tradition, and especially Virgil and Ovid. Finally, Gianfranco Agosti

makes a strong argument for the importance of acknowledging the Coptic cultural background, so far mostly ignored, for a better understanding of the poetry of Nonnus.

Part 2, "Literary Structure and Motifs in the *Dionysiaca*," contains seven chapters. A. Sophie Schoess explores the concept of looking and being looked at in the episode of Actaeon who, after having seen the bathing Artemis, is changed into a stag and dies torn to pieces—but his true identity is somehow preserved in a tombstone monument visualizing the hero as an animal with a human face. Camille Geisz focuses on some aspects of narrative structure of the *Dionysiaca* as she analyzes its eight bathing scenes using the concept of "spatial form." Nestan Egetashvili's contribution exemplifies the poet's penchant for playing with opposites by illustrating how he juxtaposes things and events in order to emphasize their differences and similarities. Marta Otlewska-Jung examines the notion of harmony in the epic and comes up with a conclusion that to Nonnus the harmony is not only the force that maintains the cosmic order but also the structural principle of his poetry. Awakenings (especially that of Ariadne) come under close scrutiny in the chapter by David Hernández de la Fuente, who leaves the reader in no doubt that they serve Nonnus to metaphorically mark the transition from the old to the new life. By comparing Nonnus' Aura and Colluthus' Aphrodite, Cosetta Cadau points to different models of femininity that existed within Late Antique society: that of a sworn virgin on the one hand, and that of a dedicated wife on the other. The last chapter of Part 2, authored by Fotini Hadjittofi, investigates the shift in gender roles alluded to in the episodes of Europa and Cadmus: while the abducted Europa in fact dominates over her male abductor, Cadmus is both effeminate and powerful at the same time.

The exegesis of the fourth Gospel in Nonnus' *Paraphrasis* is the main subject of the five chapters making up Part 3 ("Exegesis through Paraphrase"). Roberta Franchi looks closely at the poet's pneumatology as she examines the symbols and metaphors, usually of philosophical origin, he uses in reference to the Holy Spirit. The contribution by Jane Lightfoot clearly shows that in both Nonnus' poems books and writings are always presented as endowed with voice: they speak aloud the words of their authors. Margherita Maria Di Nino and Maria Ypsilanti explore the way in which Nonnus renders the Johannine parable of the Good Shepherd and describe a variety of paraphrastic techniques put to work by the poet. The application of one of these techniques, amplification, by two biblical poets, Nonnus and Juvencus, is dealt with in the chapter by Michael Paschalis who demonstrates that the latter, unlike Nonnus, makes almost no use of it. In the closing chapter, Laura Franco and Maria Ypsilanti analyze Nonnus' depiction of John the Baptist and Pontius Pilate and provide a detailed overview of classical, biblical, and patristic sources employed by the poet to expand the text of John.

Part 4, "Nonnus and Late Antique Culture," consists of three chapters. In the first, Ewa Osek compares the killing of the Dircean dragon by Cadmus in the *Dionysiaca* with the sacrificing of a snake by Helenus in the Orphic *Lithica* and suggests that both descriptions were influenced by the same esoteric author. Konstantinos Spanoudakis speaks of a great popularity that Theocritus and his poetry enjoyed in Late Antiquity, and discusses spiritual and mystical interpretations of *Idylls* 1 and 7; his study provides a valuable context for Nonnus' allusions to the bucolic poet. In her contribution, Nicole Kröll investigates representation of Athens and Berytus (hailed by the poet as the New Athens) in the *Dionysiaca* and their cultural significance as marks of Greek identity.

Finally, four chapters gathered in Part 5 discuss reception of Nonnus. This section opens with a contribution by Enrico Magnelli who focuses on a short hexametric poem by a certain John of Memphis and offers a new critical edition along with an English translation and a commentary. Mary Whitby

discusses the epigrammatic poetry of George of Pisidia and demonstrates that aesthetically and intellectually it belongs to the world of Nonnus and his followers. Domenico Accorinti re-examines the scanty evidence for the reception of Nonnus' works in the Byzantine times and formulates some speculative hypotheses about why the literature of the period mostly passes over the poet's oeuvre in silence. Fabian Sieber surveys the studies done on the poet in Germany from 1900 to 1976 pointing to the fact that Nonnus' works attracted the most attention from German scholars during the inter- and post-war periods.

A STUDY OF THE NARRATOR IN NONNUS OF PANOPOLIS' DIONYSIACA: STORYTELLING IN LATE ANTIQUE EPIC by Camille Geisz [Series: Amsterdam Studies in Classical Philology, Brill, 978-90-04-35533-0

This Study of the Narrator in Nonnus of Panopolis' Dionysiaca by Camille Geisz investigates manifestations of the narratorial voice in Nonnus' account of the life and deeds of Dionysus (4th/5th century C.E.). Through a variety of interventions in his own voice, the narrator reveals much about his relationship to his predecessors, his own conception of story-telling, and highlights his mindfulness of the presence of his narratee.

Narratorial devices in the Dionysiaca are opportunities for displays of ingeniousness, discussions of sources, and a reflection on the role of the poet. They highlight the innovative style of Nonnus' epic, written as a compendium of influences, genres, and myths, and encompassing the influence of a thousand years of Greek literature.

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The figure of Nonnus of Panopolis as we know it is one of contrasts, mainly on account of the variety of the subject matter of his works and of the wide range of reactions accompanying their reception. Although he left us two long poems devoid of significant lacunae, the Dionysiaca being to date the longest extant Greek epic, almost nothing is known about his life, beyond that he was born in Panopolis in Egypt in the fifth century CE., and wrote the Dionysiaca in Alexandria. The very nature of the works he left us poses another problem, that of his religious beliefs: the Dionysiaca is based on Classical mythology while his Paraphrase of St John's Gospel stems from a Christian background. Critics have long tried to establish whether he was a pagan or a Christian, but recent scholarship acknowledges the impossibility of deciding one way or another, given the existence of both religious milieux in Alexandria in his time, and the presence of Christian elements in the Dionysiaca as well as pagan ones in the Paraphrase.

The reception of the Dionysiaca is another source of contrasts; it has varied greatly through time.3 In Late Antiquity, this epic met with a favorable reception and the Nonnian style, itself greatly influenced by Homeric verse, became a model for subsequent writers. Robert Shorrock mentions, among others, Colluthus and Musaeus, authors of epyllia, and writes that it was a 'tradition in earlier criticism to talk about a 'school' of Nonnus'. He goes on to list evidence of Nonnus' popularity up to the nineteenth century. However, the exuberance and the apparently loose structure of the Dionysiaca caused a wave of contempt among modern critics. John B. Hainsworth notes that 'survival is not a sure guide to quality. The loss of ... Nonnus' Dionysiaca would be no great cause for lamentation' and that Nonnus' 'lush verbiage would turn all but the strongest stomach'. Herbert Rose, in his 'Mythological introduction' to the Loeb edition of the Dionysiaca, presents the potential reader with a very disheartening account of what awaits him, lamenting that Nonnus had not proved 'a more consistent thinker and more of a poet'. Yet in the last few decades, interest in literature from the late antique period has been rekindled, and Nonnus is now receiving his share of it. When I began this project in 2009, it was with the aim of examining the Dionysiaca within the corpus of ancient epic poems and investigating what the narratorial characteristics of Nonnus' work could reveal about the evolution of the narrator's voice within the epic genre through the centuries.

When one considers the length of the Dionysiaca and the complexity of its narrative, one wonders at Nonnus' intended audience. Neil Hopkinson underlines the variety of genres and styles in Imperial Greek verse but adds that 'not enough evidence exists for us to be able to discern trends or developments in Imperial poetry, or to know about the nature and demands of the reading public and private patrons.' Yet from the Dionysiaca it is possible to infer some information about the late antique reader, or at least about the reader Nonnus had in mind when he wrote his epic. The abundance of mythological parallels, most of them in very short allusions, points to a reader well versed in the myths of the classical age and their characters. The number of intertextual connections to Homeric, classical,

and Hellenistic literature is meant for a scholarly reader familiar with more than a thousand years of literature.

Panopolis, together with Heliopolis, Gaza, and other intellectual centres, contained a flourishing group of pagans. (...) It is this small number of intellectuals in Panopolis, Alexandria, and elsewhere, who must have been the intended audience for the Dionysiaca.

As for the contents of the poem, Dionysiac themes were en vogue from the second century a.d., as is attested by the existence of numerous poems on Dionysus now lost, and by evidence of the practice of Dionysiac cults. The impressive literary knowledge revealed by the intertextual allusions indicates that Nonnus must have had access to texts in Alexandria or elsewhere and that literary production was flourishing. The question of whether Nonnus knew Latin and could have had access to Latin texts remains in suspense— some passages of the Dionysiaca could be interpreted as allusions to Ovid's Metamorphoses, although scholars now tend to think that this is improbable, and to explain similarities by positing common Hellenistic sources. Robert Shorrock writes:

> Although it seems unlikely that Nonnus and the majority of his early readers had any real familiarity with Latin texts, Catullus 64 and Ovid should not be dismissed: whether or not one tries to argue that the Latin accounts are related to Nonnus' narrative via a lost Hellenistic model, a knowledge of these surviving Latin texts may help to cast fresh light on Nonnus' version both through similarities and differences.

The existence of Latin sources relating stories which can also be found in the Dionysiaca is of value for a narratological analysis insofar as they provide us with alternative versions of a story, as well as alternative narratological settings by other narrators. These versions may throw into relief the specificity of the Nonnian version, even though, in the absence of definite evidence regarding Nonnus' knowledge of the Latin sources, it is not possible to determine whether the Nonnian characteristics are the result of a conscious choice made by the narrator.

Indeed a striking characteristic of the Dionysiaca is its wealth of secondary stories and mythological allusions, which poses the question of how they are inserted in the main narrative. One of the ways to approach this question is to turn to narratology in order to examine how the links between the mythological parallels and the main narrative are created by the narrator. From a broader view, the voice of the narrator is one of the structuring elements in a narrative. Thus the purpose of this study is to explore the storytelling techniques employed in the Dionysiaca, in order to highlight the role of the narrator in establishing a narratorial setting which guides the narratee through the reception of the narrative, and to examine how this narratorial voice contributes to, or draws upon, the aesthetics of the late antique period.

Narratology was first applied to Greek literature by Irene de Jong with her narratological study of the Iliad. Her recent volumes span Greek epic poetry from Homer to Hellenistic times but do not yet investigate Late Antiquity. One of De Jong's aims in her study of the Iliad was to shed new light on the Homeric narrative style, commonly described as objective and impersonal, by showing that it was in fact informed by narratorial interventions, often imperceptible to a receiver analysing the text without using narratological tools. The narrator of the Dionysiaca also manifests himself in the course of his narrative, and his interventions underline certain characteristics of his style.

Narratological concepts provide tools for analysing texts according to the prominence of a narrative voice or narrator, and to the role of this narrator in the presentation of the story, and organization of time, rhythm, and space. This study focuses on the narrator of the Dionysiaca and his interaction with his narratee. Although narrator and narratee are literary abstract concepts, and as such have, strictly speaking, no gender, the Nonnian narrator refers to himself in the masculine and possesses a distinctive persona, which makes itself conspicuous in a number of overt interventions in the course of the narrative. Close examination of this Nonnian persona yields significant results regarding the Nonnian narrator's own conception of storytelling and presentation of his own story, as well as revealing how certain types of narratorial interventions have, by the 4th century a.d., become inherent to the epic genre, whether the narrator chooses to reuse them in their—by then—accepted form, or to renew them to conform to his own choices as a storyteller.

Part 1 of this study analyses how the Nonnian narrator appropriates the conventions and expected features of epic storytelling. In the Dionysiaca's two proems, the narrator deals with the issues of inspiration and choice. He explains his choice of Dionysus as the main character of his poem. He also initiates his own views on the question of inspiration, when he transforms the Muses into Bacchic revellers: to him the contents of the poem are paramount, and the Muses are an outdated epic conceit; he does not want to reject them altogether, so he adapts them to his own narrative instead. He also proposes an unusual variety of Muses in the narrative itself, each time adapted to the particular scene in which they occur.

Part 2 turns to narratorial interventions which are present in the Dionysiaca, but more rarely found in other epic poems. Through verbs in the first person, the narrator comments on his own narrative to explain the accuracy of his sources, or to challenge versions of myths that do not seem plausible to him. He seeks to be truthful and exhaustive. In the syncrisis embedded in the second proem, he defends the superiority of Dionysus over other mythological characters, drawing comparisons with Homeric and Pindaric precedents.

Part 3 investigates the literary relationship between the narrator and the audience. The complexity of the narratorial interventions studied in preceding parts suggests that the Nonnian narrator is very aware of his audience, and willing to engage in a dialogue with them. He addresses them directly in the second person to draw their attention to a particular scene or aspect of the story; in a more covert way, his indirect addresses can be used to highlight the role of Dionysus, or to suggest connections between different myths. In his gnomic sentences, he proposes reflections on aspects of life such as fate and love, and creates suspense and pathos, to keep up his audience's interest in the story. Finally the Nonnian narrator's search for sophistication is visible in the way he renews some Homeric similes, which engages his best-read audience in intertextual play. He adds his personal touch again by choosing to include many similes based on mythological characters, proposing as an alternative world not the mundane, everyday world of the reader, but the world of Homeric and other mythological heroes.

Part 4 shows how the Nonnian narrator not only breaks the fourth wall between his characters and his audience; he even turns himself into a character, in two ways. First, he addresses his characters through apostrophes. This device, present in Homer, is renewed by the Nonnian narrator and reveals an ambiguous stance regarding his main character, Dionysus, between admiration, disappointment, and mockery. A significant innovation consists in the narrator presenting himself as a Dionysiac reveller, dancing with the Bacchants to honor his god. In this respect, the Nonnian narrator achieves the

complete transgression of all narratorial levels: the story is not told by a narrator acting as intermediary between the audience and the world of the story, but by one of the characters himself. The narrator thus justifies his rejection of the Muses: he does not need their support to tell about a world to which he belongs himself. Finally, his choice of Proteus as an alter ego reflects his search for innovation and variety.

This study proceeds largely from a diachronic approach, looking at earlier epic poems alongside the Dionysiaca, with the goal of pinpointing specific traits of Nonnian storytelling in comparison to the narratological settings of other works, as well as highlighting aspects of the evolution of the narratorial presence within the epic genre. This study draws comparisons between the Dionysiaca and Homer's poems, as well as the later works of Apollonius and Quintus, the two other main landmarks in the evolution of epic. Other influences are also at work in Nonnus' poem, and parallels with Pindar and Callimachus will be underlined as well. This study also takes into account the epyllia of Moschus, Triphiodorus, Colluthus, and Musaeus; if they are not comparable to the Dionysiaca in length, they are in terms of narrative strategies. Finally I have also explored didactic epic for narratorial parallels, including the works of Hesiod, Aratus, Dionysius Periegetes, Nicander, and both Oppians, and occasionally drawn on other genres such as lyric poetry and historiography. From this wide body of evidence emerge elements of the evolution of storytelling techniques since Homer, with Nonnus bringing up the rear and subsuming all these influences in his long poem. <>

DIRECT SPEECH IN NONNUS' DIONYSIACA: NARRATIVE AND RHETORICAL FUNCTIONS OF THE CHARACTERS' "VARIED" AND "MANY-FACETED" WORDS by Berenice Verhelst [Series: Mnemosyne, Supplements, Late Antique Literature, Brill, 9789004325890]

DIRECT SPEECH IN NONNUS' DIONYSIACA is the first more extensive study of the use and functions of direct speech in Nonnus' Dionysiaca (5th century AD). Its long soliloquies and scarcity of dialogues have often been pointed out as striking characteristics of Nonnus' epic style, but nonetheless this fascinating subject received relatively little attention.

Berenice Verhelst aims to reveal the poem's constant interplay between the epic tradition and the late antique literary context with its clear rhetorical stamp. She focusses on the changed functions of direct speech and their implications for the presentation of the mythological story. Organized around six case studies, this book presents an in-depth analysis of a representative part of the vast corpus of the Dionysiaca's 305 speeches.

The digital appendix to this book (Database of Direct Speech in Greek Epic Poetry) can be consulted online at www.dsgep.ugent.be .

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> 'And what is the use of a book,' thought Alice, 'without pictures or conversations?' LEWIS CARROLL, Alice in Wonderland

Whether or not we should agree with young Alice Liddell's judgement that literature is only worth reading if it is illustrated or contains dialogue, the words spoken by characters—like those of Alice—are often those best remembered and most quoted. This book presents a study of direct speech in the Dionysiaca, the magnum opus of the Greek epic poet Nonnus of Panopolis. With its 48 books (more than 21,000 lines), Nonnus' Dionysiaca is the longest surviving ancient Greek poem. Written in the mid-5th century Ad it can be seen as the last bastion of the Greek mythological epic tradition.

The story of the poem's modern reception reads as a paradox. It was long criticized for its lack of originality as the Dionysiaca is notorious for its many passages in imitation of a wide range of authors of the Greek literary tradition. But simultaneously, also its un-traditional style and un-classical lack of structural unity were the subject of much criticism. The exponential growth of Nonnus studies in recent decades has now caused a reappraisal of his poetry in scholarly circles, but how to understand the interaction between the classical and un-classical aspects (whether regarded as innovative or characteristically late antique) of his poetry remains an important question. I hope to shed new light on this discussion by focussing on one of the aspects in which this interaction is most prominent: the varied and many-faceted "speeches" by the characters of the Dionysiaca.

A first time reader of Nonnus familiar with Homer will be surprised by the long monologues of his characters and the almost total lack of dialogue in the poem. In no other Greek epic poem do so many different characters raise their voices. A respectable number of them seem to be introduced with the sole purpose of pronouncing a soliloquy, before disappearing again. With his 35.6% speech ratio, Nonnus, at first sight, is closer to the famous Homeric balance of speech and narrator text (Iliad 45%, Odyssey 67.7%) than his other Greek epic predecessors Apollonius of Rhodes (29.4%) and Quintus of Smyrna (23.6%). This relatively high percentage, however, is the result of the great length of Nonnus' fewer, but more rhetorically elaborated passages of direct speech. The prevalence in the Dionysiaca of monologues over dialogues seems to characterize it as an epic in which the action is not so much driven forward by the conversations between the characters, but rather delayed each time the narrator allows a character to speak his/her mind.

Defined by Martin String (1966, 6) as "einer der auffälligsten Unterschiede dieses Werkes von der früheren, ja von aller anderen griechischen Epik", the use of direct speech in the Dionysiaca is a subject of particular interest. As was long ago noticed by Albert Wifstrand (1933, 141–154), the stylistic properties of Nonnus' character text stand out against the narrator text: in Nonnus, direct speech characteristically consists of short, asyndetically connected sentences, series of apostrophes and

emotional exclamations and is wrought with rhetorical figures hunting for effect, such as sharp antitheses, eye-catching anaphors and clever word play. And yet this fascinating subject has received relatively little scholarly attention.

This book consists of two parts, preceded by a general introduction. Its structure reflects the double focus of my research. On the one hand, I have tried to lay bare the constant interplay in the Dionysiaca between the epic tradition and the late antique literary context with its clear rhetorical stamp. This I primarily do in part one, by comparing and contrasting Nonnus' use of direct speech to that of his epic predecessors. Parallels in rhetorical theory and practice are used in this part to put these differences into context and individual speeches are analysed according to rhetorical models in order to reveal the structure of the argumentation. On the other hand, the clear quantitative differences in the use of direct speech between Nonnus and his epic predecessors also raise questions concerning the functions of speech in the narrative structure of Nonnus' epic poetry. In part two of this book, the central focus lies on the implications of these differences for the presentation of the story and how it was perceived by Nonnus' contemporary audience.

Because of the vast proportions of the subject (there are 305 instances of direct speech in the Dionysiaca, all together 7,573 lines), I have chosen to work with case studies, which allowed me to pick a representative number of examples, and—according to the subject of the chapter in which they are used as an example—to approach them each time from a different angle.

When quoting from the Dionysiaca, I use the Greek text of the Budé edition (Vian et al. 1976–2006) but the English translation is taken from W.H.D. Rouse (1940, Loeb edition). Rouse's translation is adapted to the Budé edition whenever a different textual variant or a different interpretation of the Greek text causes an actual difference in meaning between the two editions. A summary of the Dionysiaca is also added in the appendix.

A Rhetorical Model of Analysis

Rhetorical education is undoubtedly an important part of the shared cultural background of Nonnus and his contemporaries, among whom we have to count both the ^^^^ with whom he entered into poetical competition and the audience he wanted to please and impress.

In her article "Poetry and rhetoric", Ruth Webb (1997) convincingly shows the close interaction between rhetorical education and poetical production from the Hellenistic period onwards, of which the development of the genre of the fable is a striking example: it originated in prose (Aesopus) and was used for rhetorical practice as part of the progymnasmata, but in the first centuries a. d. was turned into a poetic genre by Phaedrus (Latin) and Babrius (Greek). Webb concludes (1997, 347):

The skills developed by exercises such as the Progymnasmata, often illustrated by examples drawn from poetry, could be applied by poets and orators alike, but the rhetorical bias of the school exercises may eventually have affected their employment in poetry.

In antiquity, Homer was commonly regarded as the father of rhetoric. Quintilian explicitly refers to him as its source and prime example (Inst. 10.1.46). Menander Rhetor, in his treatise on the different types (^^^^) of epideictic speeches, regularly refers to the speeches in Homer as forerunners of a specific type, as is, for example the case for the farewell speech cf. Men. Rhet. 430.12–30, esp. 13). Apollonius'Argonautica, on the other hand, could be regarded as the first example of the influence of rhetorical training on the genre of epic poetry. As demonstrated by Volonaki (2013), Jason's heroism lies more in his tact and communication skills, which demonstrate a clear knowledge of rhetorical effect, than in (martial) "heroic" deeds.

Likewise, the exceptional length of Nonnus' speeches as well as the increased use of rhetorical means of persuasion in these speeches (as will be demonstrated) seem to find their logical explanation in the profound rhetorical influence on the poetic production of Late Antiquity (see especially Miguélez Cavero 2008, 191–370). My rhetorical analysis of the speeches of the Dionysiaca is primarily informed by ancient rhetorical theory and modern interpretations of this theory (like the informative book on ekphrasis by Ruth Webb (2009)). With regard to ancient theorists, I frequently consulted the progymnasmata handbooks by Theon, (Ps-)Hermogenes, Aphthonius and Nicolaus, the rhetorical treatises by Menander Rhetor and the Institutio Oratoria by Quintilian (especially Inst. 5.10 on argumentation).

On the Structure of This Book
In the Dionysiaca a total of 305 speeches are rendered in direct speech, embedded speeches not included, comprising together 7,573 of the 21,286 lines of this vast epic poem. Because of the proportions of the subject, a thorough analysis of every instance of direct speech in the Dionysiaca would have been both an immense task for me to fulfil, and would most probably have resulted in a quite tedious piece of scholarship for the reader of this book. As a solution, I have chosen to work with case studies, picking a representative number of speeches, and—according to the topic of the chapter in which they are used as an example—approaching the speeches each time from a different angle.

I singled out six topics as particularly interesting for further analysis. The six largely independent, but certainly complementary, essays that are the result of this approach follow in chapters 1 to 6. As mentioned above, part one (chapters 1 to 3) has a more pronounced comparative focus. In these chapters, I intend to show Nonnus both as a fervent imitator of his epic models and as an innovative poet, whose transformation of his epic sources has resulted in a very different kind of epic poetry. Part two (chapters 4 to 6) has a more pronounced narratological focus and pays more attention to the influence of contemporary rhetoric. In this section, one of the most frequently asked questions is "what effect does speech 'x' have for the presentation of the story and to what end is it inserted?"

Overview of Chapters 1–6
Chapter 1. Imitation and Transformation: From Troy to India and from Medea to Morrheus
In this chapter Nonnus' (re)writing process is revealed through a comparison with his models. The episode (d. 31–35 ~Il. 14–15 and Argon. 3) is selected as a case study for its strong imitative engagement with both Homer and Apollonius (and perhaps also Quintus). Not only do the Nonnian adaptations of famous episodes in his predecessors have fewer dialogues and longer speeches; the speeches themselves have also clearly undergone a rhetorical transformation. The speaking characters no longer aim to achieve persuasion through lies or gifts, but rather by providing rhetorical (albeit often very farfetched) arguments and making use of (false) to convince the addressee.

Chapter 2. Types of Epic Speech: The Battle Exhortation

Assuming that Nonnus and his audience shared a knowledge based on tradition of what a battle exhortation conventionally looked like, this chapter compares Nonnus' battle exhortations not only with the exhortations in Homer and Quintus, but also with the practices familiar from the historiographical tradition, fused with rhetoric. Battle exhortations in Nonnus, however, clearly seem to have gained a new place and function in the battle narrative in comparison to the epic tradition. As is clear from my analysis of the different recurring topoi in his exhortations, Nonnus seems to have developed a new typology. Moreover, the examples in which Nonnus inverts or parodies the genre of the battle exhortation clearly show Nonnus as a poet who is aware of the conventions and consequently able to creatively adapt them.

Chapter 3. Speeches within Speeches

This chapter deals with speeches embedded in other speeches and thus with tertiary focalization. The focus lies on a particular type of embedded speech. In scholarship on Homer, speeches within speeches that are quoted as a potential future comment of an anonymous speaker are called "potential ^^^-speech". Absent from both Apollonius and Quintus, this Homeric device is revived in Nonnus. There are, however, clear differences regarding its use and function: reshaped to become part of his stylistic vocabulary, Nonnus' potential ^^^- speech seems to be, much more than its Homeric model, a formalized element of style. Moreover, as I will demonstrate in the second part of this chapter, besides potential tic-speech a number of other "potential" embedded speech types can be distinguished in the Dionysiaca. Nonnus' characters, for example, quite frequently make use of the rhetorical figure of procatalepsis, anticipating their addressee's reaction by "quoting" possible counter-arguments.

Chapter 4. The Rhetoric of Deception: Persuasive Strategies

In some 20 cases the introductory formula for a speech in the Dionysiaca contains a reference to its "deceptive" nature. Only a limited number of these "deceptive" speeches, however, actually contain lies. The label of "deceit" rather seems to draw the reader's attention to the manipulative rhetoric of the speech: the clever argumentation, the construction of a suitable speaker's ^^^^ (often a disguise) and the appeal to the addressee's emotions (^^^^^). The story of Hera's ruse to kill Semele is used as a case study in this chapter. Interestingly, Nonnus' version of the story contains not one but three successive manipulative speeches: Phthonus to Hera (8.50–102), Hera to Apate (8.126–164) and Hera to Semele (8.207–263).

Chapter 5. Ecphrastic Ethopoeae and the Perspective of the Text-Internal Observer

As has already been observed by Peter Krafft (1975), (minor) characters in the Dionysiaca often seem to appear only to deliver a speech, before disappearing again. The speaker does not participate in the action, but comments on the on-going events from an observer's perspective. The speech is not heard by the protagonists and can therefore not have any effect on the course of the events. In this chapter, two types of outsider's comments are closely analysed. In several cases, the commenting character tries to identify the protagonists of the episode on sight by interpreting visual clues and formulating hypotheses. Looking at the protagonists through the eyes of a character "lost in wonder", these speeches not only guide the reader's visualization of the scene, but are also demonstrations of the art of the interpreter and invite the reader to reflect on his own readership and on his interpretation and visualization of the events in the poem.

The second group of speeches singled out for analysis are all pronounced from a divine bird's-eye perspective. In each of these cases a god or (more often) a goddess comments on the events from on high, but without intervening. The (sneering) comments of these divinities add a different perspective to the story, which often presents a contrast to the general tone of the episode and/or the tone of the comments of the ignorant observers below.

Chapter 6. Rhetoric of Seduction and Failure of Communication inthe Beroe Episode

The final chapter shows that the persuasive strategies of the characters in the Dionysiaca are not always successful. In the Beroe episode, Dionysus (4×) and Poseidon (1×) address Beroe several times in order to win her heart, but without any success. Dionysus' first three speeches are introduced by the narrator as deceitful. Instead of directly affirming his love to her, he uses vegetation metaphors and tries to flatter her by ostensibly mistaking her for Artemis. Beroe, however, fails to catch his (literary) imagery and does not understand his intentions. In this way, her eventual rejection of his love is postponed until after his fourth speech, an explicit proposal of marriage. Much attention is paid to the effect of dramatic irony in this episode and the accumulation of variations of the "rhetoric of seduction" as an effect of Beroe's postponed rejection. <>

NONNUS' PARAPHRASE BETWEEN POETRY, RHETORIC AND THEOLOGY: REWRITING THE FOURTH GOSPEL IN THE FIFTH CENTURY by Maria Ypsilanti, Laura Franco, with the collaboration of Filip Doroszewski, Claudia Greco [Mnemosyne Supplements: Late Antique Literature, Brill, 9789004373419]

This book investigates the various paraphrastic techniques employed by Nonnus of Panopolis (5th century AD) for his poetic version of the Gospel of John. The authors look at Nonnus' *Paraphrase*, the only extant poetic Greek paraphrase of the New Testament, in the light of ancient rhetorical theory while also exploring its multi-faceted relationship with poetic tradition and the theological debates of its era. The study shows how interpretation, cardinal both in ancient literary criticism and in theology, is exploited in a poem that is exegetical both from a philological and a Christian point of view and adheres, at the same time, to the literary principles of Hellenistic times and late antiquity.

CONTENTS

This study is the result of a research program funded by the University of Cyprus. The project springs from a novel idea conceived by the Principal Investigator, Maria Ypsilanti, who then wrote a detailed proposal on the matter, which, after it had undergone rigorous peer review by international experts, received funding. Maria Ypsilanti then recruited and supervised a group of researchers charged with implementing her ideas as outlined in her research proposal and beyond.

The resulting work is a comprehensive study of Nonnus' *Paraphrase of St. John's Gospel* from the point of view of paraphrastic technique. Through an examination of selected representative passages, the work, while focusing primarily on the exploitation of ancient rhetorical theory, also considers more general issues of poetics and of Christian exegesis. During the writing of the book, Laura Franco was the main research collaborator, while Filip Doroszewski and Claudia Greco made specific contributions. Maria Ypsilanti had overall responsibility for the editing of the work, including commenting, correcting and enriching the contributions of her research team. Some of these contributions indeed extended beyond Ypsilanti's initial ideas. For this and for the successful implementation of the research project and the realisation of the book, she is extremely grateful to the members of her team. It should be noted, however, that the chapters of this book where Maria Ypsilanti is an author or a co-author represent her own contributions to the implementation of the project.

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An Evanescent Figure

Two hexametric poems are transmitted to us under the name of Nonnus: the *Dionysiaca*, which recounts the deeds and the adventures of Dionysus, and the *Paraphrase* of the Gospel of John. There is agreement in modern scholarship that they are both ascribable to the same person, a fifth century A.D. poet from Panopolis, whose figure is somewhat enigmatic, given the meagre information on his life. All we know about Nonnus is that he was from Panopolis (modern Akhmim), in the region of the Thebaid (Upper Egypt), and that he lived in Alexandria, where, most probably, he wrote the *Dionysiaca*.

This can be inferred from an anonymous epigram of the Greek Anthology (*AP* 9.198), written in Nonnian style, and attributed to Nonnus himself. It runs:

> Νόννος ἐγώ· Πανὸς μὲν ἐμὴ πόλις, ἐν Φαρίῃ δέ
> ἔγχεϊ φωνήεντι γονὰς ἤμησα Γιγάντων.

> I am Nonnus; my native city was Panopolis, but in Alexandria I mowed down with my vocal sword the children of the Giants tr. W.R. Paton, *The Greek Anthology*, *Loeb Classical Library*, Cambridge, MA, London 1916–1918

Such an assertion seems to be confirmed by the prologue to the *Dionysiaca* (1.13–15), where Alexandria is evoked through reference to the island of Pharos:

> ἀλλὰ χοροῦ ψαύοντι Φάρῳ παρὰ γείτονι νήσῳ

> στήσατέ μοι Πρωτῆα πολύτροπον, ὄφρα φανείη
> ποικίλον εἶδος ἔχων, ὅτι ποικίλον ὕμνον ἀράσσω
>
> But bring me, a partner for your dance in the neighbouring island of Pharos, Proteus of many turns, that he may appear in all his diversity of shapes, since I twang my harp to a diversity of songs.

Located immediately in front of the port of Alexandria, Pharos was a synonym of the city. The adjective γείτων, "neighbouring", attributed to the island, is an autobiographical hint, expressing the point of view of the poet, who lived in the city nearby. The figure of Proteus, the shape-shifting deity who lived on Pharos, is linked to the notion of ποικιλία, a pivotal concept in Nonnus' poetry. Besides the autobiographical elements, this geographical reference offers a plethora of cultural implications and allusions. It was here that the tradition of the *Septuagint* was established[6] and the Alexandrian theological school was inaugurated by Clement (c. 150–215) and Origen (185–254). Here there was a firmly-rooted Neoplatonic tradition—suffice it to mention Synesius (c. 370–413), Hypatia (c. 360–415) and Hierocles (active in the fifth century).[7] In the time of Nonnus, Alexandria was dominated by the figure of Cyril, whose commentary on the Gospel of John, written some time before 428, perhaps between 425 and 428, provides principally (but not exclusively) the exegetical basis for the *Paraphrase*.

Although the *Dionysiaca* presents the longest extant epic poem in Greek from antiquity, the name of Nonnus is hardly found in early Byzantine sources. He is remembered almost *en passant* by the historian and epigrammatist Agathias Scholasticus (c. 536–582), who lived about a century after Nonnus and refers to him as one of the "new poets" who treated the myth of Marsyas. After Agathias' brief remark, a surprisingly long silence engulfs Nonnus' name in later Byzantine literature, to the point that one is tempted to suspect that this unconventional poetic personality, who interestingly mixed pagan and Christian culture, perhaps caused the Christian establishment some embarrassment. The name of Nonnus does not appear in the manuscript tradition. Eustathius, Archbishop of Thessalonica (c. 1115–1195), in his commentaries on Homer and on Dionysius Periegetes, inaccurately quotes a few lines from the *Dionysiaca*, without mentioning the name of the author.

As Accorinti recently pointed out, there is no mention of Nonnus in Photius' *Bibliotheca*, nor is he recorded in any specific entry in the *Suda*, apart from a brief note at the end of the headword Νόνναι in the *Marcianus gr*. 448 (containing this tenth century Byzantine lexicon), which is likely to be an addition by the hand of Eustathius of Thessalonica himself, who copied the manuscript. Moreover, in the *Etymologicum Magnum* a few verses of the *Dionysiaca* (9.11–12 and 19–24) are quoted anonymously in a discussion of the etymology of the name Dionysus. Eventually, in the late Byzantine period, Maximus Planudes (c. 1255–1305) copied the *Dionysiaca* as an *adespoton* (in *Laur*. 32.16) and the *Paraphrase* in the *Marcianus gr*. Z 481. Here the *inscriptio* attributes the poem to the philosopher and rhetorician Ammonius, but in a short comment added by Planudes it is specified that, according to other sources, the work is by Nonnus.

Nonnus' Egyptian origin has a crucial bearing on his literary training. We know that during Late Antiquity hexametric poetry flourished in Egypt. The popularity of this genre can be inferred from the famous quotation from Eunapius' *Lives of Philosophers and Sophists*, where it is stated that the Egyptians were very enthusiastic about poetry. It is also evident in the extant documentation concerning the work of a large

number of Egyptian poets, who were principally from the Upper Thebaid. The documentation goes back to at least the third century A.D. This evidence, which includes ancient inscriptions, papyri, and medieval manuscripts (albeit often fragmentary), offers a complex picture of the rich poetic background from which Nonnus emerged.

The concentration of poets, who mostly dealt with mythological subject-matter, in the relatively small area of Panopolis and its surroundings is remarkable. Triphiodorus (third-fourth century A.D.), Nonnus, Colluthus (fifth-sixth century A.D.) and, most probably, Musaeus (sixth century A.D.) are all native to this region and, although they belong to different periods, share similarities in style and metrics. Apart from epic poetry, other poetic genres flourished in the area, too, as is indicated by the work of Cyrus of Panopolis (c. 400–470), to whom several poems in the *Palatine Anthology* are attributed.

It has been argued that Nonnus was a travelling poet. This label is suitable for a number of Egyptian "wandering poets", a well-known definition coined by Alan Cameron, referring to figures such as Cyrus of Panopolis, Pamprepius, Andronicus of Hermoupolis, Christodorus, Olympiodorus of Thebes, and other intellectuals, all of Egyptian origin, who, supposedly, moved about so as to participate in poetry festivals and competitions. Nonnus shares his geographical and cultural background with this group of poets, but he cannot be easily described as one of them. Given the scarcity, if not absence, of biographical data, it is difficult to tell how far he may have been a travelling poet, possessing the characteristics of these fellow—countrymen of his. However, it has been suggested that Nonnus could have travelled outside Egypt, namely to Berytus, because his vivid and detailed description of the city suggests personal experience.

In the *Dionysiaca* there are descriptions of three towns, Nicaea, Tyre and Berytus. The accounts of Tyre and Berytus are rich in details and it therefore might be assumed that the poet had a direct knowledge of them. This is especially true for Berytus, where Nonnus locates no fewer than three books of the *Dionysiaca* (41–43), which deal with the story of Dionysus' failed attempt to seduce the eponymous nymph of the city, Beroe. On these grounds, Livrea suggested that Nonnus had been a student at the law school of Berytus, renowned throughout the whole Empire. However, all his poetic descriptions of towns are fashioned in accordance with the fundamental rules of the *ekphrasis*, as codified in ancient rhetorical treatises. Not only do Nonnus' descriptions seem to be the result of the application of rhetoric, but, in some cases, they also reveal the influence of other literary works.[2] This makes it even more difficult to determine to what extent such poetic descriptions can be regarded as based on autobiographical experiences.

Notwithstanding the lack of biographical data, it is generally accepted that, despite the pagan content of his major poem, Nonnus was a Christian. An intriguing, albeit controversial, hypothesis was put forward by Livrea, who suggested that Nonnus was actually the Bishop of Edessa, who performed the spectacular conversion of the most famous harlot of Antioch, the actress Pelagia. According to the legend, after her repentance she confined herself in a cell on the Mount of Olives to live as a hermit, disguised as an eunuch. The dates of the tenure of office of the Bishop of Edessa (449–451 and 457–471) and the dates of the poet of Panopolis do indeed fall within the same span of time. However, if the *Life* of Pelagia depends on a homily by John Chrysostom (*In Matthaeum* 67–68, PG 58.636–637) that refers to the conversion of a famous harlot from Antioch, whose name is not mentioned and who lived in the fourth century, it is difficult to accept Livrea's fascinating thesis. Identification with other Nonni cannot be easily accepted.

Dates and Chronology

Nonnus' date has been, and still is, the object of scholarly debate. Not much information can be drawn from his works.

The only safe *terminus post quem* for the *Paraphrase* is represented by the monumental commentary on the Gospel of John, written, as we have seen, between 425 and 428 by Cyril of Alexandria, which certainly constitutes the most important and indisputable theological background to the *Paraphrase*. It is from this work that Nonnus, who, as has been demonstrated in the past, follows Cyril's theology closely, extrapolates and re-elaborates the exegesis of innumerable Johannine passages. Another indication formerly used to support a *terminus post quem* for the composition of the *Paraphrase* is the presence of the term Θεοτόκος, which is connected with the Christological controversy on the double nature of Christ and with the conflict between Nestorius and Cyril of Alexandria. The fact that the Virgin is called "mother of God" could be taken to suggest a date later than 431, when Cyril's theological doctrine prevailed in the Council of Ephesus and this epithet was officially adopted by the Church. However, the date of the Council is not decisive, as the term is also attested earlier, and cannot be taken as an absolute criterion of dating.

On the other hand, a possible *terminus ante quem* for the *Paraphrase* is usually thought to be 451, when the Council of Chalcedon definitely condemned Monophysite doctrines, thus marking the separation of the Church of Alexandria from the Constantinopolitan patriarchate. The Nonnian presentation of Christ's "majestic" divinity has been regarded as being incompatible with this condemnation, and the composition of the *Paraphrase* has thus been dated between 444 and 451. This view, too, has been challenged and some critics do not think that the Council of Chalcedon is necessarily a *terminus ante quem*. One view that reconciles both sides of the controversy assumes that the *Paraphrase* was written within the period between the forties and the sixties of the fifth century.

We can postulate some other dates on the basis of the *Dionysiaca*. A plausible *terminus post quem* is given by the work of the Egyptian poet Claudian (c. 370–404), because Nonnus probably knew his works, particularly his Greek *Gigantomachy*. Equally feasible is the *terminus post quem* offered by the *incipit* of an epigram by Cyrus of Panopolis (*AP* 9.136), datable to 441–442, which is quoted twice in the *Dionysiaca*. A secure *terminus ante quem* rests on Agathias' reference mentioned above, together with five folios of a papyrus codex of the sixth century (*P.Berol.* inv. 10567) which contain a section of the *Dionysiaca* from books 14–16. To this evidence, two poems can be added, one attributed to Pamprepius and the other one anonymous, both datable between 471 and 473, and both clearly influenced by Nonnus' style. Furthermore, it has been suggested that 444, the year of Cyril's death, may be a possible *terminus post quem*, since the influential Bishop of Alexandria would not have approved of the publication of a blatantly pagan poem written by the same person who had interpreted the Gospel of John in the light of his commentary. On these grounds, the life of the poet can probably be placed sometime between 400 and 470 and the composition of the *Dionysiaca* may possibly be dated between 450 and 470.

A controversial issue in any treatment of Nonnus' life is his religious faith. The difficulty lies in the coexistence of two poems, one openly pagan and one indisputably Christian, by the same author (whose very name, it has to be noted, rather suits a Christian). The issue has triggered numerous scholarly discussions and different assumptions have been made. In the first half of the last century, it was maintained by various critics that Nonnus was a pagan who, at some stage of his life, converted to

Christianity. The opposite idea, that he was a Christian apostate, has also been suggested. The issue is also associated with the relative dating of the two works. A number of critics have argued on stylistic grounds that the *Paraphrase* was written first. If we accept the conjecture that Nonnus converted to Christianity, the *Dionysiaca* must have been composed earlier than the *Paraphrase*. Other critics maintain that the two works were written simultaneously. Critics now generally do not accept either hypothesis, conversion or apostasy.

In more recent times, scholars have been more inclined to reconcile the opposing views of paganism and Christianity, especially in the light of the cultural syncretism that characterised the Neoplatonic Alexandrian milieu. From this perspective, Nonnus can be regarded in various ways: as a Christian, who was familiar with pagan mythology and wrote the *Dionysiaca* with an antiquarian attitude devoid of any ideological involvement; as a "lay" poet, mainly interested in the narrative and in the literary engagement of his work; or as a Christian who saw the Dionysian mysteries as propaedeutic for the reception of the Christian message, and the salvific god Dionysus as a prefiguration of Christ.[58] Modern scholars think that the two poems are indeed the work of one and the same author,[59] notwithstanding the view, argued in the past and revived relatively recently, that the two works cannot be attributed to the same person.

One may attribute the poems to the same person not only in view of their strong stylistic similarities, but also because they contain numerous recurrent themes. These appear in both the *Dionysiaca* and the *Paraphrase* and are employed with such consistency, that scholars have excluded the possibility that they are the work of different authors. Because of these recurring similarities, some Nonnian critics are inclined to believe that the two poems were composed in parallel, but the chronological relationship between the two is still debated. There is general agreement on that the *Paraphrase* was composed around the middle of the fifth century and, even among those who accept that the two poems were composed at the same time, there is a tendency to believe that Nonnus started work first on *Paraphrase* and later on the *Dionysiaca*.

The Dionysiaca

The forty-eight books of the *Dionysiaca* recount the deeds of, and the myths related to, Dionysus, starting with the god's genealogy and birth and then illustrating his expedition to India, the war with the Indians and the numerous battles that led to the defeat of his antagonist Deriades. These are followed by the return of Dionysus to Europe and his apotheosis. Because of this structure, which is based on antecedents, birth and deeds, death and apotheosis, it has been suggested that the poem is modelled on the pattern of the βασιλικὸς λόγος (the "royal encomium", codified by Menander Rhetor). This view, first formulated by Stegemann and subsequently elaborated on by a number of authoritative scholars, was rejected by Keydell, Bogner and Collart, on the grounds that the poem does not strictly follow the scheme established by Menander, in that it contains countless digressions and small narrative units, which may give the impression, at least, of a general lack of unity.

However, more recent studies suggest that the *Dionysiaca*, far from being a series of episodes totally lacking in inner cohesion, rest on an overall sound and solid structure, which allows the presence of numerous *excursus* without loss of consistency. Moreover, the digressions, which are present throughout the poem to an exceptional extent and vary greatly in terms of length and function, offer the poet endless opportunities to narrate different versions of myths, including even their least known

variants. This variety of mythical material not only increases the encyclopaedic character of the poem but also makes for the development of a huge variety of parallel stories, which are very much in tune with the poet's taste for ποικιλία. The prologue to the *Dionysiaca*, briefly discussed above, shows clearly that this is the focal element in Nonnian poetics. Here a complex network of allusions suggests the subject and aim of the poem. Nonnus' acknowledgment of Homer as the initiator of the epic genre is made clear from the *incipit* of the poem, which introduces the programmatic statement that clarifies the subject of the poem: the deeds of Dionysus. The key-element, which implies the idea of ποικιλία, is represented by the figure of Proteus. This marine deity was traditionally thought to live on the island of Pharos, and his metamorphic nature (ποικίλον εἶδος) embodies the idea of stylistic variety. This concept is evoked in the subtle rephrasing (ποικίλον ὕμνον) of a verse by Pindar, who is, together with Homer, one of the most influential models for Nonnus' poetry and whose style is characterised *par excellence* by ποικιλία.

Beneath this monumental poem lies an ambitious poetical vision that includes the whole literary tradition inherited from Greek culture, which is both a model and a challenge. The most representative figure of this *paideia* is indisputably Homer, who is openly evoked in the two proems of the *Dionysiaca*, one at the beginning and one in the middle, as the ultimate and unrivalled model for epic poetry. Besides Homer, Nonnus' poetry presupposes deep knowledge of all the traditional poetic genres, from archaic lyric (Pindar and his metaphorical *periphrasis*, above all) to tragedy and comedy and from Hellenistic poetry to later epic poetry (the didactic poems of the Oppians, Triphiodorus' *Sack of Troy*, Quintus' *Posthomerica*, etc.) and prose (especially the novel).

The variety of Nonnus' sources also includes Christian literature. Even though the references to the literary Christian tradition are more evident and numerous in the *Paraphrase*, themes and literary reminiscences related to Christian literature are present in the *Dionysiaca*, too, where they are often interwoven with pagan themes. This is particularly evident in such instances as the metamorphosis of Ampelus and his resurrection in the shape of a vine, and, even more significantly, the episode involving the raising of the dead Tylus, which displays notable similarities with the resurrection of Lazarus. There are also striking similarities between Dionysus' turning of the water into wine at Lake Astacis and the description of the miracle performed by Jesus at the Wedding in Cana, which, in turn, is rich in Dionysian vocabulary. The correspondences between the pagan and the Christian poem are manifest in the resemblances between the two central figures of Dionysus and Christ. Furthermore, similarities can be also observed in minute details, such as the choice of similar vocabulary, epithets and turns of phrases employed for characters and episodes that echo one another in the two poems. This web of allusions and parallel references suggests a unitary conception that links the two works together as parts of the same wide syncretic vision.

The Paraphrase

Nonnus' *Paraphrase* is a re-elaboration of the Gospel of John in twenty-one books of hexameters, which correspond to the chapters of the Fourth Gospel. John's text is followed closely and re-elaborated faithfully, without any deviation in terms of content and sequence of events. As we have already mentioned, Nonnus probably began composing the *Paraphrase* before he started on the *Dionysiaca*, and the *Paraphrase* was drawn up in Alexandria at the same time as the *Dionysiaca* was composed.

The rhetorical exercise of paraphrase was a common school practice in antiquity. It was normally taught by grammarians (γραμματικοί) as part of the preliminary training designed to teach students how to compose declamations (προγυμνάσματα). Paraphrase is commended as a particularly effective exercise in various rhetorical text-books, and especially in Aelius Theon's *Progymnasmata* (15 Patillon-Bolognesi, pp. 108–109, surviving in its Armenian translation) and Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* (10.5,4–11). Theon explains that paraphrase consists in rewriting the great models of the past, so that their meaning becomes more comprehensible and that its usefulness lies in the process of expressing the same ideas in different forms. Quintilian describes it in similar terms. This practice of the paraphrase writing also continued in Christian culture, as it continued to be part of the syllabus. The rhetorical background to the *Paraphrase* will be discussed in detail below.

Paraphrase extended beyond school and we do have examples of rephrasing of important works of Classical and Hellenistic literature. These are the literary paraphrases. Surviving paraphrases of texts of pagan antiquity include the paraphrases of Nicander, Oppian and [Oppian] by Eutecnius (A.D. III–V) and the paraphrases of Aristotle by Themistius (A.D. IV). Content put aside, an obvious difference between all of them and Nonnus' work is that these are prose paraphrases (either of poetic works, the paraphrases of Eutecnius, or of prose works, the paraphrases of Themistius), while Nonnus produced a poetic paraphrase of a prose text, thus clearly aiming to achieve a significant artistic result. Nonnus was not a pioneer in this: we know, for instance, that Nicander produced a hexameter verse *Metaphrasis* of the Hippocratic *Prognostics*. From a formal point of view and mainly as regards extant works, Nonnus' task displays close parallels with a group of Greek Biblical paraphrases of the fourth and fifth century, which are few in number, compared with their Western equivalents. This poetic genre developed in both halves of the Mediterranean, starting from the fourth century, and although much more extensively attested in Latin culture, it is also represented in Greek Christian literature as well.

A fair number of pieces of Greek Christian epic poetry survive. Such are the Biblical poems by Gregory of Nazianzus, the *Christus Patiens* (controversially attributed to Gregory, and generally considered to be a later Byzantine text, dated as late as in the eleventh or twelfth century) and the hexametric metaphrasis of the Psalms by one Apollinaris (unconvincingly identified with Apollinaris of Laodicea). This work has received due attention in a number of studies, but the basic questions it raises (authorship, chronology, cultural environment) and the textual condition of its almost five thousand difficult hexameters still make it a rather obscure work. While we have a *Metaphrasis of the Ecclesiastes* ascribed to Gregory the Wonderworker in the third century, probably the first Biblical paraphrase (which is in prose), the *corpus* of Biblical paraphrases was enriched by the discovery of the so-called *Codex Visionum*, a manuscript from the Bodmer collection. This includes, along with various visionary texts, the most important of which is the *Vision of Dorotheus*, a number of shorter poems of different genres. Among these pieces are further examples of this flourishing Christian hexametrical production, such as the *ethopoea* of Cain (based on *Gen.* 4.13–15 but not quite a paraphrase), the *ethopoea* of Abel (based on of *Ps.* 101 but not quite a paraphrase), the fragments of a hymn (on the structure of *Ps.* 146–150, the so-called "Psalms of the Alleluia"). Eudocia's *De Sancto Cypriano* (the paraphrase of a prose narrative) and the Homeric centos in their different redactions represent further examples of such flourishing Christian hexametrical production. As already noted, Biblical epic did not survive as a genre, if we exempt a few Byzantine examples, such as the paraphrase of *Job* by Leo the Philosopher, and Cometas' epigram on Lazarus' resurrection. Among all these Biblical poems, the most comparable to Nonnus' *Paraphrase* is the *Metaphrasis of the Psalms*,

written probably between 450 and 470. Both poems are full and systematic rephrasings of Biblical text, rather than merely developments of short segments of a Biblical text (the *ethopoeae* of Cain and Abel, which are not, furthermore, paraphrases in the strict sense), elaborations on Christian themes by means of tragic vocabulary (*Christus Patiens*), or paraphrases in the cento form (Eudocia). Comparison of Nonnus' work with the *Metaphrasis* would be a separate study in itself and is beyond the scope of the present study. Here it is enough to briefly note that the two poets have a similar technique as regards employment of epic diction, which accords with the baroque trends in poetical taste in Late Antiquity, but varies at least as regards how far each expands on the original; expansion is significantly restricted in the *Metaphrasis*.

As for Latin Bible epic, several examples survive. As regards New Testament epic, we have Juvencus' paraphrase of the Gospels in dactylic hexameters, probably written late in the reign of Constantine, Proba's *Cento vergilianus de laudibus Christi*, a poem recounting the deeds of Christ in Vergilian hexameters (mid-fourth century), Sedulius' *Carmen Paschale* (fifth century) and Arator's *De actibus apostolorum* (sixth century). Old Testament poems include the paraphrase of the *Heptaeuch* by an author known as "Cyprianus Gallus" (end of fourth / beginning of fifth century), the *Alethia* by Claudius Marius Victorius (fifth century), written for didactic purposes, and the six books in Latin hexameters by Avitus of Vienne (c. 507) *De spiritalis historiae gestis*. Dracontius' *De Laudibus Dei* (fifth century) is a very free composition loosely based on the Bible. We also have three poems based on Psalms 1, 2 and 136 by Paulinus of Nola (fourth-fifth century); this author also wrote *Laus Sancti Iohannis* (*Carm*. 6.1–26), based on Luke 1.

As Nonnus does with Homer and other poets, the Latin Bible poets also draw on the Latin epic past for vocabulary and imagery.[114]Moreover, like Nonnus, these poets are also engaged in religious *interpretatio* and can also express anti-heretical views. However, like other Greek Bible poems, the Latin epics also differ from Nonnus' (and the Psalterion metaphrast's) task in that they are not based on one sole text which they paraphrase faithfully. For instance, Sedulius' poem is an adaptation of the information given by the Synoptics, taken mainly from Mark and Matthew, to a lesser extent from Luke and to an even lesser extent from John, although it does not follow the order of any of these narratives strictly. Arator's narrative is also a selection of the episodes of the Acts. Avitus treats the Old Testament episodes in similar fashion and incorporates elements from New Testament narratives in them. The *Heptaeuch* poet and Juvencus are the most "straightforward paraphrase makers" in comparison to the others, because their poems follow the Biblical text more closely. Still, however, unlike Nonnus, Juvencus is based principally on Matthew, while combining elements from Luke and John. Although generally very faithful, "Cyprianus" also occasionally abbreviates his vast Old Testament material. Thus, Nonnus' work is quite unique, since it is the only extant New Testament poetic paraphrase in both Greek and Latin which, for all its exegetical and other additions and embellishments, rephrases one Gospel, with no insertions from the others, and stays faithful to its chapters and to the order and content of its information from beginning to end.

The reason why so many Christian authors chose epic metre for their rendering of Biblical texts has been the object of much scholarly debate. As far as Greek poems are concerned, it has been suggested that the practice might be traced back to the notorious edict promulgated by Julian in June 362, which prohibited Christian professors from teaching pagan classics in schools of rhetoric. Supposedly responding to this interdict, Christian intellectuals are reported to have written poems of Christian

content in accordance with the modes of pagan epic poetry. However, it is hardly convincing that Christian paraphrase descends from this alleged poetic production, given the very short life of the edict and also given that Gregory the Wonderworker had already composed a Biblical paraphrase in the third century, as we have seen above. Furthermore, surviving paraphrases do not seem to be addressed to an audience of students, but rather to a public already competent both in the Scriptures and in the Homeric poems. The audience of the Nonnian *Paraphrase* was in all probability very similar, if not identical, to that of the *Dionysiaca*: a mixture of Alexandrian pagan intellectuals and cultivated Christians who knew the Holy Scriptures, but who were also cultivated enough to appreciate the numerous allusions to Classical literature present in Nonnus' re-elaboration of the Fourth Gospel and welcomed the "transformation" of the Gospel into epic style. It should be noted that a part of conservative Christians rejected any retelling of the Bible and disapproved of attempts to transform the original text into "Hellenic" poetry. However, works such as Nonnus' *Paraphrase* and the *Metaphrasis* of the Psalms show that this attitude was not universal.

If pagan tradition, both Classical and Hellenistic, represents a background common to both poems, Christian literature has a more crucial part to play in the *Paraphrase*. It has been argued that the exegetical element is predominant in this work, which should be thus considered an exegesis rather than a simple paraphrase. The importance of the commentary to the Gospel of John by Cyril of Alexandria is unquestionable: Nonnus follows this interpretation very thoroughly, as is demonstrated in all critical commentaries of the *Paraphrase*, to the extent that it can be postulated that he "had the commentary *ante oculos*". In the turbulent age of Christological controversies, the authority of the influential patriarch of Alexandria was a guarantee that Nonnus' interpretation of the Johannine Gospel would not deviate from Orthodox doctrine.

Cyril's influence can be detected either directly, in instances of poetic vocabulary which reproduces his prose or, more loosely, in the general concept underlying Nonnus' rendition of the *Vorlage*. However, Cyril was not the only patristic source Nonnus was familiar with. Indeed, the poet's theological background comprehends a wide range of authors, among whom is John Chrysostom (in his homilies on the Gospel of John) and perhaps Theodore of Mopsuestia (fourth-fifth century A.D.), who wrote a commentary on John with which Nonnus may have been familiar. A further possible, though far from certain, influence is that of Origen. Moreover, in certain instances Nonnus gives interpretations of the Gospel which must either have appeared in sources not transmitted to us or are his own exegesis. Alongside the Christian theological tradition, in re-elaborating the Fourth Gospel, Nonnus often takes elements from the Synoptic Gospels and combines them with the Johannine diction, most probably on the grounds that the Fourth Gospel was thought to complement the other Gospels, and the general practice of exegetes was to use the Synoptics to elucidate the Johannine text.

As far as other literature is concerned, Gregory of Nazianzus is a source whose presence in Nonnian poetry can hardly be underestimated. His orations and poems were certainly known to the poet of Panopolis, as is demonstrated both from single words and from phrasing and also from metrical practice. The influence of Gregory of Nyssa has been also discerned in the *Paraphrase*. For possible knowledge of Epiphanius of Salamis (fourth c.) and other views echoed in the Acts of the Ecumenical Councils, see below, *IV. Amplificatio, C. Explanations* and *H. Interptetatio, passim*. It has also been argued that similarities of ideas and vocabulary between Nonnus' work and the *Tübingen Theosophy*, a collection of texts mostly hexametrical and partly pagan and partly Christian, dated to the fifth or sixth

century, can be attributed to the common Alexandrian milieu in which both works were composed and perhaps to Nonnus' knowledge of collections of oracles incorporated in the *Theosophy*.

We can presume that one of the reasons why Nonnus chose to paraphrase the Fourth Gospel, which is constructed around the crucial principle of the divine Λόγος, was probably its strongly spiritual and philosophical character, which attracted the interest both of Alexandrian Neoplatonic circles and of theologians such as Cyril. A Neoplatonic background is evident in the vocabulary employed by Nonnus, both in the *Dionisyaca* and in the *Paraphrase*, but in the latter work it also serves the purpose of elucidating theological concepts. Roberta Franchi observed that the philosophical foundations of Nonnus' work are characterised by a "thoroughgoing eclecticism combined with religious syncretism", so that it is difficult to draw a line between theology and philosophy. The influence of Neoplatonism can be generally detected in both poems, in terms of a common knowledge of mainstream philosophical principles and terminology the educated elite was familiar with, but also with reference to specific literary sources, among which feature Plotinus and possibly Proclus.

With its abundance of literary echoes, Nonnus' poetry comes across as a multi-faceted ensemble of allusions and reverberations deriving from an astonishing variety of different traditions. In this complex picture, writings belonging to the Orphic tradition also seem to have exerted some influence on the poet's imagery, even though is not easy to determine how much. For example, despite the fact that there are significant similarities to the *Argonautica Orphica*, these elements are not sufficient to form any conclusions about whether Nonnus drew on this anonymous poem or rather from some other Orphic text circulating in the Imperial period.

Nonnus' Influence: A Brief Overview

Nonnus' influence on later literature has often been examined. It is commonly accepted that, thanks to public recitations of both his works, Nonnus' poetry had become a classic by the second half of the fifth century and all the important poets of that period and of the next century, such as Musaeus, Colluthus, Christodorus, John of Gaza, Paulus Silentiarius and Agathias, were his followers. Imitations of the Nonnian style and echoes of his poems' content are also discernible in certain Byzantine authors, although hexameter verse is gradually replaced by iamb from the sixth century onwards. Rennaissance scholars, editors and poets showed interest in Nonnus. As far as poetic production is concerned, Poliziano (fifteenth century), Jean Dorat (sixteenth century) and Giambattista Marino (sixteenth-seventeen century) are, for instance, inspired by myths and episodes in the *Dionysiaca*. In the later Renaissance, however, there was criticism of Nonnus' style and the structuring of his pagan epic. French painters of the seventeenth century, such as Nicholas Poussin and Claude Lorrain, show traces of the influence of Nonnian subjects and Spanish scholars and poets of the same period seem also to have been acquainted with the work of Nonnus. A Greek prose paraphrase of the *Paraphrase* was written in the eighteenth century, proving that the work was read and appreciated at the time, the manuscript itself being preserved on Mount Athos (*Dionysiou* 326). In modern times, Wolfgang Goethe, Percy Shelley and Elizabeth Barrett Browning in the nineteenth and Marguerite Yourcenar and Constantine Cavafy in the twentieth century are probably the best known authors to take an interest in Nonnus.

Nonnus' Paraphrastic Technique: Rhetorical Tradition and Poetic Creativity

Although there are no programmatic statements concerning poetics in the *Paraphrase* equivalent to those in the *Dionysiaca*, the substantial correspondences between the two poems, in terms of style,

themes and echoes, evident and repeatedly noted by critics, suggest that there is a sound theoretical coherence in the two works. The literary project underlying the Christian poem is reflective of that of the *Dionysiaca*, or, more probably, the two works are intended to complement each other. Both poems, different as they may be in terms of content, belong to the same poetic *genre*, that of epic poetry, i.e., poetry realised by means of dactylic hexameter verse, and they both address a similar audience, which includes Christian and pagans.

Ancient authors felt indebted to the genres to which their works belonged and regarded themselves as subject to the laws regulating such genres. These ties represented a constraint and a challenge at the same time, as the ability of a skilled poet consisted in both mastering the codified language characterising a poetic category (as well as the rules established by the tradition), and in displaying originality within these conventions. In this sense, Nonnian poetry is paradigmatic, in that he succeeded in innovating within the tradition, as is demonstrated by the *Dionysiaca* and perhaps even more clearly by the *Paraphrase*, in which he revives the epic genre by infusing it with Christian themes expressed in a language highly indebted to the Classical and Hellenistic poetic tradition. According to Rossi, four characteristics determine the genre to which a poem belongs, if we disregard music and dance, as these do not always apply: subject-matter, structure, language and metre. In terms of all, except subject-matter, the *Paraphrase* is an epic. Because of its subject-matter, which is neither heroic nor didactic, according to the ancient Greek sub-divisions of the epic genre, it becomes (as regards ancient conventions) a "new" kind of epic.

As mentioned above, rhetoric, which was taught through school exercises (*progymnasmata*) of increasing difficulty, is an essential part of the foundations of both Nonnian works. This aspect has possibly an even more crucial bearing on the *Paraphrase*, because of the genre to which the poem belongs, since paraphrasing is, by definition, a rhetorical operation. Among this set of exercises *ethopoea* and *ekphrasis* are particularly important in Nonnus' poetry. *Ethopoea*, namely the plausible representation of a character, was a very common and basic school practice consisting of imagining what kind of words would have been pronounced on a specific occasion. The exercise might involve a speech of exhortation, consolation, farewell, seeking forgiveness or other topics and students would have to find words to suit the proposed situation. *Ethopoea* could also relate to historical figures, such as kings or political leaders, or mythical figures, such as the heroes of the Trojan War, or even deities. The piece was usually composed in prose (even though very often it re-elaborated poetic material), but poetic *ethopoeae* are also attested in papyri. This technique, theorised in ancient rhetorical treatises, is extensively employed by Nonnus in the *Dionysiaca*, where numerous characters deliver speeches whose structure is indebted to the rules of *ethopoea*. Agosti observed that one of the most characteristic traits of the *Dionysiaca* is the frequency of direct speeches that deviate from the flow of the narration. This is a typical feature of late antique poetry, which developed a taste for very refined and self-contained compositional units placed within the contexts of a wider framework. This breaking of the continuity of the narration through the insertion of smaller, *tesserae*-like segments is less evident in the *Paraphrase*, as the poem is conditioned by the structure of the hypotext. Nevertheless, the influence exerted by the practice of *ethopoea* is evident also in the *Paraphrase*, especially in the characterisation of the protagonists of the Gospel account. When describing figures such as Peter, Mary Magdalene, Pontius Pilate and Judas, Nonnus gives a more sensitive and complex description of his characters, in comparison to the concise description of the *Vorlage*.

Related to the rhetorical practice of *ethopoea* is *ekphrasis*, also widely employed by Nonnus, a device which, like *ethopoea*, contributes to the creation of the impression of fine poetical segments set in a wider narrative structure. Literary miniatures describing clothes and textiles or paintings and other depictions were particularly favoured by Alexandrian poets. The theory and the technique of describing a given object were codified in ancient treatises of rhetoric, in which *ekphrasis* was apparently one of the most basic exercises normally taught during the first stages of rhetorical training. The presence of *ekphrases* is much more pervasive in the *Dionysiaca* than in the *Paraphrase*. In the former, free from the constraints represented by the *Vorlage*, Nonnus makes profuse use of this device, not only because of his rhetorical training but also because of his familiarity with Greek novels (especially Achilles Tatius), in which literary descriptions of diverse subjects are particularly abundant. However, in his Christian poem, too, this taste for descriptive insertions is an important poetic and exegetical feature, though to a more limited extent. The original function of *ekphrases* was both to please the reader and to persuade the audience. Likewise, Nonnus' vivid descriptions in the *Paraphrase* enhance the interpretation of the Johannine diction, as graphic representations lay stress on specific ideas through the use of particularly strong images, suitable for the paraphrast's purposes.

With regard to the practice of *ekphrasis*, all rhetorical treatises lay much emphasis on the importance of the vividness (*enargeia*) of the language employed in the description of a given object. In ancient theory, *enargeia* is defined as "when an event is so described in words that the business seems to be enacted and the subject to pass before your eyes". This essential quality of style contributes to the effectiveness of the rhetorical speech that enables it to render absent things present. For Quintilian, *enargeia* is accomplished in two ways: by the representation of the *tota imago* through words and by the great number of details which express this image. The desire to visually portray scenes, actions and persons is evident in both Nonnian poems and in the *Paraphrase* it plays a significant role in the representation and interpretation of the Gospel text. Nonnus employs both the approaches described by Quintilian, in that his phrasing frequently creates images in the reader's mind and in that this procedure normally involves some verbal expansion of the *Vorlage* in which characteristic descriptive details are added.

In the literary tradition, Nonnus' poem has been defined as μεταβολή. In modern languages, the term "paraphrase" is used to indicate the process by which the language and the style of a given model are changed, so that a different literary outcome is achieved, without, however, any distortion of the meaning of the original text. The rhetorical strategies of the paraphrase, according to Theon, on which Nonnus also relies on, are the following: *adjectio* (addition), *detractio* (omission), *transmutatio* (the rearrangement of words and phrases), and *immutatio* (the substitution of one or more words with other words). The Greek terms are ἔνδεια, πλεονασμός, μετάθεσις, ἐναλλαγή. Nonnus actually carries out his literary paraphrase mainly by means of *adjectio*, combined with *immutatio* and, to a lesser extent, *transmutatio*. *Adjectio* and also *transmutatio* and *immutatio*, in that they are mainly comprised of, and realised through, *adjectio*, result inevitably in the *amplificatio* of the model and contribute to its *ornatus* (embellishment). The accumulation of adjectives and phrases and the extensive use of metaphors, which have the effect of amplifying the text, are congenial to Nonnus' "baroque" penchant for overwhelming abundance. Within the various procedures employed by the poet in his amplification of the Johannine diction, the variety of metaphorical is particularly remarkable. The amplifying (αὔξησις) or diminishing (ταπείνωσις) function of metaphors was already underlined by Aristotle in his *Rhetoric*, where it is explained that, in order either to embellish or praise, the rhetorician should borrow a

metaphor from something better, pertaining to the same genre, whereas, in order to denigrate or blame, the metaphor should be borrowed from something worse. The latter statement refers to epideictic rhetoric, which in the Aristotelian scheme of things is mostly identified with the encomium, and among the three branches of oratory epideictic rhetoric is the one with the closest connection with poetry. In the time of Nonnus, the authority on epideictic was Menander. The influence of the Menandrian treatises is particularly evident in the *Dionysiaca*, especially if we accept the theory that the poem has a macro-structure and that it follows the sequence of the elements which comprise the royal encomium, the βασιλικὸς λόγος. Moreover, as has been argued, *ekphraseis* in the descriptions of towns are clearly indebted to the Menandrian scheme of the praise of cities.

In the *Dionysiaca* and in the *Paraphrase*, the rhetorical background is certainly the same. However, the *Paraphrase* is a metatext, in which the structure of the model does not allow the insertion of ample narrative structures. As a consequence, the influence exerted by Nonnus' rhetorical training on the *Paraphrase* is to be detected in shorter segments. In general, the approach of the paraphrast is extremely respectful towards the Gospel text in terms of content and sequence of events. When the poet decides to repeat the *Vorlage* in a literal way, it is either because the Johannine diction contains Biblical quotations or because such literal repetition is particularly effective. Omissions are extremely rare as well. Occasionally, Nonnus may resort to condensing or abbreviating certain Gospel passages, and this typically happens when repetitions occur in the Johannine text. The usual procedure, the expansion of the *Vorlage*, is achieved on lexical and theological levels, so that, eventually, it is typically intertwined with religious exegesis. The rich variety of metaphorical images and rhetorical devices, such as *anaphora*, *hypallage*, alliteration, oxymoron, and *periphrasis*, for example, far from being mere embellishments, usually have an exegetical function as well and are employed in order to elucidate the Gospel text. Thus, the rhetorical practice becomes an instrument, rather than a goal, for the interpreter of the Johannine text.

The tradition of interpreting the Bible for both listeners and readers was well-established in the Christian community, especially so because of the appearance of heresies which made dogmatic clarifications necessary, as has been repeatedly demonstrated. Cyril, for instance, on whom Nonnus principally draws, stresses the need for heresy to be combatted in the introduction of his commentary on John. As regards the Latin Bible epics, it has been argued that their debt to Christian exegesis is greater than their debt to classical education. The opposite has again been suggested, and a composite view has also been proposed, according to which there is a balance between Christianity and Antiquity in Bible epic. Readings which see primarily Christianity or primarily pagan methods of paraphrase in the Bible epic in fact recognise a more or less distinctive line between engagement in Christian interpretation, on the one hand, and, on the other, adherence on the author's part to classical rhetorical models. Like his Latin counterparts, Nonnus, too, is primarily a poet-exegete and secondarily a poet-rhetorician who (simply) applies the ancient rhetorical principles of rewording (through amplification and the various techniques associated with it) to improve a given text, in this case a scriptural text. Yet—to follow a line of thought similar to that behind the composite approach we have just mentioned—the cultural distance between ancient rhetorical tradition and religious exegesis itself is not necessarily that great.

First of all, paraphrase itself can be actually an act of exegesis. This is especially true for the literary paraphrase, whether religious or not. Commentators on Aristotle elucidated his ideas, producing a kind

of *philosophical* paraphrase, and other ancient paraphrasts, such as Eutecnius, also produced paraphrases which clarified the meaning of the original. Thus, the paraphrast is *a priori* engaged in the interpretation of his *Vorlage*, in pagan tradition, too. Secondly, it has been shown that Christian exegesis itself draws, at least partly, on ancient methods of interpretation, especially interpretation associated with the school practice or purely philological. In particular, Origen's commentaries on the Gospels have been examined in the light of methods of philological exegesis, such as διόρθωσις and ἀνάγνωσις (textual criticism), γλωσσηματικόν (explanation of words), τεχνικόν (grammatical and rhetorical clarifications), ἱστορικόν (explanation of facts, or, more specifically, "the enquiry that produces as much information as possible with respect to the elements, actions, characters or background of the text"), matters of metre (μετρικόν) and style, identification of the πρόσωπον, i.e the speaker of the passage in question. These categories are in fact adjusted, by modern critics, from the description of the γραμματική by Dionysius Thrax and from the clarifications of this description by his commentator. If we transfer these principles from their use in prose commentaries to the freer and more complex poetic creation, we can see that in the *Paraphrase* especially the explanation of words and the various aspects of the ἱστορικόν, which can be rendered with the general term *realia*, are constantly in the poet's mind and are intermingled with his purely religious interpretative comments. This "*realia*" aspect can be in fact traced in every kind of amplification in which Christian exegesis is also present. With reference to the investigation of the present study, it appears in the poet's explanations (being thus interwoven with the γλωσσηματικόν), in his sketching of character and even in his elaborations of high theological significance, such as the additions concerning the details of the Crucifixion. For interpretation (which includes religious exegesis), as a literary practice rooted in the Greek tradition of *paideia* in which didacticism was inherent in poetry and Homer was an exemplary "teacher" and an encyclopaedic source, see below, *H. Interpretatio*, introductory note.

Despite the intrinsic restrictions inherent in the paraphrastic genre, where the inventiveness of the poet is undeniably constrained by the existence of a model (and respect for it) and by a specific sequence of points to elaborate on, Nonnus' creativity in reworking his model, that is, in transferring its contents to a different literary genre, finds infinite ways to express itself through the resources of ποικιλία, even in this seemingly rigid framework.

Aims of the Present Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the different paraphrastic techniques employed by Nonnus in his rendition of the Johannine text. Notwithstanding the ample variety of the different stylistic solutions employed by Nonnus in his re-elaboration of the Johannine Gospel and despite the fact that it is impossible to categorise his overwhelming poetic exuberance, it is still possible to distinguish certain criteria of rewriting through analysis of passages of the paraphrased text and comparison with the *Vorlage*.

The 1985 monograph of Roberts, which investigates the paraphrastic techniques of Latin bible epic, offers a valuable method, although it has been criticised for its excessive focus on the debt of the Latin poems to ancient rhetoric. This study classifies a number of paraphrastic procedures, most of which are pertinent to Nonnus' work. A number of principal categories that Roberts uses to examine paraphrasing techniques, such as the insertion of *periphrasis*, literal paraphrasis, the transpositions, the synonymic expansion, the handling of the speech, the *interpretatio*, we will discuss with regard to Nonnus' work.

Nevertheless, the Nonnian re-elaboration of the Johannine text by no means falls into all the categories singled out by Roberts. For example, literal paraphrasis, omissions and transpositions are extremely rare, conflations and abbreviations seldom occur, and, conversely, the technique of *amplificatio* is so widely employed, that it is not always easy to draw an accurate line between several of its components (such as the accumulation of phrases or the handling of the speech) and the aspect of *interpretatio*. The difficulty of dissecting the poetic text into rigid compartments arises mainly from the nature of Nonnus' poem, which involves numerous references, ramifications and allusions to different traditions, ranging over centuries of pagan literature and Christian theology.

Our examination of the techniques which Nonnus employs to compose his paraphrase also includes discussions of Nonnian insertions that significantly enrich the text, in contrast to Roberts' approach. Roberts mostly employs rhetorical categorisation of the poets' paraphrastic modes. We discuss many rhetorical figures, while also examining other techniques. These include *ethopoea*, which rests on a basis of rhetoric, but still allows a rich and free development of its material. We also look at character sketching, whether realised through speech or through some other means, the heightening of the dramatic atmosphere and the use of imagery and striking description. In all of our discussions, we look at the exegetical background and at intertextual references to other poetry, where such references seem probable and significant. Thus our schema does in essence retain Roberts' categorisation, albeit greatly expanding upon it, and rests on ancient rhetorical theory. It does enrich this categorisation and demonstrates how far exegesis is present in many other constituents of the *amplificatio*–αὔξησις, in addition to dealing with pure *interpretatio*, which concerns passages in which the exegetical element is prevalent: our analysis of the explanations, the imagery, the character sketching and the sub-chapters in which these discussions consist also sheds light on the poet's use of exegetical material and his consequent clarification of various theological notions, *inter alia*. As Nodes concludes for the Latin Bible epics, for Nonnus, too, doctrine is one of his poem's dimensions. It is not the only one, but it is still highly important.

A systematic presentation of parallels in diction, motifs, images, details in the sketching of character and other techniques between the *Dionysiaca* and the *Paraphrase* is beyond the scope of this study. However, we make reference to the pagan epic when comparisons are significant as far as Nonnus' aesthetic choices and wider poetic universe are concerned.

Our approach does not lie in attempting to categorise Nonnus' paraphrastic strategies within rigid compartments. The aim of the following chapters is rather to offer a representative selection of examples that illustrate Nonnus' various techniques of rephrasing the *Vorlage*, in an attempt to understand better the approach of the paraphrast vis-à-vis his model, while bearing in mind that we are more likely to identify certain directional principles, so to speak, rather than to discern strict guidelines.

After the Introduction, followed by a chapter which summarises the ancient theoretical discussions on and around paraphrase, we group Nonnus' modes of paraphrasing in the two main categories used in this study, that is *Non-amplificatory paraphrase* and *Amplification*. The first category examines Nonnian passages in which the original text is only minimally altered: these "non-amplificatory" techniques, which are the exception rather than the rule in Nonnus' re-elaboration, involve literal paraphrase, abbreviations and conflations and transpositions. In the latter category, the *Amplificatio*, we investigate the various forms of the typical techniques of expansion of the model. Amplification encompasses numerous individual techniques here. The examination begins with the less drastic modes, such

as *periphrasis* and synonymic *amplificatio*, realised through additions of adjectives, participles and the figure of *anaphora*. The following section deals with Nonnus' linguistic explanations, a practice closely related to the use of exegesis, as the poet explains the terms both against the background of Biblical and other Christian literature but also in the light of his encyclopaedic knowledge. In this sub-chapter, then, we look for the first time at a condensed and concise form of interpretation. Next, we examine more extended and impressive instances of expansion of the Gospel. In the sections that follow, we discuss cases of Nonnus' elaboration of imagery through which theological notions are conveyed and of passages that display theatricality, through memorable visualisation of the scenes, description of landscapes and other settings and the effects of sound. In these instances of extended amplification, theological exegesis is always implied to a greater or a lesser extent, and our analysis constantly tries to take account of this crucial point. Furthermore, the rhetorical principle of *enargeia* is frequently exploited here. We then move on to examine the Nonnian techniques employed in his presentation of persons and their speech. This is an aspect of amplification related, in a sense, to the "theatrical" quality of the work, which is, however, much more focused on the characters' psychology and intellect. The relevant sections investigate the handling of the direct and indirect speech and the sketching of character. Nonnus' substantial re-elaboration as regards insertions in the Johannine persons' words, comments surrounding these words and descriptions of the persons' appearance, gestures and movements are discussed in the sub-chapters on the handling of speech and in the character sketching sections. Here we look in further detail at the poet's use of the principles of *ethopoea* and his blending of religious exegesis with it. Yet, it is chiefly in the final section, which deals with religious *interpretatio per se*, that we investigate a number of crucial theological issues and their handling by the poet on the basis of selected representative and significant passages. It is there that Nonnus' theology is placed in the context of his contemporary Christian milieu. Trinitarian theology obviously occupies an important part of this study. <>

ORGIES OF WORDS: MYSTERY TERMINOLOGY IN THE "PARAPHRASE OF ST. JOHN'S GOSPEL" BY NONNUS OF PANOPOLIS by Filip Doroszewski, translated by Damian Jasiński [Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte, De Gruyter, 9783110790856]

Nonnus' *Paraphrasis*, an epic rendition of the Fourth Gospel, offers a highly sophisticated interpretation of the Johannine text. An essential means to this end is extensive use of the imagery related to Greek, and especially Dionysiac, mysteries.

Doroszewski successfully challenges the once predominant view that the mystery terminology in the poem is nothing more than rhetorical ornament. He convincingly argues for an important exegetical role Nonnus gives to the mystery terms. On the one hand, they refer to the Mystery of Christ. Jesus introduces his followers into the new dimension of life and worship that enables them to commune with God. This is portrayed as falling into Bacchic frenzy and being initiated into secret rites. On the other hand, the terminology has a polemical function, too, as Nonnus uses it to present the Judaic cult as bearing the hallmarks of pagan mysteries.

As the book discusses the *Paraphrasis* against the background of the mystery metaphor development in antiquity, it serves as an excellent introduction to this key feature of the ancient mentality and will appeal to all interested in the culture of Imperial times, especially in Early Christianity, Patristics, Neoplatonism and Late Antique poetry.

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Nonnus of Panopolis, a Greek poet from late antique Egypt who probably lived and worked in the cosmopolitan city of Alexandria in the fifth century AD, is a mysterious figure. Considering the lack of biographical details, scholars have focused their research on Nonnus' poetic output, which is a much more gratifying field of study than his biography (which remains difficult to reconstruct). The poet's legacy is composed of two works only, but both may prove very interesting to contemporary readers for a number of reasons. The first poem, the Dionysiaca, is the longest of all ancient epics to have survived to this day. As its title makes evident, Nonnus dedicated it to Dionysus, the Greek god of wine, mysteries and ritual ecstasy. Written in forty-eight books and only slightly shorter than the Iliad and the Odyssey put together, the Dionysiaca forms a colourful mosaic of styles, literary references and, often considerably modified, mythological motifs. It is worth mentioning that, as a closer reading reveals, the numerous scenes of the poem refer directly to models derived from Christian literature. In this way, what at first glance might seem to be a companion to the classical Dionysiac mythology proves to be a much more complex work, one that escapes easy categorisation. The other poem, the Paraphrase of the Gospel of Saint John, is an epic rendering of the deeds of Jesus Christ described in the Fourth Gospel. The simple, meditative language of John gives way to heroic hexameter rhythm and is endowed with Homeric aplomb, while the message of the Gospel, although unchanged, receives an additional

dimension. This is especially noticeable in Nonnus' use of poetic imagery, often informed by Greek mythology, ambiguous terminology and the interpretative clues embedded in the poem that result from a deep under-standing of the Bible and the writings of the Church Fathers. At first glance, the stark difference in subject matter may seem to set Non-nus' poems apart from each other to the point of contradiction. This, together with the lack of biographical information, has given rise to numerous, often very peculiar conjectures regarding the Panopolitan poet. His lively and intriguingly puzzling interest in Jesus and Dionysus has provoked scholars to see Nonnus' poetry in the light of the purported twists and turns of his life: some have suggested that he had been a recalcitrant pagan who ultimately converted to Christianity, whereas others, contrarily, presumed that he was first a Christian but later apostatised, and still others held that he had regarded pagan and Christian beliefs as a mutually intertwined, syncretic whole. Views on the literary quality of his epic poems were also exceedingly disparate: they were de-cried as decadent, bloated, chaotic and soporific, but a decades, recognized for their seductively innovative and original characteristics that draw the reader into a whirl of highly erudite allusions. The fragmentary and conjectural image that emerges from research on Nonnus' biography gave rise to a number of fictional, pseudo-biographical writings.1Among them, we find both deftly fabricated forgeries and genuine literary works that emerged in response to questions that vexed those who were especially fond of Nonnus' poetry. In the nineteenth century, the biography of Nonnus caught the attention of a highly skilled forger, Konstantinos Simonides. Having counterfeited a papyrus that described Nonnus as a pagan poet who received baptism and dedicated himself to Christian literature, he tried to excite the curiosity of the first translator of Nonnus' poetry into a modern language, the French Countde Marcellus. An analogous portrayal of the poet's life is found in the short story The Poet of Panopolis by Simonides' contemporary, Richard Garret. In it, the pagan Nonnus, unsatisfied with the poor reception of the Dionysiaca, decides to convert and amaze Christian readers with his Paraphrase. He also agrees to be-come a candidate for episcopacy in his hometown of Panopolis, incurring the wrath of the god Apollo, who, as a punishment, orders the repentant poet to publish the Paraphrase, which dooms him to lingering for perpetuity as an unsolvable enigma in the eyes of future generations. Nonnus is also the main character in the novel I'm Garten Klaudias by the twentieth-century scholar Margarete Riemschneider. The poet goes here by the name of Ammonios, and it is only later that he is nicknamed Nonnus. Having finished his studies in Alexandria, Ammonios travels widely across the eastern parts of the Roman Empire, which allows him to witness historic events and collaborate with such important personalities of his day as Gregory of Nazianzus and Stilicho. Towards the end of his turbulent life, the poet, still as a pagan, finds refuge in the Egyptian monastery of Koptos, where over time he converts to Christianity, adopts the name of Nonnos and writes the Paraphrase. It is readily noticeable that these reconstructions of Nonnus' life have emerged from fascination not only with his oeuvre, but also with the world of Late Antiquity. That historical period, which started to be thoroughly studied only relatively recently, was long considered a period of the gradual decline of ancient civilization and culture, one that lacked originality when compared with earlier centuries. Today, however, it reveals itself ever more manifestly not as a world of despondent nostalgia for the glory of the that boldly and consciously drew from earlier traditions and endowed them with new dimensions. It was a world where two great traditions, classical and JudaeoChristian, were becoming inextricably intertwined, creating an entirely new quality. The elements that, on an equal footing, constituted the culture of Late Antiquity included Homeric epics and the Bible, mythological figures and Christian saints, Dionysus and Jesus. Despite the gradual Christianization of the Roman

Empire, the classical heritage was certainly not disparaged; on the contrary, it was subject to reinterpretation and thrived as an integral part of everyday life.

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The original version of this book was published by the Foundation for Polish Science in the year 2016, when Nonnian studies were already an emerging field in classics. Since that time the field has gained even more prominence and attention, and is now a fully grown discipline with its own conferences, volumes and an ever-increasing number of journal articles and monographs. Out of Nonnus' two epics, however, the Dionysiaca still keeps pride of place in scholarly literature, while the Paraphrase of St. John's Gospel often plays second fiddle to the longer poem. This may present some obstacles to a fuller appreciation and understanding of both Nonnus' legacy and the culture of his time. The epic tale of Jesus is no less important for gaining insight into the imaginative world of the poet and his era than that of Dionysus. To focus only on the latter would yield a picture that is if not false, then certainly incomplete (ἡμιτελής, as Nonnus would probably say). The terminology of the mysteries serves as a perfect example. Nonnus uses it frequently in both poems, but he does so differently in each. In the Dionysiaca he uses it mostly in the context of worship, and thus the terminology is to be understood in its literal sense. In the Paraphrase, on the other hand, it is often used in the best tradition of the mystery metaphor, which was fundamental to ancient religious-philosophical thought, and whose uninterrupted continuity we can trace from Plato to Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite and beyond. Given the aforementioned disparity in research on Nonnus' poems, as well as the cognitive implications that result from it, I am pleased that through this translation my book will now be available to an international audience. I hope that it will contribute at least a little to increasing interest in the Paraphrase, and thus also to a deeper understanding of Nonnus and the world of Late Antiquity. <>

RELIGION: REREADING WHAT IS BOUND TOGETHER by Michel Serres, translated by Malcolm DeBevoise [Stanford University Press, 9781503631496]

With this profound final work, completed in the days leading up to his death, Michel Serres presents a vivid picture of his thinking about religion—a constant preoccupation since childhood—thereby completing *Le Grand Récit*, the comprehensive explanation of the world and of humanity to which he devoted the last twenty years of his life. Themes from Serres's earlier writings—energy and information, the role of the media in modern society, the anthropological function of sacrifice, the role of scientific knowledge, the problem of evil—are reinterpreted here in the light of the Old Testament accounts of Isaac and Jonah and a variety of Gospel episodes, including the Three Wise Men of the Epiphany, the Transfiguration, Peter's denying Christ, the Crucifixion, Emmaus, and the Pentecost. Monotheistic religion, Serres argues, resembles mathematical abstraction in its dazzling power to bring together the real and the virtual, the natural and the transcendent; but only in its Christian embodiment is it capable of binding together human beings in such a way that partisan attachments are dissolved and a new era of history, free for once of the lethal repetition of collective violence, can be entered into.

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Michel Serres was working as fast as he could in order to deliver a finished manuscript, in the event only a day before he died, and so did not have an opportunity to correct page proof. The French edition, printed directly from the files received from the author, is marred by infelicities of various kinds that no doubt he would have wished to eliminate. In making an English translation, I have made every effort to ensure that silent modifications of the text, additions and subtractions alike, are consonant not only with the sense and spirit of the French but also with the thrust of Serres's work as a whole, and especially the attempts at synthesis over the last two decades. The subject of this final book, religion, plainly preoccupied him throughout his life.

I have streamlined the table of contents for the sake of clarity and consistency, seeking to bring out the main theme of each chapter. The various subsidiary themes—involving the idea of hot spots, networks (or webs) of relations, false gods, love and death in relation to violence, and so forth—frequently recur in the section titles, and no reader will fail either to understand their importance or to grasp their connection with one another.— Malcolm DeBevoise

> Then the scribes and Pharisees brought [to Jesus] a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placing her in the midst they said to him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. Now, in the law, Moses commanded that such should be stoned. What do you say?" ... But Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground [as though he did not hear]. And as they continued to ask him, he stood up and said to them, "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her." And once more he bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. —John 8:3-8

As it was well understood by men that the woman alone had committed adultery, an agreement was reached among them that she should be stoned. Violence within a group was focused on an individual. This human sacrifice may be said to have bound together the murderers.

Before responding and pardoning, Jesus bent down to write on the ground. As if the evangelist, in his account, had pointed to a passage written beneath his own, in Jesus's hand, just as a palimpsest displays one script and hides another. Must we reread the one in order to decipher the other?

Linguists tell us that the term "religion" has two sources, one more probable than the other: rereading and binding together. In what follows, by ceaselessly reading texts in the hope of being able to reread the very one that Jesus wrote down on the ground, I try to place the two meanings in perspective, as Saint John the Apostle's account does here. Must we read it as saying that, in pardoning the victim, without punishing her executioners, it undoes the agreement that binds together these men in infamy? This is the question that the present book seeks to answer. <>

CHRYSOSTOM AS EXEGETE: SCHOLARLY TRADITIONS AND RHETORICAL AIMS IN THE HOMILIES ON GENESIS
by Samuel Pomeroy [Series: Vigiliae Christianae, Supplements, Brill, 9789004469228]

To what extent and to what purposes did John Chrysostom engage previous models of Biblical exegesis? In this systematic study of his Homilies on Genesis, new light is shed on the precision of his adaption of works by Basil, Origen, Eusebius of Emesa, and Eusebius of Caesarea, findings set against a wider 'web' of parallels with various other exegetes (e.g. Ephrem, Diodore, Didymus). The cumulative picture is a network of shared knowledge across geographical and ecclesial boundaries which served as creative cache for Chrysostom's discourses. With the metaphors of textual obscurity and word-depth, he prioritized name and word interpretations as a means of producing multiple layers of ethical evaluation.

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The 'and' in the subtitle of this book is meant as a conjunctive: in the homilies of John Chrysostom, I do not here intend for scholarly traditions to be understood as separate from their rhetorical aims. By 'and' neither do I denote a cataloguing of A followed by B, an analysis of traditions of Bible study in the Homilies on Genesis followed by a study of the preacher's many paraenetic addresses coursing throughout our 67 homilies. Instead, I attempt to view the scholastic and the oratorical as two sides of the same, organic art intended for performance.

This said, however, it must be admitted that this study devotes more pages to the archaeology and categorization of the exegetical traditions on which Chrysostom draws, what Pierre Fruchon called the 'prior community'. That is because while there are many studies that include John Chrysostom in a reception-history or effect-history analysis of Genesis exegesis, we know a limited amount about how Chrysostom interacted with the sizeable foundation work that had already been done on the book of Genesis by the late 4th-century. And in order to analyze the rhetorical purposes of tradition, which I accomplish by case-studies in Chapters 2, 3, and 4, that which Chrysostom received as tradition must also be established—chapters 5, 6, 7, and 8.

The important study of Hagit Amirav, as Frances Young recognized, suggests that much can be learned about the transmission of ideas and biblical learning in early Christianity by scrutinizing John Chrysostom's approach to the teaching of the book of Genesis. His work illuminates an ongoing process of debate about patterns of reference around specific texts and offers the opportunity to examine how rhetorical context and the idealized aims of discourse factor into the choices made. The present volume, therefore, may be viewed as an extended analysis of the inspiring work of these two scholars.

If John Chrysostom possesses any originality in the history of the art of biblical interpretation, it is in his eclectic and almost compilatory practice on the one hand, and his at times brilliant application of technical questions to moral paraenesis on the other. This diversity of practice is likely the product of the contexts in which he worked and the resources at his disposal. I avoid the word 'method' because it is slightly misleading, implying the systematic strain for a coherence between hermeneutical theory and interpretative result that does not belong to our preacher. That is not to downplay the importance of such passages where hermeneutical theory comes to the fore—we have always famous passages like that in his Homily 5 on Isaiah 6, which captured Bultmann's attention (see Chapter 2, n. 15). It is to stress rather that at the points where he can be tested, Chrysostom is not always internally consistent (as Catherine Broc-Schmezer demonstrated so aptly) nor does he perform in the way we would expect of a student of Eusebius of Emesa and Diodore, raising again the question of context and tradition. While as a genre compilatory exegesis would flourish well after Chrysostom's time, a systematic study of his exegesis of Genesis deepens the conclusions of Amirav and Young and, I hope, provides us with a fuller profile of his activity insofar as it involved the bible, its interpretations, and the ways these traditions were employed for Christian self-understanding. Attending to Chrysostom helps us put an ear to the ground and, as it were, detect even if faintly how the waters of biblical science were flowing at the time.

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John Chrysostom's interrelation of exegetical tradition and rhetorical aim may be described by what Jauss aptly called the 'symbiotic unity' between 'imitation and creativity, preservation and discovery, tradition and innovation'. In the form that we have them, the *Homilies* were composed with precise reference to other models, at least sections of Eusebius of Emesa's and Diodore's *Commentary on Genesis*, Basil of Caesarea's *Letter* 260, Eusebius of Caesarea's *Demonstration on the Gospel* 8.1, his *Question 7 to Stephen*, and Origen's *Scholia on Genesis*. Systematic parallels throughout indicate that the list was likely more extensive, but lack of surviving material does not at this point permit further precision. The fact that so many of Chrysostom's exegetical choices can be paralleled to other Late Antique exegetes attests to a widespread, shared, network of exegetical traditions, 'webs' of text-referents on which Chrysostom built as he interpreted the text anew.

Joining paradigms of research that view Chrysostom's homiletic discourses as an integral art, this work has shown how previous models of exegesis functioned as both creative cache and methodological ideal for his pedagogical purposes. Disputation, which included the dialogical revision of traditional models, is always related to ethics, the implementation of behaviour envisioned by the preacher to connect biblical history with his own context. In this way, Chrysostom's handling of the bible may be understood as 'zetetic', in contrast to other knowledge-models of Late Antiquity such as Epiphanius's 'antiquarian' approach.[2] Whereas Epiphanius deployed biblical learning to create overwhelming, cumulative caricatures of his opponents' views, Chrysostom constructed contained engagements with previous exegetical models for the purposes of making memorable and coherent his ethical teaching. While this was not an open invitation to scholastic curiosity or democratic dialogue between different religious viewpoints, the asking and answering of questions regarding the biblical text, and the subtle adaptation of how previous models posed such questions, is essential to his idealized pastoral purposes.

As mirrored by the structure of the present work, focusing on how Chrysostom accomplishes this connection takes us to the heart of his standing in webs of patristic exegetical tradition and illuminates just how interconnected these webs were across authors of disparate ecclesial contexts and literary genres.

Chrysostom's theoretical expression in the *Homily 5 on Isaiah 6* that non-literal reading is warranted only where the text permits is shown to be an overused and perhaps unhelpful gateway into Chrysostom's hermeneutics. As expressed systematically in practice, Chrysostom's non-literal readings are warranted through name-depth study. In line with a 'zetetic' model, themes, images, and doctrines of spiritual and canonical relevance are 'hinted at'. They are found 'hidden' under or 'murkily' veiled by the specific words, places, and names in the biblical text. Chrysostom has thereby too often been simplistically ranged next to Diodore's distinction between *theōria* and *historia* and Theodore's polemic against allegory as the importation of foreign meaning. As such, *theōria* does not occur for exegetical value in the *Homilies on Genesis*, and in the rare cases where Chrysostom brought up polemics against allegory, they concerned the controversial theological implications of the paradise narrative that circulated widely. While he shared some of their didactic emphases, techniques, and awareness of exegetical questions-and-answers, and so should be positioned in relation to Antiochenes, in practice Chrysostom's non-literal readings preferred Syro-Palestinian and Alexandrian terminology and tradition.

Holding these elements together permits a global perspective on Chrysostom's didactic priorities, from which we distinguish three.

Asking Exegetical Questions to Defamiliarize

'Do not be estranged', Chrysostom would say at numerous points concerning a biblical word, image, or verse. This use of the Greek root *xenos* is illustrative, for often Chrysostom would ask questions about the biblical texts in order to create gaps of understanding for his audience, what Chin has observed as the creation of an 'unstable' biblical text. Viewed from within the wider panorama of Late Antique Christian exegetes, especially Antiochenes Eusebius of Emesa, Diodore, and Theodore who were aware of the translated character of the Septuagint and sought to clarify it, Chrysostom's basis of operation from the fundamental supposition of the bible's linguistic instability is unsurprising. Chrysostom expressed this instability with a range of metaphors pertaining to obscurity and clarity and hidden treasure, but also with subtler cues such as 'instead of' or questions like 'what is this?' The *Homilies on*

Genesis form a strong reference point for a curriculum of questions-and-answers presupposed in many of his other Old Testament exegetical works, such as *On the Obscurity of the Old Testament, Sermon 9 on Genesis, Homilies on the Changing of Names, Homilies 7 and 9 on the Statues*. In this dossier, *zētēma, aporia*, and related terminology reflect a scholastic engagement with the book of Genesis for catechetical and pastoral purposes. Into the gaps created by these destabilizing 'questions' he could invest his own ideality of meaning, related back to the single-*skopos* or *hypothesis* of the particular discourse. Even the seemingly simple task of glossing and paraphrasing, which was widespread throughout his homilies and often guided by learned resources, is aimed to revert his audience's attention to their envisioned spiritual significance.

Covenant practices, intermarriage, a shoestrap, basic human action-metaphors ('Their eyes were opened'), the rainbow, a refugee packing up his tent like a soldier, a brother feeling anger for his violated kinsman—all such cases could be affirmed as unfamiliar and so containing a particular teaching which Chrysostom wished to give. Many of these were less obviously problematic—who needed to think twice about the anger felt over a violated kinsman? Assessing the background to Chrysostom's word glosses illuminates that his knowledge of scholastic traditions imposes the possibility of conveying knowledge or bringing out content which can be related to the thematic coherence of the discourse. Thus, in his *Homily 29 on Genesis*, asking how Noah's sons Sem and Japheth knew not to publish abroad their father's nakedness, Chrysostom's answer is that it was by the natural law, a question related to traditional exegetical discussion about how Noah knew to make wine. But in asking the question about what would seem a rather obvious response from the perspective of moral judgement, Chrysostom defamiliarizes the scene by investing it with an anticipatory character, prefiguring the law given to Moses and so establishing a providential red-thread of Jew and Gentile throughout human history. The typology is riveted further by the looming possibility, which he poses, of contradiction and redundancy in the narrative: does the curse on Cham at one point contradict his blessing at an earlier one? Why is Canaan brought up in the first place? The questions enable him to show this providential red-thread as the *skopos* of the Noah cycle, studied here and in Amirav's work. The layering of Chrysostom's reading strategies thereby becomes complex, as a non-literal, typological interpretation of Noah's sons is correlated directly to literary-critical concerns about narrative coherence, word glossing, and the *skopos* which the *paraenesis* makes clear: the sign that the divine has not abandoned human beings is that they are responsible for their own actions, always capable of choosing to single themselves out from the crowd and take the narrow path of virtue.

Similarly, a number of cherished cultural practices, particularly those surrounding family and honour-traditions, are called into question. Speculating about Cain's marriage connected to reflecting on the deeper significance of names such as Seth and his son Enosh, Cain's brother and nephew. Chrysostom used exegetical traditions to pose questions that would place these characters into sharp relief, their stemming from the same stock being an obvious problem that 'made foreign' the view that honour succeeded accorded to bloodline. Thus, 'What is the meaning [of Seth's name]?', follows with non-literal readings connecting Seth and his son to themes of salvation history like the transgression of Adam and the resurrection of Christ. Chrysostom suggests, then, that all along, it is mindset that has composed the true lineage of honour, and so the true divine people. This provides an important window into Chrysostom's logic for selecting non-literal readings.

By singling out a particular name or word, non-literal readings serve as material for totalized contrast within his definitions about what is true versus what is false. At several points, notably at the ends of discourses, Chrysostom explains 'true' characteristics and qualities, such as 'freedom' or 'death'. These follow upon the exegetical discussions which have defamiliarized seemingly intimate or presupposed practices. In this Stenger's analysis of text-worlds provides the helpful categories of refamiliarization and defamiliarization. Chrysostom's take on death as 'truly' sleep alone, for instance, defamiliarizes this intimate and universal experience. His teaching is that the salvific economy of Christ has effected a historical change in the meaning of 'death' in light of the resurrection, in which his audience is implied to share. Through exegesis of Gen 49–50, in which he relied on Eusebius of Caesarea's *Demonstration on the Gospel* 8.1, the 'anticipatory' character of the text heightens this point, as Joseph's mourning is not allayed even after speaking proleptically about salvation in Christ.

'True freedom' is related to the typology of Cham, Sem, and Japheth who signify, respectively, those living in slavery, the Jews, and Gentle Christians. Their names have been made to stand for familiar, long-established historical constructs. However, Chrysostom effectively dissolves his own typology by eschewing the idea that a particular race was destined to servitude. For even those in Cham's line, the Ninevites, famously fasted and repented in time for restoration. To accomplish this, Chrysostom demonstrates some revision of previous models. Coming across the name 'Nebrod', he asks, 'What does this mean, "opposed to God?"' Understood as opposed to God by the onomastic sources, Nebrod is actually aligned within the family of repentant, and so truly 'free', persons. Exegetical traditions draw out aspects of these narratives that could serve the dialectic of familiarity and distance that Chrysostom created with his audience.

Selecting and Modifying Exegetical Traditions for 'Symphonia'

Chrysostom consistently drew upon traditions which create concord between biblical texts, yet this is accomplished most often as a pedagogical method and seldom as a stated *skopos*. While earlier apologists developed the concept of the 'symphonia' between Christian and classical Greek culture, biblical commentators championed this notion as an internal literary phenomenon, witnessing to the stability of history presided by divine providence. As a strategy for creating overlapping cognitive 'text-worlds', it served Chrysostom's purposes. Explicit mention of the *symphonia* of Scripture, such as between Old and New Testaments or across the Old Testament itself, occurs only a few times in the *Homilies on Genesis*. Yet Chrysostom's intertextual method effectively reaches toward this ideal consistently throughout. It can work to clarify linguistic questions, such as when he juxtaposes the expression 'opening of the eyes' found across different parts of Genesis. Both occurrences of this expression, Chrysostom shows, signify the act of understanding. It was found that some of these word-use juxtapositions derived from his exegetical training. For instance, like other Antiochenes, Chrysostom cites two Genesis texts in parallel to explain the meaning of the stars being 'placed' in the sky, and these Antiochenes demonstrate remarkable consistency in clarifying what this verb 'placed' should *not* mean. Examples like the latter abound and prove the sharing of a common exegetical resource by which Theodore, Diodore, Eusebius of Emesa, and Chrysostom could give the exact same gloss on this 'placed' verb, the same parallel text, and the same explanation.

But for Chrysostom, more often, the concern for *symphonia* frames the question itself, as when he asks why Scripture 'contradicts itself' at certain points. The points he brings up under this heading are developed extensively in other writings such as Eusebius of Emesa's *Commentary on Genesis* and Origen's

homilies. Often the same explanations are witnessed, such as Origen's and Chrysostom's referring to the providence over the human race in face of the problem of God resting in Gen 2,4 versus Christ saying that the Father is 'still working' in John 5,17. Chrysostom reports this as a *zētēma*, gesturing towards the shared scholastic culture of patristic biblical exegetes. Our case-study of *Homily 37 on Genesis* brings the concern for *symphonia* (one of the few places in the *Homilies on Genesis* where the term appears) to the fore in a systematic way throughout the discourse. Multiple exegetical questions address Scriptural internal contradiction, but he goes a step beyond this and synchronizes traditions of biblical study with other text-worlds, such as the juxtaposition of biblical literature as 'deep' versus pagan literature as shallow and 'broad' (the two are contradictory, then); alternatively, the providence of the creator (appeal to which solves the potential textual contradictions) is 'contrary' to human understanding, extending his promise even through the family of a refugee. Exegetical traditions thereby undergirded his construction of a hierarchy in which the audience was expected to make value judgements, such as between pagan and Christian literature, or the practice of almsgiving versus public displays of wealth.

Considering whether Chrysostom used *testimonia* traditions extends our understanding of the pedagogical concern for *symphonia* and returns to the question of his evaluative process to legitimate non-literal readings. With Ephrem the Syrian (and to the best of our knowledge, no other available patristic work), Chrysostom shared the textual construction that made Sodom and Gomorrah into a case where the divine acts in accordance with what we know is just: he investigated the situation before announcing a verdict. The precise application of the same four biblical texts to the same pericope and the judiciary *skopos* speak towards a more experiential aspect of *symphonia*, that between bible and life. Similarly, a common citation framework of texts from Deuteronomy, Ezekiel, and Jeremiah, witnessed across several different early Christian authors and literary genres, upholds the notion that the bible does not teach that children suffer for the sake of their parent's sins. But Chrysostom appears unique in applying this framework to harmonize with the problem of Canaan's curse. Again, the presentation of a value judgement on his father Cham as incontinent is the result. Chrysostom presents multiple 'spaces' in which the texts and their question resonate with various other moral and literary quandaries, such as the superfluous addition of names and the publication of a patriarch's mistake. Textual knowledge, aided by exegetical tradition, opens onto different levels of the same question of moral autonomy.

His innovation from within this web lies in the way he applied text-referent traditions to new problems and biblical texts. Since we were able to view the use of this *testimonium* tradition regarding generational sin in its context, Chrysostom's innovative take was only one among several other exegetical traditions at work in the same homily. He connects this tradition, for instance, with the typology of the sons of Noah and his use of Origen's *Scholia* for explaining some details regarding the wine and enumeration of family members. Concordance, then, functioned to instate Chrysostom's intended ethical teaching and confirm his non-literal interpretations with the creation of parallel images.

In this vein, he changed an obscurity about the bowing of Joseph's parents known by Diodore and Eusebius ('To whom?', they asked) to a potential contradiction regarding the efficacy of Joseph's dream—Chrysostom raised the possibility that this was unfulfilled prophecy. Precisely this notion of anticipatory speech, then, recurs throughout the homily, showing how the 'faith' spoken of in Hebrews 11 is exemplified by the bowing of Jacob's parents. It also sets up the exposition of the Blessing of Jacob (Gen 49) for which Chrysostom used a non-Antiochene source, Eusebius of Caesarea, to create a

systematic typology. This rather dense tissue of traditions shows us that Chrysostom could revise Antiochene traditions as suited his aims, and that the result enabled him to create coherence with his ensuing exploration of non-literal exegesis. Typology is often reinforced by concordance within the biblical text. So, Eusebius of Caesarea's typology of Gen 49 finds warrant for Chrysostom because 'the vine' in 49,11 may accord with John 15,1 where Christ self-identifies as 'the vine'. But other aspects of this non-literal reading, such as the 'white teeth', are not argued intertextually; they are supplied by Eusebius. In such moments, it is the tradition that determines Chrysostom's exegetical choices. So too Chrysostom adapts an allegory of 'light' developed in Didymus and Origen, which they supported with concordance between Gen 1,3, John 1,9, and Rom 13,13, the last clearly conveying the ethical import because Paul recommends his readers to walk as 'children of the light'. Whereas they viewed the 'darkness' of creation as the 'devil' or 'ignorance', Chrysostom used the same three text referents to say that this darkness is 'error', specifically the error of holding that the creation comes from pre-existent matter. He thereby used an Alexandrian allegorical tradition, based in concordance, to advance his own teaching. Diodore explicitly denounced this idea as 'allegory', just as he had the Eusebian typology of Gen 49.

Creating Non-literal Readings from Traditions of Name-and Word-Depth Study

In his typologies and onomastic interpretations, John Chrysostom departs from his Antiochene *milieu*. Thus, to accurately describe Chrysostom's experience of interpretation, we must account for three things. First, the fact that the name is the gateway. Second, that this knowledge is provided and warranted through tradition. Third, that Chrysostom strove to connect these meanings with other exegetical maneuvers in the context of the discourse by creating a fluid but hierarchical evaluative framework.

If Origen's method for evaluating the appropriateness of a non-literal reading included the identification of philological parallels, John Chrysostom may be said to share this methodology insofar as he was guided by previous traditions. Chrysostom discerned which ideas and words from previous traditions could be used to unite or corroborate the *skopos* of a discourse. 'A single idea', writes Rousseau about Chrysostom, 'dominates an extended address; an address nevertheless held carefully together by constant repetitions and cross-references'. What is remarkable about this pattern in Chrysostom's *Homilies on Genesis* is that traditions of text-referent are themselves the basis for the provision of parallels that construct non-literal meanings.

We see this especially with his use of onomastic traditions. The text-referent of Noah as 'rest' (not 'righteous') provides Chrysostom with a key word absent from the Genesis text but that can be searched out elsewhere in Scripture, leading to his identification of 'rest' in a rare variant of Job 3,23, where 'death is rest for a man'. With Didymus Chrysostom allegorizes this death to be the curse of Adam (warranted by the text: 'You shall surely die', warns God) which is labor and toil. The precision of these agreements demands a shared resource between the two authors. The same justification based on name-interpretation is found in his elaborate use of Eusebius of Ceasarea's *Question to Stephen* 7 to explain the birth of Thamar's twins in Gen 37 as a detailed typology of the historical drama of the Church—God's true people—ceding first order to the Jews. Divine favor, in fact, rested on them first but only for a 'little while'. Each interpretative move is based on *historia* of the text, such as the 'little bit' by which Zara's hand rises out of the birth canal first, only to be put back. But the initial impetus for committing to the typological reading comes from Eusebius—the onomastic tradition is not known

before him, and the numerous linguistic parallels between he and Chrysostom are telling. It is Eusebius who provides Zara as meaning 'rising', and this messianic image is enough for Chrysostom to elaborate the entire interpretation in detail.

Name interpretation was not an occasional practice of adornment but could substantiate the *skopos* throughout an entire homily. Taking up the meaning of 'Nod' as 'tossing', Cain's vagabond condition, Chrysostom highlights in *Homily 19 on Genesis* the meaning of other names and their importance. It leads to a reconsideration of the purpose of naming at the fundamental cultural level. Using the framework of natural law, exegetical traditions that reveal the depth of names show that the practice of naming children belongs to an even deeper moral and historical importance. What his audience considers as an honour-practice can be cast as an opportunity to express the same gratitude as Seth, whose name is a 'memory' of Adam and Abel, and whose son Enosh's name 'invokes' the Lord; similarly, 'Enoch' is 'murkily' 'about' the resurrection. Naid, in this sequence, is negatively interpreted to show the effects of a lineage gone awry. Thus, the exegetical traditions which supply the name-referent couples inspire a hierarchical-evaluative framework.

Antiochene Debates about Non-literal Interpretations

At several points, John Chrysostom adopted interpretations which Diodore explicitly deemed 'allegorical', and conversely, Chrysostom rejected interpretations as 'too philosophical' that were Diodore's opinions. This calls for a revision of our understanding of Chrysostom as Diodore's pupil. Based on this research, Chrysostom should be considered as an eclectic exegete, well-trained in Antiochene works, but who made consistent effort to incorporate a broad range of resources witnessed by Syrian and Alexandrian authors.

Chapter 5 substantiated that to a considerable extent, Chrysostom was aware of questions-and-answers in the *Commentary on Genesis* by Eusebius of Emesa, and at many points, based on the surviving material, Diodore and Chrysostom go different directions from this common source. At the same time, however, a considerable collection of other cases exhibits total independence from and contradiction to Diodore and Eusebius. The most interesting point for our considerations emerges from the comparison of Diodore, Eusebius of Emesa, Eusebius of Caesarea, and Diodore on Gen 49. There, it is clear that the Emesene and Diodore know the Caesarean's readings but reject most of them, restricting Christological referents to only two verses. Chrysostom was, with the support of a known resource, willing to say more, that the whole pericope was spoken 'about Christ'.

This expression 'about' (περὶ) acquires a technical meaning for Greek exegetes, as they identified problematic readings by denying that they could be 'about' a subject absent from the text, such as Theodore denying that Micah 5 was 'about' Christ and Chrysostom affirming that it was, in fact, 'about' him. It was a debate about which points in the text could be validated as either the change of a *skopos* or the addition of a *skopos* in a layered reading. Chrysostom's distinction from his contemporary Antiochene authors is his willingness, in practice, to determine ecclesiological, moral, and Christological referents over an extended pericope. His non-literal readings follow directly upon texts that receive literal readings, making it seem difficult to determine the reason behind his change of the *skopos*. Chrysostom included non-literal readings at the points where he clearly has the resources to make these distinctions. Such resources provided intra-biblical connections and ethical and theological themes to incorporate into his discourse. For instance, Jacob's deathbed bowing as prophecy is related to Gen

49 as anticipatory speech, and these in turn reflect back upon Jacob's actual death scene in which his son weeps in anticipation of Christ overcoming death—of which 'we' know the benefit. This returns us to the integrality of rhetoric and exegesis. Chrysostom's non-literal readings are always adduced for their value as text-images in his task of leading souls according to what he viewed as the teachings of the Church.

Chrysostom regularly presented exegetical traditions to his audience because he believed in the reciprocal relation of knowledge and ethics. The knowledge that certain figures, characters, images of the Old Testament could be viewed in a figurative, salvation-historical dimension supported his paraenetical elements by which he sought to instill his understanding of Christian identity. By presenting his teachings as a search for treasure, he urges the reader to consider the Divine authorship of history, which is reflected and made accessible to the reader by the language of the bible, and tiny words like names and places especially could lead one to perceive this providence. By invoking the precision and economic effectiveness of previously developed ideas, Chrysostom creates a dialogical space for the reader to consider the physical objects around him as spiritual because even their names may be invested with typological significance. For Chrysostom, this connection is intelligible because it is manifest in the bible itself, especially through the prominence in the Old Testament of etiological narrative. He presupposes a continuity of the physical universe, that seen both in text and in world, as the arena in which the Creator was incarnated for the sake of showing a higher—or deeper—ethical plane on which to act. From here he can place the reader's spiritual path into evaluative relationship with that of the biblical heroes and create qualitative hierarchies spanning between both worlds. His experience as an interpreter is dictated by this need. To view Chrysostom's art in its full dimensions, his dialogical revision of previous exegetical models provides a perspective on his concerted effort to bring the developed resources of biblical science of his epoch to bear for his audience's benefit. <>

CONVERTING THE IMAGINATION: TEACHING TO RECOVER JESUS' VISION FOR FULLNESS OF LIFE by Patrick R. Manning [Horizons in Religious Education, Pickwick Publications, 9781725260535]

For two thousand years countless people around the world viewed reality through a Christian lens that endowed their lives with meaning, purpose, and coherence. Today, in an era of unprecedented secularization, many have ceased to find meaning not only in Christianity but in life in general. In *Converting the Imagination*, Patrick Manning offers a probing analysis of this crisis of meaning, marshalling historical and psychological research to shed light on the connections among the disintegration of the Christian worldview, religious disaffiliation, and a growing mental health epidemic. As a response Manning presents an approach to religious education that is at once traditionally grounded in the model of Jesus' own teaching and augmented by modern educational research and cognitive science. CONVERTING THE IMAGINATION is an invitation to transform the way we teach about faith and make sense of the world, an invitation that echoes Jesus' invitation to a fuller, more meaningful life. It is sure to captivate scholars and practitioners of religious education, ministers seeking to reengage people who have drifted away from the faith or to support young people suffering from

existential anxiety, and anyone in search of deeper meaning in their religious traditions or in their own lives.

Review

"When Jesus began a parable--as he so often did--with 'the reign of God is like . . .' he was surely engaging people's imaginations, inviting them to begin with their own reality and to imagine from there their way forward into the reign of God. This is the pedagogy that Pat Manning favors in Converting the Imagination. In our era, when people find 'reasoning' less persuasive, engaging their imaginations is a crucial strategy for educating-in-faith. Manning does this very well!" --Thomas Groome, Professor of Theology and Religious Education, Boston College

"In this thought-provoking book--a must-read for all who are interested in the intersection of faith, pastoral practice, and contemporary culture--Dr. Manning shows how present-day Christian religious educators can tap the imagination to foster conversation and ongoing personal and social transformation. In the process, he discusses how we can develop a sustaining religious vision for our lives as we navigate the turbulent waters of pluralistic, postmodern culture." --Harold D. Horell, Professor of Religious Education, Fordham University

"Patrick Manning has synthesized a practical three-part educational approach to the Infinite. Inviting educators to trust the power of [religious] symbols, he shows them how to reenchant the imaginations of learners. While he takes into account relevant writings in philosophy, theology, Scripture, transformative learning, developmental psychology, religious education, and imagination, Manning's ground is always his students--real people struggling to navigate meaning in a postmodern world. While intended for religious educators, this book will also serve arts and literature teachers." --Eileen Daily, Lecturer, Director of Doctor of Ministry Program, Boston University

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A Fading Vision

"I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10:10, NRSV). Jesus' promise clearly enticed people in his day, so much so that some of them dropped whatever they were doing to "come and see" what this abundance of life might entail (John 1:39, NRSV). Does Jesus' vision of the fullness of life exert the same attractive power today?

It did for me. In fact, I remember a very particular moment in my life when this vision snapped into focus. It came one evening toward the end of my final year at college when I was gathered in the chapel of my dormitory with fellow residents and friends to celebrate the weekly 10 PM. Sunday Mass. Every chair was filled, and people sat along the back wall and on the floor around the altar. The presider, the rector of our residence hall, was concluding the Eucharistic prayer, his words heavy with meaning. He looked around the chapel, catching the eyes of those gathered, with a solemn expression that said we are doing something important here, something in which we are fortunate to participate. His words gave way to the reverberating sound of the piano, guitar, and dozens of voices filling the room with a resounding hymn. My heart, too, felt full as I stepped forward to distribute Communion to my friends. Some weeks before I had been accepted into a service-through-teaching program that would take me to a Catholic high school in Tennessee for the next two years. As I pressed the Body of Christ into the outstretched palms of my friends, I thought to myself, "This is what teaching is: bringing Christ and the fullness of life he offers to others. This is what my life will be about."

In many ways, this moment encapsulated the life of abundance that I had been gradually living into for much of my life up to that point and in a particularly intense way for the previous four years. During that time, I had lived, studied, and worshipped within a university community that expressed the fecundity of the Christian imagination in its architecture, its scholarship, and, most importantly, in the interactions among its members. I had studied the Great Books and the Christian theological tradition and found better answers to my questions than I had hitherto discovered. More importantly, I learned to ask better questions than I had previously formulated. Of greatest consequence was befriending people who were truly alive, who celebrated the joys of life—food, music, conversation—with the relish of a child sinking her toes into the grainy warmth of a sandy beach. These were people whose eyes shone brightly when they interrogated life's big questions and shared their dreams of how they might give their gift to the world.

Knowing such people helped me to see and feel the meaningfulness of the Christian conviction that we are all children of God. Overwhelmed with gratitude for the abundance of blessings in my life, I increasingly came to see life as a gift and the world as originating from love and returning to love. This world made sense to me, and I was confident of my role in it. My life was not perfect, but it was good and it was full. Jesus' promise seemed true.

Soon thereafter I graduated. In the years that followed, my vision of life was tested by adversity, heartbreak, and loss. I moved from my Midwestern, Catholic university community, where I felt very much at home, to a new school community in Memphis, Tennessee, constituted by predominantly Baptist, African-American colleagues, and students whose culture was very different from that which I had known. I shared in the grief of students who had witnessed the violent murder of family members. Around the same time, relationships that had been central in my life were breaking down. All of this complicated my vision of the life of abundance to which Jesus calls us, but it did not destroy it. Only years later, as I reflected back on this period of my life with the benefit of insights from research and study, could I appreciate why that vision held and why that of others faced with similar challenges did not.

These days I occupy the other side of the classroom as a college professor. True to my original vision, I teach and write with the aim of inviting others into the fullness of life that I have discovered in following after Jesus. This is the aim that motivated me to write this book. In recent years, this goal has come to

look increasingly ambitious, for I have found that the experience of most of my students is very different from my own. One class I teach for first-year students, a required core course centered around the big questions and classic texts of the Catholic intellectual tradition, has been particularly revealing in this regard. At this stage in their lives, these students are full of excitement and nervousness about college, new relationships, and their future. With the world opening up before them, they are growing in awareness of the perennial challenges of being human and the pressing issues of our day. They are beginning to sort out where they fit in the world and to assert themselves as agents of social change. It is exhilarating to witness the reaction when the students' raw energy comes into contact with the great questions and texts of the Christian tradition.

These students are different from recent generations of students in several ways. For one thing, they tend to be more respectful of a diversity of perspectives and slower to judge or criticize beliefs that differ from their own. At the same time, they are less willing to accept tradition and authority for its own sake. That past generations believed something to be important or that church officials proclaim a doctrine to be true is for them not sufficient reason to accept it for themselves. They seek verification in their own lives and the lives of their contemporaries. Like every generation, they seek meaning and fullness for their lives. However, I find that their search for meaning has a different flavor. There seems to be a greater sense of urgency—even desperation—perhaps because they are less inclined to take for granted the traditions and beliefs of their forbearers and so have little foundation upon which to build. Often their search for meaning embarks not from the safe harbor of family religion but rather far out in the open waters of pluralistic, postmodern culture with the shore nowhere in sight. Even those who have grown up within a well-established religious tradition are less confident that it can provide real meaning for their lives. When these students arrive in the classroom, they bring these gifts, limitations, aspirations, and anxieties with them. Of course, there is the usual anxiousness that comes with being a young adult—anxiousness about making friends, earning good grades, getting a job—but what I have seen in my students in recent years goes beyond these perennial stressors.

Take David for example. When I met David, he had recently arrived on campus and was eager to begin the new adventure of college. He dived right in, meeting lots of people, joining clubs and sports teams, and taking full advantage of the weekend (and sometimes weekday) party scene. David is handsome, funny, and likeable. He comes from a family of considerable means and Catholic devotion. His father's success in the business world has radiated to David in the form of professional contacts, internships, and other forms of social capital. Suffice it to say that David's prospects for the future were bright.

Given all that I knew about David, it took me by surprise when late in the year he confided in me that he had been struggling with depression for several months. After a fast start to the academic year, he had settled into an unshakable malaise. His world had faded to grey. He lacked energy for things that had once been passions and experienced no joy or excitement in what should have been one of the most exciting periods of his life. He isolated himself from friends and neglected assignments. A broken relationship seems to have been the initial trigger, but there was more to it than that, he said. Despite his Catholic upbringing and enviable career prospects, he lacked a sense of purpose in his life. He just didn't see any point, any meaning to it all.

David's story is not unusual these days. My students frequently make comments to the effect that they feel anxious "like literally every single day," that "there is nothing to see . . . nothing to feel," that they "view the world as a threat" and "feel lost in the shuffle." From 2008 to 2017 there was a 71 percent

increase in young adults experiencing serious psychological distress. One in four young adults in this country has a diagnosable mental illness.2 Generally speaking, college students are reporting the lowest levels of mental health in at least a quarter century. Many readers of this book could undoubtedly name students or acquaintances of their own who struggle with mental health issues. The world of higher education is now coming to the realization that we have a full-blown mental health crisis on our hands. What we have been slower to grasp—and this is a central claim of this book—is the fact that this mental health crisis is only one facet of a much larger crisis of meaning affecting much of the Western world.

As a teacher, it pains me to hear a student say that he cannot find meaning in his life or that he is so ridden with anxiety that he cannot function normally. As a Christian educator, a situation like David's troubles me on another level because his Catholic faith appears not to be helping him. He could not be further away from the fullness of life Jesus promised, a life supposedly marked by wholeness, joy, meaning, and purpose. Of course, being a Christian does not preclude suffering. Conditions like clinical depression often have a genetic basis that no amount of religion can fix. Besides, Jesus virtually guaranteed that suffering awaits those who follow him. Nonetheless, Christian faith is supposed to be a source of hope in moments of difficulty, a life raft for life's shipwrecks. Like many of his contemporaries, David found none of the above in the faith he inherited from his parents. The homilies he had heard on a weekly basis in church and the religious teachings he had learned over years of Catholic education seemed insubstantial to the point of irrelevance in the face of his very concrete, very real existential struggles. Listening as he poured out his bleeding heart, I could not help but feel that we as a church had failed this young man. It is my hope that this book will facilitate a conversation among Christian educators about how we can do better.

THE DEEP ROOTS OF DISAFFILIATION AND MENTAL DECLINE

David's situation is in a way paradigmatic of an ever-growing group of contemporary Christians. I speak of them as a group in a loose sense, for on the surface they may look very different from one another. They are not only college-aged people like David but also adolescents and mature adults. Some may attend worship services every week, others a couple of times a year, others never. Some may have even abandoned their church for a new denomination, a new set of spiritual practices, or nothing at all. What they all have in common is a Christian heritage that has lost its vital meaning for their lives. When they were searching for meaning in the midst of a breakup, the death of a loved one, or simply the day-to-day, they found nothing in their Christian faith to help them.

Of this group it is those who no longer identify with any religion—the so-called "nones"—who garner the most attention. This attention is due in part to their rapidly growing numbers. As of 2019, 26 percent of the adult US population identified as religiously unaffiliated, up 9 percent since only ten years before. For millennials, the figure is more than 40 percent. The Catholic Church has been particularly hard hit by disaffiliation with nearly 13 percent of all Americans now describing themselves as "former Catholics." There exists a great diversity of beliefs and practices among the nones, a fact that journalists and authors sometimes overlook in their reports. For example, a significant number of people who select "none" on surveys attend worship services, and far more consider religion important to their lives. Although they no longer desire to bind themselves to the religious institutions of their ancestors, many persist in a spiritual quest for meaning, value, and transcendence.

Despite outward appearances, many people who retain their traditional religious affiliation are not so different from those who abandoned theirs. There are many who continue to call themselves "Christian" in whose lives religion and spirituality factor much less than in those of some nones. This seems to be the case for a growing number of Catholics, who have in many ways absorbed a secular outlook and who in the past half century have grown virtually indistinguishable from non-Christians in their moral views. For them, the vestiges of Christianity may remain, but their faith plays little role in shaping their decisions and actions and they maintain little in the way of a personal relationship with God. As Ronald Rolheiser puts it, they profess belief in God, but "rarely is there a vital sense of God within the bread and butter of life." Many of the disaffiliated experience the same hangover or nostalgia for religion. They may even be more proactive than their "religious" counterparts in seeking the transcendent, although they may seek it in nature or meditation or CrossFit rather than in an institutional religion.

This phenomenon is not unique to Catholicism. Recent surveys show a huge drop in the number of Mainline Protestants who feel certain of God's existence. We see similar trends in other religious groups. One-in-five Jews now describe themselves as having no religion, with millennial Jews being far more likely to identify in this way. The number of American Hindus who consider religion very important to them has been cut almost in half in the past decade. While there are numerous examples of movements of young people recommitting to their faith as many of their peers are heading for the exits, the general direction of the trend is clear. The above statistics suggest that religious disaffiliation is a widespread phenomenon and that whatever is causing people to abandon their religion transcends the particularities of any one religious community.

Although the recent exodus from organized religion in the United States is certainly cause for concern, that is not the issue I want to address in this book; rather, it is only part of the issue. There seems to be a deeper problem affecting not only the "nones" but also many people who still identify as religious. On one level, these individuals indicate that they are not finding meaning in the faith of their forebears. They say things like "it didn't quite make much sense to me" and "I don't think that being Catholic or [any] other type of religion will change my life." But the issue appears to go even deeper than religion. Many contemporary persons are simply not finding meaning anywhere. In the words of one young person, they are "wounded by . . . existential anxiety" and "searching for the meaning of life." This lack of meaning and the existential distress it precipitates are the central issues I address in this book. My concern is not only for millennials or the religiously unaffiliated but rather for all those people who are presently failing to find meaning for their lives in their religious tradition, particularly the Christian tradition.

No issue is more fundamental for religious educators. Religious education as I understand it is not merely about teaching information on religion. Insofar as it touches the religious dimension of the human person, it involves exploring questions of meaning, relationship, and transcendence. Especially when carried out as one of the constitutive elements within the life of a faith community, religious education contributes to the work of inviting the personal and communal transformation that leads to wholeness of life. I trust that any religious educators who conceive of their work in similar terms will likewise consider it of paramount concern that people are failing to find meaning in religion and life in general.

That a problem exists is widely acknowledged, but the source of the problem is not well understood. One well-worn explanation is that modernization and the increase of human knowledge dispel the shadows of ignorance and superstition in which religion thrives, making its eventual disappearance inevitable. Scholars have now generally rejected this linear account of secularization, as the relationship between modernization and religion has proven quite complicated. Charles Taylor is one prominent scholar to have criticized this account, what he calls the "subtraction story" of secularization. Underpinning Taylor's critique is the psychological insight that people's deeply embedded worldviews are highly resistant to revision based on new information and rational argumentation alone. Radical change in the way people make sense of reality does not occur primarily on the intellectual level but rather at the level of the preconscious operations of the imagination.

For communities and the individuals who live within those communities, it is images, stories, rituals, and practices rather than theory that most powerfully shape their intuitive understanding or sense of the way the world is. Taylor describes this way in which a community collectively and pre-theoretically imagines the world as a "cosmic imaginary." For centuries, even those who were only marginally Christian viewed reality through the lens of a Christian imaginary. The accepted view was that the world they lived in had been created by God, that their successes and sufferings in life were influenced by spiritual forces, both good and evil, and that their eternal fate depended on living a good moral life. Because everyone took God's existence for granted, to think of a world devoid of God was literally unimaginable.

However, over the course of the past 500 years, religious, social, moral, and scientific developments contributed to the erosion of the Christian imaginary and the emergence of a myriad of visions of human flourishing, none of which have been able to provide the stable meaning previously afforded by the old Christian imaginary. Christians no longer live in a Christian world inhabited entirely by other Christians. Today they live in a world where the Big Bang rivals (in the minds of some) divine creation as an explanation for the genesis of the universe. Their neighbors are not all Christians like themselves but also Muslims and ethical culturists and atheists. Living in a cultural milieu marked by such a diversity of beliefs, it is much more difficult for anyone to take a particular view of reality (whether theistic, atheistic, or other) as a given. Increasingly, modern persons are forced to sort through the constellations of competing accounts of reality and cobble together for themselves a worldview that gives meaning and coherence to their lived experience.

Taylor's analysis suggests that, if so many people today are failing to cope mentally with life's challenges, that this is not only because the world has grown more fast-paced and complicated. Equally important is the fact that many contemporary persons lack a mental framework for making sense of it all. When people lack the means of making meaning of life events, they are less able to handle the ordinary and extraordinary stressors of modern life (final exams, breakups, layoffs, economic recessions) and so succumb to mental illness. Imperfect though it may have been, the Christian imaginary provided such a framework for previous generations, but members of this generation are increasingly abandoning that framework on account of its perceived lack of relevance or meaningfulness and failing to find an adequate alternative.

In Search of a Response

Taylor's analysis, corroborated by current research on how human beings make meaning and by what I see routinely in Catholic schools and parishes, has convinced me that underlying increasing disaffiliation and mental health issues is a widespread crisis of meaning. Other scholars have previously diagnosed this problem. Although it is certainly worthwhile to deepen that analysis, my intent in this book is to make a contribution to the body of projects aimed at responding to the problem.

While I wholeheartedly affirm proposals for addressing these issues by a variety of means, I believe that religious educators qua teachers have a crucial role to play. More specifically, I believe religious educators can train learners in formal educational settings in ways that will assist them in making sense of their lives—including their faith lives—amidst the fragmenting forces of postmodern culture. If people are not finding meaning in the Christian tradition, it is not because there is no meaning to be found. The problem lies with the failure of Christian communities to adapt to new cultural challenges to faith.

The problem is at root a problem of meaning, and meaning is always fundamentally a matter of the imagination. Nostalgic appeals to the old Christian imaginary will not help such people insofar as that imaginary will never again enjoy the unquestioned acceptance it once did. Nevertheless, what teachers of the faith can do to help contemporary Christians is train them in the habits of imagining that are necessary for constructing a meaningful Christian worldview in a pluralistic and rapidly evolving culture.

For a number of years now I have striven to do just that by taking a more imagination-centered approach in my teaching. On the one hand, I have made an effort to help students tap into the Christian tradition as a source of deep meaning flowing from Jesus' life-giving vision for the world. On the other hand, rather than viewing students' critical questions and desire for deeper meaning as a threat, I have endeavored to invite and develop these capacities through their engagement with the Christian tradition in the confidence that doing so would better prepare them to live meaningful, faithful lives in postmodern society. As I have refined this approach and applied it with greater intentionality and consistency, I have noticed that my students are more attentive, interested, and engaged with the course than in previous years. I have had greater success tapping into their passion and creativity and have observed growth in their capacity for reflecting on their own meaning-making. As my students have imaginatively engaged the wisdom, symbols, and visions of Christianity (and other religious traditions), they have (re)discovered greater meaning for their lives and, in many cases, grown more hopeful and less anxious.

In the following pages, I lay out the specifics of the pedagogical approach that facilitated these transformations. Chapters 1 through 3 establish the groundwork for a pedagogy of transforming imaginations. I take as my point of departure in chapter 1 Jesus' timeless call to personal transformation (i.e., conversion). I argue that today, as in ages past, only by undergoing a radical transformation in our desiring, imagining, and living can human beings, who are divided within themselves by both external and internal forces, achieve wholeness.

In chapter 2, I draw upon contemporary research in cognitive science and cognitional theory to understand the unique challenges to faith and meaning-making confronting Christians today. Through this analysis, the picture comes into focus as to how new mental challenges in society, coupled with the erosion of traditional resources for making sense of life, have contributed to current trends toward religious disaffiliation and existential dis-integration. This research provides the basis for my hypothesis

that reclaiming Christian faith as a way of life and an integrating meaning framework in the current context will require (among other things) at least a critical mass of Christians to grow into a "post-critical" form of religious consciousness, that is, a form of meaning-making that is self-aware, self-authoring, self-transcending, and that unites the powers of imaginative thinking and critical reasoning. The term "post-critical consciousness" will likely strike the average reader as somewhat esoteric, but in essence it is merely a psychologically informed way of describing the most recent development in the ongoing evolution of human spirituality. Chapter 3 relates this new development in religious consciousness to earlier manifestations of Christian interiority and explains how development to this new form of interiority occurs.

Building upon these foundational chapters, in chapters 4 through 6 I present a three-phase pedagogical process that has enabled me to help learners take possession of their imagining and recover meaning and wholeness in their lives. In presenting this new process, I am consciously appropriating and extending the examples and work of Jesus and other educators and scholars. Notable among these are Mary Warnock, Kathleen Fischer, and Richard Côte, three prophets of the imagination whose seminal works have drawn attention to the vital place of the imagination in human living, education, and faith. In a sense, my own book is an effort to respond to their pleas for renewed attention to the imagination as have other religious educators like Maria Harris, Jerome Berryman, and Charles Foster. Where Harris's and Foster's books focus more on the imagination of the teacher or the educating community, my focus in this book is on the imaginations of learners and helping learners cultivate ways of imagining that are more adequate to our present context. (Barryman's book is distinct in its focus on play.) In the final chapter of this book, in addition to offering some clarifications concerning my pedagogical approach, I will point to still more efforts by other religious educators, leaders, and spiritual guides that I see as complementing my own project and forming the basis for a comprehensive response to the current crisis of meaning.

I have developed this pedagogical approach by teaching in Catholic schools and parishes in the United States and through reflection primarily upon my own Catholic Christian tradition. I can therefore testify to its appropriateness for Christian (particularly Catholic) religious education in the United States context. Nonetheless, the issues I confront here—religious disaffiliation, the struggle to make meaning, communal and personal fragmentation—affect people of other faith communities as well, both in the United States and elsewhere. Insofar as religious educators from other traditions and contexts recognize their own challenges in those I describe here, I trust they will find something of benefit in what follows.

Dire as the situation is for many, the present is a moment of opportunity as well. Coming to grips with the fact that many Davids in our society and our faith communities are failing to make sense of their lives may turn out to be the impetus we need to rethink the ways we worship, build community, and hand on the faith. It may prompt us to look for new resources and ways of envisioning and living into the reign of God. Indeed, it may be that God is showing us a new way forward precisely in the questions, criticisms, and seeking of our young people and those who express dissatisfaction with our religious traditions as they encounter them. This may very well be a once-in-an-era opportunity to revitalize our faith communities by rediscovering resources within our faith traditions and within each other for responding to our deepest questions, concerns, and hopes and for serving the needs of the world. <>

OBJECTIVE RELIGION: COMPETITION, TENSION, PERSEVERANCE edited by Byron R. Johnson, with a Foreword by Rodney Stark [Baylor University Press, 9781481313643]

Though many scholars and commentators have predicted the death of religion, the world is more religious today than ever before. And yet, despite the persistence of religion, it remains a woefully understudied phenomenon. With OBJECTIVE RELIGION, Baylor University Press and Baylor's Institute for Studies of Religion have combined forces to gather select articles from the *Interdisciplinary Journal of Research on Religion* that not only highlight the journal's wide-ranging and diverse scope, but also advance the field through a careful arrangement of topics with ongoing relevance, all treated with scientific objectivity and the respect warranted by matters of faith. This multivolume project seeks to advance our understanding of religion and spirituality in general as well as particular religious beliefs and practices. The volume thereby serves as a catalyst for future studies of religion from diverse disciplines and fields of inquiry including sociology, psychology, political science, demography, economics, philosophy, ethics, history, medicine, population health, epidemiology, and theology. The articles in this volume, *Competition, Tension, and Perseverance*, document the pervasiveness of religion and demonstrate the complex ways faith, spirituality, and religious matters are consequential for individuals as well as societies across the world. Together these essays demonstrate the resilience of religion.

Review

Byron Johnson has done more for the social scientific study of religion than anyone else. He has committed to an evidence-based approach to answer the big question of what accounts for the persistence, pervasiveness, and persuasiveness of religion around the world. In this top-shelf volume he has assembled a stellar lineup of specialists that offer sophisticated answers to this perennial question. This comprehensive contribution is absolutely mandatory reading for academic scholars, graduate students, the educated public, and anyone else who recognizes that in order to understand the world in which we live, we must understand religion. -- Robert Emmons, Professor of Psychology, University of California, Davis

This volume offers a carefully curated set of chapters on the economics and persistence of religion, as well as the tensions caused by religion, drawn from some of the best articles published in the *Interdisciplinary Journal of Research on Religion*. This is an essential resource on the myriad ways that faith, spirituality, and religion continue to matter to both individuals and societies. It is a wonderful resource for scholars in a wide variety of social science disciplines. -- Matthew T. Lee, Director of Empirical Research, Human Flourishing Program at Harvard University

Objective Religion is exceptional for presenting the social scientific facts about religion across the world. There is no anti-religion bias that interferes with objectivity, and none of the unfounded assertions that we see in academia these days that religion is on its last legs. This volume does a fabulous job of staying honest with the facts and interpreting them without the assumptions of neo-atheism or rampant secularism that are found in less scholarly works. Rodney Stark remains the premier sociologist of religion in the United States, and Byron Johnson deserves equal seating. Together at Baylor?s Institute for Studies of Religion, they have changed our thinking for the better. -- Stephen G. Post, Professor of

Family, Population and Preventive Medicine, Stony Brook University

This is an intriguing set of papers from numerous scholars of religion with exceptional expertise, shedding light on the dynamics, practice, persistence, and societal effects of religion, both past and present. They together make a case for religion's enduring importance. -- Tyler J. VanderWeele, John L. Loeb and Frances Lehman Loeb Professor of Epidemiology, Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health and Director, Human Flourishing Program, Harvard University

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Religion and Tension
A definition, tension is the state of being stretched. It can also refer to mental or emotional strain. It is not surprising, therefore, that many think of tension only in a negative way. The reality, however, is that

tension can also be viewed as a positive factor that motivates people to do things that may prove to be beneficial for them as well as for others. That is to say, tension should not necessarily be viewed as something to be avoided or discouraged. Religion should be recognized as a powerful force that creates tension which can lead to important outcomes.

"How Religion Divides and Unites Us" is the subtitle of Robert Putnam and David Campbell's popular book American Grace (2010). In an obvious way the book's subtitle captures the essence of the tension that religion brings to bear on individuals and groups. The tension associated with religion touches every aspect of religious life and one can argue it causes just as much tension for those who would call themselves non-religious. The tension caused by religion is much more complicated and consequential than simply how it divides or unites us. Glock and Stark's classic book Religion and Society in Tension (1965) explores a number of different ways that tension influences religion, religious behavior, religious practices, and religious movements. For example, how do we distinguish cults from sects? Why do churches and even entire denominations split? Moreover, why have some denominations decided to merge? Why do some congregations grow and thrive, while others shrink or die? Why do "strict" or theologically conservative churches seem to benefit from establishing many more rules and boundaries than their less strict counterparts? Why have more theologically liberal denominations consistently lost members over the last seven decades? A common denominator in all of these important questions is the degree to which there is the presence of tension.

Even the casual observer would likely acknowledge that religion is often controversial and contested in contemporary society. But history reminds us that religion has always caused tension. For example, Jesus often spoke in ways that sent a message of tension: "I did not come to bring peace, but a sword" (Matthew 10:34). Many scholars have suggested Jesus was communicating that his message would ultimately cause division and conflict. Some would accept his message and others would reject it, but there is little doubt his message would create tension for all hearing it. In fact, the dramatic rise of Christianity itself would be yet another example of how Christianity's message would create tension by challenging conventional wisdom on how to think and act on matters such as marriage, family, morality, providing for widows and orphans, service to others, and taking care of underserved populations (Stark 1997).

The chapters in part 2 take a look at how tension can influence retention strategies among American Jews, help us to better understand atheists, provide insight into how issues like abortion affect Mainline Protestants, and how people view atheists or cultists differently. Religion and tension are inextricably linked, and understanding these linkages can help us to more fully appreciate the ways in which religion and tension do or do not influence individuals as well as society.

The Persistence of Religion

he secularization thesis states that the world is becoming more secular with each passing day. Moreover, the thesis posits that the continued rise in secularism will also be accompanied with the falling off of religion (Berger 1967). The central hypothesis of the secularization thesis is that modern science will always undermine religious belief and, ultimately, religion will continue to shrink. Indeed, scholars have long predicted the death of God and the demise of religion. In the nineteenth century, Nietzsche famously announced that God was dead. In the twentieth century, increasing reliance on science and technology led to a widespread rejection of religious belief on the grounds of its irrationality.

In contemporary society few reasonable people would deny that we live in a secular age, but at the same time, few would deny that theories of famous scientists like Newton, Darwin, and Einstein tell us nothing about what lies beyond the natural world. For all the predictions of the rise in secularism, science has not been able to provide adequate answers to questions of ultimate meaning that continue to be posed by so many.

In his important book ^ Secular Age (2007), Charles Taylor begins with this fascinating question: "Why was it virtually impossible not to believe in God in, say, 1500 in our Western society, while in 2000 many of us find this not only easy, but even inescapable?" Taylor is correct to point out the existence of this seismic shift. But as Taylor also recognizes, the story is far more complicated than this shift would seem to imply. For example, in one of its most famous and controversial publications, Time magazine featured the provocative question, "Is God Dead?" on the April 8, 1966 cover. Nevertheless, the ascension of secularism has never been able to remotely suggest that religion has been replaced in the United States, or any other country in the world.

Religion has not died. In fact, the opposite has occurred: it has persisted and proliferated. Despite the relentless pursuit of scientific advancement, in the twenty-first century we now see religious influence everywhere. The Gallup World Poll confirms that more than 90 percent of people in every country in the world believe in God. In fact, the data suggest that the world is more religious now than it has ever been (Stark 2015). There continues to be an appeal of spirituality to people eager to explore fundamental questions of meaning. For all its benefits, science is at a distinct disadvantage when it comes to answering the most important questions of ultimate meaning.

The most secular countries in the world that have seen declines in traditional religions have also witnessed increases in other forms of spiritual belief For example, the more secularized countries also see the proliferation of superstitions, belief in aliens, and the growth of the occult as well as other forms of nontraditional spirituality (Stark 2015). As Andrew Greeley once noted, "secularization is the religious faith of the secularized" (Greeley 1995).

In the chapters to follow, the persistence of religion is captured studies that focus on religious congregations, estimating the number Muslims in the world, the decline of secularization and religious revival in China, and the persistence of Ukrainian Baptists in the midst of persecution. <>

WHY TRANSLATE SCIENCE? DOCUMENTS FROM ANTIQUITY TO THE 16TH CENTURY IN THE HISTORICAL WEST (BACTRIA TO THE ATLANTIC) edited by Dimitri Gutas [Series: Handbook of Oriental Studies. Section 1 The Near and Middle East, Brill, 9789004472631]

From antiquity to the 16th century, translation united culturally the peoples in the historical West (from Bactria to the shores of the Atlantic) and fueled the production and circulation of knowledge. The Hellenic scientific and philosophical curriculum was translated from and into, to mention the most prevalent languages, Greek, Syriac, Middle Persian, Arabic, Hebrew, and Latin.

To fill a lack in existing scholarship, this volume collects the documents that present the insider evidence provided in contemporary accounts of the motivations and purposes of translation given in the personal statements by the agents in this process, the translators, scholars, and historians of each society. Presented in the original languages with an English translation and introductory essays, these documents offer material for the study of the historical contextualization of the translations, the social history of science and philosophy in their interplay with traditional beliefs, and the cultural policies and ideological underpinnings of these societies.

Contributors

Michael Angold, Pieter Beullens, Charles Burnett, David Cohen, Gad Freudenthal, Dag Nikolaus Hasse, Anthony Kaldellis, Daniel King, Felix Mundt, Ignacio Sánchez, Isabel Toral, Uwe Vagelpohl, and Mohsen Zakeri.

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Alexander reached Bactria, founding cities named after him along the way, and in subsequent centuries the Romans campaigned in and eventually annexed Iberia, Gaul, and Britain, thus generating a continuous geopolitical area from the west of India to the Atlantic, which constitutes the historical West. In the intellectual history of this vast area no single factor was more instrumental in culturally uniting it and fuelling the motor of civilization—the production and circulation of knowledge—than translation. Translation, of course, is present in multiform ways in all cultures,[1] and was arguably nowhere more integrally enmeshed into the fabric of society than it was already at the dawn of history in ancient Mesopotamia, the civilization antecedent to the one that is our concern; but in the case of the West it

evinces a longevous identity of function, nature, and teleology that commands attention, explanation, and, well, admiration.

Throughout the historical period that ranges from Alexander the Great to the sixteenth century, the peoples in the West acquired through translation, studied, and developed the Hellenic scientific and philosophical curriculum of higher learning—in short, science, broadly defined. There were translations, to mention the most prevalent languages, from Greek into Latin, Syriac, Middle Persian, and Arabic; from Syriac into Arabic and from Arabic into Syriac; from Sanskrit into Middle Persian and from Middle Persian into Arabic; from Arabic into Latin, Hebrew, and Greek; from Hebrew into Latin, and from Latin into Hebrew and Greek. Because the scientific knowledge that was transmitted, apart from whatever practical benefits it afforded, was acknowledged by all, tacitly or not, to be a supreme good in itself, it was a source of power and dominance to its possessor. Translation as a social movement was accordingly highly political, and the transmission itself was a deliberate and on occasion aggressive act of acquisition, a conquest, its course related closely to military, political, and social developments throughout this long period of eighteen centuries. At the end of it, all the peoples in this vast area with their various languages attained, by means of translation policies pursued by their elites as a concomitant of self-assertion and political prominence, a similar state of scientific advancement and higher learning. The process was properly the conquest of knowledge.[3] If the religious dimension is also taken into account—the fact that the peoples in the West were all adherents of monotheistic religions in the Biblical tradition—the level of homogeneity that was reached among them, both in the concordance of scientific views and the dialectic between science and religion that affected the process, is remarkable, indeed historic.

In this process, the Graeco-Arabic translation movement of the early ʿAbbāsid period (eighth to tenth centuries) played a pivotal role and constituted the node where translations into Arabic converged and whence they later spread out; and by the same token it brings to light the identity of the historical enterprise and the interconnectedness and continuity of its progression in relay. Recent scholarship has been investigating from outside the historical causes of this and other translation movements from and into the languages mentioned above, but what has not been adequately taken into consideration is the insider evidence provided in contemporary accounts of the motivations and purposes of translation given in the personal statements by the agents in this process, the translators themselves, and the actual or reported eyewitness accounts of the scholars and historians of each society.

This volume aims to collect the documents that present this evidence and accordingly complements and breathes life into the narrative and descriptive accounts of translations in other studies, notably the massive work edited by Kittel and others referred to above. It is intended for all researchers who, in the quest for the historical contextualization of the translations—that is, their causes, function, and significance—wish to study not only the personal status of the translators and the scientists who used their work in their respective societies, but also more broadly the cultural policies of the states and the ruling elites in these societies: their ideological orientations and underpinnings, and their conception of science and its importance in the interplay with traditional beliefs as well as its interface with politics. In short, it is intended that this volume present the material for a social history of science. Its aim, as a handbook, is to make this material easily accessible to research, not to conduct the research itself.

The emphasis and the scope of the volume have been accordingly on the motivations for translating science into the languages participating in the relay of translations mentioned above and not on all

translations or all languages. The reasons include, most obviously, the absence of such a dedicated focus and comprehensive reach in previous studies. But most significantly the challenge was to extract information that provides insights into the cultural core of a society that is not otherwise explicitly stated, or if it is, is stated for apologetic purposes that conceal the motivating factors beneath—which itself is revealing of them. Thus, at one extreme, among the documents collected for the most extensive translation movement in this history, the Graeco-Arabic one in Baghdad, we are at a loss to find clear and unequivocal statements about the motivations that led to it; while at the other, the Sasanian self-serving and apologetic justification for the Greek to Middle Persian translations, namely the repatriation of knowledge stolen from the ancient Iranians by Alexander the Great, invites further investigation into the motor ideologies in that society. Accordingly, the net has been thrown wide, and the authors of the chapters here have scoured their respective literatures for all documents that might provide some information, or shed some light, however indirectly, on the motivations for translating science. For the period with which we are concerned, science included what we call philosophy as well as 'occult' sciences, notably astrology, divination, and oneiromancy. The authors of these books may be authentic or pseudonymous, and even in one representative case, that of Ibn Waḥšiyya, non-existent, something that encapsulates the obverse of the theme of this book, the translation of authoritative scientific texts: authority vested in a scientific text because it is claimed to be a translation.

It should be noted, however, that the documents selected do not include those that refer to the techniques of translation in particular, although some such passages may have been inserted when deemed helpful for the main objective of motivations for scientific translations. Similarly, religious literature has been excluded, in that apart from the fact that the motivations for translation of religious texts are transparent enough, they refer to a different order of social reality, attitudes, and endeavour, though in this case too some documentation on religious translation has been included where it helps, by contrast or at times by extension, to illuminate scientific translations in a given society. Within these parameters, though, coverage was extensive, if not total, left as it was to the discretion of each author.

The chapters are chronologically arranged in this relay of translations by the language into which the translations were made, ranging from classical Latin to Renaissance Latin. Each chapter is divided into three parts. The introductory essay in Part One provides information about the authors, history, and context of the selected documents, aiming to facilitate, but not offer, their study and analysis. The English translations of the documents that follow in Part Two are either written by the authors themselves, or taken from a satisfactory published version, as indicated. Part Three presents the documents in their original languages following standard editions, with occasional interventions by the author, if deemed necessary, who is responsible for the accuracy of the text in the printed volume. Bibliographical references to primary and secondary literature come at the end.

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munificent support, especially as it afforded me the opportunity to conduct this research in the city and its institutions where our field has been graced with the contributions of so many scholars. And a big thank you goes to Beatrice Gründler, their current successor, who made it all possible, with knowledge, skill, grace, and joie de rechercher. <>

ILLUMINATING THE SECRET REVELATION OF JOHN by Shirley Paulson [Westar Studies, Cascade Books, 9781666730128]

Buried for more than a thousand years in the sands of Egypt, the Secret Revelation of John has stayed a secret far longer than it should have. Even now, more than seventy-five years after its discovery in 1945, it eludes easy understanding even as it shines with the message of God's loving presence amid suffering and violence. Illuminating the Secret Revelation of John is the first study written for the curious public, as well as for scholars who have not yet plumbed its depths. The ancient Secret Revelation of John unearths three gems of healing wisdom that have been encrusted in a millennium of doubt and theological limitation. This new work explores the many facets of these gems with a historical setting and background, a contemporary paraphrase, and a study section that invites pondering of and conversation about new questions to explore.

The Economics of Religion

The economics of religion is a relatively new subfield of inquiry, though the study of religion itself is ancient. Many other disciplines, notably philosophy, theology, history, anthropology, psychology, political science, and sociology have had much to say about religion, religious beliefs, and religious practices. Adam Smith first made reference to the church and competition between religions in An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations (1776) and in The Theory of Moral Sentiments (1759). Smith discussed three concepts which economists of religion still debate—the role of competition, religious institutions including service provision, and religious pluralism.

The value of religious pluralism, the relationship between pluralism and religious participation, and the role of the church and the state were debated between Adam Smith and David Hume and continue to be debated more than two hundred years later. Hume argued for the state sponsorship of one unique religion and how the relationship between religion and politics can lead to civil disorder. In contrast, Adam Smith argued that religious competition is ultimately good for the consumers of religion and for the nature of the religious product itself.

The work of Adam Smith brought to light a number of important and fundamental linkages between economic thinking and religious thinking that, regrettably, was overlooked for many decades. Quoting Gordon Allport, Charles Glock and Rodney Stark wrote that the "subject of religion seems to have gone into hiding" (Glock and Stark 1965, x). But this all began to change after World War II when religion and religious competition would finally begin to be explored within the social sciences. Sociologists were among the first to study modern religion and religious organizations by focusing on concepts such as competition (Stark and Glock 1968; Stark and Bainbridge 1986). Roger Finke and Rodney Stark would develop this line of thinking into an important thesis known as the "religious economies" argument (Finke and Stark 1992). Based on their analysis of religious markets in the United States, Finke and Stark

were some of the earliest scholars to make significant contributions in this overlooked area. Their focus was on such things as the process by which sects became churches, the formation of cults, as well as splits and mergers within renewal movements in various denominations (Finke and Stark 1988; Stark and Finke 2000). Research in this vein would come to document that in the United States in the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, modernization went hand in hand with religious mobilization (Warner 1993).

The five chapters in part 1 of this book tackle some of these same important concepts and issues both inside and outside the United States. Research on the economics of religion continues to provide empirical evidence that the United States remains quite distinct from religion in other parts of the world, and particularly the older paradigm of European secularization. For example, women continue to participate more in church-related activities than men; church attendance increases with age; and African Americans attend church more than whites. Many such important trends are examined in these chapters in light of the contemporary data now available from so many different countries. Contemporary studies continue to document the importance of religious belief and practice, as well as social networks within houses of worship in the United States (Putnam and Campbell 2010).

Existing research on the economics of religion is benefited by the availability of much better data than we have had on religion previously (Finke 2013). Empirical studies of religion tend to be measured either in terms of religious beliefs, such as prayer and other indicators of belief; or alternatively in terms of religious participation and attendance such as churchgoing, which are indicators of belonging or practice. These markers have expanded now to include data on religious regulations and persecution which incorporates international regulation and violence indices. A body of empirical evidence on the economics of religion has continued to grow since 2000. Indeed, there is evidence that the world is more religious than it has ever been (Stark 2015). The following chapters nicely capture in a contemporary way a number of these concepts, trends, and issues within this important and growing subfield on the economics of religion.

Review

"Paulson makes the Secret Revelation of John approachable for laypeople and scholarly sound for the academy. Her treatment of the text is brilliant. . . . Paulson brings the Secret Revelation of John back from its biblical exile at a time when it is very much needed and solidifies its importance to the redemption of Christian spirituality in the twenty-first century."" --Stephanie Duzant, Associate Minister, St. Matthew's Community African Methodist Episcopal Church of Hollis

"Paulson insists on an integrated approach which includes incisive historical investigation, important literary analysis, twenty-first-century meaning making, and contemporary questions. She paints with a clear and broad brush. . . . Those of us who have known the importance of the Secret Revelation of John for more than a generation now have an accessible and informed next step forward."" --Hal Taussig, Union Theological Seminary, retired

"Paulson provides an accessible introduction to the Secret Revelation of John. . . . Paulson unpacks its primary message and its spiritual insights in down-to-earth language. Most importantly, she addresses its relevance in the twenty-first century as she explores its multiple layers of meaning--including its subversive challenge to a Roman Empire that kept people in their place. . . . She helps us to grasp that

SRJ reveals a liberation freely available to all."" --Deborah Saxon, author of The Care of the Self in Early Christian Texts

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Preface

I remember vividly the day the Secret Revelation of John nudged its way into my life. It happened in early 2003, while I was sitting in the office of my seminary advisor, George Kalantzis. He was an excellent listener, and after giving me the space to explain my thoughts about God, Christ, and the power of spiritual healing, he stepped away and pulled his copy of the Secret Revelation of John off the shelf. He asked if I'd ever read it. No, I had never heard of it.

"Good," he said, "read it before you read anybody else's commentary on it. Then, decide for yourself what it means." I read it several times, each time feeling like I was drawing closer to a remarkable treasure just beyond my grasp. But like almost everyone else who picks it up, I kept running into an impenetrable forest of strange words and ideas.

A powerful message of healing and hope shone through, and finally I knew it was time to listen to the voices of scholars who had studied it before me. Karen King announced in her 2006 monograph, The Secret Revelation of John, that "the importance of the Secret Revelation of John can hardly be overestimated." Fifteen years later, after reading the views of many scholars, and pursuing my own ideas about it, I'm more convinced than ever of its extraordinary value.

I wrote my doctoral thesis as a critical conversation on the healing theologies in Christian Science (my faith tradition) and the Secret Revelation of John. My supervisors, Karen Wenell and Stephen Pattison, challenged me to wrestle with both the text itself and my personal reaction to it. Themes of healing surfaced easily for me. But its jarring transport through time and space, the transformation of characters and their identities, the power of demons, and allusions to an ancient culture often threw me off course.

My family and nonscholarly (but very smart) friends became an important part of the publication of this book, because in my earliest attempts to show them the sparkling treasures within the Secret Revelation of John, their eyes would go dull, and I'd lose them! They, too, couldn't get past the impenetrable forest. But I knew they would love it, if only I could find a way to light a path for them. My husband, Richard, was my best critic and conversation partner during all the years it took for this book to take shape.

Hilary Barner is one of those friends who read my manuscript without any prior knowledge of the Secret Revelation of John and told me where the language slipped into confounding scholarese. I hope she and my friends have succeeded in helping this book find its way into the hands and hearts of people who will treasure it.

I also had the good fortune of enlisting the support, scholarly wisdom, and experience of scholars Hal Taussig, Deborah Niederer Saxon, Stephanie Duzant, and Celene Lillie, who already valued the Secret Revelation of John. They see this project as a foundational study for biblical, theological, and religious scholars and professors, and they have held me to the scholarly standards they and their colleagues should expect. I can't say enough about the contributions and insightful support I received from my Westar editor, Arthur Dewey. He read and critiqued each version of the manuscript, but more importantly, he was an inspired and crucial conversation partner who encouraged me to tackle some of the tougher topics I hadn't even considered.

In order to meet the needs of both the general public and curious scholars, some compromises were made that need explanation here. Scholars know that all of the codices from the Nag Hammadi collection were damaged when they were discovered, leaving significant lacunae in some parts of the texts. Usually, the missing letters and words are noted in brackets where translators have surmised the meaning. Due to this book's goal of focusing on the meaning of the text, all the distracting brackets and textual difficulties have been removed. However, since all translated portions are referenced by page or chapter and verse, scholars may confirm these details from the original translations listed in the Sources Cited.

Another clarification should be noted concerning the existence of a shorter and longer version of the Secret Revelation of John itself (more commonly known as the Apocryphon of John in academic circles). I presented the story line as if it were one, but in fact two of the extant versions are longer and include material that is not included in the two extant shorter versions. Although I generally use the longer version, I occasionally mix them—again, for the purpose of avoiding confusion for the first-time reader. Karen King has provided an excellent parallel reading of the longer and shorter versions in her book for a comparison between the two versions.

Finally, an important tool I have provided to help modern readers find meaning is my full paraphrase of the longer version, located at the back of the book. As with any paraphrase, it should not be read as a translation, because the paraphrase skips over details that are nearly meaningless in contemporary culture. If this paraphrase can help readers find their way into the heart of the text, a full translation from other sources will help them study the details more accurately.

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Alexandria! Not Rome, Not Jerusalem

A strange and ancient book has been moving from the bookshelves of scholars and into the hands of curious and (often) Christian thinkers and spiritual seekers. Even though scholars have been able to read the Secret Revelation of John since it came to light in 1945, the odd images of the Yaldabaoth god, the Mother Barbelō, and the unwise Wisdom have left most modern readers scratching their heads. The title is rather obscure, its logic appears to run in circles, and many people say it's one of those "gnostic" heresies. Understandably, many churchgoers have found little incentive to pick it up. But since scholars

have been chipping away at these outer obstacles and polishing the rough gems, they've come to realize this book is of great value, especially to those who love the Bible!

The purpose of this book is to pick up the polished gems and look at them carefully in the light of our modern experiences and historical perspectives. To do so, we'll drop in for a visit in the city where all the forces came together to give it birth in the second century. Religion teachers, philosophers, Christ-followers, Jews, and students flocked to this cultural center of the world. No, not Rome, and not Jerusalem. But they converged on Alexandria, the great city situated along the north coast of Egypt and founded by Alexander the Great centuries before Jesus was born. All the constituent parts of the Secret Revelation of John cohabitate in second-century Alexandria, as we'll see after we listen to a few of the people we encounter.

After getting acquainted with second-century Alexandrian life, we'll look at the way the Secret Revelation of John speaks to the heart of twenty-first-century readers as well. Then we'll start to explore the text itself. The bulk of the book is organized like a kind of literary museum, where we can pause to think about some of the most important contributions to our lives today. We won't be able to see all the possibilities, but there will be enough to whet our appetite for returning again and again.

Welcome to Second-Century Alexandria

We want to start our tour in second-century Alexandria, because the Secret Revelation of John was written for people who were looking for answers to life's tough questions of the time, a period of formidable upheaval. In the midst of political and social turbulence, people tend to seek a deeper understanding of their own identity, their communities, the divine Being, and the universe. This is the state of Alexandria we are about to encounter.

Alexandrians understood well the confluence of Roman, Greek, Egyptian, and Jewish customs. This city, known for its attraction to writers and thinkers, seems to have been the perfect spawning ground for the radically new, but Christ-based, ideas in the Secret Revelation of John.

If we could walk through the neatly laid out streets of this bustling port city in the second century, we might be startled to discover such a visible blending of the multicultured way of life. The great Library, the cultural center of the city, explains much of the draw for teachers and students throughout the Mediterranean area who are eager to learn philosophy, rhetoric, religion, science, or some other scholarly subject. The Library, a part of the vast Alexandrian Museum complex, holds the largest collection of papyrus scrolls in the world and functions like a modern interactive research center with a zoo, an observatory, and a medical laboratory. Greek philosophers belonging to all sorts of schools from Stoicism to Epicureanism have flocked to Alexandria and mingle readily with the Egyptian cosmologists and those who practice mystery religions. A large community of Jews have settled here too, since the destruction of their temple in 70 CE forced even more of them to flee Jerusalem, augmenting the numbers already in Alexandria.

But the very success of this great metropolis may have also become the source of its heartache. Rome, over a thousand miles away, has installed its military authority throughout the Mediterranean area, but it is especially tough with Alexandria. Compared with Alexandria's fertile ground for research, questioning, thinking, and writing, Rome and its preoccupation with conquest and gladiator entertainment presents a stark contrast. Here is an image of Roman attitudes toward success:

This Roman cameo, known as the Gemma Augustea, was carved in approximately 10–20 CE. It poignantly captures the contrast between the superior and dominant Romans (in the top half) and the people they have subdued throughout the Roman Empire (in the bottom half). In the image, the beam lifted in the lower left was the type used in victory parades with one of the prominent captives bound to it for display in the parade.

However, all the measures of Alexandrian success continue to threaten the Roman imperialists, who retaliate with ever-tighter domination over this second-largest city in the world. We can't miss the heavy imprint of Rome's conquest in everyday life. Ever since the Romans gained control of Egypt, some thirty years before Jesus's birth, Alexandria's huge production of grain and its largest port in the world had together made it the breadbasket for Rome. A century later, when the Flavian dynasty (69–96) controlled Egypt, the emperor had become so dependent on the produce from its wealthiest city, Alexandria, that he took it for granted as his personal territory.

From beyond Rome in the West to Asia in the East, this Mediterranean jewel attracted attention. A thriving Jewish community had already settled in Alexandria long before, along with Greeks and other foreigners. No wonder multitudes of Jews found their way to this prospering city hundreds of miles away when Emperor Titus destroyed their temple in Jerusalem and the city along with it in the year 70! The new migrant Jews joined those already established, tried to rebuild their lives, and contributed to the Alexandrian prestige. It had become the world center of Jewish religion and culture.

But the next Jewish-Alexandrian generation could no longer tolerate intensifying Roman oppression. When exploitation reached the breaking point, rebellion became the next alternative. Failing to find any relief, thousands of Jews rose up in desperate rebellion once again. But they ultimately perished at the overpowering hands of the Roman military during the socalled Rebellion of the Exile of 115–117.

By now, the Jewish communities in Egypt are effectively diminished. And yet we understand why they're still fighting. It's a fight for survival against the incessant oppression of and aggressive control over Jews. Above all, though, they're fighting for their God, the God who brought them out of bondage a couple of millennia before.

Many of the Jews who had become faithful followers of Jesus probably perished along with their fellow rebelling Jews,5 but the painful losses for everyone rearranged precarious relationships among the people of Alexandria as they searched in all directions for solace and guidance. A mounting anti-Jewish attitude has been pressuring the Jewish Jesus-followers to separate themselves from their traditional Jewish colleagues, causing them to sort out their own relationships with their Greek and Roman neighbors.

These Jews are eager to engage in conversation with the ubiquitous Greek philosophers and teachers of religion, as all of them respond to the human outcry. As they look more deeply into their own teachings and traditions, their search is not a scholastic, intellectual exercise. It is a response to the hard questions of the day: How can we survive war? What is the meaning of soul? Who is God, and what happens after death? How is God both good and omnipotent? Is healing related to salvation? How does anyone cope with Roman oppression?

Pausing to listen to some of the teachers around the city, it is no surprise that we run across the full gamut of answers to these urgent questions—answers from Stoics, Jews, astrologists, demonologists, and various groups studying Plato's philosophical writings, which were enjoying an upswing in popularity. Christ-followers too are offering answers to the big questions. Among these was the teacher who had just finished writing his seminal work, the Secret Revelation of John.

Now we stop to listen intently. It could be his broad knowledge of Greek, Roman, Egyptian, and Jewish culture that attracts both Jews and non-Jews to his school, but his message is clearly a Christ-centered, Jewish one. The saving power inherent in his Christ message originates in Jewish teachings, but he uses non-Jewish customs and philosophies to demonstrate the power of Christ.

Naturally, the soldiers, sent from Rome to keep control in Alexandria are nervous when they pick up on any implications of a disrupted hierarchical order. Claiming superiority for any power outside the Roman patriarchal order threatens Roman hegemony.6 But we can discern a subversive and hidden message from this teacher. It makes sense to people who have lived among the conquered populations, and yet the Roman supervisors may or may not fully grasp what these pupils and this teacher are talking about.

The Roman Empire, starting with the emperor himself and including the whole cosmos, operates as a strictly hierarchical order. Although the divine remains supreme over all, human power originates from the emperor and descends to the Patricians (those with the highest advisory positions and great wealth), next to the Senators (with political power from ancestral lineage and wealth), and down to the Equestrians (possessing secure minimum worth and involved in various types of businesses), descending further to the Commons (all other freeborn Roman citizens with the right to legal marriage with other Roman citizens), and finally to the Freedpeople (men and women who earned or won their way out of slavery). Women subserve men, and children are governed by nonenslaved adults. Below all of them, at the lowest rank, are the enslaved (usually those whose families had been captured in Roman conquests). They are the most numerous members of society, but they have no authority even over their own lives.

In the setting of this gathering of students around a teacher, however, a quick glance at the clothing of the learners clues us into the fact that they come from all social classes. We see how easily fellowship flows among the classes, including between the enslaved and those from higher stations. There is good reason for the Romans to be nervous about these students and their teacher. Not only his message of equal worth, but also the common Greek language and culture, serves to unify master and pupils, classes and ethnic groups. Even the Jews who fled to Alexandria from Judea are more fluent in Greek than Aramaic now, so it is not surprising that the sacred texts were translated from Hebrew into Greek here in Alexandria.

This school, like most of the other small groups of pupils with their teachers, primarily uses the Greek version of the Hebrew Bible, known as the Septuagint. Although some of the pupils are Jewish, most of the newer students come from a Greco-Roman background, knowing only the Greek and Roman gods. The sacred Jewish text, in combination with the powerful and transforming ideas they hear from this teacher concerning the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, draw them in fellowship with these Christ-following Jews. Some Gentile philosophers in Alexandria have also begun to introduce the Jewish God into their own teachings, inspiring many Greeks throughout the city to find their way to the Christ-following teachers.

Despite the teachers' deep interest in the teachings from the Septuagint, the resurgent interest in Plato has also grabbed the attention of the wider population. Greeks themselves recognize how the ideas from his Timaeus and Parminides take on new relevance five hundred years later in the heat of ever-increasing Roman oppression. Our teacher recognizes the influence of these Hellenized intellectuals in the struggle to reenvision social and political systems, but he uses their familiar teachings to distinguish them from his own Christ teachings.

Numerous other philosophical systems have gained popularity also. Almost everyone is conversant with Greek Stoicism, because it offers practical solutions, especially to the problem of ubiquitous demons. You can't really see demons, but you know their existence by the feelings they instill in you. They are like the spirit of fear that takes over during a terrible storm, or great anger when someone with higher power abuses you.

People know these demons well—hundreds of them—because they stir up passions at just about any time or place, causing diseases and every form of human suffering. Since no one, from enslaved people to patricians, can escape the torment of demons, the Stoic solution of learning to control one's own passions resonates with people of all classes.

However, one of the most important secrets of the Secret Revelation of John may well be that its author sees a direct link between the action of these unseen powers (demons) and the work of the Roman emperor's minions. Gaining control of the demons might provide the key that unlocks the secrets of the power behind Rome, as well as the painful personal effects of demons.

The author of the Secret Revelation of John takes advantage of another source of support for the mastery of the demons. Local Egyptian scholars lecture particularly well on the all-important relationship between human body parts and numerous divinities and demons. Their popular Hermetic Vulgata offers a vast knowledge of the names of demons, and since demons can be exorcised through addressing them by name, this enormously helpful resource supports exorcists of all types.

Another Egyptian scholar, Ptolemy (100–170), continues to convert the worldviews of religious leaders, philosophers, and teachers through his well-known work in mathematics and astronomy. As he refocuses attention to the heavenly motion, he realigns their view of the universe. And now we notice how a combination of his (Ptolemy's) new astronomy with Aristotle's physics from five hundred years earlier is widely accepted. It is both practical truth and religious doctrine.

Crosscurrents of science, philosophy, and religion evoke creative ideas about God and the world, humanity and health, and the meaning of life. Our teacher encourages discussion on topics as broad as cosmology, anthropology, health, and ethics, because all of them relate to the larger picture of salvation. As most of the teachers of Alexandria do, this teacher also makes a wide variety of materials available to his pupils, including diverse philosophical and sacred traditions, astrology, magic, asceticism, baptismal experiences, and studies on exorcism and healing. As he nimbly weaves his way through the treacherous shoals of Roman threats, demonic powers, and religious contradictions, we hear a remarkable blend of imagery from Greek philosophy, Jewish scriptures, and Egyptian influences.

But his lectures always lead back to the teachings of Jesus. Whether he's criticizing Jewish and Greek customs or drawing on their stories and myths, he persistently demonstrates how Christ provides the ultimate answers to their questions. He talks about a salvation from suffering and darkness. It's also a

salvation that inspires all people to live together in harmony. The more we listen to this teacher, the more amazed we become. Unlike any other teacher, this man has woven together the greatest mysteries of the world. Who else has described the action of God's creation and all of cosmology, its relationship to the world we live in, and the way Christ alone is able to finally save from all evil in completeness and perfection? No one! Ever! These are truly the gems of Christ we had never noticed before, never realized their great beauty and worth.

Walking home after the class through the vast Jewish quarters, we can't help but wonder about these Jews. They make up almost a fifth of the city population, and although some have contributed more broadly to the great cosmopolitan mix, others remain in closed communities, adhering to very strict ethnic behaviors. Our teacher leans heavily on their sacred texts, especially Genesis. But most of them think it's too jarring to rethink what Moses said about creation. They don't want to hear of it.

Their isolation may contribute to their vulnerability in times of crisis. On the one hand, they and the Christ-following Jews were all persecuted together during the horror of the Roman-led Rebellion of the Exile (115–117). But on the other hand, that agonizing event began to drive a wedge between the two groups.

One of those Christ-following Jewish teachers, Justin (100–165), exemplifies this sad separation between the Jewish sects. We can't tell for sure whether Justin has ever stopped to converse with our teacher, the author of the Secret Revelation of John. But Justin makes his position quite clear in his own book, Dialogue with Trypho, a Jew, that the purpose of Jewish scripture is to prophesy Jesus, and the Jews who don't see that are simply wrong.

On the other hand, our teacher has another way of regarding his ancient heritage in the Secret Revelation of John. Some of the earlier Hebrew texts inspire truth and should be taken seriously, he teaches. And some of them need second-century updating. His knowledge of the Jewish Bible and his concern for the value of these ancient, sacred texts demonstrate his proficiency and his faith. References to the Jewish book of Genesis and to Wisdom literature keep surfacing while he's talking, and it is evident that he is also drawn to the newer gospels that have been circulating about Jesus.

Conversations between the Secret Revelation author and his disciples, and between Justin and his disciples, might have also perked up our ears if either of them had ever moved to the subject of the Roman magistrates. Although it would most certainly have taken place in hushed tones, we can be sure neither one of them would have believed in the ultimate power behind the Roman atrocities. Christ-followers united behind the conviction that evil power is not of the one God but of false powers or demons.

Our teacher is drawing a lot of attention. Some of us are simply curious, but we notice students from faraway places have started listening in too. The teacher does not evade the deepest questions, such as why and how evil came to be, what God means in the midst of death and fear, and how to be saved from this evil—whether evil is identified as demons or Roman oppressors. Jews explain the cosmos and the origin of evil from their book of Genesis. But those answers are not thorough or deep enough for the Greek converts, who seek answers to new philosophical questions challenging the second century. Jesus had introduced a novel approach to his Judaean faith, and his ideas, particularly concerning the nature of the divine presence, are especially pertinent to the second-century struggles with Rome. The

world has changed since Jesus's time, but his teachings of the present realm of God and dominion over evil seem to translate clearly to the current situation.

Welcome to the Twenty-First-Century World

Almost the same could be said about the twenty-first century as the second century. That is, the world has changed since Jesus's time, but his teachings of the realm of God and dominion over evil seem to translate clearly to the current situation. Who wants to read an ancient book with multiple gods, attacking demons, two kinds of Adam, and set in such a foreign culture?

We might consider reading an ancient book if it offers new ideas that help us navigate our identity in the world of artificial intelligence, guides us through a potentially cataclysmic climate change, offers equitable healthcare, and even reduces time-related stress.

Modern-day ideas such as these are some of the enduring gems from the Secret Revelation of John that we'll stop to investigate. For unknown reasons, the Secret Revelation of John and other texts important to Christ-followers disappeared within a couple of hundred years of being written down, not to be seen for another sixteen hundred years or more. Copies of the Secret Revelation of John had already circulated at least as far as from Egypt to France, and probably farther.8 What happened to these texts and all the others discovered in Nag Hammadi is a contentious issue. Some say they were banned; others say readers simply lost interest. But now they look like treasures to both scholars and current followers of Jesus.

We can imagine the thrill of the archaeologists and scholars who first saw the ancient papyri in 1945 and realized what they were looking at!

But, as with most major discoveries from ancient times, a huge amount of work lies between the discovery and the understanding of what it means.

These ancient texts had been hidden and buried in the sands of eastern Egypt, near Nag Hammadi, which is about five hundred miles south of Alexandria.

But what did they mean? In our age of instant cell-phone translators, it is hard to realize the difficulty involved in removing the roughened outer layers of these gems. Brittle and broken pages of papyri, the ancient Coptic language, and centuries of cultural sea changes all contributed to challenges for the translators. Although all of the texts in the Nag Hammadi collection (sometimes called the Nag Hammadi library) were written in Coptic, there is a good possibility many or all of them were copies of original texts composed in Greek. And when they first came to light, few scholars were familiar with Coptic.

Furthermore, dealing with the Coptic version of a lost Greek text is not the only difficulty for translators. Even if the language were better known and many of the pages and words hadn't been destroyed, good translations are more than word-for-word exchanges. In order to understand the conversations in the Secret Revelation of John, for example, translators need to know something about the cultural meaning of the words. And beyond these difficulties, the greatest translating challenge may come from the fact that the ensuing church traditions and doctrines have established a certain mindset that still distorts the intended message for modern readers.

Reading a text written in the second century requires a kind of vision that transcends most of what we've learned from the church over the millennia. What do these stories tell us—stories written before there was a canon of literature to defend; before there was a cathedral to pay for; before there was a church council to judge; before there was anything like a "Christian" center in Jerusalem, Rome, or Constantinople; and before Gregorian chants and Renaissance painters created our images of God? There is a Savior in the Secret Revelation of John, but he/she did not require a confession of creed to determine who is in or out.

The teacher who wrote the Secret Revelation of John was also aware that times had changed since Jesus had awakened so many hearts and minds over a century earlier. Jesus's spiritual call for awakening and transformation spoke to the hearts of his own generation, just as the people of second-century Alexandria experienced it in their time. Alexandria had been the heartbeat of the second century. Such luminaries as Philo, Basilides, Clement, Ptolemy (the philosopher), Galen, Valentinus, Justin, and Origen had all contributed in some measure to the explosive thinking, struggling, and learning in Alexandria. And the author of the Secret Revelation of John still had something new to say.

How do we make sense of it in the twenty-first century? Does it bring comfort and wisdom to those of us who live in a culture so extremely remote from its second-century origin? People today are more concerned about whether our grandchildren will survive a dramatic climate change, whether the world has enough space for the movement of refugees and emigrants, or what is in charge of the new world order. But true gems hold their value through the changing millennia, and the literary gems in the Secret Revelation of John convey an element of confidence and assurance we need especially now, when the pace of life is accelerating so rapidly.

The story of the Secret Revelation of John captures the hearts and minds of modern readers as well as it did those of second-century Alexandrians, because it opens with a picture most people relate to at some point in our human experiences. Jesus's disciple John (not the real person, but a character dramatizing the role) is distraught, struggling in the midst of a crisis of faith. Everything Jesus had taught him to love and believe in seemed to have gone up in smoke when Jesus was suddenly arrested, humiliated, and crucified by the Romans. Where was God? How did evil gain such power? Where would he (John) go next? What could he trust now?

The horror behind the questions was all too real in the second-century Mediterranean world. Twenty-first-century fears are not too different. What should we do when the fabric of global existence wears dangerously thin? Science and technology, politics and education have so far failed to reverse the threat. Strangely, our weakening faith in the promises of technology and biomedicine returns us to an equal footing with the ancient world before those promises ever appeared. We are glimpsing further evidence that our thoughts govern the health of our personal and corporate bodies more than technological wonders have ever been able to do.

Rome's endless military conquests exemplified the nature of power struggles. Emperors kept amassing greater power to bolster their hierarchical authority over the empire. Persons were captured and enslaved with every victory, women were raped, and thousands of dissenters (maybe like Jesus) were crucified. Women, poor people, and enslaved people—the majority of society—all served the preservation of power at the top. Everything and everyone had to remain and function within the proper order of hierarchical control.

Sadly, oppression still operates in almost every form of human society. Political extremism excites fear of disenfranchisement in new forms. The barbarity of pedophilia and sexual abuse is not yet erased from our modern world, and violence strikes indiscriminately.

When the Secret Revelation of John was written, there were signs that the Roman Empire was weakening. Could it sustain its expansion and hegemony into the future? As superpowers rearrange their relationships with each other and with other types of power on the world stage today, we still wonder where the power will come from and how it will be used.

Questions of health and of how people identified themselves as individuals in antiquity show up in the press and in scholarly inquiries today. But the questions arise for different reasons. Computer knowledge, from artificial intelligence to quantum-mechanics computers, threatens privacy and even our worth and identity. Do our minds belong to us or to computers, governments, or cyberspace criminals?

Illness plagues every society, ancient and modern. Our attitudes toward the body and the means of health are radically different from attitudes about health at the time of John's revelation. Even during the second century, ideas about health varied greatly. But the vision of healthcare that the Secret Revelation of John lays out is bold. Since the Savior rescues people from mental and bodily anguish, the Secret Revelation presents the idea of health itself as a state of thought. Salvation is not restricted to the sinful soul, but the Savior is a specialist in mind-comforting, mind-correcting, and mind-guiding. Therefore, people who respond to the Savior's teachings can ultimately learn how to avoid the thoughts of sin and sickness. The author of this revelatory message appeals to Jesus's style of healingby-awakening rather than to the biomedical theories of antiquity, so his healing message resonates with people today who are thinking beyond the limitations of biotechnology.

The secret of John's revelation is that Jesus's teachings are available to meet cosmic and personal questions for all eras. The teachings are available, but they are secret—an ancient method of transmission. The teachings are secret, not just because they would offend some, but because they are hard to grasp. It requires more humility than intellectual depth, more sincerity than social prestige to understand them.

The ideas are abundantly available in the other texts in the Bible, but this second-century writer pulls them out of obscurity and defines them as the three essential explanations for healing and salvation. The book consists of three major parts, each one representing a major gem.

1. God is both loving and omnipotent good.
2. Evil is an impotent counterfeit or fraud.
3. The experience of healing is an essential element of full salvation for everyone.

The first gem—that God is both loving and omnipotent good—has entangled scholars and theologians for centuries. How could God be loving and let horrific things happen to people if God is really more powerful than evil forces? This is a brave author who tackles such a tough problem about God. The second gem is equally challenging: When every person on earth experiences evil as a reality, how could this author even think about evil as a mere fraud? But if this second gem is proven true, then it serves as a marvelous gift to the world. And, the third gem is probably more startling to church authorities than ordinary people. The idea that everyone has the opportunity to experience healing and being saved from evil forces rings true to those who are truly humble and sincere. Each gem first enters the human mind

as a rough and worthless rock, but as the author of the Secret Revelation polishes them, one chapter at a time, they bring light, hope, and joy.

In the story's conclusion at the end of the Secret Revelation of John, the Savior tells John that he has "finished everything for you in your hearing" (Meyer, 132). "The Savior communicated this to John for him to record and safeguard" (Meyer, 132).

Now, to open the pages of the book itself, imagine this Jewish teacher we met in Alexandria trying to make sense of the second-century upheaval he lived in. He imagines what Jesus might have said in a kind of post-resurrection scene to comfort his disciples in Jerusalem after his violent death, some 180 years before. The Alexandrian teacher envisions Jesus coming to his disciple John, who is distraught over the failure of the new movement, and Jesus opens John's eyes to a deeper understanding of the work of salvation. This is the story of the Secret Revelation of John. <>

THE TEXT OF THE PENTATEUCH: TEXTUAL CRITICISM AND THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS by Sidnie White Crawford [Series Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, De Gruyter, 9783110465846]

In the last several decades since the first publications of the biblical Dead Sea Scrolls, a revolution has occurred in the understanding of the history of the text of the Hebrew Bible during the Second Temple period. The present volume is a collection of articles documenting that revolution, written by Sidnie White Crawford over an almost thirty-year period beginning in 1990. As a member of the editorial team responsible for publishing the Qumran scrolls, the author was responsible for the critical editions of nine Deuteronomy scrolls and the four Reworked Pentateuch manuscripts; thus, her work played a critical role in the changing understanding of the textual history of the Pentateuch, especially the book of Deuteronomy and the Rewritten Bible texts. The author's lifework is brought together here in an accessible format. While the majority of the articles are reprints, the volume will close with two major new pieces: a text-critical study of the Deuteronomic Paraphrase of the Temple Scroll and a comprehensive overview of the history of the text of the Pentateuch.

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…Why then bother to republish these first four articles at all, if they are hopelessly outdated? One reason is that they are in a sense historical artifacts; you cannot understand where the field of textual criticism has gone if you do not understand where it started, and these articles are products of the first "post-Qumran" phase of textual criticism. Another reason is that, in rereading these articles, I realized that they contained valuable information that does not even appear in DID 14 and so may be of some use to scholars now working on Deuteronomy. In Chapter 1, the listing of the variants is accompanied by a text-critical discussion that is not included in DID 14. Chapter 2 contains my first extended argument that 4QDeut was not an entire Deuteronomy manuscript at all, but an excerpted text. The discussion surrounding "excerpted texts" has become an important piece of the larger conversation about the nature and function of the Qumran scrolls collection. Chapter 3 contains extended discussions of paleography and orthography; the paleographical discussions in particular are helpful for understanding the "Cross method" and how paleographic dates are determined. Finally, Chapter 4, which overlaps with Chapter 3, contains reconstructions of the fragments that do not appear in DJD 14. Hand reconstructions were how the scope and layout of each manuscript was determined at the time these scroll editions were published; those processes are hidden in DJD 14 but laid out and explained here.

After an interval of about a decade in which my attention was taken up with the "Rewritten Bible/Scripture" manuscripts (see below), I produced my next article on the text of Deuteronomy, "Reading Deuteronomy in the Second Temple Period" (Chapter 5). During that decade, the discussion surrounding the text of the "Bible" had changed drastically, informed by the complete publication of all the "biblical" manuscripts from Qumran and the simultaneous publication of the manuscripts of 4QRewirked Pentateuch. Several things had become evident during this time. First and perhaps most importantly, it was clear that the texts of books that later became part of the Jewish canon of scripture were not "fixed" in the Second Temple period but remained "fluid" until the end of the first century CE. The second realization was a corollary to the first: there was no canon of scripture in the Second Temple period. The most that could be said was that there was movement towards a canon as the era progressed. Third, Second Temple scribes were not mere copyists but were active participants in the handing on of ancient textual traditions. ^ related fourth realization was that the effort to affiliate texts with the MT, or the LXX, or the SP was misguided: the three complete exemplars of the Pentateuch were only that, complete; they did not necessarily contain a text to be preferred over the fragmentary remains of the Qumran manuscripts. In fact, the MT. LXX, and SP were simply late, individual examples of textual streams that flowed during the Second Temple period, streams that contained more or less closely related manuscripts. Chapters 5 to 13 all effect these realizations and my attempts to grapple with them. Many of these articles began life as conference papers before becoming parts of conference proceedings volumes, making them somewhat difficult to access. I am pleased to have them collected here.

In this group of articles I suggest that by the third century BCE, when our Qumran evidence begins, the individual books of the Pentateuch had all reached a recognizable "shape," although the text within that shape was still fluid. Scribes worked within the recognizable shape to pass on the textual tradition; thus, we now have manuscripts that we can identify as part of the Deuteronomy textual tradition, even though the discrete details of those manuscripts may vary. I emphasized more and more throughout these articles the independent role of the scribe in this process of textual transmission. Further, the manuscript evidence made clear that, by the time of our earliest manuscripts, the Pentateuch was recognized as a larger block of material, enabling scribes to incorporate material from one part of the Pentateuch into another (e. g., 4QpaleExod^m, 4QNum^b, 4QDeut^n).

However, while, as illustrated by these articles, the assumptions underlying the enterprise of Hebrew Bible textual criticism have changed dramatically in the past thirty years, I continue to affirm its value as a discipline. I believe, as will be clear from these articles, that text criticism can reveal important data concerning the textual history of a particular book and that it is often possible (although not always) to determine which variants are earlier (or primary) and which are later (or secondary). Using the methods of text criticism judiciously and weighing each variant individually, it should be possible to reach what I call "the earliest inferable stage" of a text. That is why I have agreed to produce a critical, eclectic edition of Deuteronomy for The Hebrew Bible—A Critical Edition project, the subject of Chapters 6 and 13. As I state in Chapter 6, "While I am under no illusion that my work will miraculously reveal the Ur-text of Deuteronomy, I do believe that the large amount of evidence [found in the manuscripts of Deuteronomy] means that ... a critical text" can be produced.

The final article in this section, "Deuteronomy in the Temple Scroll and its Use in the Textual Criticism of Deuteronomy," creates an excellent segue to the second section of the book, dealing as it does with

textual criticism in the Temple Scroll. The Temple Scroll, identified as a "Rewritten Bible" text soon after its publication, contains long passages from Deuteronomy and so constitutes part of the body of evidence for the textual criticism of Deuteronomy. But the Temple Scroll also exists as a composition in its own right. Deuteronomy serves as one of its sources, but the Temple Scroll has its own voice, setting, and theological agenda.

The second section of this volume, even more than the first, illustrates how my mind has changed over the course of a career working on the Qumran scrolls. This is indicated by my difficulty in naming the section. "Rewritten Bible," an older description, was not correct, since there was no "Bible" in Second Temple Judaism, but could I use "Rewritten Scripture"? Was "Rewritten" appropriate, or would "rewriting" be better? Was "Scripture" suitable? All of these terms have been called into question for a variety of reasons. Finally, I settled on "Rewriting the Classical Literature of Ancient Israel." "Rewriting" reflects the ongoing nature of the scribal work that can be perceived in all of the works discussed in this section. "Classical Literature," a term borrowed from the field of classics, signals the status of the literature on which the scribes worked; it was the cultural tradition of Israel, handed on over centuries to reach the late Second Temple period scribes who produced the Qumran manuscripts. This literature had a high status in Second Temple Judaism, none more so than the Torah or Pentateuch, which is the focus of discussion in this section.

It must be admitted, however, that the contents of these chapters will strike some as hopelessly out of date. This, I am afraid, is true; the discussion surrounding the manuscripts 4Q158 and 4Q364-367 has changed so much since the first article in this section was published in 1992 that articles written then seem almost unrelated to articles written now on the same subject. However, once again I found that these articles have two characteristics in their favor: they present information about the manuscripts under discussion not available elsewhere, and they give a good historical overview, when read chronologically, of the progress in the field. For those reasons I have chosen to include early publications in this selection of articles.

My work on the manuscripts gathered under the rubric "Reworked Pentateuch" began shortly after I completed my doctoral dissertation and while I was preparing the Deuteronomy manuscripts for publication. Thus, there is often a dialogue between the two sections, and they cannot be disentangled from each other. John Strugnell, who had already invited Emanuel ^^^ to collaborate with him on the edition of the 4QReworked Pentateuch manuscripts, asked me to take his place on the project, and ^^^ graciously accepted me as his partner. 4Q364-367 were assigned to Strugnell by the original editorial team because they contained what he described as a "wild" Pentateuch text, too far removed from the known exemplars of the Pentateuch to be considered a "biblical" text. This judgment concerning the 4QRP manuscripts in comparison to the three complete exemplars included even the Samaritan Pentateuch, with which 4Q364 shares harmonistic expansions and content editing, demonstrating how narrowly the boundaries between "biblical" and "nonbiblical" were drawn by that first generation of editors. Strugnell had titled the manuscripts "Pentateuchal Paraphrases," but ^^^ and I considered that title misleading and not really reflective of the nature of the text contained in the manuscripts. We settled, with the help of George Brooke, on the title "Reworked Pentateuch," which happily still reflects the nature of the texts of the four manuscripts, i.e., pentateuchal texts that show extensive signs of scribal revision in the course of their transmission.

The first article in this section, Chapter 15, is a very early article on 4Q364 and 365, first presented at the famous Madrid Qumran conference in 1991. At that time, those manuscripts were not yet available to the scholarly community and therefore generated much discussion among the conference attendees. It is noteworthy that on the first page I refer to them as "complete Pentateuch scrolls," indicating that even at that very early stage of research I was treating 4Q364 and 365 (as well as 366 and 367) as manuscripts of the Pentateuch, albeit with texts expanded beyond that of any known exemplar. Since this was the first public presentation of these fragments, I naturally focused on the expanded sections. One of those section, 4Q365 fragment 23, excited great interest because it was the first time that such scribal activity in a legal text was seen in any example of a Pentateuch text. This section in particular should be read together with the following short note on fragment 23 (Chapter 16), written with my former student Christopher A. Hoffman. What I would particularly like to point out is that in this very first article on 4Q364-367, the idea that these are simply expanded texts of the Pentateuch, not qualitatively different from other known exemplars, is already present in embryonic form and would be taken up quite vigorously in subsequent scholarly discussion.

The next two articles, Chapters 17 and 18, should be read as a pair, separated by almost twenty years. Chapter 17 is the first extended discussion of the five fragments that ^^^ and I had separated out from the fragments of 4Q365 and published separately as 4Q365a. The article is concerned primarily with the possible identification of these fragments with the Temple Scroll, then only published in the form found in 11QTemplea. I rejected that identification, but I tentatively suggested that the material found in the fragments may have been source material for the Temple Scroll. The second article is more concerned with their identification as part of 4Q365, with which they had been placed by Strugnell on the basis of paleography. In this article (Chapter 18), while I acknowledge that their identification with 4Q365 is possible, I am concerned that the physical placement of at least one of the fragments in the manuscript 4Q365 remains difficult. I would argue that in the end we cannot be certain that all of the fragments of 4Q365a belong with 4Q365.

Chapters 19 and 20 contain much overlap but were written from different perspectives. Both represent discussions of the phenomenon then known as "Rewritten Bible" as it was happening in the late 1990s. The first, a short article written for a Festschrift honoring Frank Moore Cross that focuses on the manuscripts of 4QRew^rked Pentateuch, still uses the canonical categories "biblical" and "nonbiblical," although with the recognition that the type of scribal activity seen in these manuscripts is a continuation of scribal activity found in earlier "biblical" books. I acknowledged that "it seems clear that the reader of this text (sic) was expected to view it as a text of the Pentateuch" (235). However, I was less certain about its reception in the community that preserved it, a much more difficult question to answer. However, my thinking about the text's nature and its presumed status had clearly changed in this period, as scrolls scholars began to come to terms with the wealth of data presented in the now fully-published scrolls corpus.

Chapter 20 contains my first musings on the archaeology of Qumran and how that should affect our understanding of the scrolls collection. It is essentially a critique of a too-rigid application of the Qumran-Essene hypothesis and cautions against the then-prevalent assumption that all the manuscripts found in the Qumran caves were written at Qumran, as well as the corollary idea that they were the possession of a sectarian community and therefore not reflective of "normative" Judaism. The article discusses the manuscripts of 4QReworked Pentateuch, Jubilees, and the Temple Scroll. I concluded that,

while it was impossible to determine (at that time) whether or not a manuscript was actually copied at Qumran, there was no reason to assume that they were products of the Qumran movement. In fact, all three texts qua texts (that is, not as manuscript copies, but as compositions) predate the settlement at Qumran and should be viewed as part of the plentiful and previously unknown literature of the Second Temple period.

The last two chapters in this section are much more recent (2016, 2019) and therefore better reflect the state of the discussion concerning the manuscripts of 4QReworked Pentateuch. They also reflect my continuing interest in the phenomenon of excerpted texts, first explored in Chapter 2. An important component of both chapters is the examination of the material remains of a manuscript, not just its text, and a manuscript's archaeological context. The articles suggest that excerpted manuscripts were far more numerous in the Qumran collection than was previously supposed, and that 4Q366 and 367 were in fact not complete manuscripts of the Pentateuch, as originally claimed, but were excerpted manuscripts. I close this section with a postscript on excerpted texts, focusing even more intently on archaeological context and suggesting several more examples of excerpted texts in the Qumran collection.

The volume closes with a chapter original to this volume, "Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible in the Twenty-First Century: Theory and Praxis," which considers my own philosophy of textual criticism in some detail. The philosophical and/or epistemological underpinnings of textual criticism have been brought to the foreground in recent years, and it now behooves a textual critic to set out her own philosophical assumptions. Likewise, the methodology employed in the practice of textual criticism needs to be transparent in order for any critical edition to gain scholarly acceptance. I therefore lay out my own methods with particular reference to the book of Deuteronomy.

It is my hope that this volume will serve the reader as a historic overview of the growth of the field of Hebrew Bible textual criticism in the late twentieth-early twenty-first centuries, as well providing practical examples of the discipline as it is now practiced, drawn from my own work on Deuteronomy and the Reworked Pentateuch manuscripts. <>

THE NOTION OF »HOLY« IN ANCIENT ARMENIAN TEXTS FROM THE FIFTH CENTURY CE: A COMPARATIVE APPROACH USING DIGITAL TOOLS AND METHODS by Thomas Jurczyk [Bielefeld University Press, an Imprint of transcript Verlag. 9783837661811] Open Access

Religious studies have long discussed the comparative notion of »holy« beyond religious, cultural, and linguistic boundaries. In this book, Thomas Jurczyk conducts a diachronic comparison of the meaning and application of two notions and their related word fields that are commonly associated with a broader comparative notion of holy, namely the Ancient Armenian term »surb« and its related words and the English word field associated with »holy«. To compare these two semantic fields, his methodological approach operates on the principle of distributional semantics and applies, among others, tools and methods from the field of corpus linguistics.

CONTENTS

This book **"THE NOTION OF 'HOLY' IN ANCIENT ARMENIAN TEXTS FROM THE FIFTH CENTURY CE"** aims at contributing to the broader discussion in the study of religion on the comparative notion of holy beyond religious, cultural, and linguistic boundaries. Notions such as holy are of crucial importance for the study of religion as they enable the comparison and hence study of different religious traditions based on common tertia comparationis. With this in mind, this book compares the meaning and application of two notions and their related word fields that are commonly associated with a broader comparative notion of holy. Both notions stem from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The first notion is represented by the Ancient Armenian term surb, a word that is often rendered as "holy" in English translations of Ancient Armenian texts. The second notion is represented by the English term "holy."

The choice of Ancient Armenian and English notions was guided by the following reasons. Firstly, the examination of Ancient Armenian sources and the use of surb therein are still a desideratum in the broader discussions about a comparative notion of holy in the study of religion, at least compared to other ancient notions such as Latin sacer/sanctus or Greek hágios.4 Consequently, a detailed analysis of

the Armenian terminology adds new aspects to both the broader discussion of the comparative notion of holy and the application and meaning of words related to holy in ancient societies.

Secondly, the two notions of surb and holy stem from different languages with different cultural and historical backgrounds. Therefore, both notions and their respective semantic fields are relatively independent of each other. Consequently, potential overlappings between these semantic fields can rightfully be interpreted as an indication of an existing comparative notion or semantic field of holy beyond cultural, historical, and linguistic boundaries.

Lastly, despite the long time gap between the languages and the corresponding cultural backgrounds, the notions of surb and holy are related to one another. The relation between these two notions is notably perceivable in their common application in the translation of the Christian terminology of holy in the Bible. Furthermore, contemporary English translations of Ancient Armenian texts tend to translate the notion of surb and its related word field with words from the semantic field of the English notion of holy. These links between surb and holy illustrate that a comparison of both concepts is not entirely arbitrary but based on empirical data. Nevertheless, the assumption implicitly made by the translators that both notions correspond to each other still needs to be examined. This is one major aim of this book.

The overall research question is divided into two interrelated research foci. The first focuses on the specific semantic problem of the meaning of the Armenian notion of surb in early Armenian texts from the fifth century CE. This first part exclusively concentrates on the examination of the Armenian texts and does not take into account the use and meaning of holy in the English sources. The second research focus undertakes a comparative study by relating the word field around surb to the contemporary English notion of holy. Furthermore, the two notions of Armenian surb and English holy are evaluated in view of the comparative notion of holy in the study of religion. The inquiries are based on macro- and microanalyses of Ancient Armenian and contemporary English text corpora that apply digital tools and methods from the field of corpus linguistics.

The methodological approach in this book operates on the underlying principle that the meaning of words and notions can only be derived from their semantic, syntactical, and pragmatic contexts. Accordingly, a lexicographical6 approach based on fixed meanings, synonyms, and etymological explanations is rejected in favor of an approach which seeks to avoid any presuppositions in meaning. One such premise is as that surb means "holy, sacred; pure, clean, exempt, spotless, stainless (...)," simply because it is commonly found that way in dictionaries such as Petrosean's lexicon (Venice, 1875). Instead, the meaning of both the Ancient Armenian terminology around surb and the contemporary English notion of holy should be derived from their use cases. The application of tools and methods from the field of corpus linguistics is an adequate choice to obtain a thorough overview of the syntactical and semantic contexts of both notions as they allow the handling and examination of large text corpora.

The Importance of Comparative Notions for the Study of Religion

The importance of comparative notions such as holy for the study of religion, to which this book attempts to contribute, has been stressed by Oliver Freiberger in his book "Considering Comparison. A Method for Religious Studies" (2019). Besides Freiberger's convincing plea for the need for comparative notions in the study of religion, his book also provides a concise framework of how to evaluate and locate comparative studies based on their scale, mode, and scope.

In accordance with the methodological framework that Freiberger presents in his fourth chapter (Freiberger 2019, 111ff.), the aim of the comparative study in this book corresponds to the taxonomic mode (Freiberger 2019, 126ff.). This mode is preoccupied with "classify[ing] religious items and thus contribut[ing] to the taxonomic effort in the study of religion" (Freiberger 2019, 127). The scale of the study in this book differs depending on the size of the texts in the respective corpora. Yet, the overall focus lies on the meso- or even macro-level (Freiberger 2019, 131ff.). Regarding the scope of a study, Freiberger proposes three different categories.

Generally put, the category "scope" reflects the distance between the items compared in a study. Studies with a contextual scope compare items within one historical context or cultural milieu that can be delineated both spatially and temporally—for example, the Mediterranean world in late antiquity, northeast India in the fifth century BCE, or contemporary Brazil. Studies with a cross-cultural scope go beyond postulated cultural boundaries, such as in a comparison of ancient Chinese and ancient Greek religion. Studies with a trans-historical scope are comparisons across time and always appear in conjunction with one of the other two scopes. (Freiberger 2019,143)

Taking up these three scopes, the comparative approach in this book has a crosscultural and trans-historical scope. Yet, despite their different cultural and historical backgrounds, the contemporary English notion of holy is still linked to the Ancient Armenian notion due to translations, among others.

Overall Structure of This Book

Following the introduction, Chapter 2 provides a brief overview of the historical background of Armenia in the fifth century CE, the comparative notion of holy in the study of religion, and selected examples of the notion of holy in other ancient languages. Chapter 3 offers a more detailed articulation of the methodological approach of this book that is largely based on corpus linguistics and influenced by ideas of distributional semantics. Chapter 4 provides an overview of the texts used in the examination. The texts range from collections of short texts (tweets) to largesized text corpora (English Web corpus 2015 [enTenTen2015]) and can be grouped into three overall corpora.

The first corpus is the Armenian text corpus, including the Ancient Armenian Surb Corpus (AASC) and the Ancient Armenian Full Text Corpus (AAFTC). Both corpora are based on the same texts, namely "The History of the Armenians" by Agat`angelos, the "Life of Maštoc`" by Koriwn, the "Epic Histories," and the Gospels in their Armenian translation according to the so-called Zohrab Bible. The English corpus is divided into two subcorpora of very different sizes. Firstly, there is the Holy/ Sacred English Corpus (HSEC), which includes text samples from different genres (academic texts, religious texts, encyclopedia entries, tweets). Secondly, this book uses the already existing English Web corpus 2015 (enTenTen2015) corpus with the help of Sketch Engine. The English Web corpus 2015 (enTenTen2015) includes more than 15 billion words of contemporary English texts that have been scraped from the Internet.

The examination part of this book starts in Chapter 5. This chapter analyzes the semantic fields of the English notion of holy and the Armenian notion of surb. The examination is based on the text corpora and the methods introduced in Chapters 3 and 4.

The results of the examination in Chapter 5 are used in Chapter 6 for the overall comparison of the different semantic fields. This chapter also discusses the final results of the comparisons in view of the

two previously mentioned research foci. Thus, Chapter 6 will propose a concise answer to the question: What is the meaning of surb in Ancient Armenian texts from the fifth century CE? Furthermore, it will also evaluate whether the semantic fields of the English notion of holy and the Ancient Armenian notion of surb are linked to each other and if so, what implications this might have for the comparative notion of holy in the study of religion (Freiberger 2019, 158ff.). <>

THE GREAT DIVIDE AND THE SALVATION PARADOX by David P. Griffith [Pickwick Publications, 9781666731736]

The church in its first centuries split on whether Christ saved everyone or a few, Universalism versus Exclusivism. In the sixth century, the church settled the issue seemingly and held that Universalism was heresy. This book reviews this history as well as what provoked it—Scripture, on its face, gives two contradictory accounts of salvation's extent: everyone is ultimately saved and everyone is not. In contrast to both Exclusivism and Universalism, the book takes Scripture's two accounts of salvation's extent as true—that is, as a paradox. This is the approach the church has taken with other scriptural paradoxes. Saying one God is three, or one Son is both God and man, appeared to be contradictory too, but, to embrace Scripture entirely, these were seen as paradoxical. The Trinity modeled how one can be three, and the hypostatic union modeled how one can be two. For the paradox of salvation's extent, the answer lies in the individual's divisibility in the afterlife, one can be two. That is, in ultimate salvation, each individual can be both saved and unsaved.

Review

"This subtle, learned, and intriguing analysis not only invites us to ponder anew some of the ultimate mysteries of the Christian revelation, but to see how the concept of paradox can encompass a wide range of apparently contradictory scriptural truths in order to underscore God's gracious salvation in Christ. Those who follow David Griffith's reasoning in this highly accomplished study will be enlightened and enrichened." --D. Densil Morgan, University of Wales Trinity Saint David, Lampeter, emeritus

"Griffith's innovative take on the Christian paradox of exclusive or universal salvation is to find the paradox applied to every individual. A person's eternal life and character are divisible and thus subject to both divine acceptance and judgment. This is a fascinating exercise in constructive theology and in defining a person in relationship to the eternal God." --J. Andrew Dearman, Fuller Theological Seminary

"'Who then can be saved?' The question reverberates through Christian history from New Testament times. Taking Scripture seriously and employing a whole host of ancient as well as modern sources, David Griffith offers a fresh and original approach to the Bible's apparent advocacy of both a universal and an exclusive salvation. Erudite, stimulating, and lucid, the discussion is both constructive and provocative. Careful reading will yield insights into theological anthropology as well as Christian soteriology." --Robert Pope, Westminster College, Cambridge

"This is a novel book with a fascinating argument. As Griffith indicates, the stalemate in Christianity between universal and limited salvation seems to be an intractable issue without resolution. However, Griffith has provided an original way forward that deserves recognition and careful consideration. A timely piece and a tour de force." --Michael Burdett, University of Nottingham

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> God turned to speak to me
> (Don't anybody laugh);
> God found I wasn't there—
> At least not over half. —Frost, "Ten Mills"

The extent of salvation is a Christian aporia because Christians have not entirely agreed on whether Christ saves all of us or saves only some of us, but they all agree on the obvious: Not even Christ can truly do both. Their disagreement is based on what Christians find in Scripture, which sets out both accounts of salvation's extent and also justifies the notion, if a justification were needed, that contradicting accounts cannot be entirely true. As a result, the scriptural traditions have had to dissolve creatively what Scripture says and choose which account to embrace and which to refrain from embracing. A common shorthand for the competing positions that Christians (and others) have arrived at on salvation's extent is exclusivism and universalism. Exclusivism is the belief that not everyone is saved and has been orthodox longer than dyothelitism and since before Muhammad, but exclusivism A reconstrue all the scriptural texts that say everyone is saved so that Scripture can be interpreted in such a way that it never really says that. Universalism, the dissenting position, is the belief that everyone is ultimately saved and is a persistent heresy, but, so as to prefer wherever Scripture expresses universalism, it must negate the repeated scriptural depictions to the contrary. And, so, that is the problem: Scripture offers a paradox that says both everyone will be saved and not everyone will be, and all sides have reformulated those accounts into a contradiction so that Scripture, once the exegeting is done, can say only one account or the other.

This is not how the church typically handles scriptural paradoxes. Rather than adopting the tempting nuances that heresies have offered to simplify the scriptural answers, the church has usually offered greater wit. It has accepted such enigmas as God being both one and three and as Christ being both truly divine and truly human, but, unfortunately, by the sixth century, the church had exhausted itself on such paradoxes before understanding salvation's extent and, after recuperating, was beyond fighting over additional ones. As a result, the church settled for the simplicity of contradiction and choose exclusivism, and the second-place finisher, universalism, was only simpler. No part of the church has ever acknowledged that somehow all of Scripture is actually true in saying that both everyone will be saved and not everyone will be. This book purports to do that—accept both contraries on salvation's extent—without unlearning the principle of noncontradiction, and, to do that, the thesis must model the

individual as divisible. With this divisibility, each person can be both saved and not saved, it is argued, which would then leave Scripture's salvation paradox as it aspires to be, true. Admittedly, dividing the individual, who is practically, normally, and etymologically indivisible, is a high price to pay to preserve the paradox, but it is no higher than that paid in order to understand the other scriptural paradoxes. Being both saved and unsaved is not much different from being both one and three or being both human and divine. Each scriptural paradox has been worth the cost of rethinking the irrefutable.

The divisibility of the individual as proposed here is not the conventional one associated with biological death, where the vanishing cadaver leaves an afterlife remainder, typically labeled the soul. What constitutes the personal remainder that may persist after biological death, which is presumably spiritual and definitely not zoological, is left to those dealing with that topic. The thesis in this book divides, rather, whatever the particulars of that remainder turn out to be. Though what is substantively the remainder is not declared, what functionally continues after death is declared and that out of necessity. If we are to live after biological life, what continues must include that which has lived that life, which is usually called our character. Without the continuation of the personal character, those who are saved in eternal life would be none of us, just other people altogether. This personal character, given how we each live, has roughly two paramount outlooks, directions, alignments, mindsets, or, as broadly termed here, orientations. Our dueling as-lived orientations are roughly that of being godly and of being selfish, whether relating to God favorably or, from pride or cowardice, sinning. The two orientations cohabitate in each of us. This is absolutely incontrovertible for one person and, given the good authority from many others, is confidently presumed of nearly everyone else. To this widely shared observation that the personal character is conflicted in this life, the thesis proposed here adds the novelty that it is divisible afterwards. This unconventional idea takes nine chapters to explain.

Chapter 1 clarifies several preparatory issues required for understanding the salvation paradox, including the meaning of the central issue—ultimate salvation. Ultimate (or final) salvation specifies a quality of this life but also a quality of the life beyond it. That is, salvation is eschatological, "the fulfilment of all time," Karl Barth's phrase. Salvation, while it applies to every moment, is critical in the ultimate because it is as of then that everyone is or is not saved and is the context in which the answers of universalism and exclusivism diverge. The first chapter also justifies devoting precious attention to the issue of salvation's extent despite the contemporary sheepishness about preserving paradoxes, including the meaning of death and the objectivity of truth. The dispute about salvation's extent is often deemed too contentious for polite society or too speculative for practical company, but its extent must be understood because questions demand answers. If questions are not answered intelligently, we have only answers of the other variety. The fundamental hurdle for understanding salvation's extent is that its paradox consists of two scriptural propositions pointing in opposite directions. Happily, scriptural propositions in paradox do not generally intimidate Christians, who believe ideas like dying to live. The paradox of salvation's extent suffers in particular because it pertains to individuals, and this can be associated with "individualism," which Christians can find problematic. Yet too, this association is unavoidable because, as Thomas Aquinas reminds us, individuals cannot be reduced to universals. This is especially true in salvation. We can, Søren Kierkegaard noted, be treated like a herd on other subjects such as innoculations, but not on subjects like salvation. Finally, this chapter identifies the authority for addressing salvation's extent, which means tackling such issues as the relationship of tradition to Scripture.

Chapter 2 outlines the conceptual framework of ultimate salvation in which its paradox rests. While salvation's extent is paradoxical, its bewildering content has, to the limit of the information available to us, mostly been settled among the Christian faithful: We live with death, then die, and experience the binaries of eternal life for the godly or of perdition for the ungodly. These parameters triangulate the salvation paradox, which is delivered by Jesus, who is a sign of contradiction and who produces our division (Luke 2:34; 12:51), which bisects us (Matt 10:34–35). Though universalists and exclusivists agree that salvation relates to this life and that at least some of us experience eternal life, they disagree whether any of us suffer its negation. This is of course not the only salvation dispute, but the others are left undisturbed because, no matter how they are resolved, the salvation paradox abides in them. For example, whether salvation extends to faith-alone or to faith-plus-works leaves the Christian consensus that godliness, broadly understood, relates to salvation's extent.

Chapter 3 lays out the two scriptural accounts of salvation's extent, and they are, if not paradoxical, undeniably contradictory. The universalism account is well represented in Scripture. There is "one God and Father of all who is over all, through all, and in all"9 (Eph 4:6), with each "all" being a substantive of ^^^, the most natural way that the NT has to refer to everyone. Because Christ "wills all men saved" and "gave himself ransom exchange for all" (1 Tim 2:4, 6), "God's grace, saving to all men, has appeared" (Titus 2:11), the aorist indicative verb actualizing universal salvation. Paul explains: The salvation of the God-man must be as thorough as the thoroughly infectious sin of the first-man and thereby reach "all men" (Rom 5:12–21). So, God saves "all men, most especially [^^^^^^^] those believing" (1 Tim 4:10), which emphasizes that none fewer than everyone is saved. Scripture is, however, equally expressive on exclusivism. The evil are "gathered and burned in" the consummation's "fiery furnace" (Matt 13:24–50). Christ will "separate men from each other" and the cursed will suffer "eternal castigation," a "torment" in "fire" (25:31–46; Luke 16:19–31). Those not abiding in Christ are "like the branch cast away to wither" (John 15:6). While "many" traverse "the way leading to the destruction," only "a few" traverse "the way leading to the life" (Matt 7:13–14). In the end, God's wrath inundates the cosmos, which is likened to Sodom's brimstone and Noah's cataclysm (Luke 17:26–30//Matt 24:37–39), "an example of suffering eternal fire's punishment" (Jude 7). Given these seemingly contradictory accounts, both cannot be true, at least not without more comment. So, both exclusivists and universalists must, in adhering to their respective positions, unwind the paradox by downgrading its opponent's scriptural basis to something that is only facially true, not authentically true. Exclusivists take all people as all believers so that, wherever Scripture says all people are saved, only all believers are, and universalists take God's wrath as a passing phase so that, wherever Scripture speaks of the damned, no one truly is. This chapter, in contrast, takes the accounts as written without anticipating the logic collision towards which they are evidently bound.

Chapter 4 presents the church's responses to the paradox of salvation's extent. The contesting responses have throughout history been roughly two, and, not coincidentally, they follow the two accounts found in Scripture. The two positions were competitive among Christians until the sixth century, which was when exclusivism abruptly prevailed and universalism was anathematized. Because Christians have since grown accustomed to the orthodoxy of that resolution, the chapter must give an extended survey of Christian universalists to counterbalance exclusivism's obvious dominance, and confirmation of that dominance comes primarily from Christianity's creeds, which chapter 4 also presents. In reviewing the universalism and exclusivism in the church, the chapter strives for evenhandedness while juggling thoroughness and brevity. The overview finds that 1) universalism gained

strength in the second century and lasted until the sixth century, convincing luminaries like Origen of Alexandria, Athanasius the Great, Hilary of Poitiers, Gregory of Nyssa, John Cassian, and Maximus the Confessor, and has more recently flourished as a minority, whose notables have included Friedrich Schleiermacher, Paul Tillich, William Barclay, Jürgen Moltmann, and David Bentley Hart, and 2) exclusivism has more or less predominated since the beginning and has been led by such greats as Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Cyril of Jerusalem, Basil of Caesarea, Augustine, Chrysostom, Jerome, Gregory the Great, John Damascene, Thomas, Martin Luther, John Calvin, and the authors of every extant Christian confession for over one thousand years and nearly every church order since the Didache. No one has yet taken any but these two positions, though a twentieth-century exclusivist subset, with worthies like Barth and Hans Urs von Balthasar, has claimed that universalism is potentially, though not actually, true (here designated "potentialism").

Chapter 5 explains why these positions have failed to maintain a consensus, much less extinguish its competition. Each response, in treating its preferred scriptural account as sincerely true, treats its opposite account as only superficially true, all to make Scripture intelligible, though some potentialists say Scripture is unintelligible on this subject. Exclusivists, who are grounded in how obviously Scripture says eternal life is not for everyone, suffer a sort of semantic anomia whenever they encounter scriptural words like all in connection with salvation. Universalists, on the other hand, have the same sort of motivated perception when it comes to scriptural words like hell, wrath, perishing, remnant, or any unqualified imperative. As for potentialists, they mostly say that everyone is saved potentially, which optimistic exclusivists espousing unlimited atonement have been saying all along. The chapter does not referee the theological conflict so much as find that no side convinces when rejecting its opposition. Said differently, much like heresies had tried with the paradoxes of the Trinity and of Christ's natures, each position has deflated Scripture's paradox to one account, while treating the other account as a misdirect, which inevitably gives each position a nagging sense of imbalance. On the positive side, the persistence of each position in the church confirms what a fair read of Scripture clearly yields—both positions on salvation's extent are obviously present.

Chapter 6, the longest, sets the table for the proposal to preserve the salvation paradox as Scripture has presented it, and that argument depends on the individual's divisibility. The chapter reviews the thought history and current perspectives on what we think we know about who we are in this life and about what of this life that perdures into the next. Addressed but found wanting are the views that say the self is a fiction or an organic robot. Instead, the subject is as Richard Wollheim aptly described it after appropriating Kierkegaard—it is one who leads a life. And this self is all too reasonably assumed to be indivisible. The body partly explains this assumption, but the body can divide even in this life (e.g., amputation) and always does, at least eventually and then thoroughly, in death. The natural body's most pertinent limitation is that an afterlife lacks one. The individual after death is, if anything, either discarnate or preternatural. This supposed belittlement of the terrestrial physique sounds antiquated and must therefore be addressed repeatedly. Irrespective of the natural body or any other ontological inventory, an individual is incurably a personal character, which consists of memories, beliefs, and preferences from leading a life, and is inherently centered on a personal identity's first-person awareness of that life. Accordingly, an afterlife, to be the self from this life, must include the personal character and, to be experienced, must include the personal identity. And certainly in this life, the personal character is manifestly semi-divided for the healthy (e.g., internal dialogue) and can be pathologically divided for the unhealthy (e.g., dissociative identity disorder). Scripture likewise describes the personal character's

orientations as divided in this life: Two ways are choosable, and we each choose both. We are not two beings, but two modes of being. As Paul observed, the self is metaphorically two selves by literally living two ways (Rom 7:19–21). So, our character develops as we each live, and, because it is conflicted in this life, the character's divisibility afterwards is almost plausible.

Chapter 7, to finalize the argument, takes what the prior chapters have established. First, according to Scripture, everyone is ultimately saved and not everyone is. Second, according to those whose thoughts find traction in reality, contradictions entail falsehood. So, according to everyone interpreting Scripture, either everyone is ultimately saved or not everyone is. Third, according to those who have candidly explored the individual, each one of them is conceptually, though not actually, divisible in what orients them. These verities, this chapter argues, lead to the ineluctable but unprecedented conclusion: The individual suffers divisibility in the next life. Rather than godly individuals being separated from ungodly ones as tradition sees the separation then, the godly can be separated from the ungodly as to each individual. Accordingly, a single individual can have both eternal life and perdition. In other words, because Scripture says that everyone is saved and that not everyone is saved and because the principle of noncontradiction is adamant, something must give, and that something is the weak link. The individual splits. The individual's divisibility differs critically from its purging, which is traditional. Purging is what removes ungodliness from the individual, and, as a consequence, purging does not address the salvation paradox—it damns no one. Dividing an individual, in contrast, results in one who is saved and one who is not. Thus, the thesis, in striving for the orthodoxy of honoring what Scripture says in its entirety, is thereby unorthodox in the sense of beyond belief. Like Christianity generally, the thesis foolishly chooses both sides of Scripture's paradox and scandalously arrives at the incredible. As a result, Scripture's accounts of salvation's extent are not as they have been taken—poorly worded—but are utterly true.

Chapter 8 is defensive. While the thesis is built on the salvation paradox that Scripture presents, this chapter sets out how Scripture hints at the answer that the thesis offers. The scriptural exegesis is mostly original and, hence, probationary, but it exploits the greater literalness that the thesis of afterlife individual divisibility allows. For instance, when Jesus says self-amputation is better than perdition entirely, might he have meant something like that, such as perdition partly (Mark 9:43–49//Matt 18:8–9; 5:29–30)? Jesus adds that he will bring about personal division (^^^^^^^^^^), which tradition has understood as dividing persons into two groups, one consisting of the unbelieving, but Jesus adds that his division involves one person being divided into two (^^^^^^^^^^), with one part (^^^^^) for the unbelieving (Luke 12:46, 51). The NT also frequently uses ^^^, which combines if (^^) with the generally untranslatable contingency of ^^, and this combination could express a condition in both kind (from if) and degree (from ^^), which English expresses with to the extent. So understood, Scripture is explaining that salvation is "to the extent," not merely "if," godly. Further, certain grammar oddities in Scripture, conventionally taken as unproductive, are reexamined and found suggestive. To illustrate, the NT uses comparative adjectives for those who are saved and those who are damned, thus expressing degrees of salvation and damnation, though traditionally understood as not really meaning that. The NT also uses neuter nouns (e.g., ^^^ and ^^^^), not personal nouns, to describe what, not who, is saved and damned. In one instance, Jesus says he wants fellowship with what (^) the Father has given him (John 17:24). Correct grammar here demands who (^^^), which a few early copyists "corrected" John to, but the best manuscripts kept what, which just forced exegetes to interpret it as who anyway. Individual division, however, justifies the canonical wording, which is that personal qualities, not persons altogether, are

saved. So, dividing a person, which may have at first seemed deranged, is, upon reflection, earnestly so (2 Cor 5:13). The chapter ends with an examination of several theologians, such as universalists like Sergei Bulgakov, potentialists like Balthasar, and exclusivists like Wolfhart Pannenberg, who, without dividing the individual to account for the salvation paradox, resort to descriptions of purging that are similar to division as a way to account for how persons have eternal life despite their endemic ungodliness.

Chapter 9 reviews whether the individual divisibility that is being proposed disturbs any Christian doctrines other than that of salvation's extent, and, conveniently, the thesis requires no further innovations. Dividing the individual after this life changes only those doctrines it intends to, which is actually none. And that includes anthropology because the proposal does nothing to anthropology as it relates to this life, which is naturally the primary focus in both Scripture and tradition, and, as for the afterlife, which is traditionally conceived as involving the individual's purgation and transformation, the proposal merely discerns divisibility among all that metamorphosis. Related to every chapter, but especially this last, are the numerous doctrines that the proposed model leaves undisturbed. For example, not developed here is soteriology, whether its nature or means, or the resurrection, whether Christ's or generally, because addressing such issues is unnecessary for the salvation paradox. More generally, the thesis sidesteps any issue not directly implicated in the paradox of salvation's extent, even when the issue is in the same doctrinal domain, such as what constitutes, comprises, or accounts for being human, the extent to which eschatology is realized or not-yet, whether there is an intermediate state, whether perdition is torment or annihilation, or how the final judgment is administered. One paradox per book is enough.

As this introduction manifests, the approach will be conceptual. That is, while pertinent scholarship will be extensively relied on for premises and context, the book is not a critical evaluation of what any particular theologian thinks or what any comparison or combination of certain theologians produces. While some theologians will rightfully contribute more here than others, none has negotiated the salvation paradox as a paradox. On that issue, the position, if the theologian has taken one, has always been either that everyone will be saved, that not everyone will be, or, a purported compromise, that everyone will be saved potentially. In reaching these positions, each side must retreat to its favored ghetto, which is fortified by the obvious Scripture for its preferred expression and is protected by the well-rehearsed exegetics for pounding the other side, but, to nonpartisans, this theological shadowboxing has been unconvincing because Scripture clearly takes both sides, at least until the exegetes do their magic. Therefore, focusing on any theologian or any handful would miss the point, and, so, numerous authorities from a wide variety of backgrounds are counted upon instead. As a further result of what the thesis strives to accomplish, it cannot circumscribe its focus by isolating on any specific set of theologians. The thesis instead relies on the singularity of the salvation paradox for that focus. This means citing broadly the expressed insights of various theologians (and others) without trying to determine with confidence what they thought comprehensively. For us the auditors, the truth comes from the artwork, not the artist, and the truth from the artwork is found without exegeting the rest of the corpus.

And the citations will be unapologetically generous, but they are not presented to make the reasoning more persuasive, though they might help those needing a nudge. Rather, the authorities serve as arbiters of the reasoning so as to ensure that the proposal reaches for the outlandish only in its titular conclusion. The reasoning therefore surveys broadly, distilling the scholarship and treating its

convergence, but is always motivated by the cultural embarrassment in how the salvation paradox has everywhere been reduced to a mere contradiction. Even if individual divisibility is the wrong approach, this project is called for, certainly beforehand and definitely after. The Gregorys anticipated the sentiment of both the project and the approach. "I do not wish the Word to save only half of me," even if this means I must be "at once conjoined and separated."

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Concludings

> The thought of the life beyond the grave distracts me to anguish, to terror . . . And now I am so bold as to ask you. Oh, God! What will you think of me now? —Dostoevsky, **THE BROTHERS KARAMAZOV**

Chapters 1 and 2 framed the predicament that chapter 3 presented, which is that Scripture by imparting both exclusivist and universalist accounts is in paradox on salvation's extent. Chapter 4 documented how the church has responded to this predicament, which, according to every position that has so far been taken on the subject, is that Scripture is in contradiction and, as a result, one account on salvation's extent must be hollowed out so that the preferred account may be hallowed. After centuries of mostly ineffectual debate about which account to prefer, the church has decided conclusively but precipitously on exclusivism, which includes potentialism, but many Christians, particularly after Origen and of late, have favored universalism. Chapter 5 found that each competing position is incomplete primarily because each side, so as to brevet one scriptural account to doctrine, must cashier the other scriptural account to misconception, and, not only must each side do violence to what Scripture says to achieve pellucidity, each position is in the ultimate noetically unbalanced: universalism seems Pollyanna, exclusivism seems savage, and potentialism seems disingenuous.

This unsatisfactory state of affairs led to chapter 6's disquisition that the individual is divisible, which, as chapter 7 explained, allows Scripture's portrayal of salvation's extent to be paradoxical—that is, seemingly contradictory but actually true. As a consequence of everyone being ultimately divisible, both are true: everyone is saved, and not everyone is. Chapters 8 and 9 offered additional reasons for this strange understanding. The stances that have been argued with conviction throughout the book's second half have been offered mostly to suggest the viability of preserving Scripture's salvation paradox through individual division. Those so inclined are invited to jettison any number of the stances taken, such as those which concern who we are, the scriptural exegesis, or the doctrinal influences, and this should not undermine the primary stance of the thesis, which, at the end here, can be singled out from the obiter dicta.

The thesis originated with what cannot be fairly disputed: Scripture says that everyone will be saved and also that not everyone will be. If the text of Scripture did not itself make both accounts clear enough, the church's many first-rate proponents have confirmed each account on salvation's extent. Denying either account is effectively unavailable until one of them is exegeted with extreme prejudice—the favored account, whichever one that happens to be, is used to justify reinterpreting the other so that just the favorite survives. The only alternative has been to claim that actual contradictions are true, but this view does not survive contact with reality except perhaps under dictatorial doublethink. In contrast,

the impetus of the thesis has been that Scripture's portrayal of salvation's extent should be as it appears, paradoxical.

The gist of the thesis has been to show how this scriptural paradox need not be treated as an actual contradiction, which means to say something false, and the insight proposed has been that of the divisible individual. Though individual has been around for nearly as long as cogitation, Descartes famously highlighted its indivisibility. Those disputing Cartesian anthropology have largely challenged its dualism or its stringency, but the eligible anthropological alternatives, whether before or after Descartes, still model the living individual as generally indivisible thanks to this life's naturally unitary corporeality and the first-person's inherently unitary perspective. The thesis, regardless of whatever dependence our thinking has on Descartes, also uses this understanding of the individual for two reasons. First, the in-itself individual has clearly been the most common understanding since antiquity and remains so until today, and, given our unitary perspective, it is also the most reasonable.

This is why Descartes' position, even if wrong at the physical or metaphysical level, has been so credible at the practical level. Second, the in-itself individual, which emphasizes the integrity of the entity, actually imposes the most stress on paradoxism's divisibility. So, those of us with less Cartesianesque views can, if persuaded by them, consider their alternatives for individual (or self or human) and should have an easier time with the paradox. Regardless of how indivisible we are each understood to be, the salvation paradox had best remain as it is scripturally presented—a paradox. Even if our understanding of the individual changes, the issue will remain whether dividing an individual, to whatever extent it might be Cartesian, risks less than enfeebling one scriptural account. If the dividing of the individual as modeled here does not display the salvation paradox, some other model should.

Long before the thesis, Scripture's adherents have struggled with its paradoxes. In those struggles, the church has typically imbibed Scripture entirely, marginalizing as heresy only the sublations, even when dressed up as sublimations, and, to avoid subjecting Scripture to such reductions, the church modeled new theological insights. An interminable exception, however, has been the paradox of salvation's extent. Instead of accepting, as Scripture asserts, that both everyone is ultimately saved and not everyone is, Christians have accepted only the account deemed best. The exclusivist position, which has been dominant, is based on Scripture unmistakably describing two actual, populated ultimate destinies, one of which is perdition. The universalist position, which competed early on and resurges today, is based on Scripture clearly declaring that God, who is through and in everyone, reconciles and saves everyone, dragging everyone to himself, even the ungodly. Given the inescapable principle of noncontradiction, whether reasoned out or intuitively lived, the church felt obliged, despite the evident presence of both scriptural accounts, to pick one. This unraveling of the contradiction, once it was taken as a contradiction, required no insight, just a cleanup of the other scriptural account.

The church in its first several centuries tentatively split on which contradicting account to clean up. In deciding more vital issues, each involving seemingly contradictory scriptural accounts, the church had resisted the alluring simplicity of contradiction and preserved the paradoxes that Scripture presented, but it had not decided on how best to understand the paradox of salvation's extent by the time the church had begun to see paradoxy as a threat. By then, a "coating of dust" had fallen, Bornkamm described, "on the holy writings like a pall." So, the sixth-century church, lacking the appetite for more incongruities, opted for exclusivism, though universalism subsequently persisted as a heresy and has, as Christianity's bona fides have waned, now regained popularity. Both sides in the debate, despite reaching

opposite conclusions on salvation's extent, have agreed on one fundamental, which is that the salvation paradox is a contradiction in need of reform.

In contrast, paradoxism takes salvation's extent as what Scripture says it is, which means taking the salvation-extent accounts not as untruthful or as unartful but as paradoxical. If both scriptural accounts are taken as true, the accounts cannot contradict, and it is this that invites the individual's divisibility. It can be admitted at the end that this, despite being unexpected, is as should be expected. Absolute truth claims, such as those that Scripture makes about eternal life, are bound to be particularistic and universalistic because such claims are exceptional without exception. Paradoxism, to the extent elegant, is, however, no anodyne for the salvation paradox because to preserve the paradox the model exposes the individual as divisible into two, not merely purged into clarity.

The healthy among us naturally question how this can be, an individual that is divisible. The model, in answer, relies on how little we know about the individual. Much of what we suspect to be the case does not contribute in our context, and, so, unspecified here are whatever the substances are, if any, that continue from this life to the next. Nonetheless, the Christian consensus delivers, and the model employs, two unavoidable axioms that are relevant. First, as corpses prove relentlessly, our bodies suffer an erasure when life ends that is, at least eventually, as thorough as unused words wiped into dust from the chalkboard. Second, beyond the corporeal dust left behind, there are at least two other personal aspects that perdure from this life to the next if there is to be an afterlife: Our personal identity continues because any afterlife to be ours must be experienced by us, and our personal character continues because any afterlife to be ours must be us. While the personal identity is our first-person awareness and is thereby unitary, the personal character is what our led life renders and is thereby chronically conflicted between what is basically godly and ungodly. From this, paradoxism's understanding of the salvation paradox follows: The individual is ultimately saved to the extent godly and doomed to the extent ungodly, dividing (if necessary) the two orientations of the personal character, and our personal identity experiences the personal character with which it identifies.

As a result, because no one is nothing ultimately, everyone in God's mercy is remade ultimately while also remaining oneself, reunifying God with the singular, but anyone opposing God's mercy deserts the self. In the paradox of salvation's extent, as with most other Christian paradoxes, what coincides is identity and difference, the singular and the plural. Divisibility, therefore, contrary to expectation, unifies because everything in this life matters for the next, notwithstanding that the next life, by general agreement, radically differs. The next is not merely this life plus extras, just as the eternal is not dying plus overtime. Rather, Christ unifies this life with the next, and, while everything now will matter to the next, not everything now will be in the next.

This began as an effort to understand what Scripture means when it says that everyone is saved and that not everyone is saved. Paradoxism accepts both as true, but this is reckless, even perilous, because it domesticates neither salvation proposition. Preserving Scripture's salvation paradox means that what ultimately matters is how we face every moment, not any particular moment or two, and the choice we face is the lifelong one between the sinfully earthy and the earthly Divine. "The man under grace is engaged unconditionally in a conflict," Barth saw, "a war of life and death, a war in which there can be no armistice—and no peace." "Upon the threshold of my existence there appears . . . the new man in Christ Jesus, . . . endowed with attributes which are not mine . . . This new man is . . . no other, second person with whom I may be compared; he claims to be me myself, my existential, unobservable ego,"

but this internal dissension means only "that an abyss is disclosed between myself and—myself." The question heard in the abyss is, With whom do I identify? Hamann answered rightly, "Unbelief in the most essential, historical sense of the word is thus the only sin against the spirit of the true religion, whose heart is in heaven and whose heaven is in the heart." "As a result, there is no mediating concept left . . . except to believe with all their heart, with all their soul, with all their mind: For God so loved the world—This faith is the victory that overcomes the world."

"God is love," which is not our love for him, but his for us, namely his love revealed in us (1 John 4:8–10, 16). This in Wordsworth's words is "the sustaining thought." "[T]he glory of God," Irenaeus noted, "is a living man; and the life of man consists in beholding God." Cabasilas advanced the idea, "It is those in whom this noble passion is nourished who truly live, just as all things are dead for those in whom it is absent." No one escapes this passion entirely; just as no mere mortal nourishes it thoroughly. The "dangerous condition of being human," McConville reminds us, involves "the perpetual tension between flourishing and degradation." "In redemption, as in creation," Käsemann knew, "everything is differentiated" because "God does not want stereotypes." Yet too, "Nothing differentiates" (Rom 3:22). We are therefore encouraged not to differentiate people as either godly or ungodly, but to recognize that we each are both. God's love certainly does not differentiate among us, but every great love, even his, knows absolute differentiation at its most lived, which is the yearning difference between the lover and the beloved.

When all is done, I want to be "counted worthy of God's reign" (2 Thess 1:5). I do not know if I can try more—I certainly can—or how much that counts—I question that—but I will try more, because "nothing entering man from outside can defile," only "what comes out of man" (Mark 7:18, 20//Matt 15:17–18). "I do not wish the Word to save only half of me," Gregory of Nazianzus foresaw. I alone am guilty, Kierkegaard judged, which brings the joy that the fault lies in me alone and that my task alone remains. Therefore, even when assured of salvation, I doubt the extent to which I abide in it. "God will call to account the pursuit" (Eccl 3:15). Though the good news is God's grace to humanity, I live the paradox of a loving but an alienating response. I am, therefore, sure and unsure of salvation. I hear distinctly Yes and No, but the voices sound different. It is as if I am divided. Sure, God loves me entirely, but if only I entirely returned the favor. Kierkegaard again writes for me: "now, for the first time, I understand and can see the whole of it—but then of course I cannot say 'I'." "What is this mystery in me?" the original Climacus asked. "Speak to me, my yoke-fellow, my nature! I cannot ask anyone else about you," he insisted. "How can I escape the danger of my own nature? I have made a promise to Christ that I will fight you, yet how can I defeat your tyranny?" I—no, we—should fight this fight, not because we want to live eternally, but because we want to be there when we do. <>

THE GOSPEL OF THOMAS: INTRODUCTION AND COMMENTARY by Simon James Gathercole [Series: Texts and Editions for New Testament Study, Brill, 9789004190412]

In this new commentary on the controversial Gospel of Thomas, Simon Gathercole provides the most extensive analysis yet published of both the work as a whole and of the individual sayings contained in it. This commentary offers a fresh analysis of Thomas not from the perspective of form criticism and source criticism but seeks to elucidate the meaning of the work and its constituent elements in its

second-century context. With its lucid discussion of the various controversial aspects of Thomas, and treatment of the various different scholarly views, this is a foundational work of reference for scholars not just of apocryphal Gospels, but also for New Testament scholars, Classicists and Patrologists.

CONTENTS

Excerpt: The greatest commentary never written was undoubtedly that of Prof. Morris Zapp of Euphoric State University. In his own words:

> I began a commentary on the works of Jane Austen, the aim of which was to be utterly exhaustive, to examine the novels from every conceivable angle—historical, biographical, rhetorical, mythical, structural, Freudian, Jungian, Marxist, existentialist, Christian, allegorical, ethical, phenomenological, archetypal, you name it. So that when each commentary was written, there would be nothing further to say about the novel in question.
> Of course, I never finished it.

Rather than imitating the promethean project started by Prof. Zapp, any commentator must be subject to a strict self-denying ordinance, and focus only on particular aspects of the text. This is no less true with such a short book as the Gospel of Thomas. DeConick's commentary, for example, seeks to identify where the various sections of Thomas accrued in the compositional history of the work.2

Nordsieck aims primarily to identify the extent to which particular sayings go back to the historical Jesus. One approach which Valantasis adopts is a kind of post-structuralist reading of the text, emphasizing the playfulness and indeterminacy of Thomas.

The intention of the present commentary is different. The aim here is principally to understand the meaning of the sayings of Thomas in its second-century historical context. That is, it elucidates the religious outlook of Thomas in the setting in which it was composed. This may sound like a standard approach of a commentary, but, as can be seen from the remarks above, commentators have not always focused on the actual meaning of the text. As Gagné has recently put it: 'What has lacked in Thomasine research is inquiry into the meaning of the collection of sayings as a whole, and this for a plausible historical implied reader. This commentary is not concerned with the tradition-history of the work, asking, for example, whether a saying in Thomas is more primitive than its parallel in the Synoptics. (I have addressed a number of the issues about the compositional situation of Thomas in a recent monograph.) It treats the final form of the text, an approach which is in part defended in the Introduction, which aims to argue for Thomas as a tolerably unified work which can legitimately be interpreted as such. The reasonable degree of similarity between the Greek and Coptic texts is shown (Introduction, §2), and the reasonably coherent religious outlook of the work is set out (§10) in order to defend an approach based upon Thomas's relative consistency. Speculative theories about the prehistory of Thomas are also subjected to scrutiny (see Appended Note following §2).

A few house-keeping matters are in order. The division of the text into 114 sayings has for a long time been well established, and I have also followed the subdivisions of sayings adopted by the Berliner Arbeitskreis für koptischgnostische Schriften. In the translation, I have used gender-inclusive language where practicable, though in order to avoid cumbersome renderings, occasional masculine pronouns ('he', 'him', 'his') have been necessary.

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The Religious Outlook of Thomas
A central problem for scholarship on Thomas has been to identify its theology or religious outlook. This question has elicited a number of answers, in part because of Thomas's enigmatic content, its form and its brevity. As Schröter has remarked, Thomas has been taken variously to be a document of Gnosticism, or of Jewish-Christian encratism, or of wisdom theology, or as an expression of social radicalism. Others have summarised Thomas as focused upon 'unitive mysticism', or as a Valentinian product, or as 'an "orthodox" text from early Syrian Christianity'. Scholars have often attempted to align Thomas with a particular school of thought, and have aimed to fill in the gaps with the help of literature from that school. The difficulty, however, is that Thomas does not fit neatly (or even approximately) into any previously known hairesis. It is therefore important, at least in the first instance, to look at Thomas as far as possible on its own terms, even if there are limits to this, as Uro rightly notes. The aim here is to identify, if not a tidy theology, then at least Thomas's central concerns as well as its more ambiguously articulated themes. The rough sketch here is of course dependent upon various points of interpretation argued for in the commentary below.

Theological Framework
Thomas's theology is fundamentally a soteriology: 'Whoever finds the interpretation of these sayings will not taste death' (GTh 1). It is not primarily about common wisdom, as alleged both by some members

of the Jesus Seminar, as well as by one of their staunchest critics. For Thomas, the souls of the elect had their origins in the realm of light, the kingdom of the Father (GTh 49–50). Thomas provides instruction in how to return to that kingdom of the Father.

The Father

The Father is in one respect a prominent figure in Thomas, being mentioned 21 times. On the other hand, it is striking that he is hardly a character at all; he is not identified as an agent in any significant way, in contrast to Jesus. The most that can probably be said is that he is characterised by 'motion and rest' like the elect (GTh 50), as well as having an 'image of light' in GTh 83. He evidently has a 'will' (99), and of course a Son (GTh 61; 64; 99), but especially a kingdom (GTh 57; 76; 96–99; 113).

The Kingdom

Although the Synoptics talk of the kingdom as 'prepared' (Mk 10.40; Matt. 25.34; cf. Mk 10.40; Matt. 20.23), Thomas goes further, envisaging the kingdom as a pre-existent, paradisal realm of light. It is certainly not a geographical location in the cosmos. It is closely associated with 'light' (49–50). The kingdom is inside the elect, and outside of them (3); they came from it and will return there (49). It can also be found (27.1; 49), known (46), and most of all, entered (22 tris; 99; 114; cf. 39; 64; 75); or one can be 'far from' it (82). When the disciples talk of the kingdom 'coming' (GTh 113), Jesus retorts that it is spread out everywhere (113): other traditional, futuristic language is avoided. There is some sort of future expectation ('days are coming' in GTh 79), but this is not related specifically to the kingdom, and even the rolling up of the heavens and the earth do not have any effect upon the elect (GTh 11; 111). The categories of 'now' and 'not yet' do not apply in Thomas, because the kingdom is an ever-present, primordial paradise (18–19). The kingdom does not belong to the rich and powerful, but to the poor (54) and child-like (22; 46). It is a place of primeval unity (22), and ought to be visible, though it is obscured by people's blindness (113).

Creation and the Fall

Understanding the creation of the world in Thomas presents certain difficulties. We should not expect a systematic account, and indeed we only have short and elusive fragments. On some occasions, the creator figure is referred to in feminine terms: Adam came from a 'great power and great wealth' (GTh 85), and it is some sort of 'true mother' who gave Jesus life (101). These (along with 'the Mother' in GTh 105) might be suggestive of the Spirit (cf. 44) as involved in creation, in two instances where it is clearly positive. It is tantalising, however, that GTh 101 has a lacuna at a key point. In addition to GTh 77 (on which see below), the only other place where one might see a creator is in GTh 89, but that saying is also enigmatic.

Whatever the truth about creation, the tragic reality of the present is the result of a fall. This is expressed in two main ways, which can be summarised as a 'falling apart' and a 'falling downward'. With respect to the former, Jesus states that, 'When you were one, you became two' (11), and this theme of division is picked up in a number of places. Jesus on the other hand 'comes from the undivided' (GTh 61.3), and is emphatically not 'a divider' (72). A conception of the fall as a separation appears in, among other places, the Valentinian myth, according to which the enthymesis of Sophia was removed from the pleroma and became Achamoth, an inferior form of Sophia (Irenaeus, AH 1.4.1), or as in another version, in which the Word is divided in two (Tri. Trac. 77,11–36). We will see that in Thomas the recovery of primordial unity is a key task in the discipleship of the elect.

As far as the 'downward' fall is concerned, the spirit descends into physical human bodies, as Jesus states: 'I am amazed at how this great wealth [sc. spirit] has made its home in this poverty [i.e. the body, the flesh]' (29). This is clearly related in some unspecified way to the fall of Adam, and his death (85). So there is a conception of a heavenly fall with mundane implications for human beings. None of this is connected explicitly with sin, however, a topic which plays a very small role in the Gospel of Thomas. The cause of this fall is unclear.

A number of options existed in Thomas's intellectual environment for why souls descended into bodies, many of which arise out of interpretations of the Timaeus and the Phaedrus.16 Alcinous lists four options: 'either following their turn in a numbered sequence, or by the will of the gods, or through intemperance, or through love of the body; body and soul, after all, have a certain affinity for one another, like fire and asphalt'. Iamblichus's De Anima 23 discusses various accounts of 'the activities which induce the soul to descend', listing the following: a kind of desire for independence (Plotinus); 'flight from God' (Empedocles), and 'the rest which consists in change' (Heraclitus), 'derangement and deviation' (the Gnostics), and 'the erring judgment of a free will' (Albinus). Iamblichus returns later to a very similar theme, where some Platonists are described as taking the view that there are multiple modes of descent (De Anima 26); in De Anima 27 Heraclitus's view is repeated (souls must be in motion because it is an effort for them to stay still), and two opinions of Taurus or his followers are described, the completion of the number of souls in the universe, and the demonstration of the divine life (cf. Alcinous's first two options?). Other explanations include the soul's intention to administer the material realm (Plutarch's stranger; Plotinus, Enn. 4.8.4–5). Philo's enigmatic explanation is that the soul was 'not able to overcome a satiety with divine blessings'. The other distinction made is that between willing and unwilling descent (Iamblichus, De Anima 27).

Some of these are incompatible with Thomas. It is hard to imagine that for Thomas, the soul-spirit, being 'great wealth', could have had evil propensities or incompetence before its descent (the view attributed to Albinus or the Gnostics). Additionally, Alcinous's last option, where there is an attraction between soul and body because of their mutual affinity (the view which he probably holds himself), probably does not do justice to the way in which Thomas portrays their rather more hostile relationship (see commentary on GTh 87 and 112 below). The problem of characterising Thomas's own view is complicated further by imagery which defies systematisation: in GTh 57, the evil is sown among the good, whereas in 21.2–3 and 29, the good has taken up residence in what is alien. Two points which have not yet been brought into the discussion perhaps deserve mention. Firstly, the 'all coming forth' from Jesus in GTh 77 perhaps is suggestive of a fall of the light or pneumatic element, and not necessarily a positive act of creation. Secondly, the view attributed by Iamblichus to Heraclitus that 'souls travel both the road up and the road down and that for them to remain in place is toil but to change is rest' may have something in common with Thomas: 'motion and rest' are the 'sign of the Father' in the elect in GTh 50, and, as we have seen, GTh 77 talks of the all both 'coming forth' from Jesus (cf. the 'road down') and 'extending to' him (cf. the 'road up'). Such connections must remain speculative, however.

The World
Uncertainty about the character of the fall is one reason for a degree of ambiguity in Thomas about the world, for which the Coptic uses the Greek loan word. On the one hand, Thomas seems very negative about the world: it is described as a corpse (GTh 56), its implied 'death' putting it at the very negative

extreme of Thomas's moral spectrum. Some have seen this negativity as arising from a demiurge who is responsible for creation, for example in the reference to God/ god in the 'Render unto Caesar' pericope (GTh 100). On the other hand, Zöckler draws attention to the fact that according to GTh 24 the world can be enlightened, and for Marjanen the world is the arena where salvation is possible for people, with the same creator making both the inside and the outside of the metaphorical cup (GTh 89).

As one proceeds through Thomas, it is the negative elements which come to the fore. One sees the ridiculousness of the kingdom being part of this world—in the air or the sea (GTh 3). Jesus has cast fire on the world in GTh 10, and GTh 16 repeats this idea, adding 'sword and war'. GTh 21 may imply that the world belongs to other powers. The world is probably the implied object of 'passing by' in GTh 42. As noted, it is a corpse (56), and should be renounced (110). There is an overridingly negative impression here. If the world is to be illuminated, it is only because it is dark in the first place. It may be that the positive illumination is confined to the world qua people: when Jesus stands in the midst of the world in GTh 28, there ^ocMoc is glossed in anthropological terms—as 'them'—namely, the blind, empty and drunk who nevertheless have the capacity to repent.

It is interesting that, in contrast to the world, 'the all' came forth from Jesus and is identified with Jesus, and 'the earth' is the realm over which the kingdom is spread out (GTh 113). This may point to different realms, as has already been suggested (see further the commentary below). One can compare here the contrast between the world and 'the all' (as well as the Pleroma) in the Treatise on the Resurrection (46,34–39).

There is also a degree of ambiguity in the treatments of particular 'worldly' themes. Some are sharply rejected: the accumulation of wealth is frowned upon and commerce shunned (see e.g. GTh 63–65), as are the finely clothed but ignorant rulers of GTh 78. On the other hand, other items are treated merely as matters of indifference, such as clothes (36: 'do not be concerned …') and diet (14: 'eat whatever is set before you'): this almost certainly means there is no prohibition of eating meat. The same is true of money per se in GTh 95.2, where giving to those who cannot give it back signals at the same time altruism and indifference to one's own possession of money; similarly, one can without hesitation give Caesar back what belongs to him (100) because it holds no appeal to the true disciple.

The Body

Mirroring Thomas's view of the world is the perspective on the body. There is certainly a stark contrast between the soul or spirit on the one side and the body or flesh on the other. (The terms spirit and soul do not seem clearly distinguished, nor do body and flesh.) As we saw in the discussion of the fall, Jesus expresses his amazement that such great wealth, viz. the spirit, has come to occupy a position of poverty, i.e. in the flesh (GTh 29.3). Thomas suggests that this cohabitation is an ill, however, as there is a woe pronounced upon the mutual dependence upon the flesh and soul in GTh 112. Less antithetically, there is a contrast between the external, physical image on the one hand, and the pre-existent, spiritual image on the other (84), but not an opposition. It is just possible that the body is neutral in Thomas's mind. On the other hand, two factors might point in the direction of a more negative perspective. For one, the existence of the spirit in the body seems to correlate with the sense of alienation which is explained as being "two"—divided, rather than a whole unity. Another factor is that for some readers, the view of the world would have rubbed off on their view of the physical body: it is difficult to keep these too far apart. It is an outstanding question in the Platonism of the period whether the body is the

negative 'fetter' that it is in the Phaedo, or in fact something less detrimental to the soul. Valentinians maintained that in the body and other created institutions, 'the likeness of the divine is rather eclipsed than wholly obscured', as Edwards has put it, in contrast to the sharper negativity of the Gnostics. Thomas does not seem to have taken a clear stance on this question, while tending in a negative direction.

The History of Israel

Moving to the more mundane sphere of history, there are only brief allusions in Thomas to Israel, which is perhaps seen as one of history's unfortunate parentheses. As we have seen above, circumcision and 'the Jews' are characterised as straightforwardly negative (GTh 43 and 53; see above §7.3, and commentary ad locc. below); the Pharisees (and Scribes) aim to prevent people from discovering the truth in GTh 39 and 102; Israel may well be the illegitimate vine which will be uprooted (GTh 40); the temple will be irrevocably destroyed (GTh 71). More positive is John the Baptist, but as in Matthew 11 and Luke 7 he is primarily the pinnacle of the old age, and inferior to anyone participating in Jesus' kingdom (GTh 46).

Jesus and Revelation

It is probable that Thomas portrays Jesus as incarnate: he is fundamentally 'light' (GTh 77), but also entered the world as 'flesh' (GTh 28). Although there is a sense in which the true disciple can be identified with Jesus (GTh 108) and the disciple Thomas should not even call Jesus 'master' (GTh 13), nevertheless in various ways Jesus retains a transcendence.34 He is, for example, the agent of election (GTh 23) and judgment (GTh 10; 16); the elect are his disciples (55), and are under his 'lordship' (90); all are to give him his due (GTh 100), and supremely, he is the light above all and the all in GTh 77. His relation to the supreme divine being is as son (99), and he also appears to receive life in some sense from another, feminine, spiritual being (105).

Central to the christology of Thomas, however, is his identity as revealer. In GTh 17 this is highlighted: 'I will give you what eye has not seen, and what ear has not heard, and what hand has not touched, nor has it ascended to the heart of man.' The theme is picked up in GTh 38, highlighting Jesus (and by implication the Gospel of Thomas) as the unique source of revelation. The format of the whole Gospel ('Jesus says ...', 'Jesus says ...', 'Jesus says ...') draws attention to just this point. The opening lines of the Gospel set out the significance of this revelation entrusted to Thomas, this revelation which must be rightly understood and which is the means to escaping death (Prologue + GTh 1).

(Self-)Knowledge

After a saying which expands upon the eschatological reward of escaping death (2), we have another statement which probably glosses the comprehension of Jesus' revelation: GTh 3, with its reference to knowing oneself. Knowledge is a central theme in the work. There are twenty-five instances of the word coo^^ in Thomas, twenty of which are of theological significance, with five more casual instances.36 There is also the Greek loan-word in GTh 39.1, and six instances of Coptic e^^ ^e (probably five theological in intent). This is an extraordinary density of 'knowing' vocabulary, given that Thomas is such a short work. There is also a strong focus on the words of Jesus as the source of this knowledge (Prologue; GTh 38 etc.). The references specifically to 'self-knowledge' should not be understood as concerned with a kind of psychological introspection, 'self-knowledge' in the sense of knowing one's own personality, knowing one's abilities and identity in relation to and comparison with others. Rather,

it is about knowing what you are in the grand theological scheme of things—knowing about yourself. It is probably something close to what is summarised in the words of the Valentinian Theodotus, who defines knowledge (^^^^^^) by way of the following questions:

Who were we and what have we become? Where were we and where are we now cast? To where are we hastening and from what have we been delivered? What is birth? What is rebirth?

(For further parallels and discussion, see the commentary below on GTh 3.4.) The answers to all these questions are thematised in Thomas: 'Who were we and what have we become?' We were spirits pure and simple but are now divided between spirit and body. 'Where were we and where are we now cast?' We were in the primordial light, but have now been thrown into a corpse-like world. 'To where are we hastening and from what have we been delivered?' We have been delivered already from ignorance, and are now heading for—or better, returning to—the perfected salvation which is already substantially possessed.

Salvation

This knowledge about oneself that Jesus reveals according to the Gospel of Thomas, then, is the necessary condition for salvation. This state of salvation is depicted in various ways as, for example, vision of the Father, ascendancy over the cosmos, being in a united state (on which more below) and perhaps predominantly, 'rest'. DeConick rightly emphasises the motif of visionary experience in places such as GTh 59,39 and there is a good deal of visual language elsewhere in Thomas (e.g. GTh 5; 15; 27.2; 37; 38; 84), even if it is not the central idea in Thomas. There is still a strong emphasis on text and textual interpretation as precondition for salvation, and other soteriological motifs are also prominent. Ascendancy over the cosmos is a key goal for true disciples, expressed in terms of their reigning (GTh 2), and conversely of the obedience or service which elements of the world will render (19.2; 48; 106): additionally, 'the world is not worthy' of such disciples (56; 80; 111). 'Rest' is also another important result (51; 60; 90), signalling freedom from the temptations of the world and— ultimately—freedom from the labour of discipleship. It may be dangerous to assign primacy to any particular image, but there is certainly widespread reference in Thomas to the cultivation or creation of a unitary personhood or nature in the enacted discipleship of the elect, and this theme merits more extended treatment.

The Practice of Discipleship in Thomas

We have above characterised the fall as a kind of disintegration, which is more precisely a splitting of reality into binary opposites. There are various instances of this. The audience itself is 'two' (11), but GTh 22 especially focuses on the inside/ outside, above/ below, male/ female divisions. Existentially, loyalties are divided (47) and the disciples 'like the Jews' operate with inconsistent distinctions (43, 89). The 'house' can be divided (48; cf. 106). The distinction between the internal 'image' and the external 'likeness' (84) recalls the inside/ outside dichotomy, as does the false distinction between the inside and the outside of the cup (89). The need for Mary and women in general to be assimilated to maleness (114) reflects (though not exactly) the male/ female division in 22. There are three aspects to the resolution of these divisions, which might be called 'self-union', 'gender union' and 'christological union', and all these require actualisation by the disciple. As Frend has noted, salvation is not conceived as instantaneous, but rather results from 'advance towards spiritual perfection through the practice of ascetic virtues and repentance'.40 Although one might quibble with some of Frend's terminology, the

thought is a valid one. There are quite distinctive images which express this side of Thomas's theology. We will examine these individually before exploring their potential coherence.

Self-Union

GTh 70 is the one place in Thomas where the standard verb 'to save' is employed. The saving element in this saying is described in the language of that which 'you bring forth from yourselves'. This probably refers to the true image, or spirit, hidden within. It is this real image which needs to come to the fore, and to take precedence over the external visible image presented in the body. A similar idea is perhaps found in the Gospel of Judas: 'Let whoever is [strong] among you men bring forth the perfect man and stand in the presence of my face' (Gos. Jud. 35,2–6); compare also Gos. Mary 18,15–17. Relatedly, the Treatise on the Resurrection comments that it is not our dead, external limbs which will be resurrected, but the true living members (Treat. Res. 47,38–48,3). 'Light' is another image used in Thomas to describe the saving, internal element (GTh 24).

GTh 22 similarly talks of 'when you fashion eyes in the place of an eye, and a hand in place of a hand, and a foot in place of a foot, and an image in place of an image' as preconditions for entering the kingdom. Here, the construction of a new person is in some sense envisaged, although one might more properly label this a reunification and return to a primordial state. The conclusion—'an image in place of an image'—may well be a summary. The new, or true, person within needs to supersede the external physical person. The two 'images' correspond to those in GTh 84, the external 'likeness' as opposed to 'your images which came into being before you, and which neither die nor become manifest'. The latter needs to swallow up the former. If GTh 70 spoke of bringing forth and externalising the true image within, GTh 22 speaks slightly differently of replacing the external with the internal. The emphasis here is on the new/ primordial identity, and the 'intentional reformation of the self'and creating an 'alternative symbolic universe'.

Somewhat different is the metaphor of 'becoming a child' (GTh 46; cf. 4, 21, 22, 37, 50), although this too connotes a primordial identity. In addition to the connotations of asexuality and innocence, there is the element of childlike nakedness without shame (37) evoking the Garden of Eden. This connection is also made by Philo:

> "And the two were naked, both Adam and his wife, and they were not ashamed; but the serpent was the most subtle of all the beasts which were on the earth, which the Lord God had made" (Gen. 2.25; 3.1). The mind, which is clothed neither with vice nor with virtue, but really stripped of both, is naked, like the soul of an infant child ... (Leg. 2.53)

Thomas probably similarly sees the child-like state as that possessed by the elect disciple who has reverted to primordial innocence. This is often, probably correctly, seen as a reversion to a primordial state construed as an Adamic identity; a specifically Adamic state is not always strongly emphasised in Thomas, however. The 'child' imagery is linked to, and perhaps explicated by, two related motifs, those of the unifying of the divided self, and of stripping naked.

Jesus in GTh 22 commends suckling babies as models of discipleship, and then immediately talks in terms of 'when you make the two one', especially the inside/ outside, above/ below, and male/ female. Hence Jesus exhorts the disciples to participate in the resolution of the 'inside/ outside' dichotomy (cf. also 48 and 106). There is some tension between unification and replacement (for example of 'outside' and 'inside'), but they have a similar field of reference.

The motif of 'stripping off one's clothes', noted in the parable in GTh 21, comes to prominence in GTh 37 as necessary for vision of Jesus. Whether this is achievable in the present or is eschatological is unclear. The precise contours of this expression are not especially relevant here: what is clear is that we have a removal of the external, which connects with (indeed, constitutes the negative element of) the replacement of the external with the internal in GTh 22.

We have here, then, various construals of the internal and external: (i) bringing forth what is internal, (ii) replacing the external with the internal, (iii) unifying external and internal, and (iv) removal of the external. It would be rather churlish to decry any inconsistencies that may be present here. For Thomas, (i) and (ii) are derived from the Gospel's image theology, and (iii) and (iv) are closely related to the 'child' motif. Across those two themes of the image and the child, we have noted that (iv) can be seen as a component of (ii), and—in particular—GTh 22 fuses both themes, with the child as the symbol of the unified image. Additionally, they are all related to the primordial state in which the eternal image within recovers its superiority over outward physical likeness (although (iii) is surprising here). It is interesting that Philo (in a passage already alluded to) can also combine these in the same primeval setting of Genesis 1–2:

> Observe that it is not the woman who cleaves to the man, but on the contrary, the man to the woman, that is, the mind to sensation. For when the better, namely, the mind, is united to the worse, namely, sensation, it is then dissolved into the worse, that is the nature of the flesh, and into sensation, the cause of the passions. But when the worse, namely sensation, follows the better, the mind, then it will no longer be flesh, but both will be mind (Leg. 2.50)

Here, the mind is fused with the flesh (cf. iii), but then when the mind becomes the prominent element (cf. i) and the flesh follows the mind, then the flesh will also become mind (cf. ii and iv). There is a degree of coherence in Thomas's account here without it being systematic.

Gender Union

This leads us in to the theme of 'gender union': just as male/ female division is an aspect of the plight in Thomas, so the construction of an androgynous state is part of the solution. As Klijn puts it, humanity was originally one but became two by becoming male and female; the person needs to return to that unitary, single state. Klijn draws attention to Philo as again illuminating this theme. (There are also Syrian and Talmudic parallels, but these come from a later time.) Philo saw God as monad in contrast to the dyadic human (Deus 82– 84), and in contrast to divisible matter (Spec. 3.180). In fact, however, humanity was originally not dyadic when existing as the uncontaminated image of God (Opif. 134). This is associated by Philo with man/ woman, where man is 'mind' and woman 'sensation', as in the passage just quoted above (Leg. 2.50). A postmortem existence in which the duality is resolved into its original unity awaits humanity. Thomas is also similar in this respect to the Gospel of Philip, where the separation of 'Adam' and 'Eve' is imagined as a fall in need of reversal:

> If the female had not separated from the male, the female and the male would not have died. The separation of male and female was the beginning of death. Christ came to heal the separation that was from the beginning and reunite the two, in order to give life to those who died through separation and unite them. (Gos. Phil. 70,9–17)

A passage following shortly after this elaborates, and although it becomes fragmentary, it may suggest that the unification of Adam's soul and spirit are analogous to the salvation of the addressees of Philip

(70,23–28). The Gospel of the Egyptians also makes the unification of male and female a condition of salvation much as does the Gospel of Philip.

The unity in Thomas may not be best construed as entirely genderless, but might be best described as 'male androgyny' (see commentary below on GTh 114). The way in which the male/ female distinction is treated in Thomas, however, does not necessarily enable us to identify the gender dynamics in the Thomas movement.

Christological Union

Finally, the resolution of cosmic division results in incorporation (perhaps even absorption) of the person into Jesus himself (hence, 'christological union'). As GTh 108 has it: 'Whoever drinks from my mouth will become like me. I myself will become him ...' (108.1–2). The degree of assimilation here is strong, reflecting more than a Pauline imagery of being in Christ, and closer to the kind of 'unitive mysticism'51 or ^^^^^^^^ ^^^ in the strong sense in the Gospel of Eve or the Gospel of Philip (see commentary on GTh 108 below). The precise nature of this union in Thomas eludes us, however.

Concrete Requirements

More concretely, what is required is radical self-denial. This is expressed in the traditional terms of taking up the cross (55), but also through the language of 'fasting to the world' and observing 'sabbath' (27), and renouncing power (81) and the world (110). Obligations to parents (101) and to anything else must be subordinated to the requirement of Jesus.

More positively, there are a number of motifs which highlight the devotion to the matters advocated in Thomas, summarised in GTh 99 as doing the will of the Father, and elsewhere as seeking rest (60) or seeking the imperishable treasure (76). The importance of seeking is reinforced by the fact that throughout Thomas finding is a soteriological good (GTh 1; 2; 8; 27; 38; 49; 56; 58; 77?; 80; 90; 92; 94; 97?;107; 109.3; 110; 111). In addition to this language, salvation can also be said to depend on particular attributes which are to be developed. Singlemindedness, especially about true knowledge over against its alternatives, is prominent in the parables (GTh 8; 76; 107), as well as in the aphorisms (e.g. GTh 32–34). Also notable is the demand of exacting labour (GTh 2; 58; 107.3, 109.3)—related to the seeking motif. Discipleship is also characterised by readiness, a theme employed most consistently in contexts of conflict imagery: being armed in anticipation of robbery (GTh 21.4?; 103) and being able to effect a killing (98). Where this theme of readiness comes particularly into prominence, however, is in the preparation of acquiring knowledge necessary for heavenly ascent (GTh 50).

The knowledge of one's place in relation to the kingdom and the cosmos is highly relevant to this postmortem scenario envisaged in GTh 50. In the personal eschatology set out in Thomas, the soul is asked a series of questions about her identity, origin and characteristics. Hence, mastery of what Thomas says about these themes is essential labour for the true disciple. As noted above in §10.1, Thomas's theology is fundamentally soteriological.

The Problem of "Asceticism" in Thomas

Some scholars have emphasised very strongly that for Thomas the goal of discipleship is apatheia and that permanent celibacy is a sine qua non for the elect. Frend wrote of 'complete sexual abnegation', and

Turner of Thomas's 'fastidious abhorrence of sex'. Richardson remarked that Thomas is 'crystal clear' on the point; Lincoln stated not only that a requirement of chastity was 'certain', but added: 'it is not unthinkable that even so extreme a measure as self-castration may have been practiced by the senior members of the Thomas-community'. More recently, for DeConick, abstinence is the necessary preparation for openness to visionary experience, which she argues is also crucial to Thomas. Certainly there are places which might well be amenable to such an interpretation, as for example in the references to 'single ones', and perhaps a veiled condemnation of marriage in GTh 87.

At the other extreme, Davies has stated that there is no such thing: 'Thomas never mentions either marriage or sexual continence.' Indeed, with its indifference to these themes, Thomas 'contradicts encratism'. There is also something to be said for this understanding, given that early Christians and others in Thomas's cultural environment were perfectly capable of talking clearly about celibacy if they wanted to: Paul's commendation (though not requirement) of celibacy is clear (1 Cor. 7.7), but the same is not true of Thomas. On the other hand, is Thomas ever 'crystal clear', and given the nature of the work, should we expect such clarity?

More moderately, Uro notes that the talk of blessing on those who no longer give birth is relegated to the future: 'Days are coming when you will say, "Blessed are the womb which has not conceived and the breasts which have not given milk"' (79.3). Uro also warns against the danger of interpreting the 'single ones' as celibates against the background of rather later, fourth-century Syrian parallels. Nevertheless, the factors favouring singleness should not be dismissed lightly either, even if there seems to be no clear prohibition of marriage.

If Uro is on the right track in rejecting a clear requirement for celibacy in Thomas, it is probably also true to say that for those disciples who have ears to hear, celibacy is the (strongly) commended life. A brief survey of Thomas is illuminating in this respect. GTh 7 may include, among other things, a condemnation of lust. The supreme being is 'not born of woman' (GTh 15). The addition of 'and they will stand as solitary' to the saying about division in the family (16) implies separation from the family. Child imagery, with its potential connotations of asexual innocence, is very concentrated (4, 21, 22, 37, 46), with the relativisation of the male-female distinction in one of those sayings (22), and some degree of contrast with 'those born of woman' in another (46). Certainly there is a redefinition of family in the Synoptic Gospels, but it is notable that Thomas has taken over much of this material in, again, a concentrated way (GTh 16 = Matt. 10.34–35/ Lk. 12.51–53; GTh 55 = Lk. 14.26; GTh 79 = Lk. 11.27+23.29; GTh 99 = Mk 3.31–35&parr.; GTh 101 = GTh 55 = Lk. 14.26): material spread across Matthew, Mark and Luke is included in the very much shorter Thomas. (Thomas is less than one-quarter the length of Matthew and Luke, slightly over one-quarter the length of John, and slightly over one-third the length of Mark.) Salome, perhaps known from the Gospel of the Egyptians as a celibate, is highlighted as a disciple in GTh 61. A marriage is an excuse for avoiding (allegorically) discipleship in the parable about the 'places of my Father' in GTh 64. Only the solitary, ironically, will enter the true bridal chamber (GTh 75). In contrast to the fertile, it is the barren who are blessed in GTh 79. Perhaps the most negative statement about sex is that in which a body dependent on another body is denounced as 'wretched' (87): at risk of hair-splitting, however, 'wretched', or 'pitiable', might not be so negative as e.g. the 'cursed' state in GTh 7.2. In contrast to the biological family of Jesus, the obedient are his true family (99), and the physical parents of disciples are to be 'hated' (101). Thomas disciples are instead characterised as those who know their true Father and Mother. In the treasure parable, the biological

son is ignorant, but the one who works achieves success (109). Women must become male in order to enter the kingdom (114).

'Asceticism' and 'encratism' have probably become words too ill-defined to be useful in Thomas scholarship at present. What should probably be said, however, is that in contrast to the extreme positions of both Richardson and Davies, commendation (but not requirement) of celibacy is present in a concentrated way. Accompanying this is a stance of indifference to and disregard for biological relations, as the statements above have already implied. As Uro rightly notes, there is a 'disregard for family ties'.

Social Ethos and Practices

Less important in Thomas, but not irrelevant, are the various social attitudes and practices enjoined. These are not extensive: Patterson rightly talks not so much of a 'community' as a 'loosely structured movement', which is 'not very highly organized'. Hence there is not a large set of community regulations. There are no references to baptisms or eucharists, or observance of a literal sabbath, though some have seen these.64 There is, however, an emphasis on speaking the truth and doing as you would be done by, but even these are expressed in negative terms (GTh 6). More positive statements come in the commands to love and guard a brother (25), to give generously (95), and in the reference to social fasting (69.2).

Some have strongly emphasised the missionary outlook of the Thomas movement as reflected in the document, most notably Patterson, who sees in the work an itinerant radicalism—in Theissen's term, 'Wanderradikalismus'. (This is not to imply that Thomas is itself an evangelistic tract.) At the other end, Popkes objects that some characteristics of 'Wanderradikalismus', such as its Jewish-Christian character, are absent from Thomas, and that there are only marginal hints of mission. This seems like an over-reaction. Others such as Schröter, have struck a successful balance between over-emphasising and undervaluing mission in Thomas. There does appear to be a kind of missionary programme presupposed in the incorporation of the traditional synoptic sayings about eating whatever is set before you when you go into different places (GTh 14), and asking for labourers to be sent out into the great harvest (GTh 73). Thomas combines an exclusivity of loyalties with an openness to accepting new converts on its own terms (cf. GTh 4). In the end, however, it is difficult to be certain from Thomas the extent to which the movement was a wandering mobile movement and the extent to which it was more static.

Another difficult element to assess is prayer. In one place prayer is— remarkably—expressly condemned, alongside fasting and almsgiving (GTh 14). On the other hand, Thomas can also rather mysteriously say: 'But when the bridegroom leaves the bridal chamber, then let them fast and pray' (104). This might only be a problem, however, if GTh 104 refers—as does its Synoptic parallel—to Jesus' death or ascension. In fact, the departure of the bridegroom from the bridal chamber probably has a rather different meaning, since it would be very odd for the bridal chamber—a soteriological image in Thomas (75)—to refer to the world. A suitable parallel to this critical stance toward prayer appears in the Gospel of Philip (a work which particularly thematises the bridal chamber), which has a close association with Thomas in the fathers and in Nag Hammadi Codex II: 'The winter is the world, the summer the other aeon. Let us sow in the world so that we may reap in the summer. Therefore it is right for us not to pray in the winter' (Gos. Phil. 52,26–29). A further similarity between Thomas and Philip, then, is that they both connect the prohibition of prayer with a particular epoch of time. Even if

Thomas forbids prayer, however, or reinterprets it dramatically, there is still a residual prayer in 73: 'Ask the Lord, therefore, to send out labourers to the harvest.'

Thomas's Views of Its Rivals

Thomas's theological positions are expressed not only in positive but also in negative terms, i.e. over against other groups, references to which are always oppositional. One might compare here the position of Justin who states that there are some Christ-believers who wish to observe the law who despite their weak-mindedness will be saved (Dial. 47), or the various systems which posit an 'in-between' group, such as the psychics between the hylics and the pneumatics. On the other hand, closer to Thomas in this respect is the similarly uncompromising stance of the Gospel of Judas, although the opposition in Thomas is not given a cosmological and demonic explanation (though n.b. GTh 40).

The two main targets of criticism are non-Christian Judaism, and the wider Christian movement which does not follow Thomas. There is a possible criticism in GTh 67 of Gnostic and/or related groups who lay claim to knowledge (for Thomas, falsely so-called): 'Whoever knows all, but is deficient in one thing, is deficient completely.' The statement is too vague to allow certainty on the point. Similarly, there may be criticism of Roman persecution in the reference to 'those who drag' in GTh 3, but again there is not sufficient clarity to be sure.

Non-Christian Judaism

Some have argued that Thomas is fundamentally 'Jewish Christian', usually (at least in part) on the basis of the reference to James in GTh 12. This is a mistake, however: the reference to James does not necessitate seeing Thomas in Jewish-Christian terms. (The category 'Jewish-Christian' is in any case a highly problematic one.) As we have seen, Thomas is unreservedly critical of Jews (GTh 43), the Pharisees (GTh 39; 102) and central aspects of Jewish theology and practice (GTh 14; 52–53; 71, though in some cases as Christian elements). Jesus and the disciples are not depicted as Jews or as belonging to Judaism. As Löhr has put it: '"Jesus der Jude" ist im EvThom nicht mehr erkennbar.' Thomas is in GTh 14 totally negative towards prayer, alms and fasting, which are not just useless but harmful; this attitude is neither explained nor justified, but is simply in conflict with Thomas's own ethical outlook. The same is true of the attitudes to circumcision, sabbath and temple, where Thomas's views bear comparison with Justin, Barnabas and the Epistle of Ptolemy to Flora (and indeed with the views of pagans). The position according to which Thomas is sharply critical of Jewish practices now attracts very wide support. The references to Jewish themes may indicate 'contact' and 'encounter' with Judaism or Jewish Christianity, but certainly do not align Thomas with Jewish Christianity.76 In fact, however, the comment about the 'twenty-four prophets' in GTh 52 betrays a confused ignorance of the Jewish subdivisions of Scripture: there are twenty-four books but not twenty-four prophetic authors (Moses, for example, was assumed to have written five, whereas the twelve minor prophets only counted as one).

The Wider Christian Movement

Thomas is equally critical of non-Thomasine Christianity, which may of course include not only the 'magna ecclesia' of the likes of Ignatius and Polycarp, but also Valentinian and other movements. This critical stance is evident from the negative valuation of Matthew and Peter in GTh 13, and via the criticisms of disciples both in general (e.g. GTh 18) and as representatives of particular theological views of biblical authority and resurrection (GTh 51–52).

The negativity here causes difficulties for the view taken by Stead and Pagels that Thomas was intended as supplementary teaching for elite members who also sat happily within communities such as the wider apostolic church, and who also enjoyed one or more of the canonical Gospels. It is a difficulty for this view that the work presents itself as a document the acceptance of which is necessary for salvation (as in GTh 1)—thereby excluding non-Thomasine Christians. Similarly, several of the distinctive elements in Thomas are presented not as recommended ideal practices for reaching a higher spiritual status, but as soteriological conditions. For example, in GTh 22.4–6, the conditions of making the two one, the outside like the inside and the above like the below, etc., are identified in 22.7 as necessary for entry into the kingdom. Similarly, in GTh 27, fasting to the world and 'sabbatising' are conditions for finding the kingdom and seeing the Father. GTh 13 also implies a separatist stance. Finally, Thomas's prohibitions of fasting, prayer and almsgiving (GTh 6; 14), as well as its views on resurrection and scripture (GTh 51–52) and other matters, strongly suggest divergence from other movements which countenanced such practices rather than affiliation with such movements.

Cautionary Remarks

There is a need here for careful mirror-reading. Some exegeses of sayings in Thomas have adopted too simplistic an approach, such as supposing that 'the questions that the disciples pose are invariably the questions that the community has raised and seeks to resolve', and that in GTh 24.1 'the disciples' question represents the voice of the community'. Similarly, Trevijano Etcheverría gives voice to what is often assumed in Thomas scholarship, namely that the motif of the incomprehension of the disciples represents the ignorance of non-Gnostic Christianity and Judaism. But some questions of the disciples (including 24.1) are rather more abstract (cf. also 91). There is, then, a serious danger involved in mirror reading: as Uro has warned, the facts on the ground cannot simply be read off the surface of Thomas.

Conclusion

A number of clear points emerge here. Thomas takes an uncompromising stance towards its rivals. One could add to (a) non-Christian Judaism and (b) the wider Christian movement, (c) the additional target of figures of authority in the wider empire—'your kings and your nobles' (GTh 78; cf. 81), though these are not assigned any particular religious views. Many of Thomas's central theological themes, especially elements of the Gospel's soteriology are sufficiently evident.

On the other hand, some aspects of Thomas's theological ethical and stance are more ambiguous, and there are certain points on which Thomas is simply silent. Perhaps such ambiguities in Thomas were originally illusory and there was a clear corpus of other works read alongside Thomas shaping its interpretation, with mystagogues who guaranteed the authoritative understanding, and a set of practices lived out in the Thomas movement and simply assumed in the Gospel. Or it could be that Thomas was intended all along to serve as an impulse for all kinds of different interpretative results, though this is unlikely. We also may have to reckon with the fact that some of the tensions left by the author or editor may be the result of Thomas not having been written or edited by a towering theological intellect and literary craftsman. Overall, however, there is a good deal of consistency, and so perhaps E.P. Sanders' verdict on Paul is not so far off the truth for Thomas—that it may not be completely systematic, but it is reasonably coherent. That is, the thought reflected in Thomas is not necessarily animated by a philosophical impulse towards logical doctrinal tidiness, but one can nevertheless make sense of Thomas's religious outlook. As Marjanen has concluded: 'it is nevertheless an exaggeration to claim that the choice and interpretation of the material employed in the Gospel is guided by no

consistent theological and ideological line of thought. On the contrary, in its chief theological emphases the Gospel of Thomas provides a fairly coherent picture.'87 Because of this, one can attempt an exegesis in the commentary below which does not need to see in Thomas a haphazard series of sayings which may go off in all sorts of different directions.

The survey above has also aimed to highlight those works with which Thomas can helpfully be compared (and more detailed evidence for this will be found in the commentary below). Two important criteria are closeness in time and partial overlap of theological approach. The difficulty with a number of Syrian parallels is that they are not really contemporaneous with Thomas, but generally come from around two centuries later. Conversely, Gnostic literature begins at roughly the same time as the composition of Thomas, but as Turner quipped, 'aeons and syzygies are conspicuous by their absence' from Thomas. As already noted, Thomas cannot be assigned to any particular group. There are some early Christian works which are both contemporaneous with Thomas, and in which quite similar moves are made (although their differences also need to be borne in mind). The Gospel of Philip shares a number of themes in common, and probably quotes Thomas. The Dialogue of the Saviour is also close in many respects. The Epistle of Ptolemy to Flora and Justin Martyr also share some similar interpretative strategies, as does the Treatise on the Resurrection. On some key themes, Philo offers important parallels. The Epistle of Barnabas is usually dated either to the end of the first century or to the second quarter of the second century, and its treatments of Jewish institutions such as sabbath, circumcision and temple bear comparison with Thomas. These works will be seen to be especially useful, alongside others, in the course of the commentary below. <>

LET IN THE LIGHT: LEARNING TO READ ST. AUGUSTINE'S CONFESSIONS WITH ATTENTION TO THE LATIN TEXT by James Boyd White [Columbia University Press, 9780231205009]

St. Augustine's *Confessions* is heralded as a classic of Western culture. Yet when James Boyd White first tried to read it in translation, it seemed utterly dull. Its ideas struck him as platitudinous and its prose felt drab. It was only when he started to read the text in Latin that he began to see the originality and depth of Augustine's work.

In **LET IN THE LIGHT**, White invites readers to join him in a close and engaged encounter with the *Confessions* in which they will come to share his experience of the book's power and profundity by reading at least some of it in Augustine's own language. He offers an accessible guide to reading the text in Latin, line by line—even for those who have never studied the language.

Equally attuned to the resonances of individual words and the deeper currents of Augustine's culture, **LET IN THE LIGHT** considers how the form and nuances of the Latin text allow greater insight into the work and its author. White shows how to read Augustine's prose with care and imagination, rewarding sustained attention and broader reflection.

LET IN THE LIGH*t* brings new life to a classic work, guiding readers to experience the immediacy, urgency, and vitality of Augustine's *Confessions*.

Review

I've spent fifty years translating Sanskrit texts, but only now has this book taught me how to read a text in a foreign language and how to read (and write) a translation. It is also a brilliant book about Latin, Augustine, God, and the meaning of life. -- Wendy Doniger, author of *The Implied Spider: Politics and Theology in Myth*

Such careful, loving reading as we find in James Boyd White's book is as rare as it is precious. This is a book to be read slowly, allowing Augustine's Latin to resonate—to be felt even when little understood. For words are living things, and we here come to know that Augustine's *Confessions* is a work that is alive in words with all their human complexity— but above all with love. -- David Jasper, author of *Heaven in Ordinary: Religion and Poetry in a Secular Age*

Let in the Light offers a better way to read a work of literature of enormous and enduring importance. White argues that our easy familiarity with the English language and the inevitable distance and distortions associated with any translation create a barrier between Augustine and his readers. He is a lively, clear, and engaging writer, and the book is extremely sophisticated about literary criticism but wears its sophistication lightly. -- M. Cathleen Kaveny, author of *Ethics at the Edges of Law: Christian Moralists and American Legal Thought*

CONTENTS

NOTES

I can best explain what kind of book you have in your hand if I tell you first how it was that I became engaged with the Confessions of Augustine. It is a simple story. I had heard over and over again that this was one of the most important and valuable books in the Western tradition: the first full expression of human inwardness, the deepest actualization of the human self as we have come to know it since, full of depth and mystery. It was fascinating, enlightening, and a true shaper of our culture.

I started to read the Confessions, many times in many translations, but I found it impossible. I felt that I was drowning in an ill-shapen mass of pious platitudes taken from second-rate nineteenth-century theologians, who seemed to speak as if their language was not problematic in any way, but simply said what needed to be said clearly and with the authority of the ages. I could not grasp either the outline or the details of the story. I could not imagine building on what I read.

In these English versions, Augustine seemed to use theological terms in what lawyers call a conclusory way, that is, as though they did not need further elaboration or definition. His psychology likewise seemed elementary and unsophisticated, again as though his words explained themselves. As for the narrative, that seemed pointlessly complex and substantively trivial. What, for example, is this big deal about stealing pears? It was an adolescent prank, not a serious sin. And why was the story more generally so hard to follow? Why does he so often fail to tell us where he is and who he is with? And so on. If you have tried to read the Confessions, maybe you have had such a response yourself.

None of this helped me discover what his religious experience was, or how the language he used might be connected with the events of ordinary life, in his era or our own. The whole experience was deeply unsatisfactory. I know other people have had different responses to the translated Augustine, but this was mine, and I saw no way to change it.

Then—now many years ago—I read the first page of the Confessions in Latin. I was, in the modern idiom, blown away. All the impressions I had of this text were exploded. It was full of life and immediacy and urgency. In the Latin text Augustine seemed to use his terms of theology and psychology, indeed all of his languages, with a constant sense of what they could and could not do, of what they left out or distorted. His sense of God was not reducible to theological cliche, but was deep, vital, and original. I felt that I was directly hearing his actual voice, not listening to a voice muffled and distorted by being forced to speak English.

In recent years my retirement has made it possible for me to read the whole work through in Latin, and for me it has become one of the most important books of all.

The present book is meant as a reading of the Confessions that recognizes it as a Latin text, as it was written by Augustine

himself. I want to help you see how it is that this book can take

on meaning of a different and deeper kind when it is read in its original language—and read closely. Thus in early chapters

I shall try to explain in detail how Augustine is at work in the Latin in a small number of sentences, so even if you know no

Latin at all you may get a sense of the way it works here and to what end Augustine directs it. As we proceed, we will do less of that, but I will always try to give you, in English, a sense of the Latin text at hand.

If you do not have any Latin, I want to help you learn just a tiny bit, enough to enable you to get some feel for what this text is actually like as it was written. My hope is that the experience of being exposed to the mind of Augustine speaking the language in which he lived and thought will bring you to want to learn at least a little more.

Working with the Latin as well as the English will, I hope, be a rewarding process, but it will necessarily and properly be a very slow one. It is an extreme form of close reading, which is in my view all to the good. The result is that in Part I of this book I will treat in detail only the first book of the Confessions. In Part II and Part III I will give less comprehensive attention to the other books.

The question I ask throughout is: What is it like to read the Confessions of St. Augustine? In addressing this question, why is it important to read the Confessions, at least in part, in Latin? Why exactly can it not be fully and properly translated?

I will speak to these questions repeatedly throughout the book. But I can say now that one important reason for reading at least some of it in Latin is that Augustine's mind is present in the original text in a way it cannot be in a translation, even a very good one. Of course there are good translations of books from one language to another, and we should be thankful for them. But there are always what the Spanish scholar Ortega y Gasset called "exuberances and deficiencies" of meaning, that is, ways in which the translation both fails to express what is said and done in the original and adds meanings that are not there.

This is true not only of translations across languages but translations within a language. Think of a poem, for example, and how much its life and meaning are particular to its form. If you want to engage with the mind of Shakespeare, you will insist upon reading his own words, not a version found in student aids like Cliffs N^tes. Or, if like me you are a lawyer, think how hard it is to explain what is meant by terms like "jurisdiction" or "equity" or "common law" to those who do not have a legal training. To understand these words you need to learn the language. That is in fact what happens, or ought to happen, in law school.

If we hope to engage in a full way with the movements of Augustine's mind and imagination, then, it is important to read him at least in part in Latin. Another way to put it is to say that his voice can fully be heard only in that language, and as I will try to show, his voice is crucial to the meaning of the whole. Or, putting it another way, in the Latin he is present, in mind and soul, in a way he cannot be present in English.

Another reason to read the Latin is that the Latin language that Augustine learned as a child and worked with as an adult was a carrier of his culture, a culture in which he was caught up when he was young—as we are all caught up in the cultures in which we are raised—and of which, when he was older, he came to be in some ways critical, in others accepting, in still others transforming. To put it slightly differently,

a central part of the drama of the Confessions lies in his struggles with his culture and the language that embodied it. In this sense the Latin language he knew is one of his most important subjects. We can have access to what he does with this language, and why, only as we come to share it.

In addition, as I hope to show, Augustine not only uses the Latin he has inherited; he remakes it in important ways as he

uses it. In doing so he is teaching us how to remake our own languages, our own ways of imagining and talking. All this requires us to pay attention to what he has done in the Latin.

This point is all the stronger, for me at least, when I recognize how little of what Augustine says can be reduced to a set of propositions. Sometimes scholars seem to see him as promulgating a philosophic or theological system. But in my experience this is just what he is not doing, at least in the Confessions. The life and meaning of what he does lies rather in the way he confronts and uses his language and the expectations it generates; in the way he establishes and builds relations with his two audiences, his reader and his God; and in the way he stimulates perception, feeling, thought, and imagination in us. This book is not reducible to a narrative, nor it is it propositional in character. Rather, I think it can best be understood as offering us as we read it a set of experiences, in our minds and our inner beings. It is in these experiences that its meaning lies.

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A third benefit of reading some of it in Latin is that its very foreignness and difficulty forces us to slow down as readers—to admit uncertainty, to look for meanings that are not obvious on the surface, and to regard our initial understandings as incomplete, all in a good way.

Think of what it is like to skim through a newspaper column or detective story in English. It can go so easily that it is hardly happening at all. In a way it would not necessarily be a huge advantage to us as readers of the Confessions if we were as fluent in Latin as we are in English, for then we might just skim through it. This book should not be read in such a way, nor should it be swallowed whole. Rather, like Shakespeare's plays or the poetry of Donne or Eliot, it requires sustained attention and thought, an active and imaginative engagement, if we are to read it well. One of the advantages of the Latin is that it makes skimming impossible, at least for us. We are forced to slow down, and

that is a good thing.

Also, in reading the Confessions we are reading a book that has an original form. It is a new genre, and to read it well we need to see how that genre is given shape and meaning as the book is written. This requires us to look with special care at what Augustine says, and how he says it. To do this we need to pay attention to its language and how he uses it.

Despite all I have said, I know that good translations obviously have their own importance and value. In what follows I myself translate almost every Latin passage into English. If I have done my job well, there and in the commentary, I think

that even if you were to read only these translations, skipping

the Latin entirely, you would acquire a real, though incomplete,

sense of who Augustine is and a deeper connection with him

and his life.

As for the Latin, I hope that even if you cannot read it, the presence of this language is a constant reminder that you are not reading the real thing. I hope you will be aware that the English you do read in the translations, including my own, has something unexpressed behind it, something you can see and in a sense touch, or let touch you. I hope that the Latin in this book can in this way have real value even for someone who reads little

or none of it.

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The first chapter of this book is a kind of summary of the whole of the Confessions, offered not as a scientific statement of some kind but simply as one reader's effort to sum the work up. My hope is that this will help you start to tune yourself to the actual

text when we turn to it. The next chapter will focus on the opening sentences, which are reproduced in Latin with notes and comments. Subsequent chapters will build on these two. From time to time throughout the book I will ask you to think about the way a particular Latin sentence actually works, giving you what help I can.

It is important to understand that while we shall work with passages taken from each of its books, we shall in total read only a rather small portion of the Confessions. My choice of passages is of course not beyond criticism, but it is perhaps comforting to think that our selection of passages will leave lots of the Confessions for you to turn to when our work together is over.

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I should add, loudly and clearly, that I am not a professional Latinist, nor an Augustinian scholar, but just one mind engaging as well as I can with what Augustine has written. This is not a work of scholarship in the usual sense, but an exploration of the experience this wonderful book offers its readers. You might perhaps think of me as a friend with whom you happen to be reading this text closely, asking questions, making suggestions, and in general carrying on a conversation, without making any claims to perfection.

In this connection I imagine you, the reader, as someone who wants to come to terms with the experience of reading this text, even to the extent of learning to use at least a little Latin, and who is willing to give the conversation that it wants to establish with you a try. I think that if you ever studied Latin, in high school say, you should be able to follow a good bit of the Latin you will be presented with. If you have no exposure to Latin, you may want to look also at the resources in the note appended to this paragraph, or even better, to ask a Latinate friend to help you. Everything I do here is meant as an invitation or introduction, a first step in coming to terms with this remarkable work.

Finally, I might add that in having these hopes for the use of Latin I am moved by my own experience, not of Latin this time, but of Dante's Italian. With a couple of friends, one of whom knew Italian well, I read through the Commedia, one canto every week for three years. I used a text with Italian on one side, English on the other. I was never able simply to read the Italian, but I could often reconstruct much

of its meaning with the help of the translation, then read it in Italian. This gave me an experience of reading Dante in Italian, which changed my whole sense of what he was doing and how.

What happens in such a case is that the language is brought to life as a language, even though not fully understood, and this connects the reader with the mind of the writer in a new way. In the case of Augustine you will find that what is written in Latin, when it is understood even a little, will have a kind of firmness or solidity, as well as a life, that a translation cannot have. These are the words he wrote; there is nothing behind them but his mind. With a translation, by contrast, there is always something behind the language you read, something hidden, uncertain, obscure.

As you will see, I am present throughout the book as an interlocutor with you, the reader, continually making comments

and asking questions. I hope you will look at these critically. I do mean what I say, but I do not propound it with any external authority. As you read, ask what you think of my comments and questions, and the way, or ways, of thinking they express. How would you do it differently?

On another note. It has been suggested to me that you may already, and understandably, have an unappealing image of

Augustine as an authoritarian, rigid, misogynistic, self-certain figure constantly engaged in doctrinal battles that have no real

meaning today. While I cannot speak of all of his writings, I hope that you will discover that the Augustine at work in the Confessions is not like this at all. As you will see, his central term is caritas, another word for "love."

If you do need a quick antidote to the image I have presented above, I suggest you read his Sermon 9.7 Here he treats the sin of adultery, which men in his culture felt privileged to commit, while women were meant to be completely faithful. The women, who are present with their husbands in the congregation, are understandably afraid to speak to them about this difficult subject. Augustine speaks for them, in the presence of their husbands, giving them a voice they otherwise would not have had and claiming for them in no uncertain terms a fundamental equality in the face of a culture that denies it. While doing this he explicitly creates a sense of the Scriptures not as demanding grim obedience to a set of severe commands but as offering a life of song and joy.

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There is one more aspect of this work I want to mention now, namely, its connection to the world in which I write—a world in which we face a serious pandemic, the possible loss of our democracy, and the consequences of global warming. In this world it is not possible to rely unthinkingly on existing institutions or traditions or established practices and attitudes. We do not know where we are going but we know it is not into a version of our own past. In 2019 I published a book, Keep Law Alive, which was about contemporary threats to our way of doing law, indeed to law itself, in which I tried to show how we might keep alive this crucial element of our culture. I had to consider as well how we might respond if we lost the law as we know and admire it; my response was to turn to Augustine who lived in a worse world than our own—one in which the Roman Empire was collapsing and invaders were taking its place—yet in my view found a way to maintain his psychic and intellectual integrity, his

integrity as a person. The chapter in which I tried to explain this reappears with little change in this book as its first chapter. The rest of this book could be read as an elaboration of what I saw to be so remarkable in Augustine's Confessions and what it might mean for us, living as we do in a culture that is collapsing, perhaps to be reborn, perhaps not. <>

AUGUSTINE'S CONFESSIONS: PHILOSOPHY IN AUTOBIOGRAPHY edited by William E. Mann [Oxford University Press, 9780199577552]

Augustine's *Confessions* is a masterpiece of world literature. Written by Augustine in his forties, at the height of his philosophical and rhetorical skills, the *Confessions* is at once autobiographical, philosophical, theological, and psychological. The aim of the eight essays commissioned for the present volume is to provide an examination and discussion of some of the philosophical issues raised by Augustine. What constitutes the happy or blessed life and what is required to achieve it? The essays question the role that philosophical perplexity plays in the search for truth, and the mental discipline that is required for conducting the search; in addition to asking how Augustine depicts the acquisition of truth as a vision of God. Furthermore, they discuss the problems that arise in the attempt to understand minds, both our own and others, and ask about the interplay between what reason tells us is right and what we will to do. What are the impediments to an individual's moral progress, and how far are these impediments created by the temptations to indulge in such fictions as dramas and dreams? What is the nature of eternity, and how does eternity differ from time? How should scripture be interpreted, especially the account of creation of the material world in Genesis?

Readers with a basic knowledge of Augustine may perceive him to be simply a powerful definer and defender of religious orthodoxy, a figure who ranks behind only Jesus and Paul in the development of a distinctively Christian world-view. For such readers the intellectual honesty and psychological candour of the *Confessions* should come as a pleasant surprise.

Review

"...overall they present a useful companion to a deeper reading of this most fascinating book... Recommended. Upper-level undergraduates and above; general readers." --*Choice*

"This is an unusually philosophical - thus very welcome - book about the *Confessions*...overall Mann has edited a spicy mixed bag, with a few lows and some exhilarating highs." --*Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews Online*

"...analytic philosophers might find this volume helpful...If this volume leads philosophers to a greater understanding of Augustine, and perhaps to further reading of Augustine himself and the wealth of scholarship dedicated to him, it will be a successful work indeed." -- *The Review of Metaphysics*

"Many would insist that whatever speculation Augustine engaged in, it was solely as a theologian. Yet each of the authors in this superb volume approaches Augustine in the context of the philosophy of the late Roman world, especially Neoplatonic philosophy. Their success in showing how the themes of

the *Confessions* resonate with the language of philosophers of the time - Plotinus chief among them - and wrestle with many of the same issues vindicates Mann's claim. Anyone interested in understanding the *Confessions* will have to confront these eight essays and ponder their philosophical analysis of Augustine's thought." -- *Journal of the History of Philosophy*

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A strong case can be made for the claim that with the exception of Jesus and Paul, Augustine has exerted the most influence on the development of Christian thought. His writings became authoritative in medieval, Reformation, and post-Reformation thinking. Contemporary writers and translators continue to regard his thought as valuable.1 Surely the most well-known of his works is the Confessions. The Confessions belongs to everyone. No single academic discipline can claim exclusive rights to it or its author. Classics students can sample the Latin language of a rhetorical master. Theologians will find positions inaugurated in it that reverberate throughout Christianity in subsequent centuries. Historians can trace the influence of earlier thinkers on Augustine's thought as he reports on his intellectual odyssey. In turn, they can find his influence on subsequent philosophers and theologians, including Anselm, Abelard, Aquinas, Luther, Calvin, and Descartes. Psychologists will find accounts of language learning and conflict of will still worth examining. Students of literature can savor a work that seems to defy genres: is it a 300-page prayer, an autobiography, a theological treatise, all of the above, or something else entirely?

The aim of the essays presented here is to provide a sample of the wares of Augustine the philosopher. For that purpose the Confessions is a well-stocked bazaar. In it one will find such topics as what constitutes the happy or blessed life and what is required to achieve it; the role of philosophical perplexity in Augustine's search for truth; the mental discipline required for conducting that search; the "ascent" to a vision of God; problems arising in the attempt to understand minds, both our own and others'; the interplay between practical reason and the will; impediments to moral progress, including the temptations of fiction and fantasy; time and eternity; and the interpretation of scripture, especially the account of creation in Genesis.

Readers who know only a bit about Augustine's intellectual biography may think of him simply as an inflexible, powerful definer and defender of religious orthodoxy. It may come as a surprise to them to see in the Confessions expressions of fascinated perplexity and open-mindedness. In some cases he

believes he has found a resolution, for example, in dealing with the quandary of how there can be evil in a world created by God. In other cases, it appears that he does not. He seems to despair of finding an explanation for his youthful theft of his neighbor's pears, a trivial but nonetheless senseless crime. In Book 11 he famously worries about the nature of time: he claims to know full well what time is until he is asked to explain it. The essays presented here attempt to respect that sense of philosophical wonderment and investigation.

Peter King's "Augustine's Anti-Platonist Ascents" documents the ways in which Augustine's account of the ascent to God in Book 7 differs from Plato's account of the ascent of the soul to the Form of the Good in the Symposium. Plato conscripts erotic love (Eros) to provide motivation for the soul to engage in the process of ascent. King argues that Augustine, following Ambrose's lead, regards erotic urges as the chief impediment to the ascent to the divine. King notes that God, unlike Plato's Form of the Good or Plotinus's One, can offer assistance to Augustine, but can also freely refrain from offering assistance.

"Practical Rationality and the Wills of Confessions 8" by Tomas Ekenberg explores the book of the Confessions that describes the mental struggle that culminates in Augustine's conversion to Christianity. Ekenberg argues that Book 8 does not present a coherent account of the will as something distinct from emotion and reason. Augustine sometimes attributes his hesitation to his desires overpowering what reason acknowledges; at other times he describes his reason as self-deceived; at still other times he suggests that even when all his cognitive and conative resources were in harmony they were inadequate to effect his conversion. In support of his argument Ekenberg notes the theoretical influences on Augustine coming from Manicheanism, Platonism, and Stoicism.

In "Happiness in Augustine's Confessions" Nicholas Wolterstorff argues that whereas the great bulk of the ancient eudaimonists understood eudaimonia as the good or estimable life, with most of them holding that the estimable life is the well-lived life, Augustine understood beatitudo differently, namely, as the joyful life. In describing the role of happiness and unhappiness in his life, Augustine divides his life sharply into his life before his conversion and his life after his conversion. It is easy to get the impression, upon finishing Book 9 of the Confessions, that Augustine's conversion meant the end of his misery. From Book 10 we learn that it meant nothing of the sort. Misery remains. Its source now is different. Augustine is now unhappy over the fact that his self has not been reformed as he wants it to be. He yields to the temptations to desire and enjoy sensory pleasure for its own sake, to desire and enjoy praise, to indulge his curiosity. As to why Augustine thinks it is intrinsically wrong to engage in these activities, the answer is that all of them are independent of his love of God and distractions from activities expressive of that love. Wolterstorff closes by arguing that, as Augustine sees it, happiness in this present life is impossible.

One of the quandaries about the composition of the Confessions is the placement of Book 10 between what has hitherto been autobiography and what is henceforward commentary on the book of Genesis. In "The Desire for God and the Aporetic Method in Augustine's Confessions" Stephen Menn addresses this quandary by pointing out that much of the Confessions is written in the form of aporiai or seemingly paradoxical philosophical puzzles. Menn focuses on one such puzzle, a version of which appears at the beginning of Book 1—how one can search for, or pray to, or make predications concerning God prior to knowing God. Menn discusses the puzzle in connection with Meno's Paradox, but argues that Augustine does not accept Plato's solution, namely the doctrine of Recollection. Menn argues that Augustine offers his solution to this puzzle in Book 10 and suggests how the two major parts of that

book, on memory and temptation, fit in with the solution. If, as Menn argues, God is truth and humans take pleasure in the truth, then in pursuing the truth humans can experience God without yet knowing God. In the second half of Book 10 Augustine describes the ways in which humans can fail in the pursuit by deluding themselves. The aporiai serve to induce confessions of ignorance.

William E. Mann's "The Life of the Mind in Dramas and Dreams" focuses attention on two seemingly disparate phenomena, Augustine's attitude towards the theatre recorded in Book 2 of the Confessions, and his worry about persistent erotic dreams in Book 10. Book 2 contains the first recorded presentation of the so-called paradox of fiction, which for Augustine has three strands. People flock to take in staged spectacles that evoke feelings of fear, anger, and grief, even though they otherwise seek to avoid such feelings. Yet these emotions do not move the audiences to action. Moreover, the emotions are aroused even in cases in which the audiences know that the protagonists never existed. Dreams are like dramas in that they can exhibit the same paradoxical features. Augustine's remarks on the role of imagination imply that just as plays have playwrights, dreams have "dreamwrights"—the dreamers themselves. Augustine would like to disavow responsibility for his dreams, but Mann argues that he never fully succeeds.

Paul Helm's "Thinking Eternally" examines Augustine's discussion of time in Book 11 of the Confessions by laying emphasis on what it is to think eternally. Helm stresses the importance for Augustine (in his quest for a way of thinking about the immutable God of the Christian church) of replacing an Aristotelian theory of categories with a "grammar" inspired by his coming to understand the Neoplatonists (as reported in Book 7). Invoking the distinction between A-theories and B-theories of time, Helm argues that Augustine in effect opts for a modified B-series for God's relation to time, citing four lines of evidence: that Augustine uses the language of temporal realism; that God's knowledge of time transcends time; that a B-series accounts for the nature of God's knowledge of time; that the language of the A-series, that is, the language of past, present, and future viewpoints, is inexact. Helm suggests that Augustine's use of A-series language enables us creatures to appreciate the fleetingness of time.

"The Privacy of the Mind and the Fully Approvable Reading of Scripture," by Blake D. Dutton, concentrates on Book 12 of the Confessions. Dutton argues that Augustine defends an interpretation of Genesis 1:1 with which many fellow Christians would disagree. Central to Augustine's defense is a thesis to the effect that different interpretations of the same text can be true even when not all of them capture the author's intentions. In service of that thesis Dutton attributes to Augustine a Doctrine of the Privacy of the Mind, according to which each mind is cognitively accessible to itself but cognitively inaccessible to every other mind. The doctrine implies that any author's intentions are unknowable. Thus doubt is cast on correctness as a basis for judging an interpretation of Scripture. Dutton suggests on Augustine's behalf that a fully approvable reading of a text is a reading in which the reader takes the text's propositions to be true and advantageous. Dutton concludes by pointing out Augustine's "astonishing" Plenitude of Meaning Thesis: for any sentence in Scripture, if a reader takes it to express some proposition that is true, then the author intended it to express that proposition.

In "Intelligible Matter and the Genesis of Intellect" Christian Tornau investigates the way in which Augustine appropriates the Neoplatonic notion of intelligible matter in his exegesis of the first verses of Genesis in Books 12 and 13 of the Confessions. Augustine regards matter as changeable and a source of potentiality, which in his theology distinguishes creation from its changeless creator. Some immaterial

substances, however, are also susceptible to change; Augustine has in mind the created angelic intellects, who have it in their power to rebel. Contrary to Plotinus Augustine comes to regard intelligible matter as a source of potentiality in creation, a potentiality, moreover, that is ethical and primarily negative—it is the pseudo-freedom to sin.

The Confessions consists of thirteen books, each of which is traditionally divided into chapters and sections. The sections are more fine-grained than the chapters, making the chapter numbers redundant for purposes of reference. So, for example, in this volume reference to Book 7, chapter 10, section 16 will be given as 7.16. <>

AUGUSTINIAN THEOLOGY IN THE LATER MIDDLE AGES: VOLUME 1: CONCEPTS, PERSPECTIVES, AND THE EMERGENCE OF AUGUSTINIAN IDENTITY by Eric Leland Saak [Series: Studies in the History of Christian Traditions, Brill, 9789004405738]

The culmination of thirty years of research, Eric Leland Saak's **AUGUSTINIAN THEOLOGY IN THE LATER MIDDLE AGES** offers a comprehensive, new interpretation of late medieval Augustinianism. The first of a two-volume work, the present book sets the stage and analyzes the conceptual and methodological structures requisite for interpreting the reception of Augustine in the later Middle Ages historically, together with explicating the first two of the four "pillars" of Augustinian theology: the Augustinian Hermits' political theology; the teaching in the Order's schools; the Order's university theology; and its moral theology. Holistically fused with the Order's religious identity, these distinct yet interconnected components of Augustinian theology, rather than a narrow, theologically defined anti-Pelagianism, provided the context for the emergence of the Reformation.

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In 1956, Damasus Trapp published a 129-page article in the journal Augustiniana.1 That volume was a special issue celebrating the 700th Anniversary of the bull Licet Ecclesiae of Pope Alexander iv, establishing the Ordo Eremitarum Sancti Augustini. It remains perhaps of unparalleled importance for our understanding of the late medieval Augustinian tradition, and Trapp's article is one of the primary reasons why it is so. Reading Trapp's article for me was transformative. I still remember sitting deep in the stacks of Doheny Library at the University of Southern California reading it for the first time and having the feeling that somehow this was extremely important, while at the same time realizing that I did not understand a single word. The title of Trapp's article was "Augustinian Theology in the Fourteenth Century: Notes on Editions, Marginalia, Opinions, and Booklore." That article was designed as a sketch of a forthcoming work of Trapp's, which regrettably never appeared.2 This present book takes Trapp's article as its intertext. While I still cannot claim that I understand every word in that article, it is one to which I constantly return, with the same degree of awe, even if with more understanding.

As the intertext for this present work, the subtitle "Notes" applies here as well. The study below should be read as simply "Notes on the Augustinian Theology of the Later Middle Ages." It makes no claim to be comprehensive, and by intent hopes to serve as a point of departure, much as Trapp's article did for me; I have been studying the late medieval Augustinian tradition ever since.

Yet even if not comprehensive with the very conscious awareness of the extent to which that is so—since far more work would need to be done on still unknown and only partially known late medieval Augustinians before we could even begin to be able to claim a comprehensive understanding—it is more than a sketch in that it seeks to make a clear argument with sufficient evidence to make it stick. That overarching argument can be summarized in the following four theses:

1. 1.Historically seen, Augustinian theology in the later Middle Ages cannot be reduced to late medieval anti-Pelagianism;
2. 2.Historically seen, Augustinian theology in the later Middle Ages was the theology of the Order of Hermits of St. Augustine (oesa);
3. 3.Historically seen, Augustinian theology in the later Middle Ages cannot be reduced or limited to the theological production of the Augustinian Hermits' university magistri;
4. 4.Historically seen, Augustinian theology in the later Middle Ages was a major catalytic factor in the emergence of the Reformation and Early Modern Europe.

These theses, implicitly and explicitly, have lain behind the majority of my published work, so consequently one could legitimately question why yet another book on the theme is needed. There are, I would claim, two primary reasons. First, acknowledging the work that has been done, and that has been done since my High Way to Heaven in 2002, the late medieval Augustinians and their impact on their world have still not entered general representations of the religion and theology of the later

Middle Ages. As a case in point, Kevin Madigan's Medieval Christianity. A New History, which appeared in 2015, treats Augustine in passing but does not even mention the Augustinian Hermits, even when treating the religio-political conflicts of the early fourteenth century.4 Other popular works and textbooks ignore the Augustinians as well, while giving at least some importance to the Franciscans and Dominicans.5 While scholarly works only "trickle down" to popular works and textbooks very slowly, until the Augustinians and their importance for our understanding of the religious, cultural, intellectual, and political history of the later Middle Ages is recognized, it is essential to continue to emphasize that importance, to underscore it and to elaborate on it, in scholarly works.6 Second, while my published books and articles have built towards an over-arching representation of the reception, influence, and impact of Augustine from the late thirteenth to the early sixteenth century, emphasizing the centrality thereto of the Augustinian Hermits, they have not in and of themselves presented my vision and interpretation of late medieval Augustinianism and its relationship to the origins of Early Modern Europe in its entirety. That is presented here for the first time.

I should note, however, that that vision and interpretation is presented in this present work only in part. Originally, I had conceived of presenting my overall vision and interpretation in a single volume that would have been based on previously published articles and would have carried the account up through the Council of Trent. That soon become increasingly distasteful and I found myself doing increasingly more new research, so that what had started conceptually as a volume of collected articles of sorts grew into a new independent work, since, if for no other reason, I realized that indeed to present my vision and interpretation of late medieval Augustinianism a volume of collected articles, even reworked and expanded, did not actually suffice. It did not do what I had wanted to do. As the conception evolved and grew, it also grew in size so that were I to write a single work it would have ended up being longer, perhaps even substantially so, than my High Way to Heaven (of over 800 pages).7 Thus I decided to break it into two works. I may, if time and longevity allow, at some point in the future return to writing the "second" volume with the title, The Confessionalization of Augustine. Augustinianism in the Reformation, which would re-examine the thesis of Eduard Stakemeier that the late medieval Augustinian tradition culminated not in Luther and the Reformation, but in Jerome Seripando and the Council of Trent. Time will only tell, and there are a number of projects I need to complete first beforehand. Yet here I do present my vision of Augustinianism in the later Middle Ages as a whole. This endeavor too, though, grew over time with the consequence that I needed to do it in two volumes, yet two volumes that form a unified whole, even with the first volume appearing first, to be followed shortly by the second. This two-volume work then seeks to establish what late medieval Augustinianism actually was. As such, it stands on its own, as well as providing the requisite point of departure for a re-interpretation of the role and influence of Augustinianism in the Reformation.

This last phrase, however, may appear to be a mis-statement, or a lapse of memory, as a major theme of my work has been the argument that there was no such thing, as such, as "late medieval Augustinianism," or at least that if we use the term, we should do so historically, whereby only the religious identity of the Order of Hermits of St. Augustine (oesa) can legitimately claim to be described, in a historical rather than in a theological understanding, as late medieval Augustinianism.8 I still hold to that position, for it was, and still is, asserted as a means to bring the scholarly debate back to a historical basis rather than one explicitly or implicitly focused on the confessional, theological positions of the ones doing the interpreting. There is good reason to refer to the later Middle Ages as such as an "age of Augustine" or an "age of Augustinianism," or the "Augustinian later Middle Ages," yet doing so obscures

as much as it might illumine historical contours and developments as did Heiko Oberman's reference to the "Franciscan Middle Ages."9 "Augustinian traditions" could be a useful term since it would acknowledge the ambiguity and the multiplicity of Augustine's reception, influence, and impact without attempting to concretize it into any one particular reception, influence, or impact. Keeping that broader, more general perspective in mind, here "late medieval Augustinianism" is understood as referring to the historical phenomena of living as an Augustinian. Thus the qualification "Historically seen" in each of the four theses stated above. In this context we can identify more specific phenomena of how Augustine and his works affected the historical developments of the later Middle Ages. It is far more than an issue of "mere semantics"; it is an issue of historical understanding, and how we describe that understanding, which is, by necessity, always a creation of the historian. We are prisoners to language and the words we use to describe what we observe often shape and create that which we observe. With that recognition as a given, here I attempt to present my interpretation, my understanding, of that specific, determined influence of Augustine and his heritage as it was embodied in the late medieval oesa. This particular reception and appropriation of Augustine was the only historically legitimate referent for the ahistorical term "late medieval Augustinianism." It was, however, this specific reception, influence, and impact of Augustine that served as a catalyst, at least in part, for the Reformation and emergence of early modern Europe. That, in any case, is the argument in what follows below.

There is, though, a third reason why this book is legitimate, at least in my own mind. In his classic study, Amor Dei, John Burnaby wrote in his preface:

> The years in which this book has been written have been a time in which pride, hatred, and violence have seemed the rulers of this world, and the meditation of an ancient ideal has been too easily oppressed by a sense of futility. St. Augustine stands for the faith that an advancing knowledge and an increasing love of the Eternal God is the only foundation upon which frail men can build the love of one another and learn to live together in peace … It may be that at long last a broken world will come back to the love of that Beauty which is old, but ever new.

If only it were true. Burnaby wrote these lines in 1938. The better part of a century later, we still live in a world in which pride, hatred and violence seem to be the rulers of the world. My country is being torn apart by hate and violence. In the current political crisis, the current soul searching in trying to figure out who we are as a country, in the current dilemma of individuals balancing the competing instincts of fighting or fleeing, in the conflict of despair and hope, what relevance at all can a study of late medieval Augustinianism have? We are still living in a broken world, and Augustine's teaching of Love remains the only remedy for the pride, hatred, and violence that continues to infect and comprise the saeculum, regardless of the moralistic and religious rhetoric used for self-justification. In so many ways, not only the late medieval Augustinians, but also Augustine himself has been forgotten, and rendered mute, and that is, perhaps, precisely why this current volume is needed, to remind of a time when Augustine's doctrines of love fueled the social action of an entire religious institution. It pales in comparison with the need to address gun violence, white supremacy, nationalism, terrorism, corruption, the attack on truth, and global warming, by no means an exhaustive list. And yet as so many in El Paso asserted after the gun violence and white supremacy that exerted its hate on their community in the summer of 2019, love is the means to heal their community, their city, and our country, a position that has been and remains foundational for President Biden, even after the storming of the Capitol on 6 January 2021. Burnaby's words ring eerily true eighty years later, and not completely without reason when we have the courage to recognize the parallel perils. Thus, for what it is worth, as little as it might be, the work that follows is

dedicated to the love that Augustine advocated, even if the theme of love itself is not often present explicitly in the pages that follow. It is why I study the late medieval Augustinian tradition, and why I feel it is so essential, and relevant, to our world today, lest we forget the world that led Burnaby to write his lines quoted above.

I don't know what will happen with my country as I write these lines, and I am rather skeptical of realizing the extent and depth of healing that is needed. Yet there is always hope, even if vague and dim. Being an Augustinian myself, at least in a certain way, I accept as a given that God's plan and our hopes do not always coincide, if they ever really do (Isaiah 55:8-9). For both history and theology, the comprehensive interpretation of Augustine's reception, influence, and impact in the later Middle Ages, if it is to be forthcoming at all, will be the work of others. Here I offer only some notes on one part of that reception, influence, and impact, that I hope will serve as points of departure for others, representing as they do the culmination of my work since that first day long ago when I discovered Trapp's article in Augustiniana 1956 and was transported into a state of awe. The awe remains, even if the understanding has grown, and as the understanding has grown, the awe has likewise just increased. As historians and as theologians we so often portray ourselves as masters of the past. We should recapture the awe and the wonder, not so much as dwarfs standing on the shoulders of giants, though that we are, but as dwarfs gazing upon the giants of the past in amazement and wonder at the world to which we no longer have access, which we can never visit and never, really, understand, try as we may. If wonder and awe are not what is clearly present in the chapters that follow, the reader should know they are there, underneath, underneath the conventions of our scholarly hubris that are intended to reveal not the scholarly erudition of the historian, but the awe and wonder at the minds, hearts, and lives of those long since dead and gone, whose only voice is that which we can give them, faint and faulty though it may be. May we listen well, we in our grossly impoverished intellectual world, who can only offer up what we can as a means of mourning our loss as we pay tribute to what we cannot hope to recover. If I can serve as a spokesperson for the mute, dead Augustinians, whose voices we still would be well advised to strive to listen to and to hear, I will have met my hopes and goals for my own work. Thus too this book.

The study that follows is a new creation of what is signified explicitly by the term "Augustinian Theology" in the chronological period referenced descriptively by the term "the Later Middle Ages." Creation it is, and consciously so, but creation is not fiction. The historian is grounded in the existence of her sources, sources that signify, somehow, the muted voices of the past to which the historian has the daunting responsibility of making heard once again. Historical fiction has its place, and if and/or when it is done well, it can enrich our historical understanding. But historical fiction is not history. Just as the historian is a slave to language, so is the historian a slave to the extant sources. Thus in the chapters that follow, I strive to describe, analyze, interpret, and understand the sources of the late medieval Augustinians, or at least some of them, and to present my understanding and interpretation thereof to come to a new understanding and representation of the Augustinian theology of the later Middle Ages, creating thereby a new understanding of late medieval Augustinianism, even as a slave to language and to the sources. I can only hope that fundamentally as simply some "notes" on the Augustinian theology of the later Middle Ages, it may serve itself as a catalyst and inspiration for new and further work on the extant sources, many of which have still never been read, even if only by some future undergraduate, deep in the stacks of her undergraduate library. <>

A COMPANION TO MEDIEVAL MIRACLE COLLECTIONS
edited by Sari Katajala- Peltomaa, Jenni Kuuliala and Iona McCleery [Reading Medieval Sources, Brill, 9789004465404]

Miracle accounts provide a window into the views and conceptions of the laity, the uneducated, women, and even children, whose voices are mostly missing from other types of sources. They are not, however, simple to use. This volume offers a methodological insight into the medieval world of the miraculous. Consisting of 15 cutting-edge articles by leading scholars in the field, it provides versatile approaches to the origins, methods, and recording techniques of various types of miracle narratives. It offers fascinating case studies from across Europe, which show how miracle accounts can be used as a source for various topics such as lived religion, healing, protection, and family and gender.

Contributors are Nicole Archambeau, Leigh Ann Craig, Ildikó Csepregi, Jussi Hanska, Emilia Jamroziak, Sari Katajala-Peltomaa, Jenni Kuuliala, Iona McCleery, Jyrki Nissi, Roberto Paciocco, Donald S. Prudlo, Marika Räsänen, Jonas Van Mulder, and Louise Elizabeth Wilson.

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Miracle Collections in Their Contexts by Sari Katajala- Peltomaa, Jenni Kuuliala and Iona McCleery

Why do miracles matter? Are they not just a reflection of the imaginary side of Christianity, an emblem of the backwardness of the Middle Ages? It has not been that long a time since these kinds of disclaimers were openly proclaimed, and administrative documents were considered to be most reliable sources in historical research. Obviously, for decades now, it has been clear that miracle narrations, whether recorded in a register at a shrine, in a collection, or in a judicial hearing, are invaluable sources when it comes to questions about daily life, family relations, lay devotion, or healing practices. This list of prolific themes and approaches could be, and indeed has been, continued, since miracles capture a wide variety of crucial elements of medieval society and culture. They were linked to church administration, economic life, patriotic pride and politics, communal coherence and hierarchies, gender and identity, as well as to experiences of illness, health, and healing. In sum, they encapsulate the whole spectrum of life and connect macro and micro levels of society and culture with each other. They matter a lot when it comes to our understanding of the Middle Ages.

Miracle narrations were also one of the most popular and widespread – if not the most widespread – literary genres during the Middle Ages, and were also a crucial part of the oral communication within societies as a common discussion topic and "dinner table" subject. Furthermore, they are often vivid narrations full of colorful details. Considering all this, it is small wonder that miracle narrations in their various forms are increasingly used by medievalists. They are no longer neglected – quite the contrary, but this proposes another problem. The nature of the sources, that is, how the written narration came into being, what is written and why, is occasionally not afforded enough attention. Miracle narrations do shed light on all the themes mentioned above – as well as hitherto unstudied ones – but not at face value. A profound methodological awareness is due in order to fully deploy the potential of the material. This is the aim of the volume at hand: to offer practical tools for the methodological understanding of miracle narrations. We analyze the background rationale of this material as well as deconstruct the structure of the collections and rhetorical elements within the narrations. Our focus is both on miracle collections and canonization processes, and we aim to offer a comparative perspective, to scrutinize links, similarities, and differences within these sets of sources. In addition to the evolution of the genre and contextualizing the collections, the chapters of the volume at hand offer a synthesis of some recent themes within this field and suggest new directions. Before introducing the themes and structure of the volume at hand, a review of the earlier scholarship is due.

There are many types of miracles, some of which, such as healing miracles, liberation miracles, and visions, receive special attention in this volume. There have been numerous studies of miracles over the decades, ranging in approach and theme from theological discussions and folkloric treatments, through to more recent histories of daily life and social practices. Although there have been historiographical reviews previously, and there are several important essay collections on miracles and their contexts, they perhaps focus more on the early Middle Ages, on the period 1000–1200, or on a single country. There is a great deal of scholarship on twelfth- century miracles, in particular, especially for England. As for other geographical areas, French and Italian miracle collections have also been extensively analyzed. Similarly, Scandinavian miracle collections and canonization processes have been analyzed for the study of the region.

In the scholarship, there has been relatively little methodological or critical analysis of miracle genres and miracle- recording practices, and what there is tends to focus on an earlier period than that covered by this volume. There are also limited comparisons across different regions of Europe; where these exist they tend to be focused on canonization processes rather than shrine collections.6 Shrine collections and canonization processes are usually studied separately, often for fairly narrow or discrete time periods with little opportunity to look at wider patterns. There are few late medieval studies of shrine collections. Even the miracles of the Virgin Mary, a truly universal transnational phenomenon, and usually studied as such, have not received the comparative attention they deserve for the Late Middle Ages. When it comes to late medieval saints, it is often their mysticism, devotional practices and asceticism or their political influence which has attracted interest. Legal and theological aspects of the cults and canonization process have also been extensively studied. Both of these are established fields of study, but do not particularly focus on miracles.

Following from the biblical example of Christ and his apostles, healing has always been the archetypical miracle, favored in all kinds of miracle collections. Resulting from this, where miracles are the focus of attention, it is usually healing that has received most scrutiny. Studies of childbirth, madness and possession, blindness, and resuscitation have been prominent in recent years. Sustained studies of broken bones, hernias, cancers, fevers, plague, and occupational injuries are very rare even though there are many examples of these conditions recorded in processes and collections across Europe and individual cases have attracted the interest of medical historians. For example, Luke Demaitre and Joseph Ziegler both study the cure of a woman with breast cancer attributed to Pierre of Luxembourg in 1387, and Nancy Siraisi describes how parents took their child with a hernia to the tomb of Chiara of Montefalco in 1308 rather than resorting to surgery. The problem of belief in these cures is often completely side- stepped by researchers, even those who study doubt and skepticism. Belief in healing has, to a certain extent, been avoided as a research topic in recent years. Either scholars have to consider that the injury or lesion was really there and healed miraculously; or that the miraculé was too ignorant to recognize that it was not a serious condition (unlikely in these very obvious cases); or that it just healed "naturally"; or that it was a textual construct that did not "really" happen (but then why describe the conditions if they had no bearing on experience?). Although we have come a long way from the reductionism of the 1970– 80s that tried to explain holy intercessors and miracle cures using modern rationalizations, there are still some fundamental issues that need to be addressed in the field of miracle studies for the late Middle Ages.

In some respects, the key difficulty for scholars coming into this field is that there are so many archival sources for late medieval politics and society that the specificity of what can be achieved through the study of miracles becomes lost. For example, it has been noted recently by a number of social historians that the great mortality that resulted from plague in the late Middle Ages (currently it is estimated that on average 50% of the population of Europe, the Middle East and North Africa died in the late 1340s) did not lead to nearly the amount of archived commentary that we would expect, used as we are to outpourings of grief in modern letters and diaries. Scholars instead point to changing patterns in late medieval art and literature or archaeological disruptions, but the archive is often annoyingly silent. Relatively few historians have tried to fill this silence by reading late medieval miracles for evidence of emotional and practical concerns connected to caring for the sick. The pioneer in this area is Nicole Archambeau in her close study of traumatic experience as expressed in the late fourteenth- century miracles of Delphine of Puimichel. We should consider that more late medieval miracle narratives could

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be studied in this light as a glimpse of the anxieties of their age, although it may not be as transparent as was previously assumed.

One of the major issues that this field of research faces is that there are relatively few monographs, but a profusion of essay collections and articles, some of which are isolated or quite difficult to access. Perhaps as a result, there is, as Robert Bartlett put it in a book review, "the continued dominance of the classic studies of thirty- five years ago (Sigal, Vauchez, Brown, Finucane, Schmitt)". This critique does not denigrate the sterling work of those scholars, some of whom are still active, and most of whom Bartlett also uses at length in his own very influential research. However, it is a reminder that it is time for scholarship to move on to new methods and insights, especially for the late Middle Ages, while still recognizing pioneering earlier scholarship. It will be clear from the pages of this volume that all of these scholars remain fundamental for the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries, especially Sigal, Finucane and Vauchez. However, it is also clear that as far as reading miracles today is concerned, two other names are now repeated much more regularly and deserve special recognition for their influence on a younger generation of researchers: Michael Goodich and Gábor Klaniczay.

Michael Goodich's research focused on the study of miracles: their narrative form and what they say about medieval society. He pioneered the use of miracles for social history, unusually using both canonization processes and shrine collections across a broad sweep of time and space. Goodich very much first advocated the idea that miracles could be used as evidence for daily life, social status, emotions, violence, childcare and gender studies, without ever losing sight of the need to pay close attention to the manuscript contexts of the original record. Gábor Klaniczay was originally known as a specialist on royal saints, part of his far broader interest in supernatural power. His major monograph on dynastic saints was ground- breaking in its attention to gender and the distinctive monarchies of central Europe. Klaniczay then turned his attention from dynastic politics to canonization processes, especially the miracles they recorded. His many studies and translations seek to make miracles from a much broader range of cults much more accessible.

As noted earlier, the study of miracle collections, and especially canonization processes are both lively historical fields. This means that new themes are emerging. While the first studies focused largely on quantitative analysis, especially on the classification of various conditions cured, qualitative close reading has been a core approach for some time now. The study of miracle narrations has also taken a turn to more theoretical approaches following the lead of scholars studying vitae, who are largely literary scholars. Their theory oriented gender approach and queer reading of sources, for example, has also inspired scholars focusing on miracles. Similarly, the theoretical framework of social and cultural models of disability have been used and discussed in the study of hagiographical sources. Correspondingly, other theories borrowed from the social sciences have been utilized in the study of daily life and family relations. Miracle narrations offer excellent potential for the study of childhood socialization, for example.

In addition to a more profound theoretical frame utilized in the analysis, a more pronounced focus on methodology has recently become relevant within studies of miracle narrations. For example, deconstruction of elements of hagiographic genre and analysis of different topoi, like the oral and literate elements in the depositions, as well as analysis of various versions of the same case at different levels of the process (local shrine, canonization process, curial evaluation, papal bull, sermons on a feast day) are scrutinized. Recently, the rhetorical elements in depositions have been deconstructed.

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Miracle narrations as a source material are not easily exhausted and they have demonstrated their ability to conform to new approaches within historical studies. A recent "turn" that affects academia widely, not only historians or medievalists, is the return of religion in its various forms. Theology or church institutions are no longer deemed as the most essential elements. Focus has shifted to religion's intermingling with society and culture, which can be defined as "lived religion", meaning a focus on devotional practices, such as rituals, symbols and gestures, and their connection to the community and culture. Even if the laity's devotional practices have long been a core element in the study of miracle collections and canonization processes, the "lived religion" approach contests the hierarchy between the "learned" and the "popular" within religion, as well as the existence of a strict polarity between individual and collective religious participation, and enables scholars to take seriously the experience of religion. Recently, topics like disbelief or demonic presence in daily life have also been addressed by analyzing miracle narrations. The non-typical miracles that do not fit into the accustomed pattern, revealing fractures in the genre and in recording practices, are also attracting increasing attention. The chapters of this volume contribute to the aforementioned themes and aim to open new possibilities for scrutiny. As methodological questions are a core rationale for the volume at hand, both the very concrete methods of recording as well as specific thematic analytical concepts emerge.

Structure of the Volume

The chapters included in this volume have been divided into two parts. The first of them concerns the evolution and contexts of miracle collections and canonization processes. In this section, the authors analyze and discuss the practical and juridical backgrounds and principles for recording miracles at shrines, in monastic settings, as a part of canonization processes, as well as how they could be used and re- used later on. These aspects are of crucial importance for any analysis of miracle narratives, as they provide the background for source- critical aspects that the researcher needs to take into consideration in order to be able to examine and dissect the sources fruitfully.

Louise Elizabeth Wilson's chapter, "Writing Miracle Collections", starts the first part of the book. In her chapter, Wilson examines the producing of collections of miracles in twelfth- and thirteenth- century England, Scotland, and France. She discusses the importance and variance in the reports of the oral report given by the beneficiaries as well as the methods and principles of the hagiographers. Wilson demonstrates the importance of knowing the individual situation of each collection in analyzing them, as the writers utilized different methods and rhetorical techniques depending on their purposes and the cults' situations, as well as on the cultural, societal, and theological changes over time.

Emilia Jamroziak's chapter, "Miracles in Monastic Culture", examines the importance of miracles for late medieval monastic culture, focusing particularly on the Benedictine and Cistercian orders. Despite their significance for any monastic community and its memories, a systematic analysis of miracles and monastic culture is still lacking. Monastic communities were often the guardians of shrines, in communication with their local communities, but miracles also played a role in remembering the vagaries of monastic life. In her chapter, Jamroziak also demonstrates the different purposes and audiences of miracle- recording in monastic settings, as well as the topoi they produced.

With the chapter "The Canonization of Saints in the Middle Ages: Procedure, Documentation, Meanings", written by Roberto Paciocco, the volume moves to the discussion about the practicalities and principles of canonization processes. Paciocco provides a thorough overview of the legal/ theological

developments which led to the establishment of the process in the thirteenth century, and demonstrates the growing needs and increased volume in the production of the required documents. The chapter covers the whole period of medieval canonizations, ending with the developments of the fifteenth century, and shows how the developing and changing legal requirements influenced the types of documents preserved for a modern scholar.

In their chapter "Practical Matters: Canonization Records in the Making", Sari Katajala- Peltomaa and Jenni Kuuliala continue the discussion on the requirements and preferences of those conducting canonization inquests, this time focusing on the recording of miracle testimonies. They show how the same legal and theological principles could be put into practice in very fluctuating and differing ways, depending on the situation of individual processes and the preferences of those conducting them. Their article demonstrates that comparisons between different processes and the knowledge about their characteristics is vital for any fruitful analysis of these sources.

Donald S. Prudlo also elaborates on the significance of miracles in canonization processes and the cults of the Friars Preachers in his chapter "Heretics, Hemorrhages, and Herrings: Miracles and the Canonizations of Dominican Saints". With miracle collections and papal bulls as a source, Prudlo shows how the Dominicans as well as the popes emphasized different aspects of the lives of their three major saints, St Dominic himself, St Peter of Verona, and St Thomas Aquinas, to formulate and strengthen the order. The choice of miracles played an important role here, and may point to the many different purposes and reasons for their selection in various types of hagiographic sources.

The final chapter of the first part of the book, "Miracula and exempla – a Complicated Relationship" by Jussi Hanska, proceeds to examine later usages of miracle narratives. Exempla were used in later medieval preaching to prove a point or teach a valuable lesson, and often miracle narratives were their core material. Hanska shows how the writers of exempla collections and preachers' manuals re- used and re- modelled existing miracle narratives to fit their genre, and also how preaching itself shaped the laity's views about the miraculous. Miracle narratives and exempla thus offer an interesting opportunity for research on the transferring of religious influences.

The second part of the book turns the focus to the ways miracle narratives can be and have been used in the study of lay piety, lived religion, communal religious practices, and the social history of medicine. The case- studies presented here provide examples of the potential of this material, highlighting source-critical aspects which need to be taken into consideration, as well as offering windows onto new possible research topics.

In the first chapter in this part, "Rituals and Spaces of Devotion in Cistercian Everyday Religion", Marika Räsänen analyses the ways the cult of St Thomas Aquinas was born, developed, and practised in the daily lives of his devotees. By dissecting Thomas's canonization process in particular, her focus is on the rituals and practices that tied the cult to the local communities and made it touchable for them, discussing also how the practicalities of this particular process intermingle with and enable a historical analysis. Furthermore, Räsänen shows how the dossiers can be used to study the interaction between the monastery and the surrounding villages in the sphere of lived religion.

Also focusing on the religious practices of the laity and their interaction with the sacred, in her chapter "Pilgrimage as a Feature of Miracles" Leigh Ann Craig examines the concept and practice of pilgrimage.

A crucial element in the veneration and invocation of saints, pilgrimage however received different levels of emphasis in miracle narrations. Craig discusses the usage of miracle reports included in miracle collections as well as canonization processes as sources for pilgrimage, analyzing the interplay of travel, the transfer of ideas, and lived religion.

Thaumaturgic cures have always formed the largest group of recorded miracles. In her chapter "Physical Disability and Bodily Difference" Jenni Kuuliala discusses the uses of miracles, especially those examined in canonization inquests, as a source for medieval disability history. As a rare source type recording the laity's views about illness, impairment, and health, these texts provide an exceptional window onto medieval communities' ideas about bodily deviance. The article examines the ways physical disability was reconstructed in canonization inquests and what that states about the everyday life of the disabled.

The topic of miraculous healing continues in Sari Katajala- Peltomaa's chapter "Madness, Demonic Possession and Methods of Categorization", where she shows that the categorization of different mental conditions was always a result of communal negotiations. Instead of proposing one simple line between demonic possession and mental illnesses, she shows how such categorizations varied from one context, that is one set of source material – a miracle collection or a canonization process – to the next. Demonic possession was an affliction but also a social phenomenon arising from, and therefore also revealing, the needs of the community.

The study of communal roles and social realities is also in focus in Jyrki Nissi's chapter "Death in a Birth Chamber. Birth Attendants as Expert Witnesses in the Canonization Process of Bernardino of Siena". Nissi examines childbirth based on testimonies about miracles, where a newborn infant was resurrected from death, analyzing how a community functioned and what the birth attendants' strategies for survival were. The chapter demonstrates how the requirements of a canonization inquest produced statements and information that are of great value for a modern scholar studying everyday events.

Not all miracles were healings, however, as Iona McCleery discusses in her chapter "Escaping Justice? The Politics of Liberation Miracles in Late Medieval Portugal". This chapter first of all identifies "non-healing" miracles such as shipwrecks and escapes from prison, and some of the methodological difficulties of studying them. Then the chapter focuses on liberation from prison or execution in the context of the late medieval Portuguese cult of the saints. Such miracles are guides to and critiques of behavior, as well as performances of power. They shed light on a less well understood system of criminal justice.

Continuing with the theme of "non-healing" miracles, in her chapter "Protection Miracles as Evidence for the Shifting Political Landscape of Fourteenth- Century Provence", Nicole Archambeau examines in more detail types of protection in miracle narratives in miracle collections and canonization processes. Saints were asked to help in various vagaries of everyday life, protecting the petitioners from different types of danger. Archambeau shows that miracle testimonies can be used for the study of social and political ties, and how the veneration of saints intermingled with political events and tensions of a given area. In addition to larger- scale quantitative analyses, the focus again on a strictly defined geographical area also produces illuminating results.

Jonas Van Mulder's chapter titled "The Mobilization of Thought. A Narratological Approach to Representations of Dream and Vision in Late Medieval Miracle Collections in the Low Countries"

analyses miracles that report dreams and visions as narratological constructions. He examines the ways these narratives could be used in instructing the cultic community, and how they simultaneously transfer information about the laity's access to the divine through visions. With a certain miracle type in his focus, Van Mulder demonstrates the ways those recording miracles re- modelled a religious experience to fit an established cultural script.

The narratological methods of miracles are also in focus in the last chapter of this volume "Miracle Types and Narratives: The Case of Saint Margaret of Hungary". Using various typologies in the different miracle collections of St Margaret, Ildikò Csepregi discusses the ways a lived event receives a form as a miracle story, and is then recounted to a shrine keeper or at a canonization inquest, and how the established pattern of a miracle narrative functioned in this process. At the same time, she shows how the particular nature of Margaret's canonization process, compared with many other inquest documents of the time, influences the narrative tone and therefore also the researcher's possibilities and challenges. <>

ELISABETH LESEUR: SELECTED WRITINGS by Janet K. Ruffing [Classics of Western Spirituality, Paulist Press, 9780809105748]

This volume, the first in the highly praised Classics of Western Spirituality series to venture into the 20th century, introduces the writings of Elisabeth Leseur (1800-1914), a French laywoman who left a precious record of a remarkable inner spiritual journey that was all but hidden from those who knew her. Leseur confronted the twin challenges of serious illness and her husband's agnosticism, which pained her, but didn't prevent her from being happily married. Inspired by a spirituality of the communion of saints, Leseur approached these issues by becoming a loving presence in her familial and social circles. She participated in all of the major theological developments that led to Vatican II, as well, but she has been a missing figure in the history of spirituality until now. This volume introduces the writings of Elisabeth Leseur to an English-speaking audience. It is the first and only edition of Leseur's works that brings together in one volume insights from her entire corpus. The works included are: Journal and Daily Thoughts, Writings on Christian Vocation, Letters to Unbelievers (Selected), Letters on Suffering (Selected).

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Elisabeth Leseur (1866-1914)

Born into the privileged Arrighi family during the last half of the nineteenth century and dying on the eve of World War I, Elisabeth Leseur creatively and originally responded to the spirit of her own times in the way she understood and practiced her faith as a lay Christian. Elisabeth Leseur deserves to be better known as an important lay figure in the history of Christian Spirituality.' The specific challenges she confronted were many. First, her marriage at the age of twenty-three to F^lix Leseur profoundly threatened her faith, and she struggled to regain that faith and develop it into a robust committed dedication to God. She found herself married to an unbeliever in an age of unbelief in France, and she adopted an apostolic strategy of unconditional loving presence. Despite this difference of religious belief, the Leseurs show evidence of deeply loving each other throughout their marriage.

Second, her approach to spirituality from the beginning of her adult conversion was always thoroughly lay in character. She developed a rule of life that maintained a set of priorities related to her responsibilities within her marriage and family. The couple remained childless, which seemed to bother Elisabeth more than Felix. Elisabeth responded to this lack by maintaining deep involvement with their extended families, including giving special attention to her niece and nephews, as well as by developing her own intellectual gifts through a disciplined program of study. Her studies included languages, literature, philosophy, and Christianity.

'Third, she experienced many forms of suffering in her life. She endured many illnesses, beg^nning with an intestinal abscess that developed toward the end of their honeymoon and that never completely healed. That illness was followed by a carriage accident (1895) in which she was struck on her side by the horse's hoofs. From 1908 on she had recurrent problems with her liver, forcing her to spend a great deal of time resting during each episode. In 1911 she developed breast cancer, from which she died in 1914. She learned how to turn this physical suffering as well as her spiritual isolation into a form of prayer and participation in redemption, making a pact with God offering her sufferings for the conversion of her husband. In addition to her physical and spiñtual sufferings, Elisabeth constantly confronted deaths and life-threatening illnesses within her family. Her father died just after her honeymoon, when she was too ill to attend his funeral. Her youngest sister, Marie, died as a child from

typhoid fever, and her younger, adult sister Juliette died from tuberculosis in 1905. Her nephew, Roger, died in childhood as well. Her belief in the communion of saints helped give meaning to these experiences of suffering and loss.

Fourth, she had an expansive view of the world from extensive travel and reading. The Leseurs counted among their friends, musicians, artists, writers, philosophers, politicians, doctors, and lawyers—believers and unbelievers alike. She recognized a special call to minister to the needs of this segment of society.

Fifth, she participated in the developing lay movements of her time, deeply affected by the social teachings of Leo XIII and the evangelizing efforts of the embryonic Catholic Action movement. She also embraced the budding developments in Catholic theology and spirituality—the beginnings of historical criticism and better understandings of the scriptures, the early liturgical movement as promoted by Dom Gueranger, and the return to the importance of the Eucharist as fostered by Pius X. She was deeply engaged in trying to harmonize faith and reason, faith and the new democracy, faith and culture. In many ways she was dearly an exceptional prototype of a happily married lay woman, educated in her faith, immersed in society, and carrying out in a secular context the specific forms of the lay apostolate that Vatican II would envision half a century later.

The Leseurs

Introduced by family friends, Elisabeth and Felix were immediately attracted to one another. It was certainly love at first sight. They both loved music, culture, literature, opera, and travel. Felix was just finishing his medical degree and expected to serve in the colonies. Elisabeth assumed that they came from similar faimily backgrounds—their fathers were both lawyers and both families were Catholic. Elisabeth believed that "Felix was everything she desired in a husband."' He had been educated by the Oratorians, and Pere Bordes, an Oratorian and one of Felix's teachers, presided at their wedding. On the eve of their wedding Elisabeth discovered that Felix was no longer a practicing Catholic and had become a complete agnostic.

He promised to respect and support her practice of the faith, even accompany her to Mass at times, but after a short period Felix discovered he was anything but neutral and increasingly tried to influence her toward unbelief. He became a journalist and worked for two of the most anticlerical journals in France. In 1892 he replaced his good friend, Maurice Ordinaire, as director of the Republique Fran^aise, founded by Leon Gambetta, when Ordinaire was offered a cabinet post by the undersecretary of state for the colonies. Ordinaire was first a deputy and senator of Doubs, then vice-president of the Senate and a close friend of Felix. The Ordinaires lived near Jougne, where the Leseurs eventually purchased a summer home in 1902. A year after joining the Repuubliquue Frannaise, Felix moved to Siecle in order to write editorials on colonial questions. He hoped thereby to launch his colonial career. When his friend, Theophile Delcasse (1852-1923) became minister of the colonies, he offered Felix a posting that would have taken the Leseurs to Africa in 1894. Fearful about Elisabeth's delicate health, her family intervened and in 1894 invited Felix to become part of their prestigious insurance company, thus ending Felix's ambitions for Foreign Service.

This brief description of Felixs friends and acclivities gives some indications of the social and political circles in which the Leseurs entertained, worked, and socialized. Felix was immersed in the anticlerical, rationalist thought of his day and wanted Elisabeth to join him. He had a library that included Protestant writers, rationalists, and modernists. Elisabeth's habits of recollecdon and her practice of the faith began

to weaken in the whirl of travel, social life, entertaining, and Felix constant activity' He describes himself as returning after their evening meal to the office or to public or cultural functions and combing home in the early morning hours. Elisabeth began to study Latin, which Felix could not criticize because it was not only the language of the church but of the classics as well. Sometime in 1898, when Elisabeth mentioned she had nothing to read, Felix suggested she read Ernest Renan's (1823-92) Origines di' Christianisme. Instead, she chose Renan's La vie de Jesus from his library.

This book marked the turning point in her spiritual crisis. Elisabeth was not at all persuaded by Renan account and quickly dissected his argument. In order to justify her critique she turned to the Gospels and was deeply affected spiritually by reading them daily.' She engaged in a program of reading, study, and prayer, and she began writing in her journal one year later, after the Leseurs returned from their trips to Spain and Germany. Eventually, she assembled a library of two hundred volumes of philosophy, morality, spiritual writing, apologetics, and religious biography. Although Elisabeth certainly participated in all of the popular forms of religion characteristic of nineteenth-century French Catholicism, her strong mind and the intellectual environment of their social circle compelled her to find answers to her pressing religious and social questions through reading.

In 1903 the Leseurs accepted an invitation from friends to join them on a pilgrimage to Rome. There, at the tomb of St. Peter, Elisabeth describes a religious experience that marked the beginning of a "new life" for her, confirming her in her renewed commitment to Christian life. Finding herself isolated in her religious practice and deep faith, Elisabeth confides her resolutions, rule of life, significant insights into herself, and her vocation in a private journal, Journal et pensees pour chaque jour. She had no one to talk to about her unfolding spiritual life until she met Pere Joseph Hebert, OP, in 1903, when a co-worker of Felix asked her to be his sponsor for baptism? Subsequently, Elisabeth sought spiritual direction from Hebert in the context of the sacrament of penance twice monthly when the Leseurs were in Paris (September to May) and when Elisabeth was well enough to leave her home.

Elisabeth, recognizing that faith is God's gift, prayed constantly for the conversion of her husband. She suffered deeply from the inability to share a life of faith, so meaningful and important to her, with her husband, with whom she shared everything else. The pact she made with God offering her suffering for his conversion convinced her that Felix would not only eventually return to Catholic practice but would also become a priest Gradually, Felix became more respectful of his wile's religious practices and witnessed the consolation she experienced in prayer at Lourdes and when she received communion at home during her final illness. Felix also met some other religious people, Elisabeth's epistolary soul-friend, Soeur G^by, and several priests whom Elisabeth assisted in fund-raising events and in pastoral ministry. His attitudes toward religion softened, but he had not returned to the faith before his wife's death. Elisabeth's sister Amelie urged her to preserve her journal instead of destroying it, as she had already instructed her sister to do. At that point Elisabeth decided to agree with her sister and thought the journal might help Felix understand her better after her death and be of some comfort to him through that spiritual understanding. Indeed, the bereft and grieving Felix returned to the Catholic Church in 1915 through reading Elisabeth's journal and feeling her presence guiding him from beyond the grave. Four years later he entered the Dominican community, becoming a priest, making Elisabeth's apostolate of prayer and suffering known and promoting her cause for canonization throughout his priestly life.

Elisabeth's spiritual evolution seemed to unfold in four distinct phases. From her marriage until 1897, Felix appeared to weaken her religious observance and seriously undermine her faith. In the first phase of her adult development from 1897 to 1898, Elisabeth underwent a spiritual crisis and recommitment to Christian faith. In the second phase, from 1898 to 1899, Elisabeth returned to her faith, strengthened by the crisis she had resolved interiorly. From 1899 to 1903, her third phase, Elisabeth progressed spiritually through her own solitary prayer, study, meditation, and writing. In the fourth phase, from 1903 to 1914, Elisabeth continued to grow spiritually through exchanges first with Pere ^ebert and subsequently with Soeur Goby.

Elisabeth Leseur's Spirituality

Marriage and Family

Elisabeth carefully integrated her family life and her spirituality. Tutored in devout humanism with Francis de Sales as her guide, she fully accepted his teaching that a life of devotion is fully compatible with marriage." Since her conversion occurred nine years into her marriage, she assumed that this call to a deeper, more intimate relationship with God was to be lived as Felix wife. Despite their inability as a couple to share faith as they shared everything else, every reference to her husband suggests a loving and mutually respectful relationship. She felt Felix loved her deeply and supported her by his presence, companionship, and expressions of affection. For instance, she wrote: "Some joyful days because of a present from Felix, and more because of the words that accompanied it—words so full of love that made me very happy. I do not deserve to be so loved, but I rejoice fully in it.» She felt Felix's love and support during her sister's death and her niece's first communion six weeks later," and they enjoyed one another's company when they traveled together, visited Mends, and summered in the countryside with Elisabeth's extended family. Despite their childlessness, Elisabeth consistently described a healthy and mutually loving marital relationship. In her letters she remarked frequently about how busy her husband was with no trace of resentment on her part. From his side, Felix was devoted to her and remained constant in his love and affection for her through her multiple illnesses. The devastation he describes when she died was evidence of the depth of his love and his emotional reliance on her.

She both took for granted the gender expectations of her role—managing the household, including the supervision of the servants, planning the necessary round of dinner parties, and responding to the charitable needs of the poor—and questioned restrictions on this role. (Her views on women will be explored separately.) She involved herself with her extended family—her mother, her sisters and their children. The children stayed for long periods of time at the Leseur's country home near the Swiss border, where they all spent quality time together. Elisabeth took an active role in encouraging the faith life of her niece and nephews by preparing them for first communion and writing spiritual treatises for both of them on this occasion. The children loved their Aunt Elizbeth and wrote postcards and notes to her as young adults; they seemed anxious to share their lives with her. They were impressed by her hour of daily meditation when they were with her in Jougne, noting that they were not to disturb her during that time. Elisabeth's correspondence to family members and friends discloses a regular round of meal-sharing and visits with family and friends. These were simply the givens of the upper-class family life that Elisabeth embraced as part of her spiritual journey. This involvement with family as well as concerns related to both society and church characterize lay spirituality.

Pattern of Devotional Life and Ascetical Practices

Elisabeth devised a flexible rule of life that organized her devotional and ascetical practices." These she outlined in the second part of her journal, tided "Notebook of Resolutions," which spanned the years 1906-12. Despite the specific structure, she modified it by the two principles of flexibility and charity. She did not want her devotional life to interfere with either the comfort or needs of those she loved. She strictly followed her program when she was home alone and did not need to consider the rest of the household, and she was entirely flexible where others were concerned.

She maintained a daily pattern of morning and evening prayer including meditation. She went to confession and communion every two weeks. She would have liked to communicate more often if she could have done so "without inconveniencing or displeasing anyone." She made a one-day spiritual retreat monthly. This meant as much solitude as possible, more time in meditation, an examination of conscience, reflection on her life, and preparation for death. Annually, she tried to make a few days of retreat. Her letters indicate that by 1911, she felt fortunate to go to Mass and communicate three times a week.

She also organized her outer life as part of her spiritual program. She considered family and social responsibilities first—Felix lovingly headed the list. She carefully monitored what she said to him about spiritual matters, and by 1906 she had resolved to say as little as possible. Since she was relatively healthy, she adopted work she felt she could do, was actively involved with the poor, and sought to treat her servants as warmly as possible without crossing the boundary of familiarity. Finally, she developed an asceticism based on silence, self-giving, and austerity. Love determined all. What was the loving way to be, the loving thing to say, the loving thing not to do or say?

She defined each of these virtues in her own situation. Silence meant not imposing her illness, pain, or even graces on others. She actively sought to conceal her suffering and to avoid a natural tendency toward self-absorption when ill. She spoke about her interior experience only if she thought she could help another who sought spiritual guidance or emotional support from her. By self-giving she meant a radiant and active charity—real love expressed in every relationship and activity in her life. Finally, personal austerity meant that she avoided anything harmful to herself physically. "I need to preserve and try to improve my health, since it can be an instrument in the service of God and of neighbor. But in this illness...the precautions I must take, the discomforts it brings and the deprivations it imposes... there is sufficient opportunity for self-denial." Any other choice related to personal austerity had to have a positive effect on someone else. For instance, she continually tried to be gracious, lively, and good company in social situations while at the same timed concealing the pain caused by religious hostility on many of these occasions. Her ascetical choices were carefully ordered to charity. If they did not serve love or increase her intimacy with God, she did not do them.

Primary Influences on Elisabeth Leseur's Spirituality

There are complex and multiple influences on the spirituality of any single Christian. First, there is the melange that constitutes the historical period in which a person lives. For Elisabeth, this included the popular forms of French Catholicism that constituted the context in which she experienced sacramental life in the church and available resources for developing her own interior life. Second, there are the public examples of other notable Christians either immediately preceding a person's life or contemporary with a person's life. Third, there are spiritual writers both historical and contemporary

who reflect, challenge, or nourish someone like Elisabeth, who had almost unlimited access to books and time to read them. Fourth, there are the particular circumstances that constitute the "givens" of a person's life to which each person creatively responds in the artful fashioning of a unique way of living.

Popular Religion

Several analyses of nineteenth-century spirituality agree on some of the main trends in popular Catholic piety in the second half of the nineteenth century. In 1854 the dogma of the Immaculate Conception was formerly defined and promulgated. In France this official impetus for Marian devotion was preceded by Catherine Laboure's vision of Mary in 1830 with the prayer invoking "Mary conceived without sin" and the striking of the Miraculous Medal, depicting the woman of the Apocalypse. It was followed in 1858 by Mar» appearance to Bernadette Soubirous at Lourdes, where Mary identified herself as the Immaculate Conception. Thomas Kselman describes a rather circular relationship in the way the church used these apparitions and the healings that accompanied them as affirming, almost proving, the dogmatic definition. By approving these apparitions and orchestrating the healing cults that grew up around them, the church supported the prophetic hope for healing and for a restoration of the religious faith in France?' In addition, as these pilgrimage sites developed, the devotions practiced included confession, Eucharist, the Rosary, or other popular devotions specific to the site.

Kselman aptly characterizes popular nineteenth-century French piety with its amazing array of devotions as manifesting three themes: the sentimentalization of Catholic piety; the guilt of the modern age and the need for redemption; and the virtues of poverty, simplicity; and humility. The sentimentalization of piety tended to increase the affective intimacy between the devotee and the object of devotion. This was part of a more general and sophisticated trend toward a religion of love rather than fear that was still quite strong in preaching and in the religious culture in general. This trend could also represent the emphasis on the irrational and affective over reason in the face of nineteenth-century rationalism. Metaphors of family life were especially important. And in the nineteenth century the family was becoming a new locus of affective intimacy and friendship. The autobiography of Therese of Lisieux is a stunning example of this theme as well as the one that follows.

The guilt of the modern age and its need for redemption underlay a dramatic increase in devotions throughout the nineteenth century that focused on the sins of the modern world and the role of prayer and suffering to make reparation for these offenses. There were at least three sources for this renewed emphasis. First, the French clergy consistently attempted to frighten their congregations into moral behavior through preaching and confessional practices that relied on fear of eternal punishment for moral transgressions, usually related to sexuality and blasphemy. Second, the social and political unrest in France, which destroyed the monarchy and finally developed into a republic, gradually separated church and state from one another. Thus, it became socially possible to express publicly one's agnosticism or atheism. Anxiety about the salvation of these skeptics and unbelievers required that those who continued to believe make up for this loss of religion in a formerly Catholic culture through prayer and reparation. Third, life-threatening illness and other forms of suffering remained a fact of human life. There is a psychic need that supports an appeal to the crucified Christ (or Mary, who suffers with him) that others might live. Kselman suggests that the shift specific to nineteenth-century France was from concern about individual salvation to concern about the salvation of others. One could earn salvation or conversion for another through prayer and suffering. This, of course, included the ever present and growing devotion to the Sacred Heart, which developed its modern form through the

visions of Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque at Paray-le-Monial from 1673 to 1675 and which reached its peak in the national vow in 1873 that iiiiñated the building of the Basilica of Sacre-Coeur on Montmartre. Sacre-Coeur was completed only on the eve of World War I. Of particular note in relationship to Elisabeth Leseur, Leo XIII consecrated the entire human race to the Sacred Heart in 1899, one year after Elisabeth's resolution of her own spiritual crisis."

Finally, an emphasis on the virtues of poverty, simplicity, and humility was an antidote to the growing wealth, a higher standard of living for some, and the hubris of secular proposals for public life that threatened religious values. Virtually all of the visionaries of the nineteenth century were poor and rural. Their pastoral poverty contrasted with the growing urban wealth among some. In these visionaries the church began to celebrate the moral superiority of the poor. Their simplicity contrasted with rationalism and their illiteracy with the education of scholars. Humility ensured that neither visions nor prophecy would lead to pride. Their humility was linked to obedience and ensured humble submission to church authority.

In addition to these trends in popular Catholic religiosity, church elites in the nineteenth century began to influence devotional life through a renewed emphasis on liturgy; frequent reception of the Eucharist; a retrieval of the importance of scripture and the beginnings of historical criticism; and the more compassionate moral theology of Alphonsus Liguori, which gradually replaced the previous rigorist practices in the sacrament of penance. These were all strong influences on Elisabeth. She read Alphonsus in Italian?' Msgr. Louis Gaston de Segur's promotion of frequent reception of communion was very widely known in Paris. Fenelon's Letter on Frequent Communion was republished by Dupanloup in 1855, selling 100,000 copies, and Pius X encouraged daily communion for religious orders and in 1915 allowed any Catholic in the state of grace to receive communion. As mentioned above, Elisabeth had a deep appreciation for the liturgical seasons, a theology of Eucharist, and meditated on the New Testament She read the works of Dom Prosper Gueranger (1805-75), abbot of Solesmes, an authority on liturgy. She would have attended Eucharist with a hand missal?$ Elisabeth also regularly read Dominican Marie Joseph Lagrange 's (1855-1938) Revue Biblique and comments on how much she appreciates it. There is less emphasis in Elisabeth's writings on popular devotions than on a combination of interior recollection, meditation, and a sacramental practice that conflates the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist with the Sacred Heart. She possessed a solid theological and philosophical understanding of Christianity. It is true that Elisabeth went to Lourdes in 1912, accompanied by Felix, primarily in gratitude for her nephew Mauñcek recovery from a serious injury to his hand, but for herself as well. She went to the Chapel of the Visitation at Paray-le-Monial while her husband had legal business there. Her friend Soeur Goby prayed for her there at another time and also at the shrine of the Cure of Ars, Saint John Vianney (1786-1859). She also had a single volume of meditations for "souls devoted to the Sacred Heart," which she used and distributed. This strata of popular devotions appears to be the taken-for-granted background rather than the primary focus of Elisabeth's spirituality.

Lay Exemplars

Although Elisabeth's ecclesial milieu could scarcely be characterized as an age of the laity, she was aware of a number of prominent lay Catholics in France who had made unique contributions to the life of the church. Most notable among them were Fredeñc Ozanam and Pauline Jaricot. Ozanam (1813-53), descended from a Jewish family, was a lawyer, author, and professor at the Sorbonne. He responded to the challenge of social radicals to Catholics who had ignored the plight of the poor by founding the

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Society of St Vincent de Paul in 1833, a lay organization that "personally served the poor, the sick and the unemployed without distinction of race and creed"; the Society was organized at the parish and diocesan level.;' Ozanam participated from the beginning in the development of a social Catholicism in France that looked beyond private charity to public reforms intended to address the situation of the impoverished masses. ^ specialist in Dante and Francis of Assisi, he joined his intellectual life with practical social action. Pauline Jaricot (1799-1862) was no less innovative, although her status as a single lay woman caused her great suffering. She founded the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, which began as an association for the missions in 1820. Another group of laymen joined forces with her to solicit financial aid for the missions. Pauline made a private vow of perpetual virginity at the age of seventeen. She also founded the Union of Prayer in Reparation to the Sacred Heart, an organization for working girls. In 1826 she established Loretta House, a home for the same group.

Elisabeth also names Joseph de Maistre, Charles Montalembert, George Goyau, and other scholars, writers, diplomats, politicians, and philosophers who represented admirable efforts of lay Catholics to live their faith in the public arena as they came to terms with the shifting relationships of church and state in postrevolutionary France.

Spiritual Writers

Elisabeth mentions the spiritual writers she appreciated and who seemed to help her the most in the course of her letters and journal entries. Her husband also annotated her library, indicating which volumes she constantly read and reread, underlined, and which she talked about or distributed. Elisabeth lent her books to friends and acquaintances she thought would benefit from them. She simply replaced them if they were not returned. She considered this enlightenment of others through sharing resources one form of her intellectual apostolate.

Elisabeth writes about reading the lives of Bridget of Sweden, Teresa of Avila, and Catherine of Siena. She claimed Teresa and Catherine as patron saints. Felix notes that she liked the Dialogue of Catherine of Siena very much. In addition to these mystics who encourage interiority, contemplative prayer, suffering, apostolic activity, and strength in women, there are strong Salesian influences on Elisabeth. Few other women would have possessed fifteen volumes of the works of Saint Francis de Sales. Contemporary writers whom she mentions include Msgr. Charles Gay (1815-92), Pere Auguste Gratry, and the English Oratorian Frederick William Faber.

Elisabeth Leseur appears to have been a woman on a search, like so many lay women today. She was intellectual, deeply affectionate, and spiritual. From a loving and close-knit family, she sought love and affection in her marriage and maintained affectionate bonds with both families throughout her life. She extended this love and affection to her social circle of friends and acquaintances. She longed for the kind of friendship Francis de Sales describes in the Introduction to the Devout Life as almost a necessity for Christians who live their lives in a secular environment. This spiritual friendship she found only late her in her life when she met Soeur Goby. She had to find a way to God that included both head and heart, affective nourishment and intimacy, as well as a defensible, thoughtful history and philosophy she could draw on to justify her religious practice to herself and to unbelievers. She had to find a way to relate the spiritual dimension of human persons to reason. She wanted to find a way to discover the spiritual core of unbelievers who were genuinely good people but who had no faith. She had to do this as an upper-class, married woman in Paris.

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Elisabeth echoes several major themes of Francis de Sales and Jane Frances DeChantal. She is convinced God is a loving God and that human happiness consists in experiencing that love in prayer and in embodying that love in life and action. Her childhood journal already shows the beginnings of this affective intimacy with God. According to historian and biographer Genevieve Duhamelet, more than twenty pages of this journal speak of death and heaven. She burst out with this exclamañon to her parents: "That the good God will welcome you one day in his beautiful heaven, you are worthy of that. This is the wish of a little girl who loves you tenderly." And again, she reports being surprised in the midst of her meditation by a servant who cared for her. "My meditation today was on heaven; Oh, I had been transported in reading about that; I had stood up straight, crying, 'My God! Heaven!' Mamie came in at that moment and asked me if I was performing a play. I said to her no, but I thought that she wasn't sure. Oh! Heaven! Heaven! The house of the good God; and I would like to be there; what happiness it must be to see God!" As an eleven-year-old, she reveals something of her ecstatic nature but also a Salesian sensibility of the goodness of a loving God and the realization that death is not to be feared because it means being with God. Her understanding of the Eucharist is similar in that she experiences God in her heart. As an adult, Elisabeth found in Francis de Sales a way to pursue this intimacy with God as a married woman. His focus on the cultivation of the virtues includes donueur, humility, simplicity, and poverty. Wendy Wright gives a number of meanings for douceur, a word almost impossible to translate into English:

> "Sweetness," "gentleness," "graciousness," "meekness," and "suavity." None of these translations do it full justice. Douceur is a quality of person that corresponds to the light burden offered by the Matthean Jesus to those otherwise heavy-laden. It connotes an almost maternal quality of serving that is swathed in tender concern. Salesian douceur also suggests a sense of being grace-filled, graceful in the broadest use of the term. This gracefulness extends from external demeanor—polite manners and convivial disposition—to the very quality of a person's heart the way in which a person is interiorly ordered and disposed. Here one is reminded of the tradition of the l'honnete homme popular in the seventeenth century which stressed the harmony, beauty, and grace of the whole person and which De Sales saw as reflecting the beauty and harmony of God.

This reflection of God dwelling in her, embodied in the gracefulness of her attentive, empathetic presence, became Elisabeth's apostolic strategy. She also aspires to simplicity of life and detachment from wealth, on which De Sales gives advice in "The Poverty of Spirit to Be Observed in the Midst of Riches" and "How to Practice Genuine Poverty although Really Rich." Elisabeth discreetly responded to the needs of those she knew with generosity and consistency. She gradually persuaded Felix to stop giving her expensive gifts by explaining that monetary gifts she could use for the poor would give her more pleasure. At the same time she deliberately dressed as attractively as possible to further her apostolic goals—attracting others to her joyful, radiant interior secret as well as honoring Felix's social standing, which required her to dress appropriately for numerous social events.

From Salesian spirituality she adopts De Sales 's approach to austerity or mortification. One was to acquire the virtues through hidden mortification—using the circumstances of daily life to cultivate humility, patience, gentleness, and so on. Elisabeth exhibits this moderation of self-denial in the service of developing personal qualities that contributed to a peaceful and loving environment for those around her. She never aspires to the heroic or masochistic practices of self-inflicted physical pain or excessive fasting. Quite the opposite, her physical vulnerabilities to illness provide all the material she needs.

Taking care of her health without making a project of it is her form of asceticism. Her asceticism is largely internal, monitoring her internal responses and resisting the depression and lethargy that are normal accompaniments of serious illness. This kind of hidden practice of virtue and prudent asceticism is also echoed in the writings of Teresa of Avila. Self-denial is ordered to love, as it is for De Sales. Finally, the gentle bishop of Geneva used his douceur, his gentleness, and his loving approach to the people in his region to win them back to the faith and to develop peaceful relationships with Protestants in this Calvinist stronghold. De Sales understood that hearts are won through love and gentleness, not through violence or hatred. Elisabeth found here the strategy she was looking for in her social life with intolerant and often bigoted atheists and agnostics. She learned in this environment not to debate but simply to be a radiant, God-filled presence.

As a lay woman, Elisabeth found able spiritual guidance in Francis de Sales. She also found much to support her in contemporary spiritual writers. French spirituality in the nineteenth century had a strongly moralistic tone that only gradually changed when the influence of Alphonsus Liguori began to soak into French consciousness and several other writers began to emphasize the centrality of love in the Christian life. Elisabeth's preparation for first communion consisted in a nearly two-year program supervised by her mother and her tutors. She was given a copybook and encouraged to write in it. The entries reveal the voice of a bright, lively girl who felt very loved within her family. This journal is more like a typical diary except for her struggles with her faults, as she sees them, accounts of positive experiences with confession, and a day-by-day account of her first-communion retreat. The retreat focused on death, judgment, and the loving reception of the sacrament. Elisabeth was clearly interested in being good and choosing the path to heaven. She was required to write little essays after attending religious education in her parish church taught by Abbe Seguin, her parish priest. In addition to meditating on this instruction, she was also supposed to monitor her behavior and dispositions through examination of conscience and to improve herself. Her mother's role was to accompany her to instructions and then to supervise her ongoing reflection.

When she begins her adult journal in 1898, she follows a similar procedure, except there are far fewer entries about daily life. She uses this personal journal to monitor her responses, to formulate a way of life, to record resolutions, and to remember the more significant insights and religious experiences that unfold. At this point in her life she has no one with whom to share her interior life. The journal becomes a way of recording, reflecting, remembering, and mirroring the important movements along the way, especially as she works out what this new life will mean for her and how it will affect her. It is not a record of mystical experiences or of visions. About these she is mostly silent. When she does note experiences of God's presence or of consolations, they typically accompany sacramental practice—the focus is eucharistic. It is Jesus present in her then. After 1911, when she cannot go out to Mass, she mentally prays in her room while imagining she is present in her friend Soeur Goby's chapel when her community is at prayer. She has a strong sense of Eucharist and holy communion—as sacrament, for making intentions, and as spiritual communion when ill. Part of the appeal of Elisabeth's spirituality is precisely its lack of emphasis on extraordinary mystical experiences. At the same time she exerted an extraordinary influence toward good on those around her.

Elisabeth writes of the influence of Msgr. Charles Gay. His De la vie et des vertus chretiennes comsiderees dams l'etat religieux was given in conferences to nuns, but he thought it might also be useful to priests and to devout laity. Based on seventeenth-century spirituality, it was strongly

Christocentric, drawing on Saint Paul's teaching that each Christian participates in the body of Christ and on the Johannine theme of the vine and the branches. He wrote in his preface:

> What I have tried to do above everything else is to make Christ present in every parr of this work;...the whole book should be simply and solely Jesus Christ. The person of Jesus should never be separated from His teaching. If that teaching is life, it is because it comes from Him who is the life: the blessed words that He speaks, the commands that He lays down, the counsels He suggests, the attractions He displays, the advances He makes, the helps He provides and the pledges He gives—all these are simply bringing life to His beloved human creatures, that life which is real, close, fulfilled, endless union with Him who is true life....The sum of our perfection and of our holiness—is our living union with Jesus.

Gay differed from Pierre de Berulle, the great seventeenth-century spiritual writer, by giving more importance to the human starting point for holiness. One needed to understand human nature and build on it. He proposes a harmony between the natural and the supernatural. Faith uplifts and perfects reason, it does not extinguish it. Christian life is nothing more than Christ living in us the life of the Trinity. Gay is less interested in the "states" and "dispositions" of Christ than in the Thomistic doctrine that grace builds on nature. Virtuous life is made possible by this indwelling of God. Gay's emphasis on human development and on the role of fostering virtues useful in relational human life is one of the influences on Elisabeth's program of meditating on a specific virtue each month as part of her retreat practice.

Two other nineteenth-century Oratorians were favorites of Elisabeth: Auguste Gratry (1805-72) and Frederick William Faber (1814-63). Gratry appealed to head as well as heart, while Faber was known for his emotionalism. Gratry taught moral theology at the Sorbonne, subsequently being elected to the Academie Francaise. He contributed to a renaissance in Christian philosophy with works that were both apologetic and polemic. He is criticized for placing excessive weight on emotion in the discovery of truth. In reflecting on the knowledge of God, he appealed to "a sense of the infinite" that is superior to intellect. Elisabeth considered him a kindred spirit. She clearly assimilated his sense of the supernatural and his assumptions about prayer. He wrote in Les sources, for instance: "Those who pray help everyone. They help their brothers and sisters often by the salutary and powerful magnetism of a soul who believes, who knows, and who wills. They are able to do all things as Saint Paul says through their prayers, supplications, and their graced actions for all."

Frederick Faber, known for his effusiveness and emotional tone, clearly promoted a vision of a loving and merciful God. He was a prolific writer and a popular, successful preacher, drawing from the Italian and French schools of spirituality. He was an insightful spiritual director and had a reputation for shining a light into the dark places of human nature. Faber was also accused of being so lenient that he was "sending people to heaven on a featherbed." Pierre Pourrat, an expert on the history of spirituality, characterized him as "ultramontane" in the true sense. He was deeply respectful of the pope and promoted an attitude of duty and love toward the papacy. Despite his expansive and florid style, Faber drew on many sources and presented his teaching in an original way. He placed a great deal of emphasis on "the soul's individuality," the psychosomatic unity of the individual, "the necessity of spiritual reading," and "friendliness to all men, especially to those not of the faith." This last theme would have held particular appeal to Elisabeth as she sought to respond to the many unbelievers around her. She also appreciated his book on redemption, Le Precier Sang or le prix de notre saint, which she read sometime after her surgery for breast cancer.

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From Preface by Wendy Wright

Not long ago a retired priest contacted me about a book he hoped to complete during the last active phase of his life. It would be a book about Christian saints for the journey, and he wanted to be inclusive, so, of the twenty portraits he planned to paint, he hoped to fashion ten of exemplary women. The problem, and this is why he had written to me, was that all the names he could come up with were women in vowed religious life. Could I recommend to him any well-documented stories of women enrolled in the ranks of the canonized who were lay people? Of course, I could not offer him a long list, and of the few examples I could come up with, other than some early martyrs, the spirituality of the women—Catherine of Genoa for example—was very much cast in the ascetic mold shaped by monastic life. Or a life was so singular—I think of the sickly Kateri Tekakwitha, the Lily of the Mohawks, who clung to her chosen faith despite being persecuted by members of her tribe—that it really belongs to one time and place. There is little documentation about women whose Christian Catholic faith was deeply realized precisely as lay persons.

Part of the problem in coming up with officially canonized female lay saints, of course, lies with the process by which the Roman Catholic Church recognizes those persons felt to be heroic practitioners of the Christian life. But the issue is deeper than this specifically ecclesial one. When one looks beyond the ranks of those who are formally recognized as worthy of liturgical veneration to the many other Christian holy persons whose names and stories are enthusiastically admired today, one finds that, while some are lay women, they are generally admired because of the dramatic narrative arc of their spiritual journey. Contemporary heroine Dorothy Day embraced radical poverty and offered uncompromising hospitality to the homeless and hungry on the streets of America's cities, and Maryknoll lay missioner Jean Donovan made the ultimate sacrifice of her own life for the people of El Salvador. Their witness compels admiration, even imitation, but their lives don't really mirror most of ours.

This focus on the unusual and the exceptional as characteristic of the heralded Christian life extends to the academic world as well. The last thirty years or so, with the Paulist Press Classics of Western Spirituality series leading the way, have been rich ones in the scholarly world for the discovery and recovery of the width, depth, and breadth of Christian spiritual traditions. Yet so many of the narratives and texts held up to us are of the unusual variety. As fascinating as are kataphatic visionaries, pursuers of the apophatic depths of the Godhead, hi-locators, martyrs, hermits, undaunted foundresses, and spiritual performance artists, and as important as they are for our understanding of the trajectory of the tradition, their stories rarely offer us a vision of the Christian life that finds us just where we are—in our little lives with our mundane responsibilities, so-so relationships, our probably pretty pedestrian joys and pains. Rarely do they take our breath away by a glimpse of the sheer simplicity and elegance of an ordinary life made transparent by being lived in faith.

And then there is Elisabeth Leseur.

> "The Christian life is great and beautiful and full of joy," she wrote. When you begin to read the personal journal entries, letters, and writings on vocation and suffering that Elisabeth penned, you begin yourself to entertain just such a radical thought. Her story is both very ordinary and extraordinary, and it is that in a hidden, unpretentious way.

How can I describe Elisabeth Leseur in a manner that conveys some real sense of the presence captured by Janet Ruffing's lovely translation of her writings? She is very French. Her profound formation in the spirit of French-speaking Francis de Sales is evident. She studied and internalized the Introduction to the Devout Life that he wrote for lay women two centuries before she lived. She gave herself completely to God's animating life exactly as a wife, an aunt, a friend, a woman who struggled with illness, and as an avid student of the gospel and of contemporary thought. The Savoyard bishop's insistence that each "state in life" has its own spiritual practices and tonality shaped by the duties of that life is something she knew well. One can also hear the echo of Francis's injunction to "be what you are and be that well" as Elisabeth discovered the trajectory of her own spiritual pilgrimage: in her tenderness for her nonbelieving husband, in her silent evangelization of others through the practice of being a loving presence, in her probing correspondence with her spiritual friend Soeur Goby, in the integrity of her intelligent pursuit of her recovered Catholic faith, in the long diminishment that resulted from her breast cancer. There is as well in Elisabeth Leseur something reminiscent of two French Carmelite women whose lifespans overlapped hers. There is in her spirituality something akin to Therese of Lisieux's utterly simple, clear grasp of the mysteries of faith, something of Therese's little way," and something reminiscent too of Edith Stein's inquiring mind, which applied itself with such penetration to matters of faith.

To read Elisabeth Leseur is to encounter the spiritual possibilities of late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century Roman Catholicism, an era often overlooked by scholars of Christian spirituality as an age dominated by pietistic devotionalism and reactionary theology. Elisabeth Leseur did find redemptive meaning in the illness that finally claimed her life, but one cannot roll one's contemporary eyes at a distasteful "victim spirituality" or snigger at the thought that she was just mindlessly "offering it up." Rather, the depth at which Elisabeth explored the resources of the Catholic spiritual tradition of her day, both before and after her last illness, are revelatory both of her own deeply examined faith and of the inherent depth of that same tradition. Evident in her writing is the creative dynamism stirring the church of her day: the beginnings of historical criticism and liturgical renewal, the emerging Catholic social-teaching tradition and vital movements encouraging lay involvement, the artistic and philosophical explorations that would emerge in the French Catholic Revival. She also provides a stunning example of a convicted believer whose breadth of spirit and trust in the divine compassion at the root of all creation allowed her to live graciously and gratefully in a society and a marriage often hostile to or dismissive of faith.

Elisabeth Leseur's presence also seems to expand outward beyond the confines of her era and geographical location. Perhaps that is why she so rightly belongs in the Classics of Western Spirituality series. Her thought as recorded in these writings is spacious and expansive, at once balanced and penetrating. Very little of it seems constrained by narrow or petty concerns. She was capable of a lyricism that is profoundly contemplative, sensitive to both the interior and exterior dynamics of a fully lived faith. Thus she could write expressively:

> Let us love. Let our lives be a perpetual song of love for God first of all, and for all human beings who suffer, love and mourn. Let deep joy live in us. Let us be like the lark, enemy of the night, who always announces the dawn and awakens in each creature the love of light and life. Let us awaken others to the spiritual life.

Strangely, when I try to evoke her to entice readers to discover her for themselves, I find myself conjuring up a man of the next generation, Dag Hammarskjbld, the Swedish secretarygeneral of the United Nations, whose personal spiritual notebook, Markings, was not made known until after his death. Elisabeth was not a public figure or an internationally known diplomat, but she, like Hammarskjold, left a precious record of a remarkable inner spiritual journey that was all but hidden from contemporaries. Profoundly personal, the inner journeys these two undertook were not, however, privatized. They undergirded lives of intense service to others. They flowered in a spirituality at once social and intimate, sophisticated and utterly transparent. <>

WRITINGS ON BODY AND SOUL BY AELRED OF RIEVAULX, edited and translated by Bruce L. Venarde [Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library, Harvard University Press, 9780674261181]

Aelred (1110–1167), abbot of Rievaulx Abbey in Yorkshire, has always been a controversial figure. He was beloved by his monks and widely admired, but also sharply criticized for his frankness about his own sinfulness and what some considered his favoritism and excessive leniency.

WRITINGS ON BODY AND SOUL includes a selection of the prolific abbot's theological, historical, and devotional works. Each contains autobiographical elements, showing Aelred at turns confident and fearful, tormented and serene. In *A Pastoral Prayer*, he asserts his unworthiness and pleads for divine aid in leading his monks wisely and compassionately. *Spiritual Friendship* adapts Cicero's dialogue on friendship for Christian purposes. *A Certain Marvelous Miracle* offers a riveting account of a pregnant teenage nun, the bloody vengeance wreaked on her seducer, and the miracle of her release from her fetters. Finally, *Teachings for Recluses*, addressed to Aelred's sister, is a guide for women pursuing solitary religious perfection.

Freshly revised editions of the Latin texts appear here alongside new English translations.

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Excerpt: Aelred's Reputation

The charming and witty figure, wise man, kind mentor, guru, biblical scholar, and brilliant writer memorialized byJocelyn of Furness, or the sinful, anxious abbot Aelred portrayed himself to be, was a controversial figure in his lifetime. He remains so today, the object of extensive and sometimes contentious scholarship. Walter Daniel was sometimes defensive in the Life of Aelred, completed shortly after its subject's death. Of Aelred's election as abbot of Rievaulx, Walter writes that "there are some who think that he rose to rule this house by willful ambition" and noted that critics accused him of being "a glutton, a drunk, and a friend of publicans who gives up his body to baths and ointments." Walter also notes the abbot's patience with those weak in body and character; he welcomed to Rievaulx men no other monastery would accept. In a subsequent letter aimed at critics of his encomium, Walter explains that by saying the young Aelred lived as a monk in the court of King David, he was referring to his humility, noting almost casually and without elaboration that `Aelred occasionally deflowered his chastity." In his own times, then, Aelred had enemies who regarded him as an ambitious, lax, self-indulgent sensualist.

In his writings, Aelred offered ample material for critics. His recollections of his youth inA Pastoral Prayer and Teachings for Recluses include what sound like more than occasional sexual sins. The close bonds described in Spiritual Friendship have led some modern scholars to claim that Aelred was gay or that, at very least, he had a circle of intimates in the monastery who incurred resentment from those who were not members of it. Although Spiritual Friendship fails to mention the friendship between Scipio and Laelius that was the cornerstone of Cicero's treatise, it cites as models the mythological figures of Orestes and Pylades and, repeatedly, the biblical David and Jonathan, two friendships whose homoerotic overtones are unmistakable. The precise nature of Aelred's sexual interests and history are impossible to determine, but it is easy to imagine his gentle treatment of errant monks and his close friendships arousing malicious gossip.

The monks of Rievaulx revered Aelred, whose accomplishments and reputation could easily have incited jealousy while provoking criticism that he paid too little attention to his responsibilities as a spiritual leader. Again, Aelred himself invited criticism, often voicing his regret that practical affairs demanded so much of his time. He frequently preached away from Rievaulx, and although information about his public life is incomplete, he clearly knew some of the most powerful people of his day. Rievaulx under his guidance became populous, wealthy, and highly regarded. Aelred managed to be many things to many people, and as is usual in such cases, he inspired detractors as well as admirers.

The Contents of this Volume

Many of Aelred's writings have autobiographical elements, including all those presented here. Spiritual Friendship, A Certain Marvelous Miracle, and Teachings for Recluses were completed in the last years of Aelred's life. A Pastoral Prayer, too, has usually been dated to this late period, but it could well be a

much earlier work, written on the occasion of his election as abbot of Revery in 1143 or as abbot of Rievaulx in 1147. It is an excellent introduction to Aelred as a person, an abbot, and a thinker, so it appears first.

A Pastoral Prayer

"O good shepherd Jesus," begins Aelred's plea for divine aid in his position as abbot, shepherd of his monastic flock. In straightforward yet passionate language, Aelred asserts his unworthiness for his office and wonders why God has imposed it on him. He proceeds to ask God's help to lead wisely, compassionately, and with attention to the needs of each individual under his care. Aelred then prays for his monks. He hopes he may rule and teach them well and that God will guide them and provide for the spiritual and temporal needs of "your household, your own people." The abbot concludes by commending his flock to God, in the hopes that its members will carry out their vocations joyfully, thereby attaining eternal life. Throughout, Aelred's worry about his unworthiness is balanced by hope and trust as he expresses gratitude for God's many favors. A Pastoral Prayer is packed with biblical citations and allusions and draws inspiration from writings on the similar themes by Abbot John of Fécamp (d. 1070), Archbishop Anselm of Canterbury (1033/4-1109), and Aelred's fellow Cistercian abbot William of Saint Thierry (ca. 1080-1148), behind all of which stands Augustine in his Confessions. It is nonetheless highly personal, its presentation elegant and powerful.

Spiritual Friendship

As Aelred explains in a prologue, when young he found comfort and guidance in Cicero's eloquent book on friendship, which he wants to rework on the authority of scripture and other holy writings. It has three books, which he summarizes as covering the definition of friendship, then its rewards, and finally its cultivation and preservation. Each book is framed as a dialogue. The first is between Aelred and Ivo, a young monk of the monastery of Wardon, a daughter house of Rievaulx that Aelred is visiting. Books 2 and 3 are set at Rievaulx, some years later, and recount a conversation between Aelred and two of his monks, Gratian and Walter. Part of the pleasure of Spiritual Friendship derives from the character sketches that emerge from the conversations. ^^^ is a starry-eyed youngster, timid yet prone to intellectual impetuousness. Gratian is loving, eager, and generous, even to Walter, whose irascibility and self-righteousness show that he is based on none other than Walter Daniel, whose writings also disclose those traits. Presiding over it all is Aelred, modest, patient, learned, and ever so slightly long-winded.

The treatise covers more subjects than Aelred's précis suggests. It includes questions of the origins of friendship; different kinds of friendship, both good and bad; the sort of people among whom friendship exists; who makes the best friend; the stages of friendship and reasons and procedures for dissolving it; the characteristics, pleasures, and duties of friendship; its limits; and its spiritual aspects. In an extended final section, Aelred recalls two of the most important friendships of his life.

Spiritual Friendship was completed sometime between 1164 and Aelred's death in early 1167. As he promises at the beginning, Aelred draws extensively on earlier writings. The foundation is Cicero's On Friendship, frequently quoted and alluded to throughout. The second and third books of Spiritual Friendship are rich in positive and negative examples of friendship drawn from scripture, especially the historical books of the Hebrew Bible. Aelred frequently quotes or cites Ambrose of Milan's On Duties and Augustine's Confessions, as well as other pagan and Christian authors. But Aelred does more than

pile up quotations, references, and examples. Instead, he creates a work of synthesis on the power of any friendship that has its origins and purpose in Christ.

Aelred's most popular work in the Middle Ages, Spiritual Friendship was copied in whole or in part in many manuscripts in England and on the Continent. At least one of the shorter versions was long attributed to Augustine. Around 1200, the scholar and diplomat Peter of Blois wrote an immensely successful treatise entitled Christian Friendship, heavily dependent on Spiritual Friendship and the Mirror of Charity. Spiritual Friendship was first translated into a vernacular language, French, in the thirteenth century. Interest in Spiritual Friendship waned in the later Middle Ages but was revived in the twentieth century. In recent decades the text has been translated into Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Italian, and Spanish.

Á Certain Marvelous Miracle

This brief narrative, closer to Aelred's historical writings than to the other three texts in this book, recounts events that took place around 1160 and were recorded two or three years later. It is a shocking story of sex and violence. A fouryear-old orphan girl was sent to Watton, an East Yorkshire monastery of the Gilbertine Order that housed both men and women, canons and nuns, as well as lay brothers and sisters. As a teenager, she begins a torrid affair with a lay brother of the community. She becomes pregnant, her fellow nuns bind her with chains and imprison her, and her fleeing lover is captured through trickery and handed over to the nuns of the community. The nuns take their revenge on him in a gruesome fashion, and he vanishes from the narrative. When it is clear that the teenage nun is about to give birth in her cell, she has two visions, during the second of which she sees two beautiful women in white carrying away what appears to be an infant. The next morning, she is no longer pregnant and soon her fetters begin to come loose. Aelred, invited to Watton to investigate and consult, concludes that God was behind this second miracle and the matter should be left to God. The account ends as Aelred, back at Rievaulx, hears that the last of her bonds has fallen away.

Readers have been hard pressed to interpret the narrative, which fails to tell us things like who the girl's parents were, what happened to her and her lover subsequently, or even her name. It is likely that Aelred wanted to keep her identity, and that of her family, private. However, two things stand out. First, as his title and prologue make clear, Aelred saw this as a miracle story, not a tawdry tale but a manifestation of God's power and grace. Second, Aelred's treatment of the protagonist is gentle, even compassionate. He makes it clear that the nun, however great a sinner, was tempera-mentally unsuited to monastic life. He notes that although her seducer had only sex on his mind, she thought of love, and Aelred shows her stoically accepting her brutal treatment, saying she deserved worse. When Aelred visits after some of her fetters have unaccountably fallen off, the nuns suggest she be chained up again. He forbids it as presumptuous and faithless.

Teachings for Recluses

Aelred's guide for women leading a solitary religious life also dates to the abbot's last years. Recluses, also known as anchoresses, were enclosed in their ordinarily doorless cells in a formal religious ceremony. Teachings for Recluses is addressed to the abbot's sister, who has had long experience as a recluse, and re is urged to share its contents with young women aspiring to this way of life. At the end, Aelred notes that the text is divided into three parts: one about the outer self, one about the inner self, and finally a guide to meditation designed to increase devotion to God. After a brief account of the

origins of this way of life, complete with a satirical portrait of women who carry it out in an unholy fashion, Aelred begins in earnest to describe how the recluse should organize her life in matters like food, drink, clothing, contact with others, silence, and daily routine. He moves on to consideration of the merits of solitude and virginity, the practice of chastity, the cultivation of humility and simplicity how to serve fellow humans while avoiding them, and how to love God. This last subject opens the third section, a three-part guide to meditation on Christ's favors past, present, and future. The past here is the life of Christ. Aelred outlines a mental pilgrimage in which the recluse becomes an emotion-filled participant-observer at events from the Annunciation to Christ's crucifixion and resurrection. Meditation on the present is to include reflection on the blessings of this life; here Aelred contrasts his sister's lifelong purity to his own youthful sins. The meditation on the future concerns what comes after the death of the body, and Aelred places his sister at the seat of Christ's judgment to observe the fate of the wicked and the good. The meditation, and the treatise, ends with a description of the joys of eternal blessedness.

Although the recluse was to be solitary, she was hardly alone; in fact, many English recluses lived in cells built on the outside of a church wall. Aelred prescribes two servants to perform domestic duties and an elderly and reputable local priest to serve as spiritual advisor or confessor. Anyone wanting to speak with the recluse can do so only with a third party present and with her priest's permission. Still, that leaves three people with whom the recluse has regular interactions, and although other visitors are in general discouraged, Aelred expects her to receive some, including bishops and monastic officials. This is in keeping with the setting of this solitary life; many recluses, both male and female, lived not isolated in the countryside but in or near villages and towns.

Teachings for Recluses is a highly inventive work, combining several elements into a harmonious whole. Some of the first section reads like a monastic rule, and the remarks on the inner life and youthful transgressions are in keeping with both traditional and more novel themes in Christian spirituality. At the same time, the description of the failings of some recluses is excellent satire. The prescription for a "threefold meditation" contains nothing new in itself; calls to contemplate the life of Christ, one's own life and behavior, and life after death are found in the works of other twelfth-century writers, including Bernard of Clairvaux. But the length and the passionate tone of the meditations are noteworthy. Ancrene Wisse, a Middle English guide for female solitaries written in the early thirteenth century, drew heavily on Teachings for Recluses, and the imaginative participation in the life of Christ Aelred recommends was much in vogue in the late medieval and early modern eras.

Translating Aelred

Translating Aelred's Latin into faithful yet idiomatic English is a demanding task. I have sometimes divided long periodic sentences into two or even three parts to enhance clarity and readability, changed passive voice to active, and reduced the frequency of both asyndeton (absence of conjunctions) and polysyndeton (multiple successive conjunctions). The main difficulty, however, is with individual words, and the reader should be aware of some choices I have made, especially where nuance or consistency proves impossible.

Aelred often uses, more or less interchangeably, words that denote sweetness, pleasure, charm, enjoyment, and delight: the nouns suavitas, dulcedo, and iocunditas and the adjectives suavis, dulcis, and iocundus. In the absence of any clear pattern, I have used several English words to translate each set of

nouns and adjectives, preferring "sweetness" or "sweet" for suavitas/suavis and dulcedoldulcis. The demands of idiomatic English, however, do not permit complete consistency, for example when Aelred refers to something as both suavis and dulcis. In a similar vein, Aelred draws on Latin's rich vocabulary for nouns and verbs to express tenderness or devotion: amor and aware, dilectio and diligere, and caritas. Amor and amare usually have positive connotations and refer to the feelings of God or humankind, but they can also be associated with carnality and wickedness, which context makes clear. Dilectio and diligere, which also signify traits or capacities of God and people alike, are unambiguously positive. In the texts translated here, Aelred uses caritas to refer almost exclusively to feelings of humans toward one another. For the most part, I have translated all these words simply as "love." Caritas is sometimes "loving-kindness," but to render it so in all instances would be clumsy in English.

Most vexing of all is affectus, a word rarely used in classical Latin that features prominently in Aelred's writings. In his first major work, The Mirror of Charity, Aelred writes that affectus is "a certain spontaneous and sweet inclination of the very spirit toward someone" (est igitur affectus spontanea quadam ac dulcis ipsius animi ad aliquem inclinatio). That definition is less helpful than modern scholars and translators would like, especially since Aelred locates affectus variously in the mens (mind), anima, (soul), animus or spiritus (spirit), and cor (heart). In any case, it is unlike the capacity of reason, which can be accounted for and is not spontaneous. Here again consistency proves impossible, in part because Aelred was not consistent in his usage of the term. I have translated affectus variously as "affect," "affection," "attachment," "emotion," and "feeling," according to context and the demands of English idiom. Caveat lector. Biblical translations are my own, although I have consulted the Douay-Rheims Vulgate. <>

COMMENTARY ON THOMAS AQUINAS'S TREATISE ON HAPPINESS AND ULTIMATE PURPOSE by J. Budziszewski (Summa theologica. Prima secundae Quaestio 1-5.) [Cambridge University Press, 9781108477994]

This monumental, line-by-line commentary makes Thomas Aquinas's classic Treatise on Happiness and Ultimate Purpose accessible to all readers. Budziszewski illuminates arguments that even specialists find challenging: What is happiness? Is it something that we have, feel, or do? Does it lie in such things as wealth, power, fame, having friends, or knowing God? Can it actually be attained? This book's luminous prose makes Aquinas's treatise transparent, bringing to light profound underlying issues concerning knowledge, meaning, human psychology, and even the nature of reality.

Review
'Budziszewski's Commentary on Thomas Aquinas's Treatise on Happiness and Ultimate Purpose provides an in-depth, detailed, accessible, and comprehensive commentary on the Summa theologiae's questions on happiness. This commentary is a gem. It can be read with profit by philosophers, theologians, and intellectual historians, as well as by their students. If you are interested in Aquinas, want insight about happiness, or both, this book is for you.' Christopher Kaczor, author of The Gospel of Happiness and Thomas Aquinas on the Cardinal Virtues

'Excellent. Students, general readers, and professionals alike are sure to find this commentary on Aquinas tremendously useful given its clarity, erudition, attention to contemporary moral and philosophical concerns, and plain enjoyableness.' Edward Feser, Pasadena City College

'Professor Budziszewski is among the rare scholars who combine depth and erudition with a real flair for writing. No matter how dry or formidable one imagines Thomas Aquinas to be, his words come alive through the pen of Budziszewski. One sees with new eyes how amazingly pertinent Aquinas's questions are, how intriguing the puzzles with which he wrestles, and how sensible the answers at which he arrives regarding the meaning of life. This book will be a godsend for classroom study.' Matthew Levering, James N. and Mary D. Perry Jr, Chair of Theology, Mundelein Seminary

ANALYTICAL TABLE OF CONTENTS

For this Table of Contents, I have taken the topics of the Articles from St. Thomas's prologues; these differ slightly from those shown in the texts of the Articles themselves. For clarity, I have also paraphrased the traditional titles of the Questions, several of which are a little bit misleading. "Man's Last End" has become "Man's Ultimate Purpose"; "In What It Consists" has become "In What Does Happiness Lie? Failed Candidates"; "What It Is" has become "Where Then Does Happiness Really Lie, And What Is It in Itself?"; "What Is Required for It" has become "What Complete Happiness Requires"; and "How It May Be Obtained" has become "How Complete Happiness Is Finally Attained."

The general structure of the Treatise, then, is as follows:

I Man's Ultimate Purpose (Question 1)
II Happiness Itself
A. Where Does Complete Happiness Lie? Failed Candidates (Question 2)
B. What Then Is Complete Happiness in Itself, and In What Does It Really Lie? (Question 3)
C. Its Attainment
1. What Complete Happiness Requires (Question 4)
2. How Complete Happiness Is Finally Attained (Question 5)

And its detailed structure is shown below, with the themes of additional discussions indicated in italics.

Anti Studium
Epigraph
Commentator's Introduction
General Prologue of St. Thomas Aquinas to the Treatise on Happiness and Ultimate Purpose
Man is not a pawn of a blind fate but a being who knows what
he is doing. As we see later, supreme happiness is not attainable by
man's natural powers alone. Yet in another sense, whether he
attains utter happiness depends on his free choices.
Text and Paraphrase
Commentary
Discussion: God and God's Image
MAN'S ULTIMATE PURPOSE (QUESTION 1)
Prologue to Question 1
The term "happiness," which is unavoidable in this book, gives but a pale and pallid sense of what St. Thomas is talking about. Expressions such as "blessedness" and "supreme happiness" convey fair impressions of its meaning; the expression "flourishing" would be even better, if only we

could keep in mind that the sort of flourishing we are thinking about is neither that of a plant, like a cabbage or artichoke, nor that of an animal, like a cat or a turtle, but that of an embodied rational being who has dominion over his own actions.

Text and Paraphrase

Commentary

Discussion: So Many Questions

Whether it belongs to man to act for an end? (Article 1)

In either of two ways, one might deny that it is characteristically human to act for an end or aim. The more moderate is to suggest that man does not always act for an end. The more radical is to suggest that man never acts for an end, but only seems to. St. Thomas responds.

Text and Paraphrase

Commentary

Discussion: A Practical Joke by the Universe?

Whether it is proper to the rational nature to act for an end? (Article z) Is man's characteristic of acting for some aim due specifically to his rational nature — is it because of his rationality that he acts in this way? Could it be that in some sense, creatures that lack reason will also act for an end? The tradition has held that they do — that all things in nature are directed to ends, even the lower creatures that do not know what they are doing. St. Thomas seeks to find out whether this is true.

Text and Paraphrase

Commentary

Discussion: Divine Providence

Whether human acts are specified by their end? (Article 3)

Do human acts "receive their species" from their ends — are their ends what make them the species, or kinds, of acts that they are? If so, then these ends are the proper basis for defining and classifying them — something we need to know for what comes later.

Text and Paraphrase

Commentary

Discussion: Moral Judgment

Whether there is one last end of human life? (Article 4)

At present St. Thomas is asking only whether ultimate meaning or purpose is in some way at stake in each human life — whether in this sense human life is meaningful. Later on he asks whether each person has but a single ultimate purpose, whether each person always acts with it in view, and whether each person pursues the same one.

Text and Paraphrase

Commentary

Discussion: So Many Infinities

Whether one man can have several last ends? (Article 5)

Can a single man have more than one ultimate purpose at once — more than one independent final aim in all his acts?

Text and Paraphrase

Commentary

Discussion: Don't Tell ME About Happiness!

Whether man will all, whatsoever he wills, for the last end? (Article 6) Could it be that even though every person does love something to the furthest limit, he pursues not all things but only certain things for its sake?

Text and Paraphrase

Commentary

Discussion: Under the Aspect of Good

Whether a11 men have the same last end? (Article 7)

In the previous Article, St. Thomas made it clear that different men might pursue different ends, not as ultimate but as though they were ultimate. Now he considers whether such differences arise from a mistake: Whether, despite disagreements about what the ultimate purpose is, in some sense all people are aimed at the same one — even if they err about it.

Text and Paraphrase

Commentary

Discussion: Qualified Judges

Discussion: Qualified Judges — Trying Again

Whether other creatures concur in that last end? (Article 8)

Wouldn't all created things have the same ultimate aim? One might at first say "Yes," just because they were all made by the same God. On the other hand, one might at first say "N^," on grounds that creatures without intellects have no aims. But as we saw previously, things do not have to know their purposes in order to have purposes; their purposes are built into their natures. Yet shouldn't it make some difference that certain things have intellects and others do not? What is

the solution?

Text and Paraphrase

Commentary

Discussion: Teleology in Contemporary Science

Discussion: Not Only the Image but the Likeness of God

WHERE DOES COMPLETE HAPPINESS LIE? FAILED CANDIDATES (QUESTION 2)

Question 2 Prologue

In Question 1, we found that acting for a purpose is a property of man; that although subrational things also act for purposes, man does so under his own agency and direction; and that the purpose of an act makes it the kind of act that it is. Furthermore, we found that each human being pursues some aim as an ultimate purpose, not for something else but for its own sake; that he pursues just one purpose as ultimate; and that he directs everything to it. Finally, we found that all human beings have the same ultimate purpose, the fulfillment of which only rational beings are capable. But although we have given names to this ultimate purpose, such as supreme or consummate happiness, complete or perfect flourishing, and beatitude, we don't yet know

much about it.

Text and Paraphrase

Commentary

Discussion: Just a Copycat?

Whether man's happiness consists in wealth? (Article 1)

Wealth is the first candidate for happiness to be considered, probably because so many nominate it. It is easy to see why people would fix their hopes on material possessions, for the desire for riches is allied with

other strong motives.

Text and Paraphrase
Commentary
Discussion: The Love of Money, Then and Now
Whether man's happiness consists in honors? (Article 2)
Here we are thinking of the particular distinctions that we confer upon persons whom we consider deserving. Offices, for example, are honors; so are prizes, awards, and other authoritative recognition; so is being raised to a higher rank.
Text and Paraphrase
Commentary
Discussion: The Craving for Honor among Professionals
Whether man's happiness consists in fame or glory? (Article 3)
To have fame is to be clearly known and praised by others. Many envy so-called celebrities. The psychological bases of the belief in their happiness do not concern us here. We are concerned only with whether it is true.
Text and Paraphrase
Commentary
Discussion: Reason and Revelation
Whether man's happiness consists in power? (Article 4)
The kind of power discussed in the present Article is not the power to build a house, to prove a theorem, to be aroused to anger, or to write a book, but the power to rule or direct others. Curiously, although people in our society readily admit to the desire to be "administrators," join "management," learn "leadership," or enter "public service," they rarely admit to a desire to rule or attain power.
Text and Paraphrase
Commentary
Discussion: Can Happiness Do Harm?
Discussion: Evil As Privation of Good
Whether man's happiness consists in any bodily good? (Article 5) Although St. Thomas frames his arguments in such a way as to apply to all bodily goods, he has the Objectors focus on the bodily good of health, and with good reason. Only a few people think supreme happiness lies in swiftness. Perhaps a somewhat larger number think it lies in beauty. But a great many think it lies in health.
Text and Paraphrase
Commentary
Discussion: Materialism, Soft and Hard
Whether man's happiness consists in pleasure? (Article 6)
St. Thomas is far from dismissive of common opinion, especially concerning people's own experience — something of which they have, so to speak, inside knowledge. He is also quite aware of the popularity of the view that happiness is pleasure. In his view, however, the relation between happiness and pleasure is not the sort of question that can be settled by an opinion poll.
Text and Paraphrase
Commentary
Discussion: Hedonism, High and Low

Discussion: From Pleasure to "Positive Emotions"
Whether some good of the soul constitutes man's happiness? (Article 7)
The actual enjoyment of external and of bodily goods takes place in the
soul. However, there are also goods intrinsic to the soul, such as virtue.
Could supreme happiness or beatitude lie in one of those?
Text and Paraphrase
Commentary
Discussion: Can We Love Anything More than Ourselves?
Whether any created good constitutes man's happiness? (Article 8) So far we have been
considering not only particular goods, such as wealth, but also entire categories of goods, such
as goods of the body. Since these categories seem to exhaust all possible created human goods,
it would seem that no other candidates for happiness are left. Nevertheless, someone might say
happiness must lie in some good of the created order, just because there is nothing else he can
desire. So in this culminating query St. Thomas considers all created goods at once.
Text and Paraphrase
Commentary
Discussion: Wanting to Be Supermen
WHAT THEN IS COMPLETE HAPPINESS IN ITSELF, AND IN WHAT DOES IT REALLY LIE?
Question 3 Prologue
Question 2 finaliy concluded that supreme happiness does
not lie in any created good at all. But what is it?
Text and Paraphrase
Commentary
Discussion: Should I Take This Seriously?
Whether happiness is something uncreated? (Article 1)
To ask whether our beatitude or supreme happiness is "something
uncreated" amounts to asking whether our beatitude is something
concerning the Creator Himself. Surprisingly, although in one sense
the answer is "Yes," in another sense it is "No."
Text and Paraphrase
Commentary
Discussion: Does God Lack Something?
Whether happiness is an operation? (Article 2)
The suggestion that happiness is some kind of activity may seem formidably abstract until we
have considered just what kind of activity it may be — and for this, we must read through the
rest of Question 3. Here it may suffice to remember Aristotle's remark that both ordinary
and educated people identify happiness with the activity of living well
and doing well.
Text and Paraphrase
Commentary
Discussion: Pie in the Sky By and By?
Discussion: Is Aristotle Wrong about Nature Making Nothing in Vain?
Whether happiness is an operation of the sensitive part, or of the intellective part only? (Article
3)
The sensitive powers include not just the abilities to see, hear, smell,
taste, and touch, but all those capacities by which animals surpass
plants. So to ask whether happiness is an activity of the sensitive

powers is to ask whether it is an activity of those capacities, connected with the body, which we rational animals share with subrational animals, rather than of the intellectual powers that are ours alone.

Text and Paraphrase

Commentary

Discussion: Are We United with God through Our Feelings or Our Minds?

Discussion: Why Does the Intellect Depend on Phantasms?

Discussion: Seeing the Glory of God

Discussion: The Unity — and Dislocation — of Human Nature

Whether, if happiness is in the intellective part, it is an operation of the intellect or of the will? (Article 4)

The intellectual powers include not only understanding, but also willing. So if happiness really does pertain to our intellectual rather than sensitive powers, is it a matter of understanding, or of willing?

Text and Paraphrase

Commentary

Discussion: Is Happiness Peace?

Whether happiness is an operation of the speculative, or of the practical intellect (Article 5)

Granted that happiness is an activity of the intellect rather than the will, is it an activity of the knowing intellect or of the guiding and doing intellect — of the power of mind to understand, or the power of mind to direct conduct?

Text and Paraphrase

Commentary

Discussion: Knowledge as Power, or as Understanding?

Whether happiness consists in the consideration of speculative sciences? (Article 6)

The "speculative" or theoretical sciences include all that has been called philosophy, all that has been called science, and much that has been called scholarship, from ancient times to the present. The question, then, is whether supreme happiness lies in pursuing these studies — in doing what "scientists" or scholars do. Are they the truly happy ones?

Text and Paraphrase

Commentary

Discussion: The Light That Illuminates the Mind

Whether happiness consists in the knowledge of separate substances, namely, angels? (Article 7)

If any exist, immaterial created beings would certainly be higher in the order of being than we are. Some have believed that they also enlighten the human intellect. Some have believed that under God, they in certain ways govern us. Some have even believed that they created us — an opinion St. Thomas rejects. However, any of these things would make them nobler objects of the intellect than either ourselves or the things that are beneath us. Then might happiness lie in reflecting upon them?

Text and Paraphrase

Commentary

Discussion: The Angels of the Materialists
Whether man's happiness consists in the vision
of the divine essence? (Article 8)
Finally we reach the pivotal question, the one to which the spoilers have been pointing: Are we really united with God by knowing Him, and is this really our happiness? The argument moves swiftly, because so much
of it has already been anticipated.
Text and Paraphrase
Commentary
Discussion: Mourning and Weeping in This Valley of Tears
WHAT COMPLETE HAPPINESS REQUIRES (QUESTION 4)
Question 4 Prologue
In Question 1, we established that man does have an ultimate purpose,
and this is happiness. In Question 2, we found that it does not lie in any
created thing, and in Question 3, we found that it lies in union with the
Creator. Here in Question 4, we consider the conditions it requires — "If
you do not have Q, you cannot possess that union."
Text and Paraphrase
Commentary
Discussion: What Is at Stake?
Whether pleasure, or delight, is required for happiness?
(Article 1)
Delight can mean either rational delight or bodily pleasure. To ask
whether delight is required for supreme happiness is to ask whether any so-called happiness that did not include the element of delight could be completely happy. This is not the same as asking whether happiness lies in
delight; that query has already been answered in the negative.
Text and Paraphrase
Commentary
Discussion: Is a Requirement the Same As a Necessity?
Whether in happiness vision ranks before delight? (Article 2)
We saw in the previous Article that in one sense happiness requires the
vision of God, and in another sense it requires the delight of this vision.
Even though they are inseparable, it makes sense to ask which is more
fundamental — and so we do.
Text and Paraphrase
Commentary
Discussion: Delightetarians
Whether comprehension is necessary for happiness? (Article 3) Previously St. Thomas argued that we need not comprehend God to be happy, and that, being finite, we cannot do so anyway. Yet the tradition seems, at least, to say that in some sense, happiness does require comprehending Him. What then is the truth of the matter? Plainly it needs to be unraveled.
Text and Paraphrase
Commentary
Discussion: The Number of the Intellectual Powers
Whether rectitude of the will is necessary for happiness? (Article 4) All three Objectors accept what has been shown previously: Happiness is the mind's possession and enjoyment of truth as

such, which lies in the vision of God. However, two of them argue that even a person with a crooked will can attain such knowledge. The third argues that even if a straight and upright will is necessary for the attainment of it, it ceases to be necessary once the knowledge is in hand. St. Thomas responds.

Text and Paraphrase

Commentary

Discussion: God Pills and Other Gimmicks

Discussion: Divinity without Deity

Whether the body is necessary for man's happiness? (Article 5)

St. Thomas believes that the immortality of the soul can be demonstrated not only from faith but also from reason. What does come uniquely from faith is the doctrine of the general resurrection: That after a period of time, the separated souls of the dead will be reunited with their bodies. Consequently, the question of whether souls can be happy while separated from their bodies should be of interest to everyone. Although Christian tradition holds that separated souls can be happy, it is not at first obvious how they could be, because the human person is a union of body and soul. This Article is one of the longest in the Treatise on Happiness and Ultimate Purpose, perhaps because over the course of his life St. Thomas changed his mind about one of the issues involved in
the question.

Text and Paraphrase

Commentary

Discussion: Overflow

Discussion: Mortal and Immortal Souls

Discussion: How Can Separated Souls Understand Anything? Discussion: Do All Dogs Go to Heaven?

Whether perfection of the body is necessary for happiness? (Article 6) St. Thomas argued in the previous Article that the reunion of the redeemed soul with its body does not increase its happiness in intensity, but it does increase it in extent, because now the body participates in the soul's happiness by "a kind of overflow." If supreme happiness does require the body, then it is reasonable to ask whether it also requires that the body be in perfect condition. Above all, this would mean that the body is perfectly obedient to the soul, no longer subject to the humiliations that result from the Fall.

Text and Paraphrase

Commentary

Discussion: The Redemption of the Body

Discussion: The "Spiritual Body"

Whether any external goods are necessary for happiness? (Article 7) It might seem to follow as a matter of course that if the body is required for supreme happiness, then so are the external goods that the body needs. However, several other things complicate the question. We must distinguish between the essence of happiness and the means to it; between what is needed and what is fitting; between complete and incomplete happiness; and between the conditions of our bodies in the
next life and in this one.

Text and Paraphrase

Commentary

Discussion: The Contemplative and Active Lives

Whether the fellowship of friends is necessary for happiness? (Article 8) Certain people are offended by St. Thomas's teaching that the consummate happiness of the redeemed souls in the life to come does not need the fellowship of friends. But if they are complete in God, how could it? This does not mean that they have no love for their friends; it means that their love for them is greater still, because, as a flawless reflection of God's own love, it too is perfectly gratuitous. Now, perhaps for the first time, they do not love to be loved in return; they
only love.

Text and Paraphrase

Commentary

Discussion: ^ Refuse to Be Happy Unless Doris Is There, Too

HOW COMPLETE HAPPINESS IS FINALLY ATTAINED (QUESTION 5)

Question 5 Prologue

In one sense, we have already considered the attainment of happiness, for in Question 4 we investigated the requirements that must be fulfilled in order to have it. This turned out to be a more complex question than might have been expected, because there is more than one sense in which a thing can be required for happiness. However, the requirements of happiness are not the only things we need to know about the possibility of its achievement and loss. We turn to these other things now.

Text and Paraphrase

Commentary

Discussion: Leftovers?

Whether man can attain happiness? (Article 1)

A few people hold that life is so full of suffering that it is "better never to have been." A far greater number hold that supreme happiness is unattainable, so the wise person takes what he can get and "settles." In the present Article, St. Thomas challenges these views. To be sure, if consummate happiness really were unreachable, then giving up the quest might be the only reasonable course of action. Surprisingly, though, many refuse even to consider the possibility of its attainment.

Text and Paraphrase

Commentary

Discussion: If Happiness Can Be Attained, What's Wrong with Me?

Whether one man can be happier than another? (Article 2)

If we are speaking of the incomplete happiness of this life, then it is obvious that one can have more or less of it than another. But that is not the question, for we are speaking of the complete and consummate happiness that leaves nothing to be desired. Is it possible for someone to have more or less of that? Can there be degrees of what cannot be improved?

Text and Paraphrase

Commentary

Discussion: Happiness and Love

Whether one can be happy in this life? (Article 3)

It is a curious thing: If one asks whether supreme happiness is possible, some people insist that it is not; yet if one asks whether supreme happiness is possible in the present life, some of the same people insist that it is. The only thing these two answers have in common is a resolution to deny that supreme happiness is possible in the next life: "Here, or nowhere!"

Text and Paraphrase

Commentary

Discussion: Has Not Man a Hard Service upon Earth?

Whether happiness once had can be lost? (Article 4)

The responded or "I answer that" in this Article is the longest in the Treatise on Happiness and Ultimate Purpose. No doubt this is mostly because the problem itself is complex, but perhaps St. Thomas also wants to make sure that we get the point. If we could reach our final destination, but not stay there, what hope would there be in human life?

Text and Paraphrase

Commentary

Discussion: Partakers of the Divine Nature

Discussion: But Didn't the Fallen Angels Lose Their Happiness?

Whether man can attain happiness by his natural powers?

(Article 5)

Can we acquire supreme happiness by our natural abilities alone? The problem is more subtle than it appears. Perhaps the answer is "Yes", perhaps "^^" on grounds that we need supernatural help. But if "^^," then in what sense can happiness be considered our nature's fulfillment?

Text and Paraphrase

Commentary

Discussion: If Perfect and Imperfect Happiness Are Different Things, Then Why Are They Both Called Happiness?

Discussion: If We Cannot Give Perfect Happiness to Ourselves, Can We at Least Assuage Our Own Sadness?

Whether man attains happiness through the action of some higher creature? (Article 6)

In the previous Article, St. Thomas showed that no human being can achieve supreme happiness by his own natural powers. However, during the course of the argument he maintained that man can achieve supreme happiness by the power of God. Someone might ask: Is God our only resort? Even if our own powers do not suffice, can we attain supreme happiness by any power superior to ours, but short of His?

Text and Paraphrase

Commentary

Discussion: How Could Anyone Know Anything about Angels, Anyway?

Whether any good works are necessary that man may receive happiness from God? (Article 7)

The query is not whether we can do anything by our own power to make ourselves supremely happy, for we have already seen that we cannot. Nor are we asking whether we can do anything by our own power to deserve supreme happiness, as though we had a claim upon God as an equal. Only one point is at issue: Does God require us to conduct ourselves in a certain way to receive happiness at the Divine hands?

Text and Paraphrase

Commentary

Discussion: The Paradox of Merit

Whether every man desires happiness? (Article 8)

Does everyone really desire supreme happiness? Think of a person who says, "I want something, but I don't know what I want. " In one sense he knows what this "something" is: It is what he wants. In another sense he does not know what it is: He does not know what specific thing will satisfy his desire. Since by now St. Thomas has shown exactly where supreme happiness does lie, he is finally in a position to investigate who really wants it — and in what sense.

The Reason for this Commentary

What is happiness? For that matter, what isn't it? Can it be attained, and if so, how? Surely these count among the permanent questions of human life. Yet active interest in pursuing them waxes and wanes over the years, and, in our clay, such interest has exploded. What universities call Happiness Studies has become what marketers call a growth field.

The most probable explanation for this current vogue is that despite all our modern advantages, we are not happy — or not very happy — or not as happy as we think we should be. This is not just a personal impression. Recently the share of American adults aged 18-35 who say they are "very happy" in life — never very high — dropped to 25%, the lowest percentage ever recorded in the history of the General Social Survey. Perhaps the time has come again to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest what is probably the greatest book on happiness ever written, Thomas Aquinas's Treatise on Happiness and Ultimate Purpose, which is part of his massive Summa Theologise.

Encountering the Treatise for the first time is less like reading a new book than exploring a new universe. If we do take up the Angelic Doctor's book, we may be forced to readjust our thinking. Years ago, when I had shed yet another skin of unconsidered modern assumptions and prejudices, I realized that I would have to go on molting for a good while longer. I am still molting. I wish all my readers a good molting, too.

Most books about happiness approach it from a statistical point of view. They assume that happiness is whatever people think it is. In this age of Self, most people would agree. But the claim is ambiguous, for it may mean any of the three following things.

1. It may mean that human happiness is what it is, independent of our opinions, but that, being humans ourselves, we have inside knowledge of it. Therefore, our opinions have merit.

2. It may mean that human happiness is what it is, independent of our opinions, but even though our opinions about what it is may be wildly wrong, they are no worse than any other guide.

3. It may mean that since human happiness is our happiness, our opinions make it what it is. It is what people think it is just because their thinking it makes it true.

The problem with the first view is that even though we all have inside knowledge, experience is not self-interpreting, and we all draw different conclusions. The second view is arbitrary, for if our opinions are no worse than any other guide, they are no better, and the guides disagree. With the third view, the difficulty is that many people who pursue what they call happiness are bitterly unhappy even by their own lights. They thought that whatever they called happiness would make them happy, and it didn't. Apparently, the notion that the will alone has independent value, that it confers value on the things that it chooses just by choosing them, is false. In the end, we are just lofty enough to admit that we are not lofty enough to pursue ourselves as ends.

St. Thomas takes no account of the second and third views, which are of modern coinage. They are too silly to have been current in his own time. As to the first view, he agrees that we have inside knowledge, and he begins with common opinion. But in view of the confusions of common opinion, he does not end with it. Instead, he uses common opinion to cross-examine common opinion; he connects the dots of our scattered and fragmentary insights, showing that some of what people say about happiness reveals flaws in their very claims about what it is. It isn't that he doesn't think people know anything about themselves. However, he will not allow psychology to take its stand on shifting sand. With philosophical help, he forces it onto firmer

ground.

Here is another thing that takes some getting used to: St. Thomas always wants to know what others before him have thought. Today we are taught so thoroughly to doubt authority that in our vanity, we sometimes behave as though no one worth considering had ever thought about a subject before we did. As a result we are always breathlessly rediscovering banalities, on the order of "Science discovers the benefits of hugging" and "Researchers find that youth are not fully mature." Now St. Thomas is certainly aware that authorities may be mistaken: As he quips in one place, "the proof from authority is the weakest according to Boethius." But he would consider it foolish and vainglorious to leap to the opposite conclusion that the authorities of the past have nothing to say to us except when they confirm our prejudices.

It is amazing how devious St. Thomas allows his hypothetical objectors to be in their use of authorities. Sometimes he even allows them to quote selectively, distorting the meanings of the texts they are using. But why shouldn't he? Many real-life objections are devious. This was true in his time, and it is true in ours. We do not have the luxury of engaging only with good-faith objections and not with devious ones. We must take them as they come, responding to the former, dissipating the smokescreens of the latter. He had to do this. So do we.

Perhaps the biggest shock to our skeptical and secular assumptions is that St. Thomas makes use not only of philosophy, but of theology. However, this does not work the way one might expect. The popular notion of the Middle Ages is that it was a time of unthinking acceptance of dogma. This is far from the truth, for the air was filled with the ring and clash of ideas. The Scholastic thinkers were trained to think of subtle objections to everything — so only those things stood that could not be knocked down. This is not the method of Descartes, who refused to be confident of anything that could be doubted, for anything can be doubted. For the Scholastic thinkers, the question was not whether a proposition can be doubted, but whether it can plausibly defend itself. Even so, this is a rather terrifying intellectual method, because one must inure oneself to standing on precipices. The risk is that one might be shaken in one's grasp of the truth. The gain is that one might attain deeper insight into that truth that cannot be shaken.

As one might guess from this fact, St. Thomas breaks sharply with fideists, who reject reason in favor of faith. In every inquiry, he takes reason just as far as it can go — often much further than rationalists do — before seeking additional help. But he also breaks sharply with rationalists, who reject faith in favor of reason. In his view, although faith without reason is nonsense, true faith makes reason not less reasonable, but more. Not only does it provide reason with additional data, but it ceaselessly pushes it to ask more penetrating questions.

Utter and consummate happiness provides a very good example. As we will see, St. Thomas thinks that reason alone can show that there must be such a thing; yet had it not been for Revelation, the mind

And yet the same faith that insists upon these things also insists that God made us "in His image, after His likeness" He who is infinite, illimitable, incomparable, and dependent on nothing else has made man a finite and limited portrait of Himself, on whom man depends. What could this mean?

Some over the centuries have held the meaning of being made in God's image is that as God is mind, God has endowed man with mind. Others have held its meaning to be that as God is love, God has made man capable of love. St. Thomas's formulation both includes the former insight and implies the latter. However, it penetrates more deeply.

For in the first place, God has not made us pure thinkers disengaged from action: As His own thoughts formed the world, so He has made man's own imitative thoughts effective in the world. Within the proper limits of created being, we can do those things that arise from our deliberate will. And in the second place, just because we are doers, it is possible for us to be lovers. For love is something chosen, but how can I choose if I am but a billiard ball knocked about by the forces of the universe? Love rejoices in the good of the beloved, but how can I carry out even the act of rejoicing if I have no power of action? Love itself is an act of a deliberate will; a person is not capable of love, unless first he is capable.

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So What Is Our Ultimate Purpose? What Is Happiness?

People may have many different purposes, merely in the sense that they direct themselves to different things: to be rich beyond the dreams of avarice, to be a pop music star, to get married, to win the Nobel Prize, to have a steady supply of heroin. But this cannot be the end of the story, because some of these subjective purposes are inappropriate to our nature, to what we are as human beings.

To what then does our nature direct us? For beings of the human kind, what counts as fulfillment, what counts as flourishing, what counts as living well? We have a name for it: Happiness. But what is happiness?

My students often argue that a person's happiness is whatever he says it is, just because he says it. But that merely takes us back to step one. People who get what they call happiness — who become captains of industry, connoisseurs of pleasure, famous scholars, or successful pimps — are often desperately unhappy, even by their own lights. "I thought this was what I wanted, but something is still lacking."

This fact must not be misunderstood. If we go down the list of things in which people commonly say that happiness lies — for example, wealth, honors, fame, power, health, beauty, and pleasure — we find that none of them fully satisfy. But although the view that these things equal happiness is an illusion, it is not wholly wrong. Even if there is such a thing as an excess of wealth, surely we need some material goods to live well. Because we are social beings, we cannot be said to flourish if everyone holds us in contempt. The sheer enjoyment of lording it over others is a vice, but we do need the power to direct our lives well. Health is not the soul's happiness, but the soul is united to the body, and health might be called the body's happiness. If it is good to enjoy the beauty of the night sky, then it is hard to see why it is not good to enjoy the beauty of a lovely face; although many disadvantages come with having a face that can launch a thousand ships, beauty is good in itself. And as to pleasure — no, it is not itself the good, but certainly it is repose in some good.

Yet that knowledge is just what we long for, and the more we understand this longing, the stronger it becomes. As we saw above, this deepest longing cannot be in vain, for our longings are all for something. If, then, our natural intellectual powers are insufficient to behold God face to face, there must be means beyond nature by which our natural intellectual powers can be uplifted. And for the third time, this is what we call God. The power is His.

To be sure, our natural intellectual powers can go somewhat further, even apart from being uplifted. Just as they can show why it is reasonable to believe that they can be supernaturally uplifted, they can work out many other things about this uplifting, for example, some of the things about what happens to the body in the meantime. But just as to have knowledge about God is not the same as to see God, so to have knowledge about seeing God is not the same as seeing God.

The mind, by its own powers, can work out that it cannot be uplifted without grace, and it can work out, by its own powers, that it is reasonable to believe in the possibility of that grace. But it cannot, by its own powers, attain that grace. That is, in fact, why grace is called by that name. It is a gift of God, made available to man by the sacrifice of the Redeemer of the World, and the means by which it is provided are made known to us only through faith. These means must therefore also be reasonable things in which to believe.

This happiness — the happiness offered to the faithful in the next life — is not just a second layer on the cake of the happiness of this life, for it utterly transforms the significance of this life. It makes it possible for enjoyment of the goods of this life — so fragmentary, so incomplete, so inadequate in themselves — to share, really share, even though only by anticipation, in the Supreme Good of the next life.

For in this case, by His help, we are not just pursuing this good or that good — we are pursuing it for the sake of the Good Himself, in Person. <>

TEACHING FOR SPIRITUAL FORMATION: A PATRISTIC APPROACH TO CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN A CONVULSED AGE by Kyle R. Hughes, Foreword by David I. Smith [Cascade Books, 9781725281233]

In **TEACHING FOR SPIRITUAL FORMATION,** church historian and experienced Christian educator Kyle R. Hughes advances a fresh vision of Christian teaching and learning by drawing upon the riches of the Christian tradition, synthesizing the wisdom of the early church fathers with contemporary efforts to cultivate a distinctively Christian approach to education. Of interest to a wide range of Christian educators, this book examines how the writings of five significant church fathers can illuminate our understanding of the vocation of teachers, the nature of students, the purpose of curriculum, decisions about pedagogy, and how spiritual formation works. Besides reimagining these aspects of Christian education, Hughes also offers habits and practices that can help bring this vision of Christian teaching and learning to life, challenging Christian educators to sharpen their approach to the integration of faith and learning in practical and accessible ways.

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Seeking Conversations with Strangers

Christians who work in education live amid a variety of tensions, real and imagined. One tension seems particularly pertinent to the book that you have just commenced reading. (If, that is, you started at the very beginning. Which, as the book is suggesting, is a very good place to start.)

As members of the Christian church, Christians find themselves belonging to a communion of saints that stretches not only across the world, spanning cultural, ethnic, and political boundaries, but also across time. As compelling as the concerns of the present moment might be, it still matters for the Christian church what Augustine thought about sin, what Luther said about Romans, how Wesley understood sanctification, how the church fathers practiced prayer. Christians do not do theology (at least theology that has much merit) as if folks discovered God last week and the first good thinkers arrived a day or two later. Christians are part of a long conversation unfolding across time amid the communion of saints. More recent is not automatically better. As those who affirm the authority of Scriptures written many centuries ago, Christians have a pretty basic reason for affirming that vital wisdom and compelling direction can come from ancient sources.

As members of the education profession, Christians find themselves in a current thought-world in which decisions are supposed to be data-driven and data comes from the social sciences. Keeping up with the latest findings, methods, and devices is part of professional competence. Ongoing research publications tell us, for instance, that we should teach to particular learning styles or multiple intelligences, and then a

decade or two later fresh research publications unveil the lack of solid evidence that these are actually valid; teachers are encouraged to adjust accordingly. After all, there is a great deal at stake in children's education. Why rely on strategies that are grounded mainly in habit and guesswork if fresh findings might show us that something else works better? In this realm, it does not seem as if ancient sources have much to offer. The tendency to read those ancient sources as if they were only talking about narrowly theological matters adds to the challenge. The church fathers might be a good source of prayer fodder, but what could they possibly say about teaching and learning?

Despite appearances, the contrast between these two worlds is not as stark as it may seem. Research can valuably inform our teaching, but it rarely, if ever, can tell us exactly what to do. Empirical research itself depends on ideas and values that come from beyond its scope. Measuring does not get us very far if we have started with bad questions or poorly formed assumptions about what needs measuring or what might count as evidence. Even the best data is of only partial value if it misses the heart of what we are trying to do. Perhaps most importantly, the claim that we are educating children implies a claim that we are somehow making things better, helping them to become better than they would have been without our intervention. "Better" is a value judgment that requires a conception of the good and enough wisdom to see how it might play out in learning. Claiming that a strategy "works better" only makes sense if it is backed up by an idea of what kind of good we are trying to achieve: better for what, and why? Talking well about education includes ideas like assessment, outcomes, and cognitive development but at least as urgently needs ideas like justice, beauty, formation, and hope.

At this point Christians ought to become wary: if, as Scripture warns, the human heart is deceitful, then idolizing either the latest ideas or the ones of a generation ago or any other arbitrary point in the past becomes problematic. Truth is not tied to a particular decade. People did not start being sinners or making self-serving assumptions a few years back (or stop last Christmas). Neither the present nor the past offers us a golden ticket to a perfect classroom or a pristine grasp on things. There is room for repentance in our best ideas.

Yet here the voices of those from a different time and place can be peculiarly helpful. Scripture instructs us to avoid conforming to the pattern of this world, a tricky instruction indeed given that the pattern of our current world has shaped our perceptions, our judgments, our sense of what is possible and viable and valuable. A voice from outside our particular fish bowl (perhaps, say, one from the early years of the Christian church) has potential to help us. Not because what it says will be automatically right, for other times and places have had their own failings and idolatries. But because there is a chance that it is asking questions we might have missed, probing at problems that we have ignored, making connections that slip beneath our own radar. Perhaps its strengths and weaknesses don't mesh with ours, and that might help us to see. In communion with others, precisely others who are not ourselves, we might make headway in learning how to repent, how to seek truth, how to teach and learn in ways that love our students as ourselves.

I think that this is an important part of the service that Kyle Hughes offers in this book. He invites us to spend time in the company of the church fathers, people who, after all, thought and wrote well enough about being Christian that they are still in print and still discussed almost two millennia later. He invites us to read them not just for prayer tips but to get a sense of how they might have imagined the task of learning, the wisdom of teaching, what it means to grow and help others to grow. And he asks us not to replace some current surefire recipe with some hoary old one (solve all your teaching problems with

this one second-century trick!) but to tackle the more patient task of seeking wisdom to inform our work. If we are to sustain wisdom in teaching, we need more conversations like this, thoughtful conversations with the best of those who have taught before. A visit with the church fathers is not a bad place to start.

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Christian Education in a Convulsed Age

Christian schooling presents both profound challenges and incredible opportunities for those seeking to provide students with an education that contributes to their formation into disciples of Jesus Christ. While many teachers, professors, and administrators have discerned a call to this vocation precisely because of their desire to see young people grow into Christ's likeness, they may at times struggle to discern how best to carry out this work in an authentic and transformational way. We live in a convulsed age—as I write this, the United States is contending with far-reaching upheavals resulting from a global pandemic, economic downturn, and the legacy of racial inequality, and all of this in a broader time of intensifying political polarization, rapid technological and demographic change, and increasing environmental crisis. This is the world into which we are sending our students, young people who may already be experiencing the effects of these upheavals and uncertainties in their own lives, or perhaps are simply dealing with the more mundane (and yet, for them, no less real and significant) matters of meeting parental expectations, fitting in with peers, and facing learning difficulties. Likewise, many Christian educators are also experiencing convulsions in their work, adapting to new forms of virtual learning, staring down budget cuts, and wondering if their efforts are actually making any difference at all. As a teacher myself, I know that I often feel like I am just treading water. It can feel difficult enough to get through the required course content and grade yet another stack of essays; broader conversations about "the integration of faith and learning" can seem as distant and useless as the bottom of the sea.

And yet, the calling for Christian educators remains. Christ tells us that he came that we might have life—true, abundant, complete life—here and now, even in our present circumstances (John 10:10). It is this quality of life that we long for our students to taste and to see, as we have, that the Lord is good (Ps 34:8). It is a life in which we are reminded that we will have our portion of hardship and suffering, and yet it is in precisely those things that we will find true joy and communion with Christ (1 Pet 4:12–13). It is, moreover, a life in which we can become like trees planted by streams of water, yielding the fruit of love of God and love of neighbor for the healing of the world (Ps 1:3; Rev 22:2). This, then, is the life to which we endeavor to invite our students, even as we are very much in the process of figuring this out for ourselves. If anything, the present trials and tribulations of our world should only heighten the urgency with which we seek, for ourselves and for our students, the life that Christ brings. But how?

In light of the complexities and challenges of our present time and place, the early church fathers—those key figures of the first Christian centuries whose lives and writings guide the church's doctrine and practice to this day—would at first glance appear to be unlikely conversation partners for educators interested in making deeper connections between their Christian faith and the work of teaching and learning. It is my contention, however, that it is precisely in a time such as ours that the voices of our great forefathers need to be invited to the table. We need the church fathers to speak afresh that wisdom that has endured through the centuries and proven itself time and again to be a source of inspiration and edification for Christians through the ages. This book, then, is an attempt to advance a

fresh vision of Christian teaching and learning by drawing upon the riches of the Christian tradition, synthesizing the wisdom of the church fathers with contemporary efforts to cultivate a distinctively Christian approach to education.

Two Key Presuppositions

Before beginning our engagement with the church fathers and what they can teach us about Christian education, a few words are in order to explain how I have arrived at my understanding of the purpose of Christian education and the relevance of the church fathers. While some readers may no doubt be eager to move on to begin engaging with the first of the church fathers we will examine in this book (and are welcome to do so), further attention to these two points will help make sense of the approach that undergirds the following chapters.

The Purpose of Christian Education

First, I hold that the goal of Christian education is not simply to produce graduates who know things about English, history, math, science, or even theology but rather to form graduates who become certain kinds of people— disciples of Jesus Christ. To validate this claim, we must briefly consider what we mean by "education" in the first place. In James K. A. Smith's influential definition, "An education . . . is a constellation of practices, rituals, and routines that inculcates a particular vision of the good life by inscribing or infusing that vision into the heart (the gut) by means of material, embodied practices." For Christian educators, then, this means that "the primary goal of Christian education is the formation of a peculiar people—a people who desire the kingdom of God and thus undertake their vocations as an expression of that desire." In other words, the ultimate end (that is, the telos) of Christian education is to help shape students' understanding of "the good life" as one that is centered on Christ and his kingdom, such that they are challenged to reorient more and more of their lives in light of the gospel. Rather than reducing students to what Smith provocatively calls "brains on a stick," empty containers into which the expert teacher pours her knowledge, this approach to education proceeds from a truly Christian anthropology that sees students, like all people, as embodied beings, who by means of their habits, relationships, and the Holy Spirit are formed into people who come to desire the things of God above the things of this world.

We will return to this point below, but for now it will suffice to say that Smith helps us to see that the work of Christian education is in fact the work of discipleship, here carried out not in the sanctuary or on the mission field but in the classroom. By emphasizing the role of formational practices in building disciples, Smith points us to the realization that Christian education must include not just the selection of curriculum (the what) or the relationships being formed (the who) but even the process of teaching and learning itself (the how). This approach calls for the integration of faith and learning across all levels of the educational endeavor: in the curriculum and pedagogy, in the minds and lives of the teachers and students, and in the policies and ethos of the institution itself. It involves, therefore, both an expansion of the imagination for rethinking some of these central aspects of the teaching task and a commitment to engaging in the formative practices and habits that will enable a Christian vision of the good life to take root in the deepest parts of a person's being.

Across his various works, but most clearly and recently in his book On Christian Teaching, David I. Smith has sought to unpack some elements of what such a distinctively Christian approach to education might include. What Smith correctly recognized was that most conversations about Christian teaching

and learning were ignoring such formative classroom matters as the use of time and space, patterns of reflection and interaction, and types of homework and assessment. As he insists, "An account of Christian education that focuses only on the truth of what is taught, and fails to address the meanings molded through how it is taught and learned is at best incomplete." While conceding that "Christian faith cannot simply tell us how to teach or provide unique, copyrighted, Christian teaching moves," Smith still claims that "Christian faith can play a generative role in shaping pedagogy." To unleash this process, he commends a model that involves examining how various aspects of the teaching and learning process might be viewed and practiced differently in light of the values and virtues of the kingdom of God. A key initial element of Smith's proposal is the work of expanding the imagination, casting a new vision of teaching and learning. As Smith eloquently puts it: "Attending to faith's role within our pedagogical world involves being able to imagine afresh, to see anew, and for this we need not so much to think harder as to engage in the practices that nurture Christian imagination. We need to invest in becoming people capable of imagining in Christian ways, of seeing our classrooms through the lenses of grace, justice, beauty, delight, virtue, faith, hope, and love." It is very much within this perspective on what it means to integrate faith and learning that I offer this book as a complement to Smith's provocative work.

The difficulty of this challenge should not be understated; there are, I believe, three major roadblocks to engaging with this task. The first is institutional. As others have recognized, the "prevailing view" in many Christian schools "assumes that Christian education more or less happens when Christians teach in Christian schools." Indeed, it is easier for Christian educators to adopt the presuppositions, ideals, and values of the prevailing instrumentalist model of secular education, to add on a weekly chapel time and make some occasional efforts to connect Scripture to class content, than to do the work of moving in the direction of providing an education that would result in "the transformation of the school's educational goals, curriculum, pedagogy, student evaluation, and organizational structure." What if this approach would make our school less appealing to colleges, graduate schools, or prospective employers? What if no one enrolled? There is a legitimate concern here for practical and economic realities that is understandable enough, and yet to the extent that we fail to embark upon this difficult work, our ability to provide a truly Christian education, and thereby participate in the work of forming Christian disciples and setting forth an authentic, countercultural Christian witness, suffers. While some institutional factors may lie outside of the control of many teachers, it is nevertheless the case that real organizational change is possible from the efforts of even small groups of teachers committed to advancing the cause of faith-learning integration in their classrooms.

The second roadblock is societal. As is widely recognized, America is now very much a post-Christian society, where Christianity no longer holds a religiously privileged position in the public square. Indeed, the broader landscape of modern American spirituality appears to be tilting decisively away from orthodox expressions of Christianity. As the philosopher Charles Taylor has demonstrated, we have entered a "secular age" in which we have moved "from a society in which it was virtually impossible not to believe in God, to one in which faith, even for the staunchest believer, is one human possibility among others." Drawing on Taylor's work, Carl Trueman has identified a major cultural shift with profound repercussions for our society as the "prioritization of the individual's inner psychology—we might even say 'feelings' or 'intuitions'—for our sense of who we are and what the purpose of our lives is." In such a context, the Christian appeal to the Bible and the traditional teachings of the church as in some sense authoritative is increasingly seen as problematic, if not outright dangerous. Still, there are signs of hope.

As Gerald Sittser explains, while the decline of Christianity in the United States "has left the church concerned, confused, and sobered," it has also made the church more "curious and teachable, which is one reason why Christians are looking for new resources, movements, and models that might help us, as Christians living in the West, respond faithfully and winsomely to this new state of affairs." As we will see below, it is my contention that the "new" approaches we need most are not so much those that are of recent origin but rather those that are being rediscovered after having been forgotten for a lengthy period of time and are now ready to speak afresh into our present circumstances.

The third roadblock is theological. The "triumph of the therapeutic" is seen not just in culture at large but even within much of the Christian church. In their famous study of the religious beliefs of American teenagers, Christian Smith and Melinda Lundquist Denton identified "moralistic therapeutic deism" as the prevailing "religion" of many such young Americans. This belief system posits the existence of a deity who, from a safe distance from our affairs, just wants people to live good, moral lives so that they can be happy and fulfilled. For Smith and Denton, this was not so much a conscious theological development as it was a reflection of a broader American social context of "therapeutic individualism" emphasizing subjective personal experience and self-fulfillment. In any event, while this kind of thinking is certainly not characteristic of all American teenagers today, nor is it limited to younger generations exclusively, moralistic therapeutic deism is nevertheless the form of "Christianity" that informs much of our present teaching context. The challenge, then, is to help our students—and, indeed, ourselves—enter into a more meaningful and more orthodox understanding of what it means to be a Christian, one in which we are striving to submit the entirety of our lives to Christ as his disciples, such that we "interpret and live all of life within the Biblical drama of creation, fall, redemption, and restoration." Rather than moralistic therapeutic deism, we are called to a faith characterized by what the German theologian and martyr Dietrich Bonhoeffer described as a "single-minded obedience" in which we follow Jesus on the road of self-denial and suffering, which is "the badge of true discipleship" and the means by which we share in Christ's own life. This, then, is what we mean by discipleship: the daily work of training our affections away from the things of this world such that, by the power of the Holy Spirit, we are transformed into Christ's likeness in every aspect of our lives. As we put off the old, we put on the new (Eph 4:22–24), learning to find and embrace the presence of God in every aspect of our daily living.

We will unpack in more detail the exact nature of this understanding of the Christian life and how to go about walking alongside of our students on this journey in the chapters that follow. For now, though, it will suffice to note that this book proceeds from the belief that the goal of Christian education is nothing less than the formation of disciples of Jesus Christ, an aim which requires a thoughtful and comprehensive approach to the integration of faith and learning that impacts every aspect of the educational endeavor. Thankfully, given the enormous challenge of this task, we have a powerful and yet underappreciated resource to help us in developing such an approach: the church fathers.

The Relevance of the Church Fathers

The second main assumption of this book is that the close study of the teachings of the church fathers can provide a new lens for thinking about Christian teaching and learning. Considering the above section, we might rightly ask what it would look like to go about actually nurturing a Christian imagination that has the potential to transform the way we see Christian teaching and learning. We might wonder, too, what habits we could engage in, as individuals or with other teachers or even with our students, that would deepen the role of faith in our classrooms. There are, of course, the basic

disciplines of the Christian life: reading the Bible, prayer, and corporate worship. We can exchange ideas with our colleagues and attend conferences. But most Christian educators are not trained biblical scholars or theologians, instinctively able to bridge the pages of the New Testament or the liturgy of the church's worship to the work of the science classroom or the computer lab. Likewise, many churches have dropped the ball on faith formation for their own people, complicating our efforts to reach our students when we feel so inadequate in our own spiritual lives. For these reasons, we need expert guides who can help show us the way. David Smith himself recognizes this need: "The cultivation of a Christian imagination, one rooted in both Scriptures and a communion of saints that stretches beyond the bounds of our own social and historical context, can help us to see our tasks and contexts anew. Throughout Christian history, there have been thinkers who have allowed their vision of pedagogy to be framed and shaped by the imagery of Scripture and the practices of the church, and they can help us to imagine differently." Indeed, getting outside of our own time and place can, like a semester abroad, shake loose some of our certainties about the way things must be. In this way, the history of the church, and the lives of those saints who have gone before us, can indeed provide opportunities for expanding our imaginations.

Are the early church fathers, though, really adequate guides for this particular journey? Within some evangelical Protestant circles of Christian education, there is often a bias towards an understanding of church history that sees the Protestant Reformation as the retrieval of "true New Testament Christianity," as if everything between the New Testament and the Reformation had been a giant mistake. Often there is simply an ignorance of church history altogether. There are, however, many hopeful signs that the evangelical church is increasingly recognizing, as the great Protestant reformers themselves had acknowledged, the significance of the great tradition for the present and future of the Christian faith. This is seen, for instance, in an increased interest among evangelical scholars in the early church, as there is a growing awareness that the spirituality and theology of the early church can provide a solid grounding for the faith in the evershifting sands of the present day. Likewise, the burgeoning movement of a large number of younger evangelicals into more historic and liturgical expressions of the Christian faith suggests that this book's approach is tapping into a broader movement in which the Spirit is calling us back to rediscover the fullness of our heritage as Christians.

Thus, this book posits that the church fathers represent a significant and largely untapped resource in expanding our imaginations for thinking about Christian teaching and learning. Despite having lived in what can seem like an entirely foreign world to us today, the early church fathers, like us, sought to explain, live out, and pass on the Christian faith in the midst of a complex and ever-changing world, characterized by pluralism, syncretism, and materialism, grappling with the fallout from plagues, economic upheavals, and the mass migrations of peoples. In so doing they left us with a variety of ideas, metaphors, and practices that constitute something of a "spiritual treasure box" from which we can draw. The church has long taught that the lives of these ancient church fathers were characterized by orthodoxy of doctrine, holiness of life, and approval from other Christians. Not only have many of their ideas stood the test of time, but the church fathers themselves were (and still are) considered worthy of emulation. If nothing else, the example of those heroes of the faith who came before us can inspire and encourage us in our own vocations, reminding us that we are part of a grand story that transcends our own lives. We are, the Apostles' Creed reminds us, part of a great "communion of saints," connecting us, in Christ, to other believers across time and space. Lest we succumb to the arrogance of historical amnesia or the pride of presentism, we must allow others, even(and perhaps especially!) those from

radically different circumstances, to speak into our own situation, and the church fathers are the most time-honored place from which to start. If nothing else, our study of our Christian predecessors can help us to challenge the mistakes and point out the blind spots of Christian thinking in our present context.

This book focuses on one specific aspect of the heritage of the early church as it pertains to Christian teaching and learning: ascetical theology as the means of forming disciples of Christ. As traditionally understood, classical asceticism (from the Greek askësis) refers to the practices of self-discipline and self-denial by which one seeks to advance along a given philosophical or religious path. To modern Christians, such a description may conjure up images of early Christian ascetics living on pillars in the desert or cloistered monks whipping their backs in penance for their sins. However, I have in view a more expansive notion of what we might term an "ascetical spirituality." While we will indeed wish to avoid some of the extremes of early Christian asceticism, it is nevertheless the case that our baptismal vows push us to embrace elements of the ascetical life. In the Anglican tradition, for instance, the Book of Common Prayer directs the baptismal candidate (or sponsors) to "renounce the empty promises and deadly deceits of this world that corrupt and destroy the creatures of God," and to "renounce the sinful desires of the flesh that draw you from the love of God." Thus, Greg Peters writes, "Asceticism, that most monastic of practices, is expected of all Christian believers by virtue of our baptism and is characterized by balance and moderation." In an age where comfort and consumption are privileged above all else, the ascetical tradition calls us back to a way of life in which our desires are rightly ordered.

In this book, then, I follow Martin Thornton's description of ascetical theology as that which is "dealing with the fundamental duties and disciplines of the Christian life, which nurture the ordinary ways of prayer, and which discover and foster those spiritual gifts and graces constantly found in ordinary people."33 In other words, ascetical theology focuses on those practices and virtues by which, in cooperation with the Holy Spirit, we progress in the spiritual life. These practices and virtues must not, however, become an end unto themselves; rather, they are the means by which we journey towards our ultimate purpose or telos.34 Historically, this telos has been identified not as "going to heaven," but rather as attaining the beatific vision, or, to use other words, the contemplation of God (Ps 27:4, 8). This deeply biblical idea is perhaps best exemplified by Paul's words that "we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another" (2 Cor 3:18); thus, in turning away from ourselves and seeking the face of God (Ps 105:4), we find that we are actually becoming more like Christ. As articulated by the church fathers, contemplation is "a foretaste in the present life of the vision of God that characterizes the life to come." At the heart of this contemplation is a personal experience of God; through ascetical practices such as prayer, fasting, and the devotional reading of Scripture, we are, by the power of the Holy Spirit, transformed into the image of Christ. We will perhaps even, like Paul, find our hearts drawn ever nearer to God's presence in a profound encounter with divine love (2 Cor 12:1–10). To this end, we are called to develop in ourselves and in our students what James K. A. Smith calls the "habits of daily worship," engaging students in those common practices that redirect the heart to God. It is, therefore, a primary contention of this book that the invitation to ascetical practices and virtues is a neglected and yet powerful means of forming our students in the Christian way into the kinds of people who do not just know about God but will become what Hans Boersma calls "apprentices" of God, by which Boersma indicates those who are guided by

God in Christ "along the process of salvation" such that they are increasingly habituated to God's presence and able to grow in their capacity to behold God in Christ.

Therefore, the truth to which the church fathers ultimately point us is that the spirit—that is, the defining or typical element—of Christian teaching is one in which the Spirit—that is, God's own empowering presence—infuses all aspects of our work. If the goal of Christian education, and indeed the Christian life in general, is to be formed into Christ's likeness, to become disciples of Christ, we can take heart from the knowledge that this is the work of the very Spirit of God, who seeks to draw our students into relationship with himself, not simply for their own salvation but for his purposes of mission and renewal in the world. Thus, even in this convulsed age, even with the enormity of the task before us, we have access to "power from on high" (Luke 24:49), to the Spirit who can give us the gifts we need to carry out our vocation (1 Cor 12:4–7) and can produce in us and in our students the fruit that characterizes a Spirit-empowered life (Gal 5:22–23). Undergirding all of the patristic claims we will examine in this book is the understanding that the Spirit leads believers into all truth (John 16:13), a truth that the church fathers believed would be received not just intellectually but in a way that is "inescapably participatory and transformative." In other words, transformation happens not so much when we encounter ideas about God as when we encounter God himself; by the Spirit, God makes us a new creation, gives us new birth, and puts a new heart within us as we become increasingly transformed into the image of Christ. Thus, over the following chapters of this book, we will see how the church fathers present us with a historically rooted and theologically rich means of nurturing our imaginations as we seek, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to cultivate a distinctively Christian pedagogy adequate for the task before us.

An Invitation to the Journey

Many of the ideas we will encounter in this book will no doubt at first glance seem quite foreign or even strange, especially for those who have not spent much time in the company of the church fathers. My encouragement, then, is simply to consider this book as an invitation to a journey of reflecting on all that we do as Christian educators. We need not adopt wholesale every aspect of the church fathers' thinking in order to find ourselves challenged to reimagine aspects of our classrooms. As your guide on this journey, I write as someone who has not myself "arrived" but has perhaps a unique vantage point for undertaking this endeavor: my formal training is in the history and literature of early Christianity, not education. And while I have taught at both the university and high school levels, I am also, as an ordained Anglican minister, deeply invested in the work of education within the context of the local church. As a result, I hope that a broad array of Christian educators in a wide range of contexts will consider taking this journey with me.

To chart our journey ahead, we will draw on the insights of the church fathers to explore five key questions at the heart of teaching and learning. Who are we as teachers? Who are our students? What are we teaching? How are we teaching? How do we plan for growth? The basic structure of each of the following chapters of the book is to answer one of these questions by drawing upon the insights of a selected church father whose writings have the potential to stimulate our ability to reimagine this aspect of Christian education and to consider what kinds of habits and practices can help bring this new vision to life. Each chapter begins with a brief introduction to the life of the relevant church father so that readers unfamiliar with these giants of the faith can have a sense of the context in which the church

fathers wrote. The subject matter of each chapter is largely discrete, and yet a distinct, coherent vision of Christian education gradually takes shape as each chapter builds upon earlier ones.

Thus, for those who, like me, need all the help they can get in being Christian educators in this convulsed age, I offer the following reflections not so much as "a new teaching with authority" (Mark 1:27) but rather as an invitation to consider with me, a fellow pilgrim on this journey, new ways in which we can consider how the teachings of the one to whom "all authority in heaven and on earth has been given" (Matt 28:18) might apply to our work as Christian educators in these troubled times. We will begin, therefore, by seeking to shed light on the most basic of questions: what does it mean to be a Christian teacher? <>

THE MATERIAL LOGIC OF JOHN OF ST. THOMAS: BASIC TREATISES by John Poinsot, translated by Yves R. Simon, John J. Glanville, G. Donald Hollenhorst, with a Preface by Jacques Maritain [The University of Chicago Press, 9780226758497

My dear Friend,

By sending me a typewritten copy of John of St. Thomas' Logic you gave my eagerness the privilege of early satisfaction. It has been a joy for me to follow the progress of this translation ever since it was begun quite a few years ago. I know how much work it meant for you and your excellent collaborators. Friendship, together with stubborn dedication, is responsible for the successful completion of this difficult task.

My personal indebtedness to John of St. Thomas is great. In your introduction, you describe him as "an inspiring and charming teacher." This is indeed what he has been for me. He is among the greatest metaphysicians who ever existed. I admire and cherish him for the profundity of his thought and the illuminating power of his spiritual experience. I gratefully remember the intellectual delight provided by his interminable disputations, when I was groping after the basic insights of Thomism. Later, when I was engaged in projects designed to carry on the development of the Thomistic synthesis, I constantly found in John of St. Thomas a outstanding witness to the progressive character of St. Thomas' philosophy.

With such works as this Logic the commentators of St. Thomas, for the first time in history, are reaching a large audience. It is puzzling to realize that the treasures contained in their writings have remained, for so many generations, unknown except to a very few, and it is good to be alive at the time when to read John of St. Thomas seems almost as natural as to read Berkeley or Leibnitz. Twenty-five years ago we could not even have dreamt of such a victory over age-old prejudices.

There will never be any question of substituting the works of the commentators for those of St. Thomas, nor shall we ever allow ourselves to read into St. Thomas what was contributed by Philosophy lives on dialogue and conversation; and it is a mark of any great philosophy that it can manifest constantly new aspects in a conversation which is pursued through centuries on the same accepted principles and with organic consistency. A philosopher finds reason for melancholy in realizing that the conversation about his own ideas (assuming that he is worthy of it) will begin only when he is dead and

no longer has the opportunity of having his search for truth profit by it. Fortunate is he, if the very meaning of his dearest intuitions is not missed by the interlocutors. To continue the conversation with congenial and clearsighted companions of the stature of Cajetan, Banez and John of St. Thomas is a privilege of the genius of Thomas Aquinas and of his grace-given mission.

The development of St. Thomas' doctrine in the works of the commentators is a fascinating process to which not enough attention has been given. The greater our familiarity with the writings of St. Thomas, the better we realize that by the character of his mission, by the nature of his interests and by his style, St. Thomas calls for commentators. Because the complete works of St. Thomas look huge on a bookshelf, it has been a surprise for many beginners to find that in a number of cases his treatment of important issues is very short. St. Thomas' works are free from the kind of obscurity which results from confusion, but they contain many difficulties framed in spiritual loftiness and lucid simplicity. To read St. Thomas well, the help of genius is needed and gratefully welcome. Our John is the latest and the most mature of the geniuses who explained St. Thomas.

Over and above the basic task of rendering the thoughts of St. Thomas more accessible, the commentators have performed feats of doctrinal progress with hardly any parallel in the history of philosophy. As we have often pointed out, progress in the philosophic sciences is normally effected not by the substitution of one system for another system, but by the accomplishment of greater profundity and comprehensiveness within one and the same continuously living body of truth. Yet history offers few examples of processes conforming to such a pattern. It is altogether accidental that philosophic progress should be achieved by way of substitution, but such accidents are so frequent that the really normal course of events has, historically speaking, the character of an exception. Considered in its relation to the philosophy of Aristotle, the work of St. Thomas comprises, besides many features of continuity, changes involving significant corrections. But, if we compare the work of John of St. Thomas—latest of the great commentators with that of St. Thomas himself, all important changes can be interpreted in terms of pure development.

It is in the field of logic that the school of St. Thomas exemplifies most successfully the method of progress which becomes the philosophic sciences. In logic a picture characterized by the predominance of continuity over discrepancy covers not only the several ages of Thomism but the work of Aristotle himself. The Logical Art of John of St. Thomas is in several respects the masterpiece of Aristotelian logic; yet, it includes issues that Aristotle hardly touched upon. In the context of John of St. Thomas, issues not treated by Aristotle never look un-Aristotelian; quite naturally, the system of logic founded by Aristotle takes over truths contributed by the Stoics and other philosophers, by grammarians and by theologians. At a time when the state of logical studies obviously calls for an ample process of integration, the work of John of St. Thomas demonstrates, in the most encouraging fashion, the integrative power of Aristotelian logic.

So far as I can judge, the mood of conquering vitality which distinguishes the work of John of St. Thomas is nicely conveyed by your translation. The most obvious function of the present book is to give college students a chance to read, besides whatever "textbook' they may use, a "great books of material logic (that is, of logic not only of correctness in reasoning, but of truth in knowing). It should not be held that John of St. Thomas is too difficult for beginners. As you say in your introduction "It is the privilege of a patient teacher to become less and less difficult to follow as the work of teaching goes on." A beginner who refuses to be discouraged by initial difficulties will soon notice that things are no longer so hard,

and by that time he has already learned a great deal. The style of the translation, which will be of great help to beginners, will also play a significant part on the level of advanced research. Trained logicians, including those who have access to the Latin text, will notice that your sharp and graphic expressions often bring about helpful insights into obscure issues and a fresh understanding of familiar ones. You remark that 'intense and luminous life may find expression in scholastic language." In spite of the known difficulty of translating scholastic language into a vernacular, I expect that through this translation the quiet ardor of intellectual life that we admire so much in the Courses of John of St. Thomas will endear itself to many readers. Jacques Maritain

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The expression `material logic,' used in the title of this book, is uncommon and paradoxical. Few logicians would hesitate to say that all logical problems are problems of form and that there is no room in logic for the consideration of any matter. But if such is the case, the common use of the expression `formal logic' has to be accounted for. Unless some part of logic is not formal, to speak of formal logic seems to involve absurd redundance. We might speak of symbolic algebra if there were such a thing as a nonsymbolic algebra, but because all parts of algebra are symbolic, the expression `symbolic algebra' sounds nonsensical. The formal character of logic should rule out the expression `formal logic' just as the symbolic character of algebra rules out the expression `symbolic algebra.' Here are logicians to whom the notion of material logic is entirely foreign: from what do they intend to distinguish what they call formal logic?

In the usage of these logicians and in the common usage of our time, `formal logic' is not meant to distinguish one part of logic from another. Rather it is meant to distinguish, at the cost of redundance, logic itself from the inquiries described as `theory of science,' `scientific method,' `critique of scientific knowledge,' `epistemology,' etc. These unscrupulous neighbors of logic are not concerned with logical entities but with a universe of things and real relations; yet they are called by some, with no claim to rigor in the choice of words, `logic of science,' `applied logic,' etc. Redundance is welcome if it serves to remove the threat of confusion between logic and these ill-defined disciplines.

Formal logic is universally held to deal with consistency alone. Let us, accordingly, approach the problem of material logic as follows: Should it be said that when the rules of consistency are established the task of logic is over and the possibilities of logic exhausted? Beyond consistency there is truth. No matter how rigorous our inferences, we fall short of truth if ourprinciples are false, we fall short of certainty if our principles are uncertain, we fall short of understanding if our principles are devoid of explanatory power. It is certainly reasonable to ask whether, beyond the rules of consistent reasoning, any part of logic deals with the attainment of these scientific perfections: truth, certainty, and explanation.

To this question the vast majority of logicians answer in the negative. For them, the contribution of logic to the scientific ideal ends with the valuable achievement of strictly consistent inference. Any further achievement would be by the sciences themselves. "Whether the premises be true or false," Augustus De Morgan wrote, "is not a question of logic, but of morals, philosophy, history, or any other knowledge to which their subject-matter belongs: the question of logic is, does the conclusion certainly follow if the premises be true?" (Formal Logic, London, Taylor and Walton, 1847, p. 1). Along the same line, Abraham Wolf wrote, about a century later, "... logic is the study of valid inference, not true inference. This is not because logic is not interested in truth, for its own function is to explain the true conditions

of valid inference. It is simply a case of that division of labor which necessity has forced upon all the sciences. The study of the conditions of valid inference means the study of the general relations between inferences and premises. This is a sufficiently important task by itself. The study of the conditions of true inference would mean, in addition, an investigation into the truth of all possible premises—an obviously impossible task." ("Logic," Encyclopaedia Britannica, 14th ed.) To take a simple example, logic may define a type of inference based upon the transitivity of a relation; but in the argumentation, `Chicago is north of St. Louis and St. Louis north of New Orleans, therefore Chicago is north of New Orleans,' logic will not let me know whether Chicago is in fact north of St. Louis and St. Louis north of New Orleans. The truth of the conclusion `Chicago is north of New Orleans' depends upon facts known to geography and foreign to logic.

Logic cannot say what city is north or south of what city; more generally, logic knows nothing about things. But things admit of more than one way of existing. Over and above the primary existence that they enjoy in nature, things enjoy, as objects of understanding, a new existence—objective, intelligible, intentional—which brings forth in them a new system of properties. The object of logic is constituted by the properties which accrue to things by reason of the new existence that they enjoy as objects of the human mind. In opposition to the real properties or `first intentions' of things, these logical properties are called `second intentions' in scholastic language. The laws of second intentions are the rules of reasoning, and the art of reasoning is the same as the science of the second intentions.

From all this, it results that there is no such thing as a material logic if second intentions concern exclusively consistent inference. In other words, there is no such thing as a material logic if all laws of second intentions are merely rules of consisttency. But if there are, within the broad field of the second intentions, properties placed beyond the achievement of consistency—i.e., properties whose laws concern the truth of our argumentations, their certainty, and their explanatory power—then there is such a thing as a material logic. No part or function of logic will ever decide whether a particular proposition, relative to the real world, is true or not. But logic may be able to say what general conditions an argumentation must satisfy in order to be not only consistent, i.e., formally perfect, but also demonstrative. Material logic is a possibility if and only if some second intentions are so constituted that their laws be the rules of scientific demonstration.

Suppose three consistent argumentations of the same formal type—say, three syllogisms in Barbara. One conclusion is false, one probable, and one scientific. Such diversity derives from diversity in the matter or content since, by hypothesis, the form is the same. At this point, the problem of material logic can be stated in entirely definite terms. Considering the matter or content which grounds the diversity of false, probable, and scientific argumentation, the question is to determine whether this matter or content is constituted by real properties alone, or also comprises logical properties. Once more: Considering the diversity of content which, within the unity of a single form (Barbara), divides argumentation according to falsehood, probability, and scientific certainty, the question is whether such diversity is merely one of first intentions or involves both first and second intentions. If the content which distinguishes the three argumentation as false, probable, and scientific is altogether reducible to first intentions, then there is no such thing as a material logic. If all questions of content are to be decided, like the question whether St. Louis is south of Chicago and New Orleans south of St. Louis, by inquiry into the real world, then logic is concerned with consistency alone and whatever perfection of

discourse lies beyond consistency is the business of particular sciences. If, on the contrary, diversifying contents involve also a diversity of second intentions, then there is such a thing as a material logic.

The Posterior Analytics of Aristotle are an inquiry into logical matter. This treatise considers the intentions which distinguish scientific argumentation from consistent reasonings devoid of scientific character. To be sure, logical matter, in relation to the real content of science, retains the nature of a form. In a comparison between logic and the sciences of the real, the whole of logic is formal. But over and above the relation of form to matter which obtains between logical science and the science of reality, a comparison between the parts of logic reveals a further relation of form to matter according as a second intention concerns mere consistency or the scientific perfections of truth, certainty, and explanation. The law that a syllogism of the second figure must necessarily comprise one negative premise concerns consistency and pertains to formal logic. Whether the premises are false, probable, or certain makes no difference: if the middle term is twice predicate and if both premises are affirmative, nothing follows.

The Prior Analytics deal with such problems and the Posterior Analytics start where the Prior leave off. A past master in priority analysis—i.e., in the theory of consistency—if he never studied demonstration would lack logical instruments of decisive significance. In order to achieve scientific quality in my discourse about the real world, in order to obtain the highest degree of intelligibility in my dealing with things, I need familiarity with such logical intentions as primacy and immediacy, essential universality, essential connection, the modes of perseity, strict appropriateness, logical priority and posteriority, a priori demonstration and a posteriori demonstration, demonstration of fact and explanatory demonstration, etc.

Such second intentions, which do not regard the consistency of reasoning but its scientific perfection, constitute the subject of the Posterior Analytics. Among all the logical works of Aristotle, the climax is this treatise of material logic. Why, then, are Aristotle and his followers so commonly reputed to have constructed a logic purely formal in character? Among others, Mr. Bertrand Russell wrote: "Logic, in the Middle Ages, and down to the present day in teaching, meant no more than a collection of technical terms and rules of syllogistic inference."

To account for this legend, we may observe, first, that the Posterior Analytics are a book of extreme difficulty. Whereas the formal logic of Aristotle has been explained in countless digests, some of which are both exact and relatively easy to read, his material logic is not readily accessible in secondhand expositions.

Further, and more importantly, the reduction of logic to the treatment of consistency alone is a stubbornly recurrent accident originating in the sociology of knowledge. At all times the behavior of scientific men betrays willingness to make sacrifices for the sake of communication, intersubjectivation, and consensus. Such sacrifices may affect the very structure of science, as when modern physicists restrict themselves to those aspects of nature which can be expressed in "sharp statements." But, independently of what happens to the sciences themselves, it seems that the instrument of science, viz., logic, should also be the instrument par excellence of scientific communication. And thus logicians are led to think and to dream of a logical system independent of philosophic controversy, indifferent to the subjects that cause conflicts among philosophers, acceptable to the most diverse schools of philosophy,

valid for the Platonist, the Aristotelian, the materialistic nominalist, the nominalistic rationalist, and the pragmatist as well.

Now it soon becomes evident that not all parts of logic lend themselves equally well to abstraction from philosophically controversial issues. The problem of the relation between logic and philosophic controversy can be outlined as follows:

1. Any question of Ionic, if treated with the depth and thoroughness required for greatest intelligibility, involves issues on which philosophers are divided.
2. On the level defined by merely utilitarian concern for safely working rules, it can be said, roughly, that formal logic, or an important part of it, admits of abstraction from philosophic controversy.
3. In material logic, rules are so closely bound up with their foundations that abstraction from philosophic controversy is altogether impossible.

Accordingly, a program of logic free from philosophic controversy will restrict itself to problems of form. Further, in the treatment of these problems it will shun inquiries into foundations and, generally, be not too particular about the intelligible establishment of its own rules. It is often possible to propose convincingly a rule of consistency without unfolding the ultimate reasons of its validity. Diversity regarding the justification of the rule proves compatible with common adherence to the rule itself—just as the ethical precept that one ought not to kill is commonly adhered to by the eudaemonist, the Kantist, the utilitarian, etc., though their reasons for not killing are diverse.

Take, for instance, the rule that in a syllogism of the second figure one premise must be negative: it is interpreted by the Aristotelian in terms of universal wholes and by the nominalist in terms of sets, and subsets, and members of a set or of a subset. Such diversity corresponds to very profound differences with regard to the most basic problems of metaphysics. Yet, this rule of the second figure is a subject and an instrument of agreement between the Aristotelian and the nominalist. Leaving aside the metaphysical issues, it is possible to achieve some common understanding of many rules of formal logic. Though utilitarian and shallow, this common understanding may by establishing a clear framework for discussions play a considerable role in the communication of knowledge. But the problems of truth, certainty, and intelligible necessity which material logic considers cannot be isolated from the subjects of philosophic controversy. Treated aside from philosophic controversy, material logic would hardly make any sense at all.

Logicians who want to avoid philosophic controversy must ignore material logic. So far as the sociology of knowledge is concerned, the situation of the material logician is much the same as that of the metaphysician. Both need the very particular kind of fortitude that it takes to live by rational evidence, with little or no support from society, in the midst of never-ending opposition. Wherever logic is principally regarded as an instrument of discussion and communication, material logic is likely to decline. Only a short time after the death of Aquinas, the Logical Treatises of Peter of Spain supplied schoolboys with a manual of logic from which posterioristic analysis is entirely absent. The maintenance and development of Aristotle's material logic were tasks for such geniuses as Cajetan and John of St. Thomas.

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In the work of Aristotle, the division of logic into formal and material is drawn with entire clarity so far as reasoning is concerned. But his treatises on apprehension and judgment do not express, by their divisions, the distinction of a form and a matter within logic. Thus On interpretation considers both such formal properties of propositions as universality and particularity (chap. 7) and such material properties as necessity and contingency (chap. 9). In most logical works patterned after the Aristotelian Organon, formal and material standpoints are distinguished only in the treatment of reasoning. John of St. Thomas, on the contrary, interprets all three operations—apprehension, judgment, and reasoning—in terms of logical form and logical matter. Considering, however, that for the logician, the first two operations of the mind are subordinated to the third, it is easily seen that this division pertains by priority to reasoning. Intentions belonging to terms or propositions are considered formal or material according as they are preparatory to the consistency of reasoning or to its demonstrative power. The relevance of the division of logic into formal and material is indirect in the case of the first two operations. Where relevance is but indirect, lesser clarity should be expected. In fact, the reasons why a problem pertaining to the first or second operation is treated in formal or in material logic are not always obvious and may not always be certain. Thus, John of St. Thomas places in material logic the problem of unity and diversity in the meaning of terms. No doubt, the treatment of this problem is, in several respects, preparatory to the theory of demonstration; but it is equally clear that without firm notions on univocity, equivocity, and analogy we are apt to break the first law of syllogistic validity, viz., that there be no more than three terms in any categorical syllogism. Further, the distribution of subjects in the two main divisions of the Logical Art may occasionally be influenced by pedagogical considerations. In scholastic language formal logic is also called `minor' logic and material logic `major' logic. But `minor' does not only signify that formal logic is shorter, and `major' that material logic is longer. It is understood that minor logic is the kind of logic that can be taught to beginners—students have to begin with formal logic anyway—and major logic the kind of logic which presupposes a background and consequently can be taught only to advanced students. Hence a tendency to place in material logic all questions particularly deep and difficult, even though it may not be entirely clear that they concern the demonstrative power of argumentation more essentially than its formal validity. The same pedagogical concern accounts for the fact that reflection upon logic itself, which, in an Aristotelian and Thomistic vision of the sciences, belongs not to logic but to metaphysics, is placed in the opening section of material, or major logic.

The general pattern of Aristotle's Organon can be described in terms of a polar opposition between dialectic on the one hand and on the other hand analytic and science. This opposition, however, must remain subordinate and can never be allowed to grow into a picture of final disunity.

Aristotle's notion of dialectic admits of several approaches and can be defined in several ways. It seems that dialectic is primarily a rational system whose principles are not rational necessities but common opinions. Science, on the other hand, is a rational system whose principles are axioms, i.e., propositions endowed with rational necessity and evidence. In lieu of axiomatic truth, dialectic depends upon the verisimilitude, the probable truth of propositions accredited by their success in the society of thinking persons. Dialectic is a sociological substitute for science. In it the real content is never certain—or, if it happens to be certain, it is so for reasons extraneous to dialectic. Nothing is certain in dialectic except the logical arrangement of objects and signs. The dialectician knows nothing scientifically except second intentions. And yet he talks of real things, nay, of all sorts of things. The logical forms of his art organize a real matter supplied, under conditions of probability, by the authority of all men, or of most of them,

or of all experts, or of most of them, or of the most famous of them. The dialectician can afford not to be a specialist: all that is certain in his art concerns second intentions, and these are general in character. The real content of dialectic is also general in character, though in an altogether different sense, since it is made of opinions commonly received among men. Because the principles organizing the dialectical art and constituting all the certainty found in it are logical, the logician, and no one else, constructs dialectical systems and writes books of dialectic. Historians and interpreters of logic have not given enough attention to the dual capacity of the dialectician. A treatise of dialectic comprises a system of logical propositions designed to get the best out of opinions commonly received in such domains as physics, ethics, or politics. It is also supposed to comprise an orderly collection of these commonly received opinions. The logician, as dialectician, trespasses the borders of the logical. He has much to say about real things, in his own tentative, talkative, unfinished, and uncertain style. Whenever the work of a logician comprises a dialectical section, we expect to find, framed in a logical system, an inquiry into real being. In fact John of St. Thomas has written no dialectic. But his extensive treatment of the categories involves a reinterpretation, in an analytical context and for analytical purposes, of material originally destined to supply the dialectician with a general knowledge of reality. As a result of this reinterpretation, the Logical Art of John of St. Thomas contains much philosophy of nature and much metaphysics.

In so far as it is directed toward analytic and science, logic does not have the same reason for inquiring into the world of reality. The analytician is not, like the dialectician, an ambiguous personage. He is all concerned with logical properties: real Properties are taken care of by another person, viz., the scientist. In analytic, the treatment of logic, both formal and material, can afford to be pure. But care for logical purity cannot hinder the logician's quest for a deep understanding of his own objects. Because the second intentions are founded upon the first, the intelligibility of logical entities, directly or indirectly, flows from the intelligibility of things. (As shown in the foregoing, this is why divergencies in the philosophy of the real are inevitably paralleled in logic. Again, the logical consequences of philosophic positions are more evident as the logician goes more deeply into the explanation of logical properties and rules.) The foundations of the logical world are aspects of the real world, both physical and mental. These aspects of nature and of the soul concern logical research intrinsically, and there is no a priori restriction on the volume of real inquiry which will be needed in order to achieve satisfactory explanation of even the most familiar of logical objects.

To sum up: although the object of logic is entirely constituted by second intentions, there are two reasons why discourse about real being should appear in the works of a logician. In so far as logic is influenced by the purposes of its dialectical part, the logician discourses about the real because dialectic is ambiguous and comprises a real content. In so far as logic is influenced by the purposes of analytic and science, the logician discourses about the real because the explanation of logical intentions requires such discourse. Besides these two reasons, which are essential, a purely accidental factor deserves to be mentioned. Occasionally, the temptation to digress about interesting issues accounts for the consideration of real subjects in a logical context. John of St. Thomas, a metaphysician and theologian much interested in reality, and a teacher always generous with his time, is not immune to this temptation. But his frequent inquiries into the real world are motivated and vindicated, in the vast majority of cases, by his search for thorough explanation of logical properties. These properties are so related to nature, to the world of the human soul, and to the metaphysical universe that an exposition

of logic centered about the explanation of logical properties inevitably develops into a general introduction to philosophy.

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The author of the Logical Art, John Poinsot, was a contemporary of Descartes. Contrary to popular belief, there still was, in this late phase of "decadent scholasticism," one man of genius among the so-called scholastics. But if we are to call him a `scholastic philosopher,' let us bear in mind a properly restricted notion of scholasticism. Not so long ago, it was commonly assumed that there had existed a unified system or thought which could be designated as "scholastic philosophy." True, men whose mental habits had been formed by the reading of Plato, Descartes, Leibnitz, Hume, Kant, and J. S. Mill could not help detecting a family resemblance in St. Anselm, St. Albert the Great, St. Thomas, Scotus, Ockham, Suarez, and a few others. Through improved acquaintance with the history of medieval thought, we now know that there has never been such a thing as a unified system of scholastic philosophy. A dozen or more philosophic doctrines, which are sharply at variance with each other, would have an equal right to be called scholastic: this makes it nonsensical to predicate `scholastic' of any philosophy or doctrine. It is possible to speak of a scholastic period in the history of thought, in spite of inevitable vagueness in the definition of such a period. But the word 'scholastic' is predicated more relevantly of a certain language, of a certain method, and of a certain set of problems—what the Germans call Problematik. There is no unified scholastic doctrine or philosophy, but there is such a thing as a scholastic set of problems. Both with regard to language and to Problematik, John of St. Thomas remains a scholastic. In spite of his chronology, Galileo and Descartes are unknown to him. His uneventful life was, for the most part, spent in schools dedicated to scholastic problems and regrettably closed to the great scientific novelties of the Renaissance.

A member of the Dominican order and a professor at the celebrated University of Alcala de Henares, John Poinsot (1589-1644)—called John of St. Thomas because of his devotion to St. Thomas' doctrines—left a monumental work comprising a Course of Philosophy and a Course of Theology. The Course of Philosophy fills three thick volumes in modern editions, the Course of Theology ten. John of St. Thomas belongs to the line of St. Thomas' great commentators; Cajetan is one of his most respected authorities. His expositions are parallel to basic works—treatises of Aristotle in the Course of Philosophy, Summa theologica of St. Thomas in the Course of Theology— but he does not use the method of the textual commentary. Most sections of his Courses begin with a sharp summary of a text; then, the main issues are discussed in extensive dissertations. Sometimes these dissertations follow each other so continuously as to make up a complete and strongly organized treatise. But John of St. Thomas considers that the requirements of completeness and continuity in exposition are met by basic texts and textual commentaries. He does not feel obliged to treat all questions normally included in a curriculum. His task is to explain—leisurely, patiently, thoroughly, and with unique skill in the selection and multiplication of standpoints—a restricted number of wonderful questions.

We do not need to elaborate on the reasons why the integral translation of a work which fills 839 two-column pages in the latest edition was held impossible. Since a choice had to be made, we turned to the field of material logic, where the shortage of great books is particularly felt. But no more than about three-fifths of John of St. Thomas' writings in material logic could be included within reasonable space limits. Our choice was governed by both doctrinal and pedagogical concerns. We made it a rule never to abridge an exposition having the character of a whole. Our shortest units are long articles. In several

cases, our unit is a whole "question." On the subject of demonstration, it is the whole set of "questions" corresponding to the Posterior Analytics.

Whoever is aware of the situation of logical studies in our time knows that the most vexing of our problems is the problem of logic itself. Accordingly, much space is given to the issues concerning the object and nature of logic (I). The problem of the universal (I^) is obviously of central significance for all logic and for the philosophy of knowledge. The "antepredicamental" discussions (III), consisting principally of an inquiry into analogy, constitute a masterly contribution to the theory of meaning.

The doctrine of analogy presented here is the subject of further developments in the articles on the division of being into categories (IV). The long study of the first four categories (IV) is a store of elaborate information on concepts basic in all parts of philosophy and in the interpretation of the sciences. From a certain standpoint, the pages on quantity and on relation can be considered supplementary to the introductory pages on the object of logic. Taken together, these three sections present much material and many precise instruments for the improvement of our ideas on the relations between the logical and the mathematical sciences. Section V is concerned with four timely issues: signification, the relation of knowledge to actual existence, reflection, and formalization. Lastly (VI) we present without any omission John of St. Thomas' treatment of demonstration and science.

A scholastic language is spoken on the campus alone and never in the market place. A vernacular, i.e., a language spoken in the market place, can be successfully translated into another vernacular; but the translation of a scholastic language into a vernacular is an enterprise whose difficulties are not always surmountable. Intense and luminous life may find expression in scholastic language; however, the intellectual life that a scholastic language succeeds in conveying is marked by austerity even in its phases of abundance. In vernacular translations, such austerity may look stiff. These general difficulties are complicated here by a disposition related to John of St. Thomas' best pedagogical qualities. A very patient teacher does not have much time left to polish his style. John of St. Thomas is capable of sharpness and beauty in expression, but he often writes in the uninhibited style of a teacher who depends confidently upon friendly communication with eager scholars. In many cases we have had to reshape clauses, to divide exceedingly long sentences, to modify the order of phrases, and effect other changes, on the same minor scale, for the sake of better readability. We believe that accuracy has never suffered in the process. In so far as the subject matter admits of anything like ease, we would not hesitate to say that John of St. Thomas reads easily when familiarity has been achieved with his vocabulary, his style, and his way of approaching questions, considering and reconsidering them with indefatigable zeal. It is the privilege of a patient teacher to become less arid less difficult to follow as the work of teaching goes on.

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From a philosophic standpoint, one major characteristic of our time is a deepened split between man's concern for mystery and the forms of scientific thought. Referring to well-known propositions of Maritain in A Preface to Metaphysics, let us say that a question can be predominantly a problem or predominantly a mystery. A problem is a question the true answer to which leaves no room for further elaboration. Descartes was praising the handiness of problems when he pointed out that a child who has performed a multiplication according to the rules of arithmetic knows as much about the product as any mathematical genius in the world. But a mystery is a question of such character that an answer

unqualifiedly true and sound and appropriate not only admits of but also urgently demands further inquiries into inexhaustible intelligibility. The mystery aspect predominates in religion, in metaphysics, in philosophy generally, and in human affairs. The problem aspect predominates in the disciplines called the sciences by common usage, in techniques, and generally in the fields where the pattern of positive science exercises a strong influence. Interest in philosophy, religion, theology, human sciences, and humane studies is no less today than in celebrated periods of intellectual greatness. But it is impossible not to be struck by a widespread aversion to scientific forms in philosophy, theology, and human affairs—briefly, in the realms characterized by the predominance of mystery. What is most alive in the logical movement of our days is directed toward a universal and thorough problematization of science. True, the rigor achieved in the scientific handling of purely problematic questions is one glorious aspect of intellectual life in this century. At the same time a sense for mystery is not lacking. It is incomparably more profound in our contemporaries than it used to be in the golden age of rationalistic optimism—say, from the time of the Encyclopedie to the great terrors of the twentieth century. What is lacking in our relation to mystery is neither earnestness nor abundance of ideas, it is the rigor of the scientific spirit. There are things which will never be accomplished by "the tragic sentiment of life," 'immersion in history,' "experience of death,' `esprit de finesse,' "cultural refinement," 'esthetic sophistication,' "our cultural heritage," etc. Those things are clarity in the statement of questions and principles, firmness in inference, rational evidence of conclusions, appropriateness in predication, integral preservation of past developments, lucid order, and the unique defense against error that rational forms alone can provide. The ambition to explore scientifically the realms where mystery predominates receives little encouragement from the most up-to-date of our logicians. Some of them would say that one major merit of their work is precisely to have demonstrated the meaninglessness of metaphysical questions, and more generally of questions concerning what we call the realm of the mystery.

Let it be remarked, at this point, that the scientific type borne in mind by a logician exerts influence upon the factual product called a system of logic. This does not express an essential necessity: such things happen because our energy is exhaustible and our versatility limited. The logic of Aristotle is not exactly what it would have been if his scientific patterns had not been Greek geometry, an imperfectly disontologized mathematical knowledge, and a physics that was not disontologized at all. With the great abundance of metaphysical and theological genius which marks the work of St. Thomas and his commentators, the scientific patterns used by the logician change somewhat. Indeed, for St. Thomas and John of St. Thomas, mathematics—principally represented by Euclidean geometry—remains the best approximation to unqualifiedly scientific knowledge and consequently the pattern which the analytician bears in mind. But when logicians are so ardently interested in philosophy, they cannot omit the logical problems of particular relevance for the explorers of philosophic mysteries. A clear example of such concern is the treatment of analogy in the Logical Art. Here, the logician answers a question asked by the metaphysician with burning anxiety, for the answer will decide whether metaphysical and, more generally, philosophic issues are meaningless or not. An inspiring and charming teacher, John of St. Thomas remains among us the logician who understands best the scientific ideal of the philosophers.

TRACTATUS DE SIGNIS: THE SEMIOTIC OF JOHN POINSOT Interpretive Arrangement by John N. Deely in Consultation with Ralph Austin Powell from the 1930 Reiser edition (emended second impression) of the *Ars Logica,* itself comprising the first two parts of the five part Curs us Philosophicus of 1631-1635, by the same author. First Published at Alcala de Henares (Complutum), Iberia 1632. In Bilingual Format Corrected Second Edition [St. Augustine's Press, 9781587318771]

In the spring of 1970 this work was understaken because of, and later sustained by, the vision of Thomas A. Sebeok. Yet the work would not have reached its fulfillment without the learned assistance and patient counsel of Ralph Austin Powell, a graduate of Poinsot's own alma matter and his brother in religious life. Powell's subtle mastery of philosophical traditions—the Greek, the Latin, the German, and the French—was an improbable resource made priceless by being put at my disposal throughout the project.

Translation finally of the inscrutable Latin of Poinsot's "Word to the Reader" of 1631 and 1640 was owing to J. Kenneth Downing. Archaic usage was much reduced through detailed suggestions of Bert Mahoney. Editorial assistance in point of organization came from Heinz Schmitz, and in point of grammar from Brooke Williams, who also mastered Spanish Round Gothic script for the frontispiece. The task of getting the notes on the text into presentable typescript was executed with admirable fidelity and steadiness by Claire Levy, as were many related tasks performed by my student Felicia Kruse. Carl Lenhart contributed help with proofreading.

The aim for the Treatise text proper was to produce matching linguistic columns, beginning and ending within the same line of text on every page. The extent to which this goal has been realized is due to the involvement and consummate skill in typesetting of Bud MacFarlane, Production Manager of Composition Specialists.

Jack Miles of the University of California Press pursued contractual arrangements for this work with understanding, vision, and respect for detail. Chet Grycz of the same press stands out in the work's actual production by his distinct commitment to its being realized in the integrity of its design. His was not the first press to try to see how this might be possible, a fact which provides the reader an intimation of the exceptional talent Mr. Grycz brings to bear on his work.

A subsidy for publishing in bilingual format was provided from three sources, the American Midwest Province of Saint Albert the Great, the DeRance Publication Fund of the ACPA in response to a proposal initiated under the presidency of Desmond FitzGerald, and Mr. Jerome Powell. Free time along with typing and copying facilities for the initial draft of this work was provided by Mortimer J. Adler.

This work is dedicated to the memory of J. Eris Powell (1875-1949), whose concept of Public life in the end made this work possible, and to the memory of his wife, Mary Conroy Powell (1888-1960). It is dedicated also to the memory of a monk of the abbey of Solesmes, with the hope that his work will be somehow continued—Dom Boissard, who produced the magnificent five volumes of the Solesmes edition of Poinsot's theological Cursus according to standards the present little work has sought to realize in its own order. His death in December of 1979 robbed humane culture for the second time (the first was Pere Combefis' death in 1679) of a completed edition worthy of its proper merits.

Walker Percy expressed the view that "a few years from now John Poinsot will be recognized as one of the major founders, if not the founder, of modern semiotics". The year was 1986, and the first edition— the first complete and independent edition—of Poinsot's Treatise on Signs had been in print about seventeen months (Perch's letter was dated 27 October, whereas 4 May 1985 was the official date of the actual publication). Two days later, having spent "the last few days toiling away" at the Tractatus, he wrote to Thomas A. Sebeok:

I am persuaded that Poinsot is the seminal man indeed. For example, I am endlessly intrigued by his insistence that "even in the case of stipulated signs the rationale of the sign must be explained by a relation to the signified [just as in the case of natural signs]...". thanks to you and Deely, that Dominican will be hooked up with Peirce and de Saussure as a Founding Father, if not the Founding Father.

With this corrected second impression of Poinsot's seminal and foundational Tractatus, perhaps we are in sight of the fulfillment of Percy's prophesy. Certainly we are much closer than we were when, outside of mathematics, the name "Poinsot" was unknown in intellectual culture, and even within mathematics it was not the Poinsot concerned with the proper standpoint and paradigm for developing the doctrine of signs that was named. Thanks to the 1985 issuance of his Treatise on Signs, the name of Poinsot has indeed become a familiar one in semiotics, philosophy, and related disciplines, overcoming even the reluctance of the Peirceans to concede that the triadic notion of sign had its birth among the Latins (whence Peirce himself originally glimpsed it), and its first unqualified statement in Book I, Question 3, of Poinsot 1632.

So, by way of introducing this emended second impression of Poinsot's semiotic, it behooves us to take a quick glance at the intervening years.

Since 1985, and a Little Before

Those of us who had been involved in semiotics with and through the pioneering work of Thomas Albert Sebeok (9 November 1920-21 December 2001)2 were caught up in the immediate task of discerning the paradigm proper to semiotics as the doctrine of signs, and disentangling the pars pro toto confusion engendered by the late modern notion of semiology. We would take a while longer to realize that the late modern overlap of semiotics with phenomenology, analytic philosophy, and semiology together was actually a moment of epochal change, the true—that is to say, positive—beginning of postmodernity for philosophy and intellectual culture globally, a beginning in which semiotics stood apart from the rest, as it were, precisely by reason of not fitting in with any pre-existing paradigm.

Things are clearer now, and particularly clearer is the justice of one of Poinsot's opening remarks concerning the doctrine of signs, namely, that it requires a standpoint transcending the realism/idealism opposition which had come to define modernity as a distinct epoch or period in the history of philosophy. This pill proved hardest to swallow for the self-styled realists, and I shall have to devote a

Section of this Second Edition Foreword to wondering why. Suffice at this point to say that there are few left today who have not come to realize that even when things become objects, the objects do not simply reduce to the things but are sustained as objects by an additional network of relations that enable the objects to become matters of public debate with the often disconcerting effect of revealing that many aspects of objectivity thought to be "real" were in fact fictions not yet recognized as such.

More disconcerting yet was the realization that these relations without which there would be no objects in their difference from (their irreducibility to) things are themselves indifferent to the difference, being themselves both apprehensive and mind-independent under one set of circumstances (when what is object exists also regardless of the apprehension, like a correctly diagnosed cancer) and—with no change whatever in the positive being of the relation itself as linking the one apprehending to something over and above his or her own subjectivity, something irreducibly "other", as might be said, as in the forlorn case of the lover who discovers only after a considerable lapse of time that the beloved has been killed by a meteor (of all things!)—while remaining apprehensive and apprehensive of the same object, become mind-dependent as relations under another set of circumstances. ^n short, the circumstances alone, not the relation itself, determine whether a given relation is real or fictional, or indeed a mixture of both.

Poinsot's insight is as simple as that: since signs fully actual consist in relations, signs partake both of the transcendence of subjectivity distinctive of relation and of the indifference to the boundaries which separate things in the order of 'substance' and 'inherent accidents' (subjectivity with its subjective characteristics), i.e., the boundaries making this thing natural and that one cultural, this phenomenon "inner" and that phenomenon "outer", etc.; whence it comes about that the Way of Signs winds everywhere.

Exclusively preoccupied with determining "what things are", seeking the substance of things (or at least with talking about it, however emptily on many occasions), whether thinking or extended, the moderns thought next to nothing of relations, save to regard them as creations of subjectivity, creatures of a "point of view". They were ill-prepared for the discovery that without relations as something real there could be no objects at all, neither real nor unreal. As the end of modernity approached, the ultramoderns went to the opposite extreme, declaring these thoroughly mind-dependent relations to be all and only—yet without in any measure realizing the singularity of relations as alone among the ways of being indifferent to the difference between obtaining in the order of substances intersubjectively with a mind-independent character (as between parent and offspring) or obtaining only in the order of what might have been, what was or could be, or even could not be at all (as in the pre-Copernican belief that the sun revolves about the earth; or as in the movie Them portraying mutated ants in the earth's gravitational field attaining the size of railroad boxcars, impossible for an exoskeleton lifeform under earth gravitation), "purely objectively", as it were.

The true break with modern nominalism, then—or, what comes close to the same thing, the beginning of a postmodern philosophical stance—came with Peirce (1839-1914) the only late-modern student of the Latins, it would seem, who learned from the study of the works of Poinsot's teachers, the Conimbricenses, along with his study of Aquinas and other Latins, Scotus above all to appreciate the reality of relations alongside substance even though a relation as such can never be instantiated save indirectly by the medium of related objects and related things as objects (when the relation, of its

proper nature irreducibly suprasubjective, is intersubjective as well) and can never exist save dependently upon some subjective characteristic of an individual (a "substance").

Whether it be in the pure relativism of the ultramoderns, often mistaken for "postmodernism"; or in the actual postmodernism of the rediscovery of relations as not only obtaining in the order of fictional and conventional being, but also within the order of being really mind-independent, and rather as that singular way of being equally at home in the world of things as things, things as objects, or objects whether pretending or not pretending to be (mistaken or not mistaken for) things: the actual crossing of the threshold of postmodernity has been best described so far in the formulae of Joseph Ratzinger according to which "the undivided sway of thinking in terms of substance has ended", because "relation is discovered as an equally primordial mode of reality".

The decisive move, then, lies not simply in the recovery of relation as singularly unconfined by any boundary between reality and fiction, but in the more complex realization that this singularity of relation is precisely the reason why the boundaries between what is real and what is not are shifting rather than fixed, a world wherein the future holds possibilities that cannot be foreseen or foretold within the horizon of any given "present" (any exclusively synchronic view), and where as a consequence the "meaning" of the past in its relevance (or irrelevance) to the present is never settled once and for all.

To put the more complex realization opening the door to a postmodern epoch of philosophy and intellectual culture in other words, it consists in the discovery that relations in their singular being, when they involve the objectification of related things (certainly when they actually do so, probably even when they do so only virtually), are not merely dyadic cause-effect products or 'after effects' but something more complex and more interesting: relations irreducibly triadic wherein one term of the relation stands to another term of the relation as presenting that other term to or for some yet third term. For in that case the relation in question brings about the situation of a signification, the paradigm case of the action of signs in contrast to things and to objects ("significates") alike.

The action of signs—"semiosis", as Peirce named it, in a term coined from the Greek term for signs of nature, ^^^^^^^ ("semeion")—is singular in the world of things, just as it is the singular being of relations on which the action of signs depends for its distinctiveness. The "causality" in this case, thus, is indirect. Peirce not so much mistakenly identified the action of signs with "final causality" as he mistakenly called that action "final causality", for want of familiarity with the more refined later Latin categories of causality as the notion applied both to the world of nature and to the world of culture in their experiential interpenetration.

Of course, so-called "final causality"—including extrinsic final causality, not only the intrinsic final causality or "teleonomy" that Aristotle identified in nature to describe the development of individual substances from initial to mature states—is involved in the action of some signs, but by no means in all (most notably not in the signs of nature originally called ^^^^^^, such as smoke indicating burning, milk in the female breast indicating childbirth, etc.). The only causality involved in the action of all signs, and therefore the causality according to signs in their proper being, is extrinsic formal causality, as Poinsot is careful to explain and was careful also to distinguish from final causality (whether intrinsic 'teleonomy', or extrinsic deliberate use) in making the necessary expansion of and additions to Aristotle's original fourfold scheme of causes specified to explanations of being only in the order of ens reale, not in the order of the being proper to signs transcending the contrast between ens reale and ens rationis.

Our present author, John Poinsot, was the first one not only [1] to identify the distinctiveness of semiotic causality as extrinsic formal rather than some variant of final, but also [2] to set out in a thematic way the irreducibly triadic character of relations in producing the action of signs, showing [3] that the action in question is possible in the first place precisely by reason of the singularity of relation among the modes of being in being realizable with its proper and positive character unchanged when the instance of the relation under one set of circumstances make it to be mindindependent and under changed circumstances mind-dependent, while maintaining unchanged as its terminus the object signified, the same significate.

This triple originality underscores Walker Percy's assignment of the title of "founding father of semiotics" to Poinsot's future: Poinsot's work cannot come to be known without its author's claim to that title forcing itself upon the minds of readers in the 21st century generally familiar, as 20th century readers generally were not, with the idea of signs and their action as constituting a distinctive field of inquiry that cannot be avoided by anyone interested to know, as Richard Morris put it in his review of Poinsot's Tractatus in its first independent edition, "why we are able to talk about past and present, the real and the unreal, casting a net of significance over both". With his Tractatus de Signis Poinsot anticipated and adumbrated an era beyond the development of the Way of Ideas upon which his contemporaries were even then setting forth on what was to become the modern mainstream development.

The semiotic of John Poinsot here presented autonomously for the first time was disengaged from a larger work entitled the Ars Logics, itself but the first two parts of a five-part Cursus Philosophicus. Since this work has a considerable historical interest in its own right, and in order to minimize the violence of editing the tractatus de signis into a whole independent of that original context, we have settled on the following manner of presentation.

Putting ourselves in the position of a reader coming to the Ars Logics for the first time and interested only in Poinsot's discussion of signs, we asked ourselves: What sections of the work would this hypothetical reader have to look at in order to appreciate that discussion both in its own terms and in terms of the whole of which it originally formed a part? To what extent are these separable philosophically?

The pages that follow make up our solution to this problem. We have left Poinsot's text stand virtually entirely according to the order he proposed for it within the Ars Logics as a whole. To make this order clear, we have included title pages, and all general statements Poinsot set down concerning the whole (and therefore the Treatise as part), inserting where appropriate and to bridge necessary jumps a series of brief comments designated "semiotic markers," designed to show the reader how the rationale of all editing is derived from the original author's own intentions; and second, we have included all and only those sections of the whole which have a direct bearing on understanding the doctrine proposed in the Treatise on Signs proper, as the semiotic markers make clear.

In other words, we have tried to provide the reader with a guided tour of the Ars Logics that leads directly to an understanding of the doctrine of signs contained in that work, but does so by enabling him or her to appreciate the historical origin of the account in the context of its author's own understanding of previous logical and philosophical traditions. We have chosen this format as the one best suited, so far as we could judge, to exhibit the unique mediating status Poinsot's Treatise occupies

"archeologically," as it were, in the Western tradition between the ontological concerns of ancient, medieval, and renaissance philosophy, and the epistemological concerns of modern and contemporary thought.

At the end of the work, the reader will find a lengthy "Editorial Afterword" explaining the entire work and giving its background and prospectus, much the sort of materials commonly given in an Introduction to a translated work. The device of the semiotic markers made it possible in this case to bypass the need for lengthy introductory materials enabling the reader to grasp the editorial structure of the whole, yet without of course obviating the need for detailed discussions somewhere of the principles of the English text, and of the historical situation of the author and his work. Thus we have been able to enter simply and directly into the doctrinal content of the main text, without cluttering its entrance with more than a very few lines of contemporary origin. <>

TRAFFICKING WITH DEMONS: MAGIC, RITUAL, AND GENDER FROM LATE ANTIQUITY TO 1000 by Martha Rampton [Cornell University Press, 9781501702686]

TRAFFICKING WITH DEMONS explores how magic was perceived, practiced, and prohibited in western Europe during the first millennium CE. Through the overlapping frameworks of religion, ritual, and gender, Martha Rampton connects early Christian reckonings with pagan magic to later doctrines and dogmas. Challenging established views on the role of women in ritual magic during this period, Rampton provides a new narrative of the ways in which magic was embedded within the foundational assumptions of western European society, informing how people understood the cosmos, divinity, and their own Christian faith.

As Rampton shows, throughout the first Christian millennium, magic was thought to play a natural role within the functioning of the universe and existed within a rational cosmos hierarchically arranged according to a "great chain of being." Trafficking with the "demons of the lower air" was the essense of magic. Interactions with those demons occurred both in highly formalistic, ritual settings and on a routine and casual basis. Rampton tracks the competition between pagan magic and Christian belief from the first century CE, when it was fiercest, through the early Middle Ages, as atavistic forms of magic mutated and found sanctuary in the daily habits of the converted peoples and new paganisms entered Europe with their own forms of magic. By the year 1000, she concludes, many forms of magic had been tamed and were, by the reckoning of the elite, essentially ineffective, as were the women who practiced it and the rituals that attended it.

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The timeframe covered by this book is broad and the project ambitious. It treats magic, ritual, and gender from the perspective of varied disciplines and more than one historical era. I can by no means claim to be an expert on all of them, and because of this there are likely to be errors and scant justice done to particular topics, despite my best efforts to avoid them. That having been said, I have confidence in the argument of the work and have made the decision that missteps on some details (though regrettable) do not negate the value of a comprehensive, synthetic study. The long early Middle Ages is the period in European history least studied by scholars of magic, and a full appreciation of early medieval culture and society is not possible without bringing magic into the equation. Although late antiquity has not suffered the same neglect as the five hundred years following it, a discussion of late antique Christian magic comprises a portion of the book because in order to appreciate early European magic, a grounding in the intellectual, religious, and cultural landscape of the late Roman world is essential.

Late antiquity formed a bridge between the classical era and the early Middle Ages and is the period in which the building blocks of the early medieval world can be found. Late antique culture flowered roughly from 200 CE and continued until about 450, when the inheritors of the western Roman Empire accommodated themselves to post-Roman societies where classical traditions, customs of national ethnic groups, and the Christian religion in its various configurations were homogenizing.

The most defining cultural development of late antiquity was the rise of the church and the formulation of Christianity As people of the Mediterranean world converted, their enthusiasm for Christianity and its heroes and heroines—martyrs, saints, and holy persons—was grafted onto a timehonored devotion to most all things Roman. Gradually, however, Christian sites, such as churches and tombs of the dead, dimmed the allure of the Roman city. The most zealous devotees of the new faith fled to the desert— the anti-city—and took up residence in caves, thereby registering a radical critique of the very assumptions of the classical dream which averred that humans are perfectible through the state. Due to the labor of committed Christians, including missionaries, the urban clergy, and noblewomen, the religion spread steadily through Egypt, the Levant, and northern Europe in the fourth and fifth centuries. Although numbers are frustratingly difficult to tie down; a scholarly estimate is that in 313, when

Emperor Constantine (d. 337) legalized Christianity, there were approximately five to six million adherents in the empire. A century later, the number of Christians had grown to thirty milli^n.

Monastic communities were essential in sustaining the conversion of Europe because they acted as hubs for those seeking to serve the church and as centers for the development and dissemination of doctrine. Communities such as those at Liguge (ca. 360), Marmoutier (ca. 372), Lerins (ca. 410), and Marseille (ca. 415) attracted men who wished to live ascetic lives dedicated to God. Women's religious communities also flourished during these centuries. John Cassian (d. ca. 435), the monk instrumental in introducing eastern notions of monasticism to the West, founded a female house in Marseille around 415.29

the most momentous kingdom to emerge from the late antique dissolution of western Roman sovereignty was carved out by the Prankish dynasty of the Merovingians. Their ascension began with Clovis I (d. ca. 511), who united various Germanic tribes under his militaristic leadership and helped lay the groundwork for the Franks coexistence and eventual assimilation with the Gallo-Roman population of Gaul.

When Clovis died, he followed the Frankish pattern of inheritance and divided his expansive kingdom among his sons. The four princes had considerable trouble agreeing on the boundaries between kingdoms, and 250 years of partible inheritance resulted in recurrent fratricidal warfare over lands and titles. Although the early Merovingian period is often characterized as brutal and chaotic, recent assessments demonstrate that beneath the territorial conflicts the rudiments of Roman civilization remained in place, there was a steady spread and elaboration of Christianity, and by the seventh century, the sense of a common "Frankishness" began to form. This new polity reached its zenith in the seventh century under Kings Clothar II (d. 629) and Dagobert I (d. 639), during which time the Merovingian achievements were particularly evident. Monasticism thrived; the kings established alliances with bishops, extended political suzerainty, assembled armies, levied taxes, appointed dukes, wrote legal codes, and instituted law courts. Most important, the clear outlines of an evolving, distinct and rationalized medieval civilization became perceptible.

After the death of Dagobert, the Merovingian eminence began to fade as a succession of short-lived, mediocre kings and ambitious, competitive noble families fractured the kingdom. A definitive loss of authority and regnal competency was evident by the end of the civil war in 719, and the dynasty was eclipsed by the rising Carolingian house, headed by its eponym, Charles Martel (d. 741), a military mastermind and shrewd politician. The political fiction that the Merovingian governed Gaul was abandoned when Charles's son, Pippin III (d. 768), endorsed by Pope Zacharias (d. 752), maneuvered his way to the throne in 751.

Pippin's son, the great Charlemagne (d. 814), continued his father's military expansion and organizational policies. In the last decades of the eighth century, under Charlemagne's direction, a coalition of the ecclesiastical and secular leadership of western Europe designed a reform agenda for the betterment of the Frankish lands and began the process of imposing a level of conformity in the areas of religion, law, the military, education, marriage, inheritance, liturgy, and public behavior. "Carolingian" can refer narrowly to the ruling families of western and central Europe from the mid-eighth through most of the tenth century, but the term does not map neatly onto any narrowly defined lineage or specific territorial borders. It generally has a broader connotation of the political, religious, and cultural life lived during the reign of Carolingian kings. An even more wide-ranging denotation of the term draws in the late tenth

and early eleventh centuries, when European society advanced along the lines set out by Carolingian reformers, even after Carolingian political power had splintered or disappeared.

The reform movement, which was the bedrock of the Carolingian agenda, was an all-embracing enterprise with roots in Celtic and Anglo-Saxon ecclesiology. Christianity reached Roman England in the first centuries after the death of Jesus and was present in Ireland by about 400, which predates Saint Patrick's (fl. fifth century) arrival on the emerald shores. Patrick was kidnapped from his home in Britain as a young boy and enslaved in Ireland, where, after his escape, he was instrumental in establishing an ecclesiastical structure. The traditional view holds that the oxygen of church revival originated in Ireland and England, then breathed life into the continental church as Celtic and Anglo-Saxon monks, pilgrims, and missionaries (along with their manuscripts) migrated to Europe. This view fails to take into account the vibrancy of the Merovingian church, but it remains true that in the seventh century, itinerant monks such as the Irish Columbanus (d. 615) and his companions, founded pivotal monasteries in Gaul and Lombardy (most notable at Luxeuil and Bobbin) that recruited religious from the upper nobility. These peregrini worked together with continental bishops, monks, and monarchs to further the development of Christianity in Gaul.

By 410, Britain found itself outside the protection of the retreating Roman imperial polity, and the Romano-Britons were left to fend for themselves. In the mid-fifth century, German peoples from Saxon tribes began migrating to Britain, some looking for farmland, some as mercenaries, some as freebooting warriors. These migrations lasted for about a century and a half, and over a period of approximately fifty years the new peoples gained control of the lowlands of England. Relatively few written sources are extant that explain the process by which the Anglo-Saxons settled in and came to rule the Romano-Britons, and those we do have are Latin and portray the Anglo-Saxons as full-blooded invaders and conquerors. The archaeological evidence is richer than the written word and confirms a dramatic decline of centralized administration and Roman culture after 410. In the wake of this decline came a reversion to paganism, a linguistic evolution from Latin and Gaelic to Old English (at least in the lowlands), and the emergence of the Anglo-Saxons as the ruling class.

In 596, Gregory the Great sent Augustine (d. 604), the soon-to-be first archbishop of Canterbury, and a delegation of missionaries to convert King AEthelbert of Kent (d. 616) to Roman Christianity, and the events of England once again became part of the European record. England was slowly and erratically evangelized as the monarchies of its seven kingdoms embraced the new religion, although periodic reversions to paganism were common. The historical developments of the church and Christian society in England and on the Continent were not identical, but there were many parallels. The sources attest to an energetic cross-fertilization of ideas and exchange of written works across the channel in the seventh through eleventh centuries, and a robust scholarship has demonstrated the close intellectual and spiritual affinities, as well as some political similarities, between the inhabitants of England and those who came under the authority of the Carolingians.

Powerful reform-minded bishops such as Wilfrid of Northumbria (d. ca. 709) struck out against secularized monasteries and worked to bring AngloSaxon practice in line with Roman usage. Kings AEthelbald (d. 757) and Offa d. 796) of the kingdom of Mercia had priorities similar to those of Charlemagne, and the political and cultural bonds between the kingdoms tightened in the late eighth century. The Mercian dynasty expanded the territorial and political hegemony of Mercia, held councils, and increased the number of bishoprics and archbish^^rics. The tenth-century English and continental

churches, enthralled with the spirit of renewal and sharing a vision of how it should look, worked together to operationalize reform.

Pope Leo III (d. 816) crowned Charlemagne the Holy Roman Emperor on Christmas Day in 800, and the Frankish kingdom became an empire. Charlemagne's son, Louis the Pious (d. 840), continued his father's program of secular and religious renewal, but the events of the ninth century successfully challenged the unity of his realm. Emperor Louis followed Frankish custom and assigned different portions of his patrimony to his three sons, but Frankish elites were encouraged to conceive of the empire as a single entity. The oldest son, Lothar (d. 855), inherited his father's imperial crown. The two other sons (Louis the German [d. 876]) and Charles the Bald [d. 877]) were to act as sub-kings over given regions of the federation. The failure of Louis's sons to make their father's vision of "brotherly cooperation" a political reality worked to undermine the cohesiveness of the Carolingian Empire. In the ninth century, Europe, which was already fissiparous due to family feuding, was beset by a devastating series of Viking invasions from the north, Magyars from the east, and Berbers/Arabs from the south. Regionalism prevailed, and the separate nations of modern Europe began to take shape out of the once vast domain of Charles the Great.

In England the Viking invasions were prolonged and severe, but the balance began to tip in favor of the Anglo-Saxons with King Alfred the Great's (d. 899) victory over a large Danish army at the battle of Edington in 878. Alfred and his descendants from Wessex consolidated their authority over other English kingdoms and created a strong monarchy in the south of England supported by the nobility and the church.

In 911 the last Carolingian king of East Francia died, and in 987 the West Frankish line of the Carolingian dynasty came to an end. In both East and West Francia, nobles elected non-Carolingian rulers. East Francia experienced a brief "Ottoman Renaissance" under the Saxon kings initiated by Otto I's (d. 973) marriage to Adelaide of Italy (d. 999) in 951 and his subsequent coronation as emperor by Pope John XI^ (d. 964) in 962. Intellectuals in Ottoman Europe had been nurtured on the Carolingian vision and furthered the reform work that began in the ninth century. Changes in the political sphere did not cause significant discontinuities in popular or learned culture. The Carolingians transmitted corrected versions of Old and New Testament texts, patristic biblical exegeses, treatises for use in schools, guides to discipline and the religious life, liturgical materials, practical manuals, legal collections, histories, poetry, and the concept of a model library, properly stocked with materials necessary for Christian learning.

By around 1050, Europe powered by the achievements of the Carolingian renovatio, was shifting gears. Thinking began to change regarding church hierarchs, ecclesiastical administration, organization of land tenure, and political structures. Along with these transformations, perceptions about the concept of magic metamorphosed. For a millennium, ruling bodies had suppressed errant folk practices and struggled to corral the concept of magic by determining what exactly trafficking with demons amounted to. In the centuries after 1000, the concept of magic shattered like the glass of a windshield which retains its basic coherence while forming new surface patterns. Magic came to encompass anything from a plot element in a romance narrative to the fuel for heresy trials.

Throughout the political vicissitudes of the early Middle Ages, magic was a lived reality, and the fundamentals were consistent from the earliest Christian period to the end of the Ottoman era. Traffic with demons was rooted in daily life in myriad ways and was a serious threat to the thoroughgoing

Christianization of Europe's peoples. Understanding the mechanics, efficacy, and gender of magic brings into relief the processes of social and intellectual evolution in the early Middle Ages.

Chapter 1 of this book addresses definitions and historiography, loosening some of the terminological knots that have bedeviled the terms "magic" and "ritual." It also serves as an essay on materials pertaining to this study. My methodology is to amass a critical body of evidence, without claiming that zll of it contributed equally to contemporary perceptions of magic. Some sources were well known in their time, some not, but the perspective contained in any given text provides a piece of the puzzle even if the text was not widely distributed. I often line fictional works up with other sorts of evidence in order to examine perceptions. When discussing in the same voice, for example, a Roman novel, a seventh-century law code, and a lead tablet found in a fifth-century cemetery, I am not confusing "actual" practices (inasmuch as we can know what is real from any text) with literary imagination. Instead, I am looking for cultural conceptions of magic that are manifest in various types of written records—fictional or otherwise.

Chapter 2 considers demons and their place in late classical and early medieval cosmologies. This discussion is not sequential or linear, nor does it focus on texts in situ; rather, it accommodates a high level of generalization and acts as a large canopy covering material from across a broad spectrum of time and space in order to clarify terms and assumptions that informed an understanding of magic throughout the first millennium. In the Christian mental universe, demons were at the very center of all magic, so much so that magic itself equated to traffic with demons. As this book demonstrates, any active involvement with demons—from blatantly honoring pagan idols, to eating meat cooked at pagan shrines, to casting spells—was magic, even if the persons involved were not intentionally trafficking.

In parts 2, 3, and 4, magic, ritual, and gender are approached chronologically, broken down into three eras: the early Christian, the Merovingian, and the Carolingian." Periodization is always tricky because history does not unfold in neat units, and people do not experience their lives in discrete epochs. Given that, I am not apologetic about organizing the book the way I have, because a nuanced periodization is necessary and all but inescapable. Every chapter harks back to material in previous units and foreshadows issues to come so as to highlight links across the first millennium while exploring change over time. Each unit covers the myriad sorts and uses of magic—how it was viewed, discussed, categorized, and (to the extent that the sources allow) practiced. Over the course of ten centuries, the scope of "the magical" mutated and grew. There were both progression and permanence as to what constituted magic, what types were thought to be the most toxic, how people encountered the magic arts, and how church and secular authorities sought to structure those encounters.

Broadly speaking, trafficking with demons can be divided into seven types. Although my taxonomy is inevitably overdrawn (as taxonomies tend to be) and there was impressive imbrication, lack of precision, and evolution in the way nomenclature was used, the classificatory system that follows is more than a bricolage created from bits and pieces of data from disparate sources; it paints a coherent portrait of the kinds or aspects of magic practiced in the first millennium. It is etic, while at the same respecting the historical actors' categories.

First is idolatry. In the polytheistic cultures of the ancient world, idolatry constituted the institutionalized veneration of deities—both state sponsored and familial. But for Christians, those deities were devils, and worship of them through their idols amounted to traffic with demons. Although all magic was at

base idolatrous because it acknowledged the power of demons in some way, Christian thinkers of the primitive church differentiated between the formal worship of false gods and other kinds of magical trafficking. However, in the post-apostolic period, the connotation of idolatry broadened as theologians folded an assortment of activities into the concept of idolatry—a concept Christians already accepted as blasphemy. Over time, the term "idolatry" became increasingly oblique, blurry and subtle. As Bernadette Filotas notes, by the early Middle Ages idolatry denoted a "body of customs." It became a watchword for any sort of trafficking with demons and activities thought to be pagan or simply irreligious.

Second, divination and theurgy were in essence pseudo-sciences devoted to mystical, celestial ascent or clairvoyance by means of soothsaying, astrology, lots, and dreams, all of which drew on the abilities of demons.

Third, goetia is a classical Greek term referring to conjuring for various purposes; some of them were lofty, and some were tawdry. Closely allied to goetia is the Latin maleficium which was the word used in the Middle Ages to indicate self-serving and intentionally harmful manipulation of the magic arts.

Fourth, superstition consisted of unexceptional misdeeds or witlessness of individuals, who may or may not have been aware that their actions were demonic. The term implied false or distorted religion, excessive anxiety about the profane affairs of daily life over which people ought not to attempt control, and undue curiosity that gave demons entree to the unwary and led them to irrational behaviors—or worse, idolatry. Allied to superstition was a brand of magic best labeled as "tricks" (conveyed by Latin terms such as ludus, ars, praestigia, and dolus). Tricks pertained to dramaturgic displays of magical virtuosity intended to impress an audience and aggrandize the conjurer's own prestige or influence. Performers of magical stunts were not primarily interested in venerating demons, but their histrionics depended on demonic aid and played to the superstitious proclivities of their audiences. Another more insidious kind of tricksters were arch-demons, such as Satan or the Antichrist, whose trickery was considerably more noxious than the attention-getting trafficker in hoaxes.

Fifth, stria refers to an inscrutable airborne creature, and lamia is a term for a bloodsucking vampire. Each has a long and chilling tradition cloaked in obscurity. They make appearances in various genres from antiquity throughout the Middle Ages, and because of their protean natures, various other female-identified beings were accreted to them.

The sixth category involves healing, which was by no means a subset of magic per se in the early Middle Ages, but demons do appear in the materia medica as the cause of disease, disease itself, and sometimes the cure. Among the medical treatments recorded, magical remedies or prophylactics that depend on demons for their efficacy are common.

The seventh category entails love and birth magic, which shared characteristics with maleficium, superstition, and healing. Love magic refers to procedures designed to inflame or squelch romantic/physical attraction, and birth magic sought to stimulate fertility and its opposite, infertility, and to effect abortion.

Thinking on magic was not monolithic, even in a given time and place; authors analyzed practices in different ways and used terms or accepted concepts inconsistently. A person of authority might label a practice "forbidden" and append it to the corpus of existing proscriptions without particular concern about standardization, redundancy, or contradiction. Further, behaviors were fluid and flexible in the

daily world of a given era and could at one time be classed in several ways. Categories were not exclusive; the borders between one type of magic and another were unstable. And of course, how various practices might be classified was rarely a concern of the people engaged in the magic arts and only sometimes of interest to those who sought to eradicate them. Particular magical procedures entered a given society's field of vision in some periods more than in others. For example, those in the apostolic age had first to combat overt idolatry, whereas in the Merovingian era, superstition was a more persistent problem.

Although throughout the first millennium there was no hierarchy of types of magic or magical practitioners per se, some were intrinsically less pernicious or objectionable than others. There was a difference between the herbal healer and the malicious maleficus/malefice—between the migrant trickster and the simple country farmer clinging to pre-Christian traditions. Theologians and pastors realized that the itinerant magician sought to deceive by devilish tricks, while the peasant often acted from ignorance. They recognized that calculations of the mathematicus were hoary and erudite, and the conjurations of the local spellbinder sprang from the waywardness of the unlettered.

Words such as superstition (superstitio), pagan (paganus), idolatry (idololatria or cultura idolorum), gentile (gentilis) heathen (ethnicus or gens), necromancy (necromantic), juggling! tricks (praestigia/praestigiae), and so forth were slippery, nebulous, overlapping, and indiscriminately applied to behaviors that looked very much alike. In the ninth century, a group of fifteen sermons was collected and erroneously attributed to Saint Boniface (d. 754). Sermon six captures the blending of terminology typical of writings throughout the first millennium. "That which is called sacrilege is the worship of idols. And all the sacrifices and divination of the pagans are sacrileges; so in the same way sacrifices of the dead or dead bodies, or over their tombs, or auguries, or amulets of herbs, or sacrifices over stones or atsprings or trees or to Jupiter or Mercury or to the other pagan gods, all these things are dem^nic." As Pseudo-Boniface demonstrates, regardless of the nuances in terminology, the common denominator among all the expressions of magic was trafficking with demons. <>

THE DIVINE VISION OF DANTE'S PARADISO: THE METAPHYSICS OF REPRESENTATION by William Franke [Cambridge University Press, 9781316517024]

A bold study that reveals Dante's medieval vision of Scripture as theophany through pioneering use of contemporary theory and phenomenology.

In Canto XVIII of Paradiso, Dante sees thirty-five letters of Scripture - LOVE JUSTICE, YOU WHO RULE THE EARTH - 'painted' one after the other in the sky. It is an epiphany that encapsulates the Paradiso, staging its ultimate goal - the divine vision. This book offers a fresh, intensive reading of this extraordinary passage at the heart of the third canticle of the Divine Comedy. While adapting in novel ways the methods of the traditional lectura Dantis, William Franke meditates independently on the philosophical, theological, political, ethical, and aesthetic ideas that Dante's text so provocatively projects into a multiplicity of disciplinary contexts. This book demands that we question not only what Dante may have meant by his representations, but also what they mean for us today in the broad horizon of our intellectual traditions and cultural heritage.

Review

'This is a brilliant and enjoyable book. With sharp interdisciplinary acumen, Franke provides lucid and creative readings that offer original and fruitful perspectives on Dante's Commedia, highlighting its relevance for contemporary studies in theology, philosophy and literature. The Divine Vision of Dante's Paradiso compellingly shows how Dante's bold and experimental writing can, even for us today, vivify in striking ways reflection on truth and its mediation.' Vittorio Montemaggi, King's College London

'This book possesses the outstanding qualities one has come to expect from Franke's scholarship: broad and deep mastery of the Western philosophical and theological traditions; attentive, nuanced, and fecund literary analysis; a crystal-clear, jargon-free, economical, elegant, and at times lyrical prose; a searching and intelligent devotion to groundbreaking inquiry. In Franke's view, Dante's longed-for vision of God is nothing other than his vision of Letters – of Writing that, in keeping with the doctrine of Incarnation, both is and is not God. Such Writing is not human but is revelation: it shows God visibly, yet at the same time it is not God's essence as the Absolute and the Infinite.' Gregory B. Stone, Louisiana State University

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Subject and Scope of the Work

This book offers a sharply focused reading of one of the most extraordinary passages at the heart of Dante's Paradiso. In Canto XVIHI, Dante sees thirty-five letters of Scripture — DILIGITE IUSTITIAM / QUI IUDICATIS TERRAM — "painted" ("dipinto") one after the other in the sky. After a dazzling song and dance, each of the incandescent letters breaks up into its component sparks, each spark a blessed soul. These soulsparks then regroup to form the next letter in the series. The last letter, M, finally metamorphoses into a figure — the emblematic sign of the Roman Imperial Eagle outlined in its head and wings. Considered specifically from a literary-theoretical point of view, this scene is arguably the most challenging and intriguing in the poem. In some vertiginous regards, this epiphany encapsulates the Paradiso as a whole by staging its ultimate goal — the divine vision — self-reflexively in a mise-en-abime as an instance of the writing of letters.

In this cosmic staging of letters from Holy Scripture, the inner, spiritual experience of Dante's visio Dei takes on an external, aesthetic form as a written figure. Words and letters that are revealed from heaven show forth also as a consummate poetic creation. In teasing ways, this extraordinary revelation of Scripture constitutes an exception within a poem in which the divine vision as such tends to withdraw behind the veil of ineffability that is tirelessly evoked from beginning to end. This exception, in which God is directly envisioned in the letters of Scripture, each one being individually contemplated as a divine Name, serves to reveal the enabling condition of the entire poem, namely, writing, since the poem in the end is made up of nothing but writing. The divine vision is displayed here as revealed in the poem's material means — writing — which is itself then broken down into its own basic building blocks, viz., letters. These letters, furthermore, dissolve into what appear to be random sparks, though actually they are providentially guided soul-lights forming, as if by a miracle, into the intelligible shapes of letters and even spelling out a verse from Scripture, hence the divine Word.

The monograph in hand presents a reading of this particularly provocative passage near the climax of Dante's complete oeuvre. At the same time, such an exegetical exercise also furnishes the occasion for investigating some fundamental theoretical issues concerning, notably, the metaphysics of representation, particularly with respect to God. The scene probes the epistemological conditions of possibility of a vision of theological transcendence. For this purpose, Dante employs poetic modes as his indispensable means. Dante's text raises key questions regarding representation in language of the ultimately real, questions that are decisive today for criticism throughout the humanities and social

sciences and even more broadly across the entire spectrum of discursive disciplines. These questions and their analogues are inseparably literary-critical, philosophical, and theological, and they infiltrate the domains of the ethical and the political as well.

The book, accordingly, aims to interpret Dante's paradisiacal vision of writing in terms opening it up to philosophical analysis and, furthermore, to speculative contemplation that is simultaneously aesthetic and spiritual in nature. The Heaven of Jupiter (or Jove, "Giove," as this heaven is christened explicitly in XV ^^. 95) is, in crucial respects, the metaliterary pivot-point where the poem probes most searchingly its own creative source springs and the poeticological methods that make it materially feasible as a linguistic performance. In the passage placed under scrutiny (Paradiso XVI^^. 71-136), the poem reflects upon itself both in its theological underpinnings and in its literary techniques. It turns attention specifically to the material substrate and scriptural medium comprised by its own representational apparatus as the vehicles and pragmatic instruments for its actualization of a mystical experience.

In following up Dante's literary visions with philosophical reflections, I am continuing a procedure already at least implicit within the poem itself. I intend, furthermore, that the book should be useful to many diverse readers looking to find in Dante something answering to their own interests and quests. It aims to interest researchers, for example, investigating the relation between word and image in art history and aesthetic theory, as well as those sounding the materialities of signification in media studies. But the consequences for these and for other disciplines are left largely to be drawn by scholars working in those fields.

The book offers a kind of lectura Dantis focused on one heaven of the Paradiso, yet it also enfolds in embryo a philosophical interpretation of modernity as it emerges from the intellectual and spiritual matrices that Dante discloses in this astonishing and perspicuous epiphany. This interpretation is extended to other passages of the Paradiso in a companion work titled Dante's Paradiso and the Origins of Modern Thought: Toward a Speculative Philosophy of Self-Reflection (Routledge, 2021). Here, in contrast, I remain focused on a single — albeit superlatively significant — juncture of the poem.

Unlike the traditional lectura Dantis, the present work proposes not only to "read" the text as accurately as possible, adhering strictly to Dante's own views, but also to meditate independently on the philosophical, theological, political, ethical, and aesthetic ideas that Dante's text so audaciously projects onto a multiplicity of disciplinary backgrounds. The question is not only what Dante may have meant by his representations, but also what they can mean for us today in the broad horizon of our intellectual traditions and cultural heritage.

Thus, like my previous books on Dante, this book, too, is a work of philosophical reflection. It interprets Dante's text as disclosing to us the nature of a fundamental idea in philosophy, namely, that of mediation. This idea evolves in the course of intellectual history. Mediation of supersensible ideas by their sensible instantiations through metaphysical "participation," as laid out in Plato's philosophy, eventually turns, particularly with Hegel's thinking, into dialectical mediation of material and ideal phenomena dynamically by their negations. These mediations make up the course of world history, with its triumphant progression and tragic struggles. Mediation, as an overarching trope connecting the universe together in this culminating Hegelian paradigm, is subsequently dismantled by the deconstruction of representation through writing — or ecriture — with Hegel's postmodern heirs, signally Jacques Derrida.

This entire trajectory, with its divergent possibilities, is prefigured by Dante's poetics aiming at a kind of comprehensive theological revelation of the relation of all reality to its ungraspable Ground, which must be imagined as both necessary and impossible. Ultimately, this is a negativetheological revelation — and thus also a withdrawal from revelation — since Dante's vision suggests that revelation as mediation takes place essentially in the gaps opened up by ruptures in the chain of rationally demonstrable links between divinity and its material manifestations. At its most intense and climactic moments in its "figuration of Paradise," the "sacred poem" must "jump, like someone who finds their path cut off" ("e cosi, figurando il paradiso, / convien saltar lo sacrato poema, / come chi trova suo cammin reciso," XXI^^. 61-63).

Dante's text, moreover, displays how these gaps can be filled in by the "revelatory" work of the imagination operating in a state of ecstasy. Dante's imagining of the Empyrean, where God governs directly and without any means of mediation ("dove Dio sanza mezzo governa," XXX. 122) purports to convey a kind of unmediated vision. This is where Dante sees the face of Beatrice "without admixture of any medium" ("che sua effige / non discendea a me per mezzo mista," XXXI. 77-78). And yet, the scene of letters flashing in the Heaven of Jupiter contemplates how the medium of writing is itself intrinsic to the vision — how Dante's vision of God is an irreducibly written vision. In the end, this theophany of letters in Paradiso XVIII graphically shows that the medium itself is what Dante immediately views. In this scene, Dante totally mediates the divine Absolute with his vision's own liter^ry medium. His vision of God is literally a written vision and is hardly imaginable apart from this written form. Such are among the consequences of his Christian understanding of the revelation of God as Incarnate Word apprehended in and through Scripture. The incarnation of the Word specifically in writing reveals another face of this doctrine, one that poetry alone can expound and explore.

For the record, the original and working title for the manuscript of this book throughout the course of its elaboration was "The Written Vision: Scripture as Theophany in Dante's Heaven of Jupiter." Publishing has its own exigencies and imposes them now especially in determining books' titles as they go on the market, but the seed of the work's conception preserved in its original tide is worth bearing in mind. This title is a (re) source that makes it possible to grasp the internal coherence of the book and that accurately expresses the essential insight from which it springs in all of its overflowing implications.

Method of Inquiry and Bifocal Structure

In order to accommodate the different purposes of primarily literary readers together with those who are more philosophically minded, I have capped the extent to which the philosophical inquiry is pursued in the main chapters by moving a substantial amount of material to Excursuses. This allows the reader to focus on the book's critical interpretation of the passage from the Paradiso without being unduly sidetracked by its philosophical ramifications. As a result, the "Excursuses" are something more than what this expedient rubric might suggest. They are integral to the philosophical reflection proposed by the book, but they are supplementary with respect to its literary-critical agenda. The successive subsections in each main chapter already tend in this speculative direction, so I do not mean to suggest anything like a neat division between criticism and philosophy — or between exegesis and theoretical reflection. Quite the contrary. In the course of the more exegetical segments, I have always already adumbrated the paths that speculative inquiry would pursue, even where the further development of such connections is deferred to the Excursuses.

Nonetheless, the structure of the book, as articulated into two parts, mirrors its hybrid nature and inflects its contents in a way meant to assist different sorts of readers in finding their way to what interests them most. Relegating the further pursuit of the theoretical arguments to separate Excursuses enables the reader to ponder the reading of the primary poetic text — Paradiso XVI^l. 70-136, followed by cantos XIX and XX, all of which together comprise the Heaven of Jupiter — through to the end without examining in all their details the more far-reaching ideas concerning language that come up along the way. Nevertheless, both of these registers are fully intertwined in Dante's overall vision and, consequently, in the conception of the book.

Although wide-ranging theoretical issues are raised by the poetic text and its interpretation as it unfolds in the discussion in the chapters, there are limits as to how much of this material can be absorbed and supported by a unified structure of continuous exposition. Giving a coherent reading of the Heaven of Jove is wedded here to a broader enterprise of following up and working out the intellectual implications and speculative suggestions of Dante's scene in terms engaging philosophical and theological thought and literary theory in our own time. The scene's representation of an apotheosis of letters of Scripture flickers with insights for elucidating the nature and origins of language considered as originary theological revelation. This speculative elan is not only my own penchant: it belongs also intrinsically to Dante's project itself. The text calls to be read as a synthesis, if not a summa, of ideas that probe perennial philosophical and theological questions concerning language, its origins, its seemingly miraculous capacities, and its limits — especially as a vehicle of divine revelation.

My expository division between the literary vision and pertinent philosophical reflections is thus merely heuristic and highly porous. It is not even fully consistent, since it applies only in a reduced degree to the first chapter, where I feel the need to outline in some detail the theoretical issues that are central to the book as a whole. In any case, this method distinguishes exegetical and speculative moments not in order ultimately to separate them but rather to articulate their synergisms more effectively.

Dante's vernacular masterpiece opens itself to the dynamism of language and life: it relinquishes the static ideal of an unchanging law and linguistic norm. This has generally been viewed as a mark of Dante's modernity and can even be taken as representing a decisive break with a medieval transcendental theological viewpoint in favor of a more secular outlook. Still, it is important to see that the sources of this insight are, nevertheless, theological in nature. I intend by this close — and, at the same time, also distant — reading of a particular text by Dante to illustrate more broadly the theological inspiration of some of the most path-breaking insights of the modern world. My reading of Dante thus views him in his historical context designedly from the distance of our own.

This, then, is an example of how the study of Dante can be pursued not exclusively for the sake of a more accurate understanding of his text alone, but also as a means of deepening our knowledge of certain pivotal topics in the humanities and of their high degree of relevance to human concerns generally. This book endeavors to link the extraordinary insight into language opened up by Dante's inventions in the Paradiso to some of the most challenging thinking about language in contemporary thought, especially in linguistically oriented philosophies.

The Paradiso comprises something of a poetic encyclopedia or compendium of theories of language, and the book in hand touches on a considerable range of them. In terms of contemporary forms and equivalents, it privileges post-structuralist theories of language for their affinity with Dante's premodern

poetic adventure specifically in the Paradiso. This affinity owes much to the negative-theological matrix within which crucial aspects of Dante's culminating work are embedded. The French thinking of "difference" figures prominently in this approach, just as it figures prominently in the theoretical debates concerning critical theory in recent decades. However, the present work places this French deconstructive theoretical background into an integrated frame with the German hermeneutical tradition. These two broad currents in theory — the German hermeneutic and the French deconstructive — informed, respectively, my previous two monographs dedicated entirely to Dante: Dante's Interpretive Journey (1996) and Dante and the Sense of Transgression: "The Trespass of the Sign" (2013). The present book brings these strands together — by leading them both back to their common origins and interests in phenomenology broadly conceived. It therewith brings to Dante's poem a more unified view of contemporary theory, employing a fuller range of its resources and directly exploiting them for detailed exegesis of specific passages of the poem.

Of course, some other recent developments within the ambit of theory, such as iconology and media studies, with their focus on the materialities of culture, are also rife with resources for illuminating Dante's text. They, too, have an appreciable impact on the interpretations offered here in the wake of art-historical and cultural theorists such as Hans Belting, Georges Didi-Huberman, Jean-Claude Schmitt, and Friedrich Kittler. These authors' studies have shown the dialectic of presence and absence in the image to be key to evoking otherworldly experience and to representing communication with the gods or the divine — generally viewed from an anthropological perspective. The complex interplays of word and image, of painting and writing, of visibility and legibility, have been analyzed in ways that can brilliantly illuminate Dante's poetic representations of writing as a visual epiphany in the form of Scripture. These resources help us to work out the reasons why divine presence, however pictorial and positive, is experienced necessarily in a negative mode. Even the "presenting" of the divine in incarnate forms of flesh, or in material images, remains "writing" in the sense of the presencing of an absence.

Kittler's Die Wahrheit der technischen Welt: Essays zur Genealogie der Gegenwart (2013) furnishes a broad historical background reflecting on some of the more technical and even technological aspects of the representation of presence and of truth in images, and this treatment casts new light useful for interpreting Dante's technically self-reflective vision of God in and through writing in heaven. In Das Nahen der Gbtter vorbereiten (iou), Kittler directs his thinking to the implications of mediality specifically for representing and for "preparing for" the "nearing of the gods." His interpretation of Wagnerian opera, furthermore, enables us to find refracted there one possible, suggestive destiny of Dante's spectacle in the Heaven of Jupiter, which likewise fuses sound and light, son et lumiere, in a synaesthetic, dramatic, and lyrical Gesamtkunstwerk revealing divinity.

Several of my literary-critical books allude to more detailed readings of texts from Dante's Paradiso. They reference a few journal articles, but for the most part this referral has been in the mode of promise. Much of my theoretical reflection on the Parddiso has gone into print in advance of extended critical reading of relevant texts. The present volume intends to make good on these promises and to show in more detail what I am talking about in terms of the specifics of Dante's text when I write about theological transcendence through language and the apotheosis of lyric in the Paradiso as Dante's final testament. There is a certain limit to what philosophical interpretation of Dante's text can achieve. Beyond that limit, only very specific attention to the detail of his textual performances can take our understanding further. A degree of penetration can be gained by conceptualizations such as "mediation,"

but this can go only so far before it is necessary to return to Dante's own images and the singular experience that they embody in order to follow his thought. Only so does this thought release its store of seeds and sparks and make manifest its uniquely fecund insights. Image and concept emerge into clarity only through their reciprocal interaction and thoroughgoing interpenetration.

Hence the book's distinctive bifocal structure, which requires still a further word of explanation. The Excursuses sometimes summarily restate theses of the chapters in order to bring out further connections, moving in directions complementary to those taken by the expositions in the main text. The Excursuses are aligned loosely with the respective chapters (Chapter 1 with Excursus I, and so forth), supplementing their arguments with further reflections. However, their relevance spills over into other chapters as well. Most importantly, the Excursuses are linked together so as to enable them to be read most profitably in series after the main body of the chapters. Their diverse considerations follow coherently upon one another. They consist largely in philosophical elaborations that are not strictly necessary in order to follow the principal reflection proposed in the corresponding chapters from beginning to end. Some of these elaborations engage philosophical traditions and resources that are not necessarily familiar to readers of Dante. The excursus-structure enables them to be explored on an elective basis by removing them from the principal axis of the argument. This strategic division between what is indispensable and what is enhancement aims to make the work readable for all and yet rewarding also for the keenest and most initiated, in spite of its wide interdisciplinary stretch.

The ambition of the book is not only to elucidate a crucial passage in the Divine Comedy but also to think through the status of language as an event of revelation in terms spanning from the theological outlook of Dante to the phenomenological methods of Heidegger, Levinas, Merleau-Ponty, and contemporary theological thinkers in their wake. This book makes an original contribution to understanding some of the most fundamental and perennial questions of philosophy and theology, as well as of literature. As just mentioned, the book is designed to accommodate various types of whose disciplinary competences may not encompass the whole of fields involved. Still, that such an overarching interdisciplinary speculative project be undertaken is proposed as one way of answering Dance's own veiled challenge, expressed in his ardent desire to "spark" what he imagines as a glorious burst of light for human culture. As Paradiso L 34, with false modesty, attests: "A great flame may follow a little spark" "poca favilla gran fiamma seconds"). In evoking Jesus's promise of the sending of the Holy Spirit in order to accompany his disciples and their acts after his departure (John 14:15-18), Dante intimates that his own work takes root and bears fruit only in the answering works that it is able to 'ark. He is echoing, most exactly, the Epistle of St. James 3:5: "Behold, ow great a matter a little fire kindleth!" ("Ecce quantus ignis quam magnam silvam incendit!") in his transmission of the sparks of Scripture :o future literary lights and poetic beacons. <>

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