The Medieval Luther

Edited by
CHRISTINE HELMER

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Mohr Siebeck

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for Marilyn McCord Adams (1943–2017)
teacher, mentor, friend

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Over her long and productive career, Marilyn McCord Adams (1943–2017) made a number of signal and foundational contributions to situating Luther's thought in relation to the late medieval nominalists. Her two-volume work on William Ockham from 1987 inspired medievalists to analyze philosophical and theological questions of the era they study in view of key thinkers with whom Luther was familiar. Her work is an indispensable resource for anyone studying Luther's intellectual continuity with Ockham. Marilyn's scholarship on medieval and late medieval doctrines of Christ, Trinity, and Eucharist are indispensable to Luther scholars interested in connecting lines of reception through the Middle Ages into the Reformation. To my delight, she participated in the conference, which I organized, that was the occasion for this volume. The conference, "Beyond Oberman: Luther and the Middle Ages" was held on November 2–4, 2016 at Northwestern University. All the contributors in this volume have benefited greatly from conversations with her. The "medieval Luther" very much bears her imprint.

Marilyn died on March 22, 2017, after a brief illness. A scholar who valued rigorous thinking, she inspired the many graduate students she mentored to strive for intellectual excellence and conceptual precision. She was committed to the proposition that truth, and the words that articulate it, are important in scholarship as well as in life. And she always had time (and cookies!) for anyone who wanted to learn from her and with her. This volume is dedicated to her in the deepest gratitude for her work and friendship.

The conference in 2016 established the conversation between medieval philosophers and Luther scholars. I thank Northwestern University, specifically the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences Dean's Office, the Departments of Religious Studies and German, the Alumnae of Northwestern, and the Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities, as well as the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) for generous funding. Thanks goes to the scholars who contributed essays to this volume; also to Aaron Moldenhauer for completing the references in Marilyn McCord Adams's article; in addition to Michael Moore of Fortress Press for permission to publish an updated and reconfigured version of chapter 2 of David J. Luy's book *Dominus Mortis. Martin Luther on the Incorruptibility of God in Christ* (Minneapolis, MN 2014); and to Oxford University Press for permission to publish a reconfigured and streamlined version of chapter 1

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Evanston, Dec. 31, 2019 *Christine Helmer*

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Source Abbreviations

AL	Martin Luther, The Annotated Luther, 6 vols., Timothy J. Wengert/Kirsi I. Stjerna/Paul W. Robinson/Mary Jane Haemig/Hans J. Hillerbrand/Euan K. Cameron (eds.), Minneapolis, MN 2015–2017.
CR	Philipp Melanchthon, Opera Quae Supersunt Omnia, 28 vols., Karl Gottlieb Bretschneider/Heinrich Ernst Bindseil (eds.), Corpus Reformatorum 1–28, Halle 1834–1860. John Calvin, Calvini Opera Quae Supersunt Omnia, 59 vols., Guilielmus Baum/Eduardus Cunitz/Eduardus Reuss (eds.), Corpus Reformatorum 29–87, Brunswick 1863–1900. Huldrych Zwingli, Huldreich Zwinglis Sämtliche Werke, 14 vols. (to date), Emil Egli et al. (eds.), Corpus Reformatorum 88–101, Berlin/Leipzig/Zürich 1892– .
LW	Martin Luther, Luther's Works. American Edition, 79 vols. (projected), Jaroslav Pelikan/Helmut T. Lehmann/Christopher Boyd Brown (eds.), St. Louis, MO/Philadelphia, PA 1955–2020.
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version, Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha, Bruce M. Metzger et al. (eds.), New York 1991.
OPh	Guillelmi de Ockham, Opera Philosophica, 7 vols., Gedeon Gál, O. F. M. et al. (eds.), St. Bonaventure, NY 1974–1988.
OTh	Guillelmi de Ockham, Opera Theologica, 10 vols., Gedeon Gál, O. F. M. et al. (eds.), St. Bonaventure, NY 1967–1986.
SBOp	Bernard of Clairvaux, Sancti Bernardi Opera, 8 vols., Jean Leclercq et al. (eds.), Rome 1957–1977.
StA	Martin Luther, Studienausgabe, 8 vols. (projected), Hans-Ulrich Delius (ed.), Berlin 1979– .
STh	Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, online at http://www.corpusthomisticum.org/iopera.html.
WA	Martin Luther, D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe, 73 vols., J. K. F. Knaake et al. (eds.), Weimar 1883–2009.
WA.B	Martin Luther, D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Briefwechsel, 18 vols., Otto Clemens et al. (eds.), Weimar 1930–2002.
WA.TR	Martin Luther, D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Tischreden, 6 vols., Karl Drescher et al. (ed.), Weimar 1912–1921.

Chapter 1

Introduction

The Search for the Medieval Luther

Christine Helmer

Martin Luther's name has come to be associated with more than his reform of religion. His idea of freedom was formative for modern society and politics. His emphasis on the human person as the beneficiary of divine grace set the stage for modern individualism. By speaking truth to the powers of pope and emperor, Luther became the quintessential symbol for those struggling for their rights and freedoms in the modern world.

He is also a divisive figure. Protestants identify Luther as the reformer who founded Protestantism, seeing in him the theologian who set Christians free from a Catholic clericalism that burdened consciences with the threat of excommunication. Luther countered the abuse of clerical and papal power with his new idea of the priesthood of all believers. He insisted on the Bible's primacy and affirmed the individual Christian's responsibility to study the word of God in Scripture against the Catholic magisterium that reserved truth to itself. The theological ideas of freedom in Christ, the common priesthood, and "sola scriptura" (by Scripture alone) are markers of Protestant identity, and as many Protestants see it, of Protestant superiority to Roman Catholicism.

But Roman Catholics also have their image of Luther. He was a heretic, excommunicated by Pope Leo X in early 1521 and banned by Emperor Charles V later that year. He was a sexual deviant, as his Dominican biographer Heinrich Suso Denifle asserted in the first decade of the twentieth century.[1] According to a contemporary Catholic historian working in the United States, Luther stands at the origin of a slippery slope into modern relativism and pluralism; he is identified with the loss of doctrinal and ethical norms.[2] The sixteenth century Council of Trent settled on a reform policy that was explicitly set against Luther, as a

[1] Heinrich Suso Denifle, Luther und Luthertum in der ersten Entwicklung quellenmäßig dargestellt, 2 vols. (vol. 1/2: expanded and ed. Albert Maria Weiss; vol. 2: with Albert Maria Weiss), Mainz 1904–1909; English translation: Heinrich Suso Denifle, Luther and Lutherdom, From Original Sources, Raymund Volz (trans. from 2nd rev. edn.), Somerset, OH 1917.

[2] Brad S. Gregory, The Unintended Reformation. How a Religious Revolution Secularized Society, Cambridge, MA 2012.

new work on Luther by Roman Catholic theologian Peter Folan, S. J. explains.[3] At Trent, the Roman Catholic Church took up reforms on its own terms, without giving credit to the reprobate Protestant.

Any study of Luther must acknowledge the conceptual stakes at play. On the one hand, Luther is the emblem of the modern, and as modern, the marker of Protestant identity. On the other hand, Luther the Catholic is still the heretic whom Roman Catholic theologians must not read. There are, of course, exceptions. One of Luther's ideas, namely his high estimation of the common priesthood, found its way into the Second Vatican Council's *Lumen Gentium*. Peter Folan recommends that contemporary Roman Catholic theology take Luther's appreciation for biblical interpretation more generously to heart. But for the most part, confessional lines bisect Luther. He is either Protestant or Roman Catholic, modern or medieval. Can any study of Luther bridge this intractable division, this tendentious bisection?

Recently some historians of early modernity have assayed to do so. Casting aside the historiographical interests at stake in periodizing the fraught end to the Middle Ages, they have written histories that trace instead lines of continuity. Historian Dean Phillip Bell, for example, approaches the history of Jews in Germany by erasing the clear boundary between the late Middle Ages and the early modern world.[4] Stephen G. Burnett discusses the Christian Hebraists working in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century without hypostasizing an artificial distinction between the two centuries.[5] Volker Leppin tells Luther's biography by situating him at the end of the Middle Ages without emphasizing an alleged breakthrough into modernity.[6] These historians demonstrate that the development of medieval society into the early modern era is more fluid and continuous than one marked by rupture.

The volume takes up this new historiography and makes it central to key theological issues. What if an investigation into Luther's theology presupposes a conceptual continuity between the late Middle Ages and early modernity? The common approach to Luther specifies his reformation breakthrough as an innovation in the doctrine of justification. What if Luther's approach to justification were studied instead as a body of questions posed in the context of late medieval philosophy and theology? This volume's goal is to explicitly situate Luther's doctrines of Christ, salvation, and the priesthood in continuity with medieval

[3] Peter Folan, S. J., Matters of Interpretation. Biblical Methodology in the Lutheran-Catholic Dialogue on the Doctrine of Justification, Ph.D. Diss., Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA 2019.

[4] Dean Phillip Bell, Jews in the Early Modern World, Lanham, MD 2008.

[5] Stephen G. Burnett, Christian Hebraism in the Reformation Era (1500–1660). Authors, Books, and the Transmission of Jewish Learning (Library of the Written Word), Leiden 2012.

[6] Volker Leppin, Martin Luther. A Late Medieval Life, Rhys Bezzant/Karen Roe (trans.), Grand Rapids, MI 2017.

and late medieval ideas. The selection of these particular doctrines is intentional. Above all others, these three have commonly been identified as Luther's "breakthrough" ideas; these are the ideas that separated him, and by extension Protestantism, from Rome. The conceptual and confessional stakes with respect to these doctrines are high. If Luther's work on these doctrines is viewed as doctrinally and historically continuous with medieval ideas, as this volume's authors do, then the historiographical and confessional identity markers predicated on disjunction are called into question, and with them the whole confident idea of the Protestant origins of modernity. Furthermore, if it can be shown that Luther deployed late medieval resources to articulate Christian doctrines with philosophical care and precision, then future study of Luther will require familiarity with medieval philosophy. The essays in this volume represent Luther from this perspective, namely as a late medieval Catholic theologian who musters philosophical acumen for theological reflection and reform.

How has it come about that Luther is usually studied as the breakthrough figure at the origins of modernity? How have scholars recently challenged this portrait of Luther the Protestant reformer? In order to answer these questions, in what follows, I sketch a trajectory of research on Luther in the twentieth century in order to clear the path to viewing Luther according to the medieval philosophical and theological terms of this volume. In the first section I describe the legacy of the Luther Renaissance, the early twentieth century group of German Luther scholars who cast Luther as decisively Protestant and modern. In the second, I discuss recent work on the "Catholic Luther," the subject of ecumenical interest after Vatican II. I conclude with the "medieval Luther," the subject matter of this volume.

1. The Search for the Protestant Luther

The Luther Renaissance was the organized scholarly effort at the beginning of the twentieth century to investigate Martin Luther as an object of critical, historical, and theological study.[7] History had become the reigning academic science (*Wissenschaft*) in the German university alongside the emerging social sciences of sociology, anthropology, and economics. Theologians too were interested in bringing their discipline into the academic discussion. Friedrich Schleiermacher had first integrated the historical paradigm into his new plan for theology as a modern field of study in 1811. A century later, Lutheran theologians took up his recommendation. By this time, their colleagues in the humanities were deploying

[7] For a detailed description of proponents of the Luther Renaissance, their questions and methodologies, see Christine Helmer, How Luther Became the Reformer, Louisville, KY 2019.

historical methods to measure change amid continuity, relating human agency to social formations, and inquiring into how economic and modern forces took shape under particular historical conditions. Theologians were eager to include these questions in their purview. Luther became their test case.

Until the Luther Renaissance, Lutheran theologians had approached their hero as a systematic theologian, taking systematic theology as the genre best suited for accumulating and ordering theological knowledge. Theologians represented theological knowledge as *knowledge* by presenting claims in a system. Lutheran theologians, too, used this form to represent Luther's ideas. While they acknowledged the dialectical core to Luther's thought, they found constructive ways to systematize its contradictions. Theodosius Harnack, for example, organized Luther's theology systematically on the basis of the structural distinction between the God outside of Christ and the God in Christ.[8]

All this changed in 1883 with the four-hundredth anniversary of Luther's birth, when scholars began investigating Luther as the central figure of the reformation. His theology was of interest only in so far as it broke away from medieval structures and inaugurated modernity. Church historians and theologians focused their attention on particular texts that yielded the reformation breakthrough. They were especially interested in Luther's exegetical works, specifically his 1515–1516 Lectures on Romans: they wanted to show that Luther, like Paul, preached a gospel of justification by faith without works. These theologians were fascinated with Luther's biography, particularly around the years of 1517, when it was said that Luther was converted to the truth of Christ, like the Apostle Paul and Saint Augustine before him.

The church historian credited with initiating the Luther Renaissance was Karl Holl. Holl had initially studied the early church and Calvin before turning to Luther during the Great War that coincided in 1917 with the four-hundredth anniversary of the Protestant reformation. Holl's work on Luther, which he published in two editions – the first in 1917 and the second after the war in 1921 – is acknowledged as the origin of the modern study of Luther. In *What did Luther Understand by Religion?*, Holl documented a dramatic shift in Luther's religious experience,[9] distinguishing Luther's "religion of conscience" into two parts: the conscience's awareness of its inability to fulfill the demands of the divine will and the divine demand that the human will's unity with the divine will would be the soul's justification. Holl showed how Luther's understanding of justification

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[8] Theodosius Harnack, Luthers Theologie. Mit besonderer Beziehung auf seine Versöhnungs- und Erlösungslehre, 2 vols., Erlangen [1]1862–1866; Munich [2]1927; reprint in one volume, Amsterdam 1969.

[9] Karl Holl, "Was Verstand Luther unter Religion?," in: Karl Holl, Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Kirchengeschichte, vol. 1: Luther, Tübingen [2+3]1923, 1–110; English translation: Karl Holl, What Did Luther Understand by Religion?, James Luther Adams/Walter F. Bense (eds.), Fred W. Meuser/Walter R. Wietzke (trans.), Philadelphia, PA 1977.

was a paradox. The human would have to resign the personal will to the consequences of divine wrath in order to reach a point at which it could be united with the divine will. Only at that point of self-renunciation could divine grace be bestowed. In the second edition of his book on Luther, Holl introduced the idea of the "resignation to hell" (*resignatio ad infernum*) in order to underscore the self's experience of God.[10] He found the idea in Luther's interpretation of Romans 9:3 in which Paul admits that he would gladly be "accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my own people, my kindred according to the flesh" (NRSV). According to Holl, Luther followed Paul by resigning his will to hell in order to fulfill the demands of the divine justice. The paradox of Holl's depiction of Luther's experience of justification is that only at the point of self-renunciation does God effect the sinner's justification.

Holl's achievement was to lay out the historical and religious categories that Luther scholars would use for the rest of the twentieth century to address Luther's "reformation breakthrough." Following Holl, biographers conceptualized Luther's religious experience as a conversion from an "old" paradigm of fear of the divine wrath to a "new" paradigm of justification by faith through grace. Holl's foundational work set the parameters for viewing Luther's reformation as this dramatic shift from works to grace, from wrath to love, from sin to justification. Concepts such as conscience and paradox, *Anfechtung* and justification became the essential vocabulary for Luther studies. The story of Luther that Holl told was one who had made the conversion from Catholic to Protestant.

Much more than Luther's biography is at stake in these reorientations. Holl, like many contemporary biographers of Luther, was interested in the question of how Germany could be identified as a modern nation. Max Weber had initially related Protestantism to modernity in his 1904–1905 work, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*.[11] Holl took up this impetus and connected Luther's reformation to the birth of modernity in his *The Cultural Significance of the Protestant Reformation*.[12] This promotion of Luther as the progenitor of modernity continues in contemporary identifications of Luther, most recently in biographies by Michael Massing, Brad S. Gregory, and Andrew Pettegree.[13]

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[10] See specifically HELMER, How Luther Became the Reformer (as note 7), 31–36.

[11] For the critical edition of this work, see MAX WEBER, Gesamtausgabe, vol. 1/18: Die protestantische Ethik und der Geist des Kapitalismus. Die protestantischen Sekten und der Geist des Kapitalismus. Schriften 1904–1920, WOLFGANG SCHLUCHTER/in collaboration with URSULA BUBE (eds.), Tübingen 2016; English translation: MAX WEBER, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, 3rd Oxford edn./expanded 1920 version, STEPHEN KALBERG (trans.), New York/Oxford 2002.

[12] KARL HOLL, "Die Kulturbedeutung der Reformation," in: KARL HOLL, Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Kirchengeschichte, vol. 1: Luther, Tübingen $^{4+5}$1927, 468–543; English translation: KARL HOLL, The Cultural Significance of the Protestant Reformation (Living Age Books), KARL HERTZ/BARBARA HERTZ (trans.), New York 1959.

[13] MICHAEL MASSING, Fatal Discord. Erasmus, Luther, and the Fight for the Western Mind, New York 2018; BRAD S. GREGORY, Rebel in the Ranks. Martin Luther, the Reforma-

In the tradition of Holl, according to these authors, at stake in Luther's biography are broader cultural-historical questions concerning the rupture between the Middle Ages and modernity. Luther stands with his banner of freedom at modernity's origins.

The achievement of the Luther Renaissance was the production of Luther as modern Protestant. Luther the Reformer initiated the break with Rome and embarked on an entirely new religious course. He polemized against religious superstition, advocated the Bible as source and norm for theological truth, stripped the liturgy of its incense, saints, and vestments, and wrote catechisms for religious education in the home. According to Holl's followers, he rejected philosophy as tool for theology and insisted on a new language that had its truth criterion in Christ. He left Catholicism behind in the Middle Ages and opened the gateway to modernity.

2. The Search for the Catholic Luther

The Protestant Luther dominated scholarship until the 1960s. Vatican II changed this course. Called by Pope John XXIII in 1959, the Second Vatican Council, which met in four sessions between 1962 and 1965, heralded a new vision for western Christianity, one inspired by reform. It was, maybe, the council longed for by Luther for his own rehabilitation! One of its documents, *Lumen Gentium*, can be said to bear Luther's imprint.[14] While the question of the Lutheran "heresy" was not addressed at Vatican II, Protestant theologians were invited to attend as observers. American Lutheran theologian, George A. Lindbeck, who attended the council, went on to construct a theological paradigm facilitating the ecumenical dialogues between Lutherans and Roman Catholics, precisely on the topic that had divided these confessions for five hundred years, the doctrine of justification.[15]

Ecumenism was in the air as Roman Catholic theologians asked the significant question of how the Church might embrace modern values while holding fast to doctrine. This double commitment to modernity and tradition inspired mainline Protestant theologians who lamented the loss within their tradition of

tion, and the Conflicts That Continue to Shape Our World, New York 2017; Andrew Pettegree, Brand Luther. How an Unheralded Monk Turned His Small Town into a Center of Publishing, Made Himself the Most Famous Man in Europe – and Started the Protestant Reformation, New York 2016.

[14] Of note is the placing of the section "On the People of God" before the section on the ordained priesthood, "On the Hierarchical Structure of the Church and In Particular On the Episcopate"; online at: http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html (accessed July 8, 2019).

[15] For this work, see George A. Lindbeck, The Nature of Doctrine. Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age, 25th anniversary edn., Louisville, KY 2009.

liturgical decorum and the Catholic intellectual inheritance. Some Protestant theologians and liturgists spearheaded another kind of rapprochement. They insisted on recovering the Catholic liturgical tradition for their worship services and both the ecumenical councils and the theological works of Catholic luminaries for their theological reflection. The liturgical movement, as it came to be called, appropriated the Catholic liturgy and integrated some of its rituals into Protestant services. Incense and hyssop returned to feast days; liturgical colors decorated vestments and adorned Protestant altars; and the Easter Vigil was celebrated again. The evangelical catholic intellectual movement dug deep into the common Catholic tradition and emerged armed with new theological resources. After five centuries of preaching the pure word of God, Protestants recovered their senses and opened their minds to the catholicity at the root of their tradition.

These efforts at ecumenical rapprochement swept Luther up on both sides of the confessional divide. The Dutch church historian Heiko Oberman took a lead in connecting Luther to his late medieval predecessor, Gabriel Biel. Biel had been a member of the Brethren of the Common Life, a religious community in which Luther (and Erasmus of Rotterdam) had been schooled in his youth. Biel's work on the Canon of the Mass was the standard text on the Roman Mass for late medieval theology students, like Luther. Oberman published *The Harvest of Medieval Theology* in 1963, and showed how Luther had inherited Biel's philosophical position, namely nominalism, and late medieval theological doctrines.[16]

Two German Catholic theologians generated excitement among Luther scholars with their work on the "Catholic Luther." Peter Manns first coined the term, the "Catholic Luther" in the 1960s.[17] Dominican friar, Otto Hermann Pesch, compared Aquinas and Luther on the doctrine of justification and concluded that the two Catholics were not as far apart theologically as their respective traditions deemed.[18] Pesch's comparison inspired Lindbeck. Trained as a medieval theologian, Lindbeck taught that in order to appreciate Luther as a reformer, scholars would have to situate his innovations in the theology of the late medievals. In order to understand how Luther came to new insights concerning the doctrine of justification, one would have to learn the late medieval penitential system and sacramental theology. In his classes at Yale, Lindbeck insisted on the significance of medieval theology for Protestant seminaries that had for too

[16] Heiko A. Oberman, The Harvest of Medieval Theology. Gabriel Biel and Late Medieval Nominalism, Cambridge, MA 1963; reprint, Grand Rapids, MI 2000.

[17] See the edited volume celebrating Manns's contributions: Mariano Delgado/Volker Leppin (eds.), Luther. Zankapfel zwischen den Konfessionen und "Vater im Glauben"?. Historische, systematische und ökumenische Zugänge (Studien zur christlichen Religions- und Kulturgeschichte 21), Freiburg, Switzerland/Stuttgart 2016.

[18] Otto Hermann Pesch, Theologie der Rechtfertigung bei Martin Luther und Thomas von Aquin. Versuch eines systematisch-theologischen Dialogs (Walberger Studien/Theologische Reihe 4), Mainz 1967.

long restricted their study of medieval theologians to the singular Augustine. Oberman and Lindbeck set new terms for studying the history of Christianity in Protestant institutions. The Middle Ages was now required reading; its proponents were to be regarded as "forerunners of the reformation."[19]

Study of the Catholic Luther soon demanded that Luther scholars become familiar with medieval philosophy. The position that Luther had consistently denigrated Aristotle and rejected any intrusions of philosophy into theology was no longer tenable after Oberman's work. Luther was a Catholic theologian, trained in the seven liberal arts, which included the philosophical disciplines of dialectic and logic. English theologian and mathematician Graham White led the way in convincing Luther scholars that Luther had applied philosophical tools to the investigation of the Trinity and Christ.[20] White showed that Luther appealed to semantics and logic in order to prove medieval trinitarian syllogisms on theological grounds. Luther's theological method resembled that of other late medieval theologians, such as Robert Holcot and Pierre d'Ailly. White's work from 1994 was soon followed by other published works on Luther's use of philosophy in Christian doctrine. My own *Trinity and Martin Luther* focused on Luther's appropriation of William of Ockham in his trinitarian theology.[21] German theologian and ecumenist Theodor Dieter studied Luther's use of Aristotle in the early disputations of 1517–1518.[22] Historian of Christianity, Volker Leppin published a book on William of Ockham.[23] Danish theologian Else Marie Wiberg Pedersen and German historian Theo Bell recovered Bernard of Clairvaux as crucial resource for Luther's theology of grace.[24] Finnish theologian and ecumenist Risto Saarinen studied Luther's medieval inheritances regarding the human will.[25] David J. Luy, Candace L. Kohli, and Aaron Moldenhauer have recently written works on Luther's medieval inheritances, focusing specifically on Christology and ethics.[26] These studies take Luther's deep familiarity with philosophy seri-

[19] To allude to the title of a book by Heiko A. Oberman, Forerunners of the Reformation. The Shape of Late Medieval Thought, New York 1966; reprint, Cambridge 2002.

[20] Graham White, Luther as Nominalist. A Study of the Logical Methods Used in Martin Luther's Disputations in the Light of Their Medieval Background (Schriften der Luther-Agricola-Gesellschaft 30), Helsinki 1994.

[21] Christine Helmer, The Trinity and Martin Luther (Studies in Historical and Systematic Theology), Bellingham, WA ^{2}2017.

[22] Theodor Dieter, Der junge Luther und Aristoteles. Eine historisch-systematische Untersuchung zum Verhältnis von Theologie und Philosophie (TBT 105), Berlin/New York 2001.

[23] Volker Leppin, Wilhelm von Ockham. Gelehrter, Streiter, Bettelmönch, Darmstadt 2003.

[24] Else Marie Wiberg Pedersen, Bernard af Clairvaux. Teolog eller mystiker [Bernard of Clairvaux. Theologian or Mystic?], Copenhagen 2008; Theo Bell, Divus Bernhardus. Bernhard von Clairvaux in Martin Luthers Schriften (VIEG Abteilung Religionsgeschichte 148), Mainz 1993.

[25] Risto Saarinen, Weakness of Will in Renaissance and Reformation Thought, Oxford 2011.

[26] David J. Luy, Dominus Mortis. Martin Luther on the Incorruptibility of God in Christ,

ously as formative for his theological work. What had begun as an interest in the Catholic Luther for ecumenical purposes had become a full-fledged research program.

The research on the Catholic Luther proved significant for the important ecumenical dialogues between Roman Catholics and Lutherans in the 1990s. The dialogues focused inevitably on justification, the doctrine "by which the church stands or falls." The positions Lutheran theologians took on ecumenism were based on their attitudes towards the Catholic Luther. While Nordic and American scholarship was aligned with the philosophically astute Catholic Luther, German scholarship continued to favor the anti-philosophical, word-oriented Luther of the law/gospel dialectic. A controversy played out between German Lutherans and the Lutheran World Federation prior to the signing of the Joint Declaration on Justification on October 31, 1999. German Lutherans Gerhard Ebeling and Eberhard Jüngel had led over one hundred and sixty-five of their German colleagues to protest the Joint Declaration.[27] Theodor Dieter, Risto Saarinen, and American Lutheran theologian Michael Root (who subsequently converted to Roman Catholicism), who were affiliated with the Ecumenical Institute in Strasbourg at the time, defended the Joint Declaration and facilitated its signing.

The Joint Declaration put an end to the long-standing mutual condemnations between Roman Catholics and Lutherans. Yet the scholarly divide remains. Many Lutheran theologians in Germany and North America still favor an approach to Luther that underscores forensic justification, the primacy of the word, and a "relational" ontology between Christ and the believer. It continues to be the work of primarily Nordic and North American scholars of Luther to study Luther's use of medieval philosophy and his appropriation of late medieval concepts and theological questions

3. The Search for the Medieval Luther

With the five-hundredth anniversary of the Protestant reformation finally behind us, opportunities for orienting Luther scholarship in new directions have opened up. It is now time to build on the legacy of the searches for the Protestant Luther and the Catholic Luther and to study how Luther explicitly deploys philosophy for articulating Christian doctrine.

Minneapolis, MN 2014; Candace L. Kohli, Help for the Good. Martin Luther's Understanding of Human Agency (1530–1545), Ph.D. Diss., Northwestern University, Evanston, IL 2017; Aaron Moldenhauer, Luther's Doctrine of Christ. Language, Metaphysics, Logic, Ph.D. Diss., Northwestern University, Evanston, IL 2019.

[27] Richard Nyberg, "Germany. Protestant Theologians Object to Lutheran-Catholic Accord," in: Christianity Today (June 15, 1998); online at http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/1998/june15/8t7012.html (accessed July 8, 2019).

The search for the medieval Luther follows the lead that Graham White has taken in creating a dialogue between the field of medieval philosophy and Luther's theology. The contributions in this volume represent this interdisciplinary endeavor. On the one hand, scholars of the Middle Ages, philosophers and historians, reach into their toolkits in order to stretch their historical and conceptual purview into Luther studies. They approach Luther as a medieval theologian from their disciplinary perspective. On the other hand, Luther scholars, theologians and historians use their analytical tools to move Luther back across the threshold of modernity and situate him in continuity with the medieval world. By reaching forward to early modernity, on the one hand, and back to the Middle Ages, on the other hand, the two scholarly perspectives meet in the middle, negotiating new ways of approaching Luther's theology.

How might Luther studies be recast to comprehend the medieval Luther? An important preliminary task concerns knowledge of the Middle Ages, which tends to be a weak spot among Protestant historians and theologians. Protestant treatments of Luther usually place him in conceptual proximity to the church fathers and to Augustine, dismissing the period from Peter Lombard to Gabriel Biel on the grounds of Luther's alleged antipathy to philosophy. Once Luther scholars admit that Luther himself acknowledged his indebtedness to his medieval predecessors, they can then more empirically attend to his references to many medieval philosophers and theologians. Luther learned nominalism from his Erfurt teachers, Jodocus Truttfetter and Bartholomäus Arnoldi von Usingen. He often cites nominalist thinkers William Ockham and Gabriel Biel. Luther connects his own work to the positions of Duns Scotus, Robert Holcott, Pierre d'Ailly, Peter Lombard, and Joachim of Fiore. If Luther scholars are to indeed acknowledge these references in Luther's works, they must become more familiar with these names and their philosophical and theological positions.

To be sure, Luther is famous for inveighing against the scholastics and their obfuscation of theological truth. Yet these claims must be taken with a grain of salt. Luther's rhetoric hides a deep commitment to philosophy as indispensable for theology; the disputations are key texts in demonstrating Luther's constructive use of philosophy. The academic disputation was, alongside the lecture, the primary medieval genre for teaching and, in the ecclesial context, for accusing a heretic. Luther participated in many different disputations over the course of his entire career about various topics. The procedures regulating disputation were strict. Respondent and opponent engaged in the debate with the opponent assaying to force the respondent into a logical error. Luther, a formidable disputator, was familiar with the formalities as well as with the dialectical tools necessary for a winning outcome.

This volume aims to change the way Luther is perceived. The contributions demonstrate how Luther may be approached as a late medieval figure who was intimately familiar with philosophy and who deployed philosophical reason to

work out his theological positions on the doctrines of Christ, salvation, and the priesthood. The book also takes up recent developments in the field of medieval philosophy. Since Oberman first published his work, philosophers of the Middle Ages have become more familiar with theological topics. Marilyn McCord Adams, specifically her work on William Ockham, paved an important direction in the field.[28] This book underscores McCord Adams's inspiration to medievalists to study theological questions and then to situate Luther's contributions in relation to these studies.

The contributions in this volume approach the medieval Luther from historical, philosophical, and theological perspectives. They are united in their aim to identify how medieval traditions shaped Luther's questions and the way he sought to answer them. Contributors deliberately bracket the question of whether Luther broke with the medieval paradigm or remained within its purview. More important is imagining a conceptuality that allows for Luther's thought to be entertained in sympathetic relation to the Middle Ages.

The first part of the volume focuses on Christology. The later Luther, particularly in the years 1539–1540, took up the doctrinal question of Christology in explicit view of the methodological question of applying philosophy in theology. The contributors in this section reject the position established by German Luther scholar Reinhard Schwarz that predicates Luther's theological innovation on the basis of a "new language," showing instead how Luther's Christology, and his theology of Christ's real presence in the Eucharist, negotiates a commitment to philosophy. The volume's second part focuses on soteriology, or in other words, "Christ's benefits." Rather than concentrating solely on justification, contributors in this section consider the diverse ways in which Luther describes and explains salvation in continuity with medieval traditions of healing, mysticism, and spirituality. The volume's third part takes up the priesthood, that is, the way in which humans are entrusted with the task of distributing Christ's benefits in the church. Contributors in this section discuss Luther's theology of the common priesthood and situate it in view of broader historical and theological questions.

What then are the stakes in the medieval Luther proposed by this volume? First, there is the historical issue, namely the historiographical periodizing of the transition from Middle Ages to modernity. The hope is that this volume's focus on the medieval Luther will add to the scholarship that already traces lines of continuity from medieval to modern periods. Second, at stake is theology's relationship to philosophy. This volume demonstrates how Luther's own work is deeply cognizant of philosophical issues. The hope is that contemporary Protestant theologians follow this assessment of Luther and admit that Protestant theology has always used philosophy as an important tool. Third, confessional inter-

[28] Marilyn McCord Adams, William Ockham, 2 vols. (Publications in Medieval Studies 26), Notre Dame, IN 1987.

ests are at stake. If Luther is indeed a theologian who takes up medieval Catholic themes and questions, then he must be evaluated in this light. Roman Catholic theologians are challenged to entertain Luther's reforms as reforms of their own tradition and Protestant theologians to revise their assumptions about Roman Catholic theology and practice.

Part One

Christology

Chapter 2

Martin Luther and Late Medieval Christology

Continuity or Discontinuity?

David J. Luy

A majority of modern scholars contends that Martin Luther rejects the conceptual framework underlying late medieval Christology.[1] While it is true that Luther continues at times to utilize the distinctive terminology of scholasticism, most of the secondary literature insists that the content of his doctrine is substantially new.[2] Luther's innovation is typically characterized as an obvious improvement. Whereas late medieval Christology had been "static," "abstract," "theoretical," and "speculative," Luther's new Christology is "dynamic," "soteriologically-rooted," "biblically-based," and judiciously pruned of philosophical excess.[3] According to this preponderant version of the history, Luther's departure from late medieval Christology is thus a heroic discontinuity.[4] Luther was right to reject his teachers.

[1] An earlier version of this paper appears in ch. 2 of David J. Luy, Dominus Mortis. Martin Luther on the Incorruptibility of God in Christ, Minneapolis, MN 2014. I am grateful to Michael Moore of Fortress Press for granting me permission to publish this updated and reconfigured version here.

[2] See, for instance Kjell Ove Nilsson, Simul. Das Miteinander von Göttlichem und Menschlichem in Luthers Theologie (FKDG 17), Göttingen 1966, 186–187.

[3] Descriptive binaries of this sort are quite common. See, for instance Marc Lienhard, Luther, Witness to Jesus Christ. Stages and Themes of the Reformer's Christology, Edwin H. Robertson (trans.), Minneapolis, MN 1982, 30, 387–89; Ulrich Asendorf, Die Theologie Martin Luthers nach seinen Predigten, Göttingen 1988, 197; Vidar L. Haanes, "Christological Themes in Luther's Theology," in: ST 61 (2007), 23–29; Florian Schneider, Christus praedicatus et creditus. Die reformatorische Christologie Luthers in den Operationes in Psalmos (1519–1521), dargestellt mit beständigem Bezug zu seiner Frühzeitchristologie, Neukirchen-Vluyn 2004, 102–103; Athina Lexutt, "Christologie als Soteriologie. Ein Blick in die späten Disputationen Martin Luthers," in: Athina Lexutt/Wolfgang Matz (eds.), Relationen – Studien zum Übergang vom Spätmittelalter zur Reformation, FS Karl-Heinz zur Mühlen (Arbeiten zur Historischen und Systematischen Theologie 1), Münster 2000, 205–207.

[4] In a few cases, the script is flipped. Luther's radical divergence is depicted as a catastrophic error on his part. See, for instance Theobald Beer, Der fröhliche Wechsel und Streit. Grundzüge der Theologie Luthers, Leipzig 1974; see also Axel Schmidt, Die Christologie in Martin Luthers späten Disputationen (Dissertationen, Theologische Reihe 77), St. Ottilien 1990.

Is this influential account accurate? In this essay, I demur. In contrast to the received narrative, I argue that the basic framework of Luther's Christology remains typically medieval. The primary focus will rest upon Luther's preservation of the doctrine of suppositional carrying, a model for explaining the hypostatic union widely espoused among late medieval thinkers. In an important and influential essay from 1966, Reinhard Schwarz has insisted that Luther entirely rejected this idea. In this present essay, I will contend over against Schwarz that Luther explicitly affirms the doctrine of suppositional carrying. In doing so, he conscientiously retains the very same conceptual framework that underlies the Christological analysis of his scholastic forebears.[5] In short, the discontinuity between Luther and late medieval Christology has been seriously exaggerated.

1. The Doctrine of Suppositional Carrying

Medieval treatments of the incarnation are far from homogenous.[6] Nevertheless, it remains true as a generalization that most late medieval theologians rely upon some version of the concept of suppositional carrying in their attempt to explicate the mystery of the hypostatic union. As Marilyn McCord Adams has explained, this explanatory model presupposes what is at root an Aristotelian distinction between the individual existence of a thing (i. e., its primary substance) and the kind of thing that individual existent is (i. e., its secondary substance or its "what-ness"). Indebted primarily to Boethius, the medievals take up this distinction, but customarily refer to a thing's "primary substance" as its "suppositum" (i. e., that which carries an instance of "what-ness" into concrete individual existence). When the "what-ness" in question denotes a rational nature (e. g., humanity), the suppositum identifies that particular thing's "who-ness," its personhood or, in the language of conciliar Christology, its "hypostasis." When applied to the incarnation, the conceptual framework of suppositional carrying allows one to say that the human nature of Christ has the second Person of the Trinity as its suppositum. Here are two "whats" (humanity and divinity) subsisting as a single "who" (the eternal Logos).

[5] This essay is not the first or only attempt to counteract the majority position. See, for instance GRAHAM WHITE, Luther as Nominalist. A Study of the Logical Methods Used in Martin Luther's Disputations in the Light of Their Medieval Background (Schriften der Luther-Agricola-Gesellschaft 30), Helsinki 1994; LUY, Dominus Mortis (as note 1); BRUCE D. MARSHALL, "Faith and Reason Reconsidered. Aquinas and Luther on Deciding What is True," in: The Thomist 63 (1999), 1–48; CHRISTINE HELMER, The Trinity and Martin Luther (Studies in Historical and Systematic Theology), Bellingham, WA ²2017. See also Richard Cross's helpful essay, "Luther's Christology and the *Communicatio Idiomatum*" in ch. 3 of the present volume.

[6] For a helpful overview of the various views, see RICHARD CROSS, The Metaphysics of the Incarnation. Thomas Aquinas to Duns Scotus, Oxford 2002.

This is quite strange, the medieval doctors freely admit. In every other instance, human natures subsist of themselves and do not depend upon an alien suppositum. The humanity of Christ, however, uniquely receives its concrete individual existence from the divine suppositum of the Word, which "carries" it.[7] It is important to observe that the personhood of Christ precedes the incarnation on this account.[8] So far as the underlying *suppositum* is concerned (the locus of personal identity), Christ remains ever as He was before. To be sure, a new sort of external dependency relation is added. The divine Logos now causally sustains a human nature in a particular mode. And yet, the person (i. e., the divine Logos) remains the same. The union of divinity and humanity does not generate a new person, and neither is the preexistent person changed. The person of Christ is not a composite, which emerges as the result of the union of divinity of humanity.

This is precisely the point at which Luther allegedly objects. Rather than seeing the personhood of Christ as residing in an eternally unchanging divine "suppositum," Luther is said by many of his modern interpreters to conceive of Christ's personhood as constituted or reconfigured by the hypostatic union. The incarnation is not simply the external annexation of humanity to divinity. It is for Luther rather an ontologically constitutive event. Luther's rejection of suppositional carrying has been defended or assumed by many scholars over the past half century. The most sophisticated defense by far belongs to Reinhard Schwarz. In what follows, I present an overview of Schwarz's account, and criticize his interpretation of Luther with special reference to an important Christological disputation held at the University of Wittenberg in 1539, namely "The Disputation Concerning the Passage: 'The Word Was Made Flesh' (John 1:14)."[9]

2. An Overview of Schwarz

In his highly influential essay "Gott ist Mensch," Reinhard Schwarz begins with a reiteration of Karl Holl's pronouncement that, although Luther thought he was simply repeating classical dogma, he actually interprets traditional concepts in an idiosyncratic and, by the standards of the early church, possibly heretical manner.[10] More specifically, Schwarz suggests that the inadvertent idiosyncrasy

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[7] For more on the expansion of Aristotelian philosophy to make sense of the hypostatic union, see Marilyn McCord Adams, "What's Metaphysically Special about Supposits? Some Medieval Variations on Aristotelian Substance," in: Aristotelian Society Supplementary 79 (2005), 15–52. See also Marilyn McCord Adams, "Relations, Inherence, and Subsistence; or, Was Ockham a Nestorian in Christology?," in: Nous 16 (1982), 62–75.

[8] See, for instance Marilyn McCord Adams, Christ and Horrors. The Coherence of Christology (Current Issues in Theology), Cambridge 2006, 125–127.

[9] WA 39/2, 1–33 (Die Disputation de sententia: Verbum caro factum est (Joh. 1,14) [1539]) (= LW 38, 235–277).

[10] "In seiner Christologie hat Luther das altkirchliche Dogma nicht unbedacht nachgespro-

of Luther's position manifests itself above all in his highly critical evaluation of Ockhamist Christology, which Luther apparently derides at one point as crude (*geschmacklos*) and outrageous (*ungeheuerlich*).[11] The five sections comprising Schwarz's essay seek to document the nature of Luther's criticism of Ockhamist Christology and to identify the fundamental claims that Luther evidently found so offensive about it.

At the heart of Luther's alleged critique is the Ockhamist presentation of the hypostatic union in terms of suppositional carrying. According to Schwarz, Luther rejects this view essentially because of the extrinsic and remote relationship that it creates between the divine Person and the human nature of Christ. For Schwarz, the Ockhamists treat divinity and humanity as polar opposites, and this is because they have uncritically adopted a pernicious philosophical axiom.[12] This axiom asserts that uncreated Being must be kept strictly separate from created being because there is no proportional relationship between the finite and the infinite: "nulla proportio est finitum ad infinitum."[13] For Schwarz, Ockhamist Christology is the result of its highly convoluted attempt to affirm orthodox Christological teaching under the supervision of this rigid philosophical rule. Luther objects because he recognized that the enterprise was destined to fail. It is impossible to affirm the incarnation while simultaneously presupposing that humanity and divinity are necessarily immiscible.

Schwarz's interpretation of Luther's response to the Ockhamists appears in the second major section of his essay. According to Schwarz, Luther rejects the idea that the divine Person merely "carries" the human nature of Christ because it suggests a far too extrinsic and distant relationship between divinity and humanity.[14] The language makes it seem as though the human nature does share in

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chen, sondern nach seinem Verständnis der Sache interpretiert." REINHARD SCHWARZ, "Gott ist Mensch. Zur Lehre von der Person Christi bei den Ockhamisten und bei Luther," in: ZThK 63.3 (1966), 289. Schwarz goes on to quote Karl Holl's verdict: "Denn in Wahrheit hat Luther das alte Dogma nicht nur aufgenommen, sondern fortgebildet, und zwar in einer Weise, die, wenn man den Standpunkt der alten Konzilien einnimmt, überall nahe an das Ketzerische anstreifte." This quote originates in KARL HOLL, Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Kirchengeschichte, vol. 1: Luther, Tübingen ^{3}1928, 71.

[11] SCHWARZ, "Gott ist Mensch," 292. Schwarz is echoing here a line from another Christological disputation from 1540 (Disputation on the Divinity and Humanity of Christ). This text, although very important to Schwarz's interpretation, will not be treated in this paper for reasons of space limitations. In the opinion of the present author, Schwarz's construal of Luther's meaning in this disputation is also marked by a number of key deficiencies. The most important of these is the fact that Schwarz interprets theses 46–48 as a clear repudiation of late medieval Christology, when, in fact, the section of the disputation in which they appear contains a series of traditional statements whose intended meaning Luther deems orthodox but are nevertheless susceptible to problematic interpretations when taken otherwise.

[12] SCHWARZ, "Gott ist Mensch," 300: "Dieses Axiom ist der neuralgische Punkt der ockhamistichen Christologie."

[13] SCHWARZ, "Gott ist Mensch," 300–301.

[14] SCHWARZ, "Gott ist Mensch," 301–302.

the personal existence of Christ. Christ is therefore fully God, but not quite fully human.[15] Moreover, Schwarz continues, such a view is able to affirm the phrase "Christ is a human Person" only on the basis of a fundamental equivocation of terms. That is, the proposition is true *only* if the term "person" itself is defined in an entirely different way depending upon whether one says "Christ is a divine person" on the one hand, or "Christ is a human person" on the other.

On the Ockhamist account, to say that Christ is a divine person is to state in a relatively straightforward manner that Christ *is* the divine suppositum – i. e., the second person of the Trinity. The meaning of the second statement is less obvious, however, because Christ does not have a human suppositum on the Ockhamist account. To say that Christ is a human person, one must therefore intend something like: Christ is a divine suppositum that also happens to "carry" a human nature.[16] According to Schwarz, Luther rejects this as a sophistical sleight of hand. It is a semantic trick, since it allows one to accept the statement that God became human, but without affirming the incarnation in any meaningful sense. God does not, in fact, become a human person like us. God is, as God has always been, *simply* a divine person, but who now happens to sustain a human nature through some extrinsic causal relation.

What is Luther's constructive alternative? For Schwarz, it is a fundamentally new conception of the personhood of Christ.[17] On this account, the person is constituted by the union of divinity and humanity, thus making Christ a kind of mixture or composite.[18] Although Schwarz admits that Luther continues to deploy the vocabulary of suppositional carrying, he insists that the overlap is merely terminological. Unlike the medieval view, Luther thinks of the incarnation as an event effecting an ontological change in what the person of Christ is. Vestigial remnants of late medieval vocabulary do not alter the fact that Luther fundamentally rejects the doctrine of suppositional carrying.[19]

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[15] Schwarz, "Gott ist Mensch," 302. In light of this criticism, Schwarz surmises: "Es ist praktisch der Vorwurf des Doketismus, den Luther gegen die ockhamistische Christologie erhebt."

[16] Schwarz, "Gott ist Mensch," 302–303. Schwarz advances this interpretation on the basis of the disputation on John 1:14 from 1539 that I will investigate below.

[17] Schwarz, "Gott ist Mensch," 304: "Auf den ersten Blick scheinen Luthers christologische Äußerungen nicht mehr zu sein als seine Bekräftigung des altkirchlichen Bekenntnisses. […] Luthers nachdrückliches Festhalten am alten Bekenntnis ist aber getragen von einem spezifischen Verständnis der 'Sache'." In this way, Schwarz basically corroborates Holl's programmatic statement cited at the outset of his essay.

[18] Schwarz, "Gott ist Mensch," 304–305. This is the critical claim that will prove to be so influential in later studies of Luther's Christology. This does not impair Luther's ability, on the reading of most scholars who endorse this view, to still endorse the Chalcedonian prohibition against "mixing" the two natures together. Whether or not this claim is coherent is not a question I have space to entertain here.

[19] Schwarz, "Gott ist Mensch," 305: "Die Annahme der menschlichen Natur bedeutet indessen nicht eine Aufnahme in suppositale Abhängigkeit, sondern ein Geschehen im Sein der Person." Luther's debate with the Ockhamists is not an intra-mural dispute among scholastic

Schwarz's account is undeniably sophisticated. Nevertheless, it is susceptible to a number of serious criticisms. For example, Schwarz's characterization of late medieval Christology is inordinately pejorative. Ockhamism in particular functions within Schwarz's essay as a foil over against which the relative virtues of Luther's putative position are highlighted. As Graham White has shown, the result is a profound caricature of the medieval thinkers.[20] Naturally, the task of measuring Luther's relation to scholastic Christology must begin with an accurate description of scholastic Christology. Inasmuch as Schwarz's account fails to meet this criterion, it is necessary to revisit his fundamental conclusions.[21] Schwarz's essay can also be criticized for its interpretation of Luther, and this is the line of inquiry pursued in the remainder of this essay. Despite Schwarz's assertions to the contrary, this text does not exhibit any divergence on Luther's part from late medieval Christology. On the contrary, it demonstrates rather clearly Luther's enduring commitment to the doctrine of suppositional carrying.

3. Luther's Disputation and Suppositional Carrying

Luther held "The Disputation Concerning the Passage: 'The Word Was Made Flesh' (John 1:14)" in 1539 on a question of theological language. Theses 4–7 of the disputation consider the assertion that truth is exactly the same in theology and philosophy.[22] Luther's main goal in the disputation is to criticize this assertion and to show that it misleads. Despite his obvious fondness for dialectic, Luther has no interest in a theory of double truth. In thesis 1, he concedes: "the notion that all truth agrees with truth" should be "upheld."[23] And yet, Luther does not think this means that conceptual terms behave in philosophical dis-

thinkers. It represents the emergence of a new paradigm. See SCHWARZ, "Gott ist Mensch," 306.

[20] WHITE, Luther as Nominalist (as note 5), 271–280.

[21] Ironically, even some modern defenders of late medieval Christology have perpetuated Schwarz's assumption that Luther rejects the doctrine of suppositional carrying. On this reading, Luther becomes the foil. See, for instance SCHMIDT, Die Christologie in Martin Luthers späten Disputationen (as note 4).

[22] WA 39/2, 3–4 (= LW 38, 239): "4. Sorbona, mater errorum, pessime definivit, idem esse verum in philosophia et theologia. 5. Impieque damnavit eos, qui contrarium disputaverunt. 6. Nam hac sententia abominabili docuit captivare articulos fidei sub iudicium rationis humanae. 7. Hoc erat aliud nihil, quam coelum et terram includere in suo centro aut grano milii." For a discussion of the actual historical document to which Luther may be referring, see REIJO TYÖRINOJA, "Proprietas Verbi. Luther's Conception of Philosophical and Theological Language in the Disputation: Verbum caro factum est (Joh. 1:14), 1539," in: HEIKKI KIRJAVAINEN (ed.), Faith, Will, and Grammar. Some Themes of Intensional Logic and Semantics in Medieval and Reformation Thought (Schriften der Luther-Agricola-Gesellschaft B15), Helsinki 1986, 145–146.

[23] WA 39/2, 3 (= LW 38, 239): "1. Etsi tenendum est, quod dicitur: Omne verum vero consonat, tamen idem non est verum in diversis professionibus."

course exactly as they behave in theological discourse. There are important differences that must be respected even when the terms utilized in each disciplinary sphere happen to be identical.[24] Luther appeals to the doctrine of the incarnation as a case in point:

2. In theology it is true that the Word was made flesh; in philosophy the statement is simply impossible and absurd.
3. The declaration, "God is [a human being]," is not less but even more contradictory than if you would say, "[A human being] is an ass."[25]

Luther's argument is that the doctrine of the incarnation should make it impossible for a Christian theologian to suggest that truths of theology and philosophy are entirely identical, because theology is forced to adjust (or expand) its definition of the term *homo* as a result of the hypostatic union.[26] In philosophical discourse, the term *homo* refers to a human *person*; that is, a human nature that is self-suppositing. This definition is clearly inadequate, Luther insists, when applied to Christology. The incarnate Son of God is not a *homo* in the unmodified philosophical sense since, even on the scholastic account, "Christ is a *homo*" means that the divine suppositum of the Word *carries* a human nature in a relation of alien suppositional dependency.[27] And so, Luther thinks it misleading to claim that we are saying *exactly* the same thing when we state: 1) Socrates is a *homo*; and 2) Christ is a *homo*. Whereas in the former case, *homo* denotes a human suppositum, in the latter statement *homo* denotes a divine suppositum carrying a human nature.[28] Thus, even from the perspective of late medieval

[24] LW 38, 239 (= WA 39/2, 3): "1. Although the saying, 'Every truth is in agreement with every other truth,' is to be upheld, nevertheless, what is true in one field of learning is not always true in other fields of learning." See, for instance, theses 40–42 in LW 38, 242: "40. We would act more correctly if we left dialectic and philosophy in their own area and learned to speak in a new language in the realm of faith apart from every sphere. 41. Otherwise, it will turn out that, if we put the new wine in old wineskins, both of them will perish; this is what the Sorbonne did. 42. In articles of faith, the disposition of faith is to be exercised, not the philosophical intellect. Only then will we truly know what this means: 'The Word was made flesh'." In the original Latin, WA 39/2, 5: "40. Rectius ergo fecerimus, si dialectica seu philosophia in sua sphaera relictis discamus loqui novis linguis in regno fidei extra omnem sphaeram. 41. Alioqui futurum est, ut vinum novum in utres veteres mittamus, et utrumque perdamus, ut Sorbona fecit. 42. Affectus fidei exercendus est in articulis fidei, non intellectus philosophiae. Tum vere scietur, quid sit: Verbum caro factum est."

[25] LW 38, 239; in the original Latin, WA 39/2, 3: "2. In theologia verum est, verbum esse carnem factum, in philosophia simpliciter impossibile et absurdum. 3. Nec minus, imo magis disparata est praedicatio: Deus est homo, quam si dicas: Homo est asinus."

[26] The underlying argument which accompanies these theses is available to us in the form of transcripts recorded during the public disputation in 1539. The Weimar edition preserves three written accounts of the proceedings.

[27] WA 39/2, 10b (= LW 38, 271).

[28] This differentiation does not affect the truth-value of the statement "Christ is *homo*" in Luther's mind because it rightly names the fact that Christ, like all other human beings, is in possession of a completely intact human nature. This fact, though, does not necessarily

Christology, it does not seem to be true on Luther's account that the truths of theology and philosophy are exactly the same.

Does this mean that Luther endorses an analysis of the incarnation in terms of suppositional carrying? Schwarz thinks not. On his reading, late medieval Christology represents an attempt to secure the truth value of the incarnation, but only within the fixed constraints of rigid philosophical rules. In the end, the philosophical commitments prevail, and the result is an equivocal understanding of the statement "God is a *homo*." The doctrine of suppositional carrying reinterprets this statement in tautologous terms. "God is a *homo*" really means "God is God (carrying a human nature)." Thus, although the medieval theologians make it sound as though they affirm the doctrine of the incarnation, their philosophical presuppositions can only allow them to affirm that "God is God" and "*homo est homo*."[29] According to Schwarz's interpretation, Luther's main point in the disputation of 1539 is to insist that a univocal conflation of theology and philosophy requires one to adopt an equivocal account of the incarnation. For Schwarz's distillation of Luther's argument in this text, the disingenuous contortions of Ockhamist Christology are symptoms of a philosophical pathology. We can reconstruct Schwarz's version of Luther's argument in six sequential claims:

1. If the truths of theology and philosophy are identical, then theological statements cannot exceed the scope of that which philosophy deems possible.
2. Philosophy regards the finite and the infinite as incompatible.
3. Theology is obliged to affirm the unity of divinity and humanity (the doctrine of the incarnation) while simultaneously denying that such unity is possible (1 + 2).

mean that Christ relates to his human nature in exactly the same way that ordinary human beings do, a caveat buttressed by late medieval accounts of the incarnation in terms of alien suppositional carrying. Once this caveat is acknowledged, though, a theologian is faced with a significant methodological choice. Either one will try to ambiguate the ordinary meaning of the word *homo* so as to include the unique instance in which the divine Person assumes to itself a human nature in an attempt to achieve a thorough-going discursive symmetry between theology and philosophy; or, one will admit the different way in which Christ is called a *homo*, thus leaving relatively undisrupted the integrity of philosophical discourse, while at the same time finding a way to uphold and talk about the unique event of the incarnation. Marilyn McCord Adams illustrates rather helpfully how currents in late medieval theology and philosophy contributed to the urgency of this question specifically in relation to the vocabulary of supposits. See McCord Adams, "What's Metaphysically Special about Supposits? Some Medieval Variations on Aristotelian Substance," 15–52. As I will argue below, Luther's treatment of the Sorbonne statement in the 1539 disputation appears to have far more to do with these methodological concerns, rather than with any attempt on his part to suggest the fundamental bankruptcy of late medieval Christology in general. To the contrary, it is precisely because Luther retains a late medieval point of view that he views a totally univocal position as problematic. For more on this claim, see below.

[29] See Streiff's representation of Schwarz's argument in Stefan Streiff, "Novis linguis loqui". Martin Luther's Disputation über Joh 1,14 "verbum caro factum est" aus dem Jahr 1539 (FSÖTh 70), Göttingen 1993, 62.

4. The result is the doctrine of suppositional carrying, which seems to affirm that "God is a *homo*," but can actually only affirm that "God is God."
5. Thus, what begins in an attempt to secure the unity of philosophical and theological discourse terminates in an equivocal explication of the incarnation.
6. It would be preferable to admit that the truths of theology and philosophy are distinct and exchange the doctrine of suppositional carrying for a genuine affirmation of the incarnation.

Schwarz's synopsis does not accurately represent the progression of Luther's thought. Whereas Schwarz posits that Luther rejects suppositional carrying because he derides it as the subjugation of theology to philosophy, something closer to the opposite of this interpretation is actually the case. Luther opposes the conflation of theology and philosophy precisely because he accepts a late medieval account of the hypostatic union, and he does not think this account deploys the term *homo* in exactly the same manner as in general philosophical discourse. Luther does not reject the proposition because it leads to the doctrine of suppositional carrying. On the contrary, it is precisely because he accepts the doctrine of suppositional carrying that he reasons the truths of theology and philosophy must not be exactly the same.

Arguments 3a and 4 make this point abundantly clear, as they are recorded in the third transcript of the public debate.[30] In this section, Luther considers whether the term *homo* may be attributed univocally of God; and if so, whether it would be appropriate to refer to God as a "thinking animal."[31] In short, is the term *homo* applied to God in exactly the same way that it is applied to human beings other than Christ? Luther addresses this question as follows:

When I speak of God as man [*homo*], I cannot deny that he is a thinking animal; here the Scholastic theologians have admitted that Christ was a rational animal and man [*homo*]. However, they distinguish senses of the word "man" [*homo*] and say that it is equivocal, so that, when it refers to anyone of the human race apart from the incarnation, it designates a person subsisting by himself. This is a philosophical meaning. It has another meaning when it is said about Christ. Here one does not interpolate that fictitious philosophical concept of a person. For here a new word is coined, designating the divine person sustaining our human one, as a white person signifies a man [*homo*] who maintains whiteness.[32]

[30] These recorded arguments correspond with theses 3 and 4 of the published disputation itself.

[31] As a caveat, it may be observed that the adjudication of statements such as this one (which may appear rather strange) is a persistent custom of nominalist Christology, especially in its extensive discussions regarding the communication of attributes.

[32] LW 38, 271; in the original Latin, WA 39/2, 10c: "Quando dico Deum hominem, non possum negare, quod et sit animal sensitivum; hic theologi scholastici concesserunt, quod Christus esset animal rationale et homo. Distinxerunt autem homines, et significat aequivocum, ut, quando significat aliquem de genere humano extra incarnationem, significat personam per sese subsistentem. Haec est significatio philosophica. Alia est, quando de Christo dicitur. Hic non supponit illam fictam personam philosophicam. Hic enim fit novum vocabulum

In this response, Luther makes it quite clear that the term *homo* is not applied to the incarnate Person of Christ in exactly the same way as it is applied to other human beings. In ordinary circumstances, *homo* designates a human person. That is, it refers to a self-subsisting rational-animal nature or human suppositum. This definition cannot apply to Christ without modification, Luther continues, because Christ is not a self-subsisting human nature, but a divine person *carrying* a human nature. Thus, although the term *homo* continues to denote an entity possessing an intact human nature, the relation of this human nature to the person in which it subsists is different. Whereas *homo* refers in ordinary usage to a *human* person, as applied to Christ it signifies a *divine* person, albeit one that sustains a genuinely intact human nature.

The main point we must glean from this discussion is that Luther's complaint is emphatically *not* that the doctrine of suppositional carrying introduces an unacceptable equivocal representation of the incarnation as Schwarz alleges. To the contrary, it is precisely *because* Luther endorses the doctrine of suppositional carrying that he resists the conflation of theology and philosophy. Although there is clearly some overlap (*homo* = rational animal), the two disciplines nevertheless deploy the same terms in a different manner.[33] This construal calls for an alternative distillation of Luther's reasoning, this time in four main steps.

1. If the articulation of truth is exactly the same in theology and philosophy, then the descriptive terms these disciplines share must be deployed in a univocal manner.
2. If the descriptive terms utilized by theology and philosophy are deployed univocally, then it must be true that the statement "Christ is *homo*" possesses the same meaning as when it might be applied to any other human being.
3. This does not follow, however, since in the case of Christ, the term "*homo*" denotes a *divine* Person carrying a human nature; whereas in other settings it denotes a *human* Person subsisting in itself.
4. Therefore, the articulation of truth cannot be exactly the same in theology and philosophy.

The turning point in this logical sequence arrives in step three, where Luther asserts the doctrine of suppositional carrying as an underlying premise. In other words, there must be some distinction between the truths of theology and philosophy, because the traditional doctrine of the incarnation deploys the term

significans personam divinam sustentantem nostram humanam, ut albus significat hominem sustentantem albedinem."

[33] This raises an important question. How does Luther think the two "languages" (i. e., philosophy and theology) relate to one another? For an overview of the main views of this issue, see David J. Luy, "Disputation," in: Derek R. Nelson/Paul R. Hinlicky (eds.), The Oxford Encyclopedia of Martin Luther, 3 vols. (Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Religion), Oxford 2017, vol. 3, 518–550.

homo differently than in the unexpanded philosophical sense. Luther's disputation is not an assault upon late medieval Christology. It is an attempt to clarify the nature of theological language in light of the doctrine of the incarnation as he had learned it from his scholastic teachers.[34]

4. Conclusion

Although he is neither the first nor the only scholar to have argued that Luther rejected late medieval Christology, Schwarz's essay is unparalleled in the scope of its influence among modern treatments of Luther's Christology. Most studies of the past several decades take for granted his central claim that Luther jettisons the doctrine of suppositional carrying.[35] In this essay, I have shown that Schwarz misunderstands the primary text upon which much of his argument is based (i. e., the disputation from 1539). Whereas Schwarz interprets the Christological disputation of 1539 as an assault upon late medieval Christology, it is actually a reflection upon the relation between philosophy and theology in which Luther explicitly presupposes a medieval conception of the hypostatic union in terms of suppositional carrying.[36] This critique of Schwarz does not necessarily imply that Luther aligns perfectly with the Christology of his scholastic teachers in every respect.[37] It does suggest, however, that the relation between Luther and late medieval Christology is ripe for critical reappraisal.

[34] This interpretation is reinforced by other sections of the disputation that have not been examined in the present essay. Consider, for example, WA 39/II, 16a: "Ego capio hominem dupliciter uno modo pro substantia corporali per se subsistente, alio modo pro persona divina sustentante humanitatem. Est hoc, quaeso, theologiam et philosophiam conciliare, cum distinguis, imo hoc ipso, quod univoca distinguifices?" See also WA 39/2, 10b (= LW 38, 271).

[35] See, for instance BEER, Der fröhliche Wechsel und Streit (as note 4); LIENHARD, Luther, Witness to Jesus Christ (as note 3); SCHMIDT, Die Christologie in Martin Luthers späten Disputationen (as note 4); STREIFF, "Novis linguis loqui" (as note 29); SCHNEIDER, Christus praedicatus et creditus (as note 3). Schwarz's account has also heavily influenced characterizations of Lutheran confessionalization. See, for instance JOHANNES HUND, Das Wort ward Fleisch. Eine systematisch-theologische Untersuchung zur Debatte um die Wittenberger Christologie und Abendmahlslehre in den Jahren 1567 und 1574 (FSÖTh 114), Göttingen 2006; HANS CHRISTIAN BRANDY, Die späte Christologie des Johannes Brenz (BHT 80), Tübingen 1991.

[36] For a more comprehensive critique of Schwarz, see LUY, Dominus Mortis (as note 1) and WHITE, Luther as Nominalist (as note 5).

[37] Inasmuch as scholastic Christology is not homogenous, comprehensive alignment would actually be impossible.

Chapter 3

Luther's Christology and the *Communicatio Idiomatum*

Richard Cross

The oft-held thesis that Luther's Christology differs in some significant ways from the Christology of the medieval Schoolmen has recently been subject to some devastating criticism. David J. Luy's ground-breaking study, *Dominus Mortis*, argues that, in most of the respects in which a divergence has been asserted, Luther's Christology in fact bears a remarkable resemblance to that of his medieval predecessors.[1] In short, in most respects there is no divergence, despite the almost unanimous assertion to the contrary found in commentators.[2] In particular, Luy dispenses with Luther's supposed rejection of the medieval view that the second person of the Trinity in some unique sense "sustains" his human nature.[3] In this, he builds on the earlier, and equally pioneering, work of Graham White.[4] Luy also shows that Luther follows the medieval theologians in denying that the human sufferings of Christ can be ascribed to Christ's divinity in some way distinct from that in which they are ascribed to his person.[5] According to Luy, the only significant divergence from the medieval theologians occurs in Luther's assertion that certain divine attributes – in particular, ubiquity – can be ascribed to Christ's humanity as such, in addition to their ascription to the divine person. And this, of course, is a well-known feature of Luther's Christology, central to the Eucharistic debates between Luther and the Reformed party, and

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[1] David J. Luy, Dominus Mortis. Martin Luther on the Incorruptibility of God in Christ, Minneapolis, MN 2014.

[2] Luy gives an exhaustive account of the relevant secondary literature in ch. 1 of Dominus Mortis (as note 1).

[3] See ch. 2 of Luy, Dominus Mortis (as note 1). I add my own reflections on this topic in n. 34 below.

[4] See Graham White, Luther as Nominalist. A Study of the Logical Methods Used in Martin Luther's Disputations in the Light of Their Medieval Background (Schriften der Luther-Agricola-Gesellschaft 30), Helsinki 1994, 271–293.

[5] See Luy, Dominus Mortis (as note 1), 118–159. Luy's particular target in this discussion is Dennis Ngien, "Chalcedonian Christology and Beyond. Luther's Understanding of the Communicatio Idiomatum," in: Heythrop Journal 43 (2004), 54–68. But it is possible to find many antecedents to this interpretation in the Lutheran tradition, as Luy illustrates in ch. 1 of Dominus Mortis (as note 1). Ngien's article is chosen, I suspect, because it offers a particularly clear and well-evidenced account of the position Luy aims to reject.

continuing on in vigorous and sometimes fraught forms right the way through the history of Protestantism.

In what follows I aim to build on Luy's work by attempting to show, through an analysis of aspects of the semantics presupposed in the canonical Christological disputations of 1539 and 1540, that in these texts Luther defends the view that the *communicatio idiomatum* involves merely predicating properties of the incarnate divine person. I attempt to argue this with greater attention to the medieval background than is offered by Luy, because failure to pay adequate attention to this context explains much of the misunderstanding in relation to Luther's account of the *communicatio idiomatum* that we find in the secondary literature. In addition, I provide further reasons for supposing that the text contains nothing novel – either in terms of the metaphysics of the incarnation or in terms of the kinds of first-order predication Luther is prepared to allow. (There are, as I will note, and has been discussed by others in great detail, some striking semantic innovations in the texts; but they do not affect the two issues just outlined.)[6]

1. The *Communicatio Idiomatum*

Luther's definition of the *communicatio idiomatum*, given at the beginning of the 1540 disputation, is traditional: "Because of the undivided union and the unity of the two natures there is brought about the *communicatio idiomatum*, so that what is attributed to one nature is attributed to the other as well, because there is made one person."[7] Elsewhere in his *corpus*, Luther refers to the natures "communicating" their properties to each other: "The two natures dwell in the Lord Christ, and yet He is but one person. These two natures retain their properties, and each also communicates its properties to the other."[8] Luy believes it to be

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[6] See in particular WHITE, Luther as Nominalist (as note 4), 128–139. I defend the view that Luther's semantics is in most important respects simply that of a medieval nominalist, at greater length and in relation to a far wider range of texts than I do here, in ch. 1 of RICHARD CROSS, Communicatio Idiomatum. Reformation Christological Debates (Changing Paradigms in Historical and Systematic Theology), Oxford 2019.

[7] WA 39/2, 98,8–10 (Preface to Die Disputation de divinitate et humanitate Christi [1540]): "sed propter unitam coniunctionem et unitatem duarum naturarum fit communicatio idiomatum, ut, quid uni naturae tribuitur, tribuitur et alteri, quia fit una persona." Subsequent references to this work are abbreviated as DDHC. In all quotations from the A version of DDHC, I use the English translation by Christopher B. Brown, online at http://www.iclnet.org/pub/resources/text/wittenberg/luther/luther-divinity.txt, with occasional modifications. Translations of the B version are my own. See also WA 39/1, 102,19–20 (DDHC, arg. III, A version); WA 39/2, 103,20–21 (arg. V, A version); WA 39/2, 106,19 (arg. XI, A version); WA 39/2, 108,8–9 (arg. XI^{b}).

[8] WA 47, 199,26–28 (Auslegung des dritten und vierten Kapitels Johannis [1538]): "… das in dem herrn Christo sein zweierlej naturn und doch nur eine Person, und das diese zwo na-

possible to hold that Luther intends, in the first of these passages, to talk about predication *in abstracto* here – indeed, he maintains that this is just as plausible as a reading that denies this interpretation.[9] As he puts it elsewhere, "This mode of description clearly lays emphasis upon the personal union of God and man, but seems semantically to suggest that this union enables Christ's two natures to exchange with one another all of their respective properties."[10] Luy attempts to undermine this suggestion by drawing attention to passages in which Luther claims that the natures retain all their proper features, and to passages in which Luther clearly divides the properties between the natures (by using the qualifiers 'according to the humanity' or 'according to the divinity').[11] And Luy rightly observes that in the text a little further on from the second of these two passages, Luther explicitly maintains that the natures "retain their properties."[12]

But I have three things to say. The first is that the definition is traditional, based closely on the original in John of Damascus (probably in turn borrowed from Ps.-Cyril of Alexandria): "And this is the manner of the *communicatio* (*antidosis*), each nature communicating to the other what is proper to it (*ta idia*) through the identity of hypostasis."[13] The second is that it can be found in almost exactly the same form in Ockham, a thinker usually taken to represent the antithesis of Luther's Christology:

> The divine and human natures remain distinct after the union, just as before. […] But notwithstanding this distinction between the natures, nevertheless the natures communicate to each other their properties, through predication in the concrete, as in this: "The Son of God is incarnate, is dead, suffered," and likewise "a man created the stars."[14]

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turen furen und behalten, ja mit einander teilen ire eigenschafften." (= LW 22, 491–492); quoted in Ngien, "Chalcedonian Christology," 59. See Luy's discussion of this text in Dominus Mortis (as note 1), 120–133.

[9] See Luy, Dominus Mortis (as note 1), 122–123.

[10] Luy, Dominus Mortis (as note 1), 139.

[11] See Luy, Dominus Mortis (as note 1), 119–151.

[12] Luy, Dominus Mortis (as note 1), 123.

[13] John of Damascus, Expositio fidei 48, ll.38–40, in: John of Damascus, Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos, vol. 2: Expositio fidei, B. Kotter (ed.) (Patristische Texte und Studien 12), Berlin/New York 1973, 117.

[14] William Ockham, Reportatio III, q. 1, a. 1 (OTh 3:10–11): "Natura divina et humana remanent distinctae post unionem sicut ante. […] Et non obstante tali distinctione inter naturas, nihilominus communicant sibi mutuo proprietates suas per praedictionem in concreto, sicut hic, 'Filius dei est incarnatus, passus, mortuus,' et similiter 'homo creavit stellas.'" I assume that Ockham is likewise following John of Damascus, though his phraseology is slightly further removed than Luther's is. In maintaining that the natures are distinct, Ockham does not mean that they are separated, or disunited – indeed, he says just the opposite here. He simply means that it is possible to count them. Compare with Luther in WA 39/2, 97,12–14 (Preface to DDHC): "et tamen quod humanitas non sit divinitas, nec divinitas sit humanitas, quod neque illa distinctio quicquam impediat, sed potius confirmet unitatem." "The humanity is not the divinity, nor the divinity the humanity; but neither does this distinction in any way hinder the unity; rather, it confirms it." Trans. R. C.

Thirdly, and more generally, Luther's way of defining the *communicatio idiomatum*, talking about the "natures" in some way sharing their properties, is in fact common among nominalists of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Luy forbears from attempting to trace the origin of this kind of locution.[15] But it strikes me that, without flattening the variety of medieval semantic theories, it is possible to see why such a way of talking would seem quite natural to a Scholastic theologian, given some general assumptions in medieval semantics.[16] Indeed, without some grasp of Luther's semantics of the term 'nature,' seen in its late medieval context, it would be easy to misunderstand what he is trying to say. Consider the following from Aquinas: "A noun signifying the common nature in the concrete can supposit for (*supponere pro*) any of the things contained under the common nature, just as this noun 'man' can supposit for any individual man."[17] Here Aquinas mentions two semantic relationships: signification and supposition. Signification is something like meaning, but with a psychological component: the signification of a term is what it brings to mind. According to Aquinas, natural-kind substantives, concrete or abstract, bring to mind natural kinds – *natures*. 'Man' makes us think of the kind *man*; 'God' makes us think of the "kind" 'God.' (I put 'kind' in scare quotes here because God is not quite a kind in the sense of created kinds; but note Aquinas's "God is the name of a nature.")[18] According to Aquinas, concrete natural-kind substantives signify the nature while neither including nor excluding its instantiations; abstract natural-kind substantives signify it excluding its instantiations.[19] The second semantic relationship that Aquinas mentions in the quoted passage is supposition. Supposition is the reference that a term has in a given sentential context. It follows from Aquinas's account of the signification of concrete and abstract natural-kind terms that an abstract term could not supposit for a concrete object (other than deviantly). But a concrete term could, and that is just what Aquinas claims for 'man' in the passage just quoted.

The Christological point is that, provided the question is what the signification of a term is, a medieval theologian would naturally have talked of concrete natural-kind terms as signifying natures, and thus would have found it natural to talk about the natures communicating their properties to each other. Since the *communicatio idiomatum* relates to properties shared between God and man in

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[15] Luy, Dominus Mortis (as note 1), 157 n. 99.

[16] Luy, Dominus Mortis (as note 1), 151–158, makes a start on this project. I attempt here to build on his account – with much of which I find myself in agreement – and offer a little more detail on some of the relevant medieval background.

[17] Thomas Aquinas, STh III, q. 16, a. 1 c: "Nomen enim significans naturam communem in concreto potest supponere pro quolibet contentorum in natura communi, sicut hoc nomen homo potest supponere pro quolibet homine singulari." For all citations of Aquinas, I use the online edition at http://www.corpusthomisticum.org/iopera.html .

[18] Aquinas, STh I, q. 8, a. 1, sed contra.

[19] Aquinas, De ente et essentia, c. 2.

the incarnation, and since 'man' signifies human nature, and 'God' divine nature, we naturally talk of the properties shared between the natures – the natures *in the concrete*, signified by concrete natural-kind substantives. Ockham, for example, agrees with Aquinas that concrete natural-kind substantives signify natures (as I will show below), though he disagrees with Aquinas on what natures are in this context: for Aquinas, they are something common to many particulars, and for Ockham they are collections of particulars (of a given kind). In the passage quoted earlier, Ockham understands natures, as subjects of predication "in the concrete," to be particulars – *persons* in this case – of such-and-such a nature. The nature terms, in the relevant sentential context, supposit for concrete particulars God, and man, and it is these things that are the subjects of the relevant predications.

Gabriel Biel agrees: "The *communicatio idiomatum* in Christ is the mutual predication of the concrete [terms] of each nature of each other, and of the *suppositum* subsisting in these."[20] And Biel goes on to give, as an example of a "concrete term of the human nature," 'man,' and of a "concrete term of the divine nature," 'God.'[21] In short, the natures are things signified by concrete nouns, and in standard contexts such nouns supposit for persons (under given natures). The supposition of 'nature' is *person*, under a given nature. And this, I suggest, is precisely Luther's usage too.

In this context, then, the temptation to misread Luther's definitions of the *communicatio idiomatum* is surely mitigated. The question is the supposition of 'nature' in Luther's definition of the *communicatio* ("what is attributed to one nature is attributed to the other as well"). In principle, the question is ambiguous, because the term could supposit for things signified by concrete or abstract nouns (e. g. 'man,' 'humanity'). Luther's general practice makes it clear that he is talking about things signified by concrete nouns ('man,' 'God'). Thus, the *communicatio idiomatum* involves predicating concrete terms (concrete substantives and adjectives) of other concrete terms (concrete substantives). (I deal with apparent counter-instances to this claim below.) So, just as for Ockham and Biel, Luther's semantics of concrete terms has them signifying what we might call "concrete natures" – (the) God, (the) human being – in short, *persons*. When Luther talks about attributing things to a nature, he is in fact talking about attributing things to a person – the nature terms that he has in mind are concrete terms signifying persons, not natures. For example, an objector reasons as fol-

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[20] Gabriel Biel, III Sent., d. 7, qu. un., art. 1, in: Gabriel Biel, Collectorium Collectorium circa quattuor libros Sententiarum, 5 vols., Wilfridus Werbeck/Udo Hofmann (eds.), Tübingen 1973–1992, 3:154, ll. 12–13: "Est […] communicatio idiomatum in Christo mutua praedicatio concretorum utriusque naturae de seinvicem, et de supposito in his subsistente."

[21] Biel, III Sent., d. 7, qu. un., art. 1 (3:154, ll. 15–16). On Biel, see too the discussion in Luy, Dominus Mortis (as note 1), 156–157.

lows: "'Man' and 'humanity' signify the same thing. Therefore it is rightly said, 'Christ is humanity.'"[22] Luther responds by denying the premise:

This is not conceded; rather, this is: "Christ is man," because this [viz. 'man'] is a concrete term signifying personally, whereas an abstract term signifies the mode of nature, or naturally, so that therefore it is false that Christ is human nature, that is, humanity, or that Christ is humanity. Aristotle says: abstract terms denote (*sonant*) nature, concrete terms person.[23]

'Signifying personally' means signifying the person in a given nature; 'signifying naturally' means signifying the (abstract) nature. (There is, incidentally, nothing much controversial in the reading of the 1540 disputation just proposed, even though the account given above offers more than previous ones in defense of this reading: overall, commentators are now agreed that Luther's treatment of the *communicatio idiomatum* in the disputations involves predication *in concreto*, but not *in abstracto*.)[24]

We should note that in making this response – denying that, in the Christological case, 'man' and 'humanity' signify the same thing – Luther does not mean to deny the late-scholastic commonplace that the human nature is a particular. As we shall see below, Luther maintains that in non-Christological contexts 'man' and 'humanity' do indeed signify the same things. Extramental natures, for Luther and the late scholastics, are not just unified clusters of properties: they are particulars, and are in some sense the subjects of properties. Luther is happy to predicate human properties of Christ's human nature (something I will show below). And this is fully consistent with Luther's nominalism: given that natures are real (extramental), and given that everything real (extramental) is particular, natures are indeed particular.[25] (Again, I return to this in more detail below.)

[22] WA 39/2, 108,11–12 (DDHC, arg. XII): "Homo et humanitas significant idem. Ergo recte dicitur: Christus est humanitas."

[23] WA 39/2, 108,12–17 (DDHC, arg. XII): "Illa non conceditur, sed illa: Ergo Christus est homo, quia est hoc concretum significans personaliter, sed abstractum significat modum naturae vel naturaliter, sicut igitur falsum est: Christus est humana natura, id est, humanitas, sic Christus est humanitas. Aristoteles dicit: Abstracta sonant naturam, concreta personam."

[24] See recently, for instance, OSWALD BAYER's affirmation of this in "Das Wort ward Fleisch. Luthers Christologie als Lehre von der Idiomenkommunication," in: OSWALD BAYER/BENJAMIN GLEEDE (eds.), Creator est Creatura. Luthers Christologie als Lehre von der Idiomenkommunication (TBT 138), Berlin/New York 2007, 14–15. See too PAUL R. HINLICKY, "Luther's Anti-Docetism in the Disputatio de divinitate et humanitate Christi," in: BAYER/GLEEDE (eds.), Creator est Creatura, 156; JOAR HAGA, Was there a Lutheran Metaphysics? The interpretation of communicatio idiomatum in Early Modern Lutheranism (Refo500 2), Göttingen/Bristol, CT 2012, 82–87. Among recent commentators, Dennis Ngien is a dissenting voice. I believe that Luy has decisively disposed of Ngien's interpretation: see Luy, Dominus Mortis (as note 1), 139–155.

[25] See WA.TR 5, 653,7–10 (No. 6419), where Luther makes it clear that the terms 'man' and 'humanity' signify individual human beings.

So Luther maintains that, in the creaturely case, concrete terms signify persons, and abstract terms natures. Luther says something similar about the signification of concrete and abstract nouns when discussing the difference between the signification of 'God' and 'divinity.' 'God is dead' is permissible, 'the divinity is dead' is not, because the former, but not the latter, signifies just one divine person:

When it is said, 'The divinity is dead,' then it is implied that the Father too and the Holy Spirit have died. But this is not true, for only one person of the divinity, the Son is born, dies, and suffers, and so on. Therefore the divine nature, when it is taken for a person, was born, suffered, died, and so on, and this is true.[26]

The divine nature "taken for the person" is, presumably, signified by 'God' ('*Deus*'). Among other things, Luther here explicitly denies that the properties of one nature can be attributed to the other. Indeed, the discussion presupposes that anything ascribed to the divinity here is ascribed to all three persons. So when Luther talks about attributing things to a nature, what he means is to talk about attributing things to a *person* in or under a nature.[27]

We should interpret the last clause of the following in the light of the semantic rules outlined thus far:

Question: it is asked, whether this proposition is true: The Son of God, the creator of heaven and earth, the eternal Word, cries out from the Cross and is a man? Response: This is true, because what the man cries, God also cries out, and to crucify the Lord of Glory is impossible according to the divinity, but it is possible according to the humanity; but because of the unity of the person, this being crucified is attributed to the divinity as well.[28]

[26] WA 39/2, 110,7–11 (DDHC, arg. XV): "Cum ergo dicitur: Divinitas est mortua, tunc includitur, quod etiam pater et Spiritus sanctus sint mortui. Sed hoc non est verum, quia tantum una persona divinitatis, sed filius est natus, mortuus et passus etc. Ideo natura divina, quando capitur pro persona, est nata, passa, mortua etc., hoc est verum." Luy discusses this passage in a footnote, but does not regard it as unambiguous evidence in favor of Luther's alignment with Biel. This is because he does not think the passage is particularly clear in any case; see LUY, Dominus Mortis (as note 1), 157 n. 100. I think we can be a bit more confident, however.

[27] On this, he is more conservative than Biel. Biel maintains that the prohibition on these kinds of predication (predicating concrete human properties of the divine nature) is not semantic but pragmatic, and understands the semantics of 'the divine essence' differently from Luther. For Luther, 'the divine essence' in the abstract signifies the Trinity: "'the divine essence' signifies the whole Trinity": in the original, WA 39/2, 18,4–5 (Die Disputation de sententia: Verbum caro factum est (Joh. 1, 14) [1539], arg. 10, A version): "quod essentia significet totam trinitatem." C version in WA 39/2, 18,33. Subsequent references to this disputation abbreviated as DSV. The A version omits 'divine,' clearly required by or understood in the context. There is an English translation of the A version in LW 38, 239–277, but I have found it insufficiently careful in relation to Luther's technical language, and prefer to use my own translation. Biel maintains that 'the divine nature' signifies something that is the same as the divine person, and thus the relevant propositions turn out to be true, though to be avoided "on account of heretics, lest they give occasion for the simple to err": BIEL, III Sent., d. 7, q. un., a. 1, ll. 38–42 (3:155).

[28] WA 39/2, 103,20–31 (DDHC, arg. V, A version): "Quaestio: Quaeritur, an illa propositio sit vera: Filius Dei, creator coeli et terrae, verbum aeternum, clamat in cruce et est homo? Re-

Given that the response expressly claims that it is impossible to crucify the Lord of glory "according to his divinity," the only way to make the text coherent is to understand "this being crucified is attributed to the divinity as well" to mean that it is attributed to the divine person.

Equally, I take it that talk of the natures' communicating their properties to each other, as found in both Ockham and Luther, correlates exactly to the ascription or predication of the properties of one nature to the other – and this, as I have shown, Luther understands of the natures *in concreto*.

Luther's understanding of the semantics of the relevant terms more generally has a great deal in common with that proposed by Ockham, albeit that, as we shall see, there are some significant differences. According to Ockham, a philosopher without the great benefit of Christian revelation would hold that correlative concrete and abstract substance-terms (e. g. 'man,' 'humanity') signify the same thing – namely, the substance: the subsisting human nature. Theologians and philosophers alike would hold that correlative concrete and abstract accident terms (e. g. 'white', 'whiteness') signify different things: the concrete adjective signifies the substance (while connoting the accidental form), the abstract substantive signifies the form.[29] But theologians would hold that correlative concrete and abstract substance-terms fail to be synonymous, because in the case of Christ there is a distinction between person and nature, and the concrete term signifies the nature (but connotes the person) whereas the abstract term signifies the nature without the connotation.[30] So Ockham believes that, given the Christian revelation, statements such as 'man is humanity' are in fact false. He can argue this because one of his semantic theories, connotation, allows him to build features of the Christian revelation into his definition of 'man':

The name 'humanity' signifies only a nature composed of body and intellectual soul and connotes neither that the nature is sustained by a *suppositum* – e. g. the divine person – nor that it is not sustained. […] But the name 'man' signifies the nature and gives us to understand that either the nature subsists *per se* and is not sustained by another or that it is sustained by another.[31]

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sponsio: Est vera, quia quod clamat homo, clamat etiam Deus, et crucifigi dominum gloriae est impossibile secundum divinitatem, est autem possibile secundum humanitatem, sed quia est unitas personae, illud crucifigi tribuitur etiam divinitati." See too arg. XXXIII in WA 39/2, 120,21–121,2.

[29] Ockham, Summa logicae I, c. 5 (OPh 1:16–17).

[30] Ockham, Summa logicae I, c. 7 (OPh 1:24–25).

[31] Ockham, Summa logicae I, c. 7 (OPh 1:25): "Hoc […] nomen 'humanitas' nihil significat nisi naturam unam compositam ex corpore et anima intellectiva, non connotando quod ista natura sustentetur ab aliquo supposito, puta a persona divina, nec quod non sustentetur. […] Hoc autem nomen 'homo' significat illam naturam dando intelligere illam naturam esse per se subsistentem et non sustentatam ab alio supposito vel esse sustentatm ab alio." The translation is from Marilyn McCord Adams, William Ockham, 2 vols. (Publications in Medieval Studies 26), Notre Dame, IN 1987, 2:988.

The idea is that both terms, 'man,' 'humanity,' signify particular natures. But their connotations are different: 'man' connotes the fact that natures are related in various ways to *supposita*, 'humanity' does not. And this makes a difference to their supposition in distinct sentential contexts. '*Suppositum*' (= 'hypostasis') is a technical term for whatever is the ultimate subject of the natures and their properties, and Ockham's view is that in non-Christological contexts a particular nature is its own subject – hence in standard cases, as for Luther, concrete and abstract coincide. But *not* so in the Christological context – thus the definition of the *communicatio* in terms of concrete natural-kind substantives: concrete *nature* substantives. Metaphysically, the difference between Christ's human nature and all other human natures is that Christ's is an abstract particular – something akin to a (particular) property of some further thing, the divine person – whereas in all other cases a human nature is a concrete particular – a person.

Luther develops a semantics of the relevant terms that owes a great deal to this treatment, or one much like it. In the 1539 disputation, Luther makes much the same distinction as Ockham between two senses of 'man': a subsisting human nature, and a person sustaining a human nature: "I take 'man' in two ways: in one way of a *per se* subsisting corporeal substance, and in another for a divine person sustaining a humanity."[32] And he explicitly acknowledges his debt to the Scholastic theologians:

> They [viz. the Scholastic theologians] distinguished the 'men,' and it [viz. 'man'] signifies something equivocal, such that, when it signifies someone of the human race outside the Incarnation, it signifies a man subsisting *per se*. This is the philosophical signification. The other is when it is said of Christ. Here it does not supposit for (*supponit*) that unreal (*fictam*) philosophical person, for here it is made to be a new word, signifying the divine person, sustaining (*sustentantem*) our human [nature], as 'white' signifies a human being sustaining whiteness.[33]

Luther makes the same point about the term 'creature' as well: "'Creature' [...] is made a new word in theology, as it signifies the suppositing person."[34] (I return in a moment to further discussion of the signification of 'creature.')

[32] WA 39/2, 17,4–6 (DSV, arg. 9, A version): "Ego capio hominem dupliciter, uno modo pro substantia corporali per se subsistente, alio modo pro persona divina sustentante humanitatem."

[33] WA 39/2, 10,26–32 (DSV, arg. III^a, C version): "Distinxerunt autem homines, et significat aequivocum, ut, quando significat aliquem de genere humano extra incarnationem, significat personam per sese subsistentem. Haec est significatio philosophica. Alia est, quando de Christo dicitur. Hic non supponit illam fictam personam philosophicam. Hic enim fit novum vocabulum significans personam divinam sustentantem nostram humanam, ut albus significat hominem sustentantem albedinem."

[34] WA, 39/2, 29,31–33 (DSV, arg. XXIX^a, C version): "Creatura [...] novum fit vocabulum in theologia, ut significet suppositantem personam." As I noted above, it has been argued that there is a fundamental move away from medieval-style Christologies in Luther's hesitance about the language of the human nature being "sustained or supposited (*sustentari seu suppositari*) by the ... divine *suppositum*" (WA 39/2, 95,34–35 [DDHC, th. 47]). For the classic state-

Where Luther's theory diverges from Ockham's is in its lack of a theory of connotation. For Ockham, as we have seen, 'man' signifies human nature, but connotes its relation to a person. The connotation allows 'man' to *refer* to persons in every case in which it is used to refer to what it signifies. Luther, as we have likewise just seen, maintains that it signifies persons. This shift allows him to secure the correct reference in different contexts: created persons in non-Christological contexts, and the divine person in Christological contexts. Thus, "In philosophy there is no difference between man and the union of a soul and flesh, but in theology there is a great difference. For in Christ, 'humanity' signifies the assumed, not subsistent, human nature. But 'man' signifies a subsistent person"[35]: that is to say, in non-Christological contexts "the union of soul and flesh," and in Christological contexts the divine person.

Luther makes a great deal of denying that 'man,' considered with these different significations, is equivocal. Rather, he maintains that the two word-tokens 'man' and 'man,' uttered variously in the contexts of theological and philosophical discourse, are not only distinct word-tokens but distinct word-types. In the 1539 disputation in particular, he persistently talks about the words of theology as "new words."[36] His view is that word-types are individuated by their signifi-

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ment of the argument, see REINHARD SCHWARZ, "Gott ist Mensch. Zur Lehre von der Person Christi bei den Ockhamisten und bei Luther," in: ZThK 63.3 (1966), 289–351. For the objection, see Luther's comments: "This is said awkwardly (*portentose*), and nearly constrains God as it were to carry or bear the humanity." In the original, WA 39/2, 95,36–37 (DDHC, th. 48): "Hoc et portentose dicitur et cogit pene Deum velut portare vel gestare humanitatem." But his objection is only to the way of talking, not to the doctrine itself: "All these [viz. the Scholastic theologians] understand in a correct and Catholic sense, and therefore the inappropriate language should be abandoned by them." In the original, WA 39/2, 96,1–2 (DDHC, th. 49): "Sed omnes illi recte et catholice sapiunt, ideo condonanda est illis incommoda locutio." The reading proposed by Graham White, as part of a step-by-step refutation of Schwarz, is surely correct: what Luther is objecting to is the implication of "carrying" or "bearing" (see WHITE, Luther as Nominalist [as note 4], 290–291), which presumably sounds too much like the *habitus* theory reported by Peter Lombard and widely rejected by the Schoolmen. In short, Luther objects to this way of talking only on pragmatic grounds, not semantic ones. Luther makes a similar point, though more ambiguously elsewhere: he objects to the language of sustaining in this context, but only, as it turns out, if construed to mean that the human nature is an accident of the Son of God – that the Son of God was a man 'in second act, not in first act' (WA.B 9, 445 [Annex to No. 3629, 60–66]). In fact, talk of sustaining was indeed construed in this context along the lines of an accident's dependence on (and being sustained by) a substance. But even in the 1540 disputation, Luther *affirms* that the human nature inheres in the divine person analogously to the way in which an accident inheres in a subject: see WA 39/2, 108,24–109,2 (DDHC, arg. XII[a], A version). For restrictions on the analogy, see WA 39/2, 111,7–14 (DDHC, arg. XVII, A version).

[35] WA 39/2, 118,1–4: "In philosophia enim nulla est differentia inter hominem et animam et carnem coniunctas, sed in theologia est magna differentia. Humanitas enim in Christo significat naturam humanam assumptam, non subsistentem. Sed homo significat personam subsistentem." See e. g. WA 39/2, 117,24–27 (DDHC, arg. XXVII, A version); also WA 39/2, 115,13–20 (arg. XXV, A version); WA 39/2, 93,20–94,2 (th. 11–12).

[36] See for instance WA 39/2, 10,20 (DSV, arg. III[a], C version).

cations: "the same word, the same signification."[37] (Luther, in effect, excludes equivocation as a semantic possibility.) The philosophical ramifications of the semantic question have been well-explored in the literature, and I will not pursue the matter further here.[38]

But one question is worth pursuing: precisely *why* does Luther adopt this semantic view? Luther believes that doing so allows him to preserve the correct relation between theology and philosophy, as distinct hierarchically-ordered disciplines:

> 4. The Sorbonne, the mother of errors, very badly defined that the same thing is true in philosophy and theology. […] 6. For by this detestable opinion it taught the captivity of the article of faith under the judgment of human reason. 7. And this was nothing other than to include heaven and earth in their own center, or in a grain of millet.[39]

The idea is that the theological use of the language of philosophy would somehow derogate from the dignity of God and theology. Thus the language of philosophy would permit unorthodox implications. Giving the words different senses therefore allows Luther to block certain otherwise damaging inferences – for example (to choose the very first argument in the 1540 disputation), "A human person is one thing, a divine person another. But in Christ there are both divinity and humanity. Therefore there are two persons in Christ."[40] Luther responds by denying that the inference is sound. In theology, 'humanity' and 'divinity' do not signify person but nature, and in the proposed syllogism this semantic shift entails a syntactic difference.[41] (Of course, asserting equivocation – that [e. g.] 'humanity' is equivocal over theological and non-theological contexts – is also sufficient to block the inference.)

Theologically, the theory might lead an unsympathetic reader to suspect Luther of some kind of Docetism, since Christ is not a human being in the sense in which other human beings are – the significations of the two word types '*homo*' (said of Christ) and '*homo*' said of all other human beings are different.

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[37] WA 39/2, 11,33 (DSV, arg. IV, C version). I quote this text in full below.

[38] See White, Luther as Nominalist (as note 4), 128–139. Luther's view is on the face of it puzzling, though I confess I do not have a clear grasp of the individuation conditions for word-types. For something similar to it in recent philosophy of language, though spelled out very differently, see David Kaplan, "Words," in: Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volumes 64 (1990), 93–119.

[39] WA 39/2, 3,7–8, 4,2–5 (DSV, th. 4, 6, 7): "4. Sorbona, mater errorum, pessime definivit, idem esse verum in philosophia et theologia. […] 6. Nam hac sententia abominabili docuit captivare articulos fidei sub iudicium rationis humanae. 7. Hoc erat aliud nihil, quam coelum et terram includere in suo centro aut grano milii."

[40] WA 39/2, 100,9–11 (DDHC, arg. 1, A version): "Alia est persona humanitatis, alia est persona divinitatis. In Christo autem sunt humanitas et divinitas. Ergo in Christo sunt duae personae."

[41] WA 39/2, 100,12–16 (DDHC, arg. 1, A version). For a good discussion of this, see White, Luther as Nominalist (as note 4), 333, 344–347.

At one point, Luther even says, "In theology … there is one man [viz. Christ] to whom none is similar."[42] But this Docetic suspicion would, I think, be unjust, and it is clearly not a consequence that Luther intends. The referents of either of the '*homo*' word-types are related to humanity or human nature in such a way as to allow Christ to be genuinely incarnate. Luther's point is semantic, and does not track the ontology.

2. Two Troublesome Locutions in the 1540 Disputation

2.1. "Christ is a creature"

Running through both disputations is a persistent discussion of the propriety of "Christ is a creature," and, given that 'Christ' refers to the second person of the Trinity, of "The creator is a creature" and similar locutions having as their subject concrete substantives whose Christological supposition is the second person of the Trinity. Luther says a number of things about this, but at heart there is little in his account that we cannot find in the Scholastic theologians. For ease of presentation, I begin with the Scholastics, and work forwards towards Luther.

Consider Thomas Aquinas. His basic line is that "Christ is a creature" is true, but that the risk of misunderstanding in such a case is such that it should only be asserted with the qualification "in his humanity," or "by reason of his humanity." As Aquinas sees it, the risk in omitting the qualification is the Arian heresy: "The Arian heretics said that Christ was a creature, and less than the Father, not only by reason of his human nature, but also by reason of the divine person."[43] To avoid seeming to assert the Arian heresy, we specify "Christ is a creature … according to his human nature."[44] This leads Aquinas to assert a general linguistic rule:

> Those things about which it is not possible to suspect that they belong to the divine person in himself, can be said without qualification of Christ, by reason of his human nature: as we say without qualification that Christ suffered, died, and was buried.[45]

The suspicion in the case of 'is a creature' arises, of course, simply because of the Arian heresy. A similar suspicion could arise, *de facto*, in relation to these other predicates, had some heretic thought (for example) that non-incarnate divine

[42] WA 39/2, 116,1–2 (DDHC, arg. XXV, A version): "sed non in theologia, quia hic est unus homo, cui nullus est similis."

[43] Aquinas, STh III, q. 16, a. 8 c.: "Ariani autem haeretici Christum dixerunt esse creaturam, et minorem patre, non solum ratione humanae naturae, sed etiam ratione divinae personae."

[44] Aquinas, STh III, q. 16, a. 8 c.: "Christus sit creatura … secundum humanam naturam."

[45] Aquinas, STh III, q. 16, a. 8 c.: "Ea vero de quibus suspicari non potest quod divinae personae conveniant secundum seipsam, possunt simpliciter dici de Christo ratione humanae naturae, sicut simpliciter dicimus Christum esse passum, mortuum et sepultum."

persons were passible, or buried. But note that Aquinas asserts the syntactic rule that he does – that we should always add a qualification to 'creature' in the predication "Christ is a creature" – on wholly pragmatic grounds, not semantic ones: "Christ is a creature" (or "God is a creature") is impermissible for pragmatic reasons, not because it is false. Disallowed on semantic grounds, of course, is the Arian claim, "Christ is a creature by reason of his divine person" (read: "according to his kind-essential nature").

Gabriel Biel provides an immediate context for Luther's treatment. Biel sets out two views, both at either extreme around Aquinas's *via media*. One is that of Peter Lombard, who asserts that "Christ is a creature" is simply false.[46] The other is that of Duns Scotus's supposed teacher, William of Ware, who asserts that it is true – and is interpreted by Biel as not disallowing the locution even on merely pragmatic grounds.[47] As Biel sees it, the difference between the two views depends simply on different implied understandings of the terms 'to be created' and 'creature.' Both sides of the debate, as presented in Biel, agree that Christ's human nature is created and is a creature. But Lombard's view maintains that these terms ('created' or 'is a creature') can be truly predicated unqualifiedly of their subject only "immediately." Since, in "Christ is a creature," 'creature' is not predicated of Christ immediately, but only mediately, in virtue of the fact that Christ's human nature is a creature, the proposition is false.[48] Ware, contrariwise, is presented as holding that 'creature' can be truly predicated mediately, and on this analysis the proposition is true.[49] And, in Biel's reading, Ware is relatively sanguine about the possibility for avoiding misunderstanding. Biel thus asserts that, on Ware's view,

> It should be conceded that Christ is created temporally from the Virgin, and is thus a creature, even though these locutions should be used sparingly (*parcius*), lest by their occasion simple people can be seduced into the error of Arius, and believe that Christ even according to his divine nature is a creature.[50]

There is no pragmatic bar here, merely the suggestion of caution. Biel himself accepts Ware's view, thus understood.[51] And as this passage makes clear, Biel's

[46] Biel, III Sent., d. 11, q. un., a. 1, not. 2, ll. 3–8 (3:204), referring to Lombard, Sententiae distinctae III, d. 11, c. 1, n. 1, in: Peter Lombard, Sententiae in quatuor libros, 2 vols., 3rd edn., Spicilegium Bonaventurianum, Grottaferrata 1972–1981, 2:77.

[47] Biel, III Sent., d. 11, q. un., a. 1, not. 2, ll. 9–12 (3:204); for William of Ware, see the text from In sententias III, q. 27, quoted in John Duns Scotus, Opera Omnia, 21 vols., Scotistic Commission (ed.), Vatican City 1950–2004, vol. 9:354, apparatus F.

[48] See Biel, III Sent., d. 11, q. un., a. 1, not. 3, ll. 12–16 (3:206).

[49] Biel, III Sent., d. 11, q. un., a. 1, not. 3, ll. 17–23 (3:206–207).

[50] Biel, III Sent., d. 11, q. un., a. 1, not. 2, ll. 42–47 (3:206): "Concedendum est Christum esse temporaliter creatum ex Virgine et per consequens esse creaturam. Licet illae locutiones parcius proferendae sunt, ne earum occasione simplices possint seduci in errorem Arii, credentes Christum etiam secundum naturam divinam esse creaturam."

[51] See Biel, III Sent., d. 11, q. un., a. 2, ll. 10–17 (3:207).

diagnosis of the Arian heresy is that the Arians accept "Christ is a creature according to his divine nature,"[52] and thus that "Christ … is merely a creature"[53] – and this is to be rejected.

Luther follows Ware and Biel:

> Augustine, moved by the greatest joy, says, "Is this not a wonderful mystery, that he who is the creator wished to be a creature?" […] As I have said, however, this should be said sparingly (*parcius*), and the joy should be restrained, lest it engenders errors. […] It is not permissible (*non licet*) to use these words among the weak, who are easily offended, but among the learned, and those grounded (*radicatos*) in that article [of faith], you may speak in any way. It doesn't matter, and so it does not hurt me, if you say, "Christ is … a creature."[54]

Here, the unqualified locution "Christ is a creature" is true; and the pragmatic bar does not extend within the academy. The similarities to Biel's treatment are striking, even down to verbal parallels.[55]

Given this, it does not seem possible to accept Oswald Bayer's claim that the Scholastics sought to "make it possible to speak of the unity of the natures without arriving at statements such as 'God has suffered and died,' or 'Christ is a creature,' which were considered to be offensive."[56] Luther simply follows Biel, and ultimately William of Ware, on both the truth and the pragmatics of "the creator is a creature." And Biel has the following to say about "the Word died":

> Christ himself truly died. This is proved: Someone who is deprived of a life which he had truly dies. But in the separation of the soul, the humanity of Christ, as much as the body,

[52] See too Biel, III Sent., d. 11, q. un., a. 1, not. 2, ll. 32–33 (3:206).

[53] Biel, III Sent., d. 11, q. un., a. 1, not. 2, l. 34 (3:206).

[54] WA 39/2, 105,10–11, 13–14, 16–19 (DDHC, arg. VII, A version): "Augustinus dicit summa laetitia adfectus: Nonne admirabile mysterium? qui creator est, voluit esse creatura. […] sed tamen, ut dixi, est parcius loquendum et restringenda laetitia, ne pariat errores. […] Apud infirmos non licet uti istis vocabulis, quod facile offenduntur, sed apud doctos et radicatos in illo articulo quocunque modo loquaris, nihil refert, ut mihi nihil nocet, si dicis: Christus est … creatura."

[55] See too e. g. WA 39/2, 120,14 (DDHC, arg. XXXII). At one point, Luther seems to allow a wider pragmatic ban, as in theses 10–11 of DSV: "10. From the teaching of the predicables, it follows perfectly that God is man, and therefore is a rational animal, sensory, living, animate, a body: namely, a created substance. 11. But because Christians should speak soberly and (as Augustine teaches) according to precept, such consequences should be unqualifiedly denied." In the original, WA 39/2, 4,10–14: "10. Ex praedicabilium doctrina sequeretur pulchre: Deus est homo, ergo est animal rationale, sensitivum, animatum, corpus, substantia scilicet creata. 11. Sed quia christianis sobrie, et (ut Augustinus docet) secundum praescriptum est loquendum, tales consequentiae sunt simpliciter negandae." Here, the semantic shift is specified by different syntactic rules: presumably he is worried that the inferences along Porphyry's tree might suggest that we are using 'creature' in the sense of "merely a creature" – something I discuss in a moment. And there is an ambiguity of scope: in claiming that the implications should be unqualifiedly denied, Luther might mean that they should be denied without exception, or that they should be denied unless qualified. A great deal would turn on this. For what it is worth, his practice, as we have seen, should certainly push towards the second reading.

[56] Bayer, "Das Wort ward Fleisch," 16.

as Christ himself, and as the Word, was deprived of a life which he had. […] This is clear in relation to Christ or the Word, because, once the soul was separated from the body, the Word ceased to subsist in a living human nature. […] And 'died' … is truly predicated of the divine *suppositum* through the *communicatio idiomatum*.[57]

No evidence here of Bayer's claims about Scholasticism, or about Luther's novelty.[58]

Luther's reason for the pragmatic bar on the use of "Christ is a creature" outside the academy is the danger of the Arian heresy, namely, that "Christ is only a creature."[59] But his diagnosis of the error is slightly different from those proposed by the Schoolmen. Not only does Luther appeal to his semantic theory; he proposes a distinct understanding of just which meaning is relevant in the case of the Arian heresy. As he sees it, the mistake is understanding 'creature' in a philosophical sense, to mean "something separate from God,"[60] or "something which the creator created and separated from himself."[61] Luther's treatment of the term used in theology is a little unclear. He is clear enough that the term is applicable *only* to Christ; but he is unclear as to whether it signifies the divine person or the

57 Biel, III Sent., d. 21, q. un., a. 2, concl. 2, ll. 8–11, 15–16, 18, 19–20 (3:339): "Ipse Christus vere fuit mortuus. Probatur: quis vere moritur, qui vita, quam habuit, privatur; sed tam humanitas Christi quam corpus quam ipse Christus seu Verbum in separatione animae privatum est vita, quam habuit. […] De Christo seu Verbo patet, quia separata anima a carne, desiit Verbum subsistere in natura humana vivente. […] Item: 'Mortuum' … vere praedicatur de supposito divino per communicationem idiomatum."

58 This is not to say that Luther follows the medieval theologians in everything. Some of the medieval theologians see the Word as the subject of human accidents on the grounds that the Word is the subject of a human nature that, in turn, bears its human accidents: see e. g. Biel, III Sent., d. 7, q. un., ll. 34–49 (3:161). On this view, the Word is not the ontological subject of his human accidents, but merely the linguistic one. Luther strongly rejects this view, which he finds (rightly) in Zwingli: "Zwingli applies all the texts concerning the passion only to the human nature and completely excludes them from the divine nature. But if the works are divided and separated, the person will also have to be separated, since all the doing and suffering are not ascribed to natures but to persons. It is the person who does and suffers everything, the one thing according to this nature, and the other thing according to the other nature, all of which scholars know perfectly well." LW 37, 212–213 (Vom Abendmahl Christi. Bekenntnis [1528]; hereafter abbreviated as VACB); in the original, WA 26, 324,26–32: "weil er die sprůche vom leiden allein auff die menschliche natur zeucht und aller dinge von der Gottheit wendet, Denn wo die werck zuteilet und gesondert werden, da mus auch die person zurtrennet werden, Weil alle werck odder leiden nicht den naturen, sondern den personen zugeeigent werden. Denn die person ists, die alles thut und leidet, eins nach dieser natur, das ander nach ihener natur, wie das alles die gelerten wol wissen." Luther holds that the human nature does indeed bear its human accidents, so presumably he holds that in virtue of its doing so the Word that has that nature also bears them: see WA 40/3, 707,22–26 (Enarratio 53. capitis Esaiae [1544/1550]). In taking this line, Luther in effect follows the view adopted by Scotus: see Scotus, Quodlibetum, q. 19, n. 13, in: John Duns Scotus, Opera Omnia, 12 vols., Luke Wadding (ed.), Lyon 1639, vol. 12:503.

59 WA 39/2, 91,5 (DDHC, praef.).

60 See e. g. WA 39/2, 94,31–32 (DDHC, th. 27).

61 WA 39/2, 105,5 (DDHC, arg. VII, A version); see too WA 39/2, 29,17 (DVC, arg. 31, A version); WA 39/2, 29,31 (DSV, arg. XXIX[a], C version), quoted shortly.

abstract human nature. For example, in the 1539 disputation, "In philosophy, 'creature' signifies that which is not the divine essence or person. Therefore it is made to be a new word in theology, as it signifies the suppositing person."[62] And in the B version of the 1540 one: "The common definition of 'creature' cannot be tolerated in theology. In theology it signifies a creature, that is to say, the person assuming a creature."[63] The A version here is slightly different:

When we call Christ a creature, we understand the divine person who assumed human nature. Nor is the creature in Christ the *suppositum*, not even according to philosophy, but the assumed [nature].[64]

The theses of the 1540 disputation accord with the A version:

56. These forms of speech – Christ according as he is a man, or according to his humanity, or with respect to his humanity, or by his humanity, or in his humanity – mean nothing else than that he has a creature or has assumed a human creature, or, what is simplest, the humanity of Christ is a creature.[65]

Given, then, that Luther allows for the professional use of "Christ is a creature," it is no surprise that he allows all of these qualified uses too. Presumably, it is true both that the divine person is a creature, and that the human nature is a creature; but that the first of these two is parasitic on the second, as in Biel's analysis. And we most properly express the former with the unqualified formula ("Christ is a creature"), and are permitted to express the latter with the qualified formulae outlined in the thesis.

One thing that is initially surprising, given what I have reported thus far, is Luther's hesitancy about "Christ is unqualifiedly (*simpliciter*) a creature":

Argument: If Christ is a creature only according to his humanity, and is not called a creature unqualifiedly (*simpliciter*), then it follows that something remains which is not united in Christ by nature, and that there is in Christ something that is not divine. Response: There is an equivocation in the term 'unqualifiedly.' It is impossible that Christ is merely a creature according to his humanity, for this destroys the divinity. This is Schwenckfeld's objection. Christ is not unqualifiedly a creature. Christians indeed say that Christ accord-

[62] WA 39/2, 29,31–33 (DSV, arg. XXIX[a], C version): "Creatura significat id, quod non est essentia aut persona divina in philosophia. Igitur novum fit vocabulum in theologia, ut significet suppositantem personam."

[63] WA 39/2, 118,15–17 (DDHC, arg. XXVIII, B version): "Illa communis definitio creaturae non potest tolerari in theologia, significat in theologia creatura, id est, persona assumens creaturam."

[64] WA 39/2, 118,17–21 (DDHC, art. XXVIII, A version): "Nos autem dicentes Christum creaturam intelligimus divinam personam, quae assumpsit humanam naturam. Non est autem suppositum, neque in philosophia, illa creatura in Christo, sed assumpta."

[65] WA 39/2, 96,16–20 (DDHC, th. 56): "Ita cum nihil aliud velint istae formae locutionis: Christus secundum quod homo, vel secundum humanitatem, vel humanitate, vel per humanitatem, vel in humanitate est creatura, quam quod habet creaturam vel assumpsit creaturam humanam, vel, quod simplicissimum est, humanitas Christi est creatura."

ing to his humanity is a creature, but they immediately add that Christ according to his divinity is the creator, etc.[66]

But the hesitancy is easily explained: Luther's opponent, Caspar Schwenckfeld, attempted to argue on the basis of the rejected locution that, according to Luther, Christ is *merely* a creature. And this, of course, Luther rejects. The equivocation that Luther is talking about is in fact something syntactic, to do with the scope of 'unqualifiedly': he certainly accepts that the unqualified *locution*, "Christ is a creature," is true, as we have seen.

Luther never tells us what precisely 'creature' means when predicated of the assumed nature (not the person). Clearly, "something not separate from God" cannot be a sufficient account, because that would apply to any non-incarnate divine person too, and Luther cannot intend that. Neither can it be "the suppositing person" or "the person assuming a nature," since the nature does not assume or supposit itself. Presumably, Luther intends it to mean something like "what the creator created and did not separate from himself."

Is there a Scholastic antecedent to this meaning of 'creature'? Clearly, Scholastic understandings of the term 'creature' allow it to be predicated of 'God' and 'man,' whether in the same sense or in different senses. For example, according to Aquinas, what it is to be a creature is to have a relation to God as "the principle of being,"[67] or (equivalently) to instantiate a nature that has such a relation.[68] So Aquinas, unlike Luther, does not think that 'creature' exhibits any semantic peculiarities. Equally, Biel asserts that creature, in the relevant sense, simply means "What is produced into being from non-being."[69] Most relevant for Luther – as Graham White has shown – is the discussion in John Mair. In particular, Mair proposes a sense of the word 'creature' that seems very similar to Luther's philosophical sense: "everything that is not God," and he goes on to note that in this sense "Christ is not a creature, and thus the Master [viz. Peter Lombard] denies [the proposition]."[70]

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[66] WA 39/2, 107,15–29 (DDHC, arg. XI, A version): "Si Christus tantum secundum humanitatem est creatura et non simpliciter est praedicandus creatura, ergo sequitur, manere, quod non uniatur in Christo natura, et in Christo esse aliquod non divinum. Responsio: Est aequivocatio in vocabulo simpliciter. Impossibile est, Christus est tantum creatura secundum humanitatem, quia hoc tollit divinitatem. Hoc tantum opponit Schwenckfeldt. Christus simpliciter non est creatura. Christiani quidem loquuntur, Christum secundum humanitatem creaturam esse, sed statim addunt: Christus secundum divinitatem est creator etc."

[67] Aquinas, STh I, q. 45, a. 3 c.

[68] Aquinas, STh III, q. 16, a. 10 ad 1: "Although Christ is not a human nature, he has a human nature. Now, the word 'creature' is naturally predicated not only of abstract things but also of concrete things, as we say both that humanity is a creature, and a human being is a creature." In the original: "licet Christus non sit humana natura, est tamen habens humanam naturam. Nomen autem creaturae natum est praedicari non solum de abstractis, sed etiam de concretis, dicimus enim quod humanitas est creatura, et quod homo est creatura."

[69] Biel, III Sent., d. 11, q. 1, a. 1, not. 1, 1. 11 (3:203).

[70] John Mair, Super tertium Sententiarum disputationes theologiae, Paris 1517, fol. 24r,

Luther's two senses, philosophical and theological, signify objects under the same root concept ("what the creator created"), but divide it into two incompatible disjuncts – "separated from the creator" and "not separated from the creator." Clearly, the semantics of the term(s) 'creature' are different from those presupposed in Scholastic discussions, and Luther intends there to be such a difference. But does this semantic difference track any serious or substantive theological difference? It does not seem so, and neither does it seem that Luther intends it to. Luther himself periodically expresses puzzlement at the refusal of the Sorbonnists to correct their semantic view – that 'creature' is equivocal' – in favor of the view that 'creature' (in the respective theological and philosophical contexts) is simply two different word-types. In relation to the syllogism, "Every man is a creature; Christ is a man; therefore Christ is a creature,"[71] Luther notes that the Parisians reject the syllogism on the grounds that 'man' is equivocal. He cannot himself understand why they would do this rather than simply admit that 'man' and 'man,' in theological and philosophical contexts, are two different word-types:

> When it [viz. 'man'] is truly equivocal, there would be no [valid] syllogism, with four terms. Thus the Parisians themselves make distinctions. But they say the same thing is true in philosophy and theology. Why, then, do they make the distinction? If it were the same, it would have to be univocal: the same word, the same signification. Thus, not knowing what they are doing, they distinguish philosophy from theology.[72]

When they claim that the word 'man' is equivocal, Luther believes that the Parisians are in fact, without realizing it, committing themselves to his view that 'man' and 'man' in theological and philosophical are different word-types. But the complaint is about the semantics; Luther does not object to the theology – the substantive, ontological commitments – of the Sorbonnists.

And Luther is surely right to think that the difference between his view and that of the Parisians is merely semantic. It is clear that both the whole disjunctive concept ("either 'what the creator created, separated from the creator' or 'what the creator created, not separated from the creator'") and (more importantly) the common core concept ('what the creator created') can be predicated of Christ and other creatures in just the same way as the Scholastic concept is. To

quoted in White, Luther as Nominalist (as note 4), 130. For Mair's Christology more generally, see Richard Cross, "John Mair on the Metaphysics of the Incarnation," in: John T. Slotemaker/Jeffrey C. Witt (eds.), A Companion to John Mair, Leiden 2015, 115–138.

[71] WA 39/2, 10,4–5 (DSV, arg. 4, A version): "Omnis homo est creatura. Christus est homo. Ergo Christus est creatura."

[72] WA 39/2, 11,30–34 (DSV, arg. IV, C version): "Quando vero aequivoce non subsistit syllogismus 4 terminorum, sic ipsi Parisienses distinguunt, et tamen dicunt, idem esse verum in philosophia et theologia. Cur ergo distinguunt? Si esset idem, deberet etiam esse univocatio, idem verbum, eadem significatio. Nescientes ergo, quid dicant, tamen distinguunt a philosophia theologiam." Translation from White, Luther as Nominalist (as note 4), 129–130, slightly modified.

this extent, I doubt that there is much doctrinal difference between Luther and his predecessors, even though the Lutheran semantics is novel. So the following assessment offered by Joar Haga is not quite right:

> Luther's doctrine of Christ may truly be considered in line with the greater nominalist tradition, but his extreme insistence on the proximity of Creator and creature in Christ marks a break from the past insofar as the change of grammar is necessary.[73]

No "change of grammar is necessary," or at least not for this Christological purpose. Luther's view of the "proximity of Creator and creature in Christ" is simply identical to that of the Scholastics. His own motivation for the semantic theory he develops has to do not with the exigencies of orthodox Christology, but with the refusal to allow any place for philosophical terms in theology, as I showed above.

2.2. "The Humanity of Christ is Worshiped"

Given what I have just argued, it may seem surprising that Luther in the 1540 disputation affirms that the humanity of Christ is worshiped. Here is the text: "The humanity joined with the divinity is worshiped; the humanity of Christ worshiped, and not falsely, for it is inseparable from the divinity, and the addition of this possessive, 'of Christ,' answers the objection."[74] What is curious about this case, however, is that the Scholastic theologians all conceded it as well, and so Luther's position is hardly idiosyncratic (and hardly evidence for some innovative Christology in Luther).[75] It derives, in fact (though Luther does not mention this) from the anathemas of the Second Council of Constantinople, anathema nine:

> If anyone, so as to remove the flesh or to mix up the divinity and the humanity, monstrously invents one nature or substance brought together from the two, and so worships Christ, but not by a single adoration God the Word in human flesh along with his human flesh. […] let him be anathema.[76]

Luther explains, exegeting John 14:9–10:

> He who touches the Son of God, touches the divine nature itself. […] Whoever worships the humanity of Christ here no longer adores a creature (for this is what is meant by the union of natures), but the Creator himself, for the unity is what is fundamental.[77]

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[73] Haga, "Was there a Lutheran Metaphysics?" (as note 24), 87.

[74] WA 39/2, 106,3–8 (DDHC, arg. IX, A version): "Humanitas coniuncta cum divinitate adoratur, Christi humanitas adoratur, non est falsum, quia est inseparabilis a divinitate et additio huius genitivi Christi solvit argumentum."

[75] See for example Aquinas, STh III, q. 26, aa. 1 and 2.

[76] Norman F. Tanner (ed./trans.), Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, 2 vols., London/Washington, DC 1990, 1:*118.

[77] WA 39/2, 106,19–20, 26–107,2 (DDHC, arg. IX, A version): "Qui tangit filium Dei, ipsam divinam naturam tangit. […] qui adorat humanitatem Christi hic (quia sic significatur coniun-

Luther's view is utterly traditional and fully in line with his Scholastic and Patristic predecessors.[78]

ctio naturarum), non adorat amplius creaturam, sed ipsum creatorem, quia fundamentum est in unitate."

[78] Versions of this paper were read at the "Beyond Oberman" conference at Northwestern University (Nov. 2–4, 2016), and also at a conference "Rethinking the Resources of the Christian Theological Tradition: Retrieval, Renewal, Reunion" at the University of St Thomas in St Paul, MN (July 11–14, 2017). I am grateful to the participants at both conferences for helpful discussion.

Chapter 4

Analyzing the *Verba Christi*

Martin Luther, Ulrich Zwingli, and Gabriel Biel on the Power of Words

Aaron Moldenhauer

Some readings trace Martin Luther's reformation discovery to his conception of the gospel as performative speech. In this type of speech, a "promise" does not describe an existent reality but creates reality in the conversation between speaker and hearer. The linguistic act is the thing itself. As such, traditional distinctions of sign and signified no longer apply to language. Luther came to this discovery by pondering absolution, the story is told, and then discovered the same type of language in baptism and the Eucharist.[1] According to this reading, Luther's conception that language can be effective is a discovery and displaces traditional questions of signification.

In this essay I ask what theories of effective language were available to Luther from the Scholastics, and whether Luther adopted scholastic theories in his understanding of effective language. More precisely, I ask under what conditions scholastic theologians, Ulrich Zwingli, and Luther understand words to be effective. By effective, I mean that these words do what they say, or bring about the things they point to. In addition to asking under what conditions words are effective, I also ask how these theologians understand words to do what they say, exploring theories of the relationship between the words and the power that effects change. I argue in this paper that Luther appropriates scholastic theories of the efficacy of words, and that Zwingli departs from scholastic consensus by claiming that in theology human words are not effective.

The question of the efficacy of words is important for framing issues of the boundary between medieval and modern. If, as I argue, Luther works within scholastic categories of effective and significative speech, no space is left to root his reformation discovery in effective words. Rather, important questions emerge: what motivates Zwingli's insistence – against scholastic consensus – that human speech cannot be effective in theology, and what has made this theory of language and the broader view of empty signs and divine absence so powerful in modernity?

1 See, for instance Oswald Bayer, Martin Luther's Theology. A Contemporary Interpretation, Thomas A. Trapp (trans.), Grand Rapids, MI 2003, 50–54.

In this paper I put the questions of when and how words signify to analyses of the words of institution of the Eucharist – the *verba Christi* – found in Gabriel Biel, Ulrich Zwingli, and Martin Luther. All three focus their work on the phrase "This is my body," which accounts for its prominence in this paper.[2] I analyze Biel's *Commentary on the Canon of the Mass* as a summary of late medieval scholastic theology, particularly useful for my question because Luther knew it well.[3] I analyze two of Zwingli's *Answers* to Luther's writings on the Eucharist from the late 1520s because Luther's most detailed analyses of the efficacy of words occur in conversation with these works. For Luther, the primary text I analyze is his *Confession Concerning Christ's Supper*, though I also bring in evidence from additional writings of Luther on the Eucharist from the 1520s.

1. Scholastic Theories of the Power of Words

Scholastic theologians, in Gabriel Biel's account, hold that words by their natural power are not effective. Biel reports that this is a consensus among the Scholastics. In Biel's account, words, since they are sounds, by nature possess the power only to change what is heard. Beyond this natural strength to change what a person apprehends, words by convention are made signs of things. Words change the intellect when the one who hears them knows the conventional meaning of the word. For this change in the intellect to occur, the hearer must know the language being spoken, the definition of the particular word said, and something about the referent of the word. However, the natural power of words to change the hearing and their conventional power to change the intellect is insufficient to effect a change outside the senses and the mind, such as the change of bread and wine into Christ's body and blood. Biel argues the point by offering two hypothetical situations involving the words of institution. Were the words of institution to be spoken by a layperson they would not effect the change in the bread, nor would they effect the change if they had been spoken before Christ's incarnation.[4] Leaving aside Biel's theology of the power of the priesthood, what matters

[2] Lee Palmer Wandel surveys the various readings of these words in her excellent book, The Eucharist in the Reformation. Incarnation and Liturgy, Cambridge 2005. My analysis here explores the particular question about the efficacy of the words in greater depth than Palmer addresses in her book.

[3] For Luther's knowledge of Biel's *Canonis Misse Expositio*, see Oberman's and Courtenay's introduction to Gabriel Biel, Canonis Misse Expositio, 5 vols. (VIEG 31–34, 79), Heiko A. Oberman/William J. Courtenay (eds.), Wiesbaden 1963–1976, 1:xiii. References to this edition of Biel's *Expositio* will be cited according to Lecture (Lect.), edited volume and page numbers in parentheses. Luther in 1538 states that he had read the work, WA.TR 3, 564,5–8 (No. 3722) (Anton Lauterbachs Lagebuch aufs Jahr 1538). Melanchthon confirms that Luther could recite the work virtually verbatim in: Philipp Melanchthon, CR 6, 159.

[4] Biel, Expositio, Lect. 47 M (ed. 2:220–221).

for my question is that Biel's examples are intended to demonstrate that there is no power in the words themselves to effect change outside of the mind. Something more must be added to the words if they are to be effective.

Might words be given an added supernatural power so that they can effect change? Scholastic opinions here vary, Biel reports, but many say that they can. One scholastic opinion holds to the idea that the words have power in a broad sense. According to this theory, an uncreated word is operative when the words of institution are spoken.[5] In this case power is not located in the human words that are spoken. The operative words are uncreated, divine words, in some way spoken along with the human words. This theory speaks of power in a broad sense because the power is not in human words but located in a parallel divine word loosely connected to human speech. Many Scholastics, Biel reports, argue against this opinion for a stronger sense of the power of words.

If words have power in more than a broad sense, under what conditions are words effective, and how are they effective? I summarize Biel's account here under two main theories, which I label a divine command theory and a covenant theory. The examples Biel uses to answer both when and how words are effective divide into these two opinions, each group of theologians holding to a particular combination of when and how words are effective. Nevertheless, Biel treats the questions separately, and it is possible that a scholastic could hold to the "when" theory of one school and the "how" theory of the other – a point that will be of note in considering Luther. It is also key to note that Biel treats these theories as opinions.[6] By categorizing them as opinions rather than doctrines, truths, or heresies, Biel allows space to disagree with or critique one theory without condemning it as heresy.

The divine command theory holds that words are effective when they are spoken according to God's command. Biel cites Thomas Aquinas as an example of this theory. Thomas argues that the words of institution are effective because they are spoken in the person of Christ and by Christ's mandate.[7] According to this theory two related ideas are put forward: Christ's command to speak words gives those words power to do what they say, and the person speaking according to the mandate is speaking in Christ's person. When such a word is spoken in the place of Christ and in accordance with his command, that word is effective.

Scholastic theologians holding to a divine command theory think that these words are effective as a *causa concurrens*. That is, they hold that supernatural power is given to the words so that they are a cause concurrent with divine power in effecting change. Again, Biel offers Thomas as an example of the *causa concurrens* theory. According to this opinion, the words of institution given

[5] Biel, Expositio, Lect. 47 N (ed. 2:221).
[6] Biel, Expositio, Lect. 47 N (ed. 2:221).
[7] Biel, Expositio, Lect. 47 N–O (ed. 2:221–223).

by Christ possess the power to convert the elements into body and blood. The words do this by a power lacking in created things but supplied to these words by divine strength. This power given to the words makes the created word a concurrent cause, working with the uncreated word operating in the sacrament to effect the change in substance.[8] This opinion answers the "how" question by seeing the words as a concurrent cause. In the case of the Eucharist, Christ's command gives the words of institution supernatural power to convert the elements when spoken by a priest intending to consecrate the sacrament.

Biel, along with other Scholastics, is not satisfied with the opinion that the words of institution are efficacious as a *causa concurrens* containing supernatural power. The gist of Biel's argument is that this power cannot be precisely located. Does the power lie in the letters, the individual words, or the whole saying? Does the power migrate from one word to the next? If so, this would violate widely-held views that accidents are unable to migrate between subjects. And, most problematic, Biel argues that the transubstantiation of the elements is instantaneous and identifies the moment of consecration as the first moment after the words are spoken.[9] At that moment the words have been corrupted; they no longer exist. Since the corruption of a subject means the accidents of that subject are also corrupted, any power given to the words would also be corrupted after the words were spoken. Furthermore, since to act implies existence, it is problematic to consider how the words might be active in the moment after they cease to be.[10] From this discussion, it is clear that Biel and the Scholastics more broadly see words as Aristotelian subjects possessing accidents, with the conventional power to signify and (in some opinions) capable of possessing additional supernatural power to be efficacious under certain conditions.

Biel prefers the alternative covenant theory which holds that words are effective when God has included them in a covenant. According to this theory, God has made a covenant with the church that when the words of institution are spoken God wills to convert the bread into Christ's body. Because of the covenant, God effects a change when the words of institution are spoken. However, this is not because God has given a divine command to speak the words nor because they contain supernatural power. Instead, the words are consecratory only because God by divine will has included them in a covenant.[11] According to this theory the words are effective, but they do not bear a supernatural power within themselves. This theory fits in between the opinion that supernatural power resides in the words and the opinion that the words have power only in a broad sense parallel to a separate divine word.

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[8] Biel, Expositio, Lect. 47 N–O (ed. 2:221–223).
[9] Biel, Expositio, Lect. 42 M (ed. 2:136–137).
[10] Biel, Expositio, Lect. 47 P–Q (ed. 2:223–224).
[11] Biel, Expositio, Lect. 47 R (ed. 2:225).

Those who hold the covenant theory, in Biel's examples, understand words to be efficacious as a *causa sine qua non*. This opinion holds that bread is converted into the body of Christ by divine power and strength alone, but only when the words of institution are spoken. Biel argues that the special kind of corruption here – the bread ceasing to be according to both matter and form – is beyond the capacity of created strength, as annihilation and creation are both beyond created strength, and therefore beyond the capacity of human words. Yet the words are still efficacious and consecratory because the consecration happens when a priest speaks the words, in accord with divine will and a divine covenant. More precisely, the priest is to do what Christ did, namely, "take bread and say: 'This is my body,'" all of which is commanded by the "this" in "do this in remembrance of me."[12] Biel categorizes the words as a *causa sine qua non*, a cause rooted in God's will and ordination that when the words are spoken God will effect the change. This is distinguished from a natural cause, in which one thing causes another by the nature of the thing. But when one thing follows another only because of someone's will that it should be so, then that thing is a *causa sine qua non*. The words of institution, based on God's will enacted within a covenant, is categorized as a *causa sine qua non* in this theory.[13] In short, the words are consecratory because God by divine will has included them in a covenant that when they are spoken God will transubstantiate the elements of the sacrament.

Biel cites theologians who compare the words of the sacrament to the words of creation. Augustine compares the words that effect a change in created things in the sacrament to the word by which all things were created.[14] Ambrose attributes to the words of Christ the power to create things from nothing (*ex nihilo*). If Christ's words have that power, Ambrose contends that they also have the power to change things that are. He concludes that the word of Christ accomplishes the sacrament, the very word by which all things were created. Biel concludes that this powerful word of creation operative in the sacrament is an eternal and uncreated word.[15] The Scholastics were aware of patristic arguments that saw the words of creation as models for the power of the words in the sacrament, and approved of this connection. They looked to Genesis 1 as evidence that divine words could be effective and saw the same kind of efficacy at work in the words of institution.

By great consensus, the Scholastics hold that the *verba Christi* instituting the Eucharist are efficacious, operative, and even omnipotent. Biel cites a long list of

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[12] Biel, Expositio, Lect. 47 R–S (ed. 2:224–225). "Placuit igitur deo verba instituere in ecclesia predicta regulariter ad quorum prolationem legittimam conversio fieret sua misericordia et voluntate, quod fecit cum dixit: *Hoc facite in meam commemorationem*, *hoc* scilicet quod ego feci, quasi diceret: 'Accipite panem et dicite: *Hoc est corpus meum*', et per hoc fecit pactum cum ecclesia." Lect. 47 S (ed. 2:225).

[13] Biel, Expositio, Lect. 47 U (ed. 2:226–227).

[14] Biel, Expositio, Lect. 47 N (ed. 2:222).

[15] Biel, Expositio, Lect. 47 Q (ed. 2:224).

authorities who hold that words may bear supernatural power to effect change. The authorities include Ambrose, Augustine, Eusebius, John Damascene, Thomas Aquinas, and Alexander of Hales. These authorities describe God's word as active and omnipotent. These words effect what they signify according to these theologians.[16] Luther, given his careful reading of Biel's *Expositio*, was familiar with scholastic theories that words with divine authorization are effective. Given that familiarity, Luther had no space to invent a new theory that words are effective. The Scholastics already had such theories that Luther would have known.

To summarize, two theories in Biel's account explain how the words of institution are effective. One theory holds that a divine command gives the words supernatural strength to effect what they signify and convert the elements into Christ's body and blood. According to this theory the words are a *causa concurrens* of transubstantiation. The other theory holds that by a divine covenant God has willed that when the words are spoken divine strength will convert the elements. According to this theory the words are a *causa sine qua non* of transubstantiation. Biel holds that these theories are opinions and may be adopted or critiqued by orthodox theologians.

The conception of effective language, for the Scholastics, is compatible with a conception of signifying language. Efficacious words still signify. Biel traces various theories of what the efficacious words of institution signify and different solutions to how the words can be conversive and true at the same time. One minority opinion is that the words are spoken recitatively. According to this view, the priest merely reports what words Jesus spoke. In this case the words "this is my body" are spoken *materialiter*, meaning that the word "this" does not signify something directly, as if it were pointing out the bread or the body on the altar. Instead, the words are a report of what Jesus did and said. For those who hold this view, the words are not consecrative, but are given only as a sign to the communicants that they may know that the body of Christ is present according to divine good will.[17] Much more common is the opinion that the words are spoken enunciatively, in the person of Christ and signifying the same things that Christ signified.[18] These opinions will recur, respectively, in Zwingli's and Luther's treatments of the *verba Christi*.

Moreover, anticipating the later debate between Zwingli and Luther, Biel reports an opinion that the signification of "est" is not substantive, but figurative. According to this opinion, "hoc est corpus meum" avails only to say that "bread signifies my body." This assumes that Christ had spoken figuratively, as he did when he said, "I am the true vine." Biel quickly dismisses this opinion as heresy.[19] But he argues further that Christ's speech cannot be taken figuratively unless the

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[16] Biel, Expositio, Lect. 47 N–O (ed. 2:221–223).
[17] Biel, Expositio, Lect. 48 B–C (ed. 2:232–233).
[18] Biel, Expositio, Lect. 48 F–M (ed. 2:235–241).
[19] Biel, Expositio, Lect. 48 G (ed. 2:236).

context clearly indicates figurative speech. In the case of "I am the true vine," the words "you are the branches" indicate such figurative speech. But the words "given for you" and "poured out for you" following "this is my body" indicate that the words of institution are not figurative speech.[20] This debate over figurative language will be replayed between Luther and Zwingli with greater intensity and higher stakes. I note it here to show how for the Scholastics who hold to the efficacy of the words of institution, those words signify even when they are effective words. What they signify may be debated, but that they point to a reality beyond themselves is assumed by the Scholastics.

2. Zwingli on the Power of Words

Like the Scholastics, Zwingli holds that words by nature are not effective. Rather, Zwingli understands words as signifiers. Words bring what they say, Zwingli argues, only in the sense that they bring their meaning to human understanding.[21] This account of the natural power of words, while glossing over scholastic distinctions between natural and conventional power, agrees with the Scholastics that words by nature are not efficacious. Since words signify, Zwingli repeatedly calls for the interpreter to stick to the "natural sense" of words.[22] Zwingli complains that Luther departs from a simple understanding of the natural sense of words in favor of a reading based on metaphysical sophistry.[23] Luther is, in Zwingli's opinion, too metaphysical. Zwingli appeals to the natural sense of words to reject Luther's metaphysical conceptions of different kinds of presence.[24]

But can words be given supernatural power to do what they say? On this point Zwingli's writings show some instability. His argument in these works allows that, potentially, words in a theological context may be effective, but Zwingli restricts this to some few words spoken by God. In actuality, Zwingli identifies no human words as effective in a theological context.[25] The works analyzed here do not address the question of effective speech in political or other contexts. That is, in these works Zwingli does not comment on the power of a king's

[20] Biel, Expositio, Lect. 39 D (ed. 2:87–88).

[21] Ulrich Zwingli, Ulrich Zwingli's Antwort auf Luthers Bekenntniß vom Abendmahl, in: Johann Georg Walch (ed.), Dr. Martin Luthers Sämmtliche Schriften, 23 vols., St. Louis, MO 1880–1910, vol. 20 (1890), 1283, § 129.

[22] Ulrich Zwingli, Ulrich Zwingli's Antwort, daß diese Worte, Das ist mein Leichnam, ewiglich den alten einigen Sinn haben werden, in: Johann Georg Walch (ed.), Dr. Martin Luthers Sämmtliche Schriften, St. Louis, MO 1890–1910, vol. 20 (1890), 1151, § 32.

[23] Zwingli, Antwort, daß diese Worte, 1155–57, § 37.

[24] Zwingli, Antwort, daß diese Worte, 1151–53, §§ 32–35.

[25] Zwingli, Antwort auf Luthers Bekenntniß, 1262, § 73. Moses had a promise given that his words would bring water forth from the rock. But Zwingli does not find a single word of Scripture that makes a similar type of promise to contemporary Christians (1262–63, § 77).

words when he passes a judgment or decrees a law, or similar examples outside of theology.

Zwingli differs from scholastic theologians by grounding the potential efficacy of words not in a divine command or covenant, but in a divine promise. Zwingli speaks of three categories of words. Potentially, Zwingli allows that a "promise-word" (*verheissendes Wort*) brings what it says. A "promise-word" is a word that God has given to speak and promised that when the word is spoken, God does what the words say.[26] This is similar to the covenantal theory seen in Biel, but Zwingli's analytical category is a promise rather than a covenant. Zwingli contrasts "promise-words" with "command-words," words in which God gives a command. For Zwingli, command words are not effective. Command-words merely command that one is to do what God says but include no promise to effect the thing commanded. Claiming that they are effective goes beyond what God has given these words to do.[27] This condition precludes any type of divine command theory for the efficacy of words. While a divine command requires one to say certain words, the command in no way gives power to the words to effect what they say.

Even further removed from effective speech is Zwingli's third category of "thätliche Worte / Tätelworte," which I will translate in Zwingli's work as "historical words." Zwingli offers a Latin synonym: *verba facti*, words of the thing done. He defines these as words that grasp a deed that has been done or report something that happened.[28] When historical words are spoken, it is sufficient to believe that what they say took place, but erroneous to go beyond this to believe that speaking the words will bring what they say in the present time.[29] Zwingli's category of *Tätelworte* is important for Luther, as he takes the term from Zwingli and redefines it.

Zwingli is reluctant to include scriptural injunctions in the category of promise words, due to his strict separation of divine work from human work. For instance, Zwingli holds that only Christ can provide comfort. For this reason, Zwingli does not categorize words of absolution spoken by a person other than Christ as promise-words. When Peter or Paul says, "your sins are forgiven," these are only historical words (*Tätelworte*) indicating what Christ has done. Zwingli contends that only Christ and not humans can bring comfort and security to the conscience. Likewise, Jesus' words in John 20:23 that "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them" (NRSV) are not promise-words. They cannot be, because no creature can forgive sins. Christ's words in this passage are only a command to preach the gospel. The words mean that when one has the gospel

[26] Zwingli, Antwort, daß diese Worte, 1173–74, § 68.

[27] Zwingli, Antwort, daß diese Worte, 1173–74, §§ 68–69; Antwort auf Luthers Bekenntniß, 1259, § 66.

[28] Zwingli, Antwort auf Luthers Bekenntniß, 1258–59, §§ 65–66.

[29] Zwingli, Antwort, daß diese Worte, 1173–74, § 68.

preached to the heart, then that person's sins are forgiven. But speaking the gospel to the heart and forgiving sins is the work of the Holy Spirit, not of a person.[30] Forgiving sins and offering comfort is a divine work, and it is not accomplished by words spoken by a person other than Christ. Unpacking this, Zwingli holds that forgiveness and comfort are worked by divine power apart from any human words spoken. Words that declare forgiveness are only reports of something that God has worked in a different way.

Zwingli is not precise about whether promise-words are effective as a *causa concurrens* or as a *causa sine qua non*. His general treatment suggests that he thinks words are effective as a *causa sine qua non*. Zwingli describes the power of Christ's words in this way. When Christ said, "Be clean," the words merely told people that by divine power Christ had cleansed a person.[31] While the words and the healing happened simultaneously, there is nothing in the words that caused this. For questions of human speech, the question of "how" words effect change is moot for Zwingli. For instance, when Jesus promises that his disciples will drive out demons in his name, Zwingli holds that the "name" means Jesus' power that will drive out the demons – not through the words of his disciples, but by immediate divine power. The words will signify to others what God is doing by his almighty power. In this case words do not bring what they say, and Zwingli thinks that to argue that they do is a foolish fabrication.[32] Zwingli allows no instances of actual promise-words given to an ordinary person to speak to effect a change in spiritual or theological matters. When describing Christ's words as promise-words, Zwingli gives an account of causality something akin to a *causa sine qua non*. Even in the case of Christ's words, the words report what God is doing by a separate power.

What complicates this account is Zwingli's assertion that the word of God is almighty and effective. Zwingli views the words of creation as God speaking the living (*lebendigmachende*) word, "Let there be light" (Gen 1:3).[33] God's word brings what it purports, Zwingli says, as no one denies. But this power, he hastens to add, does not extend to words people speak to which God has not attached a command or promise. So a person cannot speak the words of creation, "Let there be light," and expect the words to be efficacious. Perhaps a likelier candidate to try would be to speak to the dead that they should arise and look for those words to bring what they say. After all, Zwingli argues, those words have God's promise attached to them. But those words will not bring what they say; the dead will not rise when these words are spoken.[34] Zwingli argues from these examples to conclude that when people speak God's almighty word, the word is

[30] Zwingli, Antwort auf Luthers Bekenntniß, 1260–61, §§ 70–71.
[31] Zwingli, Antwort auf Luthers Bekenntniß, 1283, § 129.
[32] Zwingli, Antwort auf Luthers Bekenntniß, 1282–83, § 129.
[33] Zwingli, Antwort, daß diese Worte, 1172–73, § 67.
[34] Zwingli, Antwort, daß diese Worte, 1177–78, § 77.

still ineffective. It appears that Zwingli restricts words that have power in them to God's word, here meaning words that God speaks or has spoken directly and not meaning words that ordinary people speak. Zwingli views human words, even human speaking of scriptural words, as merely indicative of things God does by separate, direct divine power.

Zwingli uses these theories of the power of words to analyze the words of institution in the Eucharist. These words should be taken in their natural sense, signifying what the words normally signify. The natural sense of "this is my body, given for you" necessitates that if Christ's body is present, it must be a visible, passable presence, because the natural sense of the word "body" is a body that is visible and passable. Accordingly, the natural sense of the words is that the sacramental meal is a memorial of Christ's body. When the husk is stripped away from the words, the memorial meal is the kernel that remains as their true meaning.[35] Zwingli categorizes the words "this is my body" as historical words, reporting something that happened. Since they lack a divine promise or command, they cannot be effective words. Moreover, Jesus' command to "take, eat," does not extend to the words "this is my body." Jesus' words command only what they say, that we are to take and eat.[36] It is not permissible to extend the "do this" in Jesus' words to the presence of Christ's body and blood. The command to "do this" extends only to the eating and drinking. The words, "Do this in remembrance of me," characterize the meal as a memorial meal, and as a memorial a meal that by definition lacks the thing signified.[37] Zwingli, finding no divine promise to make the words "this is my body" effective, uses the category of *Tätelworte* to contend that these words merely report what happened. Of note here is Zwingli's insistence that a memorial meal must be an empty sign. Seen from a medieval perspective, this conception is an innovation.

Luther, as we will see, redefines *Tätelworte* and interprets the commands in the words of institution differently. Zwingli is aware of Luther's redefinition of *Tätelworte* and contends that Luther confuses *Tätelworte* with words of promise.[38] While Luther thinks these words do what they say, Zwingli finds no promise that would make the words of institution efficacious and no command to make the body present.[39] Zwingli rightly identifies the different theories of language as foundational for his argument with Luther. Luther concurs on the importance of this point. As Luther goes about arguing against Zwingli, his concept of effective speech fits within scholastic theories while rejecting Zwingli's concepts limiting the power of words.

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35 Zwingli, Antwort, daß diese Worte, 1151–53, §§ 32–35.

36 Zwingli, Antwort, daß diese Worte, 1174–75, §§ 69–70.

37 Zwingli, Antwort, daß diese Worte, 1175–78, §§ 72–77; Antwort auf Luthers Bekenntniß, 1236–37, §§ 4–7.

38 Zwingli, Antwort auf Luthers Bekenntniß, 1259–61, §§ 67–70.

39 Zwingli, Antwort auf Luthers Bekenntniß, 1262, §§ 75–76.

3. Luther on the Power of Words

Luther holds that human words by nature are not effective. When speech is only the declarative word of a person, that speaking accomplishes nothing. Luther takes this as a given; Zwingli does not need "to teach us that our speaking would accomplish nothing. We already know that."[40] For Luther, words do not by their nature effect what they signify. Rather, words are signifiers.[41] This is true also of God's word, in which words retain their natural meaning.[42] In Luther's view, even when God's word is effective it still signifies. Words by their nature do not have the power to effect what they say. On this point Biel, Zwingli, and Luther agree. Likewise, the three agree that words signify, pointing to things beyond the words themselves.

Luther holds that words under certain conditions are effective. He describes these words as "Tätelworte." Luther's concept of *Tätelworte* differs radically from Zwingli's. Zwingli, as shown above, defines *Tätelworte* as words that report an action that has happened. Luther takes up this category, empties it, and redefines it to mean words that effect what they signify.[43] In other words, Zwingli provides the term that Luther uses to describe effective words. Beyond that, Luther dismisses Zwingli's categories as irrelevant.[44] Luther does not base the efficacy of words on a divine promise, as Zwingli did.

Instead, Luther argues that when God speaks words as "Tätelworte" or as a "Machtwort," then the words are effective. This is one condition Luther gives for effective speech. For Luther it is not enough that it is God's word for that word to be a *Tätelwort*, or as I will translate the term in Luther, an "action-word." Rather, an act of divine will is needed to make the words effective.[45] When God speaks intending the words to be effective, then they are effective.

When it comes to human speech, Luther works with a divine command theory for the efficacy of human words. When action-words stand in the context

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[40] LW 37, 184–185 (That These Words of Christ, "This is my Body," Still Stand Firm Against the Fanatics [1527]); in the original WA 26, 285,3–24, citation at 20–21: "So dů̊rfft er uns nicht leren, wie als den unser sprechen nichts schaffet, das wů̊sten wir auch wol." Also LW 36, 339 (The Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ – Against the Fanatics [1527]): "The human voice is a weak thing, that by itself does not speak words that effect what they say." In the original, WA 19, 488,17–28, citation at 17–20: "das ist ein arme elende stim und so zu rechnen die geringste creatur, nichts mehr denn ein wind; so bald der mund auffhoret, so ist es aus und nichts mehr, das kein schwecher, vergenglicher ding sein kan."

[41] LW 37, 164–168 (That These Words of Christ) (= WA 26, 263,29–266,25).

[42] LW 36, 279–282 (The Adoration of the Sacrament [1523]) (= WA 11, 434,17–436,34).

[43] LW 37, 181 (That These Words of Christ) (= WA 26, 282,26–283,8).

[44] LW 37, 181: "Let Zwingli regard the words in the Supper as he will, be they command-words or permission-words, action-words or written words; it doesn't matter to me." In the original, WA 26, 282,33–35: "Zwingel halte die wort ym abendmal, gleich wie er wil, es seyen heisselwort odder lasselwort, thettelwort odder leselwort, da ligt mir nichts an."

[45] LW 37, 181 (= WA 26, 282,39–283,6).

of divine imperatives, then everything that the words declare takes place. This happens by the power of the divine imperative through which the words are spoken.[46] Luther gives examples of divine commands embracing simple declarative words that make those words effective, including baptism and absolution. When the priest says, "I baptize you," those words stand in the context of Christ's imperative, "Go and baptize," and so it is a baptism in the sight of God. Or when Peter or Paul says, "Your sins are forgiven," the sins are forgiven because the words are embraced in Christ's imperative in John 20:23, "If you forgive the sins of any [they are forgiven]."[47] Luther's reading of divine commands – particularly his inclusion of words of absolution within a divine command – extends further than Zwingli's and authorizes the words to do more. Like the Scholastics who work with a divine command theory, Luther says that these words are spoken in Christ's person and name.[48] The priest who baptizes does so in the name and stead of God.[49] When God gives a command authorizing human speech to be effective, then those words effect what they declare.

On the question of how words are effective, Luther appears to work with a *causa sine qua non* theory for human speech authorized by a divine imperative. Luther does not use Biel's language of *causa concurrens* or *causa sine qua non*, and his writing suggests both theories at different places. When describing God's words as action-words, Luther's description suggests the words are a concurrent cause. A divine action-word is "a word of power which accomplishes what it expresses."[50] This description echoes Biel's analysis of words as a concurrent cause,

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[46] LW 37, 182–183 (= WA 26, 283,31–284,4).

[47] LW 37, 183. In the original, WA 26, 284,10–18: "Item wenn der Priester teuffet und spricht: Ich teuffe dich ĸ., das ist freilich ein lauter thettel wort, Aber weil es ynn das heissel wort gefasset ist, da Christus sagt: 'Gehet hin und teuffet,' mus es gleich wol eine tauffe sein fur Gott. Und wenn Petrus odder Paulus spreche: Dir sind deine sunde vergeben, wie Christus zu Maria Magdalena sprach, wolan, das ist ein lauter thettel wort, Dennoch sind da die sunde vergeben, wie die wort lauten, Darumb, das ym heissel wort befohlen und gefasset ist, da Christus spricht Johan. ult. 'nemet den heiligen geist, welchem yhr die sunde vergebt.'"

[48] LW 37, 187 (= WA 26, 287,24–26).

[49] LW 36, 62–63 (The Babylonian Captivity of the Church [1520]) (= WA 6, 530,19–531,6). In this passage Luther expands on what he understands doing something in the person and name of Christ to mean. The person administering baptism is the instrument of God, who is the doer of the action. In this way, a person both baptizes (because he submerges the person in the water) and does not baptize (because she acts by God's authority and not by her own, and because the work is to be ascribed to God).

[50] LW 37, 181 (Confession Concerning Christ's Supper [1528]). In the original, WA 26, 283,4–5: "So ist sein wort freylich nicht ein nachwort, sondern ein machtwort, das da schaffet, was es lautet." When describing God's word in general, Luther asserts that it "brings with it everything of which it speaks, namely, Christ with his flesh and blood and everything that he is and has." LW 36, 278 (The Adoration of the Sacrament [1523]). In the original, WA 11, 433,23–33: "bringe mit sich alles, was es deuttet, nemlich Christum mit seym fleysch und blutt und alles was er ist und hatt." Note that when Luther speaks of God's word as effective, there is something outside of the text which it means, here Christ and his flesh and blood, which the word signifies and brings.

with the power located in the words. But Luther's description of human speech as action-words suggests that the words are effective as a *causa sine qua non*. Human words standing in the context of a divine imperative do not simply declare, but everything they declare takes place "by the power of the divine imperative through which they are spoken."[51] When people speak words in the context of a divine command, what they say occurs by virtue of God's command, bidding, and action. Luther locates the power not in human words but in God's command; God has connected a divine deed to human speech.[52] For instance, in baptism God is the real agent, baptizing through a human voice and hands.[53] These descriptions echo Biel's account of a *causa sine qua non*. These words are effective not because there is power in the words, but because by virtue of a divine command God has attached divine action to the words.

Luther combines elements from the two scholastic theories of efficacious words outlined by Biel. Like Thomas and other Scholastics, Luther says that human words are effective when they are spoken according to a divine command. This type of divine command theory was not something Luther needed to invent; he would have been familiar with it from Biel's writing. Unlike Thomas and the Scholastics in the divine command theory school, Luther understands human words to be efficacious as a *causa sine qua non*. This opinion was also available to Luther from his study of the Scholastics. And, given that Biel treats the "when" and "how" questions separately, I see no reason why the Scholastics would object to Luther's juxtaposition of scholastic opinions that words are made efficacious by a divine command, and are efficacious as a *causa sine qua non* along with divine power. Luther's theory about effective words fits within accepted Scholastic opinions.

Like the Scholastics and Zwingli, Luther applies his theories to the words of creation. According to a divine command theory, the words of creation were effective when God spoke them, but are ineffective when people speak them. God creates all things by divine words spoken in creation as action-words. This is an example of God's word of power, the word working here as a type of concurrent cause. But God has not given a command for people to speak these words as action-words. If God had, Luther holds, then a person would say, "Let there be a moon and a sun," and they would appear.[54] By applying the divine command theory for the efficacy of words, Luther counters Zwingli's argument based on the words of creation that human speaking of action-words remains ineffective.

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[51] LW 37, 183 (That These Words of Christ). In the original, WA 26, 284,2–4: "So sinds nicht mehr schlechte thettelwort, sondern auch heissel wort, denn es geschicht auch alles, was sie lauten, aus krafft der go̊tlichen heisselwort, durch welche sie gesprochen warden."

[52] LW 37, 184 (Confession Concerning Christ's Supper) (= WA 26, 285,3–24).

[53] LW 36, 63 (Babylonian Captivity) (= WA 6, 530,27–31).

[54] LW 37, 61 (That These Words of Christ) (= WA 23, 139,17–19); LW 37, 183 (Confession Concerning Christ's Supper) (= WA 26, 284,5–30).

Luther's thought on the words of creation is not innovative. As Biel reports, this connection of the words of creation to God's power was common before and during the scholastic period.

Luther applies his theories to the words of institution. Working with a divine command theory of "when" words are effective, Luther concludes that these words are efficacious based on Christ's institution or command. Luther writes that all the power of the sacrament is located in the words that institute the sacrament.[55] The institution is a form of divine command, so that Luther's divine command theory applies to the words "this is my body." Specifically, the divine command here is found in Christ's words "do this." Luther understands this command to cover all that Christ did: take bread, bless it, break it, and distribute it, saying, "This is my body."[56] Luther locates the power of the sacrament in God's command, not in human words. God joins a divine command to our speaking, but the power lies in God's command.[57] Luther's descriptions of "how" the words are effective suggest that this efficacy is something like Biel's opinion that words are effective as a *causa sine qua non*.[58] That is, Luther says that Christ's body is present by virtue of the words. But when expanding on this, Luther describes this as a divine work performed by God's almighty power.[59] Luther identifies the divine command as the place of that power, rather than human words. These descriptions suggest that God's power works when the words are spoken but operates alongside the words when they are spoken rather than in them. For Luther, words function as they did in scholastic opinions: they are efficacious when authorized by a divine command and accomplish what they say because of divine power working when the words are spoken.

Luther interprets Christ's command to cover more than Zwingli does. Zwingli, as shown above, limits the command "Do this" to eating bread as a memorial. Luther criticizes Zwingli for separating the command-words "Do this" from the words "This is my body."[60] Yet, given Zwingli's theories of command-words and promise-words, Zwingli could grant Luther that the command covered the words "This is my body" and still insist that the words were not efficacious, be-

[55] LW 36, 36 (Babylonian Captivity) (= WA 6, 512,33–34).

[56] LW 37, 187 (Confession Concerning Christ's Supper) (= WA 26, 287,4–21).

[57] LW 37, 184 (= WA 26, 285,6–7, 16–18).

[58] But consider a counter example in LW 36, 341–343 (The Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ) (= WA 19, 490,10–494,14). In this text Luther says that Christ puts himself into the word and by the word puts himself into the bread. "Er hat sich yns wort gefasset, und durchs wort fasset er sich auch yns brod." WA 19, 493,21–22. While this sounds like a *causa concurrens*, two paragraphs earlier Luther explicates what he means by saying that it is not human words spoken that draw Christ down. Rather, the words make certain where Christ will be found: "Unsere wort, so wir sprechen, durffen yhn nicht herunter ziehen sondern sind uns geben zur sicherung, das wir wissen yhn gewis zu finden." WA 19, 492,16–17. That explanation fits well with a *causa sine qua non* theory of the efficacy of the words.

[59] LW 36, 33–34 (Babylonian Captivity) (= WA 6, 511,10–12).

[60] LW 37, 187 (Confession Concerning Christ's Supper) (= WA 26, 287,4–21).

cause they lacked a divine promise. While Luther and Zwingli differ on what the command "do this" entails, this point is insufficient to account for their respective sacramental theologies. More significant is the difference in their respective theories of effective language.

Like the Scholastics, Luther holds that the effective words of institution signify things. He advises, as Zwingli does, to read these words in their natural sense.[61] Luther judges that "This is my body" is the simplest expression to signify that the bread on the altar has been united to Christ's body.[62] The "this" designates the bread on the altar, no longer ordinary bread but bread united to Christ's body as one sacramental substance, a "body-bread."[63] Luther's language of substance here indicates a reality in the sacrament beyond the words. The words of institution signify this substance; they point to the very thing that they effect, the union of body and bread on the altar. While the words of institution, in Luther's reading, are effective, their efficacy does not displace their signification.

4. Conclusions

The first point I would like to draw from this analysis is a consensus among Biel, Zwingli, and Luther that words signify things. Words signify even when they are efficacious. The three theologians all comment on the precise formula for what the words "This is my body" signify. Biel argues that they are properly reduced to mean a loss of the bread and the succession of the body of Christ within the remaining accidents.[64] Zwingli argues that they are properly reduced to "this is the commemoration of my body," or "this is a sign of my body."[65] Luther argues that they are properly reduced to mean that both body and bread are present, united in one new sacramental substance.[66] For Biel and Luther, who hold that these words are efficacious, this means that the efficacy of words does not replace their

[61] LW 37, 304 (= WA 26, 445,19–23).

[62] LW 37, 309 (= WA 26, 451,19–24).

[63] LW 37, 303. In the original, WA 26, 445,1–12: "Es ist auch keine da, sondern es trewmet dem Vigleph und den sophisten also, denn ob gleich leib und brod zwo unterscheidliche naturn sind ein igliche fur sich selbs, und wo sie von einander gescheiden sind, freylich keine die ander ist, Doch wo sie zu samen komen und ein new, gantz wesen werden, da verlieren sie yhren unterscheid, so fern solch new einig wesen betrifft, und wie sie ein ding werden und sind, also heisst und spricht man sie denn auch fur ein ding, das nicht von nо̊ten ist, der zweyer eins untergehen und zu nicht werden, sondern beide brod und leib bleibe, und umb der sacramentlichen einickeit willen recht gered wird: 'Das ist mein leib', mit dem wо̊rtlin 'Das' auffs brod zu deuten, Denn es ist nu nicht mehr schlecht brod ym backofen, sondern fleischsbrod odder leibsbrod, das ist ein brod, so mit dem leibe Christi ein sacramentlich wesen und ein ding worden ist."

[64] Biel, Expositio, Lect. 49 B (ed. 2:251).

[65] Zwingli, Antwort, daß diese Worte, 1151, § 32.

[66] LW 37, 303 (Confession Concerning Christ's Supper) (= WA 26, 445,1–12).

signification. The words still point to something beyond themselves. Luther's theories about the efficacy of words does not eliminate their signification. For Luther there is a real substance outside the words of institution of the Eucharist which the words bring to mind.

A second point is that Luther's position on the efficacy of words stands, from a scholastic viewpoint, within established opinions. His views on divine commands making human words efficacious as a *causa sine qua non* fit within the scholastic conversation. He arranges these opinions in a new way, but in doing so Luther simply chooses from among scholastic opinions, all of which Biel grants are legitimate. On the main question of whether words may be efficacious under certain circumstances, Luther follows medieval thought.

What is new in this discourse is Zwingli's insistence that within a theological context no actual human words are effective. This suggests further questions. Why does Zwingli insist that words are not effective? Are there precursors to this view whom Zwingli is following? Why has this position, particularly notions of empty signs and divine absence, proven so influential in framing many modern conceptions of divinity and language? In particular, this point is key to constructions of a sharp divide between Catholicism and Protestantism. That is, as Robert Orsi argues convincingly in *History and Presence*, Zwingli's and other sixteenth-century Protestants' insistence that the Eucharist is a memorial meal, and as a memorial an empty sign necessitating the absence of Christ's body, informs later modern devaluations of material elements of religion. These conceptions of religion sharply separate the material from the spiritual, so that no room is left for real divine presence in material things. According to these constructs, medieval Catholicism is marked by presence, and modern Protestantism by absence.[67] One example of how these concepts are mobilized in this kind of narrative is the thought of William Robertson Smith, a late-nineteenth century English religious theorist. Smith echoes Zwingli's language from the Eucharistic debates of a spiritual kernel within a material husk. Smith theorizes religion as an evolution out of "primitive" forms of religion involving material cults to ever purer spiritual religions.[68] I suggest that, perhaps, the innovation in reformation theories of language leading to the most generative questions is not Luther's effective language, but Zwingli's theory that signs, being necessarily empty, mark the absence of the thing signified.

A third and final conclusion is that Luther does not reduce the Eucharist to a promise. He elevates the importance of promise and complains that the Scholastics overlooked this aspect of the sacrament.[69] However, Luther's writings on the Eucharist use the same conceptions and theories of effective language as

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[67] Robert A. Orsi, History and Presence, Cambridge, MA 2016, 1–47.

[68] William Robertson Smith, Religion of the Semites, New Brunswick, NJ/London 2005, 439–440.

[69] LW 36, 41–45 (Babylonian Captivity) (= WA 6, 516,2–519,8).

the scholastic theologians, language that signifies. Luther holds that the words point to a real thing outside of and behind the promise. In the Small Catechism, Luther's simplest treatment of the sacrament of the altar, he begins with this reality.[70] Luther's first question in the Catechism is what the sacrament of the altar is: the body and blood of Christ given to Christians to eat and to drink. Only after referencing the substance does Luther move to the benefits of the sacrament, those things contained in Christ's promise.

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[70] WA 30/1, 259,26–260,5 (Der kleine Katechismus [1529]).

Chapter 5

Eucharistic Real Presence

Some Scholastic Background to Luther's Debate with Zwingli[1]

Marilyn McCord Adams

1. Metaphysics and Hermeneutics

I want to examine some of Luther's views about Eucharistic real presence – the thesis that after the consecration, Christ's Body and Blood are really present on the altar where the bread and wine were and still appear to be – in the context of his polemics against Zwingli and against the background of the scholastic defaults from which he started as an Augustinian friar.

All parties to the debate agree: infallible authority furnishes data for theology, givens that it must incorporate and explain or otherwise work around. All parties to the debate concur: Sacred Scripture is the primary authority for Christians, while the Apostles' Creed is invariably binding. To these, medievals would add the Nicene Creed and various ecclesiastical pronouncements. All conclude that primary authorities must be construed in such a way that they come out true. All insist on Divine omnipotence, which is attested by creeds as well as Scripture.

1.1. Zwingli's Figurative Reading

At stake between Zwingli, on the one hand, and Luther and the scholastics, on the other, is the proper interpretation of Christ's words of institution: "This is my body" (Mt 26:26; Mk 14:22; Lk 22:19; 1 Cor 11:24). Zwingli contends that taking 'This is my body' literally after the resurrection and ascension is incompatible with another scriptural and credal assertion: that Christ has ascended to the right hand of God, where he will remain until his second coming (Mk 16:19; Acts 7:56; cf. Ps 110:1; the Apostles' Creed). Zwingli takes the latter claim to mean that between ascension and second coming, the body of Christ is literally located and extended in a particular place in heaven. For these and other reasons, scholastics generally agreed. But Zwingli takes it to be philosophically self-evident that

[1] I thank Aaron Moldenhauer for finding the equivalent original texts by Zwingli and Luther.

[P1] it is metaphysically impossible for one body to exist in two places at once,

from which he concludes that the Body of Christ cannot simultaneously exist at the right hand of God in heaven and on one or more earthly altars. "This is my body" has to be taken figuratively to mean "this [bread] is a sign of my body."[2] Everyone should know that a sign and the thing signified are not the same!

For polemical good measure, Zwingli contends that those who opt for a literal interpretation of the words of institution will find themselves committed to what – back in 1059 – Berengar of Tours was forced to swear: that the real body of Christ is held and broken by the hands of the priests and crushed by the teeth of the faithful![3]

1.2. Luther's Literal Reading

Roughly speaking, Luther inverts Zwingli's hermeneutical intuitions to take Christ's words of institution literally,[4] while construing 'the right hand of God' as a figure of speech.[5] Luther puts his energy behind medieval (eleventh and thirteenth century) prohibitions against taking 'this is my body' figuratively or merely symbolically. Zwingli's conclusion is false! What, then, went wrong in his argument? Luther's diagnosis is that Zwingli was assuming that there is only one way for bodies to exist in place: viz., extended in place, in such a way that the figure of the body is commensurate with the figure of the place, in such a way that the whole is in the whole place and part in the part of place (what Aquinas and Ockham, among others, labeled being "circumscriptively" in place; see section 1.3 below). Scholastics mostly took for granted that Aristotle would have agreed with

[P1*] it is metaphysically impossible for one body to exist circumscriptively in more than one place at once;

and

[P2] it is metaphysically impossible for two or more bodies to exist circumscriptively in the same place at once.

Aristotle would have declared either sort of multiple location to be metaphysically impossible. What drives Zwingli to his figurative interpretation of the

[2] Ulrich Zwingli, "On the Lord's Supper," in: Zwingli/Bullinger, Selected Translations, G. W. Bromiley (trans./ed.) (LCC 24), Philadelphia, PA 1953, 185–238, art. 1, 188 (= CR 91, 793–794).

[3] Zwingli, "On the Lord's Supper," art. 1, 193–197; art. 3, 222–223 (= CR 91, 800–806, 841).

[4] LW 36, 337–338 (The Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ against the Fanatics [1526]) (= WA 19, 485,12–28).

[5] LW 37, 57 (That These Words of Christ, 'This is My Body,' Still Stand Firm against the Fanatics [1527]) (= WA 23, 133,19–28).

words of institution is his *de facto* philosophical agreement with Aristotle about what it is for a body to be in place!

Besides scolding Zwingli for underestimating the scope of Divine power, Luther reminds Zwingli and his readers how scholastics had worked overtime to identify, distinguish, and analyze multiple ways of being in place. None of the scholastics maintained that *de facto* the body of Christ is extended (i. e., exists circumscriptively) on altars where mass is said. On this much, Zwingli and Luther and most scholastics all agree.[6]

Luther merely references the distinctions he found in Gabriel Biel, between circumscriptive, definitive, and repletive location.[7] For the scholastics, digging into the details was an important part of their vocation as *philosophical* theologians. If infallible or non-defeasible authority declares that proposition P is true, faith requires them to hold *that* P is true. But faith seeking understanding will probe what P means and labor to show how its assertive content can be made philosophically intelligible and defensible. As theologians, they began with the givens of faith. As philosophers, they began with philosophical categories as well as more and less entrenched philosophical convictions. Their task was to fit the theological and philosophical together into a single coherent system. As in science so in philosophical theology: integration required adjustments in what they started with. Sometimes theology had to take a page from philosophy. When it came to formulating and explaining the doctrines of the Trinity, Incarnation, and Eucharistic real presence, philosophy had to learn some lessons from theology. In particular, philosophy had to submit to conceptual revision and expansion.

2. Varieties of Placement

Scholastics who re-examined the metaphysics of bodily placement in the light of Eucharistic real presence came up with different, non-equivalent explanatory models and distinctions.

2.1. Thomas Aquinas

Aquinas held that quantity is an absolute accident really distinct from substance and quality. If substance is whole in the whole and whole in each part of the substance individual, quantity by nature has part outside part. Its inherence in substance divides the substance individual into parts and extends them. Quantity is

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[6] Ockham is an exception, because he argues that circumscriptive presence follows from definitive presence. See section 2.3 below.

[7] Gabriel Biel, I Sent., d. 37, q. 7, art. 1, in: Gabriel Biel, Collectorium circa quattuor libros Sententiarum, 5 vols., Wilfridus Werbeck/Udo Hofmann (eds.), Tübingen 1973–1992 (1:677).

also the proximate subject of sensible qualities (color, flavor, odor, temperature, texture) which are extended by their inherence in it. Aquinas holds that normally and naturally, bodies are located in place when their own determinate quantities are immediately present to the place. By contrast, immaterial beings such as angels are located in the places where their power is operative.[8] Aquinas distinguishes three ways of being in place:

[Aq1] A body B is *circumscriptively* in place P, when B's figure is circumscribed by the figure of P.[9]

[Aq2] A thing X is *definitively* in place P, when X is in place P and X is somehow commensurate with place P through its quantity (in the case of bodies) or its power (in the case of spirits) in such a way that X is not in any place other than P.[10]

[Aq3] A body B is *repletively* in place (a place-filler) when B's quantity is commensurate with the dimensions of the place and B's being in P excludes others' being in P at the same time.[11]

Aquinas declares that the body of Christ is *not* on altars where mass is said in any of these ways, because the body of Christ is not located on altars through its own quantitative dimensions. Rather the body of Christ is on the altar, not after the mode of quantity, but only according to the mode of substance. Aquinas held that the whole substance nature is in the individual substance, whole in the whole and whole in each of its parts. (Where humans are concerned, we shouldn't think that rationality is to be found in the head, but animality in the heart, lungs, and stomach. Rational animality is there throughout.) Nor is anything about Christ's body immediately present to place. Rather the erstwhile bread-quantity is immediately present to place and its parts to the parts of place so that the erstwhile bread-qualities remain extended on the altar. The substance of the body of Christ is immediately present to the erstwhile bread-quantity without that quantity's inhering in the body of Christ, and that is enough to make the body of Christ present on the altar *per accidens.* Thus, the body of Christ is there on the altar. But because it is not there *per se* through its own quantitative dimensions, it is not on the altar in such a way as to be causally interactive, to be seen or touched, much less broken by the hands of priests or torn and crushed by the teeth of the faithful![12]

2.2. *Giles of Rome*

Giles of Rome agrees that substances and their parts are related to place, not immediately, but by means of some magnitude: in the case of bodies, their quanti-

[8] Thomas Aquinas, STh I, q. 52, a. 1 c. For all citations of Aquinas, I use the online edition at http://www.corpusthomisticum.org/iopera.html.

[9] Aquinas, STh III, q. 76, a. 5 c & ad 1um; IV Sent. d. 10, q. 1, a. 3, qc 1 c & ad 3um.

[10] Aquinas, STh I, q. 52, a. 2 c; q. 3, a. 1 c.

[11] Aquinas, STh III, q. 76, a. 5, arg 2 and ad 2um.

[12] Aquinas, IV Sent. d. 10, q. 1, a. 1 ad 1um; a. 4, qc.1 c; STh III, q. 76, a. 7 c & ad 1um.

tative dimensions; in the case of spirits, the virtual or functional magnitude of their causal power. He makes this explicit when he draws his own (partly contrasting) three-fold distinction.

[GR1] X is *circumscriptively* in place P if and only if the quantity of X is compared with the quantity of P, whole to the whole, part to the part;

[GR2] X is *definitively* in place P if and only if the quantity of X is commensurate with the quantity of P, and the quantity of X is not commensurate with that of any other place P;

[GR3] X is *determined* to place P if the magnitude through which X is said to be in P is finite, and that magnitude is not its own substance.[13]

Giles intends that [GR1] circumscriptive placement implies [GR2] definitive placement, and [GR2] definitive placement implies [GR3] determinate placement, but not the other way around. Giles clarifies his distinctions with illustrations from the ontological hierarchy. Because God is omnipresent by God's own infinite substance, God is not in place in any of these ways. The body of Christ is determined to and exists definitively and circumscriptively in its heavenly place, but – because it is not related to altar places by its own dimensive quantity but mediately through the erstwhile bread-quantity – it is determined to the place(s) on the altar(s) while not existing on them definitively or circumscriptively. Created intellectual substances are determined to place by their finite functional powers and exist in place definitively. Normally and naturally, bodies are determined to place by their own quantitative dimensions and exist in those places definitively and circumscriptively.[14] Giles expects to startle his interlocutors with his further conclusion: that because what is merely determined to a place is not thereby confined to that place, it is metaphysically possible by Divine power for a body to be determined to every place in the universe at once.

[Conclusion] [GR3]–ubiquity is metaphysically possible for bodies by Divine power![15]

2.3. *William Ockham*

Ockham bucks philosophical near-consensus with his vigorous arguments that quantity is not an absolute accident really distinct from substance and quality.[16] Ockham maintains that if things – whether substance, substance constituents (matter and substantial form), or qualities – are present to place, that presence is altogether unmediated.[17] Accordingly, Ockham redraws the distinction between circumscriptive versus definitive location in place:

[13] Giles of Rome, Theoremata de Corpore Christi, Propositiones III–V, fols. 2va–3vb.

[14] Giles of Rome, Theoremata, Propositio III, fol. 3vab.

[15] Giles of Rome, Theoremata III, fol. 2vb; Propositio V, fol. 3rb–va.

[16] See Marilyn McCord Adams, William Ockham, 2 vols. (Publications in Medieval Studies 26), Notre Dame, IN 1987, ch. 6, 169–213.

[17] Ockham, Quodlibeta IV, q. 20; OTh 9:399–400.

[Ock1] X is in place P *circumscriptively* if and only if X is in P whole in the whole and part in the part.

[Ock2] X is in place P *definitively* if and only if X is whole in the whole of P and whole in each part of P.

For Ockham, material differ from immaterial things in that material things and their essential parts are divided into integral parts in and of themselves, while immaterial things – such as angels and the intellectual soul – are not. Ockham's paradigms of definitive location are simple immaterial things: angels exist in place and the intellectual soul in its body, whole in the whole and whole in each part. A substance, substance part, or quality is quantified through its own intrinsic parts, when it has part outside part and part situationally distant from part.[18] If a place surrounds it, then a quantified thing exists in place circumscriptively. Because quantity is not anything really distinct from substance and quality, Ockham concludes that any material thing that exists in place circumscriptively *is* a quantity.[19] Normally and naturally and paradigmatically, material substances, material substance-parts, and their qualities exist in place circumscriptively and exist circumscriptively in only one whole place at a time.

By contrast with [Aq2] and [GR2], [Ock2] does *not* imply that a thing is *confined* to the place where it is definitively in place. Ockham finds this is easy to prove, given Aristotle's doctrine of the continuity of place. If places are not points, then any place P can be divided into place-parts Pm and Pn. Anything X that is definitively in place in P, is simultaneously whole in the whole and whole in each of its parts – Pm and Pn, distinct places into which P can be divided. Thus, X exists definitively in Pm but is not confined to Pm, because X also exists definitively in Pn at the same time.

Combined with cases and other givens from authority, Ockham's reworked definitions of circumscriptive versus definitive location spawn further surprising conclusions. Medieval readings of Gospel stories about the virgin birth (in which baby Jesus passes through Mary's membranes without breaking them), of Christ's post-resurrection passage through closed doors and the unriven heavens, seem to imply

[not-P2*] it is metaphysically possible for more than one whole body to exist circumscriptively in the same place at the same time.

Christ's body, Mary's membrane, the locked doors, and the celestial spheres were all circumscriptively in place, more than one of them in the same places at the same time.[20]

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18 Ockham, Quodlibeta IV, q. 23; OTh 9:407.

19 Ockham, Quaest. in IV Sent., q. 6; OTh 7:87.

20 Ockham, Quodlibeta IV, q. 31; OTh 9:453. Discussed by Gabriel Biel, Canonis Misse Expositio, 5 vols. (VIEG 31–34, 79), Heiko A. Oberman/William J. Courtenay (eds.), Wiesbaden 1963–1976, Lect. 43 B (ed. 2:146–147).

Likewise, Ockham insists, philosophy and theology join forces to support the converse conclusion:

[not-P1] it is metaphysically possible for the same whole body to exist in many places at once.

If, as above, one and the same indivisible substance that exists definitively in place, *ipso facto* exists definitively in many places at once, why should the fact that material substances have intrinsic parts be an obstacle to a single body's existing in many places at once?[21] Shifting attention from whole bodies to their parts, Ockham contends that

[Cor1] material substance, its essential parts, and corporeal qualities, can exist in place definitively.

For if multiple distinct whole bodies can exist in the same place at once (e. g., Christ's body and the closed door), why could not many parts of the same body exist in the same place at once, just as [Ock2] requires?[22] On Ockham's view, we do not need to appeal to authority for examples, because condensation gives us a case from nature in which multiple parts of the same body – parts that used to coexist with different parts of place – come to exist at the same place. If multiple parts can naturally exist in the same place simultaneously, why should it not be metaphysically possible – and achievable by Divine power – for all of a body's parts to do so?[23] Ockham further concludes

[Cor2] although it is essential to material substance, to matter, substantial form, and to corporeal qualities to be divided into parts, it is not essential to them that their parts be distinct in place and situation.[24]

Ockham has already argued that

[Cor3] anything that exists definitively in place, exists definitively in many places,

and proceeds to reason from stronger to weaker that

[Cor4] multiple circumscriptive locations of corporeal things should be easier to produce than multiple definitive locations, because circumscriptive location involves fewer parts in each place than definitive location does.[25]

In any event, Ockham's definitions of circumscriptive and definitive placement themselves imply that material things that are definitively in place are also circumscriptively in place. If material substance M is divided into parts M1, M2,

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[21] Ockham, Quaest. in IV Sent., q. 6; OTh 7:79; Quodlibeta IV, q. 31; OTh 9:453. Rehearsed in Biel, Expositio, Lect. 43 C (ed. 2:147).

[22] Ockham, Quaest. in IV Sent., q. 6; OTh 9:79–81; Quodlibeta IV, q. 31; OTh 9:453.

[23] Ockham, Quaest. in IV Sent., q. 6; OTh 9:79; Quodlibeta IV, q. 31; OTh 9:452.

[24] Ockham, Quaest. in IV Sent., q. 6; OTh 7:81, 87, 97–98.

[25] Ockham, Quaest. in IV Sent., q. 6; OTh 7:97–98. Cited by Biel, IV Sent., d. 10, q. u (4/1:348).

and M3, and M exists definitively in place P with parts P1, P2, and P3, then each and all of M1, M2, and M3 exists in each and all of P1, P2, and P3. If so, it follows that M1 exists in P1, and M2 in P2, and M3 in P3, so that M is whole in the whole of P and part in the parts of P. From these he infers that

[Cor7] it is metaphysically possible for a material substance, its essential parts, and qualities to exist circumscriptively in one or more places and/or definitively in one or more places at the same time.

[Cor7] combines with [not-P2*] to underwrite the claims Ockham wants to make about real Eucharistic presence: that the Body of Christ exists in heaven circumscriptively and on altars where mass is said definitively, in the same places where the erstwhile bread-accidents still exist circumscriptively.[26] *Pace* Aquinas and Giles, Ockham denies that extension is required for material things to be causally interactive. The body of Christ could be touched and handled if God did not obstruct such natural causal interactions.[27] But so long as it is definitively in place, breaking the host cannot succeed in separating the parts of the body of Christ from one another. With [Cor7], Ockham reaffirms Giles's startling conclusion: that where material substance, its essential parts, and qualities are concerned, ubiquity – whether circumscriptive or definitive – is metaphysically possible by Divine power.

2.4. Gabriel Biel

Aquinas and Giles of Rome share roughly the same understandings of circumscriptive and definitive location. Aquinas understands repletive location in terms of place-filling, while Giles forwards the notion of being in place determinatively, which he identifies as the way the body of Christ is on altars where mass is said. Ockham remodels the notions of circumscriptive and definitive location but makes no mention of repletive location. Normally and naturally, bodies circumscriptively in place usually do exclude other bodies (but not in condensation). Nevertheless, many bodies and body parts in the same place, whether definitively or circumscriptively, is metaphysically possible by Divine power. Biel is familiar with all of these authors, and – while his discussions of the Eucharist usually give pride of place to Ockham – his *ex professo* tripartite distinction in *Collectorium circa quattuor libros Sententiarum* I, d. 37, q. u., oddly has more affinities with Aquinas and Giles.[28]

[GB1] A body B is in place P *commensuratively or circumscriptively* when the parts of B are commensurate with the parts of P, the way they are when B is quantitatively in place.

[26] Discussed by Biel, Expositio, Lect. 43 C (ed. 2:147–148).

[27] Ockham, Quaest. in IV Sent., q. 7; OTh 7:118–120, 133–135; Quodlibeta IV, q. 13; OTh 9:360–366.

[28] Biel, I Sent., d. 37, q. u, art. I (1:677).

[GB2] A body B is *terminatively or definitively* in place P, when [i] B is really in place P and [ii] B is not apt to be elsewhere than P at the same time – i. e., when B is so bound to P that it is not apt to be in another place P* at a distance from P at the same time.

[GB3] Something X is in place *repletively* when X is really in place P but X is not bound to place P in such a way that it cannot simultaneously be elsewhere according to its own nature.[29]

Like [Aq1], [GR1], and [Ock1], [GB1] commensurative or circumscriptive location in place is supposed to capture the normal and natural way bodies are extended in place. Re [GB2], Biel clarifies: the aptitude mentioned there is a body's *natural* aptitude. But lack of natural aptitude is compatible with the multiple location of a body or spirit by Divine power. By contrast with any and every creature, God is in all things through power, because God is the cause of all things and what it is for X to be in Y through power is for X to be able to produce, conserve, or act on Y.[30] God is in all things through presence both cognitively insofar as God knows everything distinctly and present in the sense of not being at a distance from anything. For the latter reason, God is present to all things through God's essence.[31] Biel concludes that [GB3] God alone lacks any natural aptitude that "binds" a thing to the place it is in, and so God alone is essentially in every place, not locally or definitively or commensuratively, but repletively.[32] Where [Aq3] understands repletive location in terms of the located body's excluding others (because their quantities are incompatible), [GB3] signifies that the repletively located item is not bound to the place and may (as God does) even have a natural aptitude for multiple location (existing in many places at the same time).

2.5. Martin Luther

Luther, in his *Confession Concerning Christ's Supper* (1528), parallels Biel in offering a three-fold distinction but does not explain the categories in exactly the same way.

[ML1] X is *circumscriptively or locally* in place P, if X and P exactly correspond and fit into the same measurements.

[ML2] X is *definitively* in place P (X is in place P in an *uncircumscribed* manner) if X is not palpably in P and X is not measurable according to the dimensions of P but can occupy more or less room than P.

[ML3] X is in place *repletively* or *supernaturally,* if X is simultaneously present in all places whole and entire and fills all places without being measured or circumscribed by any place.[33]

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[29] Biel, I Sent., d. 37, q. u, art. 1 (1:677).
[30] Biel, I Sent., d. 37, q. u, art. 2 (1:677).
[31] Biel, I Sent., d. 37, q. 7, art. 2 (1:678).
[32] Biel, I Sent., d. 37, q. u, art. 2 (1:678).
[33] LW 37, 215–216 (Confession Concerning Christ's Supper [1528]) (= WA 26, 327,20–35, 328,20–37, 329,19–33 [Dr version]).

Luther illustrates [ML1] circumscriptive location with everyday examples: wine or water in a cask, a log in the water, a man walking in the open air taking up no more space from the air around him than his size.[34]

[ML2] focuses on the contrast with [ML1]: if what is circumscriptively in place is commensurate with the place bounding it, what is definitively in place is not necessarily commensurate with the place. This is a consequence of [Ock2], but [Aq2] and [GR2] entail the opposite. Aquinas and Giles get the desired conclusion – that the body of Christ can be somehow located in places with which it is not commensurate (in particular, under hosts much smaller than an adult human body) – by insisting that the body of Christ is not present to the place through its own quantitative dimensions. For Ockham, the result comes more easily: all of the parts of any material thing can co-exist in a place, however small or large. Contrary to [Aq2] and [GR2] but like [Ock2], Luther's [ML2] leaves out any notion that definitive location confines what is located to that spot.

[ML2] speaks of "occupying" a place. But Luther's examples make it unclear what he takes this to mean. On the one hand, angels and spirits, Ockham's paradigms of definitive placement, are said to "occupy" the places in which they exist definitively without having any length, breadth, or depth at all.[35] On the other hand, Christ was definitively in place when he passed through the closed door or the tomb-sealing stone. Passing through the stone, Luther declares, Christ

> … took up no space, and the stone yielded him no space, but the stone remained stone, as entire and firm as before, and his body remained as large and thick as it was before. But he was able when he wished to let himself be seen circumscribed in given places where he occupied space and his size could be measured.[36]

Does Christ's body fail to "take up" space because it is not extended? Then in what sense is it as large and thick as before? In Ockham's sense of having as many material parts as before, although they are not distributed through the parts of place? The stone is extended and occupies the place, but – without moving over – it does not exclude Christ's body from being there definitively at the same time. Luther repeats that "the sealed stone and the closed door remained unaltered and unchanged, though his body at the same time was in the space entirely occupied by the wood …"[37] A bit later, he implies that extended bodies are perme-

[34] LW 37, 215 (= WA 26, 327,23–32 [Dr]).

[35] LW 37, 215 (= WA 26, 327,33–35, 328,20–31 [Dr]).

[36] LW 37, 216; in the original, WA 26, 328,35–37, 329,19–20 (Dr): "da nam er keinen raum, so gab yhm der stein auch keinen raum, sondern der stein bleib stein gantz und fest wie vor, und sein leib bleib auch so gros und dick, als er vor war, Er kondte doch daneben, wie er wolte, sich auch begreifflich an o̊rten sehen lassen, da er raum nam von dem ort und sich abmessen lies nach seiner gro̊sse."

[37] LW 37, 216; in the original, WA 26, 329,22–24 (Dr): "der versiegelt stein und die verschlossen thůr unverendert und unverwandelt blieben, und doch sein leib zu gleich war an dem ort, da eitel stein und holtz war."

able to the definitively located body[38]; the former do not exclude the latter or the other way around. Is Luther simply agreeing with Ockham's thesis that a body may exist definitively where another exists circumscriptively at the same time?

For Ockham, the definitive placement of material things is supernatural. Probably Luther does not disagree, but he specifies 'supernatural' only in connection with [ML3]. For Ockham, definitive placement does not necessarily circumscribe a body, although a body might – by Divine power – exist definitively in a place with which it was commensurate. For Luther, neither definitive nor repletive location carries with it the implication that the located thing is thereby circumscribed or measured. Neither [ML2] nor [ML3] makes any mention of Biel's natural aptitudes, and so [ML3] of itself leaves open whether a creature might – by Divine power – be made to exist in place repletively. God alone is everywhere *necessarily* through God's essence, presence, and power.[39] But that wouldn't keep a creature from filling every place contingently. Nevertheless, in his initial presentation of the tripartite distinction, Luther declares that repletive location "belongs to God alone," proof-texting from Jeremiah 23:23–24: "I am God at hand and not far off. I fill heaven and earth."[40] Yet, this is not the place-filling repletive location of [Aq3], and that twiceover: because God as Spirit has no quantitative dimensions to be commensurate with the dimensions of the place; and because – if God is everywhere – other things occupy the same place as God! Indeed, repletive location makes things more permeable and present than definitive location does.[41]

3. Arguments for Ubiquity from the Right Hand of God

Metaphysical speculation and conceptual development led Giles, Scotus, and Ockham to the conclusion that – by Divine power – ubiquity is a metaphysical possibility for any and every body, even though it is a fact for none. It was this very metaphysical possibility that underwrote the *de facto* multiple location of Christ's body. Luther's route to *de facto* ubiquity of Christ's body is exegetical. Luther begins by mocking Zwingli for taking 'the right hand of power' to refer to a physical place, when Scripture surely means it as a figure of speech referring to Divine omnipotence and authority. Luther then proceeds to forward what are in fact two, not clearly distinguished arguments that Christ's body is everywhere in actual fact.

[38] LW 37, 222–223 (= WA 26, 335,38–336,15).

[39] LW 37, 57–63 (That These Words of Christ [1527]) (= WA 23, 133,19–143,22 [manuscript on even pagination, printed version on odd pagination]).

[40] LW 37, 216 (= WA 26, 329,27–32 [Dr]).

[41] LW 37, 222–223 (= WA 26, 335,38–336,19).

3.1. An Argument from Scripture and Creeds

[1] Christ's resurrected and glorified body is at the right hand of God.
[2] The right hand of God is God's almighty power, which is everywhere.
[3] Therefore, Christ's resurrected and glorified body is everywhere. [1,2]
[4] Therefore, Christ's resurrected and glorified body is both in heaven and in the Supper at one and the same time. [3][42]

Three points are noteworthy here. First, Scripture and creeds locate Christ's body at the right hand of God only *at and after the ascension.* Such passages entail nothing about the location of Christ's body during his earthly career prior to his resurrection and ascension. Second, the argument nevertheless turns on [1] the simple assertion that Christ's body has the same location as God's almighty power. The same argument could be run for any body that had the same location. No special properties of glorified as opposed to pre-resurrection bodies are invoked. Third, if Christ's body has the same location as Divine omnipotence, experience suggests that Christ's body is not [GB1]/[ML1] circumscriptively in place wherever Divine omnipotence is. Divine omnipotence is repletively in place, but Christ's body cannot be repletively in place as defined by [GB3] because it has a natural aptitude that binds it to a single place, even though that natural aptitude is over-ridden by Divine power. In itself, [ML3] would allow Christ's body to share in repletive placement. Despite Luther's earlier cite of Jeremiah 23:23–24, Luther goes on – in the course of developing the argument from hypostatic union – to insist that Christ's humanity is everywhere repletively, "according to the supernatural, divine mode."[43] Luther himself finds proof-texts for this in Ephesians 1:22 and 4:10, where *Christ* is said to have ascended into heaven to fill all things![44]

3.2. An Argument from Hypostatic Union

[5] Christ is true God and true man.
[6] The Divine essence is everywhere.
[7] Therefore, Christ's humanity (including Christ's body) is everywhere.[45]

[42] LW 36, 342 (The Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ – Against the Fanatics [1526]) (= WA 19, 491,17–29, 492,12–29 [Dr]); also see LW 37, 58–61, 63–64 (That These Words of Christ [1527] (= WA 23, 133,30–139,23, 143,10–145,21 [manuscript on even pagination, printed version on odd pagination]); LW 37, 207, 214 (Confession [1528]) (= WA 26, 318,1–6, 325,24–32 [Dr]).

[43] LW 37, 218; in the original, WA 26, 332,23 (Dr): "nach der ubernatůrlichen gőttlichen weise, …"

[44] LW 36, 342 (The Sacrament of the Body and Blood [1526]) (= WA 19, 491,17–20 [Dr]).

[45] LW 37, 218, 229 (Confession [1528]) (= WA 26, 332,12–36, 333,1–10, 340,14–34 [Dr]); LW 37, 69 (That These Words of Christ [1527]) (= WA 23, 151,25–153,4 [manuscript on even pagination, printed version on odd pagination]).

It is tempting to understand[46] this argument to be underwritten by Luther's notorious extension of the Christological *communicatio idiomatum* to natures: that is, his alleged contention that – because of the hypostatic union – whatever pertains to one nature may be truly predicated of the other nature. To be sure, in his *Confession Concerning Christ's Supper* (1528), Luther does declare that

since the divinity and humanity are one person in Christ, the Scriptures ascribe to the divinity, because of this personal union, all that happens to the humanity, and vice versa. And in reality it is so.[47]

Nevertheless, it seems doubtful that Luther meant it that way. For in the same work, in the very context where the Argument from Hypostatic Union is offered, Luther several times takes pains to assert that the *communicatio idiomatum* licenses predications from both natures of *the whole person*. Thus, he writes against Zwingli,

Indeed, you must say that *the person* (pointing to Christ) suffers and dies. But this person is truly God, and therefore it is correct to say: the Son of God suffers. Although, so to speak, the one part (namely the divinity) does not suffer, nevertheless, *the person* who is God suffers in the other part (namely in the humanity).[48]

Continuing to conceptualize the two natures as distinct parts of Christ, Luther construes statements such as 'the Son of God truly is crucified' as a transfer of predicates from the part (the human nature) to the whole person (who is the Son of God).[49] Again, he declares,

We do not say that divinity is humanity, or that the divine nature is the human nature, which would be confusing the natures into one essence. Rather we merge the two distinct natures into one single person and say: God is man and man is God. […] It is the person who does and suffers everything, the one thing according to this nature and the other thing according to the other nature. […] [W]e regard our Lord Christ as God and man in one person, 'neither confusing the natures nor dividing the person.'[50]

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[46] I did take it that way in Marilyn McCord, Christ and Horrors. The Coherence of Christology (Current Issues in Theology), Cambridge 2006, 302–304.

[47] LW 37, 210 (Confession [1528]); in the original, WA 26, 321,21–24 (Dr): "weil Gottheit und menscheit ynn Christo eine person ist, so gibt die schrifft umb solcher personlicher einickeit willen auch der Gottheit alles, was der menscheit widderferet und widderumb, Und ist auch also ynn der warheit."

[48] LW 37, 210; in the original, WA 26, 321,24–28 (Dr): "Denn das mustu ia sagen: Die person (zeige Christum) leidet, stirbet, Nu ist die person warhafftiger Gott, drumb ists recht gered: Gottes son leidet, Denn ob wol das eine stůck (das ich so rede) als die Gottheit, nicht leidet, so leidet dennoch die person, welche Gott ist, am andern stůcke, als an der menscheit, …"

[49] LW 37, 211 (= WA 26, 321,28–32, 322,18–30 [Dr]).

[50] LW 37, 212–213; in the original, WA 26, 324,20–23, 30–32, 32–34 (Dr): "Wir sagen nicht, das Gottheit sey menscheit odder Gottliche natur sey menschliche natur, welches were die natur ynn ein wesen gemenget, Sondern wir mengen die zwo unterschiedliche natur ynn ein einige person und sagen: Gott ist mensch und mensch ist Gott. […] Denn die person ists, die alles thut und leidet, eins nach dieser natur, das ander nach ihener natur, […] Drumb halten

This more usual version of the Christological *communicatio idiomatum* would allow us to infer from [6] the Divine essence is everywhere that

[7*] the person of Christ is everywhere.

It will not take us further to

[7] the humanity and hence the body of Christ is everywhere.

It now strikes me as more likely that Luther is here resting his Argument from Hypostatic Union on a different scholastic principle:

[P3] where X and Y are *de facto* metaphysically united, X takes Y with it wherever it goes, so that wherever X is located, Y is also located.

This principle is at once narrower, insofar as it is restricted to location predicates, and more general, insofar as it applies to various sorts of metaphysical union. From an Aristotelian point of view, [P3] might seem to enjoy an almost common-sense plausibility. Thus, where the water and its coldness are united by a real relation of inherence, [P3] allows us to infer that the coldness is wherever the water is. Likewise, it might seem – by [P3] – that since the soul is metaphysically united to the body to make one substance *per se*, that the soul is wherever the body is. Again, by [P3], since Christ's humanity is united to God the Son in hypostatic union, Christ's humanity is wherever Christ's divinity is. Since Divinity is everywhere, so is God the Son and so – by [P3] – is Christ's humanity. On [P3] hypostatic union underwrites ubiquity, insofar as hypostatic union is a species of metaphysical union. The argument does not turn on special features of hypostatic union that distinguish it from the real inherence of accidents in their subjects and from the real union of matter and substantial form.

4. Scholastic Challenges

Principles in the neighborhood of [P3] had already come into play in scholastic discussions of the Eucharist, in particular, in connection with Scotus's and Ockham's attempts to defend the philosophical coherence of

[Cor7] it is metaphysically possible for a material substance, its essential parts, and qualities to exist [a] circumscriptively in one or more places and/or [b] definitively in one or more places at the same time.

Among others, the objection came: what if numerically the same water is in the kettle on the stove in London and in the ice box in Rome? The principles of Aristotelian physics would force us to conclude that one and the same water was

wir unsern Herrn Christum also fur Gott und mensch ynn einer person non confundens naturas nec diuidendo personam, …"

both hot and cold and so subject to contraries at one and the same time.[51] Scotus replies by distinguishing absolutes that are naturally prior to place-relations from other properties. Digging himself more deeply into the problem, Scotus concedes a qualified version of [P3]:

[P3*] whatever are essentially prior to place relations inhere in the body uniformly, even though the place relations are diverse.[52]

Absolute qualities are naturally prior to (as the foundations of) relations. [P3*] is asserting that not only the qualities, but their real metaphysical union with the body are naturally prior to and hence unaffected by placement relations. Returning to numerically the same water in London and in Rome, since heat and cold are absolute qualities naturally prior to placement, they inhere in the water wherever it goes. Scotus's answer is that the fire in London and the ice in Rome will have the same effect on the water as they would have were the fire and ice to be relevantly proximate in the same place (as if they were both in London or both in Rome). Where both are operative on the water, whether in the same or in distant places, the temperature quality for the water will be the resultant of their competing strengths.[53]

In *Quaest. in IV Sent.*, q. 7, Ockham seems to concede that [P3*] describes what in fact obtains: *de facto,* if a body exists in two places circumscriptively or definitively, every absolute thing that pertains to the integrity it has in one place, it also has in the other place.[54] Nevertheless, Ockham also mounts an argument that such co-location of metaphysically united really distinct things is not metaphysically necessary (that [P3] and [P3*] are not *necessarily* true). Ockham argues that each really distinct thing is the foundation of its own relations including its relation to place. Contrary to Aquinas and Giles, each really distinct thing, if it exists in place, is related to place immediately. If so, there is no metaphysical impossibility in a substance being located somewhere one way (circumscriptively or definitively) and its accidents not being located there or being located there another way (definitively instead of circumscriptively, or vice versa).[55] Likewise for other sorts of metaphysical union which obtain between really distinct things. The better to convince us of the metaphysical possibili-

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[51] Biel tracks this controversy, along with Scotus's and Ockham's participation in it, at great length in Biel, Expositio, Lect. 46 (ed. 2:195–206); see also Biel, IV Sent., d. 10, q. u, art. 3 (4/1:352, where he discusses a special version of this multiple location problem.

[52] Duns Scotus, Opus Oxford IV, d. 10, q. 4, n. 6; in: John Duns Scotus, Opera Omnia, 12 vols., Luke Wadding (ed.), Lyon 1639, vol. 8:540. Biel cites the view of "some" who hold that wherever a substance is, there all of its accidents necessarily are, in Expositio, Lect. 43 E (ed. 2:149).

[53] Scotus, Op. Ox. IV, d. 10, q. 2, n. 13; in: Wadding (ed.), 8:518. For Biel's rehearsal of this debate, see Expositio, Lect. 46 F (ed. 2:198–199).

[54] Ockham, Quaest. in IV Sent., q. 7; OTh 7:130–131.

[55] Ockham, Quaest. in IV Sent., q. 6; OTh 7:99–101; q. 7; OTh 7:130–133.

ty – that metaphysically united really distinct things might have different location properties – Ockham offers an example where he thinks that this is in fact the case. He declares that Christ's human nature is really distinct from but really united to the Divine Word in a manner analogous to the real union between substantial form and prime matter or that between absolute accidents and substance. Yet, *pace* Luther, Christ's human nature is not everywhere just because it is assumed by the omnipresent Divine Word. So far from establishing the ubiquity of Christ's body, Ockham simply takes it for granted that [P3] and [P3*] are counter-exampled by the Incarnation of God the Son![56]

Adherents of [P3] and [P3*] understand the real metaphysical unions of absolute things to be unaffected by mere placement and to remain constant through multiple placements. It is just this assumption that Ockham means to call into question. Ockham reasons: if numerically the same water were on the stove in London and in the ice box in Rome, the fire in London would be close enough to the water in London to cause it to be hot in London. But it would not be close enough to the water in Rome to cause it to be hot in Rome. Likewise, the ice in Rome would be close enough to the water in Rome to cause it to be cold in Rome, but it would not be close enough to the water in London to cause it to be cold in London. So

[not-P3*] a substance that has an accident can be somewhere, where its accident is not.

Numerically the same water is in London and in Rome, but heat inheres in (is metaphysically united to) that water only in London; heat does not inhere in (is not really united to) it in Rome. Cold inheres in (is metaphysically united to) that water only in Rome; cold does not inhere in (is not really united to) it in London. Working out the logical details, Ockham explains that 'the water is hot in London' implies 'the water is hot somewhere,' and 'the water is cold in Rome' implies 'the water is cold somewhere.' But it would be fallacious to infer either 'the water is not cold in London; therefore the water is not cold anywhere at all' or 'the water is not hot in Rome; therefore the water is not hot anywhere at all.'[57] Once again, Ockham tries to persuade us with an analogy from another kind of real union. Because God is everywhere and the human nature of Christ is not everywhere, they are not hypostatically united everywhere. In many places, God is not Incarnate. Nevertheless, the inference 'God is not Incarnate here; therefore God is not Incarnate anywhere at all' is fallacious.[58] Notice how this argument presupposes that

[56] Ockham, Quaest. in IV Sent., q. 6; OTh 7:99–100.

[57] Ockham, Quaest. in IV Sent., q. 6; OTh 7:100; q. 7; OTh 7:131–132. Biel summarizes this position as presented by Ockham in Expositio, Lect. 46 G–P (ed. 2:199–206).

[58] Ockham, Quaest. in IV Sent., q. 6; OTh 7:100–101. Biel notes how Ockham gives the Incarnation as an example in which really united really distinct things do not share the same location properties. See Expositio, Lect. 46 P (ed. 2:206).

[P7] absolute things can be really metaphysically united in a place – whether by inherence or hypostatic union – only if they each and all are located in that place.

So far, we have been examining what Ockham has to say about [P3] and [P3*] in working out the details of Eucharistic real presence. Ockham returns to [not-P3*] in another context, however, when he offers episodic hypostatic union as a way of interpreting Averroës's notorious *copulatio* between the separate possible intellect and human souls with relevantly sorted phantasms. Recall how for Averroës there is one separate agent intellect and one separate possible intellect for the whole human race. Human souls are high-grade sensory souls with top-of-the-line phantasm sorters. The human soul from whose phantasms the separate agent intellect abstracts intelligible species can be said to understand because of the *copulatio* between the human soul and the separate possible intellect into which the intelligible species are impressed. Scotus finds the *copulatio* of that "damned Averroës" unintelligible. By contrast, Ockham rides the principle of charity the second mile with his suggestion that if that *copulatio* were hypostatic union, the *communicatio idiomatum* would allow us to say that the human soul – and not just the separate possible intellect – understands, just as hypostatic union allows us to say that God was crucified.[59]

A problem arises for Averroës's theory so construed, however. The separate possible intellect is supposed to be the primary subject of the intelligible species and acts of thought which are accidents inhering in it. Truth to tell, the separate possible intellect thinks many thoughts by virtue of the separate agent intellect's abstracting intelligible species from many different individuals. Thus, Socrates understands what it is to be a cow because he offered relevantly sorted cow phantasms. Plato understands what it is to be a donkey, because he offered relevantly sorted donkey phantasms. Yet, it seems obvious that

[P4] if Y exists in X in such a way as to denominate X, then Y will denominate any subject Z in which X exists and/or anything W to which X is united by a real metaphysical union.

For example, if whiteness existed in each of three surfaces at once, it would equally denominate each of those surfaces. If an individual nature were hypostatically united to three supposits simultaneously (say an individual human nature to each and all of the three divine persons simultaneously), every property that denominated the individual nature would denominate each and all of the supposits. Likewise, by [P4], it would seem that all of the agent intellect's thoughts would be truly predicated of each and every human being to which it is metaphysically united or "coupled."[60]

[59] Ockham, Quaestiones Variae, q. 6, a. 7; OTh 8:239–240.
[60] Ockham, Quaestiones Variae, q. 6, a. 7; OTh 8:237–238.

For Ockham, the clue to a reply on behalf of Averroës lies in [not-P3*], the claim that a substance can be located somewhere, where its accident is not. Once again, the Incarnation looms large among Ockham's counter-examples to [P3] and [P3*]. Just as God is somewhere where the nature assumed by the Deity is not, so the separate possible intellect is somewhere (coupled to Socrates) where its act of understanding (of what it is to be a donkey) is not.[61] Contra [P4], the accident denominates what its subject inheres in or is metaphysically joined to, only if that accident is itself located there where the coupling of its proximate subject to something else occurs. Averroës can deny that this condition is met.

To be sure, Ockham is not here representing his own view but rather offering a generous reconstruction of Averroës's position. Significantly, he ends this part of his presentation with a caution about rejecting [P3] and [P3*]: "what is posited here about a subject and its accident is a maximal miracle. It is scarcely intelligible that it can be done by the power of God."[62] Ockham wobbles. Does this mean that he feels the pull of saying that real metaphysical union between absolute things remains fixed regardless of placement? Or that he finds it hard to grasp how a given absolute thing could at one and the same time be really united to another absolute thing in one place but not be really united to it in a different place?

5. Reformation Disputation

One key to the disagreement between Luther and Zwingli over ubiquity is that Luther insists on, while Zwingli rejects, [P3].

5.1. Natures versus Persons

Where Christology is concerned, Zwingli concedes that "the two natures are one Christ,"[63] but Zwingli's emphasis is on *the two natures.* He finds it important to sort the doings and the sufferings of Christ and their attendant location properties between the two natures. According to the Divine nature, Christ never left the right hand of God and did not need to ascend into heaven, because – according to the Divine nature – he is omnipresent. According to Christ's human nature, he suffered hunger, thirst, and cold, died on a cross, and ascended into heaven. The Divine nature was at home in heaven, but the human nature was a guest.[64] Strikingly significant is Zwingli's claim that "strictly speaking" the doings and sufferings pertain to *the natures.* Strictly speaking, ubiquity belongs to

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[61] Ockham, Quaestiones Variae, q. 6, a. 7; OTh 8:240.

[62] Ockham, Quaestiones Variae, q. 6, a. 7; OTh 8:241.

[63] Zwingli, "On the Lord's Supper," art. 2, 213; in the original, CR 91, 828: "das man hierinn umb der beden naturen willen, die aber nun ein Christus sind."

[64] Zwingli, "On the Lord's Supper," art. 2, 212–213 (= CR 91, 827–828).

the Divine nature, while suffering and ascension pertain to the humanity.[65] Evidently, they pertain to Christ's person derivatively. Zwingli is willing to "tolerate" traditional talk of God's suffering on our behalf, but this is loose speech. It is because Zwingli sees the doings and sufferings as, strictly speaking, pertaining to the natures, that he protests:

If without distinction we were to apply to his human nature everything that refers to the divine, and conversely, if without distinction we were to apply to the divine nature everything that refers to the human, we should overthrow all Scripture and indeed the whole of our faith.[66]

Thus, contrary to [P3], Christ's humanity is not ubiquitous and in consequence his body is not ubiquitous. If Christ were already everywhere, he would not have needed and it would not have been possible for him to ascend. If Christ's body were ubiquitous, he would not leave us behind by ascending. And, since Christ's body is in heaven, it is not also available in the sacrament for literal eating.[67]

Luther counters by re-emphasizing the person as the locus of the real metaphysical union of the natures. Contrary to Zwingli, strictly speaking, it is the supposit or person who acts and suffers. Thus, Luther writes,

We do not say that divinity is humanity, or that the divine nature is the human nature, which would be confusing the natures into one essence. Rather we merge the two distinct natures into one single person and say: God is man and man is God. […] It is the person who does and suffers everything, the one thing according to this nature and the other thing according to the other nature. […] [W]e regard our Lord Christ as God and man in one person, 'neither confusing the natures nor dividing the person.'[68]

It is from this perspective that Luther elaborates on his Argument from Hypostatic Union (the inference of [7] from [5] and [6] above):

wherever Christ is according to his divinity, he is there as a natural, divine person, and he is also naturally and personally there, […]. But if he is present naturally and personally wherever he is, then he must be man there too, since he is not two separate persons but a single person.[69]

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[65] Zwingli, "On the Lord's Supper," art. 2, 213, 214, 219 (= CR 91, 828, 829, 835).

[66] Zwingli, "On the Lord's Supper," art. 2, 213; in the original, CR 91, 828: "Dann wo man one underscheid alles, so uff götliche natur gereicht ist, uff die menschlichen ziehen wölte, und harwiderumb das, so uff die menschlichen allein reycht, on underscheid uff die götlichen ziehen, wurde man alle gschrift, ja den glouben gar verwuesten."

[67] Zwingli, "On the Lord's Supper," art. 2, 214, 219 (= CR 91, 829–830, 835–836).

[68] LW 37, 212–213; in the original, WA 26, 324,20–23, 30–32, 32–34 (Dr): "Wir sagen nicht, das Gottheit sey menscheit odder Gottliche natur sey menschliche natur, welches were die natur ynn ein wesen gemenget, Sondern wir mengen die zwo unterschiedliche natur ynn ein einige person und sagen: Gott ist mensch und mensch ist Gott. […] Denn die person ists, die alles thut und leidet, eins nach dieser natur, das ander nach ihener natur, […] Drumb halten wir unsern Herrn Christum also fur Gott und mensch ynn einer person non confundens naturas nec dividendo personam, …"

[69] LW 37, 218; in the original, WA 26, 332,24–26, 28–30 (Dr): "Christus nach der Gottheit,

'Christ's divinity is everywhere' entails 'Christ is everywhere as a natural divine person,' which entails 'Christ is naturally and personally everywhere.' Put metaphysically,

[P5] the supposit is located wherever the nature it supposits is located.

It is the next step that appears to rely on [P3]: 'Christ is naturally and personally everywhere' entails 'Christ is human everywhere.'

[P6] The supposited nature – even the alien-supposited nature – is located wherever its supposit is located.

Luther repeats: "wherever this person is, it is a single indivisible person, and if you say, 'here is God,' then you must also say 'Christ the man is present, too.'"[70]

Yet, in these passages, Luther goes beyond asserting the ubiquity of Christ's humanity. He accuses Zwingli, by denying it (and hence rejecting [P3] and [P6]), of 'dividing the person':

> … if you could show me one place where God is and not the man, then the person is already divided and I could at once say truthfully, 'Here is God who is not man and has never become man.' But no God like that for me! For it would follow from this that space and place had separated the two natures from one another and thus divided the person, even though death and all the devils had been unable to separate and tear them apart. This would leave me a poor sort of Christ, if he were present only at one single place, as a divine and human person, and if all the other places he had to be nothing more than a mere isolated God and a divine person without the humanity. No comrade, wherever you place God for me, you must also place the humanity for me. They simply will not let themselves be separated and divided from each other …[71]

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wo er ist, da ist er eine natůrliche Gőttliche person, und ist auch natůrlich und personlich daselbst, […] Ist er nu natůrlich und personlich wo er ist, so mus er daselbs auch mensch sein, denn es sind nicht zwo zurtrennete personen, sondern ein einige person, …"

[70] LW 37, 218; in the original, WA 26, 332,30–32 (Dr): "Wo sie ist, da ist sie die einige unzurtrennete person, Und wo du kanst sagen: Hie ist Gott, da mustu auch sagen: So ist Christus der mensch auch da."

[71] LW 37, 218–219; in the original, WA 26, 332,33–36, 333,1–8 (Dr): "Und wo du einen ort zeigen wurdest, da Gott were und nicht der mensch, so were die person schőn zurtrennet, weil ich als denn mit der warheit kund sagen: Hie ist Gott, der nicht mensch ist und noch nie mensch ward, Mir aber des Gottes nicht. Denn hieraus wolt folgen, das raum und stette die zwo naturn von einander sonderten und die person zurtrenneten, so doch der tod und alle teuffel sie nicht kundten trennen noch von einander reissen, Und es solt mir ein schlechter Christus bleiben, der nicht mehr denn an einem eintzelen ort zu gleich eine Gőttliche und menschliche person were, Und an allen andern orten muste er allein ein blosser abgesonderter Gott und Gottliche person sein on menscheit. Nein geselle, wo du mir Gott hinsetzest, da mustu mir die menscheit mit hin setzen, Sie lassen sich nicht sondern und von einander trennen, …" Luther talks here as if it were Zwingli's philosophical commitments that would allow space and place to divide the person. But it is in fact Luther's insistence on [P3] and [P6] that license the inference: 'supposit X is located at P and N is not located at P; therefore N is not supposited by X.'

Luther reckons that if one rejects [P3] and [P6] and maintains – with Zwingli – that the Divine nature is everywhere, while the human nature is not, one will have to conclude – as Ockham explains – that there are places where God exists without being Incarnate. If really distinct things cannot be really united in a place unless both exist in that place, then ubiquitous deity will not be Incarnate everywhere even after Christ's conception and birth. So far, Ockham agrees: 'God exists in Siberia in 30 CE and Christ's human nature is not in Siberia in 30 CE' entails 'God is not incarnate in Siberia in 30 CE.' But Luther seems to go further to draw (what Ockham reminds us is) the fallacious inference that God is not incarnate in 30 CE at all or even that God never was incarnate. The Christ who was preaching and teaching in Galilee and getting crucified in Jerusalem in 30 CE must have been someone else!

Ockham would protest: denying [P3] and [P3*] and hence [P6] does not divide *the person*. Rather it locally cuts off the person from *the nature* that it alien-supposited. The supposit God the Son needs to be metaphysically joined to human nature only where it acts or suffers through the powers of human nature: once again, in 30 CE that would be in Galilee and Jerusalem and the highways and byways, towns and villages in between. Later – Ockham would agree – that includes altars where mass is said, where according to Divine legislation, Christ's human real presence is promised and required!

5.2. *Inept Analogy*

Zealous to drive home the union of Christ's two natures in one person, Luther over-reaches with a misleading analogy. He declares:

> The humanity is more closely united with God than our skin with our flesh, yes, more closely than body and soul. Now as long as a man lives and remains in health, his skin and flesh, body and soul are so completely one being, one person, that they cannot be separated; on the contrary, wherever the soul is, there must the body be also, and wherever the flesh is, there must the skin be also. You cannot indicate a special place or space where the soul is present alone without the body, like a kernel without the shell, or where the flesh is without the skin, like a pea in a pod.[72]

Scholastic Aristotelians would surely agree: so long as a human being lives, there is a real metaphysical union between body and soul. But Luther is wrong to suppose that alien suppositing could unite God the Son with his human nature even

[72] LW 37, 219; in the original, WA 26, 333,11–18: "Die menscheit ist neher vereiniget mit Gott, denn unser haut mit unserm fleische, ia neher denn leib und seele, Nu so lange der mensch lebt und gesund, ist haut und fleisch, leib und seele also gar ein ding und person, das sie nicht mů̊gen zutrennet werden, Sondern wo die seele ist, da mus der leib auch sein, Wo das fleisch ist, da mus die haut auch sein, Und kanst nicht sonderliche stet odder raum geben, da allein die seele on leib als ein kern on die schale, odder da das fleisch on haut als ein erbeys on hů̊lsen sey, …"

more closely. For according to scholastic Aristotelian hylomorphisms, the soul is the substantial form of the animal and so unites with prime matter and lower substantial forms (if any) to make a composite that is one *per se*. These metaphysical constituents combine to make a complete being of a single species. The individual substance nature or substance individual could not exist without all of its components thus combined. To be sure, for each substance individual, there is some substance nature that makes it the very individual it is and without which that very individual could not exist. All agree: for divine persons, the nature in question is the divine nature. By contrast, the incarnation is contingent. God the Son, not only could, but from eternity up until 4 BCE did exist without the individual human nature that he assumes in Mary's womb. God could still lay down the human nature that God has alien-supposited. Scholastics agreed that God will never do this. But this is a function of free and contingent divine policy, not metaphysical necessity. It is, always has been, and always will be metaphysically possible for God the Son to be the very individual He is without any metaphysical coupling to that human nature. Alien supposition makes the humanity belong to God the Son; it is his to do and suffer through. But human and divine nature do not – like body and soul – unite to constitute a complete being of a single substance nature. Invoking the body-soul analogy, Luther risks confusing the natures in order to avoid dividing the person!

6. The Costs and Benefits of Ubiquity

Luther's arguments conclude that Christ's humanity and hence Christ's body is everywhere – the Argument from Scripture and Creeds, at least from Christ's ascension; the Argument from Hypostatic Union, from the beginning of its existence in Mary's womb. In the scholastic manner, Luther has recognized multiple ways of being in place. In what way are Christ's humanity and Christ's body present? Luther recognizes that reasonable development of the ubiquity thesis would require him to say: different ways in different times and places. During Christ's conception to ascension earthly career, Christ manifested his body [ML1] according to the "circumscribed corporeal mode of presence, as when he walked bodily on earth, when he occupied and yielded space according to his size."[73] Christ still can manifest his body in that mode, whenever it suits his purposes – if he wanted to, even in many places at once.[74] In any event, Luther seems to hold that Christ's body can be everywhere [ML2] definitively, so that Christ can be "present in and with created things in such a way that they do

[73] LW 37, 222; in the original, WA 26, 335,30–31: "die begreiffliche, leibliche weise, wie er auff erden leiblich gieng, da er raum nam und gab nach seiner grösse, …"

[74] LW 37, 224 (= WA 26, 336,32–34).

not feel, touch, measure, or circumscribe him."[75] Luther concludes that Christ's body is also in place [ML3] repletively, in such a way that he is "present in all created things according to this exalted third mode, where they cannot measure or circumscribe him but where they are present to him so that he measures and circumscribes them." Luther excuses himself from further clarification, declaring that repletive presence "transcends nature and reason even the comprehension of all the angels."[76] We can agree that repletive presence is difficult to imagine.

If the body of Christ is definitively in place everywhere, it is definitively present on altars where mass is said. If definitive presence neither occupies nor yields space, so that Christ is definitively present with and permeates any and all bodies that exist anywhere in the universe, then existing on the altars where the bread remains post-consecration poses no further problem. There is no more need for the bread to be destroyed in order for the body of Christ to be really definitively present on the altar than for Beulah the cow to be destroyed in order for the body of Christ to be really definitively present out in the field.

Ubiquity as a way to get the body of Christ on the altar seems like overkill. Worse yet, ubiquity might seem to detract from the specialness of Christ's Eucharistic real presence. If Christ is everywhere, I can worship Christ in nature, and I can eat Christ in my soup![77]

For Luther, the Argument from Scripture and Creeds and the Argument from Hypostatic Union show Christ's ubiquity to be a fact, willy-nilly, whether it is useful or not – a fact to which piety will have to adjust![78] Nevertheless, just because Christ is really present in every place, doesn't mean that Christ's purpose for being there is the same in every place. Eucharistic presence is special because Christ invites us to seek him in that place. Christ binds himself to be there *for us*.[79] We have Christ's word of promise, that if we eat the bread and his really present body physically with our mouths, and we eat his body spiritually by believing in our hearts, we shall be incorporated into Christ's body and be turned into spiritual, holy, living human beings.[80]

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[75] LW 37, 223; in the original, WA 26, 336,11–12: "kan also sein ynn und bei den Creaturn, das sie yhn nicht fulen, rů̊ren, messen noch begreiffen, …"

[76] LW 37, 223, 230; in the original, WA 26, 336,12–15, 22: "er nach dieser hohen dritten weise ynn allen Creaturn wů̊nderlicher sein, das sie yhn nicht messen noch begreiffen, sondern viel mehr, das er sie fur sich hat gegenwertig, misset und begreifft? […] Es ist uber natur und vernunfft auch aller Engel …"

[77] LW 37, 68–69 (That These Words of Christ [1527]) (= WA 23, 151,10–153,4 [manuscript on even pagination, printed version on odd pagination]).

[78] LW 37, 127 (= WA 23, 247,15–249,3 [manuscript on even pagination, printed version on odd pagination]).

[79] LW 36, 342, 346 (The Sacrament [1526]) (= WA 19, 492,19–26, 498,30, 499, 32–38 [Dr]).

[80] LW 37, 89, 94–95, 101, 132 (That These Words of Christ [1527]) (= WA 23, 183,34–185,6, 191,29–193,33, 205,17–31, 255,14–29 [manuscript on even pagination, printed version on odd pagination]).

As for adoration, Luther reckons that Christ enthroned in heaven on the last day is there for adoration. But Christ is really present in the Eucharistic bread and wine to help us. His main objective in being there, is that we should seek him there to receive forgiveness of sins and spiritual strength. A Christian is not required to adore Christ on the altar. But Eucharistic adoration is not forbidden either. Which to do is the freedom of a Christian![81]

[81] LW 36, 294–295 (The Adoration of the Sacrament [1523]) (= WA 11, 447,26–448,10).

Part Two

Soteriology

Chapter 6

Modal Logic in Luther's *Enslaved Will*

Graham White

1. Foreword

The translations from Luther and from medieval writers are my own (with the exception of the citation from Luther's commentary on *Ecclesiastes*, for which I have used the translation in *Luther's Works*). For the sake of conveying the logical structure, I have tried to preserve the syntax where possible: the *Luther's Works* translation is quite loose about syntax, but sounds more natural, whereas my translations, by contrast, will sound a little forced. I also tend to translate Latin technical terms fairly literally: for example, I translate '*res*' as 'thing', rather than, for example, 'subject matter' in cases where 'subject matter' would be too abstract.

I use "she" and "her" as default genders for the personal pronouns, both for people and for God. I will use "human" or "human being" as a translation of the Latin "homo", which is ubiquitous in this work.

2. Introduction: The Battleground

2.1. Modal Logic

I'd like to start with some remarks about modal logic, that is, the logic of possibility and necessity. Typographically, it is fairly unproblematic: if we have a proposition P, then $\Box P$ is the proposition that 'P is necessary', and similarly for $\Diamond P$, which means that 'P is possible'. And, furthermore, it seems to be generally accepted (except by constructivist logicians) that P is logically equivalent to $\neg\Diamond\neg P$, and vice versa (that is, with $\Box$ and $\Diamond$ interchanged). Here the uncontested stuff ends.

The problem, I believe, is that necessity is not a univocal concept: we have, in everyday life, many different notions of necessity in play (logically necessary, necessary according to the laws of nature, necessary according to the rules of whatever game we are playing at the moment, …) and we switch between these notions fluidly and successfully, and do not remark on this fluidity much. Simi-

larly, the logical properties of the sentence 'necessarily *P*' are very similar to the logical properties of 'at all times, *P* is true', to the extent that people often switch between one and the other: for example, people can, and frequently do, explain the sentence 'necessarily, if *P* then *Q*' by saying 'whenever *P* is true, then *Q* is'. In fact, it has been argued that temporal and modal logic were seen as more or less identical up till about the time of Scotus.[1]

So from one point of view, when we talk of necessity, we are talking about an operator with certain formal properties, and operators with these properties are surprisingly common, even though the underlying metaphysics might vary a great deal. (The *details* of the formal properties also vary, which is another complication.)

So it is no surprise that the history of this logic – *modal* logic, as it is usually called – is full of Borgesian forking paths: Cresswell[2] is a good introduction. Aristotle successfully axiomatised quite a large fragment of non-modal logic, to the extent that that Kant thinks (falsely) that this fragment is all of logic. Aristotle's attempts at modal logic, on the other hand, seem far more fragmentary, and there is little consensus about what they mean. There *was* substantial work done on modal logic in the Middle Ages, in both the Christian and Arabic traditions: Luther was heir to that tradition, and we will see him using it in *The Enslaved Will*. But a word of warning: the interpretation of medieval modal logic is somewhat contentious, and Normore[3] argues that the intended semantics of the modal operators *then* was quite different from their intended semantics *now*.

2.2. The Enslaved Will

So, to *The Enslaved Will*.[4] This is a hard book to read: the reasons are both negative (that is, reasons which could have been avoided had Luther been less emotional or had given himself more time) and positive (reasons why, given the difficulty of the subject matter, the book ought to be hard to read).

The negative reasons are that it uses technical language all the time, but always very fragmentarily, and that Luther was using the technical tools of late medieval scholasticism (including, as I hope to show, modal logic), whereas Erasmus was using the humanist terms of rhetoric (so we have a certain amount of incommensurability there), and also because Luther seemed to be constantly losing his temper. These reasons can be dealt with by the usual methods of ex-

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[1] Simo Knuutilla (ed.), Reforging the Great Chain of Being. Studies of the History of Modal Theories (SYHL 20), Dordrecht 1980.

[2] Max Cresswell/Edwin Mares/Adriane Rini (eds.), Logical Modalities from Aristotle to Carnap. The Story of Necessity, Cambridge 2016.

[3] Calvin Normore, "Ockham and the Foundations of Modality," in: Max Cresswell/Edwin Mares/Adriane Rini (eds.), Logical Modalities from Aristotle to Carnap. The Story of Necessity, Cambridge 2016, 133–153.

[4] StA 3, 170–356 (Luther, De servo arbitrio [1525]) (= WA 18, 600–787; = LW 33).

egesis and critical reading, though these methods are, of necessity, somewhat time-consuming. Consequently, my goals in this paper will be modest: I will try to analyse an argument or two, and to shed some light on the general strategy of Luther's polemic.

The positive reasons are these. If you look at the concrete struggles that Luther was involved with in the early and mid 1520s, that is, the time leading up to the composition of *The Enslaved Will*, you will find that a lot of them are about difficulties of communication, consensus, and language: Luther was very concerned with finding a way for Christians to communicate with each other, given that true Christians, as he puts it, lived far from each other,[5] and he was also concerned with finding ways in which true Christians could come together and express their opinions even when their were many people around who only pretended to be Christians.[6]

Now many of these concerns could be dismissed as merely paranoia, or as an instance of the sort of demonization of people with nonstandard beliefs which led to the post-reformation wars of religion. But, nevertheless, one ought also to consider the sort of concern – persuasively articulated by the Frankfurt School of critical theorists – which says that there are, or have been, situations in which these sort of concerns (namely, those concerning the very possibility of unbiased communication) actually make sense, and in which they show that there is something missing from the standard account.

3. Three Grades of Necessitarianism

You [Erasmus] find three [interpretations] of one sentence about free will. One of them seems hard to you, but nevertheless sufficiently probable, which denies that a human can will the good without particular grace: it denies that [a human] can begin, denies that [she] can continue, succeed, etc.; you prove this on these grounds, that it leaves striving and desire to the human being, but it does not leave the ascription of these things to her. The harder opinion is that of those who maintain that free will cannot accomplish anything apart from sinning, and that only grace brings about any good in us etc. And the hardest view is that of those who say that free will is a vacuous term, and that God brings about both good and bad in us, and that everything which happens does so by pure necessity. […] You formulate these opinions as of three sects, but the thing, discussed in different words by one and the other sect of adherents, you do not understand.[7]

[5] StA 3, 27–71 (Vom weltlicher Obrigkeit, wie weit man ihr Gehorsam schuldig sei [1523]) (= WA 11, 251–280; LW 45, 81–129).

[6] Here I am thinking particularly of Martin Luther, Das eine christliche Versammlung oder Gemeine Recht und Macht habe, alle Lehre zu urtheilen und Lehrer zu berufen, ein un ab zu setzen, Grund und Ursach in der Schrift (1523), StA 3, 72–84 (= WA 11, 408–416; = LW 39, 305–314) and his Vom weltlicher Obrigkeit (StA 3, 27–71; = WA 11, 251–280; LW 45, 81–129).

[7] StA 3, 236,12–20; 237,1–3 (Luther, De servo arbitrio) (= WA 18, 667,15–23, 24–27): "Ex una sententia de libero arbitrio triplicem fingis, dura tibi videtor eorum, set tamen satis

There are, then, three sentences about free will, framed in the technical vocabulary of the will, and of God rewarding acts of the will – a vocabulary which was common in late scholasticism – and which are paraphrases of sentences in Erasmus's *Diatribe on Free Will*: Luther is asserting that they all mean the same thing. As he says later, "I say this, … that I intend neither to say anything, or understand anything, by the words of the two latter opinions than what is said in the first opinion."[8]

And he gives an argument for the equivalence of these sentences. He has previously noted that, according to Erasmus, "the human will, after [Adam's] sin, is so depraved that, having lost its liberty, it is compelled to obey sin, and neither can it call itself back to better fruits".[9]

Luther's argument goes as follows. "After it has been conceded or decided that free will, with liberty lost, is compelled in the service of sin, and neither can it will anything good, I cannot, from these words, conceive anything but that 'free will' is a vacuous term [*vocabulum*] whose referent [*res*] has been lost. 'Lost liberty', according to my grammar, does not name any [sort of] liberty, and to give it, which does not have any liberty, the name of liberty, is to give it a vacuous name."[10]

Two remarks on this. Firstly, Luther is concluding, from the fact that the will cannot will the good, that the will is not free. This is possibly a bit strange to us, because we are accustomed to see discussions of freedom of the will in the context of questions about determinism, so that we tend to think that the will gets to be unfree because the world is completely deterministic: consequently, if we say that the will is not free, this will mean that no action we perform, however trivial, is performed freely. Luther does not, I believe, think that the world is completely deterministic (though the question is, as I will show later, rather complex), so that if we talk about the will being free we will be implicitly talking about "free

probabilis, qui negant hominem posse velle bonum sine peculiari gratia, negant posse incipere, negant posse progredi, perficere et cetera, hanc probas ideo, quod relinquat homini studium et conatum, sed non relinquat, quod suis viribus asscribat. Durior eorum, qui contendunt, liberum arbitrium nihil valere nisi ad peccandum, solam gratiam in nobis operari bonum etcetera. Durissima vero illorum, qui dicunt nomen esse inane liberum arbitrium, sed Deum tam bona quam mala in nobis operari, meraeque necessitas operare omnia quae fiunt. […] Tres facis hic opiniones velut trium sectarum, quod rem eandem, aliis et aliis verbis varie dissertam a nobis eisdem et unius sectae professoribus, non intelligis."

[8] StA 3, 239,24–25 (= WA 18, 670,28–30): "[A]liud nihil volo dicere, nec aliud intelligi per verba duarum postremarum opinionum, qum id quod dicitur in prima opinione."

[9] StA 3, 237,21–23 (= WA 18, 668,11–13): "[V]oluntatem post peccatum sic esse depravatum, ut amissa libertate cogature servire peccatum, nec possit se revocare ad meliorem frugem."

[10] StA 3, 238,28–33 (= WA 18, 670,33–38): "Postquam enim concessum aut ratum est, liberum arbitrium, amissa libertate, cogi in servitute peccati, nec possit quicquam velle boni, ex his verbis nihil aliud possum concipere, quam liberum arbitrium esse inanum vocabulum, cuius res amissa sit, Amissam libertatem mea grammatica nullam habet libertatem, tribuere autem libtertatis titulum ei, quod nullam habet libertatem, est tribuere inane vocabulum."

to Φ" for some more or less precisely specified action type Φ; in Luther's case, Φ will be "willing the good", and we have seen this above. He elsewhere paraphrases his meaning of "willing the good" in technical theological vocabulary embellished with sarcastic remarks): "that magnificently proclaimed capacity by which a human being can apply itself to those things which [lead to] eternal salvation."[11] This is, in general, the concept of freedom which Luther is concerned with, and he really does not seem to care very much about wider concepts of freedom, such as the freedom to decide which clothes to wear today. And when Luther says that the will is not free, he means by "will" this particular use of the will, namely applying oneself to the things which lead to eternal salvation. This general approach to questions of freedom, incidentally, makes a good deal of sense if we think, for example, about political freedom, where we are generally concerned only about certain classes of Φ and not, for example, about which side to part your hair on (assuming this option is open to you).

The other remark is this: given this assumption, and given that our liberty is lost, then the argument is formally valid; because the will cannot will anything good, and because we are speaking about freedom to will the good, then the term "free" contradicts the term "will", so that, when we put the two terms together to create a complex noun phrase, that noun phrase cannot refer to anything. This is what Luther means by 'vacuous' [*inane*]. And because of this, he has proved that the first of his sentences (logically the weakest) entails the third, which is the strongest, and so they are logically equivalent.

4. Realms of Creation

It is almost a cliché that Luther has a rich doctrine of the structure of the created order, and that, in consequence, the boundaries between his doctrine of creation and his social thought are quite thin: in many ways this is a pre-modern part of his worldview, which regards creation, not as being uniform, but as being complexly structured, and differently structured in different places. This is particularly relevant for *The Enslaved Will*, although it is never stated very prominently: however, if we lose sight of it, many of Luther's key arguments become quite difficult to follow.

What is particularly important is that Luther viewed creation as being divided into different realms.[12] This section gives some more detail to our remarks ear-

[11] StA 3, 227,5 ff. (= WA 18, 658,18 ff.): "Caucutierunt sic in laudem et gloriam liberi arbitrii, ut ostenderetur illa magnifice iactata vis, qua se homo applicare potest ad ea quae sunt salutis aeternae." Cf. Desiderius Erasmus, *Diatribe*.

[12] See Robert Kolb, "Luther's Hermeneutics of Distinction. Law and Gospel, Two Kinds of Righteousnees, Two Realms, Freedom and Bondage," in: Robert Kolb/Irene Dingel/L'ubomir Batka (eds.), The Oxford Handbook of Martin Luther's Theology, Oxford 2014,

lier that "free will" was a term that needs further specification: if we ask whether the will is free, we have to ask whether the will is free to Φ, for some class of actions Φ. Luther writes:

We should teach that free will of humans should be allowed to be free not with respect to things above us, but only to things below us, that is, that [a human] knows herself to have, in her faculties and possessions, the right to use, to do, to refrain [from doing], by [*pro*] free will, to whatever it might please her. Otherwise, before God, or in things which pertain to salvation or damnation, she does not have free will but is a captive, subject and a slave, either to the will of God or to the will of Satan.[13]

So there are things above us and things below us, and we can have free will in our dealings with the things below us, but not with the things above us. And the things below us are in our power, whereas the things above use are emphatically not. So freedom of the will has a lot to do with power, and with the ability to order our own lives as we please. As Luther says, referring to the book of Ecclesiastes

We understand, according to [the book of] Ecclesiastes, that human [life] is distributed between two kingdoms. In one, where she is given over to her will and counsel, away from the commands and mandates of God, that is, among things below her, she reigns and is master, as if left in the hands of her own counsel. Not that God abandons her there, as if [God] did not cooperate in all things, but that she leaves her to the use of things by her will, without being restricted by any laws or commands. […] In the other kingdom she is not left in the hands of her own counsel, but is moved [*fertur*] and led by the will and counsel of God, so that, just as in her own kingdom she is left without the command of another, so in the kingdom of God she is led by the command of another, away from her will.[14]

The distinction according to power naturally leads to a distinction between an act and its consequences:

168–184; and G. Graham White, Luther as Nominalist. A Study of the Logical Methods Used in Martin Luther's Disputations in the Light of their Medieval Background (Schriften der Luther-Agricola-Gesellschaft 30), Helsinki 1994, 314 ff.

[13] StA 3, 210,5–11 (= WA 18, 638,5–11): "[D]oceamus, ut homini liberum arbitrium liberum non respectu superioris, sed tantum inferioris se rei concedatur, hoc est, ut sciat sese in suis facultatibus et possessionibus habere ius utendi, faciendi, omittendi pro libero arbitrio, licet et idipsum regatur solius Dei libero arbitrio, quocunque illi placuerit, Caeterum erga Deum, vel in rebus, quae pertinent ad salvationem vel damnationem, non habet liberum arbitrium sed captivus, subiectus et servus est, vel voluntatis Dei vel voluntatis Satanae."

[14] StA 3, 240,38–241,1, 4–7 (= WA 18, 672,8–23): "per Ecclesiasticum intelligamus hominem in duo regna distribui, Uno, quo fertur suo arbitrio et consilio, absque praeceptis et mandatis Dei, puta in rebus sese inferioribus, Hic regnat et est dominus, ut in manu consilii sui relictus. Non quod Deus illum sic deserat, ut non in omnibus cooperetur, Sed quod usuim rerum illi liberum pro arbitrio concesserit, nec ullis legibus aut praescriptibus inhibuerit. […] Altero vero regno, non relinquitur in manu consilii suo, sed arbitrario et consilio Dei fertur et ducitur, ut sicut in suo regno fertur absque praeceptis alterius, ita in regno Dei fertur alterius praeceptis, absque suo arbitrio."

Proverbs 16[:1]: "humans prepare their heart, God, however, governs the tongue". … The outcomes of things are not in our power; everything to come is uncertain to us. As Ecclesiastes [11:6] says, "today sow your seed and do not cease in the evening, because you do not know whether this or that will come". I say that, for us, knowledge [of the outcome] is uncertain, but the outcome is necessary. Necessity gives us the fear of God, lest we presume and become secure. Uncertainty, however, leads to trust, lest we despair.[15]

Luther mentions the book of Ecclesiastes here, and this distribution between the two kingdoms comes up more strongly in Luther's commentary on that book (which was composed in 1526, about a year after the *Enslaved Will* was written).[16] Here Luther goes into a great deal more detail about the gap between acts and their consequences, and thus to the hidden contingency (as he sees it) behind a large number of worldly occurrences. For example, suicide is strictly speaking impossible, because, although we may do something to ourselves that may fairly reliably cause death, it is up to God whether it succeeds or not (Luther uses this line of argument in a letter to the wife of a man who had killed himself, consoling her with the thought that it cannot have been he himself that did it, but that, rather, he was attacked by the devil). On the other hand, dinner parties are not guaranteed to succeed: we may get all the preparations just right, but the party may flop, whereas "it often happens that someone happens upon a most joyful dinner party by accident, that is, by the gift of God".[17]

Divine and human action are thus intertwined in a very intimate way, and this is especially true when we consider what Luther calls "God's general omnipotence", that is, the way that God acts in everyday human actions.

[Erasmus'] *Diatribe* does not know what we are arguing about. We are not talking about "being by nature", but about "being by grace" (as they say). We know that free will does certain things by nature, such as eating, drinking, begetting, ruling … We know, however, that humans apart from the grace of God still remain under God's general omnipotence, which does, moves and carries all things on a necessary and infallible course. But this, which the human does as she is carried, is nothing, that is, it has no value in the face of God, and counts for nothing other than sin.[18]

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[15] StA 3, 314,21–22; 315,2–6 (= WA 18, 746,30–31; 746,37–747,1; 747,3–7): "Item illud Proverbi. 16, Hominis est praeparare cor, Domini autem gubernare linguam. … eventa rerum non s[u]nt in potestate nostra. […] incerta nobis sunt omnia futura, ut Ecclesiastes ait, Mane semina semen tuum et vespera non cesses, quia nescis an hoc vel illud sit oriturum. Nobis inquam sunt incerta cognitione, sed necessaria eventu. Necessitas nobis timorem Dei incutit, ne praesumamus et securi sumus. Incertitudo vero fiduciam parit, ne desperamus."

[16] G. Graham White, "Luther on the Limits of Human Activity. Dinner Parties and Suicide," in: NZSTh 26 (1984) 54–70, and White, Luther as Nominalist (as note 12), 314–320.

[17] WA 20, 35,32–33 (Annotationes in Ecclesiasten [1526]) (= LW 15, 29–30): "Saepe autem fit, ut quis casu, id est Deo sic dante, incidat in laetissimum convivium."

[18] StA 3, 320–321 (= WA 18, 752,5–8, 12–15): "Diatribe ignorat, quo loco pugnemus. Non enim de esse naturae loquimur, sed de esse gratiae (ut vocant). Scimus liberum arbitrium natura aliquid facere, ut comedere, bibere, gignere, regere, … Dicimus enim, hominem extra gratiam Dei manere nihilominus sub generali omnipotentia Dei facientis, moventis, rapientis

So we must beware of thinking of these two realms as being rigidly separated from each other: in fact they interpenetrate, and the differences between them are, to use a technical term, *intensional*, that is, they depend on what language one uses to refer to them. We can describe events one way and see human action, and describe them the other way and see divine action. Finally (and possibly tied up with this) there seems to be an ambiguity about whether we can ever act freely, even with respect to the "things below us": Luther does talk about free will being able to do things there, but also (as we have seen) elsewhere in the text he seems to talk as if free will simply did not exist.

4.1. Access

The distinction between things above us and things below us is also important for another reason: we have epistemic access to the things below us, but not to the things above us, and this means that we can reason about the things below us, and not (or not nearly so well) about the things above us. So, consequently, our rules of inference, or axioms, or however we want to formulate our logic, are not what the philosophers call topic-neutral: they vary depending on what we are reasoning about.[19]

5. Composite and Divided Sense

Dieter has a useful description of Luther's general strategy for dealing with these issues:

> On the one hand, when Luther denies the human capacity to love God above all, he presupposes *his* understanding of the biblical love commandment as requiring full and perfect dedication of the whole person to God. Biel would agree with Luther that such love is not in the natural power of human beings but would disagree with him that God requires such love as fulfilment of the law.
>
> On the other hand, Luther takes seriously Biel's claim that the love of God as an act of the human will is the fulfilment of the divine commandment. But since the doctrine of grace teaches that the fulfilment of God's law is not possible without grace, Luther draws the consequence that that the freedom of the will (in this respect) does not exist.[20]

So, to formalise this a little: Biel and Luther both agree that entailments like

if you love God above all else, **then** you have fulfilled God's law

omnia, necessario et infallibili cursu. Sed hoc, quod sic raptus homo facit, esse nihil, id est, nihil valere coram Deo, nec aliud reputare quam peccatum."

[19] White, Luther as Nominalist (as note 12), 314–320.

[20] Theodor Dieter, "Luther as Late Medieval Theologian," in: Robert Kolb/Irene Dingel/L'ubomir Bratka (eds.), The Oxford Handbook of Martin Luther's Theology, 37.

are necessarily valid. But Luther believes that the **then**-clause (what is usually called the *consequent*) is impossible apart from grace, so this means that the **if** clause (the *antecedent*) must similarly be impossible apart from grace.

The argument is not quite as straightforward as this, because both Luther and Biel are willing to argue about the semantics of "willing God above all else", and, in particular, Luther can then go on to say why "loving God above all else" is impossible. And arguments like this show why there is this concentration in Luther's book on the semantics of terms like "free will", terms which are ostensibly psychological but which have all manner of theological, and indeed political, ramifications. However, it does show us something of the logical issues at work here, and it also shows us something which is quite typical: that the parties tended to agree on the inference principles, and, indeed, on many of the basic theological positions, whereas disagreement tended to appear in the context of the truth or falsity of the antecedents and consequents of particular implications, and, on further enquiry, in the semantics of the terms involved, read in their context.

5.1. The Same in Modal Logic

Suppose that we want to prove a sentence Q in modal logic. How do we prove it? Well, it helps to think of where we can start from. What sort of things are necessary? Any theorem of logic is necessary: so, if we have $\vdash P$, then we can conclude $\vdash \Box P$. Similarly, if we have $P \vdash Q$, then we can conclude $\vdash \Box(P \rightarrow Q)$. Similarly, if we are considering natural necessity (that is, the necessity which we get from laws of nature), then the laws of nature will (we hope) give us lots of rules of the form "If P then Q", from which we get, again, something like $\vdash \Box(P \rightarrow Q)$. So these inference rules will give rise to entailments like

$\vdash \Box(P \rightarrow Q)$

Closely related, but not equivalent, is

$\vdash P \rightarrow \Box Q$

and this latter entailment is equivalent to the entailment

$P \vdash \Box Q$

One confusing thing the medieval logic on such things in the medievals is that they did it mostly in prose: they would, then, use terms such as "necessarily" ("necessario" in Latin), in sentences of the form "if P then Q". Because Latin can be syntactically quite loose, it is very often ambiguous which terms of the sentence "necessario" applies to. So, they also had language for disambiguating such things: they would, in particular, call something of the form $\Box(P \rightarrow Q)$ to be in the *composite sense* (sometimes called *necessity of the consequence*), whereas something of the form $P \rightarrow \Box Q$ will be in the *divided sense* (sometimes called

necessity of the consequent), and similarly (and, in the medieval literature more commonly) for the quantified versions of these sentence[21]

Luther knew this literature. For example, early on in the *Enslaved Will*, he rebukes Erasmus for thinking that questions such as "whether God contingently foreknows anything".[22]

This is a question which was discussed, using modal logic, by the medievals, and, in particular, by Scotus.[23]

And Luther has his own answer to this, and he says that it is necessary for Christians to know it:

> And thus this too is supremely necessary and salvific for a Christian, to know that God does not foreknow anything contingently, but that she both foreknows and does everything by an unchangeable, eternal and infallible will.[24]

Note that the syntax of the Latin seems to indicate a divided sense reading of this doctrine, i. e. that "everything" is outside of the scope of "necessarily". Now this may help to resolve the problem that, on the one hand, Luther seems to be very much in favour of predestination, but that, on the other hand, he is quite prepared to talk about free will in the context of the things below us: so maybe the 'everything' here is implicitly restricted to quantify only over things above us.

This also fits with another aspect of Luther's use of modal concepts, namely that he tended to think that the status of things vis-à-vis God was parallel to their modal status. In the context of talking of the necessity of the consequent/consequence, he says the following: note that this passage is difficult to render into English, because of the ambiguity of the Latin "facere", which can equally well mean make or do, and of the Latin "res", which can equally well mean thing or state of affairs or a whole lot of other things.

> [That] the thing which has been done is not necessary, that is, does not have a necessary essence, is nothing other than to say that the thing is not God herself. Nevertheless it remains [true] that everything happens necessarily, if the necessity is that of the necessary action of God, or the necessity of the consequent, even though, when it is made, it is not necessary, that is, it is not God, or that it does not have a necessary essence. If, then, I change, it concerns me little that my being, or my becoming, should be changeable, or that I, who am that contingent and mutable thing, [I], who am not the necessary God, change. Wherefore that game that, by the necessity of the consequence but not necessity of the consequent, all things happen, amounts to nothing other than this: All things happen by necessity, but, thus made, are not God herself. What, really, does this have to

[21] Normore, "Ockham and the Foundations of Modality."

[22] StA 3, 187 (= WA 18, 610,1): "an Deus contingenter praesciat aliquid."

[23] John Duns Scotus, Lectura I, d. 39; see Calvin Normore, "Duns Scotus' Modal Theory," in: Thomas Williams (ed.), The Cambridge Companion to Duns Scotus (Cambridge Companions to Religion), Cambridge 2003, 129–160.

[24] StA 3, 190,20–22 (= WA 18, 615,12–14): "Est itaque et hoc imprimis necessarium et salutare Christiano, nosse, quod Deus nihil praescit contingenter, sed quod omnia incommutabili et aeterna, infallibilique voluntate et praevidet et facit."

say to us? As if one had to deny that we claimed that the things which had been done were God, or that they had a divine and necessary nature.[25]

What is clear from this is that Luther, unlike very many of the scholastics,[26] had reservations about the necessity of the past: something which had been done (*qua* thing which had been done) was simply not necessary, since it did not have an necessary essence. He also had quite a simple view of the metaphysics of necessity: things have essences, and the only things which can be necessary, or not, are essences, and something is only necessary if its essence is.

However, when we talk of things as related to God, then the case is different. God can foresee, or intend, that things will turn out a certain way, and they will. But when we talk about this, we are not talking about things in themselves, but things as they are related to God: and, from this perspective, we get certainty. We can, even, run what is referred to by philosophers as a sea battle argument[27] from God's intentions.[28] So this is very much an ontology which contrasts relational facts with talk about things in themselves, and in which the relational facts can aspire to necessity, whereas finite things in themselves are never necessary. And so the interpretation of the citation above depends heavily on our semantics of the term "thing" (*res* in Latin): if it refers to a non-relational entity, then that thing is contingent, whereas, if it refers to a relational entity (and, specifically, if it refers to a created thing in relation to God) then it is necesssary.

5.2. The Preached and Hidden God

One should dispute differently about God, or the will of God, as it is preached, revealed, offered, worshipped, and differently about God not preached, not revealed, not offered, and not worshipped. Insofar as God hides herself and wishes to be unknown to us, she is no concern of ours. […] And lest anyone thinks that this is my distinction, I follow Paul, who wrote, about the antichrist, to the Thessalonians, that he would exalt himself

[25] StA 3, 192,7–17 (= WA 18, 617,7–19): "… facta res non est necessaria, id est, non habet esentiam necessariam, hoc est aliud nihil dicere quam, res facta non est Deus ipse. Nihilominus manet illud, ut omnes res necessario fiat, si actio Dei necessaria vel consequentiae necessitas est, quantumlibet iam facta non sit necessario, id est, non sit Deus, vel non habeat essentiam necessariam. Si enim ego fio necessario, parum me movet, quod esse meum vel fieri sit mutabile, nihilominus ego ille contingens et mutabilis, qui non sum Deus necessarius, fio. Quare illorum ludibrium, Necessitate consequentiae sed non necessitate consequentis omnia fieri, nihil aliud habet quam hoc, Omnia quidem necessario fiunt, sed sic facta, non sunt ipsemet Deus, Quod vero opus erat hoc nobis dicere? quasi metuendum fuerit, ut factas res assereremus Deum esse, vel divinam et necessariam essentiam habere."

[26] See Normore, "Ockham and the Foundations of Modality," but also Wojciech Wciórka, "Necessity and Future-Dependence. 'Ockhamist' Accounts of Abraham's Faith at Paris around 1200," in: Vivarium 56 (2018) 1–46.

[27] Linda Zagzebski, "Foreknowledge and Free Will," in: Edward N. Zalta (ed.), The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Stanford, CA 2017; online at https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2017/entries/free-will-foreknowledge/ (accessed August 20, 2019).

[28] StA 3, 284,1–4 (= WA 18, 715,18–19).

above every preached and worshipped God, clearly meaning that someone could be exalted above God insofar as she is preached and worshipped, that is, above the word and worship by which God is known to us, and has dealings with us: but nothing can extol itself above God who is not worshipped, not preached, as she is in her nature and majesty, but all things are in her powerful hand. One should, therefore, leave God in majesty and in her nature, for in this way we have nothing to do with her, and neither do we want to have anything to do with her. But insofar as she is clothed and presented in her word, by which she offers herself to us, we have to do with her. This is her beauty and glory, who, thus clothed, the Psalmist celebrates. We say this: that the holy God does not regret the death of the people which he works, but regrets the death which he finds in his people and tries to remove it. This is the way in which the God who is preached acts, so that, with sin and death removed, we should be saved. For he sent his word and healed us. The other God, hidden in majesty, neither regrets nor takes away death, but works life, death, and all in all. For neither does she define herself by her word, but holds herself free above all things.[29]

This has some relation to the discussion of necessity and contingency. Suppose that we have a general principle of the form

$(\text{God wills } P) \rightarrow P$

there is no problem in making this necessarily true:

$\Box((\text{God wills } P) \rightarrow P)$

We have a particular P, about some specific action, and we want to derive □P. How? Well, if we knew that

$\Box(\text{God wills } P)$

then we would be fine, but we can't. If we know that P occurs, then maybe we could derive

God wills P

[29] StA 3, 253,13–34 (= WA 18, 685,3–6, 7–24): "Aliter de Deo vel voluntate Dei nobis praedicata, revelata, oblata culta, Et aliter de Deo non praedicato, non revelato, non oblato, non culto disputandum est. Quatenus igitur Deus sese abscondit et ignorari a nobis vult, nihil ad nos. […] Et ne meam hanc esse distinctionem quis arbitretur, Paulum sequor, qui ad Thessalonicenses de Antichristo scribit, quod sit exaltaturus sese super omnium Deum praedicatum et cultum, manifeste significans, aliquem posse extolli supra Deum, quatenus est praedicatus et cultus, id est, super verbum et cultum quo Deus nobis cognitus est, et nobiscum habet commercium, sed supra Deum non cultum, nec praedicatum, ut est in sua natura et maiestate, nihil potest extolli, sed omnia sut sub potenti manu eius. Relinquendus est igitur Deus in maiestate et natura sua, sic enim nihil nos cum illo habemus agere, nec sic voluit a nobis agi cum eo, Sed quatenus indutus et proditus est verbo suo, quo nobis sese obtulit, cum eo agimus, quod est decor et gloria eius. Sic dicimus, Deus pius non deplorat mortem populi quam operatur in illo, Sed deplorat mortem quam invenit in populo et amovere studet. Hoc enim agit Deus praedicatus, ut ablato peccato et morte, salvi siumus. Misit enim verbum suum et sanavit eos. Caeterum Deus absconditus in maiestate, neque deplorat neque tollit mortem, sed operatur vitam, mortem et omnia in omnibus. Neque enim tum verbo suo definivit sese, sed liberum sese reservavit super omnia."

and then say that everything in God is necessary, so

$\Box$(God wills *P*)

but we have to be careful there, because we could easily end up saying that everything which happens necessarily happens, and that's a bit strong to be Luther's position.

There are two problems here. One is the problem we encountered in the previous section, about whether *P* is a relational or non-relational fact. The other problem is that assertions of the form God wills *P* are to do with God's hidden being, and (as we have shown) Luther thought there were basic difficulties in even reasoning about that. One of the difficulties is that we simply do not have the language to talk about God's reasoning, or God's willing, other than the things about God's reasoning and willing that she has revealed to us. So, in fact, this line of argument is extremely problematic: the right hand side of these implications seems to be reasonably clear, but the left hand side is extremely difficult. As Luther says, you can only talk about the necessity of created things when you talk about created things in relation to God, and that brings with it such a great number of difficulties about language, and difficulties about a great deal else, that it is difficult to know how to proceed.

Chapter 7

Christ the Physician

Medieval Roots of the *Christus Medicus* in Luther

Alice Chapman

1. Introduction

The image of the *Christus medicus* has its roots in the biblical text and in the early church fathers.[1] Writers such as Tertullian, Cyprian, Eusebius, Origen, Jerome, Ambrose and especially, Saint Augustine developed the image in their writings. Scholars continue to refer to the classic work from 1954 on the topic by Rudolph Abersmann, "The Concept of 'Christus medicus' in St. Augustine."[2] The work of later scholars such as Jörg Hübner and Martin Honecker pursued the theme in pre-Augustinian texts.[3] While very little has been written on the *Chris-*

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[1] For example, see the New Testament accounts of Jesus' healing the paralytic in Capernaum in Mk 2:1–12; Mt 9:1–8; and Lk 5:17–26. The accounts in Mt 9:1–2 and Mk 2:17 state that healthy people do not need a physician, only those who are sick. In Mark, Jesus heals the paralyzed man as a sign that he has the power to forgive sins (Mk 2:5, 10–11) and in Lk 5:24–25, he not only forgives sins, but demonstrates his authority by healing the paralyzed man, who immediately, "stood up before them, took what he had been lying on, and went to his home, glorifying God." The three passages (Lk 4:23; Mk 2:17; and Mt 9:12) address the phrase, "physician heal yourself." Jesus heals the man lying at the pool of Bethesda in Jn 5:1–9. Here Jesus is the "Great Physician." The Glossa ordinaria discusses aspects of the image: see the commentaries on Ps 87:11; Eccl 38:15; Is 3:7; Mk 5:25–26; Lk 4:23; this evidence is cited in Raymond St-Jacques, "Langland's *Christus medicus* Image and the Structure of Piers Plowman," in: The Yearbook of Langland Studies 5 (1991), 113. The relationship between sin and sickness is discussed by Patrick Prétot, "Sacraments and Healing. A Typology of the Relationship Between Two Dimensions of Salvation," in: Studia Liturgica 36.1 (2006), 34–59. Prétot argues that while many biblical passages indicate a link between sin and sickness, there are some that do not, for example Jas 5:13–15: "Are any among you suffering? They should pray. Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise. Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven." See also Jn 9:2–3, when the disciples asked, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him." (All biblical citations are from NRSV.)

[2] Rudolph Abersmann, "The Concept of 'Christus medicus' in St. Augustine," in: Traditio 10 (1954), 1–28.

[3] Jörg Hübner, "Christus medicus. Ein Symbol des Erlösungsgeschehens und ein Modell

tus medicus in the Middle Ages, scholars have recently focused on the image in the Reformation, particularly in the work of Martin Luther.[4] The *Christus medicus* image also appears in English vernacular literature as Anglophone scholars, such as Victor Scherb and Raymond St-Jacques have noted. Carole Rawcliffe has further examined the relationship in the later Middle Ages between physical and spiritual healing along with the idea of the hospital.[5]

In this chapter I sketch themes in the *Christus medicus* image from the Middle Ages that have relevance in the Reformation, specifically in the work of Martin Luther. I focus on particular authors who make productive use of the image, namely Hildegard of Bingen, Bernard of Clairvaux, Thomas Aquinas, and Bonaventure. I argue that the function and role of the *Christus medicus* depends on the answer to the question: "What does it mean to be sick?" The image of Christ the Physician changes in relation to how this question is answered. One of the most significant shifts in perceptions of Christ the Physician takes place when physical illness is allegorized as spiritual development. This development is characteristic of writers such as Bernard of Clairvaux, Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventure, but is not as readily apparent in Luther's work.

2. Twelfth-Century Sin, Guilt, and Penance

Sin, guilt, contrition, and penance were all important aspects of the sinner's participation in the medieval penitential process. In the twelfth century, priests began to emphasize internal examination. Contrition, meaning sorrow for one's sin, emerged at this time as a crucial step in the sinners' process. This move towards interiority is what some scholars identify as the "moral individualism" of the twelfth century.[6] The idea was that sorrow for one's sin would lead the

ärztlichen Handelns," in: KuD 31.4 (1985), 324–335; Martin Honecker, "Christus Medicus," in: KuD 31.4 (1985), 307–323.

[4] There is some discussion of *Christus medicus* in the works of Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventure, particularly in relation to the sacraments. See Prétot, "Sacraments and Healing," 34–59; in Luther, see Johann Anselm Steiger, Medizinische Theologie. Christus medicus und theologia medicinalis bei Martin Luther und im Luthertum der Barockzeit, mit Edition dreier Quellentexte (Studies in the History of Christian Thought 121), Leiden/Boston 2005.

[5] Victor Scherb, The Earthly and Divine Physicians. Christus Medicus in the Croxton Play of the Sacrament, in: Bruce Clark/Wendell Aycock (eds.), The Body and the Text. Comparative Essays in Literature and Medicine (Studies in Comparative Literature 22), Lubbock 1990, 161–171; Carole Rawcliffe, "Christ the Physician Walks the Wards. Celestial Therapeutics in the Medieval Hospital," in: Matthew P. Davies/Andrew Prescott (eds.), London and the Kingdom in the Middle Ages. Essays in Honour of Caroline M. Barron (Harlaxton Mediaeval Studies 16), Donington 2008, 78–97.

[6] Mary C. Mansfield, The Humiliation of Sinners. Public Penance in Thirteenth-Century France, Ithaca, NY 1995, 34; this division existed as early as 999; see Sarah Hamilton, "Pastoral Care in Early Eleventh-Century Rome," in: Dutch Review of Church History 84

penitent to undertake formal confession, followed by penance. Many penitents, however, felt that they were unable to accomplish the necessary temporal satisfaction for sin imposed upon them by the priest for sin. Movements, such as the Crusades or monastic benefaction, increased in intensity as ways for penitents to satisfy their debts. Beginning with the work of Anselm (d. 1109), the question was asked whether it was even possible to accomplish full recompense for sin prior to death. Thus penitential theology developed during this time.[7]

Once the theological shift from exterior penalty (*poena*) for sin to interior penance had taken place, the penitential scheme required demonstrable sorrow for one's sin. The emphasis was placed on the act of contrition, the true grace-filled sorrow for sin that led the sinner to undertake confession. Jacques Le Goff, Mary C. Mansfield, C. S. Watkins and others argue that this shift precipitated the development of purgatory as a way of finally working off the temporal penalties of sin before entering the beatific vision.[8] The real threat to the sinner was not the inability to carry out the penalty for sin but the lack of true remorse. According to Mansfield, "the guilt, not the temporal penalty, was the block to eternal salvation."[9] A host of new confessor manuals and methods for eliciting contrition as demonstration of proper repentance from the sinner emerged in the twelfth century. While earlier penitentials considered proper contrition essential to the process of forgiveness, the twelfth century saw the expansion of contrition in widespread practice. The *exempla* texts of this period contained stories of individuals confessing their sins and saints intervening on their behalf.

Influential theologians such as Peter Abelard and Peter Lombard added their voices to this shift towards contrition. In his *Ethics*, Abelard specifies that the sinner must confront one's personal intention rather than the sin itself. "God considers only the mind in rewarding good or evil, not the results of deeds, and God thinks not of what comes forth from fault or from our good will but judges the mind itself in the design of its intension not in the outcome of an outward deed."[10] Lombard also acknowledges the presence of an "interior penance" comparing baptism and penance. He explains, "Baptism is a sacrament only, but pen-

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(2004), 37–56; although the tripartite distinction had been around since 999, it was not until the twelfth century that the emphasis became widespread with the development of purgatory.

[7] C. S. Watkins, "Sin, Penance and Purgatory in the Anglo-Norman Realm. The Evidence of Visions and Ghost Stories," in: Past and Present 175 (2002), 4.

[8] Peter Lombard acknowledged that there existed "middle things" in between the "first sin of apostasy and the last punishment of eternal fire." Peter Lombard, Sentences, Bk. II, d. 36, ch. 1, in: Peter Lombard, The Sentences, 4 vols., Giulio Silano (trans.) (Mediaeval Sources in Translation 48), Toronto 2007–2010, 2:181.

[9] Mansfield, The Humiliation of Sinners (as note 6), 35.

[10] Peter Abelard, Ethics, D. E. Luscome (ed./trans.), Oxford 1971, 45: "Solum quippe animum in remuneratione boni uel mali, non effecta operum, Deus adtendit, ne quid de culpa uel de bona uoluntate nostra proueniat pensat, sed ipsum animum in proposito suae intentionis, non in effectu exterioris operis, diiudicat."

ance is called both a sacrament and a virtue of the mind. For there is an inner penance, and an outer one."[11]

3. Hildegard of Bingen on Body/Soul and Soul/Body

The emphasis on contrition in the twelfth century opens the possibility of perceiving the relation between spiritual and physical illness. The work of Hildegard of Bingen (1098–1179) on this relation is significant to the development of the idea of Christ as healer of both body and soul. In this section, I focus on her contributions to the *Christus medicus* motif.

Hildegard began her religious life as an Anchoress, walled up in seclusion sometime between the ages of eight and fourteen under the watchful eye of her spiritual teacher, Jutta. Hildegard succeeded her mentor in 1136 and became the Abbess of what had grown into a community of Benedictine nuns.[12] In 1141, she began to write down her spiritual visions that she had experienced since she was a child. The *Scivias* emerged a year later and was the first of many books on a variety of subjects including theology, music, and – importantly for our purposes here – medicine.

Hildegard was famous for using various approaches for healing the sick and her holistic approach included music.[13] Her concern was the contribution of spiritual health to the overall wellness of every person. In the *Scivias*, she insists that spiritual healing requires humility: "O true medicine – humility – extend [your] help to me … pride has shattered me with many vices, placing many wounds upon me." The imitation of Christ's wounds causes repentance in the soul, "… because the greatest physician has suffered hard and severe wounds on your behalf."[14] The medicine intends to inspire the sinner to undertake repentance and bear suffering, just as Christ did. The soul must embrace humility, a very difficult but necessary spiritual task.

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[11] Lombard, Sentences, Bk. IV, d. 14, ch. 1, par. 2.

[12] Hildegard moved from Disibodenberg, where she was Abbess under the Abbot of the adjoining monastery of monks, Kuno, with about twenty other nuns to found a new monastery at St. Rupertsberg in 1150. Her confessor and scribe, Volmar, was the provost there. The Latin title of her work, *Scivias*, means "know the ways (of the Lord)."

[13] Victoria Sweet, "Hildegard of Bingen and the Greening of Medieval Medicine," in: Bulletin of the History of Medicine 73.3 (1991), 381–403.

[14] Hildegard, Scivias, Part 3, Vision 13:9, in: Adelgundis Führkötter/Angela Carlevaris (eds.), Hildegardis Scivias (Corpus Christianorum/Continuatio Mediaevalis 43A), Turnhout 1978, 627; Cf. lines 387–390: "Et o uera medicina humilitas, praebe mihi auxilium, quia superbia in multis uitiis fregit me multas cicatrices mihi imponens"; lines 404–406 read, "O misera filia, uolo te amplecti quia magnus medicus dura et amara uulnera proper te passus est." The first part of this passage, "O miserable, or unhappy daughter, I will embrace you," refers to humility (*humilitas*) within the soul, which is difficult to embrace. Also, the Latin term *amara* is often translated as "bitter," but here I translate it with the English word, "severe."

Hildegard was also concerned with physical healing. She famously used herbs and other natural, practical remedies, as she documents in two important medical treatises, both of which were quite revolutionary: the *Physica* and the *Causes and Cures*.[15] In these texts, Hildegard focuses on the physical treatment that the sick should undertake during the healing process. Although Hildegard traces the root of all sickness – both physical and spiritual – back to the Fall of Adam, she approaches the treatment of physical illness in pragmatic ways. The emphasis is not prayer, or reliance on the *Christus medicus,* but on human action.

The fall of Adam left a mark on the soul and introduced disease into the body. With the harmony and balance gone, Hildegard writes "… men suffer diverse illnesses … sores and openings … which then introduce diverse infirmities into the human body. All this arose from the first evil … if Adam had remained in paradise, he would have had the sweetest health."[16] Hildegard's process of treating the sick marks a change from previous practice. For example, the eleventh-century canonist, Burchard of Worms (d. 1025), prescribes in the penitential section (*Corrector Burchardi*) of his work, *Decretum*, that the sick person should pray the Lord's Prayer and recite the Creed. In contrast, Hildegard prefers not to wait for Christ to heal the body. She relies on human knowledge in applying useful herbs and remedies to provide relief. Her treatment plan presupposes a kind of parallel physical *medicus* that operates alongside the spiritual power of the *Christus medicus*. Although she certainly she did not reject the efficacy of prayer, her primary focus was on active treatment of physical ailment. When it came to healing the body, the earthly physician is the instrument of God. It is the physician's duty to use knowledge in order to ameliorate physical suffering and disease. Hildegard's texts reflect this as Florence Eliza Glaze observes, "the *Physica*, stands as a sort of naturalistic parallel to the catalog of spirituality healing penances listed in the *Book of Life's Merits*."[17]

The parallel nature of the human physician with the *Christus medicus* reveals a fundamentally incarnational emphasis in treating the body and the soul as there is a parity between the two physicians. However, this symmetry was not

[15] Hildegard began work on the *Physica* and the *Causes and Cures* after completing the *Scivias,* in 1151. The *Physica* focuses on nature and natural science and includes physiological explanations, aspects of sex and sexuality, pathology, and some theology. The two works were originally unified under the title, the *Liber subtilitatum diversarum naturarum creaturarum*.

[16] Florence Eliza Glaze made this vivid translation and it is adopted here. See Florence Eliza Glaze, "Medical Writer. Behold the Creature," in: Barbara Newman (ed.), Voice of the Living Light. Hildegard and Her World, Berkeley, CA 1998, 136; Cf. Hildegard, Causes and Cures, in: On Natural Philosophy and Medicine. Selections from Cause et Cure, Margret Berger (trans.) (Library of Medieval Women) Cambridge 1999, 39. The translation in the Berger edition reads: "Had the human stayed in Paradise, he would have remained in an immutable and perfect state."

[17] Glaze, "Medical Writer," 137; the *Liber Vitae Meritorum* (written between 1148 and 1163).

typical of many monastic writers of the twelfth century. For theologians and abbots such as Bernard of Clairvaux, the primary focus was on the spiritual development of monks.

4. Bernard of Clairvaux and the *Christus Medicus*

By the twelfth century, it had long been accepted that what harms one part of the person can harm the other. The corruptions of the body have the potential to wound the soul. Many monastic writers in the twelfth century attest to this common understanding, for example, Bernard of Clairvaux (d. 1153), William of St Thierry (d. 1148), a fellow Cistercian abbot of Bernard's, and Isaac of Stella (d. 1169). Observations that the body can cause "spiritual blindness" were common tropes; warnings about the perils of the flesh leading to spiritual sickness abound.[18]

Scholars have argued that monastics such as Bernard viewed the treatment of physical ailments as part of the healing of the whole person as the image of God. This idea led to the development of the concept of "theological medicine."[19] Bernard of Clairvaux recommends, for example, that his monks pursue ascetic practices in order to actualize the divine image. His recommendations were careful, towing the line of moderation. This emphasis on spiritual healing is sometimes connected to the misunderstanding that Bernard regarded the body as subordinate to the soul, even to the point of resisting medical treatment of the sick. Although he was not opposed to doctors or medicinal practices, Bernard warned that undue emphasis on or preoccupation with the body could lead to vanity.

For Bernard, the ideal in the spiritual life was the same in the corporeal: balance and moderation. In a Sermon on the Song of Songs he writes, "we will not censure you for taking care of the body – for no one ever hates his body – provided it is done in moderation." Here Bernard warns against the extremes of the Manicheans, and he cautions that fasting can be a "spiritual therapy" as long as it does not go too far.[20] Bernard opposed any undue *emphasis* on the body, a

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[18] Mary K. K. Yearl, "Medicine for the Wounded Soul," in: Anne Kirkham/Cordelia Warr (eds.), Wounds in the Middle Ages (The History of Medicine in Context), New York 2014, 109.

[19] This term is used by David Bell, "The English Cistercians and the Practice of Medicine," in: Cîteaux. Comentarii Cisterciensces 40 (1989), 145; Bell explains that "we must distinguish between physical medicine and what we may call *theological* medicine: i. e. the application of medicine and medical theories to the concept of human beings and images of God." Bell contends that the best examples of theologians using this concept are William of St Thierry (a contemporary of Bernard of Clairvaux) and Isaac of Stella.

[20] Sermones super Cantica Canticorum 66.7, hereafter SC. Cf. SBOp II:182. The 86 sermons on the Song of Songs are in SBOp, vols. 1–2. The Latin citations abbreviated as SBOp are

kind of self-focus or self-will, which he calls *propria voluntas*. He warned against undue preoccupation with the body because he wanted to help his monks focus on their spiritual development. He writes, "we give precedence to all that assists spiritual progress … we pursue it not through vainglory … but for the welfare of oneself or one's neighbor."[21] Citing Sermon 16 of Bernard's *Sermones de diversis*, David Bell clarifies, "the body requires *sanitas* – Bernard says so – but it does not require anything more."[22]

The *Christus medicus* image occurs in many places throughout Bernard's work. As an abbot, Bernard was primarily concerned with the spiritual development of his monastic community. Christ the Physician provided a model for his monks to follow. By imitating Christ's actions and by sharing his sufferings, the monk could progress toward the ultimate goal of union with God. Although this final reality would only be realized after death, spiritual progress in this life was still possible and necessary, even if it was incomplete. Because of Bernard's focus on spiritual development, he saw Christ the Physician in primarily spiritual terms providing treatment according to the needs of each patient. At times Christ is a balm that heals gently and at other times, a strong remedy to correct the sinful.[23]

4.1. Bernard's Parables and Sentences

In his lesser-known works, the *Parables and Sentences*, Bernard tells stories that are accessible, simple, and straightforward. The stories are designed to encourage spiritual assent toward God. The theme is spiritual warfare. The images within the short texts highlight the fact that the soul is a spiritual soldier in service to Christ. In one of these parables, Bernard discusses the fact that the Church is, and has been since its beginning, made up of many different groups of people; Jews,

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from Bernard of Clairvaux, Sancti Bernardi Opera, Jean Leclercq et al. (eds.), 8 vols., Rome 1957–1977. The entire Latin quotation reads: "Verumtamen si de regula medicorum hoc profers nobis, non reprehendimus curam carnis, quam nemo umquam odio habuit, si tamen non nimia fuerit; si de disciplina abstentium, id est spiritualium medicorum." This sermon addresses the extreme asceticism that some heretical groups (e.g. Manicheans) practiced. Just prior to the passage quoted here, Bernard challenges the idea that one ought to avoid any foods that were the product of copulation, for example milk. The Abbot argues that avoiding milk simply because it was the result of copulation is not necessary, however, if drinking it leads to temptation, it should be avoided. The passage quoted here develops this theme asserting that the avoidance of certain foods is permissible if done so for medical reasons, *regula medicorum*, provided that it is done in moderation.

[21] SC 36.3 (SBOp II:5). The concept *propria voluntas* also appears in Bernard's Easter sermons: see sermons 2 and 3, Res 2.8 (SBOp V:98); Res 3.3 (SBOp V:105).

[22] David Bell has written an interesting article on this topic among the monasteries in England: see Bell, "The English Cistercians," 142. Bell points out that Bernard distinguished between the *mens* (superior) and *anima* (inferior).

[23] On Christ as a gentle, healing balm, see Bernard of Clairvaux, Christmas Eve. Sermon Six; for the application of a more powerful medicine; the "wine of repentance," see SC 44.3 (SBOp II:46).

gentiles, the overconfident, the despairing. As a remedy for those who feel content with their current situation, Bernard writes, "let them be shaken with fear and converted to humility by sharing in the suffering of Christ."[24] The cross acts as a stringent medicine that confronts the complacent encouraging repentance and contrition by admonishing the proud to suffer along with Christ. Equally, for those who despair due to the abundance of their sins, the medicine of the cross is the hope, which reminds the sinner that Christ died "not for himself but for sinners." Whatever ailment afflicts a person, even if the illnesses are opposite conditions, there is only one medicine: the cross. The *Christus medicus* here is Christ crucified, and the cross itself is the medicine that heals all conditions.

Similar to the *Parables*, the *Sentences* serve as short moral lessons that have a clear and practical message for the monks. In the third part of the *Sentences*, Bernard discusses four kinds of prayer: the first is a prayer expressing a feeling of "shame" for a behavior one is trying to correct; the second is one of "pure confession"; the third is a feeling of "fullness" in which one prays for oneself and others; and the fourth involves "devout feeling" characterized by confidence in God. The penitent must, therefore, open himself up to God in order to be healed, "[just] as a wounded person does to a physician in order to be healed."[25] The first step is contrition, the feeling of shame that accompanies sin. This is followed by a pure confession with the result of healing that draws one closer to God and promotes confidence in faith. The emphasis in the *Parables and Sentences* is on spiritual progress towards a deeper sense of union with God.

4.2. Bernard on the Christus Medicus in the Biblical Story of Naaman

The clearest and most highly-developed image of the *Christus medicus* is in Bernard's third Sermon for Easter, which is based on a story in Kings: 2 Kings, i. e., 4 Kings 5 in the Latin Vulgate.[26] In the biblical narrative, Naaman was a distinguished military commander and a valuable servant to his king, the King of

[24] See Parabolae (SBOp VI.2:293): "Christus enim diversis et contrariis infirmitatibus laborantes miro modo sanavit, et uno medicamine, id est cruce sua."

[25] See Sententiae (SBOp VI.2:169): "puro confitetur, non loquitur in corde et corde, totum vulnus medico nudat ad sanandum." There are four kinds of prayer, just as there are four kinds of people. These four kinds of people are divided into two groups: one wicked, the other good. In the first category, the wicked are subdivided again into two: those who feel their sin is too great and hence despair; these view themselves according to justice but not mercy. The second group in the wicked category is *worse*; they overlook sins in themselves and others and thus deny both God's justice and mercy. In the good category, there are those who become angry if someone sins against them but are quick to forgive; in this case, Christ is justice tempered with mercy. In the second group of good people are those who have a peaceful heart based on the grace of God. They view God not as wrathful but as directed to the good; they view sin as a way to make one emerge stronger than they were previously. See also Sententiae 119, Series Tertia.

[26] The story of Naaman appears in other places in Bernard's work. There is one short reference to the story in Liber ad milites Templi De laude novae militiae (SBO III:228). The most prominent appearance of Naaman occurs in Bernard's *Sententiae*. In the Third Series of the

Aram. He had a problem; he was afflicted with leprosy. Upon the advice of his wife's serving maid, Naaman went to Samaria to see the prophet Elisha, who told him to bathe seven times in the Jordan River to be healed. Although angry at this seemingly ridiculous cure, Naaman followed the prophet's injunction and was healed.[27]

Bernard's sermon, based on this text, begins with an allusion to the treatment of the physical body, which needs to be emptied of its toxins by bloodletting. This common medieval practice was also applied four times a year to all Cistercian monks.[28] Once the body had been purged (*minutio,* i. e. the diminishing or lessening of blood within an individual's body), it was ready to be healed and restored to strength with good and healthy food. Developing the analogy between physical and spiritual restoration, Bernard insists that Christ is the food for the spiritually sick. Christ is the "physician of souls," the *medicus animarum*, who brings healing. As the physician, Christ heals through his incarnation and acts as a "medicine of salvation" for all humanity.[29]

Just as Naaman experienced a "descent" by bathing seven times in the Jordan River to cure his physical leprosy, so too does Christ's life represent a spiritual "descent." Bernard explains that Christ's descent occurs in his humble way of life prior to his passion.[30] Through Christ's descent, humanity is both purged and cleansed, the same initial process that the physically sick endure. Through Christ's resurrection, humankind is healed, renewed, and nourished with the "food that brings delight."[31] Bernard continues to use the story of Naaman's leprosy as an analogy for the seven ways in which the "leprosy of pride" has taken

Sentences, there are several references to Naaman invoking similar themes to those discussed in Res 3. See SBOp VI.2:86, 130, 131, 132, 135, 188.

[27] 2 Kgs 5:1–5:17 (in the Latin Bible: 4 Kgs 5:3) The Latin Vulgate follows the Septuagint Greek version, which divides Kings into four books. Kings 1–2 are 1–2 Samuel in English versions. In the Hebrew Bible, the Book of Kings is a single unit.

[28] This took place in February, April, September, and "circa festivitatem sancti Ioannis Baptiste" (June 24). See also Bell, "The English Cistercians," 139–174. All members of the monastic community underwent bloodletting. The abbots determined the schedule. There is archeological evidence from an "Augustinian monastic hospital at Soutra," near Edinburgh, Scotland. Texts on the soil show that there were "300,000 pints of blood deposited at Soutra." This amount totals about two pints per day for four hundred years. Here Bell is citing P. Bowron, "Bloodstained Mementos of Medieval Medicine," in: History Today 38 (1988), 4. The process of bloodletting was quite serious. Enough blood was taken that the person was nearly unconscious, and up to four pints of blood could be taken at a time. Patients recovered in the infirmary. Both the Augustinians and the Cistercians engaged in this practice that Bernard also allowed.

[29] Res 3.1: "Sicut in corporum medicina prius purgationes adhibentur, deinde refectiones, ut scilicet prius exinaniatur corpus ab humoribus noxiis, dehinc cibis sanioribus foveatur, sic medicus animarum Dominus Christus, cuius tota dispensatio, quam exhibuit in carne, medicina salutis est, ante passionem suam septem dedit purgationes, post resurrectionem suam totidem cibos salubres pariter et suaves." See also Res 4: "the Savior is medicine for our souls."

[30] Res 3.1 (SBOp V:103): humble way of life: *humilitate conversationis.*

[31] Res 3.1 (SBOp V:103).

over in the world. He explains the "double leprosy of the heart" to include both self-will, *propria voluntas*, and self-counsel, *proprium concilium*, both of which are opposed to the will of the community, and the glory of God.[32] The sermon ends with the remedies for spiritual leprosy. These are the healing foods that Christ provides through the gifts of the Holy Spirit served as seven plates of food: fear; the spirit of godliness; knowledge; strength; counsel; understanding; and wisdom.[33]

Bernard's emphasis in this third Easter sermon is *conversatio*: living a transformed life that denies selfishness and focuses on imitating the life of Christ. The process of purging and cleansing followed by eating healthy and restorative foods promote healing and spiritual development. This practice would have resonated with the monks since the concept of *conversatio morum*, the conversion of manners, is a principle to which all monks commit themselves at their profession of vows.[34]

For Bernard, the *Christus medicus* is the cross, the medicine that heals all. Christ is the true Physician to whom one must make a pure confession in order to be healed, and he is the Physician of souls, the *medicus animarum*, who is the nourishing food of the resurrection. It is this image of Christ as the medicine of salvation (*medicina salutis*) that most clearly resembles the image in Luther's texts.

5. Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventure

The *Christus medicus* appears in the work of two of the distinguished thinkers of the thirteenth century, Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274) and Bonaventure (1221–1274). The thirteenth century was a time of theological definition and doctrinal codification exemplified by the preeminent council of the medieval church,

[32] Res 3.3 (SBOp V:105): "Voluntatem dico propriam, quae non est communis cum Deo et hominibus, sed nostra tantum, quando quod volumus, non ad honorem Dei, non utilitatem fratrem, nosipsos facimus …" The result is that one prefers his or her own judgment to that of the whole community, cf. Res 3.4 (SBOp V:107): "Et quae maior superbia, unus homo toti congregationi iudicium suum praeferat tamquam ipse solus habeat spiritum Dei?"

[33] Res 3.6 (SBOp V:109). The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit are: 1) fear – angel came down and comforted the women coming to the tomb to anoint; 2) the spirit of godliness – Christ appeared to Simon; 3) knowledge – road to Emmaus; 4) might – he entered closed doors and showed his wounds to disciple; 5) counsel – fishing on wrong side, no fish, change to right side, Jn 21:6; 6) understanding – opened minds to Scripture; 7) wisdom – fortieth day, Christ appeared ascending up to God, Ascension (Acts 1:3, 9).

[34] Cf. Rule of Benedict, ch. 58 (sec. 17): "Conversatio morum," conversion of manners, but the idea is the transformation of one's life, orienting one's self to God, seeking an internal transformation and orientation toward God with the hope and goal of union with the Word. *Conversatio morum* is one of the three promises monks made at profession: 1. Stability; 2. *Conversatio morum*; 3. Obedience.

called in 1215 by Pope Innocent III, the Fourth Lateran. The reason for including a comment on this council is related to two Canons related to the sacrament of confession, a topic discussed by both Aquinas and Bonaventure. The First, Canon 21, required members of the laity to partake in private, sacramental confession to a priest at least once per year. In addition, Canon 22 linked medical treatment to the exercise of the sacrament:

> Since bodily infirmity is sometimes caused by sin … in this present decree, we order and strictly command physicians of the body, when they are called to the sick, to warn above all and persuade them to call in physicians of the soul [i. e. priests] so that after their spiritual health has been treated they may respond better to medicine for their bodies; for when the cause ceases so does the effect.[35]

This conciliar decree indicates that the need for forgiveness is prior to the need for physical healing. By first administering forgiveness, the patient benefits spiritually, thereby improving the efficacy of the medicine. The rationale for this ordering of spiritual before physical is clarified in the last line of the first paragraph: "when the cause ceases so will the effect" indicates that the root of physical illness is spiritual corruption, or sin.

5.1. Aquinas on the Christus Medicus and Virtue

Aquinas understands the primary role of Christ the Physician to encourage virtue. Regular exercise of the sacraments can assist in this process. This interpretation stands in contrast to the twelfth-century's emphasis on the lack of contrition as the primary cause of spiritual illness. For Aquinas, pride is the essence of all vice while charity is the source of all virtue. Referring to 2 Corinthians 12:7–10 in his commentary on the Second Letter to the Corinthians, Aquinas explains that Christ acts as "the highest physician of souls" when he permits illness, lesser sins, and even mortal sins, because they serve to inoculate against pride. He argues that just as charity is the root of all good virtue, pride is the source of all vice since it possesses a desire for its own excellence. Excellence is to be lauded, but only when it is properly oriented to God and not when it seeks its own end. Infirmity, and even sin, Aquinas argues, can be reoriented to God the high-

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[35] The portion of Canon 22 cited here reads: "Cum infirmitas corporalis nonnumquam ex peccato proveniat dicente domino languido quem sanaverat vade et amplius noli peccare ne deterius aliquid tibi contingat decreto praesenti statuimus et districte praecipimus medicis corporum ut cum eos ad infirmos vocari contigerit ipsos ante omnia moneant et inducant quod medicos advocent animarum ut postquam infirmis fuerit de spirituali salute provisum ad corporalis medicinae remedium salubrius procedatur cum causa cessante cesset effectus." See Concilium Lateranense IV a. 1215, in: Concilia oecumenica et generalia Ecclesiae catholicae (medii aeui), Turnhout 2005; Cf. M. Mollat/P. Tombeur, Conciles oecuméniques médiévaux, vol. 1: Les conciles Latran I à Latran IV (Informatique et étude de textes V, 1), Turnhout 2002 and the Thesaurus Conciliorum oecumenicorum et generalium Ecclesiae catholicae, Series A-Formae (TPLTS), Turnhout 1996; in addition, Canon 18 barred clergy from bestowing a death sentence and forbade them from participating in Ordeals in any way.

est good and thereby promote humility in the sick soul. "For Christ as the supreme physician of souls, in order to cure grave sins, permits many of his elect to be afflicted gravely with diseases of the body, and furthermore, for curing greater sins, [He] permits them to fall into lesser, and even mortal sins."[36]

Aquinas continues his discussion of Christ's action as physician. When Christ promotes health, his action might cause discomfort and pain.[37] The sick person, who does not know why a painful remedy is applied, asks that it be removed. Such is the example of the Apostle Paul, who does not know the reason for the sharp plaster or a stinging salve (*mordax emplastrum*) and asks the unique physician (*singularis medicus*) to remove it.[38] When Paul recognizes that God uses a painful remedy to increase his humility, then he glorifies in his suffering. Paul can then boast of his weakness and rejoice in the power of Christ within him (cf. 2 Cor 12:10).[39]

In the *Summa contra Gentiles*, the *Christus medicus* operates to encourage virtue through the sacraments. Aquinas explains that spiritual health consists of turning the mind toward God, an act not possible without Christ's sacrifice. Aquinas writes, "we are not able to achieve this health except through the physician of our souls, Jesus Christ, who will save His people from their sins."[40] Not

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36 Aquinas, Commentary on the Second Letter to the Corinthians, ch. 12, lec. 3, § 472. The Latin text with corresponding English translations together with the relevant Greek passage from the New Testament are aligned in a good and convenient edition based on the 1953 Marietti Latin edition (see n. 40 below). Thomas Aquinas, Commentary on the Second Letter to the Corinthians, Fabian R. Larcher/Beth Mortensen/Daniel Keating (trans.) Lander, WY 2012; The Latin and much of the English translations follow this edition. The Latin reads: "Christus enim, velut medicus animarum summus, ad curandum graves animae morbos permittit plurimos electos suos et magnos in morbis corporum graviter affligi, quod plus est ad curandum maiora criminal, permittit incidere in minora etiam mortalia."

37 Aquinas introduces two additional biblical passages to elucidate the perception of the sinner. One is Job, who asks God to remove the thorn from his flesh (Jb 31:22). The other is Paul's words in Romans: "For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do" (Rom 7:19, 21, 25). Aquinas cites Augustine to explain how Paul felt moved to concupiscence but God's grace restrained him.

38 Aquinas, Commentary on the Second Letter to the Corinthians, ch. 12, lec. 3, § 475: "Here it should be noted a sick person, ignorant of the reason why a physician supplies a stinging plaster, asks him to remove it." Cf. "Ubi sciendum est, quod infirmus nesciens processum medici apponentis *mordax emplastrum*, rogat medicum, ut removeat." (Emphasis mine.)

39 Aquinas, Commentary on the Second Letter to the Corinthians, 12, lec. 3, § 478: "Therefore a thorn in the flesh according to itself is to be avoided as troublesome, but inasmuch as it is a means to virtue and an exercise of virtue, it should be desired … indeed, once he understood its purpose, the Apostle gloried in it, saying, 'I will all the more gladly boast of my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest on [dwell in] me.'" Cf. "Ergo et stimulus carnis secundum se est vitandus ut affligens, inquantum vero est via ad virtutem et exercitium virtutis, est appetendus … quod tamen sciens, postmodum apostolus gloriabatur cum diceret: *libenter gloriabor in infirmitatibus meis*, et cetera."

40 Thomas Aquinas, Summa contra Gentiles, 4.72.6: "salus spiritualis consistit, quam quidem salutem consequi non possumus nisi per medicum animarum nostrarum Iesum Christum, qui salvat populum suum a peccatis eorum [Mt1:21]." The accepted Latin critical edition

all people achieve remission of sins in the same degree, but rather remission is proportional to the extent to which people are joined together with Christ in his suffering for sin.[41] The implication of Aquinas's position is that the repeated participation in the sacraments and the undertaking of penance leads to increased virtue and to one's growing closer to God, which is the ultimate goal of Christ the physician.

The chapter on the sacrament of extreme unction in the *Summa contra Gentiles* offers a particularly fascinating account of how Aquinas connects the work of the *Christus medicus* to both body and soul. Aquinas explains that the unified nature of the body and soul means that the body is both an instrument that can promote spiritual health but can also act as an obstacle to spiritual well-being. Spiritual health can flourish when one suffers in the body because suffering encourages humility and patience and thereby satisfies some of the punishment for sin. In this way, this sacrament, which is targeted at healing the body, is also efficacious for the soul. However, the body can be a source of impairment or disadvantage to the soul. For this case the Church instituted a spiritual medicine, namely, the sacrament of extreme unction. Aquinas writes, "it was fitting to employ some spiritual medicine against sin, in so far as bodily infirmity flows out of sin; indeed, this spiritual medicine heals the bodily infirmity at times, namely, when this is helpful to salvation."[42] There are times, however, when a complete restoration to bodily health does not benefit salvation. In these cases, the sacrament of unction completes the temporal punishments required by penance and "as a result, nothing remains in him when the soul leaves the body which can obstruct the soul in the perception of glory."[43]

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of the *Summa contra Gentiles* is the Leonine Edition (*Editio Leonina*), which takes its name from Pope Leo XIII, who established a commission to produce an edition of all of Aquinas's works in 1879. The project is ongoing under the title, Sancti Thomae Aquinatis doctoris angelici Opera omnia iussu Leonis XIII.O. M. edita, cura etstudio fratrum praedictorum, Rome: 1882–. The *Summa contra Gentiles* was completed and published between 1918–1930. Since then, there has been an updated version, which is followed here: Thomas Aquinas, Summa contra Gentiles, 3 vols., P. Marc/C. Pera/P. Carmello (eds.), Marietti 1961. The complete Marietti edition is available online: Corpus Thomisticum at http://www.corpusthomisticum.org/iopera.html. For an English translation, see Thomas Aquinas, On the Truth of the Catholic Faith, 4 vols., C. J. O'Neill (trans.), Garden City, NY 1955; reprint, Notre Dame, IN 1975.

[41] Aquinas, Summa contra Gentiles, 4.73.1: "sed tamen non omnes effectum remissionis perfecte consequuntur, sed unusquisque in tantum consequitur in quantum Christo pro peccatis patienti coniungitur."

[42] Aquinas, Summa contra Gentiles, 4.73.2: "Conveniens igitur fuit ut contra peccatum aliqua spiritualis medicina adhiberetur, secundum quod ex peccato derivatur infirmitas corporalis, per quam quidem spiritualem medicinam sanatur infirmitas corporalis aliquando, cum scilicet expedit ad salutem." This passage is found in Jas 5:14–15: "Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven."

[43] Aquinas, Summa contra Gentiles, 4.73.2: "… health is provided for him through this

In Aquinas's theology, the *Christus medicus* motif is closely associated with the increase in human virtue through the practice of the sacraments. The sacraments assist in building one's virtue, which helps remove sin and the obstructions that can impede salvation. This differs from the twelfth-century emphasis on contrition and regret for one's sin, as the primary barrier to spiritual health.

5.2. Saint Bonaventure's Physician

Like Aquinas, Bonaventure associates the *Christus medicus* with the efficacy and function of the sacraments, linking the reception of the sacraments to increased virtue. Bonaventure's primary focus, however, is on the sacraments as both signs and remedies for sin, rather than for virtue building. In Part VI of his *Breviloquium*, Bonaventure writes that the sacraments are "sensible signs divinely instituted as medicines [i. e. remedies] (*medicamena*) in which 'under the cover of material realities, divine power operates in a hidden manner … they represent by similitude, signify by their institution, and confer certain spiritual grace by sanctification through which the soul is cured from the weakness of its vices."[44] When humans become ill on life's journey, the sacraments heal them through grace and restore health to the whole person. The one who brings healing is Christ, the highest physician.[45]

Original sin and its many consequences are the object of Christ's healing work. The *Christus medicus* is the Word, who heals body and soul from the disease of original sin. Christ, as Bonaventure writes, "the Physician, is the incarnate Word, that is, God invisible existing in a visible nature."[46] The result of sin is the sickness of the mind, in other words, ignorance, and the illness of the body, which is concupiscence. Both require the salvific action of Christ. The sensible signs of the sacraments are "vessels of grace" that communicate the Holy

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sacrament, it completes the healing, and it delivers him from the guilt of temporal punishment, as a result, nothing remains in him when the soul leaves the body which can obstruct the soul in the perception of glory." See O'Neill, 283; Cf. "… salubriter ei providetur, ut per hoc sacramentum praedicta curatio compleatur, et a reatu poenae temporalis liberetur, ut sic nihil in eo remaneat quod in exitu animae a corpore eam possit a perceptione gloriae impedire."

[44] Bonaventure, Breviloquium, pars VI, ch. 1, par. 2: "… sacramenta sunt signa sensibilia, divinitus instituta tanquam medicamenta, in quibus subtegumento rerum sensibilium divina virtus secretins operatur ita quod ipsa ex similitudine repraesentant, ex institutione significant, ex sanctificatione conferunt aliquam spiritualem gratiam …" For this quotation, I am following the English translation in Breviloquium, José de Vinck (trans.), Patterson, NJ 1963; see a more recent edition of the Breviloquium, Dominic V. Monti (ed.) (Works of St. Bonaventure 9), St. Bonaventure, NY 2005.

[45] Bonaventure, Breviloquium, pars VI, ch. 1, par. 3: "per illa gratiam curationis a summon medico Christo."

[46] Bonaventure, Breviloquium, pars VI, ch. 1, par. 3: "Ipse autem medicus est Verbum incarnatum deus scilicet invisibilis in natura visibili." The English translation follows Vinick, 1963.

Spirit and convey the grace of healing from Christ the Physician. Christ restores humanity through the medicine of the sacraments and heals humankind from the primary disease of original sin (*praecipuum morbum*).[47] This healing activity demonstrates the Just Physician's most profound mercy, prudence, and justice.[48]

Bonaventure centers his discussion of Christ's healing activity squarely in his sacramental theology. He thereby emphasizes that the sacraments are restorative, rather than meant to build virtue. This shift in focus onto Christ's restoration from the damages of sin allows Bonaventure to shed light on Christ's attributes that are demonstrated in his healing activity. Christ as the Word is the fountain of truth and wisdom. As incarnate Word, he is the source of compassion and gentleness.[49] Sacramental repetition is welcomed because Christ is merciful high priest, skilled physician, and just judge.

Christus medicus demonstrates his prudence in the sacrament of penance by prescribing a medicine for all three disorders: affection, expression, and operation. The prudent and skilled Physician provides medicine that restores the patient by: first, encouraging sorrow for one's transgressions and promoting contrition; second, by prescribing auricular confession; and third, in actions carried out to make satisfaction for sin. Bonaventure thus reproduces the same tripartite division between three aspects of spiritual healing that emerged in the twelfth century.[50] This sacramental medicine heals the infirmities of the soul and placates God, who was provoked by the sin.[51]

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[47] PRÈTOT, "Sacraments and Healing," 43–45. Prétot discusses Bonaventure's *Christus medicus* as the Word incarnate in reference to his sacramental theology.

[48] BONAVENTURE, Breviloquium, pars VI, ch. 2, par. 2: "haec est quia principium nostrum reparativum Verbum scilicet incarnatum eo ipso quod verbum fons est veritatis et sapientiae eo ipso quod incarnatum fons est pietatis et indulgentiae ideo debet reparare genus humanum per medicamenta sacramentorum et praecipue contra praecipuum morbum qui scilicet est peccatum mortale iuxta quod decet pontificem pium medicum peritum et iudicem aequum ut sic in curatione nostra appareat verbi incarnati summa clementia summa prudentia et summa iustitia." Cf. Sermon 50, in which Bonaventure discusses that Christ demonstrates the effectiveness of spiritual medicine, the cure of every sickness. BONAVENTURE, Sunday Sermons, Sermon 50, Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost, Sermones dominicales Sancti Bonaventurae, JACQUES GUY BOUGEROL, O. F. M. (ed.), Grottaferrata 1977; also see The Sunday Sermons of St. Bonaventure, TIMOTHY J. JOHNSON (trans.) (Works of St. Bonaventure 12), St. Bonaventure, NY 2008.

[49] BONAVENTURE, Breviloquium, pars VI, ch. 10, § 2. See previous footnote.

[50] BONAVENTURE, Breviloquium, pars VI, ch. 10, §§ 2–3.

[51] BONAVENTURE, Breviloquium, pars VI, ch. 10, § 6. Bonaventure spends a good deal of time in establishing the idea of the proper judicial and organizational power in the forgiveness of sins. The power is not indiscriminate; rather it is attached to the power of the keys, given to Peter, and passed on to the pope. The pope passed on the power to loose and bind sins to the bishops who, in turn, delegated it to local clergy. It might be the case that Bonaventure wants to clarify this issue because of disagreements between mendicant priests and parish priests in the middle of the thirteenth century. See JACQUES LE GOFF, The Birth of Purgatory, ARTHUR GOLDHAMMER (trans.), Chicago, IL 1986, 250–256.

Christ the Physician as the incarnate Word appears in a well-developed image in the final work of Bonaventure, the *Collations on the Six Days*.[52] This collection of sermons or reflections divided into twenty three Collations was left incomplete at his death in 1274.[53] The work as a whole highlights some of the tensions present within the Franciscan Order in the thirteenth century, importantly between those who sought absolute poverty as Saint Francis had taught and those who were not as zealously committed to the ideal of poverty.[54] In addition, Bonaventure was also dealing with doctrinal issues at the University of Paris, where the works of Aristotle and the commentator Averroës reigned supreme. The Franciscan Order followed a more Augustinian and Platonic model and this presented a counterpoint to the arguments of the Scholastic masters in Paris. Warning against some of the excesses of philosophy, Bonaventure sought to remind his fellow Franciscans to be conscious of their vocation, to remain vigilant in pursuing the focus of their vocation, and to prefer nothing before Christ. This "encouragement" to focus on Christ is clear especially in the Seventh Collation.[55]

The basis for this Collation is Genesis 1:4: "And God saw the light and that it was good; and God separated the light from the darkness" (NRSV). The division between light and darkness refers to the way Christians understand virtue as compared to the philosophers. Bonaventure acknowledges the similarities be-

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[52] The text of the *Collations on the Six Days of Creation* is a series of "reports" by those who heard these talks by Bonaventure. There are two very different versions, Version B, which is longer and more complete, is based on the Latin critical edition of Quaracchi in the Opera Omnia of 1891, 329–449. The other shorter version, Version A, edited by Ferdinand Marie Delorme, exists in a twentieth-century edition, Bonaventura Collationes in Hexameron et Bonaventurinana selecta quaedam, Florence 1934; the only extent Latin Critical Edition is edited by Quaracchi in the nineteenth century and uses Version B of the text. This is also the basis for the German, Italian, and English translations. Given space concerns only the Version B is cited in this essay. Until a new Latin critical edition is compiled, comparison with the Delorme edition will provide a more complete picture of Bonaventure's text. For the English translation, see Bonaventure, Collations on the Six Days, José de Vinck (trans.), Patterson, NJ 1970.

[53] For an introduction and outline of the Collations, see Jacques Guy Bougerol, O. F. M., Introduction to The Works of Bonaventure, Patterson, NJ 1964, 130–34.

[54] This Franciscan Order was divided between the Spirituals and Conventuals. For a good presentation on competing tensions within the Franciscan Order, with which Bonaventure had to deal as the General of the Order, see Colt Anderson, A Call to Piety. Saint Bonaventure's Collations on the Six Days, Quincy, IL 2002. Anderson argues that the Collations were not only an attempt to tamp down tensions with the Joachimites, but rather, they were a series of exhortations to those in Bonaventure's Franciscan Order to remember the purpose of their foundation. The Joachimites believed that a new era of the Holy Spirit would emerge in the thirteenth century, leading to the end of the institutional church and the beginning of a utopian, monastic-style life. Joachim of Fiore (d. 1202) was a contemporary of St. Francis and the Joachimites were followers of his ideas later in the thirteenth century. See Marjorie Reeves, The Influence of Prophesy in the Latter Middle Ages. A Study in Joachimism, Notre Dame, IN 1993.

[55] The idea that the Collations are more of an exhortation or a "protreptic discourse," rather than a polemic against any one group has been successfully argued by Kevin L. Hughes, "St. Bonaventure's Collations in Hexaëmeron. Fractured Sermons and Prophetic Discourse," in: Franciscan Studies 63 (2005), 107–129. See the presentation of his thesis on 108.

tween Christianity and philosophers like Plotinus and the school of Plato with respect to the worship of one god and the existence of exemplary and cardinal virtues. Yet he nevertheless claims that the Greeks are fundamentally misguided because they lack the "light of faith."[56] This contrast shows how the Greek philosophers, while insisting on a life of virtue, are unable to grasp its impossibility because of sin.[57] Bonaventure argues that the philosophers do not fully comprehend the way human virtue works since they do not understand the three underlying operations: "that is, they [the virtues] order the soul to its end; second, that they rectify the status of the soul [or rectify its affective disposition]; third, that the sick aspects [of the soul] are healed."[58] Bonaventure's argument is that the lack of virtue is not the result of free choice (*liberum arbitrium*) or the exercise of virtue itself. The cause is the sin of Adam. When the soul is united with the body, the soul becomes ill.[59] The only one who can repair this original cause is Christ the Physician as the incarnate Word, sending the grace of the Holy Spirit as the medicine (*medicina*) for humanity. Bonaventure writes, "This then, is the medicine (*medicina*): the grace of the Holy Spirit. Philosophy is unable to reach [the understanding of] such a Physician and such a grace."[60] The Physician placates God by making satisfaction for original sin so that the soul can move forward in faith; faith heals, rectifies (or straightens), and sets the soul in order such that it is changed, i. e., made straight and reordered.[61] Therefore, faith divides the light from the darkness just as it separates the Christian understanding of human virtue from the interpretations of the philosophers.

[56] Collatio VII, § 3: "non haberunt lumen fidei."

[57] Collatio VII, § 4. The philosophers refer to the highest cardinal virtues (*virtutes cardinales*) also called political (*politicae*), which are infused into human knowledge (*nostrum cognitionem*) to allow interaction with the world; the second are the purging or cleansing virtues (*purgatoriae*), which are associated with contemplation (*solitariam contemplationem*); the third are the cleansed virtues (*purgati animi*) that allow the cleansed soul to find rest in the exemplar (*ut animam quietari faciant in exemplari*). Through these virtues, the soul is changed, cleansed, and reformed: "dixerunt ergo, per has virtutes animam mordificari, purgari et reformari."

[58] Collatio VII, § 5: "Sed adhuc in tenebris sunt, quia necesse est, ut hae virtutes prius habeant tres operationes, scilicet animam ordinare in finem; secundo, rectificare affectus animae; tertio quod sanentur morbidi." The English version based on José Vinick's translation reads: "Yet, they are still in darkness, for it is necessary that these virtues first have three operations: that is, that they ordain the soul to its end; second, that they rectify its affective dispositions; third, that the sick [dispositions] be healed."

[59] Collatio VII, § 8: "quia contrahit ex unione ad corpus anima infirmitatem, ignorantiam, malitiam, concupiscentiam." As a result, the soul is infected and its powers of intellect (*intellectiva*), love (*amative*), action (*potestiva*) are killed (*inficitur*). This argument exemplifies a kind of radical dualism.

[60] Collatio VII, § 11: "Haec ergo medicina, scilicet gratia Spiritus sancti. Hunc medicum et hanc gratiam philosophia non potest attingere."

[61] Collatio VII, § 13: "Fides … sanat ergo, rectificat, et ordinat; hoc modo anima potest modificari, rectificari et ordinari."

While Bonaventure usually insists on Christ as merciful and gentle healer, he also discusses the Physician's application of stringent medicine in order to correct the sinner. In Sermon 6 of the *Sunday Sermons*, Bonaventure discusses how Christ accepts humanity's sickness and is himself a medicinal remedy that expels pride. Later in the sermon, Christ as Physician does not spare the wicked but rather exposes them to wounding with the sword of preaching in order to encourage contrition and promote spiritual health.[62] Here the Physician provides a kind of opposite medicine in order to encourage healing, an image that is similar to Aquinas's sharp plaster or the stinging salve that Paul recounts in 2 Corinthians 12. Bonaventure uses this image of contrary (*contraria medicamenta*) medicine again in his *Sermons for Certain Times*. Here, rather than exposing a wicked person to a wound designed to confront and then heal sin, contrary medicine is applied as a remedy for attacks of the devil.[63]

The *Christus medicus* is a common and potent image, which Bonaventure uses throughout his works and in a variety of contexts. The image is associated with the incarnate Word. Hence there is an emphasis on the Physician's salvific role. A final depiction reveals a more intimate portrait of the Physician. In Sermon 40 of the *Sunday Sermons*; even when human doctors and friends abandon us, Christ the divine Physician, is the true friend who heals without ointment or any other earthly medicine.[64]

6. Luther and the *Christus Medicus*

Given the rich medieval treatments of the *Christus medicus* motif, it is not surprising that Martin Luther received it as important theological theme throughout his works.[65] Particularly significant in Luther's reception is that Christ as incarnate Word heals humanity from the original disease, original sin.[66] Given Luther's emphasis on Christ's salvific healing, the question can be asked con-

[62] Bonaventure, Sunday Sermons, Sermon 6, Sunday within the Octave of the Nativity in Sermones dominicales Sancti Bonaventurae, § 6.

[63] Bonaventure, Sermon 205, in Sermones de tempore, Jacques Guy Bougerol, O. F. M. (ed.), Paris 1990: "necesse est quod Salvator et medicus Deus Iesus sanet per contraria medicamenta ita quod sicut diabolus per spiritum malignum tripliciter vexat, per Spiritum sanctum tripliciter sanat, secundum quod hodie in evangelio dicit Christus: Si in digito Dei eicio daemonia etc."

[64] Bonaventure, Sunday Sermons, Sermon 40, Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost: "Sed ubi deficiunt omnes humani medici et amici subvenit divinus medicus et verus amicus Christus … qui sanat omnem languorem sine unguento sine ferro sine quocumque terreno medicamento."

[65] For an excellent assessment of how Martin Luther has been interpreted historically and the difficulty in separating the man from "urban legend," see Risto Saarinen, "Luther the Urban Legend," in: Christine Helmer (ed.), The Global Luther, Minneapolis 2009, 13–31.

[66] See ch. 5, "Das verbum Dei als Arznei," in: Steiger, Medizinische Theologie (as note 3), 19–23.

cerned Christ's role in encouraging virtue. Is there anything one can do, having been justified by Christ, i. e. healed by the *Christus medicus*, to conform to God's will? Can one "cooperate" with God's grace? This question has been taken up and some new and convincing results have been proposed. First, however, some examples of the traditional understanding of the *Christus medicus,* particularly from Luther's earlier works, will be presented.

In his *Commentary on Galatians*, Luther develops the image of the sick person who needs medical care.[67] Once the sinner has recognized that he is ill and in need of a remedy, he is a step closer to health. He must "Run to Christ, the Physician, who heals the contrite of heart and saves sinners. Believe in Him. If you believe, you are righteous … His righteousness is yours; your sin is His."[68] The status of a person before God is both justified and sinner at the same time, *simul iustus et peccator*.[69]

Further discussion of the *simul iustus et peccator* appears in Luther's *Lectures on Romans*. In his interpretation of Romans 4, Luther presents the image of a sick man who trusts that his physician will heal him. He follows the instructions of his doctor and finally, it seems that he has been healed. But is he healthy? "No," Luther writes, but rather he is at once both sick and healthy. He actually remains sick but is made healthy by Christ. "[B]ased on the certain promise of the physician … he is 'a sinner and righteous' in one; sinner in reality but just by virtue of the certain promise of God."[70] The sinner remains a sinner, but faith unites him with Christ's righteousness that is imputed to him by faith.

Given this idea of imputed righteousness, it seems logical that Luther would reject the three-fold division of sin that was part of the medieval conception of penance. In a 1517 sermon, Luther does so explicitly:

> as *Magister Sententarium*, St Thomas and his followers give penance three parts, namely repentance, confession and satisfaction, and although this distinction they make is found to be hardly or not at all based either on Holy Scripture or in the old holy Christian teachers.[71]

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[67] Kenneth Hagen, Luther's Approach to Scripture as Seen in his Commentaries on Galatians, 1519–1538, Tübingen 1993; for a discussion of the date of the six versions published in Luther's lifetime, see Arland J. Hultgren, "Luther on Galatians," in: Word & World 20.3 (Summer 2000), 232–38.

[68] WA 40/1, 369,19–21 (In epistolam S. Pauli ad Galatas Commentarius 1531/1535): "Accurre ad Christum Medicum qui sanat contritos corde et salvat peccatores. In hunc crede; si credis, es iustus." Cf. line 25: "cuius iustitia est tua, peccatuum tuum est suum."

[69] For a discussion of this image, see, James F. McCue, "Simul iustus et peccator in Augustine, Aquinas and Luther. Toward Putting the Debate in Context," in: JAAR 48.1 (March 1980), 81–96. This theme in Luther has been discussed at length in many books and articles. The reference given here is specific for comparing Luther to Aquinas and Augustine.

[70] WA 56, 272,17–19 (Diui Pauli apostoli ad Romanos Epistola [1515]): "Sed simul peccator et Iustus; peccator re vera, Sed Iustus ex reputatione et promissione Dei certa, quod liberet ab illo, donec perfecte sanet."

[71] WA 1, 243,4–10 (Eyn Sermon von dem Ablaß und Gnade [1517]): "als Magister Senten-

Luther rejects the medieval idea that the sinner is motivated to participate in the process of penance. Such a process, as we have seen, entails first an internal feeling of remorse followed by the act of confession and then completed by the sinner making satisfaction for the sin.[72] That the sinner can make progress towards righteousness is an idea that Luther seems to reject.

There is new research, however, based on the recent work of Candace L. Kohli, which has revealed another significant and convincing interpretation of the *medicus*, focusing on the later works of Luther.[73] Kohli argues that the years 1528–1529 demonstrate a pneumatological turn in Luther's ethical thinking. This turn developed in response to doctrinal and theological issues that appeared in churches allying themselves with the Protestant Reformation. Kohli considers Luther's *Antinomian Theses and Disputations* (1537–1540) and argues that Luther "retain [s] both Christ's agency in justification and make [s] room for good behavior in the Christian life as law fulfillment."[74] Christ imputes the healing medicine, which is himself and the Holy Spirit continues the process through purgation. This healing activity is designed to help a person grow and change, moving toward a more transformed life that leads to an increase in righteousness and decrease in the inclination towards sin. This is a formal righteousness, Kohli argues, that leads to an "active resistance" to sin and "as the result of purgation, formal righteousness begins to fulfill the salutary law 'in the Spirit' through good behaviors."[75]

According to Kohli's interpretation, once the sinner has been convinced that he is sick, only then can he be persuaded to seek a remedy for his condition. For Luther, Christ the Physician's first work is diagnostic, that is Christ confronts the patient and then administers medicine to provide healing. Using an analogy of a physician treating the Black Death, which Luther calls "black cholera," Christ provides himself as the healing medicine. "[H]ere is the rhubarb, that is, the gospel, or Christ, for healing the cholera, that is, sin the original disease, death, and the devil, who besiege us."[76] Just as the rhubarb is the medicinal agent that heals

tiarum, S. Thomas und yhre folger geben der puβ drey teyll, Nemlich die rew, die peycht, die gnugthuung, unnd wie woll diβer unterscheid noch yrer meynung schwerlich adder auch gar nichts gegrundet erfundenn wirt ynn der heyligen schrifft, noch yn den alten heyligen Christlichen lerernn." See Karl-Heinz zur Mühlen, "On the Critical Reception of the Thought of Thomas Aquinas in the Theology of Martin Luther," in: Paul Can Geest et al. (eds.), Aquinas as Authority. A Collection of Studies Presented at the Second Conference of the Thomas Institute, December 14–16, 2000 (Thomas Instituut Utrecht 7), Leuven 2002, 65–86. See esp. 75–76.

[72] See Timothy J. Wengert, "Martin Luther's Preaching and Indulgence in January 1517," in: LQ 29.1 (Spring 2015), 62–75; see Wengert's discussion of variant readings of this sermon and a discussion of penance on 66–67.

[73] Candace L. Kohli, Help for the Good. Martin Luther's Understanding of Human Agency (1530–1545), Ph.D. Diss., Northwestern University, Evanston, IL 2017.

[74] Kohli, Help for the Good, 4.4.2.

[75] Kohli, Help for the Good, 4.4.2.

[76] WA 39/1, 424,16–18 (Die zweite Disputation gegen die Antinomer [1538]): "Ita hic reu-

the physical sickness of a patient, so too is Christ the remedy for the "original disease."

Once a person is healed from original sin does not mean that the propensity to sin is completely healed or eliminated. This is the key point in Luther's appropriation of the *Christus medicus* image. There is another process that continues to be active in the Christian, helping to eliminate the propensity to sin. This is where Kohli's argument helps. She writes that "purgation is a secondary process to imputation for removing remaining sin."[77] This secondary process helps the faithful person to develop good behavior by resisting sin and thereby developing righteousness over time. Luther clarifies this development when he writes, "but in faith we are not yet perfectly healthy, but healing."[78] This does not mean that Luther concurs with the Scholastic notion of growing in virtue, but it shows that there is more to Luther's *medicus* than the salvific action of Christ. The ongoing presence of Christ and the Spirit act as the healing medicine in assisting the Christian to avoid sin and seek righteousness.

7. The Medieval Roots of the *Christus Medicus* in Luther

The Physician's actions are designed to justify the sinner and to provide life-saving grace, hence the resulting image: *simul iustus et peccator*. In this sense the *medicus* is exactly what one might expect; sickness is sin requiring the imputation of Christ's righteousness as healing medicine. Luther's emphasis on the salvific aspect of Christ the Physician has some resonances with Bonaventure's focus on the *medicus* as the incarnate Word, who brings medicine through his own saving act, and is himself the remedy for original sin. This idea, although not a prominent theme, is also present in Bernard of Clairvaux's work when he refers to Christ as the medicine of salvation (*medicina salutis*).

In Luther's later works such as the *Antinomian Disputations*, the image of the *Christus medicus* is more developed. This richer treatment is open to connecting Christ's salvific healing to the purging actions of the Holy Spirit to help Christians resist sin and embrace righteousness. The contributions of Candace Kohli have elucidated and deepened our understanding of this motif in Luther. While the idea of increased virtue or cooperating grace may not be present in Luther,

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barbarum, id est, Evangelium seu Christus venit, ut medeatur cholerae, id est, peccato, morbo originis, morti et diabolo, qui nos obsedit." Kohli explains this text in greater detail, in n. 29 in Help for the Good, 4.2.1. In this section, she also contextualizes Luther's text within the context of the Black Death and explains that "black cholera" refers to the Black Death.

[77] Kohli, Help for the Good, 4.4.1. I extend my thanks to Dr. Kohli for her assistance in locating these important passages in Luther's work.

[78] WA 39/1, 376,6 (Die zweite Disputation gegen die Antinomer [1538]): "Sed fide nondum perfecte sumus sani, et sanandi."

the idea that one can grow, even slightly, towards developing some resistance to sin with the help of the Spirit certainly provides a more complete view of how spiritual healing takes place. Perhaps Luther is not so far apart from Bonaventure when he says, "Christ is the divine Physician, who watches over us and conserves us body and soul; the Physician of all experience who heals without any other earthly medicine, but only with a word and the command and benevolence of his will."[79]

8. Conclusion

The *Christus medicus* motif did not simply disappear after Augustine explored it, waiting for Luther to revive it in the sixteenth century. Rather, it developed and continued to change as evidenced in the work of many authors throughout the Middle Ages. For Hildegard, the *Christus medicus* exists alongside the human *medicus* as parallel healers. Bernard of Clairvaux saw Christ as the Physician who inspires imitation, acting as the medicine of salvation providing the most potent remedy of all, the cross. For Aquinas, the *Christus medicus* assists with virtue through the sacraments, and Bonaventure viewed the Physician as the incarnate Word who heals and restores. Martin Luther's *Christus medicus* justifies sinners though his salvific activity while the Spirit's work of purgation allows Christians to resist bad behavior and encourage righteousness.

In order to avoid the pitfalls of viewing earlier ideas as simply "pointing toward" a future that only exists in the hindsight of our own historical interpretation, we might do well to listen to Heiko Oberman: "We should by all means oppose the interpretation of this two-pronged movement as two columns, one marching to Wittenberg and Geneva and the other to Trent and Rome."[80] Reform, like ideas, are organic. They emerge within an historical context, attempting to correct, instruct, and inform practices that threaten the integrity of the church. Whatever the illness in the church, the *Christus medicus* stands ready to act with healing medicine appropriate and proportionate to any human malady or illness.

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[79] Bonaventure, Sunday Sermons, Sermon 40, Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost: "divinus medicus et verus amicus Christus … medicus conservat et custodit animas et corpora … Ipse enim est medicus totius experientiae qui sanat omnem languorem sine unguento sine ferro sine quocumque terreno medicamento sed tantum solo verbo et suae voluntatis nutu et beneplacito." In the translation above the phrase, *omnem languorem* is omitted.

[80] Heiko A. Oberman, Forerunners of the Reformation. The Shape of Late Medieval Thought, New York 1966, 42.

Chapter 8

The Medieval Luther on *Poenitentia*

Good Works as the Completion of Faith in the Christian Life

Candace L. Kohli

Poenitentia was a common, recurring theme throughout Luther's theological and pastoral career. His use of *poenitentia* gives Luther research indigestion because *poenitentia* drips with a medieval Catholic reliance on "good works" cultivated through the sacramental process of penance: contrition, confession, and works of satisfaction. According to contemporary Luther research, Luther rejected this view of good works in his so-called reformation breakthrough. Instead, he escalated divine agency in justification through faith.[1] This required a restriction of *poenitentia* to "repentance," an inner turn to faith.[2] The problem is Luther continued to utilize the term *poenitentia* up until his death and did so, in a seeming contradiction, in reference to the necessity of good works to complete faith in the Christian life. Therefore, the question arises, what did Luther actually mean by *poenitentia*? And how might his view of *poenitentia* help to reconcile his simultaneous and paradoxical insistence on justification by faith alone alongside of good works as the completion of faith?

To answer these questions, it is necessary to reposition Luther's discussion of *poenitentia* back within medieval conversations about the relation of contrition and satisfaction to the guilt and punishment incurred by sin. After briefly introducing the interpretive challenges in this topic (section 1), the paper will work to clarify Luther's problem with works by contextualizing Luther's early discus-

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[1] Paul Althaus, Gebot und Gesetz. Zum Thema 'Gesetz und Evangelium', Gütersloh 1952; Gerhard Ebeling, Lutherstudien, vols. 2/1–3: Disputatio de Homine, Tübingen 1977–1989; Werner Elert, "Gesetz und Evangelium," in: Zwischen Gnade und Ungnade, Munich 1948, 132–169. This view is extended into contemporary Luther research through Ebeling's adoption of Althaus and the subsequent pride of place given to Ebeling's interpretation. See, for example Anna Vind, "The Human Being According to Luther," in: Anne Eusterschulte/Hannah Wälzholz (eds.), Anthropological Reformations – Anthropology in the Era of Reformation (Refo500 28), Göttingen 2015, 69–87; Wilhelm Christe, "'Gerecht und Sünder zugleich' – zur Ontologie des homo christianus nach Martin Luther," in: Alexander Dietz et al. (eds.), Niemand ist eine Insel. Menschsein im Schnittpunkt von Anthropologie, FS Wilfried Härle (TBT 156), Berlin/New York 2011, 65–85.

[2] Cf. Konstanze Kemnitzer/Klaus Raschzok, art. "Buße," in: Volker Leppin/Gury Schneider-Ludorff (eds.), Das Luther-Lexikon, Regensburg 2014, 132–134.

sions of *poenitentia* vis-à-vis the medieval debate about works of satisfaction begun by Anselm (sections 2 and 3). The final section will then examine Luther's return to the topic of *poenitentia* in the 1530s as he sought once and for all to carve out space for good works alongside of faith in the Christian life to combat a rising tide of moral laxity and Antinomianism. By attending to developments in Luther's pneumatology during this controversy, it becomes possible to see how Luther used *poenitentia* in connection with the Spirit's sanctifying activities to instantiate good works in the Christian life.

1. The Problem of *Poenitentia* in Luther Research

Current approaches to Luther's notion of *poenitentia* are governed by a neo-Kantian orientation in twentieth-century Luther scholarship that connects a notion of conscience to Luther's discussion of faith and works. Paul Althaus interpreted justifying faith given in the gospel as a passive recognition of God in the conscience.[3] Because this recognition occurred only in the mind and, even then, only passively, Althaus excluded from consideration any ontological effect of faith on the human. This is precisely the connection Gerhard Ebeling made in his currently definitive work on Luther's theological anthropology.[4] Ebeling appropriated Althaus's view of conscience to reject any causal relation between divine grace and the human moral capacity for good works after justification.[5] As a result, the Christian life is conceived in internal, psychological terms and the possibility of human agency for good works is excluded.

Timothy Wengert draws on Ebeling to orient the contemporary understanding of *poenitentia* in Luther. Wengert has attempted to position Luther within his medieval context, rightly indicating that the term "*poenitentia*" has a range of meanings in medieval Latin vocabulary. It can refer to (a) the sacrament of penance consisting of three acts – contrition, confession, and satisfaction; (b) an inner disposition of grief and sorrow for sin and the good intention not to sin in the future; or (c) repentance as a turn from sin to faith.[6] Wengert follows Ebeling when he interprets Luther to largely reject the first two meanings of *poenitentia* as sacrament or disposition. Instead, he sees Luther to gravitate towards *poenitentia* as "repentance."[7] If Luther used *poenitentia* to mean exclusively a turn to faith in repentance, then Luther's doctrine of justification is safe from the intru-

[3] Althaus, Gebot und Gesetz (as note 1), 32.
[4] Ebeling, Lutherstudien, vols. 2/1–3 (as note 1).
[5] Ebeling, Lutherstudien, vol. 2/1 (as note 1), 35.
[6] AL 1, 27, 34 (The Ninety-Five Theses [1517]) (= WA 1, 233–238).
[7] Timothy Wengert, Martin Luther's Catechisms. Forming the Faith, Minneapolis 2009, 121–122.

sion of human works and his position as a sharp "break"[8] from the spirituality of the past is fixed. With a few exceptions,[9] this is the dominant interpretation of Luther within Luther research today.

A major conceptual problem permeates this view of Luther that must be resolved. The problem is, *poenitentia* as repentance and a turn to faith cannot be reconciled, at least not with any logical coherence, with Luther's lifelong insistence that good works must coincide with and, in fact, complete faith in the Christian life.[10] Currently, scholars attempt to resolve this conflict by isolating language from *On the Freedom of a Christian* (1520). Works are said to "spring spontaneously" from Christ's love in the soul, but not from the Christian herself.[11] However, this view is theologically and philosophically nonsensical in light of the anthropological requirements for the soul to move the body. The reason is that according to the medieval anthropological rules Luther employed, bodily movement is driven by the interplay between the intellect and will, without which the body lies stagnant and motionless.[12] According to Luther's own anthropological rules, Christ's love cannot spring from the soul to move the body in good works unless Christ's love somehow inheres in the soul's powers themselves. To resolve this anthropological conundrum between justification and good works, it is necessary to re-examine Luther's conception of *poenitentia* and to do so by looking at the way Luther draws on medieval conversations to bridge justification and good works.

[8] Cf. Volker Leppin, Die fremde Reformation. Luthers mystische Wurzeln, Munich 2016, 28–29.

[9] Theodor Dieter, Der junge Luther und Aristoteles. Eine historisch-systematische Untersuchung zum Verhältnis von Theologie und Philosophie (TBT 105), Berlin/New York 2001; Risto Saarinen, "Ipsa Dilectio Deus Est. Zur Wirkungsgeschichte von 1. Sent. Dist. 17 des Petrus Lombardus bei Martin Luther," in: Tuomo Mannermaa (ed.), Thesaurus Lutheri. Auf der Suche nach neuen Paradigmen der Lutherforschung (Finnische Theologische Literaturgesellschaft), Helsinki 1987, 185–204; Volker Leppin, "Transformationen spätmittelalterlicher Mystik bei Luther," in: Berndt Hamm/Volker Leppin (eds.), Gottes Nähe unmittelbar erfahren. Mystik im Mittelalter und bei Luther (SMHR 36), Tübingen 2007; Bo Kristian Holm, Gabe und Geben bei Luther. Das Verhältnis zwischen Reziprozität und reformatorischer Rechtfertigungslehre (TBT 134), Berlin/New York 2006.

[10] See, for example, WA 1, 233,14–15 (Disputatio pro declaratione virtutis indulgentiarum [1517]); WA 2, 145–152 (Sermo de duplici institia [1519]); WA 39/1, 436,16–437,3 (Die zweite Disputation gegen die Antinomer [1538]).

[11] WA 7, 60,28 (Tractatus de libertate christiana [1520]).

[12] Pekka Kärkkäinen, "Interpretations of the Psychological Analogy from Aquinas to Biel," in: Pekka Kärkkäinen (ed.), Trinitarian Theology in the Medieval West (Schriften der Luther-Agricola-Gesellschaft 61), Helsinki 2007, 256–279.

2. *Poenitentia* and Medieval Solutions for the Satisfaction of Punishment

Luther's early discussion of *poenitentia* engaged a pressing question in medieval theology: how is human guilt (*culpa*) and punishment (*poena*) for sin removed after baptism to restore a person to a state of grace? The sacrament of penance (*poenitentia*) supplied the answer. In penance, the sinner cultivated an inner disposition of contrition for sins committed and paid temporal punishment for those sins through works of satisfaction. The eleventh-century Gregorian reforms newly emphasized the inner disposition of contrition as key to the efficacious performance of *poenitentia*. Anselm of Canterbury shaped the conversation. Luther studied Anselm's works as early as 1509 and linked the topic directly to him.[13]

In *Cur Deus Homo*, Anselm isolated two problems created by sin. First, there is the satisfaction problem. Human beings are obligated to submit their wills to God.[14] The failure to fulfill this obligation creates a debt to God. Edging up against divine immutability, Anselm asserted that this debt injures God by violently seizing what rightfully belongs to God.[15] This is sin. God must be compensated for this injury by repaying the debt *plus* restitution, a punishment.[16] Satisfaction requires the repayment of both the debt and the punishment. Anselm's question was: how is this satisfaction to be paid?

Anselm's second problem involved a tension between divine mercy and justice. If the divine nature includes divine mercy, is God able to forgive sin out of mercy alone?[17] Anselm concluded definitively no. He reasoned that the divine nature also included justice. Divine justice requires that God regulate all things, including sin. Therefore, God must bring humans to submit their wills to God. The means of accomplishing this submission is punishment, *poena*. In punishment, God seizes what belongs to the human – what she currently possesses *and* what she was created with the capacity to possess, namely, happiness.[18] By seizing the happiness that properly belongs to the human as she is or ought to be, God affirms that humans are subject to God's own self. God would violate divine justice were God to forgive sin by mercy alone without punishment. A sinner must voluntarily pay her debt in order to attain eternal blessedness. The question was: how could divine mercy be reconciled with divine justice?

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13 WA 9, 104 (Zu Opuscula Anselmi und Johannis de Trittenhem Liber lugubris de statu et ruina monastici ordinis [1513–1516]); WA 1, 320,6–7 (Sermo de poenitentia [1518]).

14 Anselm of Canterbury, Why God Became Man, in: Anselm of Canterbury, The Major Works Including Monologion, Proslogion, and Why God Became Man, Brian Davies/ G. R. Evans (eds.) (Oxford World's Classics), Oxford 2008, bk. 1, q. 11.

15 Anselm of Canterbury, Why God Became Man, bk. 1, q. 14.

16 Anselm of Canterbury, Why God Became Man, bk. 1, q. 11.

17 Anselm of Canterbury, Why God Became Man, bk. 1, q. 12.

18 Anselm of Canterbury, Why God Became Man, bk. 1, q. 14.

To resolve both questions, Anselm explored whether *poenitentia* can satisfy both the debt and the punishment. He defined *poenitentia* as "a contrite and humble heart" along with "bodily labor and fasting," generosity in the giving of alms, and "subjecting oneself to God in obedience."[19] As opposed to divinely-imposed seizure of eternal happiness, Anselm explained that contrition functions as the voluntary rejection of temporal happiness out of fear and love of God. The second part, bodily labors, mark the rejection of temporal pleasure and comfort in voluntary subjection of oneself to God. *Poenitentia* provisionally constitutes voluntary obedience to God in soul and body.

On this basis, Anselm concluded that *poenitentia* only repays the debt, leaving the additional punishment unremitted. "When you are rendering to God something which you owe him, even if you have not sinned, you ought not to reckon this to be recompense for what you owe him for sin."[20] The penitential life of contrition and good works fulfills the human obligation to submit one's will to God. But because this obligation precedes sin, something more is required to satisfy the additional punishment that is due God as restitution. The problem is, the penitent sinner has already given her entire life to God to meet the obligation and repay her debt. She has nothing more to remit to God to satisfy her punishment. Another solution is required.

Anselm used divine mercy to mete out the satisfaction problem. Divine justice does not permit that God forgive the punishment for sin by mercy alone. However, the merciful God *can* elect to repay the punishment required by divine justice by means of God's own self in Christ.[21] Thus, Anselm concluded that while the penitent sinner is able to satisfy her debt to God by means of a contrite heart and bodily actions, God alone is able to repay the punishment due for injuring God's honor.

Anselm understood *poenitentia* as both a contrite disposition and a sacramental process that partially restores the sinner to a state of grace. The contrite disposition coupled with good works of satisfaction in the sacramental process reshape the Christian life in such a way that one satisfies the obligation to submit one's will to God. However, because the obligation maximized human capacity for works, human agency was insufficient to satisfy the punishment due to God. To avoid the loss of eternal happiness, one must look to Christ alone. In the context of the Indulgence controversy, Luther will critique Anselm's distinction between guilt and punishment, charging that his theory constitutes attrition, not contrition.

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[19] Anselm of Canterbury, Why God Became Man, bk. 1, q. 20.
[20] Anselm of Canterbury, Why God Became Man, bk. 1, q. 20.
[21] Anselm of Canterbury, Why God Became Man, bk. 1, q. 25.

3. Luther's Early Discussion of *Poenitentia* and Good Works

Within Luther research, Luther is widely seen to disparage medieval concepts of *poenitentia* as "works righteousness." Instead, he is said to have restricted the meaning of *poenitentia* to "repentance," an inner turn to faith in the conscience that looks to negate any human agency for morally good action. This interpretation is perplexing given Luther's insistence, even in the *Ninety-Five Theses*, that good works must accompany faith.[22] In order to reconcile this claim, we must reexamine the heart of Luther's critique of *poenitentia* and how he resolves this problem.

In 1518, Luther critiques Anselm's view of *poenitentia* as attrition. In his *Sermo de Poenitentia* (1518), Luther asserts that "Anselm teaches to ascend to love of God from love of human good."[23] He roots this in Anselm's emphasis on *poena*, the

> cursing of sin by which one considers his years in bitterness of spirit, pondering the gravity of sin, the ugliness of damnation … [and] then the loss of eternal beatitude and acquisition of eternal damnation … creates a hypocrite, indeed a greater sinner, because he [has contrition] only out of fear of the command and the suffering of damnation.[24]

Luther reconstructs Anselm's argument to suggest that the human fulfills the obligation of submission through *poenitentia* and turns to Christ only for release from punishment. Luther sees the turn to God in Anselm's theory to be driven by human fear. To the contrary, true penitence requires a turn to God rooted in love, which Anselm, per Luther, had not satisfactorily conceptualized.

Luther discusses *poenitentia* in search for a route to true contrition that grows out of love, not fear. Because punishment elicits fear, contrition must derive from some other focus than the satisfaction of *poena*. To resolve this problem, Luther suggests that true contrition requires that a love of justice must first be fostered in the heart. Luther's medieval mystical roots emerge when he explains how the mystical practice of *contemplatio* elicits contrition.[25] Sounding undeni-

[22] Cf. WA 1, 235,16–25, 40–44 (Disputatio pro declaratione virtutis indulgentiarum [1517]).

[23] WA 1, 320,6–7 (Sermo de poenitentia [1518]): "Sic enim B. Anshelmus docet ascendere ad amorem dei ex amore hominis boni."

[24] WA 1, 319,12–17: "per discussionem, collectionem, detestationem peccatorum, qua quis … recogitat annos suos in amaritudine animae suae, ponderando peccatorum gravitatem, damnum foeditatem, multitudinem, deinde amissionem aeternae beatitudinis ac aeternae damnationis acquisitionem et alia quae possunt tristiciam et dolorem excitare. Haec autem contritio facit hypocritam, immo magis peccatorem, quia solum timore praecepti et dolore damni id facit."

[25] Volker Leppin has shown the deep connection between Luther's elevation of contrition, the views of his confessor in the Augustinian monastery, Johannes von Staupitz, and Luther's own work on the mystical text, *Theologia Deutsch*. I deepen Leppin's contributions here by drawing out the influence of mystical practices on Luther's conception of how one actually ar-

ably medieval, Luther posits that contemplation of the "most brilliant species of justice … produces true penitence because it creates a love of justice."[26] Then, Luther employs mystical terms to explain that one is "enraptured" through this deep reflection on justice and a fire is "kindled" by which one becomes a lover of wisdom.[27] As a "a man who was guiltless, humble, and good," Luther then specifies that the object of contemplation is Christ, who serves as a "holy example" of justice.[28] Contra Anselm, Luther claims that Christ is not just the solution to *poena*, but actually the highest image of divine justice itself. Contemplation of this image ignites the love required for true contrition.

Having identified a means of stimulating love through Christ's example, Luther considers the impact of love in the sacramental stages of *poenitentia*. How does love of justice impact the human relation to God in contrition, confession, and satisfaction? Luther answers that love of justice ignited in contemplation of Christ results in the dual events of recognition of guilt and confession to God. He explains that after contemplating Christ's "holy example," one becomes "truly contrite." Although typically performed before a priest, Luther positions confession as a response to contrition that occurs before God. Contrition leads the Christian to run to God and, he says, to "utter from the heart that [she is] not such a one."[29] As early as 1514,[30] Luther described this contrition-confession process as inner recognition of *culpa* that corresponds with a turning back to God (*converto*).[31] In the spirit of the Gregorian reforms, Luther shows that the love of justice vis-à-vis Christ stimulates inner acts of contrition and confession that re-establish the divine-human relation.

When Luther asks whether the person now requires the addition of prescribed works of satisfaction to be restored to God, he concludes with a resounding "no." The contrition-confession response is itself already conditioned by the

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rives at an inner disposition of contrition. Luther draws the language of enrapture and the kindling of an inner fire from Johannes Tauler's sermons. On Luther's reliance on Tauler, see Leppin, Die fremde Reformation (as note 8), 27–30, 39–43.

[26] WA 1, 319,27–31 (Sermo de poenitentia [1518]): "Secundo paratur per intuitum et contemplationem speciosissimae iusticiae, qua quis in pulchritudine et specie iusticiae meditatues in eam ardescit et rapitur, incipitque cum Salomone fieri amator sapientiae, cuius pulchritudinem viderat. Haec facit vere poenitentem."

[27] See Johannes Tauler, Die Predigten Taulers aus der Engelberer und der Freiburger Handschrift sowie aus Schmidts Abschriften der ehemaligen Straßburger Handschriften, Ferdinand Vetter (ed.) (DTMA 11), Berlin 1910, 166.

[28] WA 1, 320,11–12 (Sermo de poenitentia [1518]): "si inspecto homine casto, humili, benigno."

[29] WA 1, 320,11–13: "Signum est enim verae contritionis, si inspecto homine casto, humili, benigno suspires ex corde, quia non es talis. Sic et ecclesia orat, ut deus nos per exempla sanctorum suorum restauret."

[30] The Weimar Ausgabe dates the sermon to 1514. However, Timothy Wengert has recently argued for a dating of January 1517. See Timothy Wengert, "Martin Luther's Preaching an Indulgence in January 1517," in: LQ 29.1 (2015), 62–75.

[31] WA 1, 98,37–99,16 (Sermone aus den Jahren 1514–1517).

cultivation of the love of justice in the soul. Therefore, this actually negates the divinely required fulfillment of *poena*. Luther concludes that the truly remorseful Christian, whom he describes as "*vere compunctus,*" or one who is truly goaded by the stings of the conscience, already has "full remission from punishment and guilt."[32] But how?

To answer this, Luther borrows a concept from Anselm's theory: participation. Luther reasons that the truly contrite "participate in a share of all the goods of Christ and the church."[33] Unlike Anselm however, Luther separates participation from human incapacity at this stage in his thinking. Instead, he links it to divine mercy: "God always freely forgives sins out of immeasurable grace."[34] The love of justice required to restore a person to grace is, in fact, already present from contemplating Christ and it has resulted in a recognition of *culpa*. On this basis, the penitent person already partakes in the so-called "credit" Christ acquired; the relation to Christ established through the contrition-confession response left no *poena* to repay. Luther has resolved the problem of *culpa* and *poena* while avoiding attrition.

Were we to stop here in our analysis of Luther's early notion of *poenitentia*, the neo-Kantian picture of the move to faith in the conscience alone could stand. However, Luther himself blazes forward to ground human works of satisfaction firmly in the Christian life apart from guilt and punishment. God may forgive guilt and punishment freely out of divine grace, but Luther maintains, "God requires … for this grace that one live well going forward."[35] Although divine grace is not conditioned upon the completion of works, the requirement of works are also not negated by divine grace. Luther will now look to the third process in the sacrament of penance, satisfaction, to make his case.

Luther uses the notion of satisfaction to describe moral change marked by both a negative movement in control of sin and a positive movement in producing good works. True satisfaction, like true contrition, extends from love of justice cultivated prior to contrition to spur the control of sin for moral change. In the *Ninety-Five Theses*, Luther interrogates the meaning of Christ's injunction in Matthew 4:17 to "Do penance!" (*Poenitentiam agite*). Defying neo-Kantian interpretation, Luther immediately determines that this command cannot refer to the sacrament of penance nor to "inner *poenitentia*" ("repentance") alone.[36]

[32] WA 1, 235,7–8 (Disputatio pro declaratione virtutis indulgentiarum [1517]): "Quilibet christianus vere compunctus habet remissionem plenariam a pena et culpa etiam sine literis veniarum sibi debitam."

[33] WA 1, 235,9–10: "verus christianus … habet participationem omnium bonorum Christi et Ecclesie." The final phrase is a technical term in medieval theology, found, for example, in: Aquinas, STh II/II, d. 63, a. 2, ad. 1.

[34] WA 1, 245,22–23: "got die selben altzeit umbsunst auß unschetzlicher gnad vortzeyhet."

[35] WA 1, 245,23: "got … nichts darfur begerend, dann hynfurder woll leben."

[36] WA 1, 233,12–13: "Quod verbum de penitentia sacramentali (id est confessionis et satisfactionis, que sacerdotum ministerio celebratur) non potest intelligi."

Inner *poenitentia* is nothing, Luther says, "unless it produces various mortifications of the flesh," a reference to works of fasting often associated with satisfaction.[37] Luther echoes this sentiment in preaching to his parishioners: "what really satisfies God" is "that by one's own inner hatred [of sin], one devours and punishes one's self."[38] Echoing Anselm's voluntary suspension of temporal happiness, Luther constructed true satisfaction as a self-imposed control of sin through varieties of self-deprivation.

To determine how one controls sin while also fostering positive moral action, Luther invokes another medieval concept: *medicativae* or healing suffering. *Medicativae* was a term often utilized in the sale of indulgences. Thomas Aquinas also used the term to distinguish punitive works of satisfaction from those that are sacramental (*medicativae*).[39] By contrast, Luther distances healing suffering from penance. Instead, he applies the term to works that conform the person's outward life to the inner love of justice. He focuses on self-giving, not self-limitation. Luther encourages almsgiving as works of love to the neighbor because "love grows through works of love and makes a person better."[40] While he critiques indulgences because they do not demand moral improvement but tolerate and accept imperfection, Luther teaches his congregation that Christians should "choose rather than omit [good works and healing suffering] … because all suffering, indeed everything, God lays upon Christians is for their improvement."[41] Luther does not critique indulgences because they *rely* on human works for grace, but because they do not require *enough* of human works as part of the transformative process of *poenitentia*!

Re-examination of Luther's early use of *poenitentia* reveals Luther's engagement and continuity with medieval discussions about *culpa* and *poena*. The dominant opinion holds that Luther problematized the human capacity for good works leading up to his so-called Reformation breakthrough. However, closer examination of Luther's discussion of *culpa* and *poena* vis-à-vis *poenitentia* indicates that Luther was primarily concerned to locate a means for cultivating true contrition out of love of justice. To address this concern, Luther drew on medieval mystical practices in *contemplation,* giving a Christological focus to the formation of contrition. The image of Christ supplied the penitent with a lovable object *and* a negative mirror by which the self was recognized as a sinner. Finally,

37 WA 1, 233,14–15: "Non tamen solam intendit interiorem, immo interior nulla est, nisi foris operetur varias carnis mortificationes."

38 WA 1, 99,4–5: "Deinde per sui detestationem intus sese mordet et punit: ideo ibidem Deo satisfacit."

39 AL 1, 62 (The Ninety-Five Theses [1517]).

40 WA 1, 235,24 (Disputatio pro declaratione virtutis indulgentiarum [1517]): "Quia per opus charitatis crescit charitas et fit homo melior."

41 WA 1, 244,39–40, 245,3–4: "gutter werck und heylsamer peyn, die man billicher solt erwelen dann vorlaßen … dann alle peynn, ja alls was got aufflegt ist besserlich und tzutreglich den Christen."

the sinner's resulting recognition, contrition, and confession made possible participation in Christ's benefits through a return to God.

Nevertheless, Luther's interest in true contrition does not reflect a constriction of *poenitentia* to "repentance" alone as some scholars have suggested. Rather, Luther insists with Anselm that the grace conferred in *poenitentia* requires obedience to God going forward. This view is consistent with a definition of *poenitentia* as an inner disposition. This disposition is rooted in the love of justice and as such propels corresponding outer action against sin and for righteousness. The penitential categories for works of satisfaction supply Luther with resources to define and identify sin (prayer), to control it (fasting), and to guide and produce good works instead (almsgiving). Through *poenitentia*, the person under grace fosters a new orientation towards justice that should *result* in just action – not to fulfill *poena* but as a response to grace. Unfortunately, Luther leaves unresolved the anthropological question of the capacity for good works. While the penitent Christian may possess a new love of justice that produces true contrition, confession, and good works in satisfaction, Luther does not address the way sin continues to mar the moral function of the intellect and will that challenges any real moral change through good works. Luther will revisit this anthropological problem with *poenitentia* in the midst of the Antinomian controversy of the late 1530s. It is to this controversy that we now turn.

4. *Poenitentia* and Human Moral Change in the *Antinomian Disputations*

The previous section distanced Luther's early use of *poenitentia* from the question of the human *in*capacity for good works. We saw that Luther understood *poenitentia* as a contrite disposition rooted in the love of justice. Good works – defined according to the categories of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving – should extend from this disposition. However, penetrating questions about moral capacity were percolating in other areas of Luther's thought at this time as the reformer pondered the effect of sin on moral reasoning. Between 1517 and 1525, this anthropological problem won out over the positive moral outcomes of *poenitentia*.

Historically, moral laxity stemming from "Christian freedom" became a prevailing problem for Luther's pastoral duties in Wittenberg. The problem became so bad in 1529 that Luther went on strike from his pastoral role, reporting that "I do not want to be the shepherd of such pigs."[42] Luther needed a solution to the human capacity problem in order to firmly ground good works in the con-

[42] Martin Brecht, Martin Luther, vol. 2: Shaping and Defining the Reformation (1521–1532), James Schaaf (trans.), Minneapolis, MN 1999, 288.

trite disposition characteristic of the Christian life. In 1537, Luther was forced to reckon with the topic of moral capacity for good works when his former student, John Agricola, disseminated antinomian theses around Wittenberg, threatening to further entrench the rampant immorality. But in 1537, Luther had a new theological resource in the form of a robust pneumatology. He would connect the Holy Spirit to the topic of *poenitentia* to work out a means and mechanism for good works in the Christian life after justification.

The Antinomian controversy (1537–1540) hinges on the role and function of the law in human experience before and after justification. Agricola surmised that Christ's death communicated both divine wrath against sin and divine grace. Christ's death, communicated in the gospel, sufficed to bring a person to faith. Tired from the ongoing fight against moral laxity in Wittenberg, Luther explodes. For the next three years, Luther rails against Agricola, asserting that the law was necessary not only to reveal a person's sin and bring her to faith – the recognition-conversion moment from his early works – but also to elicit the moral life that should stem from faith.

To defend the role of the law in the Christian life before and after justification, Luther reintroduces *poenitentia* as a contrite disposition construed against the backdrop of his now prevailing law-gospel paradigm. He defines *poenitentia* as "sorrow because of sin with the added intention of a better life."[43] *Poenitentia* is constituted by two moments of human affective experience centered on sin and moral improvement. Sorrow (*dolor*) is an emotional response to law. Luther says sorrow is the feeling or sting of the law on the heart as the law reveals sin and drives a person to Christ.[44] The law elicits the negative affective response of sorrow by revealing sin, causing human recognition of sin and the need for Christ.

The other part of *poenitentia* that Luther discusses is the good intention (*propositum bonum*). Echoing his early discussion on true contrition, Luther defines the "true good intention" as "hatred of sin out of love of God."[45] The first moment that love of God spurs hatred of sin is the moment of faith.[46] Notably, Luther then argues that this "first" good intention of faith leads to further good intentions rooted in the love of God. These secondary good intentions align with the active control of sin and corresponding positive action for good works under gospel. Luther explains that the Christian "intends to want to believe in God, to love and magnify God's word." Then, the Christian also intends *against* the de-

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[43] WA 39/1, 345,16–17 (Die zweite Disputation gegen die Antinomer [1538]): "Poenitentia omnium testimonio et vero est dolor de peccato cum adiuncto proposito melioris vitae." These categories come from LOMBARD, Sentences, bk. III, d. XIV, c. 3.

[44] WA 39/1, 345,18–19, 22–23; 346,9–10; 371,14–16.

[45] WA 39/1, 346,28–29: "sic ex amore Dei peccatum odisse, id quod est vere propositum bonum."

[46] WA 39/1, 472,9–10: "Nam fides est principale bonum propositum."

sire to commit adultery or similar sins.[47] Now in 1537, *poenitentia* is directly defined in the affective terms of the disposition, which includes negative and positive motions in the heart required to control sin and pursue good works. The question is: how?

To explain how the good intention leads to good works, Luther links the good intention to the economic activities of Christ and the Holy Spirit. The background for this position is Luther's *Lectures on Galatians*, where he claimed that the gospel is "a gift and gives a gift."[48] Christ comes in the gospel as a gift of righteousness. Christ then gives his own secondary gift, the Holy Spirit, who "sees, speaks, works, endures, and does all things" on the Christian's behalf.[49] In the *Antinomian Disputations*, Christ and the Spirit are also associated with eliciting the work of the good intention under gospel. Christ rescues the person from the despair of sorrow by removing the accusation and terror of the law. Thus, Christ elevates the Christian to the first good intention of faith.[50] Upon this first intention, Luther explains that Christ then gives the Spirit to the Christian "so that [she] might begin to hate sin … and to love, worship, and to call on God."[51] Under the rubric of gospel, Luther positions the first good intention of faith in relation to Christ while he aligns subsequent good intentions against sin and for good works with the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is the divine agent associated with the second good intentions because Luther links the Spirit to the law. Just as Agricola's antinomian theses began circulating in Wittenberg in 1537, Luther was preparing sermons on Christ's final speech to his disciples in John 14–16 for the liturgical season between Easter and Pentecost. These sermon expositions reflect a shift in Luther's pneumatological thinking. Commenting on John 15:26, Luther assigns the Spirit a paracletic function by separating the Spirit from the law. He notes that the Spirit does not preach the law, but "makes Christians into witnesses and confessors of Christ."[52] However, when Luther arrives at John 16:8, "the Spirit convicts the world of sin and righteousness," he seems surprised to discover two offices

[47] WA 39/1, 472,11–13: "propono, velle Deo credere, eius verbum amare et magnifacere. Postea etiam propono, me nolle moechari, scortari, crapulari etc."

[48] WA 40/1, 337,5 (In epistolam S. Pauli ad Galatas Commentarius [1535]): "Euangelium est donum et affert donum."

[49] WA 40/1, 290,10–11: "regnat Chrustus cum suo spiritu sancto qui iam videt, audit, loquitur, patitur et omnia facit in me."

[50] WA 39/1, 392,11–13 (Die zweite Disputation gegen die Antinomer [1538]): "propter Christum legis impletorem credentes non adiguntur in desperationem accusatione et terrore legis, sed verbo ipsius rursus eriguntur."

[51] WA 39/1, 383,10–11, 13; 482,14–16, 17–483,1: "Is credentibus haec donat spiritum, ut ex animo incipiant odisse peccatum … diligere, colere, invocare Deum"; "sola fides (hac enim sola Christus apprehendi potest) donat mihi Christum, qui est impletio et finis legis … Quid praeterea fides det? Impetrat et affert secum Spiritum sanctum."

[52] WA 45, 730,9 (XIV. und XV. Kapitel S. Johannis gepredigt und ausgelegt [1538]): "solche Prediger und Bekenner aus euch machen."

outlined for the Spirit – one to convict of sin, the other to convict of righteousness. Luther immediately linked the latter to the Spirit's sanctifying work. But the former gave the reformer pause: how can the Spirit convict of sin?

Luther resolves this conundrum by defining a new office for the Spirit. Calling this new function the Spirit's "punitive office" (*das straff Ampt*), Luther identified the Spirit as the eternal judge.[53] The Spirit is the divine lawgiver, Luther says, who reached out of heaven and "wrote the law on tablets of stone with his finger."[54] Thus, Luther concludes, the Spirit is the "Author of the law" (*auctor legis*). Drawing on medieval divine command theories, Luther links the Spirit's punitive office to the law and makes the Spirit the divine agent of the law.

As the divine agent of the law, the Spirit animates the law for a variety of effects. The first effect, accusation, comes from Luther's interpretation of the first proposition in John 16:8, "the Spirit will convict of sin." Luther explains that the Spirit is the eternal judge who "attacks all deeds and being, and states that, as one is found, one is entirely guilty and unjust before God and must believe this word about Christ or be eternally damned and lost."[55] Moreover, the Spirit "pronounces judgment" and condemns sinners under divine wrath.[56] Anyone who hears the law apart from the "divine touch" of the Spirit cannot not feel sorrow.[57] Luther is firm that the Spirit gives and animates the law to reveal sin, accuse, and condemn.

The second proposition in John 16:8 is "The Spirit will convict of righteousness." This supplies Luther with the second way the Spirit animates the law: as a moral directive. However, the Spirit as divine agent of law can only exact this function when the Spirit is mediated through Christ. Luther explains that "Christ earned the Spirit for those believing in him by willingly submitting himself to the law and enduring all of its curses."[58] Christ fulfills the accusing law. In doing so, Christ pacifies the Spirit as lawgiver, handing the pacified Spirit over to the justified Christian. Thus, Christ opens up a new relation between the Spirit as agent of law and the justified person.

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[53] WA 46, 47,2 (XIV. und XV. Kapitel S. Johannis gepredigt und ausgelegt [1538]): "das Straff ampt des heiligen Geists."

[54] WA 39/2, 370,10, 11–12 (Die zweite Disputation gegen die Antinomer [1538]): "Spiritu sancto … legem suo digito scripsit in tabulas lapideas, ut in Exodo legitur."

[55] WA 46, 34,30–34 (Das XVI. Kapitel S. Johannis [1528]): "Und nennets deutlich ein solch ampt, das da heist Die welt straffen, das ist: alle jr thun und wesen angreiffen und jnen sagen, das sie alle zumal, wie sie gefunden werden, fůr Gott streflich und unrecht sind und můssen jrer predigt von Christo gehorchen oder ewiglich verdampt und verloren sein."

[56] WA 46, 38,24: "das sie unter Gottes zorn und verdamnis sind und bleiben mussen."

[57] WA 39/1, 389,3–4 (Die zweite Disputation gegen die Antinomer [1538]): "lex sine Spiritu sancto non arguit peccata." 345,20–21: "Multi enim audiunt quidem legem, sed quia sensum seu vim legis non sentiunt, nihil dolent neque poenitent."

[58] WA 39/1, 365,2–4: "Christus tamen per hoc, quod legi sua sponte se subiecit et omnes eius maledictiones pertulit, emeruit credentibus in se Spiritum."

Luther explains that the Spirit continues its function as the divine agent of law under gospel, but in a new way: to convict of righteousness. In a provocative rejection of Agricola, Luther posits that "Christ earns the Spirit for believers in order that they begin to fulfill the law."[59] But this is not the accusing law; it is a law mediated through Christ in the gospel. Luther explains that the gospel "comes and removes the sting of the law and makes out of it an instructor."[60] Through Christ's mediation, the Spirit comes and brings the law to the Christian in a new, pacified way in order to convict of unrighteousness. Contra Agricola, Luther shows that the gospel removes the accusatory *function* of the law, but not the law itself because the law is connected to the Spirit.

To prove this, Luther identifies two ways the Spirit brings the law to the Christian under gospel to support the Christian's *intellectual* understanding of the law.[61] First, the Spirit directs the Christian towards Christ's example (*Christus exemplum*) as a concrete demonstration of the law.[62] Christ's example reestablishes the law under gospel and shows the Christian "how to live in obedience to God, parents, and superiors through good works and virtues" summarized in the Golden Rule.[63] There is a mimetic function here. Christ demonstrates what God wills the Christian to do.[64] Luther sees the Spirit to direct the Christian towards Christ's example in order to teach her how to act towards God and neighbor on the basis of love.

Second, Luther shows the Spirit to speak the law directly into the Christian's mind. Narrating a story about a Christian tempted by sexual sin, Luther explains that the Spirit "cries out" against the temptation directly in the Christian's heart.[65] When Luther makes explicit the content of this pneumatological cry, he draws on the Decalogue. The Spirit gives the commandment, "you shall not covet!" Then, the Spirit specifies the commandment directly to the particular temptation: "Let the girl in peace. I will give you a wife whom you will love."[66]

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[59] WA 39/1, 365,3–4: "Christus … emeruit credentibus in se Spiritum, quo impellente incipiunt etiam in hac vita legem implere."

[60] WA 39/1, 445,21–446,3: "Sed deinde venit Evangelium et aufert cuspidem legi et facit ex ea paedagogum. Atque ita debet lex per Evangelium interpretari et reduci per impossibile et ad salutarem usum."

[61] On Luther's use of the psychological analogy, see KÄRKKÄINEN, "Interpretations of the Psychological Analogy," 256–279.

[62] Luther borrows Augustine's concept of *Christus sacramentum et exemplum* and revises it as *Christus donum et exemplum*. See ERWIN ISERLOH, "Sacramentum et Exemplum. Ein augustinisches Thema lutherischer Theologie," in: ERWIN ISERLOH/KONRAD REPGEN (eds.), Reformata Reformanda, FS Hubert Jedin, Münster 1965, 247–264.

[63] WA 39/1, 464,13–15 (Die zweite Disputation gegen die Antinomer [1538]). Cf. ANTTI RAUNIO, Summe des christlichen Lebens. Die 'Goldene Regel' als Gesetz der Liebe in der Theologie Martin Luthers von 1510–1527 (VIEG Abteilung Religionsgeschichte 160), Mainz 2001.

[64] WA 39/1, 464,3–5.

[65] Luther draws on Johannes Tauler here. See TAULER, Die Predigten (as note 27), 101.

[66] WA 39/1, 501,2, 10 (Die zweite Disputation gegen die Antinomer [1538]): "Laß das medlein mit friden"; "Non concupisces."

Speaking immediately in the Christian's mind, the Spirit gives the law to the Christian anew by specifying the law to direct the soul away from a sinful temptation and towards a righteous act in moral fulfillment of the law. The Spirit uses the law to sustain new intellectual functions in the Christian in order to elicit the good intention in *poenitentia*.

If this reality were not enough to leave the majority of Luther researchers aghast, what Luther says next will surely cause jaws to drop. Luther ascribes the Spirit a role in supporting the Christian's renewed *volitional* activity. Luther explains that the Christian chooses *not* to lust and, instead, to wait on the wife God has for him.[67] Here, Luther makes room for a negative motion of the will against sin and a positive motion of the will for just action. Luther's own interpretation of this renewed volitional activity is daring. He boldly declares that "this is truly what it means to take sin captive." The Christian "obeys the Spirit … and God's word and law … with the Spirit admonishing him about this will of God, he does not succumb [to sin]."[68] Luther identifies a real volitional effect of the Spirit's instructive use of the law after justification. With the Spirit's sanctifying help, the Christian formulates a good intention in accord with the law, volitionally consents to the good intention and against the sinful intention. The result is the human performance of a concrete moral action in soul and body.

In 1537, Luther isolates the Spirit as the divine agent of the law. This robust pneumatological insight allows him to sharpen his notion of law as a function of the divine word, but more specifically a word spoken by the Spirit. Because the Spirit speaks and animates the law, the Spirit is able to use the law towards distinct ends to convict either of sin or righteousness. This means that the Spirit elicits the human affective responses to law in sorrow and the good intention that constitute the disposition of *poenitentia*. By linking the Spirit's sanctifying activity to the Spirit's agency as divine lawgiver, Luther shows the Spirit to sustain renewed moral functions in the human heart and will. This allows Luther to show how the disposition of *poenitentia* leads to good works.

Although Luther continued to problematize human capacity for good works as the basis for justification, his new pneumatological insights enabled him to solidify his early insistence contra Anselm that *poenitentia* should lead to good works out of love of justice. These good works do not satisfy divine *poena* in order to justify; Luther is consistent across both periods that grace freely forgives the punishment that is due. What Luther has accomplished is a way of conceptualizing *poenitentia* that is rooted in contrition out of the love of justice and that actually culminates in moral action aligned by and with the law. To accomplish this very medieval goal, Luther reveals his skillful mastery in appropriating,

[67] WA 39/1, 500,20–25.

[68] WA 39/1, 501,3, 4–5, 9–11: "Hic christianus … tamen obedit Spiritui, deprecans hoc malum, quod sentit, orans, ne intret in tentationem. […] tamen stat firmus obediens verbo et legi Dei … et Spiritui sancto admonenti eum de hac voluntate Dei et non succumbit."

combining, and re-applying Augustinian theology, medieval mysticism, and divine command theories to resolve what he had long seen as a fundamental issue in Scholastic soteriology stemming from Anselm. Through a robust relation to the soul as Christ's gift in justification, the Spirit offers Luther a dynamic solution for conceptualizing a moral theology that is both anthropologically coherent and amenable to total divine agency in justification.

Chapter 9

Friendly Grace

The Augustinian Roots of Luther's Epistemology

JENNIFER HOCKENBERY DRAGSETH

In contemporary scholarship there is a growing need for studies that address Luther's approach to philosophical issues, particularly his use of medieval philosophical sources. One area of philosophical concern in the contemporary academy is epistemology. While many Luther scholars have addressed his appropriation of medieval resources for the articulation of doctrine, they have been less interested in how Luther came to make his claims to theological knowledge and even less so to his view of secular knowledge. The following chapter is a contribution to the discussion of Luther's epistemology. Epistemology is of concern to both philosophers and theologians, as well as to all thinkers interested in science, practical ethics, and politics, who routinely ask, "How do I know? Whom and what ought I trust?" Epistemology, as I will argue, was of serious theological and evangelical concern for Luther. I will examine how Luther understood the source of theological insight and possibilities of theological certainty.

My aim is to show how Luther approached the epistemological problem using a primarily Augustinian solution. This historical thesis is hardly provocative. Heiko Oberman beautifully explained that Luther sided with Augustine over Aristotle in his few pages on the topic in the chapter, "With Augustine against Aristotle" of his biography of Luther.[1] Yet, Augustine's epistemology and Luther's use of it deserves more analysis. At various points when Luther praises Augustine, he insists he is Augustinian not out of loyalty to his monastic order but because Augustine possesses the best argument. Why does Luther make this claim? By presenting Luther's Augustinian epistemology, I hope to shed light on the historical-theological issues at stake as well as to argue for the viability of this epistemology to the contemporary Christian philosopher interested in engaging in current issues, particularly those concerning science and ecclesiology.

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[1] HEIKO A. OBERMAN, Luther. Man Between God and the Devil, EILEEN WALLISER-SCHWARZBART (trans.), New Haven, CT/London 1989, 158–161.

1. Justification, Faith, and Knowledge

It is well noted that Luther was not primarily interested in philosophy as a discipline. Rather, Luther's overriding concern was evangelism of the good news of *justification by faith*. But of course a discussion of faith required (and requires) a discussion of epistemology. If Christians are justified by faith alone, the questions of how, why, and when they assent to belief become a critical concern.

Faith for Luther was not a matter of force of will, nor was belief a choice or the result of a failure to struggle or question. Rather, Luther understood faith to be a state of understanding that redirected the gaze and desire of the faithful believer, a state that was granted by God as a free gift to a person who otherwise would struggle against belief that seemed to contradict human reason that was perverted by sin. Luther states in his *Disputation on Justification*:

> Faith is not properly referred to as our work according to the Scriptures, but now and then as a kind of work of God. […] It is up to God alone to give faith contrary to nature, and ability to believe contrary to reason. That I love God is the work of God alone. […] [B]ut faith is a gift of God and on that account ought not be called a work. […] For divine faith is given to him who hears the Word and even to one who struggles against it, if God so willed.[2]

Faith is a gift of God. As an assurance, faith is more secure than knowledge: it is not a state of ignorance nor even a mere hypothesis, but certainty.

Luther's high estimation of faith above knowledge contrasts with the position of the ancient Greek philosophers who gave knowledge a higher place. Luther turns the divided line in Plato's Book VI of the *Republic* upside down. Luther places *pistis* (faith) as higher, more illuminating, and more authoritative than *dianoia* (discursive reason). While Socrates in *The Republic*'s Book VII speaks of the conversion of a student from a world of imagination and opinion to a world of truth through mathematical study and dialectic, Luther speaks of conversion to truth through faith. Faith converts the soul and turns it into a lover of God with a certainty that is greater than that given by scientific fact or mathematical truth. For Luther, this certainty of faith is a gift of God, an epistemological answer that is bound to his theology of grace, a theology and epistemology that he shared with the fourth-century North African doctor of grace, Augustine.

[2] LW 34, 160 (Disputation Concerning Justification [1536]); in the original, WA 39/1, 90,15–16, 91,1–2, 5–6, 7–8: "Fides secundum sacram scripturam non dicitur opus nostrum proprie, sed interdum Dei quoddam opus. […] Solius Dei est, dare fidem contra naturam, contra rationem et credere. Est opus solius Dei, quod diligo Deum. […] sed fides est donum Dei, ideo non debet dici opus, […] Fides enim datur divinitatis audienti verbum, et etiam contraluctanti, si Deus voluerit."

2. Experiences of Conversion

Augustine explains his own epistemology while recounting his conversion experience: the experience of turning away from error towards Truth. Augustine describes this experience in the following way:

And having been admonished to return to myself, I entered into my inner self, with you as leader, and I could do this because you were my helper. I entered and I saw such as it was with the eyes of my soul above the eye of my soul, above my mind, an unchangeable light: not this common light seen by all flesh, nor something of the same type but greater, as if this was shining more and more clearly and would occupy everything with her magnitude. No this light was not that, but another, completely other than all of these. Nor was she above my mind, as oil is above water, nor as the sky is above the earth; but superior, because she made me, and I was inferior, because I was made by her. Whoever knows truth, knows her, and whoever knows her, knows eternity. Love knows her. O eternal Truth and true Love and lovely Eternity! You are my God, to you I sigh day and night. […] And you cried to me from a long way off "Ego sum qui sum." And I heard, as one hears in the heart, and there was no use for doubting, and I would easier doubt that I live, than believe that there is no truth.[3]

Augustine continues in the *Confessions* to emphasize that Christ is the cause of his conversion and the cause of his belief that Truth exists and can be known by human seekers:

And I began to seek a way of gaining the strength that is needed to enjoy you, but I could not find this way until I embraced the mediator between God and human beings, the human being Jesus Christ, who is the eternally blessed God over all things, who was calling and saying I am the way; I am the truth and the life and the food (food which I was incapable of taking), food mixed in flesh; for the Word was made flesh so that your wisdom, by which you created all things, would be milk for us in our infancy. Indeed, I was not humble enough to grasp the humble Jesus as my God, nor had I learned what lesson his fragility would teach. Indeed your Word, the eternal Truth, which is superior to even the most superior parts of your creation, raises up to herself all those who are cast down.[4]

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[3] Augustine, Confessions, J. J. O'Donnell (ed.), Oxford 1992, VII.x. 16: "et inde admonitus redire ad memet ipsum, intravi in intima mea, duce te, et potui, quoniam factus es adiutor meus. intravi et vidi qualicumque oculo animae meae supra eundem oculum animae meae, supra mentem meam, lucem incommutabilem: non hanc vulgarem et conspicuam omni carni, nec quasi ex eodem genere gradior erat, tamquam si ista multo multoque clarius claresceret totumque occuparet magnitudine. non hoc illa erat, sed aliud, aliud valde ab istis omnibus. nec ita erat supra mentem meum, sicut oleum super aquam, nec sicut caelum super terram; sed superior, quia ipsa fecit me, et ego inferior, quia factus ab ea. qui novet veritatem, novit eam, et qui novit eam, novit aeternitatem. caritas novit eam. o aeterna veritas et vera caritas et cara aeternitas! tu es deus meus, tibi suspiro die ac nocte. […] et clamasti de longinquo: ego sum qui sum. et audivi, sicut auditor in corde, et non erat prorsus unde dubitarem, faciliusque dubitarem vivere me, quam non esse veritatem, quae per ea, quae facta sunt, intellecta conspicitur." All translations from the Confessions are by J. H. D.

[4] Augustine, Confessions, VII.xviii.24: "et quaerebam viam conparandi roboris, quod

Augustine continues three sections later to say, "By wonderful means, this sunk into my very bowels, when I was reading the least of your apostles, and I considered your works and trembled."[5] Repeatedly in the *Confessions* Augustine speaks of a God who comes and comforts, who carries and loves. Considering these words, the philosopher Carl Vaught explains that faith for Augustine is grounded in the friendly aid of Christ. Vaught writes, "Faith in God is faith in the wisdom that makes philosophy possible. What faith seeks to understand is wisdom as the ground of friendship. As a result, the wisdom that makes friendship possible is also the God faith seeks to understand."[6]

Augustine's account of his conversion became paradigmatic in the European Middle Ages. It is not surprising that Luther uses language similar to Augustine when he recounts his reformation experience. But beyond the obvious linguistic resemblance, we should consider the similarity of the epistemological account: how Luther explains that he came to a new understanding of God through a gift given by a merciful and friendly God. Luther writes about his reformation conversion in the following way:

Meanwhile, I had already during that year returned to interpret the Psalter anew. I had confidence in the fact that I was more skillful, after I had lectured in the university on St. Paul's epistles to the Romans, to the Galatians, and the one to the Hebrews. I had indeed been captivated with an extraordinary ardor for understanding Paul in the Epistle to the Romans. But up till then it was not the cold blood about the heart, but a single word in Chapter 1 [:17], "In it the righteousness of God is revealed," that had stood in my way. For I hated that word "righteousness of God," which, according to the use and custom of all the teachers, I had been taught to understand philosophically regarding the formal or active righteousness, as they called it, with which God is righteous and punishes the unrighteous sinner. Though I lived as a monk without reproach, I felt that I was a sinner before God with an extremely disturbed conscience. I could not believe that he was placated by my satisfaction. I did not love, yes, I hated the righteous God who punishes sinners, and secretly, if not blasphemously, certainly murmuring greatly, I was angry with God, and said, "As if, indeed, it is not enough, that miserable sinners, eternally lost through original sin, are crushed by every kind of calamity by the law of the decalogue, without

esset idoneum ad fruendum te, nec inveniebam, donec amplecterer mediatorem dei et hominum, hominem Christum Iesum, qui est super omnia deus benedictus in saecula, vocantem et dicentem: ego sum via veritatis et vita, et cibum, cui capiendo invalidus eram, miscentem carni: quoniam verbum caro factum est, ut infantiae nostrae lactesceret sapientia tua, per quam creasti omnia. Non enim tenebam deum meum Iesum humilis humilem, nec cuius rei magistra esset eius infirmitas noveram. Verbum enim tuum, aeterna veritas, superioribus craeturae tuae partibus supereminens, subditos erigit ad se ipsam, in inferioribus autem aedificavit sibi humilem domum de limo nostro, per quam subdendos deprimeret a se ipsis et ad se traiceret, sanans tumorem et nutriens amorem, ne fiducia sui progrederentur longius, sed potius infirmarentur, videntes ante pedes suos infirmam divinitatem ex participatione tunicae pelliciae nostrae, et lassi prosternerentur in eam, illa autem surgens leveret eos."

[5] Augustine, Confessions, VII.xxi.28: "haec mihi inviscerabantur miris modis, cum minimum apostolorum tuorum legerem, et consideraveram opera tua et expaveram."

[6] Carl Vaught, "Faith and Philosophy," in: The Monist 75.3 (July 1992), 325.

having God add pain to pain by the gospel and also by the gospel threatening us with his righteousness and wrath!" Thus I raged with a fierce and troubled conscience. Nevertheless, I beat importunately upon Paul at that place, most ardently desiring to know what St. Paul wanted. At last, by the mercy of God, meditating day and night, I gave heed to the context of the words, namely, "In it the righteousness of God is revealed, as it is written, 'He who through faith is righteous shall live.'" There I began to understand that the righteousness of God is that by which the righteous lives by a gift of God, namely by faith. And this is the meaning: the righteousness of God is revealed by the gospel, namely, the passive righteousness with which merciful God justifies us by faith, as it is written, "He who through faith is righteous shall live." Here I felt that I was altogether born again and had entered paradise itself through open gates. There a totally other face of the entire Scripture showed itself to me. Thereupon I ran through the Scripture from memory. I also found in other terms an analogy, as the work of God, that is, what God does in us, the power of God, with which he makes us strong, the wisdom of God, with which he makes us wise, the strength of God, the salvation of God, the glory of God.[7]

Roland Bainton reinforces this claim that Luther came to knowing by the friendliness of God:

If you have a true faith that Christ is your Savior, then at once you have a gracious God, for faith leads you in and opens up God's heart and will, that you should see pure grace and overflowing love. This it is to behold God in faith that you should look upon his fatherly, friendly heart, in which there is no anger nor ungraciousness.[8]

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[7] LW 34, 336–337 (Preface to the Latin Writings [1545]); in the original, WA 54, 185,12–186,13: "Interim eo anno iam redieram ad Psalterium denuo interpretandum, fretus eo, quod exercitatior essem, postquam S. Pauli Epistolam ad Romanos, ad Galatas, et eam, quae est ad Ebraeos, tractassem in scholis. Miro certe ardore captus fueram cognoscendi Pauli in epistola ad Rom., sed obstiterat hactenus non frigidus circum praecordia sanguis, sed unicum vocabulum, quod est Cap. 1: Iustitia Dei revelatur in illo. Oderam enim vocabulum istud 'Iustitia Dei', quod usu et consuetudine omnium doctorum doctus eram philosophice intelligere de iustitia (ut vocant) formali seu active, qua Deus est iustus, et peccatores iniustosque punit. Ego autem, qui me, utcunque irreprehensibilis monachus vivebam, sentirem coram Deo esse peccatorem inquietissimae conscientiae, nec mea satisfactione placatum confidere possem, non amabam, imo odiebam iustum et punientem peccatores Deum, tacitaque si non blasphemia, certe ingenti murmuratione indignabar Deo, dicens: quasi vero non satis sit, miseros peccatores et aeternaliter perditos peccato originali omni genere calamitatis oppressos esse per legem decalogi, nisi Deus per euangelium dolorem dolori adderet, et etiam per euangelium nobis iustitiam et iram suam intentaret. Furebam ita saeva et perturbata conscientia, pulsabam tamen importunes eo loco Paulum, ardentissime sitiens scire, quid S. Paulus vellet. Donec miserente Deo meditabundus dies et noctes connexionem verborum attenderem, nempe: Iustitia Dei revelatur in illo, sicut scriptum est: Iustus ex fide vivit, ibi iustitiam Dei coepi intelligere eam, qua iustus dono Dei vivit, nempe ex fide, et esse hanc sententiam, revelari per euangelium iustitam Dei, scilicet passivam, qua nos Deus misericors iustificat per fidem, sicut scriptum est: Iustus ex fide vivit. Hic me prorsus renatum esse sensi, et apertis portis in ipsam paradisum intrasse. Ibi continuo alia mihi facies totius scripturae apparuit. Discurrebam deinde per scripturas, ut habebat memoria, et colligebam etiam in aliis vocabulis analogiam, ut opus Dei, id est, quod operator in nobis Deus, virtus Dei, qua nos potentes facit, sapientia Dei, qua nos sapientes facit, fortitude Dei, salus Dei, Gloria Dei."

[8] Roland Bainton, Here I Stand. A Life of Martin Luther, Nashville, TN 1978, 51.

In comparing the two texts by Augustine and Luther, it is worth noting that both men were academics, professors who regularly read and analyzed texts. Yet while textual analysis was their trade, both claimed to have been unable to understand Scripture until this point. Their inability to understand did not arise from lack of interest; both men burned with a desire to understand. Augustine had claimed earlier in the *Confessions* that at age sixteen he already "smoldered with a concupiscence for immortal wisdom."[9] Yet Augustine could not see the truth and worried that he never would. Luther also claims an extraordinary and heartfelt ardor and yet could not understand nor believe until the mercy of God granted him a gift, a truthful image of open gates. Like Augustine before him, Luther was suddenly converted to a faith in God who gives strength, salvation, and wisdom. Luther, like Augustine, moved from an inability to believe to an incapacity to doubt. The wisdom of God made them both wise. The appetite for wisdom was transformed in both men's conversion into rest in God's friendly presence.

These conversion stories are more than the narratives of saints. They provide a philosophically important way of thinking about how humans come to know Truth. Ceaselessly meditating, reading, and striving day and night to know are not the paths that bring the philosopher to Truth *unless* the Truth offers a friendly hand and becomes both guide and teacher. This implies a rejection of Aristotle's understanding of how humans come to know, and with it a rejection of the scholastic view of how humans come to know. Luther, echoing the words of Augustine, stands against an Aristotelian or Neo-Aristotelian epistemology.

3. Choosing Augustine over Aristotle

Heiko Oberman suggests that Luther read Augustine in the autumn of 1509. Oberman claims, "By studying Augustine he had discovered the contrast between the Church Father and Aristotle, and had begun to work out a theological position of his own."[10] I would add that Luther was working out a philosophical position as well. Indeed, Luther notes that Augustine's position is to use reason to prove the limits of an Aristotelian conception of reason. Oberman quotes Luther: "Augustine can even use reason to prove that the whole of philosophy is foolishness. Imagine what that means!"[11] As Luther explains in his *Disputation on the Human Person*,

> We say that philosophy knows nothing at all about [the hu]man. Aristotle assumes a *primum mobile* or mover. Hence he concludes that all things are done by the prime mover

[9] Augustine, Confessions, III.iv.8: "et inmortalitatem sapientiae concupiscebam aestu cordis incredibili."

[10] Oberman, Luther (as note 1), 159.

[11] WA 9, 13,21–22 in Oberman, Luther (as note 1), 159.

with inner cooperation and so he dreams that the prime mover acts like a nursemaid who rocks the cradle of a child, yet admires herself. Thus Aristotle condemns us. In short philosophers know nothing about God the creator and the human made of a lump of earth. Augustine says that he found all things in the Platonic books except this one thing, that the Word was made flesh.[12]

Luther further notes that Augustine had probably never read Plato's original dialogues, only a Christianized version. The Greeks did not possess a concept of a universal God who loves the human person. Indeed, Aristotle's view is that the Creator (if that is even the right term) is not a personally interested or loving Being but an unmoved mover, a Thought Thinking Itself. Such a being is not a Loving Parent who warmed the mud and breathed life into created creatures out of care. Oberman writes that Luther remarks, "I find it more than astonishing that our scholars can so brazenly claim that Aristotle does not contradict Catholic truth."[13] Indeed, Luther's theses 29–40 of the *Heidelberg Disputation* assert that one cannot find the Truth using Aristotle without Christ.[14] To prove his point, Luther attacks the logic of the ontology and epistemology of Aristotle on philosophical grounds. Luther is confident that this philosophical attack is apt; he is aware that Augustine also rejected Aristotle not only theologically but philosophically and epistemologically.

In the *Confessions*, Augustine wrote,

And what benefit was produced for me around the year I was twenty, when Aristotle's work came into my hands. I read this alone and understood it by myself, this work which is called the *Ten Categories.* Whenever the orator at Carthage, my teacher, would name the very title, his mouth would swell with pride, and others who were reputed to be great scholars held the same esteem for the work. Nevertheless I was inhibited from seeing I know not what great and divine things in it. Yet, when I compared my understanding with those who said they learned with the help of the most erudite teachers, who did not simply speak the text but studied it broken into small pieces, there was nothing other than what I understood when I read the work alone. The meaning of the book seemed clear enough to me. It was speaking about substance […] and its qualities. […] How did this profit me? Not at all. In fact, it prejudiced me as I tried to understand you, my God, who are wonderful, simple, and unchangeable, because I thought that by using these ten categories I could comprehend anything. As if you are a substance, and magnitude and beauty were your attributes? […] Indeed, it was false how I understood you, it was not truth. It was a figment of my misery, not a firm image of your beatitude.[15]

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[12] LW 34, 143 (The Disputation Concerning the Human [1536]); in the original, WA 39/1, 179,29–36: "Nos dicimus, quod philosophia nihil omnino sciat de homine. Aristoteles facit primum mobile vel movens. Concludit inde omnia interiore cooperante primo movente fieri, et ita somniat, quod primum movens sic agat, ut ancilla, quae cunas pueri movet, se tamen intuetur. Sic condemnat nos Aristoteles. In summa, philosophi nihil sciunt de creatore Deo et homine de gleba terrae facto."

[13] WA 9, 27,22–24 in Oberman, Luther (as note 1), 159.

[14] LW 41–42 (Heidelberg Disputation [1518]) (= WA 1, 355,1–25).

[15] Augustine, Confessions, IV.xvi.28–29: "et quid mihi proderat, quod annos natus ferme

Luther's careful theses written in 1518 allude to this Augustinian passage. He may also have referred to Augustine in his earlier 1515 *Lectures on Romans*. There Luther suggests that the philosopher who seeks to understand creation by looking at Aristotle's categories and four causes makes a gay science out of a sad creation; such a thinker will be utterly unable to know anything true about creation or creator.

Both Augustine and Luther find Aristotle's epistemology highly problematic. According to Aristotle, the philosopher is on her own with only intellect to guide her as she seeks to understand the nature of things, which both Luther and Augustine regard as a wretched state. While the scholastics try to recast the agent intellect as a tool or emanation of the divine, Aristotle's *De Anima* does not include any element of a divine Light that is gracious, friendly, and personally interested in individual philosophers. The Thought that Thinks Itself cannot be approached in prayer. Indeed, it is more distant than the One of Plotinus and the Good of Socrates. Thought Thinking Itself will not grab an obstinate philosopher by her hair, pull her onto its lap, and turn her heart. Thus, to understand a Christian epistemology one must reject pagan knowing.

4. The Epistemology of God as Inner Teacher

Peter Brown remarks in his famous biography of Augustine that the most beloved icon of the fourth-century Roman Empire was not the Madonna and Child, the Good Shepherd, or the crucifix, but Jesus portrayed as a teacher on the steps of a school.[16] Augustine was disposed to think of Christ as the teacher. This image was, however, less prominent by Luther's era. The Christian philosophers of Luther's time were far more willing to take Aristotle's epistemology seriously than Augustine had done. Some late medieval philosophers found Aristotelian scholasticism a clear path to knowledge, although many others were skeptical of this approach's viability. The critics of scholasticism were often skeptical of the

viginti, cum in manus meas venissent Aristotelica quaedam, quas appaellant decem categorias – quarum nomine, cum eas rhetor Carthaginiensis, magister meus, buccis typho crepantibus commemoraret et alii qui docti habebantur, tamquam in nescio quid magnum et divinum suspensus inhiabam – legi eas solus et intellexi? quas cum contulissem cum eis, qui se dicebant vix eas, magistris eruditissimis non loquentibus tantum, sed multa in pulvere depingentibus, intellexisse, nihil inde aliud mihi dicere potuerunt, quam ego solus apud me ipsum legens cognoveram; et satis aperte mihi videbantur loquentes de substantiis […] et quae in illis essent […]. Quid hoc mihi proderat, quando et oberat, cum etiam te, deus meus, mirabiliter simplicem atque incommutabilem, illis decem praedicamentis putans quidquid esset omnino conprehensum, sic intelligere conarer, quasi et tu subiectum esses magnitudini tuae aut pulchritudini, ut illa essent in te quasi in subiecto […]? falsitas enim erat, quam de te cogitabam, non veritas, et figment miseriae meae, non firmamenta beatitudinis tuae."

[16] Peter Brown, Augustine of Hippo. A Biography, Berkeley, CA 1967, 42.

possibility of any real knowledge at all. What Luther recovered in Augustine is an alternative path to Truth than what scholasticism, nominalism, or humanism offered. The possibility of real knowledge, for Luther, is founded on faith given by the inner teacher that is Christ, the Truth herself, the friendly, merciful, and relentless teacher.

Luther explains his agreement with Augustine's epistemology in *On the Babylonian Captivity of the Church*:

> But as Augustine says elsewhere, the truth itself lays hold on the soul and thus renders it able to judge most certainly of all things; however, the soul is not able to judge the truth, but is compelled to say with unerring certainty that this is the truth. For example, our mind declares with unerring certainty that three and seven are ten; and yet it cannot give a reason why this is truth, although it cannot deny that it is true. It is clearly taken captive by the truth; and rather than judging the truth, it is itself judged by it. There is such a mind also in the church, when under the enlightenment of the Spirit, she judges and approves doctrines; she is unable to prove it and yet is most certain of having it. For as among philosophers no one judges the general concepts, but all are judged by them, so it is among us with the mind of the Spirit, who judges all things and is judged by no one, as the Apostle says.[17]

In the above passage, Luther refers to Augustine's *De Libero Arbitrio.* There Augustine explains,

> But you will easily see that numbers are not conveyed to us by our bodily senses if you consider that the value of every number is calculated according to the number of time it contains the number one. […] Whoever thinks with exactitude of unity will certainly discover that it cannot be perceived by the senses. Whatever comes into contact with a bodily sense is proved to be not one but many, for it is corporeal and therefore has innumerable parts. […] However, I have come to know unity. I have not learned it from the bodily senses, for by them I can know only corporeal objects and none of them, as we have proved, is a true unity. […] We must know this by the inner light, of which bodily sense knows nothing.[18]

[17] LW 36, 107–108 (On the Babylonian Captivity of the Church [1520]); in the original, WA 6, 561,7–18: "Sed, sicut alibi dicit Augustinus, veritate ipsa sic capitur anima, ut per eam de omnibus certissime iudicare possit, sed veritatem iudicare non possit, dicere autem cogatur infallibili certitudine, hanc esse veritatem. Exempli gratia, Mens infallibili certitudine pronunciat, iii et vii esse decem, et tamen rationem reddere non potest, cur id verum sit, cum negare non possit verum esse, capta scilicet ipsa et iudice veritate indicata magis, quam iudicans. Talis est in Ecclesia sensus, illustrante spiritu, in iudicandis et approbandis doctrinis, quem demonstrare non potest et tamen certissimum habet. Sicut enim apud philosophos de communibus conceptionibus nemo iudicat, sed omnes per eas iudicantur, ita apud nos de sensu spiritus est, qui iudicat omnes et a nemine iudicatur, ut Apostolos ait. Verum haec alias."

[18] Augustine, De Libero Arbitrio, in: Augustine, Augustine's Early Writings, J. H. S. Burleigh (trans.), Philadelphia, PA 1953, II.8.22–23: "Sed ipsos quoque numeros non per corporis sensus attractos esse facile videbis, si cogitaveris quemlibet numerum tot vocari quotiens unum habuerit: […] Unum vero quisquis verissime cogitat, profecto invenit corporis sensibus non posse sentiri. Quidquid enim tali sensu attingitur, iam non unum, sed multa esse convincitur: corpus est enim, et ideo habet innumerabiles partes. […] Ubi ergo novi quod non

In this passage, Augustine is making a Platonic argument that echoes Socrates's arguments in the *Meno*. A thinker cannot come to know "unity," "oneness," or "equality" through the senses or reason. But of course, humans know these concepts. Even though we cannot point to sense data or logic that proves 1=1, we can still say with complete confidence that 3+7=10. We are captive to the Truth. Socrates concludes that the availability of true concepts without evidence is because the forms of Oneness and Equality are already in our souls before we are born. Augustine claims that innate truth proves that the Truth enlightens our minds in the present moment so that we can understand. Luther agrees with Augustine and adds that just as the thinker is captive to the truths of mathematics, the believer is captive to the enlightenment given by the Spirit.

5. Augustinian Epistemology and Philosophy

Augustine's argument in *On the Freedom of the Will*, in which he denounces Manichean gnosticism, is similar to the argument he uses against academic skeptics. Augustine sees gnosticism and skepticism as two versions of the same philosophical nihilism that denies the possibility of philosophy uncovering universal Truth. That math can be known is one of the foundational arguments of Augustine's apologetics for the possibility of true philosophy as well as of Christianity. The equation 3+7=10 proves that there is a Truth that enlightens our minds.[19] Thus the proclamation of faith that there is a gracious God who is the truth is even surer than mathematical truths that can only be known by God's grace. "I believe it was you who taught me this, because it is the truth and there is no other teacher of truth besides you."[20] In his early dialogues, Augustine delights in Christianity because of its explanation for the possibility of finding and knowing truths. Even in the *Confessions*, Augustine's epistemology is prominent. Indeed, his opening question in the *Confessions* is "How can I come to know?" and his closing answer is "The Truth says to seek and you shall find. The Truth promises."

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est corpus unum, quid sit unum novi: ubi enim si non nossem, multa in corpore numerare non possem. Ubicumque autem unum noverim, non utique per corporis sensum novi; quia per corporis sensum non novi nisi corpus, quod vere pureque unum non esse convincimus. […] nisi in luce interiore conspicitur, quam corporalis sensus ignorat?"

[19] Augustine, Against the Academicians (Contra Academicos), Peter King (trans./ed.), Indianapolis, IN 1950, II.3.9: "I declare to both of you […] the sum of one and two and three and four is ten. […] Knowledge is not to be despaired of and it will be clearer than those numbers are." In the original Latin: "Sed nunc ambobus dico […] unum, duo, tria, quatuor simul collecta in summa fieri decem […] nec cognitionem desperandam esse, et manifestiorem futuram, quam sunt illi numeri."

[20] Augustine, Confessions, V.vi.10: "et propterea credo, quod tu me docueris; quoniam verum est, nec quisquam praeter te alius doctor est veri."

As both a Christian and an academic, Augustine was concerned with countering the contrary epistemologies of the gnostics and the skeptics. He feared biblical literalism and the gnostic claim that only an elite can know truth by accessing esoteric teachings. There are no ways of evaluating truth claims from outside the cult. Augustine also feared the despair of the academic skeptics who claimed that knowledge simply cannot be had. Beyond fear and despair, Augustine also found that neither the gnostics nor skeptics were empirically adequate in their attempts to explain the phenomena of knowing that is part of everyday lived experience. Common experience showed Augustine that humans do know some things, for example that 1=1 and that the world exists. Moreover, the experiences he had as student and as teacher suggested that he had the ability to communicate with language and the ability to gather sense data into concepts. Thus, Augustine rejects both esotericism and skepticism as empirically inadequate responses to explain common lived experience. In contrast, he argues that the better philosophical answer to the epistemological question is the Christian answer that there is God who is the Truth which makes all things True that are True, and who works with human minds so that they might know those true things. Augustine proclaims this epistemology throughout all his early works.

In *On the Freedom of the Will,* he writes, "Had not my love of finding the truth obtained divine aid, I could never have found my way out or breathed the pure air of free inquiry."[21] In the Teacher, he explains, "Our real Teacher is he who is so listened to, who is said to dwell in the inner person, namely Christ, that is, the unchangeable power and eternal wisdom of God."[22] In the *Confessions,* he explains that all philosophers know only through Christ, even if they are unaware that it is through Christ that they know.

Indeed, they sought with their mind and with their ingenuity which you gave them. By means of these they have discovered many things and foretold eclipses of the sun and moon many years before they happened. They predicted the day and the hour and the duration. And their numbers were not wrong. And it happened as they provided this information that they discovered rules and they wrote these down. They are read today and they predict what year and what month of the year and what day of the month and what hour of the day and what part of the light will be eclipsed – the moon or the sun. And things happen as they have predicted. And people are amazed and stunned if they do not know this art. And they exalt them and extoll what is known. And because of this, these natural philosophers become proud, turning away from your light. They predicted the eclipse of the sun but did not see the eclipse of your light. And they could not see your

[21] Augustine, De Libero Arbitrio, I.ii.4: "ut nisi mihi amor inveniendi veri opem divinam impetravisset, emergere inde, atque in ipsam primam quaerendi libertatem respirare non possem."

[22] Augustine, De Magistro, in: Augustine, Augustine's Early Writings, J. H. S. Burleigh (trans./ed.), Philadelphia, PA 1953, I.xi.38: "Ille autem qui consulitur, docet, qui in interiore homine habitare dictus est Christus, id est incommutabilis dei virtus atque sempiterna sapientia."

presence (indeed they did not seek from religion to know where their ingenuity came from). […] They say they are wise attributing what you are to themselves, as through this they study most perversely, attributing what is of themselves to you. Certainly they confer their mendacity to you, who is the truth […] They convert your truth into lies and they call to and serve the creatures rather than the creator.[23]

Augustine was not concerned only with Christian apologetics. Rather, he wanted to find a way forward for science and philosophy in an academy that was prone to gnosticism and skepticism and in a culture where concupiscence for bread and circuses rather than the delight in Truth was making it vulnerable to the attacks of the Vandals.

6. Luther's View of Philosophy and Science

It is tempting to assume that Luther, the great reformer of the church, was interested only in Christian theology and was thus of a different mind than the philosopher Augustine. But this would be to forget that Augustine also was concerned about vain philosophy, or inane science done by proud scientists who ascribe their own errors to the Creator.[24] And this would be to forget Luther's own academic interest and his love for the university in which he taught. While Luther rejected the epistemology of the scholastics, he did not oppose academic study or natural science. As Luther put it in his *Lectures on Genesis*,

But [the human] measures the heaven and all the heavenly bodies. And so here there gleams a spark of eternal life, in that the human being busies himself by nature with this knowledge of nature. This concern indicates that [humans] were not created to live permanently in this lowest part of the universe but to take possession of heaven, because in this life they admire, and busy themselves with, the study of, and the concern about, heavenly things.[25]

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[23] Augustine, Confessions, V.iii.4–5: "mente sua enim quaerunt ista et ingenio, quod tu dedisti eis, et multa invenerunt, et praenuntiaverunt ante multos annos defectus luminarium solis et lunae, quo die, qua hora, quanta ex parte futuri essent, et non eos fefellit numerus. et ita factum est, ut praenuntiaverunt; et scripserunt regulas indagatas, et leguntur hodie; atque ex eis praenuntiatur, quo anno et quo mense anni et quo die mensis et qua hora diei et quota parte luminis sui defectura sit luna vel sol: et ita fiet, ut praenuntiatur. Et mirantur haec homines et stupent, qui nesciunt ea, et exultant atque extolluntur qui sciunt, et per impiam superbiam recedentes, et deficientes a lumine tuo, tanto ante solis defectum futurum praevident, et in praesentia suum non vident – non enim religiose quaerunt, unde habeant ingenium, quo ista quaerunt – […] et dicunt se esse sapientes sibi tribuendo quae tua sunt, ac per hoc student perversissima caecitate etiam tibi tribuere quae sua sunt, mendacia scilicet in te conferentes, qui veritas es […], et convertunt veritatem tuam in mendacium, et colunt et servient craeturae potius quam craetori."

[24] Augustine, Confessions, V.iii.5.

[25] LW 1, 46 (Lectures on Genesis [1535–1545]). Inclusive language in brackets. In the original, WA 42, 34,25–29: "et homo coelum et omnia coeli corpora metitur. Quare hic emicat

Luther was committed to supporting the free inquiry of natural scientists. While concerned about contradicting Scripture in the attempt to make a cohesive system of theology and science, Luther's support for science arises precisely from his trust in his Augustinian epistemology. Luther was certain that Christ's love proclaimed in Scripture is true. His confidence in the light of that love led to confidence in the worth of study. Scripture not only allows but gives a foundation for free and humble inquiry in science precisely because Scripture proclaims that the Truth is friendly-hearted towards human beings, promising to open the door to those who knock. As an Ockhamist in the study of science, Luther expects the scientist to create theories, models, and taxonomies that are parsimonious in their attempt to explain adequately the empirical data they discover. Rejecting attempts to understand the underlying substance that is unobservable, Ockham insisted on empiricism as the means to gather knowledge in science. What can be said and known in science is the empirical data; the theories that are induced are held as constructs to explain the data rather than as insights into some unseen reality in itself. As such, Luther's view of the natural science of his day owes much to Ockham. However, Luther's view at times also seems Academic or Ciceronian in its skeptical humility. This combination of empiricism and skepticism is evident in the scientific inquiry in Lutheran provinces where physics and astronomy thrived in early modernity.

7. Contemporary Epistemology and Science

Luther's Augustinian epistemology influenced his colleagues in the Wittenberg circle. In Andreas Osiander's foreword to Copernicus's *On the Revolutions of the Heavens* which was published with Luther's permission. Osiander explains,

> For it is the duty of an astronomer to compose the history of the celestial motions through careful and expert study. Then he must conceive and devise the causes of these motions or hypotheses about them. Since he cannot in any way attain to the true causes, he will adopt whatever suppositions enable the motions to be computed correctly from the principles of geometry for the future as well as for the past. The present author (Copernicus) has performed both these duties excellently. […] The philosopher will perhaps rather seek the semblance of the truth. But neither of them will understand or state anything certain, unless it has been divinely revealed to him. Therefore alongside the ancient hypotheses, which are no more probable, let us permit these new hypotheses also to become known, especially since they are admirable as well as simple and bring with them a huge treasure of very skillful observations. So far as hypotheses are concerned, let no one expect anything certain from astronomy, which cannot furnish it, lest he accept as the truth ideas

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scintilla aeternae vitae, quod homo naturaliter exercetur in illa naturae cognitione. Significat enim cura illa homines non eo conditos, ut in hac infima orbis parte semper vivant, sed ut coelum possideant, quod in hac vita admirantur et occupantur studio et cura coelestium rerum."

conceived for another purpose, and depart from this study a greater fool than when he entered it. Farewell.[26]

Osiander's words to the medieval academy and lay scientists are still powerful today. Christians need not fear nor ignore natural science; the study of nature arises from the divine spark already existing in the human mind. The student of nature, however, need not assume that a rationally deduced theory can be proven true. Rather she must remember that the scientific goal is to discover or create a most probable hypothesis. The preferred theory is the most simple and elegant. Indeed, the requirement for modern physics, biology, and medicine is that scientists maintain an open mind to always pursue a better hypothesis and theory which best fits the observed phenomena. Osiander's Lutheran words, grounded in Augustinian epistemology, Ockhamist empiricism, and Academic humility, reminds Christians that they have nothing to fear from science but much to fear from gnosticism: blind faith to dogma that is esoteric rather than universally accessible.

8. Augustinian Epistemology and a Lutheran Understanding of the Church

Luther concurs with Augustine that Christ is the light who facilitates knowledge in all humans. And like Augustine, Luther insists on the relation of Christ to the church. He reminds his reader in *On the Babylonian Captivity of the Church* that "Augustine confesses that he believed the Gospel because he was moved by the authority of the church which proclaimed that this is the Gospel."[27] Indeed in the first chapter of the Confessions Augustine declares, "My faith calls to you,

[26] Andreas Osiander, Preface, in: Nicholas Copernicus, De Revolutionibus (On the Revolutions), Edward Rosen (trans.), Baltimore, MD 1978; online at http://www.webexhibits.org/calendars/year-text-copernicus.html (accessed March 1, 2018); the original Latin text is Nicolai Copernici Torinensis, De revolutionibus orbium coelestium libri VI, printer Johannes Petrejus (1497–1550), former owner Michele Poccianti (1535–1576); SS. Annunziata Church, Florence, Italy; online at https://archive.org/details/nicolaicopernici00cope_1/page/n9 (accessed July 25, 2019): "Est enim Astronomi propium, historiam motuum coele stium diligenti & artificiosa obseruatione colligere. Deinde causas earundem, seu hypotheses, cum ueras assequi nulla ratione possit, qualescunque excogitare & confingere, quibus suppositis, idem motus, ex Geometriae principiis, tam in futuru quam in praeteritu recte possint calculari. Horu aute utrimque egregie praestitit hic artifex […] Philosophus fortasse, ueri similitudinem magis regis requiret, neuter tamen quicquam certi compraehedet, aut tradet, nisi diuinitus illi reuelatum fuerit. Sinamus igitur & has nouas hypotheses, inter ueteres, nihilo uerisimiliores inno tescere, praefereim cum admiribiles simul, & faciles sint ingen temoque thesaurum, doctissimarum observationum secum aduehant. Neque quisquam, quod ad hypotheses attinet, quicqua certi ab Astronomia expectet, cum ipsa nihil tale praestare que at, ne si in alium usum conficta pro ueris arripiat, stultior ab hac disciplina discedat, quam accesserit. Vale."

[27] LW 36, 107 (On the Babylonian Captivity [1520]); in the original, WA 6, 561,4–6: "Augustinus confitetur, se Euangelio credidisse motum autoritate Ecclesiae, quae hoc esse Euangelium praedicabat."

Lord, the faith which you gave to me and inspired in me through the humanity of your Son, who became human, and through the ministry of your preacher."[28] For Luther, as Augustine, the church is a vehicle for God's Word. It is in the church that Augustine heard Ambrose preach, and it is in the church that Luther continued to preach after his reformation breakthrough. Luther is often blamed for the idea that God relates directly to the believer without any form of mediation. Yet this position is erroneous. Luther was a strong advocate for the role of the church in aiding this relationship. As Luther states,

> For the word of God is powerful enough, when uttered, to change even a godless heart, which is no less unresponsive and helpless than any infant. […] Nor should I doubt that even a godless adult could be changed, in any of the sacraments, if the same church prayed for and presented him, as we read of the paralytic in the Gospel who was healed through the faith of others. I should be ready to admit that in this sense the sacraments of the new Law are efficacious in conferring grace, not only to those who do not, but even to those who do most obstinately present an obstacle. What obstacle cannot be removed by the faith of the church and the prayer of faith?[29]

In his own lifetime, Luther was presented with an ecclesiological challenge. On one hand, he claims that faith is an understanding that transforms the believer and the world the believer sees. For Luther, faith creates the deity, by making the deity real for the believer.[30] Thus, it is necessary that the church preach faith rightly and that congregants are faithful. Yet, that very right teaching in faith insists that it is Christ, not the preacher nor the listener, who gives and receives faith. In this way Luther stood against the Anabaptists, preaching fiercely against their requirement that only the faithful receive baptism saying that such a requirement reveals a lack of faith themselves in Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit. His theology of grace through faith included the central epistemology of faith through grace. The believer is not responsible for coming to faith since God comes to the individual and inspires faith. Often God comes to the individual through the community of the church. This is why Luther, like Augustine, supported infant baptism. Luther explains, "Infants are aided by the faith of others namely those who bring them for baptism."[31] Just as Luther opposed requiring

[28] Augustine, Confessions, I. i. 1: "invocat te, domine, fides mea, quam dedisti mihi, quam inspirasti mihi per humanitatem filii tui, per ministerium praedicatoris tui."

[29] LW 36, 74 (On the Babylonian Captivity [1520]); in the original, WA 6, 538,7–9, 11–16: "Sicut enim verbum dei potens est, dum sonat, etiam impii cor immutare, quod non minus est surdum et incapax quam ullus parvulus, […] Nec dubitarem, etiam adultum impium, eadem Ecclesia orante et offerente, posse in quovis sacramento mutari, sicut de paralytico Euangelico legimus, aliena fide sanato. Atque hac ratione libens admitterem, sacramenta novae legis esse efficatia ad dandam gratiam non modo non ponentibus sed etiam obstinatissime ponentibus obicem. Quid enim fides Ecclesiae et oratio fidei non tolleret."

[30] LW 26, 228 (Commentary on Galatians [1531/1535], to Gal 3:6); in the original, WA 40/1, 360,5–6: "Fides est creatrix divinitatis, non in persona, sed in nobis."

[31] LW 36, 73; in the original, WA 6, 538,2–3: "Sumus enim et ipsi parvuli, in Christo assidue baptisati."

the infant to believe before she was baptized, Luther likewise opposed banning congregants from communion. He reminded his fellow pastors that even Judas was allowed to take the Last Supper.[32] It is often through the sacraments that believers come to believe, for Christ works in and through the sacraments. Just as Augustine denounced the Donatists for claiming that a baptism performed by an unworthy priest was ineffective, Luther reminded his followers that Mass from a wicked priest is no less efficacious than that performed by a good priest. It is Christ, not the priest, who acts efficaciously.[33] And yet it is essential that the priest understand this, which is why both Luther and Augustine call into account those priests who preach otherwise.

Luther's epistemological agreement with Augustine has profound ecclesiological consequences during times of a divided western church. Augustine's arguments against the Donatists and Luther's arguments against the ban are both founded on an unshakeable trust that Christ is the light who enlightens through word and sacrament. Given the situation of ecclesial schisms today, Christians would do well to appropriate Luther's and Augustine's theological commitment to the acknowledgement of one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. The church is founded on Christ who incorporates Christians into ecclesial fellowship through baptism. Yet Christians concerned with the church's unity must go beyond Luther and Augustine by extending their commitment to Christ's salvific efficacy in the Eucharist to endorse an open table, while insisting that the endorsement relies on a firm faith that Christ is present in the table. It is Christ who converts the believer, not the will of the priest and nor that of the congregant.

9. Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to explain Luther's Augustinian epistemology. As Oberman saw it, the Augustinian Luther rejected Aristotle's epistemology and the neo-Aristotelianism of the scholastics. While Aristotle proposed that a property of the individual human mind created universals, Augustine claimed that the human mind could only come to know by the aid of divine illumination. For Augustine and Luther, there is good reason to trust in Christ. All human knowledge attests to the miracle that knowledge is even possible. Just as the certainty of mathematics grips the student, so does faith in a God who loves humans on account of the divine gift of the light and love of Christ. Augustine wrote in detail of the mystical experience of being captured by Christ. Luther, while not quite employing Augustine's language (no God whispered in Luther's ear and if she had she might have had an inkpot thrown at her), likewise asserted that he was captive to Christ. He described his conversion in terms of illumination.

[32] LW 36, 56; in the original, WA 6, 526,7: "Iudas traditor in coena domini, …"
[33] LW 36, 55 (= WA 6, 525,33–37).

Both Luther and Augustine were concerned with the implications of an Augustinian epistemology for academy and church. They advocated the free study of science done with a humility that prevented vain or empty knowledge of unobservables. And both insisted on a church founded on Christ. Augustine raged against gnostics and Vandals while mourning the destruction of schools and churches throughout the Roman Empire. He urged Christians to read works in natural science and not to dispute them with Scripture. From the pulpit he preached that every congregant needed to ask questions and use reason – the light of Christ – to deepen her faith and help her neighbor who struggled with their own questions. Luther preached the friendly face of God against the arrogance of scholastics and radical fanatics who sought to save themselves through their own reason or faith. Luther preached the friendly God who gave faith freely as a gift. The assurance of faith comforted Luther during times of fear. Both men spent their lives reading, writing, preaching, disputing, questioning, and praying with both humility and security that the Truth was bound to them in friendship. Such faith in a friendly God continues to open avenues for Christians seeking Truth today.

Chapter 10

"You are Mine, and I am Yours"

The Nuptial Motif in Luther's Theology

Else Marie Wiberg Pedersen

1. Introduction

"Whoever is ashamed of marriage is also ashamed of being human," Martin Luther writes in March 1525, only three months before his marriage to Katharina von Bora.[1] Heiko Oberman meticulously refers to some of Luther's very concrete views on marriage as a natural human and very sensual undertaking in contrast with diverse more ascetic and "respectable" judgments of Luther. With an aside to Heinrich Suso Denifle's hateful disgust of Luther and his positive attitude to marriage and marital sex,[2] Oberman quotes Luther's otherwise censured message to his friend Spalatin on his wedding night. The newly married Luther here calls marriage a gift, emphasizing that this gift has an unequivocal erotic side:

> When you sleep with your Katherine and embrace her, you should think: "This child of humankind, this wonderful creature of God has been given to me by my Christ. May he be praised and glorified." On the evening of the day on which, according to my calculations, you will receive this [letter], I shall make love to my Katherine while you make love to yours, and thus we will be united in love.[3]

One of the great achievements of Oberman's Luther scholarship is that he brought Luther's realistic and concrete worldview, also theologically, to the fore, particularly poignant in the biography, *Luther. Man Between God and Devil* from 1982.

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[1] WA 18, 277,26–27 (Christliche Schrift an Wolfgang Reißenbusch in Lichtenberg, sich in den ehelichen Stand zu begeben [1525]): "Wer sich der Ehe schemet, der schemet sich auch, das er ein mensch sey und heysse." This and the following is cited in Heiko A. Oberman, Luther. Man Between God and the Devil, New Haven, CT/London 1989, 275–276.

[2] Heinrich Suso Denifle, Luther und Luthertum in der ersten Entwicklung, vol. 1/1, Mainz 1906, 115.

[3] WA.B 3, 635 (No. 952, 23–28; Letter to Spalatin, December 6, 1525): "… cum in thoro suauissimis amplexibus & osculis Catharinam tenueris, ac sic cogitaueris: En hunc hominem, optimam creaturulam Dei mei, donauit mihi Christus meus, sit illi laus & gloria. Ego quoque, cum diuinauero diem, qua has acceperis, mox ea nocte simili opere meam amabo in tui memoriam & tibi par pari referam." Trans. E. M. W. P.

In most of the history of the Christian church, the Old Testament has served as a book about Christ and the church. Not least the most difficult and perhaps most disputed of the Old Testament texts, the Song of Solomon, has been a favorite to interpret by the church fathers from Origen on through the centuries, culminating in the twelfth century's monastic setting. The Song with its erotic love poetry and rich nuptial imagery playing on all facets and perspectives of the couple's highly carnal longing for the ultimately sublime embrace (in the bed chamber) inspired and provoked the exegetes who wanted to explain why such a text was included in the Christian canon.

The nuptial imagery is taken from a long tradition going back to Jewish exegesis that reads the Song of Songs allegorically as the marital love bond between God, the bridegroom, and God's people, the bride. Already in the early church, Christian exegetes such as Hippolytus of Rome and Origen learned from Jewish exegetes to interpret the image of the bride and groom allegorically as this conjugal love bond between God and God's people. The literal sense of the Song was determined by the assumption that Solomon wrote the poem for his Egyptian bride (1 Kgs 3:1). Christian exegesis combined this interpretation with Pauline formulations on the relation between Christ and the church (2 Cor 11:2; Eph 5:22–32), and in the early and medieval periods the Song was counted among the biblical writings that treated most deeply the mystery of the church's and the believer's relation to God in Christ. Origen identified the Song as a dramatic *epithalium*, and was at pains to keep its meaning on a purely spiritual level. While explicating the Song as a dialogue between bride and bridegroom and determining its subject to be *theologia*, Origen allegorized the individual voices of the poem as those of Christ and the church, while he interpreted the collective voices of their attendants to be the choirs of angels and believers.

In the Christian Bible, God's marriage to humankind is a recurrent motif depicted through a number of metaphors:

1. God the Creator (Is 54:5; 62:5) or Christ, the Son of God, betrothed (or already married) to the church (2 Cor 11:2; Eph 5:22–32; Rom 7:4).
2. The living Word (and Wisdom of God) with whom the human soul longs (*eros*) to be united in an eternal love bond (the Song; Mt 25:1–13).
3. The Lamb of God to be married to the heavenly bride, Jerusalem (Rv 19:7–9; 21:2, 10), or the King(dom) of heaven (Mt 22:1–14).

During the Middle Ages these biblical pictures and metaphors were conflated. But already Gregory the Great, in the sixth century, sums up the various readings in the prologue to his exposition of the Song before he embarks on first the ecclesiological and thereafter the individual interpretation (like Origen and Gregory of Nyssa did before him): the bride is the church, the people of God, or the human soul longing (*eros*) for union with Christ. Bede continues the patristic tradition while firmly stressing the individual interpretation and just as firmly

dismissing the Mariological interpretation (cf. Ambrose) of the bride. Bede's twofold interpretation was widely disseminated and formed the pattern for commentaries on the Song for the next three hundred years. No commentaries were written between the mid-ninth and the mid-eleventh centuries. During the eleventh century, interpretations of the bride of the Song and the bride of Revelation (Rv 21) were conflated in Robert of Tomberlaine's (d. ca. 1090) and John of Mantua's (d. ca. 1083) combination of an ascetic-contemplative and church-political approach, in which apocalyptic expectations for the final wedding of the lamb with the church of the elect loom large.

In the exegesis of the canonical schools, Origen was reinstated as an important source for commentaries of the Song, and the ecclesiological interpretation was again prominent in the most influential of texts from the twelfth century, the *Glossa Ordinaria*. Monastic exegesis, especially in the Cistercian tradition, continued Origen's twofold interpretation with its emphasis on the spiritual erotic drama between the bride soul and the Word or the bride church and Christ.

Over the centuries Christian commentators provided three different interpretations: the ecclesiological (the church as the bride of Christ, the bridegroom); the individual (the soul as the bride of the Word, Christ); and the Mariological (Mary as the bride, at once the virgin mother of Christ and the church/the faithful disciple) – sometimes in juxtaposition and sometimes in apposition with the first two, the ecclesiological and the individual, being dominant understandings.

2. Queering the Erotic

In explaining the longing, the *eros*, for the unification of bride and bridegroom (or the consummation of the marriage), the tradition from Origen is adamant in its employment of the Song's very own erotic terminology. This tradition does not consider the erotic poem a bizarre biblical text. Rather, the Song and its nuptial imagery sublimely expressed what allegorically or typologically was nothing less than God's love relation to the divinely created world. Gregory of Nyssa explained why the Song was the favorite text on the nuptial metaphor in the following way:

This we learn only from this headline – that exactly so far as the Songs of the holy has been lifted up above the song of mundane wisdom, the Song's mystery (*mysterion*) stands above the holy songs – that human nature when looking for fullness (*pleon*) can find neither grasp anything greater than this. Therefore the most powerful of what can effect lust (I mean erotic passion) (*lego de to erotikon patos*) depicts doctrines in an enigmatic way in order that we through them learn that the soul, which looks at the inaccessible beauty of the divine nature with an unaccustomed gaze, must love this as much as the body is inclined toward the similar and familiar, whilst passion is transformed to impassion (*apateia*) so that every bodily sense is obliterated and that then through the spirit

only our mind (intellect) burns of love, heated by that fire, which the Lord threw on the earth.[4]

To Gregory of Nyssa, allegorical exegesis is the means by which to reach the deeper meaning of the text, to transform the bodily sense to the spiritual and the physical to the metaphysical. Yet, not as a simple dualism between opposites, but rather in order to combine the two realms, the divine and the human in a complex way. The Song is then, according to Gregory the Great, "the song of union with God which is sung by the Bridegroom and Bride at their wedding. This is, of all the songs, so much the more sublime because of its being sung at a wedding feast of the most sublime solemnity," and as God calls the divine self, bridegroom, when God wishes to be loved, "through this song the Lord is embraced with a more intimate love."[5] Thus, in Gregory's perception to love God (God as bridegroom) is dearer to God than to fear God (God as Master) or honoring God (God as Father). Accordingly, still in the words of Gregory the Great:

> when God calls himself "Master," he shows that we are created; when he calls himself "Father," that we are adopted children; when he calls himself "Bridegroom," that we are betrothed (*coniunctos*).[6]

The latter is the more sublime because it indicates a treaty of marriage, Gregory states, whilst underscoring his point intertextually with references to the Bible (both Hos 2:19–20; Jer 2:21; to Jn 3:29; Mt 9:15; 2 Cor 11:2; Eph 5:27; and finally to Rv 19:9 plus 22:2). In continuity with the tradition from Origen, Gregory explains the three orders of life: the theoretical (*enoptic*), the ethical and the physical, reflected in Scripture as the contemplative (*theoria*) life of the Songs in juxtaposition with the moral life of the Proverbs and the natural life of Ecclesiastes.[7]

It is notable how the Song's vivid language of kissing and swelling of breasts is constantly utilized as a hermeneutical and pedagogical tool to explain the loftier things of faith without regard to such petty details as to who ontologically-biologically has breasts, a woman or a man, that will swell and flow with milk. The kisses and breasts function as central metaphors that form a meta-narrative, stripped of bindings to sex, but are nevertheless highly erotic; however, not erotic in any primitive carnal sense of the word. As Gregory the Great emphasizes,

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[4] Gregory The Great's Expositio in Canticis Canticorum 773 N S 27, z 1 ff., quoted in Kerstin Bjerre-Aspegren, Bräutigam, Sonne und Mutter. Studien zu einigen Gottesmetaphern bei Gregor von Nyssa, Malmø 1977, 65. English translation from the Greek and German E. M. W. P.

[5] Gregory the Great, "Exposition of the Song of Songs," n. 7, quoted as translated into English in Denys Turner, Eros and Allegory. Medieval Exegesis of the Song of Songs, Kalamazoo, MI 1995, 222.

[6] Gregory the Great, Expos. n. 8, quoted in Turner, Eros and Allegory (as note 5), 222. Note that Gregory uses the term "united" (*coniunctos*), translated by Turner as "betrothed."

[7] Gregory the Great, Expos. n. 8–9; quoted in Turner, Eros and Allegory (as note 5), 222–223.

the Song's earthly language is a means to lift humans from mere human understanding to what transcends the human world. Divine meanings are clothed in carnal words in order to bring humans from external speech to an inner understanding[8] that the soul may be moved from "numbness into warmth" by way of familiar words. Knowing how easy it is to misunderstand such carnal language as that of the Song, Gregory continues:

> For in this book are described kisses, breasts, cheeks, limbs; and this holy language is not to be held in ridicule because of these words. Rather we are provoked to reflect on the mercy of God; for by his naming of the parts of the body by which he calls us to love we must be made aware of how wonderfully and mercifully he works in us; for he goes so far as to use the language of our shameful loves in order to set our heart on fire with a holy love. Thus in humbling himself by the manner of his speech he raises us in understanding: we learn, from the words of this lower love, with what intensity we must burn with love of God.[9]

Hence, pertaining to the kiss of the bridegroom mentioned in Song 1:1, Gregory explains each of the four senses, the *Quadriga*, of this kiss. According to the literal (or historical) sense, the bridegroom's kiss represents the marriage of king Solomon to the daughter of Pharaoh. According to the allegorical sense, the kiss represents Christ incarnate reconciling with the whole church (or the entire humanity). According to the tropological sense, it signifies Christ as the just judge forgiving the sins of the human soul. Finally, according to the anagogical sense, the bridegroom's kiss represents the heavenly king uniting with the church in all eternity. As Gregory puts it: "To speak mouth to mouth is, in a way, to kiss, and to touch the mind with an interior understanding."[10] The entire human race, represented by the church, has been longing for the absent bridegroom to become present and, metaphorically speaking, open his mouth.[11]

Origen thus relates the physical opening of mouth and its allegorical interpretation to the incarnation of the Word, Christ the Logos. The conflation between literal and allegorical senses alludes to the actual speaking and preaching this word, which simultaneously is the expression of how much God loves the world. Origen, like other interpreters, interprets the Song's discourse in a Johannine frame. As Origen had it, there is only one New Testament or Scripture on the love of God, and the Song is part of that Testament. Through Bede, most medieval interpreters followed this ecclesiological, soteriological, and eschatological

[8] Gregory the Great, Expos. n. 2, quoted in Turner, Eros and Allegory (as note 5), 217.
[9] Gregory the Great, Expos. n. 3, quoted in Turner, Eros and Allegory (as note 5), 217–218.
[10] Gregory the Great, Expos. n. 15, quoted in Turner, Eros and Allegory (as note 5), 228.
[11] Gregory the Great, Expos. n. 12–13. Cf. Turner, Eros and Allegory (as note 5), 225–226.

reading – notably Bernard, who adds the Christological interpretation of the kiss to the other senses: the kiss according to Bernard also signifies the great joining (*magna conjunctio*) of the two natures of Christ.

The richness of the interpretation of the breasts mentioned in Song 1:2b is even greater than that of the kiss. In line with Origen's allegorical attachment of the words to the different players in the divine drama that takes place, the Song's breasts were most often attributed to the bridegroom. The bridegroom is provided with a feminine identity in the capacity of being the wisdom of God, and his breasts and nursing capacity are associated with God's nourishment of the human soul (1 Cor 3:2; 1 Pt 2:2) and of the church.

Gregory the Great interprets the bridegroom's breasts as God's sudden presence when the bride church has been sighing erotically for his mouth, meaning God's word. The breasts of the bridegroom thereby constitute the very center of the poem's human discourse. They signify God's preaching (the milk of the New Testament) in contrast with the law's teaching (the wine of the Old Testament), the two breasts more specifically symbolize God's loving-kindness and God's grace, alternately, through the incarnation of the Word. Furthermore, in Gregory's direct terminology, the wording "your breasts are more delightful than wine" means that "the breasts of God … are the preaching of his most humble Incarnation" and as such surpasses mundane wisdom, the wine.[12]

Like the kisses, the breasts of the bridegroom have three significant deeper meanings beyond the literal to be perceived. Allegorically, the breasts signify God's incarnated wisdom on earth on which humans may feed, that is God's preaching. Tropologically, the breasts signify Christ's most humble preaching. Finally, in the anagogical sense, the bridegroom's breasts signify the eternal embrace between God and the soul or church. Generally speaking, the Song's imagery is understood in a Neo-Platonist manner as a formal analogy of proportion. Thus, the breasts are not perceived to be identical to Christ or to the preachers physically; rather, they are employed and function as a purely formal and relational analogy (*analogia relationis*). The analogy is justified because the relation between breasts and the source of their milk is like the relation between the preachers and their interior life.[13] Correspondingly, Gregory interprets the bridegroom's chamber (the bedchamber) where God's people or the soul unites with the Word of God as the "storeroom" in which knowledge is transformed.

The allegory was thus used not in order to diminish but to emphasize the erotic tension of the text. As E. Ann Matter points out, the tension is not an eroticism of the body but an eroticism of the words and concepts inherent in the

[12] Gregory the Great, Expos. n. 16, cross referencing to 1 Cor 1:25. Cf. Turner, Eros and Allegory (as note 5), 228.

[13] Cf. Turner, Eros and Allegory (as note 5), 128.

Song of Songs as such.[14] Many medieval exegetes struggled to keep the sexual words and connotations of the text in place by overemphasizing its spiritual sense. However, their source of inspiration, Origen, did not try to take away the complexity of the text and its meaning. Quite to the contrary, Origen highlighted the ambivalence of what has later been coined "the rhetoric of sexual difference."[15] It was not a question of sexuality or spirituality, neither was it a simple question of sublimation of sexuality, as the typical Christian discourse of modernity since the sixteenth century would reduce it to be.[16]

3. Bernard of Clairvaux and the Queering of Marriage

Bernard of Clairvaux is the medieval exegete who superbly refines the erotic imagery of the bride longing for her bridegroom. Bernard does so with the aim of accentuating both the Christological, the soteriological, and the eschatological character of Christian belief. Simultaneously, he moved the Song into the setting of the monastic elite.

Bernard, who was not only the leading theologian of the Cistercian order, but also of European theology of his time as such, developed a highly original theology of love for which he was revered as much as he was for his sublime rhetorical style. The twelfth century was a time of reform. This reform primarily took the form of a renewal of traditional theology, especially the doctrine of grace and salvation central also to the understanding of the sacraments and the church. The renewal led to a diversification of theologies within three theological groupings: scholastic theologies; monastic theologies; and the theologies of intellectual circles – a diversification encompassing different personal profiles and theological genres, which again reinforced the renewal. All the milieus contributed to the renewal in each their way, covering a wide spectrum of renewal from the renovation of church buildings to a renewal of the spiritual heritage in the endeavors of creating new forms of religious life.

The renewal culminated when Bernard's carrier was at its height in the years between 1125 and 1150 when we see Bernard criticizing the establishment, the nobility, the chivalry, and the church as institutions for abandoning a true and honest Christian life, sometimes vehemently so in a way we do not see by the scholastics. Bernard based his critique foremost on his in-depth Bible studies, and we know that the Cistercians prepared a more correct Bible than the Vul-

[14] E. Ann Matter, The Voice of My Beloved. The Song of Songs in Western Medieval Christianity (The Middle Ages Series), Pennsylvania, PA 1990, 33.

[15] Barbara Johnson, The Critical Difference. Essays in the Contemporary Rhetoric of Reading, Baltimore, MD 1984, 13.

[16] Cf. Michel Foucault, The History of Sexuality. An Introduction, Robert Hurley (trans.), New York 1978, 17–35.

gate edition, to which purpose the Cistercians collaborated with the Jewish community in Troyes. However, he also based it on his studies of texts by such figures as Origen and Augustine, thus combining eastern and western theology in his own cocktail. Like many of his contemporaries, Bernard wanted to resume those ideals of the primitive church (*ecclesia primitiva*) associated with peace and social harmony (Acts 4:32), which stood in stark contrast with the society and societal life they experienced. The most important ideal of the time was the ideal of apostolic life. The Cistercians revived the Benedictine rule as they reformed their order, inspired by the life of the desert fathers. Hence, in the monasteries focus was on Bible studies accompanied by meditation and prayer, the *lectio divina*, followed by theological conversation about the biblical text, the *conversationes theologiae*.[17] The teaching in the monasteries was directed towards the living faith and spiritual growth with the ideal monastic community as matrix for the exemplary Christian life. In order to be formed according to the Christian matrix incarnated in Jesus Christ, monks and nuns learned that the recognition of themselves as sinners (the confession of sin) and the recognition of God as the God of life (the confession of faith) were inseparable as already Augustine taught. Therefore, monastic theology, Cistercian theology not least, focused on how to understand anthropology, love, faith, and the relation between divine grace and the human will.

Significant to Bernard's methodology when expounding the Song is the combination of the "book of Scripture" and the "book of experience," which has as its main purpose the communication of the gospel (*evangelizare*). Bernard recurrently points to Paul's didactics and pedagogical strategy when he explicates how this evangelization, the communication of the Christian message in and through Christ, should take place. However, one finds the pedagogical pattern laid out in his first ten sermons to the Song of Songs. First then, after having explicated the Pauline didactical and pedagogical dialectics, he explains the difference between addressing professional monks (*fratres*) and addressing worldly people (*aliis de saeculo*) according to 1 Corinthians 2:6–13. Thus Bernard establishes the context in which he is speaking. His address is the educated monk who by way of Bible study and his own experience is able to understand the Song of Songs in its true sense of ceremonious praise of God.

Bernard bases his understanding of God as love on Scripture, and from that outset he takes the Song very seriously to be an expression of godly love. As in his treatise *On Loving God* and his other texts, he always reads Scripture with Scripture, or as we would say, his reading is inter-textual. Grounded on what

[17] The scholastics' method was a *lectio*, a study of the collections of commentaries (*sententiae*) followed by a *disputatio*. It was a more abstract work with various theological themes disconnected from a living faith but rather shaped according to a canonical calculation that, as I read the development, became predominant from the second half of the twelfth century and then became dominant from Fourth Lateran in 1215 onwards.

is predominantly a combination of Paul and John (1 Jn 4:20; Jn 3:16; Rom 5:8–10), Bernard sets out to interpret the double love commandment of God and neighbor, and as always, he insists on understanding every word of the text. It is evident to him to explain the most puzzling formulations, and consequently he tries to answer the difficult question of what it means to love one's neighbor as oneself. This question is neither his beginning nor his end. Firmly based on Scripture, Bernard teaches with John that God is love, which is also the gift of God: "Charity is the divine substance. I am saying nothing new or unusual, just what John says: 'God is love' (1 Jn 4:8). Therefore, it is rightly said, charity is God, and the gift of God (Eph 2:8)."[18] Bernard thus teaches that God-talk logically must be about love, because God in and out of love gave us ourselves in creation and *a fortiori* gave us God's self in salvation through Christ on the cross, simultaneously giving us back ourselves from sin.[19] In this manner, Bernard has composed his treatise according to the double understanding of Christ as gift and example (*donum et exemplum*): "Thus charity gives charity; substantial charity produces the quality of charity. Where it signifies the giver, it takes the name of substance; where it means the gift, it is called a quality."[20]

In Bernard's exposition of theology, the triune God of love is also the triune God of life who, out of divine love, created and saved humans, and who has entered into a love relationship with humans. This God sets love right in humans in the continuum from carnal to spiritual love through the grace of God (*per Dei gratiam*), and through faith in Christ incarnated and crucified.[21] God, who loved us first, "loved freely, and even enemies."[22] Hence, also the love for neighbor and enemy is an extension of God's love turned into benevolence, when humans do not deny their neighbor what they refuse to themselves: for "how can one love one's neighbor with purity, if one does not love him in God?"[23] The true love of God is disinterested love (*amor castus*), which does not seek itself, and not until

[18] Bernard of Clairvaux, De Diligendo Deo (Dil) XII:35: "me aestimet caritatem hic … substantiam illam divinam, quod utique nec novum, nec insolitum est, dicente Iohanne: Deus caritas est. Dicitur ergo recte caritas, et Deus, et Dei donum." In: Gerhard B. Winkler (ed.), Bernhard von Clairvaux. Sämtliche Werke (lateinisch/deutsch), 10 vols., Innsbruck 1990–1999, 1, 74–145 (here 134). The English translation is from Bernard of Clairvaux, On Loving God, Kalamazoo, MI 1995 [1973], 37. Cf. Bernard of Clairvaux, Sermones de Cantica Canticorum (SC) 83.4: "Deus caritas est." For a detailed exposition of Bernard's theology, see Else Marie Wiberg Pedersen, Bernard af Clairvaux. Teolog eller mystiker? [Bernard of Clairvaux: Theologian or Mystic?], Copenhagen 2008.

[19] Dil V:15.

[20] Bernard of Clairvaux, On Loving God, 37. Dil XII:35: "Itaque caritas dat caritatem, substantiva accidentalem. Ubi dantem significat, nomen substantiae est; ubi donum, qualitatis."

[21] Dil III:7; XV:39. Cf. SC 4.4. Bernard often quotes 1 Cor 2:2: "I will know of nothing else than Jesus Christ, and him as crucified" and Gal 6:14: "As for me, I can boast of nothing else but the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ," in his works.

[22] Dil I:1: "Dilexit ergo Deus, et gratis, et inimicos."

[23] Dil VIII:25: "Alioquin proximum pure diligere quomodo potest, qui in Deo non diligit?" In: Winkler (ed.), Bernhard, 1, 139.

humans fulfill the double commandment of loving God and neighbor as themselves (as *imago Dei*), that love is set in order. This love is led by grace and sought by faith.[24]

Bernard does not tie God to sex or gender. Quite to the contrary, God transcends sex and gender as much as God transcends anything human and mundane. God is both father and mother, just and loving-kind. Therefore, the tradition of ascribing breasts to God the bridegroom fits magnificently into Bernard's continuously gender transcending or gender crossing imagery and discourse. Bernard continues Origen's tradition of sexual ambiguity, sets up a true nuptial feast drama, and starts attributing the breasts to the bridegroom that the bride, who longs for the bridegroom, highly commends:

> O my bridegroom, you are responsible; you have honored me so greatly with the nurturing sweetness of your breasts, that by your love and not by my own temerity I have put aside all fear, and may seem to have been more daring than is proper. I do indeed make bold, but it is because I am convinced of your goodness, forgetful of your majesty.[25]

The bridegroom feeds the "milk children" with the divine nourishment of love and mercy, and the bride can be male as well as female. Central in this passage is that the love of God is imitated in human life:

> While the bride is conversing about the Bridegroom, he, …, suddenly appears, yields to her desire by giving her a kiss … the filling up of her breasts is proof of this. For so great is the potency of that holy kiss, that no sooner has the bride received it than she conceives and her breasts grow rounded with the fruitfulness of conception, bearing witness, as it were, with this milky abundance. Men with an urge to frequent prayer will have experience of what I say. Often enough when we approach the altar our hearts are dry and lukewarm. If we persevere, however, there comes an unexpected infusion of grace, our breast expands, as it were and our interior is filled with an overflowing love; and if someone were to press upon it then, this milk of sweet fecundity would gush forth in streaming richness. Let us hear the bridegroom: "You have received, my love, what you asked for, and here is a sign to show you, your breasts are better than wine; henceforth you will know that you have received the kiss because you will be conscious of having conceived." That explains the expansion of your breasts, filled with a milky richness far surpassing the wine of worldly knowledge that can intoxicate indeed but with curiosity, not charity; it fills but does not nourish; puffs up but does not build up; pampers but does not strengthen.[26]

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24 Dil XV:39. For a more detailed treatment of Bernard's and Luther's understanding of faith and grace, see ELSE MARIE WIBERG PEDERSEN, "The Significance of the Sola Fide and the Sola Gratia in the Theology of Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153) and Martin Luther (1483–1546)," in: Luther-Bulletin 18 (2009), 20–43.

25 SC 9.4: "… o sponse, qui in dulcedine uberum tuorum tanta me dignatione lactasti, quatenus omni metu, tui caritate, non mea temeritate, depulso, audeam plus forte quam expediat. Audeo sane, pietatis memor, immemor maiestatis."

26 SC 9.7: "Sponsa loquente de sponso, repente, … adest ille; annuit voto, dat osculum, … Quod et probat ex eius uberum repletione. Tantae nempe efficaciae osculum sanctum est, ut ex ipso mox, cum acceperit illud, sponsa concipiat, tumescentibus nimirum uberibus, et lacte quasi pinguescentibus in testimonium. Quibus studium est orare frequenter, experti sunt quod

As can be seen from this, Bernard's monastic interpretation is mimetic.[27] The Song's nuptial imagery and its erotic discourse is understood as an encoded theological discourse, employed to pattern the life of love that monks, clergy and their prelates are supposed to imitate. The theology of love, described through the metaphor of the erotic marriage, is indeed also socio-political.

4. The Happy Exchange of Love in Marriage

Bernard explicates human love as ideally an imitation of Christ's love. Employing the monastic social life as his frame and the conjugal image of the Song as his hermeneutical key, Bernard spells out the triune God's love for humans as what should pattern inter-human communal life. Christ as the divine Word is the bridegroom, while the individual Christian and the church alternately is the bride.

Bernard already utilized the bridal imagery in his earlier treatises on love. Both in *On Loving God* (ca. 1128/1153) and in *On Grace and Free Choice* (ca. 1128),[28] he wrote about the love affair between God and the soul as the longing for union in love of the bridegroom and his bride. In *On Loving God*, Bernard explains the exchange of love as "a most passionate yet most chaste embrace," while in *On Grace and Free Choice* he focuses on the human bride's need for Christ the bridegroom to set charity in order. Bernard explicates faith's operations in life by way of an utterly poetic language with an ultimately physical and sensual imagery in order to complement life's many dimensions with the spiritual. God's love is in-fleshed and very real, for according to Bernard, God's incarnation and crucifixion are real expressions of God's affection (*affectio*) for humans. Humans must answer this love doxologically by praise and prayer as well as socially by love of neighbor and enemy.

Despite employing a sexually erotic language for the love of God (objectively and subjectively), Bernard warns heftily against an erotic love of self (*amor sui*) and the vain love of the world (*amor mundi*). Again, one must not mistake the eroticism of the words for the eroticism of the body. The text is the body, but the physical body is not the text. The Song of Songs, so easy for the unlearned to mis-

dico. Saepe corde tepido et arido accedimus ad altare, orationi incumbimus. Persistentibus autem repente infunditur gratia, pinguescit pectus, replet viscera pietatis inundatio; et si sit qui premat, lac conceptae dulcedinis ubertim fundere non tardabunt. Dicat ergo: 'Habes, sponsa, quod petisti, et hoc tibi signum, quia meliora facta sunt ubera tua vino: hinc te scilicet noveris osculum accepisse, quod te concepisse sentis.' Unde et ubera tibi intumuerunt, facta in ubertate lactis meliora vino scientiae saecularis, quae quidem inebriat, sed curiositate, non caritate: implens, non nutriens; inflans, non aedificans; ingurgitans, non confortans'."

[27] Cf. Turner, Eros and Allegory (as note 5), 140–142.

[28] Dil XI:33; De gratia et libero arbitrio (hereafter Gra) VI:17, in: Winkler (ed.), Bernhard, 1, 172–249 (178).

read as the "indecent" invitation to a sexual relationship, is only "food" for those who have already attained the self-knowledge of the sinner. The aim of the poem, which Bernard reads in the tradition of Origen as a contemplative text, a *theoricus sermo*, is that of transmitting the insight that life is a graceful gift. Life is created, granted, and upheld by God, wherefore it is the task of humans to receive it openly in its abundant fullness. This is where God's grace plays the central role. Humans are not able to simply follow the God-patterned love; they need God to drag them along (Sg 1:4) by way of divine grace. Humans have to be dragged away from a self-centered life, expressed as and in carnality, by God's grace and mercy, expressed in God incarnated.[29] Using at times quite anthropomorphic language, Bernard describes how the love of God is exchanged in the swelling breasts of the spouses while the bride in the regal marriage's wonderful exchange (*stupenda mirabile*) receives the happy kiss (*felix osculum*) of forgiveness, grace and peace, and also exchanges unbelief with faith, being justified through faith (*iustificati per fidem*).[30]

The metaphors underline that everything *which* humans have is God's gift. Humans have nothing that they were not given; and soteriologically, these gifts are prominently forgiveness of sins and the promise of God's grace. But "the kiss itself is nothing else but the mediator between God and humans, the human being Jesus Christ, who with the Father and the Holy Spirit lives as God and reigns for ever and ever," given to awaken faith and restore peace.[31] Yet, this is not given to anyone as Bernard assures his learned monks. To read Scripture is nothing simple and its message can only be received through faith:

Today we read in the book of experience. You must turn your attention inwards, each one must take note of his own particular awareness of the things which are about to be discussed. I wish to discover if it has been given to each of you to say in his own words (*ex sententia*): "Let him kiss me with the kiss of his mouth." For it is not given to just any human (*hominum*) to say this with emotion (*ex affectu*), but if anyone has received this spiritual kiss (*spirituale osculum*) from the mouth of Christ even one time, he seeks again that intimate experience, and repeats it willingly.[32]

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[29] SC 20–21. See Winkler (ed.), Bernhard, 5, 114–307.

[30] In SC 2.3 and SC 2.8, in which latter Bernard explicates the kiss as a sign of God's grace and eternal peace: "Cuius rei signum? Indulgentiae, gratiae, pacis, et pacis cuius non erit finis." In: Winkler (ed.), Bernhard, 5, 74. Cf SC 9.3: "The kiss was surely what he sought for, that kiss at the touch of which the lips are so bedewed with the richness of spiritual grace, …" In the original: "Osculum omnino petebat, et illud osculum, in cuius tactu perfuses labiis pinguedine gratiae spiritualis, …"

[31] SC 2.9: "… osculum esse non aliud quam mediatorem Dei et hominum, hominum Christum Iesum, qui cum Patre et Spiritu Sancto vivit et regnat Deus per omnia saecula saeculorum."

[32] SC 3.1: "Hodie legimus in libro experientiae. Convertimini ad vos ipsos, et attendat unusquisque conscientiam suam super his quae dicenda sunt. Explorare velim si cui umquam vestrum ex sententia dicere datum sit: 'osculetur me osculo oris sui.' Non est enim cuiusvis hominum ex affectu hoc dicere; sed si quis ex ore Christi spirituale osculum vel semel accepit, hunc proprium experimentum profecto sollicitat, et repetit libens."

In Bernard's phraseology, love is the fundamentally socializing factor in life, taking place in a circulation of love between God and humans. With the Trinity as a sublime love affair in an eternal kiss and Christ, the bridegroom's breasts of patience and forgiveness abundantly flowing with the grace to humans through the kiss of love, Bernard sets up a program for a life in love. Not a romantic love, not a sex relation, but love in its demanding reality of giving and receiving. According to Bernard, humans can only enter this relationship as a gift. *Caritas* is the divine substance, it is God's being as giver, whereas God's grace is the quality of love, it is qualified as God's gift.[33] If love is right, there is a clear balance between love as feeling (*affectus*) and love as action (*actus*). Love set in order (*ordo caritatis*) is a love divinely orchestrated.[34] Bernard formulated the exact same message in the treatise *On Grace and the Free Will*, a treatise he wrote because in his other writings he had emphasized God's grace as the sole source of all that is good. Hence, Bernard was asked about what then the responsibility of humans was and embarked on the work on the free choice of humanity in relation to the grace of God. The treatise is essentially a dogmatic exposition of Paul's Letter to the Romans, and in long stretches, much like *On Loving God*, a correction of Anselm's forensic theology. Bernard closes this paradigmatically systematic treatise by emphatically concluding that everything depends on God's free promises and righteousness. God is a loving God who wants God's creatures to spontaneously do God's will. This happens when humans are being Christ-formed through that faith, which is trust in God's promises (e. g. 1 Cor 9:16; 2 Tm 1:12). Bernard thus states: "God is … the author of merit, who both applies the will to the work, and supplies the work to the will. Besides, if the merits which we refer to as ours are rightly so called, then they are seed-beds of hope, incentives to love" (Phil 2:17 and Rom 8:30).[35]

The human self is not the end goal in Bernard's theology. Quite to the contrary, it is the goal to eradicate this self-love from humans and yet acknowledge that this is where we all start and perhaps fall back to while God in God's grace leads us toward a higher form of love – the love of the other – whereas the perfect consummation of love will only happen after death. In this sense humans are deified, namely to love in Christ through faith and by grace.

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[33] Dil XII:35: "caritas dat caritatem, substantive accidentalem. Ubi dantem significant, nomen substantiae est; ubi donum, qualitatis." In: Winkler (ed.), Bernhard, 1, 134.

[34] SC 50.8: "[Deus] ordinavit in me caritatem." In: Winkler (ed.), Bernhard, 6, 180.

[35] Gra XIV:51: "Si igitur a Deo voluntas, et meritum. Nec dubium quod a Deo sit et vel, et perficere pro bona voluntate. Deus ergo auctor est meriti, qui et voluntatem applicat opera, et opus explicat voluntati. Alioquin si proprie appellentur ea, quae dicimus nostra, merita, spei sunt quaedam seminaria, caritatis incentiva." In: Winkler (ed.), Bernhard, 1, 203. Quite interestingly, Bernard both in Dil and Gra indirectly discusses Anselm's theology. While moving the place of God's relation with humans from Anselm's court room to the nuptial bedchamber, Bernard simultaneously states that God's justice is not so much accompanied by an urge for honor as by an urge for love.

5. Luther on Love and Eros

If one searches for *eros* in Luther's vocabulary through the database of the Weimar Ausgabe edition, the term hardly appears, although traditional terms on love: *amor*, *caritas*, and *dilectus* do occur.

Luther clearly understands God as love (*caritas*) ontologically. Accordingly, the most precise picture one could paint of God would be one of love, as the precise painting of love would be one of God, for "love is a picture of God per se" – the living God burning like "an open fire and passion (*brunst*) of love" – as Luther wrote in his sermons to 1 John (1533).[36] Whereas God's substance is love, humans are endorsed with the quality to love. In a cocktail of John and Paul, Luther explicates how God is love and how those who are in love are in God as God is in them, so that God and they will become "one cake" in the divine "oven of love."[37] This means that humans are called to show love and serve in love, love of neighbor. Since God is nothing but love, pouring it abundantly into us, we should let our hearts move to acting in love to our neighbor in a circulation of love. So much so, that "the one who loves the neighbor, has God's self," and should also love the enemy for Christ's sake, he who gave himself on the cross.[38] Like Bernard, Luther accentuates that God is the reason for love, because God loved us first. Through the divine love and the acting of love, humans become God's children, deified, and united with God.[39]

The other focus of the sermons on 1 John is to restore the right balance between faith and love. Luther determines the relation between faith and love as in a Chalcedonian "without confusion, without separation."[40] Faith and love are not the same, yet are interrelated, for faith constitutes the human relationship to God (*coram Deo*, and God is love), love the inter-human relationship (*coram hominibus*).[41] Both these relations should be exercised through an honest heart, and they are connected by grace and forgiveness, which according to Luther are

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[36] WA 36, 416–477, here: 424,17–18, 18–19 (Etliche schöne Predigten aus der Epistel S. Ioannis. Von der Liebe [1533]): "so mů̊st er ein solch bild treffen, das eitel liebe were […], denn ein feur offen und brunst solcher liebe." Luther preached five sermons on 1 John 4:16–21, held between June 9 and July 28, 1532. The word "brunst" is a strongly carnal one for "passionate," a slightly stronger word than Tillich's Freudian "libido."

[37] WA 36, 422–425, citation 425,12–13: "Was ist nu das alles denn eitel brunst und ein glů̊ender backofen voller liebe?" Luther combines 1 Cor 13 and 1 John 4 to underline the unity in love between God and humans by the image of a cake (ein kuche), an image he employs several times, also in this series of sermons, thus alluding to the Eucharist.

[38] WA 36, 431–434: "Si diligit proximum, is habet deum ipsum" (cf. 431,2–3, 7).

[39] WA 36, 437–438, and 461–462. Astonishing to those Lutherans, who prefer to deny any sort of deification or sanctification in Luther's teaching, the following formulation offers specific evidence: "Wer jnn der liebe bleibet […] ist nicht mehr ein lauter mensch, sondern ein Gott […] Denn Gott is selber jnn jm …" (438,20, 21–22, 23).

[40] Cf. WA 36, 454,11–14.

[41] WA 36, 447,33–34.

given not only from God to human beings but from human to human also (cf. Our Lord's Prayer: "Forgive us our trespasses"). In contrast, as Luther warns the "pseudo-Christians," to accentuate only faith and grace on account of works of love is hypocritical and empty. If faith and love are balanced, however, faith being "deeply planted in works of love," humans will grow in love and have nothing to fear, for love leads to a "freidig herz," a frank heart.[42]

6. Marriage as a Happy Exchange

Like Bernard, Luther uses the nuptial metaphor and does it both for the love between God and humans and the inter-personal love between humans. Thus, in his "Sermon on Two Kinds of Righteousness,"[43] Luther operates with the bridal imagery at two levels, both in relation to the first justice, the *iusticia aliena et infusa*, and in relation to the second justice, the *iusticia nostra et propria*. The happy exchange of Christ's justice with our sin takes place in the first, in which the human bride receives all that belongs to Christ the bridegroom – the gifts of grace and faith – while Christ takes away sin from the bride. The bride and bridegroom become one flesh (*una caro*) in this common ownership, just as Christ and the church become one spirit (*unus spiritus*).[44] The very same paradigm we find in Luther's treatise *On the Freedom of a Christian*, in which he explains how faith "unites the soul with Christ, just as the bride is united with the bridegroom. By means of this secret (as the apostle teaches [Eph 5:32]) Christ and the soul become one flesh."[45]

As I read Luther, he – again like Bernard – understands the happy exchange in a slightly asymmetrical way, as he also does in his exposition of Hosea 2[46]: Whereas the bridegroom is the fullness of all good and gives all good things

[42] WA 36, 467–473. Luther speaks of a weak faith that will easily be uprooted in a storm, whereas a faith planted in works of love is strong against the storm caused by a bad conscience: "wo er [der glaube] wol getrieben wird und sich beweiset jnn wercken der liebe, das er eingewortzelt ist und fruchte tregt, so kan er deste fester, unbeweglich und unumbgestossen bleiben" (467,18–20).

[43] WA 2, 145–152 (Sermo de duplici iustitia [1519]). See also my commentary on and translation of LUTHER's Sermon on Two Kinds of Righteousness, AL 2, 9–24.

[44] WA 2, 145,18–21: "Sicut sponsus habet omnia, quae sunt sponsae, et sponsa habet omnia, quae sunt sponsi (omnia enim sunt communia utriusque, sunt enim una caro [1 Mos 2:24], ita Christus et Ecclesia sunt unus spiritus [Eph 5,29ff]."

[45] WA 7, 39–73 (Tractatus de libertate Christiana [1520]). Here WA 7, 54,31–33: "[Fides] animam copulat cum Christo, sicut sponsam cum sponso. Quo sacramento (ut Apostolus docet [Eph 5: 32]) Christus et anima efficiuntur una caro." (= LW 31, 351).

[46] Luther's comments on Hosea 2 in LW 18, 13 (Lectures on the Minor Prophets [1524]): "The groom gives his bride not a gift but himself, the deepest love of his heart and all his property. He goes ahead of his bride; he seeks her out, etc." In the original, WA 13, 11,6–7: "Sponsus non munus sed se ipsum tradit sponsae et intimum affectum cordis et omnia sua, praevenit sponsam et requirit eam etc."

to his bride out of grace and mercy,[47] his spouse has it only partially and must progress in imitation of Christ's unselfish love. As Luther states, the external justice "is not totally infused at one time, it begins, proceeds and is perfected through death."[48] – in an echo of Bernard's *On Loving God*. Inwardly, for the inner human being, this external justification is enough. However, humans live in a social setting, and therefore something more is required.[49]

Yet, there is also symmetry in the exchange. Luther, who always operates dialectically, uses his dialectics of the inner and outer human, of spirit and flesh, of gift and example, of the alien justice and own justice, and of the *coram Deo* and the *coram hominibus* to explicate life's two dimensions: the God-human relation and the inter-human relation. Whereas Christ is gift (*donum*) in the first justice, he is example (*exemplum*) in the second justice, in which humans become Christ-formed by doing works of love. Luther stretches the nuptial imagery to explain the reciprocal bond of love coming from God. Here there is symmetry between Christ, the bridegroom, and the believer, the bride – in a truly reciprocal responsiveness. Referring to the nuptial exchange in the Song of Songs 2:16 and Jeremiah 7:34, Luther identifies Christ's *gift* of justice as an exclamatory "I am yours" in the flesh (*incarnation*), which is responded by the bride's *act* of justice (love of neighbor) as her exclamatory "I am yours" in the spirit (*sanctification*), while crucifying the flesh.[50]

Again, we find the exact same dialectical paradigm in *On the Freedom of a Christian*, where Luther, after having unfolded the freedom in Christ through faith (inwardly), emphasizes the serfdom in Christ through love. In all actuality, the human being is a social being, always in relation to Christ and the other in a circulation of love, as Luther concludes here[51] and in several of his other texts such as his sermon on "The Blessed Sacrament of the Holy and True Body of Christ, and the Brotherhoods" (1519) and his treatise "On the Councils and the Church" (1539).[52]

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[47] Cf. Luther's comments on Hosea 2 in LW 18, 14: "She becomes a bride through righteousness, justice, mercy, pity, faith, and not through works." In the original, WA 13, 12,6–7: "sponsa fit per iustitiam, iudicium, misericordiam, miserationes, fidem, non ergo per opera."

[48] WA 2, 146,29, 34–35 (Sermo de duplici iustitia [1519]): "iusticia aliena … non enim tota simul infunditur, sed incipit, proficit et perficitur tandem in fine per mortem."

[49] WA 7, 59 and 64 (Tractatus de libertate Christiana [1520]).

[50] WA 2, 147,26–32. Luther further quotes Rom 6:19 about the justification that leads to sanctification, and Phil 2:5–11.

[51] There are both a Latin and a German version of *The Freedom of a Christian*. I here refer to the German version, Von der Freiheit eines Christenmenschen. See e. g. Martin Luther, Von der Freiheit eines Christenmenschens/Von weltlicher Obrigkeit/Sermon von guten Werken, Gütersloh [2]1998, 27.

[52] WA 2, 742–758 (Tractatus de libertate Christiana [1520]), where Luther also plays on the nuptial imagery in order to underline the mutual relationship and fellowship of humans and God, and WA 50, 641–643 (In den Konziliis und Kirchen [1539]), where Luther accentuates the works of love in Christ as further marks of the true church (*notae ecclesiae*).

7. Marriage as an Image of the Political and Economical

However, in his later text on the Song, Luther uses all of his efforts to transpose the nuptial frame of the Song to foremost a political, secondly an economical frame. We should of course notice that this text is only known as the composition of a student's (Rörer's) notes from Luther's lectures on the Song from 7 March 1530 to 22 June 1531, and it was first published in 1539. Yet we can most likely trust the text as Luther's wholehearted rejection of the traditional, medieval interpretations of the Song, in his view immature and strange. Luther deliberately de-eroticizes and impersonalizes the text. In fact, Luther interprets the Song in the same way as he interpreted the *Magnificat* (Mary's praise of God), employing it as a *Fürstenspiegel*. Hence, according to Luther's new interpretation, the Song is King Solomon's honor of God:

> Doubtless, therefore, Solomon, too, wrote his song about his own kingdom and government, which by the goodness of God he administered in the finest, happiest peace and the highest tranquility.[53]

This interpretation further makes it possible for him to utilize the Song as an encouraging message to the Protestant (Lutheran) princes. They need to stay with the evangelical principles, fight for them, and endure the hardships ensuing from that fight, for that "kingdom, principality, or state which has the Word and true worship of God is forced to sustain many affliction" … but "is deservedly called 'the people of God.'"[54] According to Luther, the Song is therefore not a love song but an encomium of political order.[55] It is in style a grand oratory, an entirely figurative poem about government[56]:

> For this is the custom with kings and princes: they compose and sing amatory ballads which the crowd takes to be songs about a bride or a sweetheart, when in fact they portray the condition of their state and people with their songs. […] He [Solomon] makes God the bridegroom and his people the bride, and in this mode he sings of how much God loves that people, how many and rich are the gifts He lavishes and heaps upon it, and finally how He embraces and cherishes the same people with a goodness and mercy with which no bridegroom has ever embraced or cherished his bride. And thus Solomon begins by speaking in the person of the whole people of God: "He is kissing me."[57]

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[53] Luther's introduction to the Song of Songs, quoted from LW 15, 191 (Song of Solomon [1530]); in the original, WA 31/2, 586,18–20: "Ita hauddubie et Salomon Canticum illud scripsit de Regno et Politia sua, quod benignitate Dei in pulcherrima ac lactissima pace et summa tranquillitate administravit."

[54] LW 15, 191; in the original, WA 31/2, 586,22–23, 25–26: "Porro cum omne Regnum, Principatus seu Politia, verbum et verum cultum Dei habens multa incommoda cogatur ferre […] merito tale Regnum seu Politia populus Dei vocatur."

[55] LW 15, 194–195.

[56] LW 15, 196. Cf. Bernard, SC 1.8.

[57] LW 15, 193 (Song of Solomon [1530]); in the original, WA 31/2, 587,33–35, 588,14–20: "Sicut enim Reges et Principes solent, meditantur et canunt amatoria carmina, quae vulgus ac-

Luther discards the interpersonal eroticism of the poem and converts it to an erotic capital of another kind. In Luther's hermeneutics, the kisses – "held in less esteem" by him – are signs of God's love and favor of the government, not of an individual soul. But God's kisses of love are real and present, he assures his princes, though these comforts are not obviously experienced in the afflictions of real politics and economy. They are, after all, "kisses of his mouth." These "kisses of God's mouth" – the Word of God given to both the government (*politia*) and to the household (*eoconomia*) – are honored by the Word of God. When in either sphere the husband or the government experience ordeals or misgivings and they pray to God, Luther offers the comfort that God hears them.

Even when Luther in his exposition of the Song takes us into the bedchamber of the newly married couple, his discourse is strictly un-erotic. Or rather, one might say, that Luther is drawing on another kind of erotic capital, the longing for the presence of the God one can trust and from whom one can seek consolation. Luther thus interprets the Song's bedchamber scene as a poetical description of how God consoles those who pray. Luther stresses how such divine consolation encourages both the poor afflicted husband of the household (the economic sphere) and the prince and the government (the political sphere) to persevere in their tasks with these remarkable words: "just as when a groom brings his bride into his chamber, he certainly does not do so from hatred of the bride!"[58] In the same vein, Luther flatly states – and actually in line with the tradition from Origen and Bernard – that the breasts of the bridegroom symbolize Christian doctrine and the preaching of the word as the gospel in contrast to the law. However, his account is stripped of hot kisses and swelling breasts. The nuptial drama has been strictly economized and politicized.

8. Luther and Queering of the Marriage[59]

Let me end this exposition of Luther's use of the nuptial motif by pointing to the fact that he does not simply follow a new track as he does in his interpretation of the Song. Luther actually follows the tradition from Origen and especially from Bernard much more extensively than most think. Hence, we find the same discourse of gender crossing in Luther's use of the nuptial imagery, but in his com-

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cipit de Sponsa aut amica cantata, cum tamen politiae et populi sui statum his depingat. […] Constituit Deum Sponsum et populum suum Sponsam atque ita canit, quantopere Deus populum illum diligat, quot et quantis beneficiis cum afficiat et cumulet. Denique ea benignitate et clementia eundem complectatur ae foveat, qua nullus unquam Sponsus Sponsam suam complexus est ac fovit. Orditur itaque ac loquitur in persona totius populi velut Sponsa Dei. Osculatur me." Cf. BERNARD, SC 1:5.

[58] LW 15, 198; WA 31/2, 605,28–29. "Sicut cum sponsus sponsam in conclave ducit, non facit illud odio sponsae."

[59] I owe this formulation to KATHRYN A. KLEINHANS, "Christ as Bride/Groom. A Luther-

ments to quite another text, the prophet Isaiah. Here, Luther interprets the bridal metaphor ecclesiologically: the bride symbolizes the church. Furthermore, like Bernard Luther employs the terms bride and bridegroom in a gender crossing or gender transgressing way in the exposition of Isaiah 61:10. But in fact both follow the biblical foundation, as the gender crossing understanding of the bridal metaphor is already implied in Ephesians 5. The bride of Ephesians 5 is not tied to the female sex or woman as gender. Paul signifies the church as a whole, male and female, as bride of the bridegroom who is none else but Christ.

Luther's gender crossing goes even further than this in his exposition of the nuptial images in Isaiah 61:10, where he not only identifies Christ with the bridegroom and the church with the bride. Following the tradition of Bernard, Luther here identifies the believers with the bridegroom, because, according to his hermeneutics, in the marriage union of faith the believers take upon themselves the role of Christ:

> Thus, all of us who believe are by faith bridegrooms and priests, something the world does not see but faith accepts.[60]

In other words, the believer is both bride and bridegroom by way of faith. In the same vein, reflecting on Isaiah 66:9, Luther applies the dual nuptial identity to Christ:

> He says that He is the author of begetting: "I, however, do not appear to be fertile. On the contrary, I, God, am sterile, yes, dead and crucified. I keep my method of bearing for myself, however. I give others the power to bring forth, and I can bring forth too. I am both Bridegroom and Bride. I can beget and give birth, and I can give others the power of begetting."[61]

Luther thus employs a discourse that is, indeed, pregnant with divine eroticism, yet at the same time unties the nuptial imagery from a specific sex or a particular gender role. Most importantly, this gives us a tool to unbind marriage from any creational order of sexes or cultural bindings on gender. The marriage is "queered," to use a modern term, and set free for the Christian or any creature to social and political play.

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an Feminist Relational Christology," in: MARY J. STREUFERT (ed.), Transformative Lutheran Theologies. Feminist, Womanist, and Mujerista Perspectives, Minneapolis, MN 2010, 132.

[60] LW 17, 342 (Lectures on Isaiah [1528]), to chapter 61; in the original, WA 31/2, 525,29–31: "Ita omnis, qui credit, per fidem sumus sponsi et sacerdotes, illa mundo non videntur, sed fides credit."

[61] LW 17, 406, to chapter 66; in the original, WA 31/2, 577,23–28. "Nam ille dicit se autorem generacionis. Ego autem non appareo fecundus. Sed ego deus sum sterilis, immo mortuus et crucifixus. Sed meum morem pariendi mihi servo, quo aliis tribuo partus facultatem, ego eciam possum parere. Ego eciam sum sponsus et sponsa, possum gignere et parere, possum aliis tribuere generacionem."

9. Conclusion

At the core of both Bernard's and Luther's theology is an understanding of God as the being of love. They agree in this ontological understanding, as they agree in their theological semantics of a *caritas* love, at times in explicitly carnal language. By way of the nuptial metaphor, they both stress that love is one, the source and the end of life in the happy exchange between God and humans. They also both stress that love is simultaneously the substance of God and the quality given to humans, and that God is the unquestionable source and agent of the human quality to love as God "sets it in order" by grace. There is no doubt that both Bernard and Luther perceive God as the very being of love, and see this love operating in a sublime circulation as love abundantly flowing from the heart of God to the heart of humans, the incarnated and the crucified Christ/God being the very illustration of that flow. Thus, I identify their theologies as a theology of love (*theologia caritatis*), which is a complex combination of a theology of the heart (*theologia cordis*) and a theology of the cross (*theologia crucis*). This is very far from a romantic theology or a theology of glory (*theologia gloriae*), spelled out in the sharp reality of life with its poles of the deepest pain and the highest bliss as it is.

When one reads their treatises and sermons with care, it becomes increasingly apparent how much Bernard inspired Luther. Both were endeavoring to reform the church of their time, albeit with four hundred years and the development of the scholastic theology between them. Nonetheless, their goals were the same, as they both wanted the church to adhere to the gospel, the Word of God, and to evangelize humanity according to the law of love, not to canon law. Bernard perhaps develops an extensively more metaphorical theology in his own cocktail of classical rhetoric and a rich biblical imagery in order to translate difficult doctrine into some form of everyday theology that could ultimately be transmitted from the cloister to every Christian. Luther, on his side, worked extensively to translate theology and the Bible into his own German language in order to make theology part of the everyday life of every Christian.

Chapter 11

Mysticism and Justification

Volker Leppin

One of Heiko Oberman's important studies was his inquiry into the roots of mysticism in Luther's work. By taking up this topic in the 1906s, Oberman challenged the way in which the German Christians in the 1930s and 1940s had appropriated Luther's mysticism to align Protestant theology with Nazi ideology. Alfred Rosenberg had popularized this alignment in his 1930 work, *Myth of the Twentieth Century* (*Der Mythus des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts*). In this text, Rosenberg identified Meister Eckhart as the forerunner of a particular form of Germanic religion.[1] German Lutheran theologians of the Nazi era, such as Erich Vogelsang,[2] Erich Seeberg,[3] and Heinrich Bornkamm[4] appropriated this conceptual frame concerning the mystical roots of Germanic religion and assigned Luther's mysticism a place in it. As well-trained scholars from the Holl School of the Luther Renaissance, these theologians were critical of Rosenberg's racially-tinged ideas.[5] But they nevertheless exploited the topic in order to show the affinity between Nazi ideology and Lutheran theology.

The legacy of mysticism's association with Nazi ideology endured after the Second World War. Karl Barth avoided the topic[6] and mysticism disappeared from theological discourse in Germany. Wilhelm Maurer posed the exception.

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[1] Ingeborg Degenhardt, Studien zum Wandel des Eckhartbildes (Studien zur Problemgeschichte der antiken und mittelalterlichen Philosophie 3), Leiden 1967, 261–268.

[2] Volker Leppin, "In Rosenbergs Schatten. Zur Lutherdeutung Erich Vogelsangs," in: ThZ 61 (2005), 132–142.

[3] Thomas Kaufmann, "Anpassung als historiographisches Konzept und als theologiepolitisches Programm. Der Kirchenhistoriker Erich Seeberg in der Zeit der Weimarer Republik und des 'Dritten Reiches'," in: Thomas Kaufmann/Harry Oelke (eds.), Evangelische Kirchenhistoriker im "Dritten Reich," Gütersloh 2002, 122–179.

[4] Kurt Nowak, "Zeiterfahrung und Kirchengeschichtsschreibung. Heinrich Bornkamm im Dritten Reich," in: ZKG 103 (1992), 46–80.

[5] Johannes Wallmann, "Karl Holl und seine Schule," in: ZThK, Beih. 4: Tübinger Theologie im 20. Jahrhundert (1978), 1–33; Heinrich Assel, Der andere Aufbruch. Die Lutherrenaissance – Ursprünge, Aporien und Wege. Karl Holl, Emanuel Hirsch, Rudolf Hermann (1910–1935) (FSÖTh 72), Göttingen 1994; Christine Svinth-Værge Pöder, "Die Lutherrenaissance im Kontext des Reformationsjubiläums. Gericht und Rechtfertigung bei Karl Holl, 1917–1921," in: KZG/CCH 26 (2013), 191–200.

[6] See mysticism as the "sister of atheism" in Karl Barth, Die Kirchliche Dogmatik, vol. 1/2: Die Lehre vom Wort Gottes, Zollikon, Switzerland 1938, 348 (§ 17), and the harsh cri-

He was a Luther scholar who studied Luther's mysticism in the 1520 treatise *On The Freedom of a Christian*.[7] The post-war consensus was, however, clear. The theologians who followed Barth, on the one hand, and the church historians who continued to adhere to the Holl School, on the other hand, were not interested in pointing out each other's intellectual faults.

It was Heiko Oberman who decided to broach the topic of mysticism in Luther's work at the Third International Congress for Luther Research in 1966.[8] He argued that mysticism was an important aspect to Luther's theology. Yet Oberman did not inspire anyone in the field apart from his doctoral advisee, Steven Ozment, who wrote his dissertation on Tauler and Luther.[9] Oberman did not continue his work on Luther's mysticism, because (as is well known) he focused on Luther's scholastic inheritances, notably Gregory of Rimini and Gabriel Biel.[10] In this chapter I approach mysticism "beyond Oberman," so to speak, by investigating the connection between mysticism and the reformation.[11] I discuss how late medieval mystical theologians, namely Johannes Tauler and Johann von Staupitz, addressed mysticism in the context of discussing justification in order to show how mysticism played an important role in the Protestant reformation.

tique against Brunner in Karl Barth, Nein! Antwort an Emil Brunner (Theologische Existenz Heute 14), Munich 1934.

[7] Wilhelm Maurer, Von der Freiheit eines Christenmenschen. Zwei Untersuchungen zu Luthers Reformationsschriften 1520/1521, Göttingen 1949.

[8] Heiko A. Oberman, "Simul gemitus et raptus. Luther und die Mystik," in: Ivar Asheim (ed.), Kirche, Mystik, Heiligung und das Natürliche bei Luther. Vorträge des Dritten Internationalen Kongresses für Lutherforschung Järvenpää, Finnland 11.–16. August 1966, Göttingen 1967, 20–59; cf. the responses of Erwin Iserloh and Bengt Hägglund, in: Asheim (ed.), Kirche, Mystik, Heligung, 60–83, 84–94.

[9] Steven Edgar Ozment, Homo spiritualis. A Comparative Study of the Anthropology of Johannes Tauler, Jean Gerson and Martin Luther in the Context of their Theological Thought (Studies in Medieval and Reformation Thought 6), Leiden 1969.

[10] Heiko A. Oberman (ed.), Gregor von Rimini. Werk und Wirkung bis zur Reformation (Spätmittelalter und Reformation 20), Berlin 1981; Heiko A. Oberman/Frank A. James (eds.), Via Augustini. Augustine in the Later Middle Ages, Renaissance and Reformation, FS Damasus Trapp (Studies in Medieval and Reformation Thought 48), Leiden 1991; Heiko A. Oberman, Spätscholastik und Reformation, vol. 1: Der Herbst der mittelalterlichen Theologie, Zürich 1965.

[11] Scholars over the past few decades have become interested in this topic: Karl-Heinz zur Mühlen, Nos Extra Nos. Luthers Theologie zwischen Mystik und Scholastik (BHTh 46), Tübingen 1972; Theo Bell, Divus Bernhardus. Bernhard von Clairvaux in Martin Luthers Schriften (VIEG Abteilung Religionsgeschichte 148), Mainz 1993; Johannes Schilling (ed.), Mystik. Religion der Zukunft – Zukunft der Religion?, Leipzig 2003, 45–66; Berndt Hamm/Volker Leppin (eds.), Gottes Nähe unmittelbar erfahren. Mystik im Mittelalter und bei Martin Luther (SMHR 36), Tübingen 2007; Volker Leppin, Die fremde Reformation. Luthers mystische Wurzeln, Munich 2016.

1. The *Iustitia Passiva*. A Trace of Mysticism?

Luther's description of his reformation breakthrough in the 1545 preface to his Latin works is one of the most discussed texts in Luther's corpus.[12] Relevant for my purposes is the calling into question of the vigorous scholarly debate concerning a particular date to the breakthrough. While some scholars identify an early date around the time of Luther's first lecture on the Psalms in 1513, others argue for a later date around 1519.[13] An interesting implication of this later dating is that Luther *must* be regarded as a medieval thinker on October 31, 1517, which is bad news for the celebrations of the five-hundredth anniversary of the Protestant reformation that took place in 2017! The discussion of pinpointing a precise date must be rendered moot by the simple fact that there was no psychological breakthrough that caused Luther to change from a medieval thinker into a reformer in a single moment. Instead the transformation occurred over a long period of development during which Luther went back and forth several times on various issues.[14]

Instead of attempting to historically discern the date of the event, it is more interesting to ask the question as to what Luther meant when he gave his accounts of his reformation breakthrough. In recalling the event, Luther speaks of discovering a new understanding of righteousness: through his scholastic training, he had learned to understand righteousness as a *iustitia activa*, according to which God actively punishes or rewards human beings for their deeds as measured against an abstract standard of what God determines to be just or unjust.[15] Luther's new insight, as he recounts decades later, was that God's righteousness is actually a *iustitia passiva*, which means that God makes human beings righteous through God's own righteousness. On the one hand, this formulation seems to clearly circumscribe the doctrine of justification that subsequent Lutheran theology appropriated without hesitation. On the other hand, it presents new historical and philological problems. For example, as early as 1920, the German Lutheran theologian associated with National Socialism, Emanuel Hirsch, showed that a combination of *iustitia* and *passivus* could not be found anywhere in Luther's

[12] Bernhard Lohse (ed.), Der Durchbruch der reformatorischen Erkenntnis bei Luther (WdF 123), Darmstadt 1968; Bernhard Lohse (ed.), Der Durchbruch der reformatorischen Erkenntnis bei Luther. Neuere Untersuchungen (VIEG Beiheft 25), Stuttgart 1988.

[13] For this, see Ernst Bizer, Fides ex auditu. Eine Untersuchung über die Gerechtigkeit Gottes durch Martin Luther, 3rd edn., Neukirchen-Vluyn 1966, who successfully established this consensus in Luther research.

[14] See Berndt Hamm's critique against the "Wende-Konstrukt" in his article "Naher Zorn und nahe Gnade. Luthers frühe Klosterjahre als Beginn seiner reformatorischen Neuorientierung," in: Christoph Bultmann/Volker Leppin/Andreas Lindner (eds.), Luther und das monastische Erbe (SMHR 39), Tübingen 2007, 113.

[15] WA 54, 185,12–186,16 (Preface to the Opera Latina [1545]).

writings before *De servo arbitrio*, published in 1525.[16] In spite of Hirsch's claim, scholars continued to rely on the 1545 text for reconstructing Luther's reformation development as a whole, while they defined the kind of reformation theology Luther had discovered in his early years on their own terms. This argument is obviously a circular one.

Even if we choose to trust Luther's later recollection, we should take into account that this report replaced another, much earlier one. In the earlier account from 1518, Luther used similar terms to explain his discovery of a new understanding of a particular biblical word. The word, however, was penitence, not righteousness.[17] Contrary to scholarly Lutheran expectations, we must refrain from investigating Luther's discussion of the word righteousness and instead consider how Luther speaks about *passivus*, or passivity, in his earlier writings. Furthermore, we should take into account that in 1518, shortly after the publication of his *Ninety-Five Theses*, Luther mentioned that the main authorities he wanted to follow were none other than the mystic John Tauler and the mystical booklet, *Theologia Deutsch*, which Luther printed in 1516 as his very first publication.[18]

How does Luther treat passivity in the context of mysticism framed by these authorities? In particular, Luther's marginal notes to Tauler's sermons, which he read in about 1515 or 1516, have survived up to now. In them we find the sentence: "Nota, quod divina pati magis quam agere oportet, immo et sensus et intellectus est naturaliter etiam virtus passiva."[19] The context of this note is Tauler's first sermon on the birth of God in the pious soul, which is a core concept of mysticism.[20] Indeed, it means that in relation to God, human activity

[16] Emanuel Hirsch, "Initium theologiae Lutheri," in: Bernhard Lohse (ed.), Der Durchbruch der reformatorischen Erkenntnis bei Luther (WdF 123), Darmstadt 1968, 64–95, esp. 72, where Hirsch mentions *De servo arbitrio* as the oldest reference ("[d]ie älteste Stelle") for this: "Gloriam Dei hic possis bifariam accipere, active et passive. Hoc facit Paulus suis Ebraismis, quibus crebro utitur. Active gloria Dei est, qua ipse in nobis gloriatur, Passive, quo nos in Deo gloriamur. Mihi tamen passive accipi debere nunc videtur, ut fides Christi latine sonat, quam Christus habet, Sed Ebraeis fides Christi intelligitur, quae in Christum habetur. Sic iustitia Dei latine dicitur, quam Deus habet, sed Ebraeis intelligitur, quae ex Deo et coram Deo habetur. Ita gloriam Dei non latine, sed Ebraice accipimus, quae in Deo et coram Deo habetur et gloria in Deo dici posset." WA 18, 768,36–769,4.

[17] For the argument in detail, see Volker Leppin, Transformationen. Studien zu den Wandlungsprozessen in Theologie und Frömmigkeit zwischen Spätmittelalter und Reformation (SMHR 86), Tübingen 2015, 262–265. The text under consideration is Luther's *Letter of Dedication to the Resolutiones*, in WA 1, 525,1–527,15.

[18] WA.B 1, 160 (No. 66, 8–9; Letter to Staupitz, March 31, 1518): "Ego sane secutus theologiam Tauleri et eius libelli, quem tu nuper dedisti imprimendum Aurifabro nostro Christianno."

[19] WA 9, 97,12–14 (Marginal Notes to Tauler [c. 1516]).

[20] Johannes Tauler, Sermones, A 1^{r}–A 3^{v}. Luther used a copy of this print edition, hence all references to this work will cite this edition: Sermones. des hoch| geleerten in gnaden erleüchten do|ctoris Johannis Thaulerii sannt | dominici ordens die da weißend | auff den nächesten waren weg im | gaist zů wanderen durch überswe| bendenn syn. Von latein in teütsch | gewendt manchem menschenn zů | såliger fruchtbarkaitt, Augsburg 1508. For mod-

is of no consequence. Humans are not able to bring anything to God that God deems acceptable. This is the precise point that Luther later emphasized with his notion of *iustitia passiva*. The early Luther stressed the idea that God alone works in humans: "Nos materia sumus pura, deus formae factor, omnis enim in nobis operator deus."[21] Luther later takes up this point in the famous *Disputatio de homine* which was held in Wittenberg in January 1536. In thesis 35 of this disputation, Luther states that human beings are "pura materia Dei ad futurae formae suae vitam."[22] Gerhard Ebeling, in his *opus magnum* on the *Disputatio de homine*, did not mention the continuity between this thesis and Luther's early mystical insights, and indeed, he might not have even noticed it at all.[23] This connection does not resonate with the consensus in German Luther research of the past few decades that connects justification to the *verbum externum*. If one, however, pays attention to the mystical context in which Luther discusses human passivity, then its implications for his concept of justification are indeed remarkable. What would later be identified as Luther's doctrine of justification was, at least to some extent, already taking shape in Luther's encounters with these late medieval mystical texts. I discuss these particular texts in the following sections.

2. Tauler on Passivity and Human Works

While Luther did not heavily annotate his reading of Johannes Tauler, his comments offer valuable clues concerning his understanding of penitence and the need for confession. We know that Luther read Tauler's advice to persons to bring their sins before God:

> vnd dring dich wider in got also schwindiglichen dz dir dein sunde zů mal entpfallen. so du da mit zů der beicht kommest. das du jt nitt wissest zů sagen. Dis sol dich nit entsetzen. es ist dir nit aufgefallen zů schaden. sunder zů ainer bekentnuß deines nichtes. vnd zů ainer verschmehunge dein selber mitt ayner gelassenhayt. nicht mitt ainer schwärmůtikait […] Sunder schweig vnd fleühe zů got vnd sihe auf dein nicht. Vnd bleib innen. nit lauf zů hant da mit zů dem beichtiger.[24]

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ern editions, see Johannes Tauler, Die Predigten Taulers aus der Engelberger und der Freiburger Handschrift sowie aus Schmidts Abschriften der ehemaligen Straßburger Handschriften, Ferdinand Vetter (ed.) (DTMA 11), Berlin 1910 (= Dublin 1968); Johannes Tauler, Sermons de J. Tauler et autres écrits mystiques, vol. 1: Le Codes Vindobonensis 2744; vol. 2: Le Codes Vindobonensis 2739, Adolphe L. Corin (ed.), Liège 1924, 1929; both of these modern editions are based on just a few manuscripts without comprehensive critical apparatus.

21 WA 9, 97,15–16 (Marginal Notes to Tauler).

22 For this, see Gerhard Ebeling, Lutherstudien, vols. 2/1–3: Disputatio de Homine, Tübingen 1977–1989, pt. 3, 489.

23 Ebeling, Lutherstudien, vols. 2/1–3.

24 Tauler, Sermones, f. 192v.

Luther was so excited about this passage that he wrote in the margin: "Hoc nota tibi," and also "Utilimissimum consilium."[25] From here we can see how he develops the first two of his *Ninety-Five Theses* in which he argues against a purely sacramental understanding of penitence.[26]

For the purpose of my argument it is important to note that Tauler occasionally mentions penitence in his sermons. He sometimes explicitly refers to the topic of justification in these discussions. For example, in another sermon Tauler makes a similar point[27] and arrives at the following conclusion regarding the insufficiency of human works before God:

> vnnd dunckt dich daz dich die außern werck hinder als zů kore geen, vnnd dienstlich werk der gehorsamkeit. Nain. die mügnn dich nit geirren noch gehindertn. sunder dein vnordnung un den wercken hyndernt dich das du got nit lauterlich hast fürgesetzt in deiner liebe in deiner mainung vnnd in dein gemůt.[28]

The above quotation is representative of how, in his sermons, Tauler rails against putting one's trust in anything other than God, including in human deeds or works. In another sermon addressed to pious sisters of the Dominicans, Tauler criticizes those people who look for their own righteousness in their words and works,[29] even "an got selber."[30] To avoid misunderstanding he adds:

> Lieben kinder hůtet eüch auch durch die ewignn warhait. vor dem bőßen falschen behendem gesůche. der natur. das jr nit gaistliche gůte übung vmb klaine zeitliche ding gebet.[31]

Tauler's remarks are indeed remarkable, considering their location in the late medieval world. He cautions the nuns against relying on spiritual exercises. By this he means that it is not any external work which makes a human being good, but one's fundamental relationship to God. Tauler summarizes this point: "Vnnd darumb sőllen wir nun allain sůchen die gerechtigkait gotes."[32] Here Tauler understands righteousness in a different way from how the mature Luther understands the term. The righteousness of God, Tauler says in the same sermon, means that God stays with those who seek God with their whole heart.[33] This no doubt means that there is some form of disposition that originates on the human side that prompts God to be gracious. However, one should not forget that the

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[25] WA 9, 104,11–12 (Marginal Notes to Tauler).

[26] Leppin, Transformationen (as note 17), 266–274.

[27] Tauler, Sermones, 50v: "vnd also soltu thůn bald du in ainiche ding in vnordnung gefallen bist so beychte got zů hand on als baiten. Entpfallnn denn dir deyne gebrechenn das du nicht waist zůsagen so du zům beichtiger kummst so glaub dz dir dein sünd bas sey vergeben. dann ob du sy dem priester selber gebeicht hetest."

[28] Tauler, Sermones, 50v.

[29] Tauler, Sermones, 141v: "in wortten oder in wercken".

[30] Tauler, Sermones, 141v.

[31] Tauler, Sermones, 141v.

[32] Tauler, Sermones, 141v.

[33] Tauler, Sermones, 142r.

idea of Christians seeking God above all other things derives from the biblical text that concerns Tauler at this point in the sermon, namely Matthew 6:33: "Quaerite primum regnum Dei et iustitiam eius." Furthermore, one must keep in mind that Tauler situates his remarks on this biblical passage in the context of his entire homiletical aim, which is to detract from placing trust in human efforts as a means of salvation. In other sermons, Tauler mentions that even the act of seeking God explicitly means the eradication of all selfish thinking. Tauler insists on this, even when the biblical imagery suggesting an active seeking of God suggests otherwise. In a sermon for the Feast of the Assumption, Tauler alludes to Sirach 24:7, "In omnibus requiem quaesivi," to chastise the placing of trust in spiritual exercises,[34] and adds:

alles das da der mensch sein růe sůchet. daz nit lauter gott ist das ist alles wurmstichig.[35]

The search for a pure encounter with God involves a radical denial of the self. The counterpart to the "lauter gott" is "dein lauter nicht. dz du doch in der warhait bist."[36] According to Tauler, there is nothing to learn from human insight other than the fact that the human has no worth, not even that of being. Tauler refers to Dionysius the Areopagite, thereby framing his sermon with a Neoplatonic ontology. But Tauler's main focus in his sermon is on monastic humility. He tells the story of Brother Wigman who, upon understanding his nothingness, went down to the "allertiefsten grunt der hell vnder lucifer."[37] When he had arrived there, God called him up to heaven to his paternal heart, which Tauler sums up:

Dieser liebe in diser gruntlosen vernichtikait antwortet das leben in der warhait vnbegeret vnd vngesůcht vnnd vngemaynet wann so ye niderer. so ye hoͤher vnnd so ye minder so ye merer.[38]

The question that Lutheran orthodoxy always poses in contrast to medieval theology is whether there is any prerequisite for grace on the human side. This question can be answered paradoxically: Yes, there is a prerequisite, but it is nothing! Human beings must lose their entire selves, but in such a way that God's grace remains "vngesůcht vnnd vngemaynet." Only in this way will grace come and exalt the humble Christian.

Tauler uses philosophical terms and stories from monastic life to explain human nothingness before God. He also makes use of Pauline-Augustinian terminology to make this point. In a Corpus Christi sermon, Tauler speaks about the dignity required for the reception of the sacrament. He cites Augustine as a

[34] Tauler, Sermones, 180r.
[35] Tauler, Sermones, 180r.
[36] Tauler, Sermones, 180r.
[37] Tauler, Sermones, 180v.
[38] Tauler, Sermones, 180r.

source for identifying desire as a prerequisite for the sacrament, but then articulates his own understanding using words sounding like Augustine:

"Wann die wirdigkayt kummpt nymmer von menschlichen wercken noch verdienen. sunder von lauter gnad vnnd verdienen vnsers herren jesu Christi. vnd fleüßt zůal von got an vns."[39]

To sum up: what we find in Tauler concerning the topic of justification does not really cohere with the usual judgment about late medieval soteriology as "Pelagian" or "Semipelagian" (whatever these labels might mean). Tauler proposes instead a doctrine that attributes the entire active role to God. There is no effort and no merit on the human side. Tauler's terminology suggests that one might think of seeking God or becoming free from all worldly things as a prerequisite for God's acting. However, the focus is always on God as sole agent who simply requests passivity on the human side. Luther summarizes this insight in the following words: "divina pati magis quam agere oportet."[40]

3. The *Theologia Deutsch*'s Conception of Inner and Outer Human

In 1516, Luther published fragments of a fifteenth-century text he received from brethren in East Prussia.[41] The title of the original work is: "Eyn geystlich edles Buchleynn."[42] Yet the text is commonly known as "Theologia Deutsch," which is the title of the second, completed edition that Luther later published in 1518. Luther discovered that this booklet was written in a manner "faßt nach der art des erleuchten doctors Tauleri, prediger ordens."[43] Given Luther's asessement concerning its authorship, we should not expect him to express insights that differ from his comments on Tauler's sermons. It is, however, of interest for our purposes in discerning the relation between mysticism and justification to see how the booklet is organized around a central point.

As mentioned above, the text was not complete when it was first published, but commenced with what is acknowledged today as the seventh chapter. In this chapter, the anonymous fifteenth-century author discusses the two eyes of Jesus Christ by interpreting them in a metaphorical sense. Christ's left eye, according to the interpretation, is focused on created beings whereas the right eye gazes

[39] Tauler, Sermones, 85^{v}.

[40] WA 9, 97,12p. (Marginal notes to Tauler).

[41] Andreas Zecherle, "Die 'Theologia Deutsch'. Ein spätmittelalterlicher mystischer Traktat," in: Berndt Hamm/Volker Leppin (eds.), Gottes Nähe unmittelbar erfahren. Mystik im Mittelalter und bei Martin Luther (SMHR 36), Tübingen 2007, 11.

[42] Eyn geystlich edles Buchleynn. | von rechter vnderscheyd | vnd vorstand. was der | alt vnnd new mensche sey. Was Adams | vnnd was gottis kind sey. vnnd wie ‚Adam | ynn vns sterben vnnd Christus | ersteen sall. Wittenberg 1516.

[43] WA 1, 153 (Preface to the Incomplete Edition of the "Theologia Deutsch").

into eternity.[44] The right and left eyes represent, respectively, the inner human ("ynner mensch") on the one hand, and the outer human ("eusser mensch") on the other.[45] Furthermore, this Christological distinction is paradigmatic for every human being. Like Jesus Christ, every human being has two eyes, so to speak, in the personal soul: one eye directed eternity and the other that sees creatures.[46] Anyone who is familiar with Luther's treatise on Christian freedom, which he wrote a few years later in 1520, will recognize the influence of "Eyn geystlich edles Buchleynn" on the future reformer.

Indeed, the booklet can be read as a treatise on justification by grace alone and not by human works. The author says as much in the following passage:

> "Auch liget die seligkeyt kurtzlich / an keinner creatur oder creaturen werck / Sunder allen an gote und an seynem wercken"[47]

In a way similar to Tauler and with comparable radicality, the author states that nothing on the "outer" side of the human, neither human virtue nor even God's own goodness, can make the soul good.[48] Salvation, in other words, depends on a right relation. The believer must stand "yn einer freyheyt" from all things.[49] As with Tauler, this text explains that Christians should not fear hell with all its punishments. Nor should Christians who want to attain salvation hope for a reward or the kingdom of heaven.[50] The booklet describes the fear of hell and the hope for a reward in terms of selfish desire because both are still oriented towards the person's ego. Either of these selfish orientations still separate the Christian from God. The only way to avoid this inward-looking proclivity is to let go of all one's deeds, even one's will, and to surrender oneself to unity with God.[51]

This anonymous text resonates deeply with mystical themes. It teaches that justification is independent of any human works. It does not make use of Pauline-Augustinian terminology, but this omission should not be of concern here. In our search for the sources of Luther's theological development, we find that this booklet articulates an explicit theology of grace that focuses exclusively on God, and in this way resonates with the later Luther's own doctrine of justification by grace alone.

44 Eyn geystlich edles Buchleynn, A 2^{r}.
45 Eyn geystlich edles Buchleynn, A 2^{r}.
46 Eyn geystlich edles Buchleynn, A 2^{v}.
47 Eyn geystlich edles Buchleynn, A 3^{r-v}.
48 Eyn geystlich edles Buchleynn, A 3^{r}.
49 Eyn geystlich edles Buchleynn, A 3^{v}.
50 Eyn geystlich edles Buchleynn, A 4^{r}.
51 Eyn geystlich edles Buchleynn, C 5^{v}.

5. Staupitz on Justification by Grace

As far as historians of the reformation can discern, it was Johann von Staupitz who inspired Luther's enthusiasm for Johannes Tauler, which he shared with other Wittenberg colleagues.[52] Staupitz was the general vicar of the Augustinian Eremites as well as Luther's confessor. His theology can be situated in a late medieval mystical movement that focused on the mystical meditation of the passion of Jesus Christ. Staupitz explicitly mentions this mysticism in sermons he delivered during Lent (1512) in Salzburg on Christ's passion. The subject of the sermons was the story of Jesus Christ being jailed, tortured, and crucified. Staupitz's basic idea was that the suffering of all human beings is resolved in Christ's suffering.[53] When the believer experiences Christ's passion,[54] the believer gains access to God's mercy and finds the sweetest Jesus Christ.[55] This Jesus is the only comfort for human beings,[56] and, as Staupitz says, "All tugent, alle genad ist in dir alain."[57] Again, as we have seen in both Tauler and the *Theologia Deutsch*, we find a Christological mysticism that anticipates Luther's later reformation theology. Luther also later reflects on the influence of Staupitz's sermons on his own work, claiming: "Staupicius hat die doctrinam angefangen."[58] Indeed, these sermons by Staupitz represent a theology of grace in its purest form. There is nothing that humans can do to earn merit before God. Salvation is given freely by God. Staupitz explains his notion of grace freely given when discussing the sacrament: "Und umbsünst ist er dir geben die genad. Du gib auch umbsünst, was dir got umbsünst geben hat!"[59]

Staupitz does not use any of the technical terminology for justification in his 1512 sermons. This terminology appears in the sermons on predestination that he preached in Nürnberg in 1516, which were published in 1517 on the eve of the reformation. One important concern among the Augustinian theologians at that time was predestination. Staupitz's 1516 sermons presuppose complicated theological debates on the topic. However the main focus of his preaching, as far as we can tell from the printed versions, was the believer's encounter with Jesus Christ, which Staupitz described in a mystical way:

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[52] Henrik Otto, Vor- und frühreformatorische Tauler-Rezeption. Annotationen in Drucken des späten 15. und frühen 16. Jahrhunderts (QFRG 75), Gütersloh 2003.

[53] Johann von Staupitz, Salzburger Predigten 1512. Eine textkritische Edition, Wolfram Schneider-Lastin (ed.), Tübingen 1990, 25,9–10.

[54] Staupitz, Salzburger Predigten, 26,33–27,53.

[55] Staupitz, Salzburger Predigten, 39,139.

[56] Staupitz, Salzburger Predigten, 39,139.

[57] Staupitz, Salzburger Predigten, 43,53.

[58] WA.TR 1, 245,12 (No. 526).

[59] Staupitz, Salzburger Predigten, 55,195–96.

Tu es ille singularis sponsus qui es meus, es mihi, es ego. Ideo tu es meus, et universa quae habes mihi habes. Ego sum tuus, et quidquid in me est tibi est. Et quia sumus unum, tua ita mea sint quod maneant tua; mea sic tua sunt, quod etiam maneant mea.[60]

The image of bride and bridegroom in a discussion of justification is famous enough! By invoking it, Staupitz brings another mystic into the discussion, namely Bernard of Clairvaux, who introduced the bridal motif in his interpretation of the Song of Songs in his sermons.[61] Staupitz considered the bridal motif to be the most sensuous and intimate image for describing Christ's effect on human beings in the process of freeing them from sin. Staupitze combines the bridal imagery with the terms of justification: "Sum igitur sic ego tua iustitia iustus."[62] When considering Luther's 1545 description of his breakthrough mentioned above, one has good reason to ask what distinguishes Staupitz's view from Luther's idea of *iustitia passiva*. In his sermons, Staupitz describes Christ's righteousness as exactly the kind of righteousness that makes humans righteous and not a type of *iustitia activa* that demands and judges human actions. Even more astonishing is what follows. Staupitz states that the same logic holds for God's power and wisdom.[63] Luther later took up this idea and expanded it to include God's work, virtue, wisdom, power, salvation and glory.[64] Until now, scholars of Luther have not noticed this connection between Staupitz's idea of God's *iustitia passiva* and Luther's 1545 preface that explicitly reiterates this idea. Scholars have tended to interpret Luther's late reminiscence as making the connection with the Pauline-Augustinian terms of justification. I draw a different conclusion: the breakthrough has to do with how Luther's theological development was inspired by Staupitz's mystical insights. I do not, however, wish to introduce a contradiction between mysticism and the Pauline-Augustinian terminology of justification. Rather, I think that both conceptualities merge in the theologies of both Luther and Staupitz. Thus, in a chapter on justification in the same text Staupitz states:

[…] iustificatio […], qua reducatur transgression ad veram dei oboedientiam. Quod tunc fit, quando per gratiam dei iterum aperiuntur oculi eius, ut verum deum cognoscat per fidem, inflammatur cor eius, ut dues sibi placeat. Utrumque mera gratia est et ex Christi meritis – praevisis vel exhibitis – fluit, operibus nostris ad hoc nihil facientibus neque facere potentibus.[65]

60 Staupitz, "De exsecutione aeternae praedestinationis," XI, 76, in: Johann von Staupitz, Sämtliche Schriften. Abhandlungen, Predigten, Zeugniess, vol. 2: Lateinische Schriften, bk. 2: Libellus de exsecutione aeternae praedestinationis = Ein nutzbarliches Büchlein von der entlichen Volziehung ewiger Fürsehung, Lothar Graf zu Dohna/Richard Wetzel (eds.), Berlin 1979, 158. (Hereafter referred to as Schriften.)

61 Bell, Divus Bernhardus (as note 11).

62 Staupitz, "De exsecutione aeternae praedestinationis," XI, 77, in: Schriften 2, 158.

63 Staupitz, "De exsecutione aeternae praedestinationis," XI, 77, in: Schriften 2, 158.

64 WA 54, 186,11–13 (Preface to the Opera Latina [1545]).

65 Staupitz, "De exsecutione aeternae praedestinationis," VI, 33, in: Schriften 2, 110–112.

These remarks conflate the mystical experience with theological reflection on justification. A similar conflation occurs in another passage in the same chapter, in which Staupitz describes the birth of the son of God according to a model that casts God as the Father, the will as the Mother, and the merits of Christ as the awakening seed. This son of God is the "iustificatus vivificatusque per fidem."[66] The birth of the son of God in us is a classical mystical image, as can be seen in the first of Tauler's sermons. Both the connection of this image with the term justification and the preoccupation with faith as the mediator closely align these reflections to Luther's later theology. Or, to put it a bit differently, when reading Staupitz, one can ask how much room was left for a "reformatory discovery."

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Heiko Oberman was averse to explaining the reformation solely in terms of the *via moderna*.[67] Similarly, my argument is not to explain Luther's reformation theology exclusively in the terms of mysticism. Luther also relied on important scholastic theologians, for example Peter Lombard, among many other biblical-exegetical and philosophical-theological sources.[68]

Nevertheless, Luther's reformation theology is influenced by late medieval mysticism. Luther makes use of Staupitz's bride-bridegroom imagery in the famous passage of the 1520 treatise *On the Freedom of a Christian*:

> Nit allein gibt der glaub ßovil, das die seel dem gottlichen wort gleych wirt aller gnaden voll, frey und selig, sondernn voreynigt auch die seele mit Christo, als eyne brawt mit yhrem breudgam. Auß wilcher ehe folget, wie S. Paulus sagt, das Christus und die seel eyn leyb werden, ßo werden auch beyder gutter fall, unfall und alle ding gemeyn, das was Christus hatt, das ist eygen der glaubigen seele, was die seele hatt, wirt eygen Christi.[69]

Notably, Luther used the imagery for exactly the same purpose as Staupitz did: to show how Christ frees sinners from their sins! Moreover, Luther used the image of the birth of the son of God in his Wartburg Postil:

> Da hatt der Euangelist aber eyn maltzeychen gesteckt, das er hie schweygt der namen Joseph und Maria, nennet sie vatter und mutter, uns ursach tzu geben an die geystliche bedeuttung. Wer ist nu Christus geystlicher vatter unnd mutter? Er selb nennet seyne geystliche mutter Marci. 4. Lu. 8: Wer da thut den willen meyniß vattern, der ist meyn bruder, meyn schwester und meyn mutter. S. Paulus nennet sich selb eynen vatter. 1. Cor. 4: Wenn yhr gleych zehen tausent schulmeyster habet yn Christo, ßo habt yhr doch nit viel vetter;

66 Staupitz, "De exsecutione aeternae praedestinationis," VI, 35–36, in: Schriften 2, 114.

67 Heiko A. Oberman, Spätscholastik und Reformation, vol. 2: Werden und Wertung der Reformation, 2nd edn., Tübingen 1979, vii.

68 Luther used Lombard's Commentary on Romans in his own lectures on Romans from 1515–1516. Cf. Volker Leppin, "*Sola gratia – sola fide*. Rechtfertigung nach der Römerbriefauslegung des Petrus Lombardus," in: Jan Lohrengel/Andreas Müller (eds.), Entdeckung des Evangeliums, FS Johannes Schilling (FKD 107), Göttingen 2017, 47–64.

69 WA 7, 25,26–32 (De libertate christiana [1520]).

denn ich hab euch yn Christo durchs Euangelium geporn oder getzeuget. So ists nu klar, das die Christliche kirche, das ist: alle glewbige menschen sind Christus geystliche mutter, und alle Apostel und lerer ym volck, ßo sie das Euangelium predigen, sind seyn geystlicher vatter. Und ßo offt eyn mensch von new glawbig wirt, ßo offt wirt Christus geporn von yhnen.[70]

Whether Luther appropriated the concept of the birth of the son of God from Tauler or Staupitz is unimportant. Of significance is that Luther used this concept into the early 1520s!

To conclude: Tauler, the *Theologia Deutsch*, and Staupitz all figure as important for Luther's early theological development with respect to his understanding of penitence. Thus we should not hesitate to see mysticism as the decisive root of Luther's theology. This makes Luther more medieval than most of his interpreters want him to be, especially his Lutheran interpreters. But it puts him into his historical place: Martin Luther is to some degree a late medieval mystic.

70 WA 10/I/1, 387,3–14 (Wartburg Postill [1522]).

Part Three

Ministry

Chapter 12

Ministry and Sacred Obligation

A Late Medieval Context for Luther's "On Whether One May Flee from the Death"

Dean Phillip Bell

1. Introduction

The Second Pandemic of the Bubonic plague ravaged a large part of Europe and the Ottoman Empire from the fourteenth through the eighteenth century. Plague fundamentally challenged and, in some cases, changed the culture and structures of communities that were struck or even merely threatened. It was the topic of much concern and discussion in a wide range of late medieval and early modern sources – from chronicles, civic legislation, medical treatises, literature, the arts, and, naturally, religious writings in the form of sermons, prayers, biblical commentaries, and polemics. In this essay I contextualize Luther's treatment of plague by surveying different religious responses to plague. I then focus on how Luther identified plague as a ministerial responsibility.

Medical historians have traditionally pointed to two approaches to plague by early modern people – one that assumed that disease was spread through the air (miasma) and one that asserted that disease was spread through contact (contagion). In reality, few early moderns entertained completely separate conceptions, often mixing both explanatory models. Adherence to either position could be leveraged to support and justify fleeing from plague in hopes of finding better, healthier air in another location (though ironically this strategy could also help to spread the disease) or avoiding those people already infected.

Indeed, large numbers of late medieval and early modern Europeans fled from the plague. Still, not everyone agreed flight was efficacious or the moral thing to do. As Boccaccio (1313–75) famously noted in the *Decameron*,

> Some people, pursuing what was possibly the safer alternative, callously maintained that there was no better or more efficacious remedy against a plague than to run away from it. Swayed by this argument, and sparing no thought for anyone but themselves, large numbers of men and women abandoned their city, their homes, their relatives, their estates and their belongings, and headed for the countryside, either in Florentine territory or, better still, abroad. It was as though they imagined that the wrath of God would not

unleash the plague against men for their iniquities irrespective of where they happened to be, but would only be aroused against those who found themselves within the city walls; or possibly they assumed that the whole of the population would be exterminated and that the city's last hour had come.[1]

Boccaccio went on to rue the abandonment of relatives and the neglect of neighbors, leading to what he saw as moral debauchery and increased death rates.

Muslim writers grappled with similar concerns as the plague spread and recurred across Ottoman lands throughout the early modern period. Like their Christian European neighbors, they drew from classical sources, their own traditions, and specific experiences. In traditional historiography it has generally been assumed that flight from plague was frowned upon in Islam. Indeed, Islam was often polemically cast as infused with a certain degree of "fatalism" and a more "passive" response to the outbreak of disease. It has been argued that the growing Islamization of the Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth century, especially with the acquisition of lands in the Islamic heartland, naturally led to even less pragmatic responses to plague.[2] This traditional approach was rooted in a few observations about Islamic thought, based on teachings of the Prophet: 1) plague should be interpreted as a form of mercy and a means of martyrdom for the faithful, but a punishment for the infidel; 2) Muslims should not enter into an area with plague, but also should not flee an area if they were already there; and 3) plague was not transmitted by contagion but rather through God directly.[3]

Recent scholarship, however, has complicated this standard interpretation significantly. Contagion was not universally rejected by Islamic scholars[4] and the most prominent Ottoman jurist of the sixteenth century, Ebussuud Efendi (1491–1574), approved flight as a preventative option against the plague.[5] In support of his position, Efendi could cite earlier Islamic scholars as well as some sayings of Muhammad and historical examples of prominent caliphs and rulers.[6] Flight was recommended in some Ottoman medical circles as well. The former Jewish physician in the Ottoman Empire, Ilyas bin Ibrahim al-Yahudi (died after 1512), who had traveled to Istanbul and converted to Islam at the end of the fifteenth century, wrote a treatise on "The Refuge from Plague and Pestilence" for Sultan Bayezid II. He indicated flight as the first recommendation against the plague. Absent the opportunity to flee, however, he identified particular places

[1] Giovanni Boccaccio, "Introduction to Decameron," in: Rosemary Horrox (ed./trans.), The Black Death (Manchester Medieval Sources), Manchester 1994, 29–30.

[2] Heath Lowry, "Pushing the Stone Uphill. The Impact of Bubonic Plague on Ottoman Urban Society in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries," in: Osmanli Arastirmalari 23 (2003), 129.

[3] Michael W. Dols, The Black Death in the Middle East, Princeton, NJ 1977, 23.

[4] See John Aberth, Plagues in World History, Lanham 2011, 39.

[5] Birsen Bulmus, Plague, Quarantine and Geopolitics in the Ottoman Empire, Edinburgh 2012, 3.

[6] Dols, The Black Death (as note 3), 172–73; Lowry, "Pushing the Stone Uphill," 103.

best suited for refuge – namely those in high altitudes and those facing north. He also indicated that other related precautions were beneficial, such as disinfecting the air through the use of vinegar, sandalwood, and rosewater, in addition to more general fumigation.[7]

The topic of flight from plague was discussed regularly in early modern Germany as well.[8] One late fifteenth-century German writer wrote wryly that, "Clever doctors have three golden rules to keep us safe from pestilence: get out quickly, go a long way away and don't be in a hurry to come back."[9] Before turning to Luther, it is instructive to review one final discussion of plague, that of Gabriel Biel (1425–1495), the well-known German nominalist theologian. Given Biel's position within late medieval Christian thought, Biel's sermon on flight from the plague seems a particularly apt starting point for a broader comparison and analysis.

For Biel, God makes use of those things created in nature as a weapon against sin, but God remains the principal operator.[10] Biel begins the question regarding flight from plague by asking if during a time when plague is raging it is permitted, profitable, and expedient to flee from a place or distance oneself from people suspected of being infected.[11] Biel believes that flight in such cases is opposed to fraternal charity (*fraternae charitati*) and therefore not permissible.[12] Biel does not find flight to be of benefit in preserving life in such cases. After all, citing the example of Job, it is not possible to extend one's life beyond the limits determined by God. Biel counters with biblical examples of successful responses, including medical responses, to illness, as in Ecclesiasticus (Sirach) 38:4, "The Lord created medicines out of the earth, and the sensible will not despise them" (NRSV); or the case of Hezekiah in 2 Kings 20.

Biel offers several suppositions for discussion: first, that plague is ordained by God, sometimes in the form of natural causes such as the corruption of the air, as punishment for sin, or, according to medical authorities, as the result of putrefaction of the air; second, God can be appeased from the divine wrath, inflicted through punishments, by improvement of life and humility; third, plague can

[7] Nükhet Varlik, Disease and Empire. A History of Plague Epidemics in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire (1453–1600), Ph.D. Diss., University of Chicago, Chicago, IL 2008, 188.

[8] Edward Eckert, The Structures of Plagues and Pestilence in Early Modern Europe. Central Europe, 1560–1640, Basel 1996, 26.

[9] Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, The Pest Anatomized. Five Centuries of the Plague in Western Europe, London 1985, 3; cited in Horrox (as note 1), The Black Death, 108.

[10] Gabriel Biel, Sermones De Festis Christi Et Divae Virginis Mariae at Que Sanctis in Signioribus Totius Anni Exquisitissimi, Colonnia Agrippinae 1619, 359.

[11] Biel, Sermones, 361.

[12] Biel thought flight from plague could be a legitimate medical response, but he did not recommend it because it was contrary to charity and pointless since plague was a punishment from God. Not all late medieval thought would have agreed that recourse to medicine in the face of plague was acceptable. Horrox, The Black Death (as note 1), 108–109.

be prevented by natural means; fourth, everything is permissible that is not prohibited by a precept of God.

Through nine conclusions,[13] Biel establishes that spiritual health must precede medical remedies.[14] Neither medicine nor flight from the plague are helpful because they do not address the primary cause, only the secondary. Only spiritual medicine can be truly efficacious.[15] Biel asserts that it is a sin to utilize any medicine, preservative, or curative against the laws of charity.[16] Those responsible for spiritual ministry are obligated to provide it since the good shepherd lays down his own life for that of his sheep. The greater the danger, Biel notes, the greater is the merit to visit and console the miserably infected and the indigent.[17]

Biel concludes that the raging pestilence serves three purposes: 1) to be diligent in our lives to clear away sins, to reconcile ourselves with God through internal conversion and penitential sacrament; 2) to offer obedience to God with a full heart, declaring firmly in life and death that when God calls us from this life no one would wish to seek remedies, even if by means of them (which is not possible) we could preserve our life; and 3) the remedy we should seek for preservation is through the fear of God.[18]

2. Luther's Discussion of Flight from the Plague

In his 1527 treatise "Whether One May Flee from a Deadly Plague," Luther takes up a common theme, addressed by numerous late medieval and reformation-era writers in Germany and across Europe.[19] The immediate context for the work was a plague epidemic that hit Wittenberg in early August 1527, forcing the relocation of the university faculty and students until April of 1528. Luther had direct and visceral experiences of this tragic event, as several close friends and/or their spouses and children died and Luther's colleague Johannes Bugenhagen and his family even moved into Luther's house for a period of time.[20] The plague also erupted in Breslau in August 1527 and prompted the local clergy there to ask about whether it was acceptable for Christians to flee from the plague. Luther wrote his response after a brief delay, as an open letter to Johann Hess, the acknowledged leader of the reformation in Silesia. His letter was published in 1527 and was widely circulated, subsequently printed in nineteen editions.

[13] Biel, Sermones, 362–363.
[14] Biel, Sermones, 363.
[15] Biel, Sermones, 363.
[16] Biel, Sermones, 364.
[17] Biel, Sermones, 366.
[18] Biel, Sermones, 366.
[19] LW 43, 119–138 (= WA 23, 338–386 [Ob man vor dem sterben fliehen möge [1527]).
[20] LW 43, 115–116 (Introduction) (= WA 23, 380 [Anmerkungen]).

Luther begins his treatise by noting that many people firmly believe that one should not flee from a plague, which, after all, is God's punishment sent upon us for our sins. In fact, if this is the case, we must rather submit to God with "true and firm" faith. Early on, however, Luther states that there are some who say that it is permissible to flee, especially if one does not hold a public office. Luther indicates that he is unprepared to censure the former for their strong faith, though he notes that not everyone has the same depth of faith and we cannot place the same burden upon everyone. However, Luther does assert that one may not repudiate God's word in order to escape death.

In his treatise, Luther focuses extensively upon the obligations of individuals involved with spiritual ministry and public office. Citing John 10:11 ("A good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep but the hireling sees the wolf coming and flees"), Luther argues that preachers and pastors must remain steadfast before the peril of death. Spiritual ministry is needed to strengthen and comfort people when they are dying. Nevertheless, Luther does concede that he does not consider it sinful for ministers to flee in cases where there are other clergy available. There is no command for clergy to leave themselves needlessly exposed to danger in such a case. He cites the case of St. Athanasius as well as the escape of Paul as depicted in Acts 9 and 19. Similarly for those in public office, Luther asserts that they are obligated to remain. Referencing Romans 13:4 ("The governing authorities are God's ministers for your own good"), he argues that "to abandon an entire community which one has been called to govern and to leave it without official or government, exposed to all kinds of danger such as fires, murder, riots, and every imaginable disaster is a great sin."[21] Luther considers flight by such people problematic, but appears to find the situation mitigated if they provide capable substitutes and "continually and carefully supervise them."

For Luther, the category of public servants includes a broad range of individuals, from physicians, city clerks, and constables. Luther also expands his analysis to address relationships of service between various people – servants and masters, children and parents, and among neighbors. Citing Matthew 25:41–46, Luther argues that one may not forsake another in distress, but rather is obligated to assist and help that person as he himself would like to be helped. (Later he cites Matthew 7:12, do to them what you would have them do to you.)

Throughout the treatise, Luther does not categorically oppose flight from the plague, though he clearly believes that it reflects weaker faith. Still, humans are endowed with the desire to save their life and, with biblical support, Luther asserts that such preservation is not forbidden, provided that it in no way leaves another in harm. He illustrates the connection between people through 1 Corin-

[21] LW 43, 121; in original, WA 23, 343,20–23: "Denn es gar eine grosse sunde ist, Ein gantze gemeine, die yemand zu versehen befolhen ist, so lassen on hewbt und regiment sitzen ynn aller fahr, als Fewr, Mo̊rder, Auffrur und allerley unfal, …"

thians 12:21–26. Luther extends the duty to one's neighbor to various troubles and perils (he earlier referenced God's four scourges of pestilence, famine, sword, and wild beasts [Ez 14:21]). The obligation to one's neighbor is so pronounced for Luther that he labels someone who forsakes and leaves his neighbor as a murderer in God's eyes (Mt 25:43).

From the general moral obligations and a discussion of sacred duties, Luther, as he often does, turns to more practical advice as well. He writes that:

> It would be well, where there is such an efficient government in cities and states, to maintain municipal homes and hospitals staffed with people to take care of the sick so that patients from private homes can be sent there – as was the intent and purpose of our forefathers with so many pious bequests, hospices, hospitals, and infirmaries so that it should not be necessary for every citizen to maintain a hospital in his own home.[22]

Like his medieval forebears, Luther associates plague and sin. Luther, however, expands the argument rather dramatically. He notes that:

> we can be sure that God's punishment has come upon us, not only to chastise us for our sins but also to test our faith and love – our faith in that we may see and experience how we should act toward God; our love in that we may recognize how we should act toward our neighbor.[23]

Luther goes on to write,

> I am of the opinion that all epidemics, like any plague, are spread among the people by evil spirits who poison the air or exhale a pestilential breath which puts a deadly poison into the flesh. Nevertheless, this is God's decree and punishment which we must patiently submit and serve our neighbor, risking our lives in this manner as St. John teaches, "If Christ laid down his life for us, we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" [1 Jn 3:16].[24]

The fear of death, which keeps us from fulfilling our sacred duties is in fact the result of the efforts of the Devil to make us despair of God and become unwilling

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[22] LW 43, 126; in the original, WA 23, 353,30–354,2: "Wol war ists, wo ein solch stadlich regiment ynn stedten und landen ist, das man gemeine heuser und spital kan halten und mit leuten, die yhr warten, versorgen, da hin man aus allen heusern alle krancken verordenete: wie denn unser vorfaren freylich solchs gesucht und gemeinet haben mit so viel stifften, spetalen und siechheusern, das nicht ein iglicher burger ynn seym hause muste ein spetal halten das were wol sein, …"

[23] LW 43, 127; in the original, WA 23, 354,12–16: "Es sey Gottes strafe, uns zugeschickt, nicht alleine die sunde zu straffen, sondern auch unsern glauben und liebe zuuersuchen. Den glauben, auff das wir sehen, und erfaren, wie wir uns gegen Gott stellen wollen, Die liebe, aber, auff das man sehe, wie wir uns gegen den nehesten stellen wollen, …"

[24] LW 43, 127; in the original, WA 23, 354,16–23: "Denn wie wol ich achte, das alle pestilentz, durch die bosen geister werden unter die leute bracht, gleich, wie auch andere plagen, das sie die lufft vergifften, odder sonst mit einem bosen odem anblasen, und damit die todliche gifft ynn das fleissch schiessen, So ists doch gleichwol gotts verhengnis und seine straffe, der wir uns mit gedůlt untergeben sollen, und unserm nehesten zu dienst, also unser leben ynn die fahr setzen, wie S. Johannes leret und spricht, Hat Christus sein leben fur uns gegeben, so sollen wir auch fur die bruder unser leben lassen."

and unprepared to die due to fear and anxiety, forgetfulness of Christ, and the deserting of our neighbors.

In combating the Devil, Luther declares one should assist his neighbor and minister to the needy. Godliness is service to God, Luther maintains, but service to God is also service to our neighbor. Adding heft to the assertion, Luther writes that, "he who despises such great promises and commands of God and leaves his own people destitute, violates all of God's laws and is guilty of the murder of his neighbor whom he abandons."[25]

Yet Luther's position does not lead him to assert that one should not take precautions to keep from the plague or to take medicine to combat it if contracted. "Others sin on the right hand. They are much too rash and reckless, tempting God and disregarding everything which might counteract death and the plague. They disdain the use of medicines; they do not avoid places and persons infected by the plague, but lightheartedly make sport of it and wish to prove how independent they are." Saying that God could protect them if God wants is not trusting God, but tempting Him.[26] One who succumbs to the disease in this way is akin to a suicide.[27] One who contracts the plague under these circumstances is also potentially a murderer as he may spread the disease to his neighbors. Luther has even harsher words for people who keep it as a secret that they have the disease, believing that they can rid themselves of it by contaminating others. Likening the situation to lepers banished from the city to prevent contamination in the Hebrew Bible, Luther argues that those who contract the plague must be separated and medicated.

Luther ends his treatise with some spiritual advice as well. People must be admonished to attend church and listen to sermons so they can learn through God's word how to live and die.[28] Wicked people who despise God's word when they are healthy, Luther argues, should be left unattended when they are sick,

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[25] LW 43, 130; in the original, WA 23, 360,22–25: "Das wer solche reiche verheissunge und Gotts gebot veracht, und die seinen lesst ynn notten, das der schuldig wird sein an allen gebotten Gotts und ein morder erfunden werden an seinem verlassen nehesten."

[26] LW 43, 131; in the original, WA 23, 363,30–364,6: "Widderumb sundigen ettliche alzu seer auff die rechten seytten und sind alzu vermessen und keck, also das sie Gott versuchen und lassen alles anstehen, da mit sie dem sterben odder pestilentz weren sollen, verachten ertzney zu nemen, und meyden nicht stete und person, so die pestilentz gehabt und auffkomen sind, Sondern zechen und spielen mit yhn wollen damit yhre freydickeit beweisen, und sagen, Es sey Gotts straffe, wolle er sie behüeten, so wird ers wol thun, on alle ertzney und uñsern vleys, Solchs heisst nicht Gott trawen, sondern Gott versuchen, …"

[27] Johann Anselm Steiger, Medizinische Theologie. Christus medicus und theologia medicinalis bei Martin Luther und im Luthertum der Barockzeit, mit Edition dreier Quellentexte (Studies in the History of Christian Thought 121), Leiden/Boston 2005, 85–86. As opposed to Bernard of Clairvaux and other medieval authorities who argued that a true Christian did not take medical assistance.

[28] Steiger, Medizinische Theologie (as note 27), 24–31 regarding the healing role of the preacher.

unless they demonstrate significant remorse and repentance. Second, everyone should prepare for death by going to confession and taking the sacrament regularly (every fortnight). They should also reconcile themselves with their neighbors. Addressing the issue of burial, Luther notes that it is necessary, pious, and decent to provide public burial grounds outside of a town.

3. Comparative Perspectives

The Nuremberg Lutheran preacher Andreas Osiander was typical in identifying "natural" causes of plague, but ultimately returning to the power of God as the real explanation for plague. It was God who was the lord of the plague, as well as fever, fire, thirst, and other associated symptoms. According to Osiander, God punishes our disbelief, disobedience, and thanklessness with the plague, as a means both to upbraid and to save us. We must trust in God with a correct and tenacious Christian belief – it is this trust and recognition that saves people, not medication or flight from plague. Similarly, God's word protects us against our chief enemy, the Devil. A true believer in God does not fear the plague. Osiander recommends, therefore, that one respond to plague with seriousness, through penance and correct belief in the word of God.[29]

Other Christian scholars, under the influence of Greek science often permitted flight from plague.[30] Such discussions about flight from plague cut across denominations. The sermon treatise on flight from the plague by the Catholic Jakob Hornstein, the preacher in Saint Lorenz Pfarrkirche in Kempten, delivered in November 1592 and published in Ingolstadt in 1593 is a valuable comparative text. While Hornstein's assessment parallels Luther's in some key areas, even the way he conceptualizes these issues evinces instructive differences. In the aftermath of the Council of Trent it is not surprising that Hornstein articulated the positions that he did. At the same time, some of his more traditional sensibilities clearly grew out of the late medieval Catholic context as well.

Hornstein notes that God is the sole king and ruler of all things and so alone the first cause (*prima causa*) of everything that transpires on earth and in the heavens.[31] He asserts that bad things such as the plague are divine punishment for sin and evil, and that punishment is for the godless.[32] He cites several biblical (Hebrew Bible and New Testament) passages reinforcing his contention that the common punishments of famine, war, and pestilence are the result of the

[29] See also FRANK HATJE, Leben und Sterben im Zeitalter der Pest. Basel im 15. bis 17. Jahrhundert, Basel 1992, 48–50.

[30] ABERTH, Plagues in World History (as note 4), 30.

[31] M. JACOBUM HORNSTEIN, Sterbensflucht. Das ist Christlicher vnd Catholischer Bericht von Sterbensläuff der Pest, Ingolstadt 1593, 11, ch. 3.

[32] HORNSTEIN, Sterbensflucht, 12–13.

sins of the people.[33] Hornstein, like earlier writers, also inventories a list of sins for which God delivers punishment.[34] In the second part of the sermon he turns more directly to responses to the plague. He notes that there are two types of pestilential illness – spiritual and bodily. He spends a very small amount of space discussing the advice of doctors and actual experience as they relate to physical manifestations of plague.[35] To combat the spiritual, he recommends such medicine as the sacrament (Eucharist) and penance, in the form of such things as communal prayers, processions, and pilgrimages.[36] Hornstein devotes chapter four specifically to love of and service towards one's neighbor during a plague outbreak. We are obligated by God's command and Law, he writes, to treat our neighbors as ourselves, to provide assistance at times of plague as well as other emergencies. In this section, the obligation to one's neighbor remains at the level of religious injunction.

In chapter eight, Hornstein deals directly with the topic of whether it is Christian and permissible to flee at the time of plague. From the start he asserts that when it is prejudicial to the love of God or one's neighbor, it is not permissible to flee during a time of plague.[37] One should, in fact, first pursue spiritual medications, since all medication is from God.[38] Hornstein does allow that people may flee in order to save themselves – one should not despise one's own flesh (as he argues from examples from Eph 5 and 2 Kgs 20) and should value life. What is more, there are certainly biblical precedents for flight from danger (e. g., Jer 38).[39] Hornstein, however, counters this in chapter ten with an argument that flight during a time of plague is Godless, unchristian, and completely illegal. In resolving these competing positions, Hornstein notes that the answer depends in part on whether one diagnoses disease as from God; from natural origins; or as the punishment for sins.[40] Hornstein argues that those whose actions would not be prejudicial to their neighbors and who could be more useful (*nutzlich*) and be able to serve God by removing themselves, are permitted to flee without sinning. On the other hand, those who are communal servants and whose absence would be detrimental to the common good (*gemeynen Nutz*) and the people generally – this is true of communal officers, medical professionals, as well as clerics (for example, as needed to administer sacraments) – are obligated to remain.[41] However, if communal servants flee because of danger to themselves that may be

[33] Hornstein, Sterbensflucht, 14.
[34] Hornstein, Sterbensflucht, 18.
[35] Hornstein, Sterbensflucht, 38–39.
[36] Hornstein, Sterbensflucht, 22, 26.
[37] Hornstein, Sterbensflucht, 39–40.
[38] Hornstein, Sterbensflucht, 40.
[39] Hornstein, Sterbensflucht, 42–43.
[40] Hornstein, Sterbensflucht, 48.
[41] Hornstein, Sterbensflucht, 54–55, 59.

permitted (as long as it does not result in great disorder), their souls will be tainted by their neglect for their subjects.[42]

4. Preliminary Analysis

There is a good deal about Luther's treatise that is not new. As we have seen, the emphasis on charity and neighborliness was sounded already in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and continued to be discussed throughout the early modern period. Some writers, such as the fifteenth-century John of Saxony and a contemporaneous anonymous Bohemian writer rued that the flight of medical practitioners had increased the number of plague deaths.[43] It was standard fare to ascribe plague to divine punishment for human sin. The medical and public policy suggestions that Luther proffered were hardly original in plague-ridden Europe, where lazarettos were developed already in the fourteenth century and a wide range of civic legislation and medical regimens had been initiated across Europe.

Still, there are some aspects of Luther's work that are quite striking. Most apparent are the traditional themes that Luther leaves out entirely. Late medieval Christian (and even Muslim) responses to plague often involved supplications to saints and holy men and frequently organized processions to appeal to God for forgiveness and the lifting of the plague. Perhaps not surprisingly, Luther does not entertain such ceremonies and "superstitions." Luther, unlike other writers but mimicking Osiander after him, spent a good deal of ink on the topic of the Devil and the plague. Luther's overarching emphasis on policy, in addition to pastoral and spiritual concerns, is perhaps his most significant contribution to the discussion of flight from plague. For our purposes, there are several significant issues in Luther's treatise that make sense largely in a late medieval religious and political context and that resonated with later writers.

4.1. Vocation, Sacred Obligation, and the Two Kingdoms

Luther's heavy emphasis on the sacred obligation of the minister at the time of plague is not completely novel, but it is much more developed than similar discussions in the works of other writers. The same is true of his expansion of that sacred obligation to civil servants and neighbors more generally. Luther's view goes well beyond the general duties of secular and religious officials that are articulated by late medieval and early modern Catholic writers.

Importantly, Luther draws from a late medieval well marked by an increasing sacralization of civic society and a different notion of moral obligations, clerical

[42] Hornstein, Sterbensflucht, 60–61.
[43] Aberth, Plagues in World History (as note 4), 45.

functions, and political and communal responsibilities where service to God and one's neighbor are closely linked.[44] For Luther generally, there are two dimensions of life for the Christian – one in which the Christian has an individual relation with God and one in which the Christian is a member of society with a specific office (*Amt*) (governmental position, parenthood, etc.) and responsibility for others.[45] Luther's notion of *imago Dei* encompassed two dimensions – obedience before God (*coram Deo*) and one's neighbor (*coram hominibus*).[46]

Luther utilized the concept of "Beruf" in a new way that diverged from his medieval predecessors, especially those of a more mystical bent who focused on the spiritual existence of the human being.[47] For Luther "work" becomes a divine calling and is therefore spiritualized at the same time that spiritual callings are not separated from worldly work.[48] Luther theologizes politics, with the political and everyday merging into the divine.[49] The spiritual vocation for Luther no longer refers simply to the priesthood, but rather more generally to the spiritual duty that each Christian has for others.[50] By introducing the notion of vocation into the worldly sphere, Luther attacks, or de-sacralizes, the monastic life[51] and establishes that brotherly love is simultaneously the expression of the love of God.[52]

Luther built upon the late medieval criticism of the holy office, for example as expressed by John Wycliffe and others, who sought to separate official and sacred functions.[53] The position of holy office had gone through a good deal of development in the early and high Middle Ages. Luther addressed the topic of the

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[44] William Langland, to give one example, it has been noted, possessed a radical Christocentric conception of the incarnation that served to merge the idea of serving God and serving one's neighbor. Jim Knowles, "Can You Serve? The Theology of Service from Langland to Luther," in: Journal of Medieval & Early Modern Studies 40.3 (2010), 527–557. Similarly, although differently focused in some key ways, Luther's position resonated with that of William Ockham, who argued that legal power resided in the people by divine law but was transferred to the civic leader after the Fall (without the mediation of the church). Jonathan David Beeke, "Historical and Theological Studies. Martin Luther's Two Kingdoms, Law and Gospel, and the Created Order. Was There a Time When the Two Kingdoms Were Not?," in: WTJ 73 (2011), 197–198.

[45] Beeke, "Historical and Theological Studies," 204.

[46] Beeke, "Historical and Theological Studies," 208.

[47] Christiane Frey, "Beruf. Luther, Weber, Agamben," in: New German Critique 105 (2008), 47.

[48] Frey, "Beruf," 44.

[49] Frey, "Beruf," 48. See also ch. 2 in Dean Phillip Bell, Sacred Communities. Jewish and Christian Identities in Fifteenth-Century Germany (Studies in Central European Histories), Leiden 2001.

[50] Frey, "Beruf," 48–49.

[51] Frey, "Beruf," 49. See also Steiger, Medizinische Theologie (as note 27), 12–15, regarding the 1527 treatise, see vii.

[52] Steiger, Medizinische Theologie (as note 27), viii, regarding the consequences for the two empire teaching.

[53] Holsten Fagerberg, art. "Amt/Ämter/Amtverständnis VI. Reformationszeit," TRE 2 (1978), 552.

theology of office in a wide range of writings, often in polemics against both the papacy and the radical wing of the reformation.[54] His conception of office was related to his stance on the gospel and justification. The late medieval notion of *Amt* involved two concepts: *potestas ordinis*, a general power to administer the sacraments, and *potestas jurisdictionis*, which related to the obligation to teach, lead, and judge. For Luther, judiciary power was not only given to Peter, but to all priests and the entire church.[55] Luther's notion of the priesthood of all believers was influenced by late medieval corporate ideas. In his 1523 "De instituendis ministris Ecclesiae," Luther asserted that ordination was instituted on the authority of Scripture and the example and decrees of the Apostle for the purpose of providing people with ministers of the Word.[56] "Mostly the functions of a priest," he argued, "are these: to teach, preach and proclaim the Word of God, to baptize, to consecrate or administer the Eucharist, to bind and loose sins, to pray for others, to sacrifice, and to judge of all doctrine and spirits."[57] Luther complained that contemporary priests had moved far from this core function.[58] Luther did not reject the idea that the holy office executed certain church functions; however, the office (*ministerium*) held a completely new meaning for Luther.[59] It was not the individual in office who held power over his fellow Christians, but rather the mediating power of the Word.[60] Luther diminished the distinction between the priest and the layman since, as he noted, the New Testament knows only one High Priest, namely Jesus Christ.[61] Luther argued that, "But let us go on and show from the priestly offices (as they call them) that all Christians are priests in equal degree."[62] The first office, the ministry of the Word, was the basis for all the other functions and, importantly, it was common to all Christians.[63] He writes further that, "Indeed it is not a priesthood if it is not unique and common to all,"[64] and "For the word of Christ in Matt. 18 [:15] is addressed not only to the Apostles, but, certainly, to all the brethren."[65]

[54] Fagerberg, "Amt/Ämter/Amtverständnis VI. Reformationszeit," 553.

[55] Fagerberg, "Amt/Ämter/Amtverständnis VI. Reformationszeit," 554.

[56] LW 40, 11 (Concerning the Ministry [1523]) (= WA 12, 172,35–173,2).

[57] LW 40, 21; in the original, WA 12, 180,1–4: "Sunt autem sacerdotalia officia ferme haec: docere, praedicare annunciareque verbum dei, baptisare, consecrare seu Eucharistiam ministrare, ligare et solvere peccata, orare pro aliis, sacrificare et iudicare de omnium doctrinis et spiritibus."

[58] LW 40, 12 (= WA 12, 173,23–24).

[59] Fagerberg, "Amt/Ämter/Amtverständnis VI. Reformationszeit," 557.

[60] Fagerberg, "Amt/Ämter/Amtverständnis VI. Reformationszeit," 558.

[61] Fagerberg, "Amt/Ämter/Amtverständnis VI. Reformationszeit," 555.

[62] LW 40, 21; in the original, WA 12, 179,38–39: "Sed pergamus et idem ex officiis sacerdotalibus (quae vocant) probemus, omnes Christianos ex aequo esse sacerdotes."

[63] LW 40, 21 (= WA 12, 180,17–18).

[64] LW 40, 23; in the original, WA 12, 181,19–20: "Quare et sacerdotium non nisi unicum et commune erit."

[65] LW 40, 26; in the original, WA 12, 183,32–33: "Stat enim verbum Christi Matth. 18 non Apostolis tantum, sed omnibus prorsus fratribus dictum: …"

While Luther was not completely revolutionary, he certainly engaged with and built upon two significant late medieval developments – the shift to moralism over dogma and practice and the growing laicization of religion, by which sacred authority was increasingly stripped from the clergy as an exclusive privilege. These two shifts were played out in late medieval theological discussions as well as political developments, and these were further expanded during the reformation, particularly in its more radical expressions.[66]

4.2. Neighborliness, Sacralization, and Communalism

Throughout his plague treatise Luther utilizes the terms *Nachbarschaft* and *Nächsten*. The former, of course, had the general meaning of someone living in close proximity. But in the later Middle Ages it could also be used coterminously with the notion of *Bürgerschaft* and more generally with the relations between neighbors and their reciprocal obligations.[67] The latter term referred to relationships or connections between people, especially relatives, or some kind of trusted union.

Late medieval Germany witnessed what has been termed a process of communalization. A leading proponent of the communalization thesis is Peter Blickle, who has argued that the movement had economic roots[68] and involved the intensification of social relations and the emergence of communal administrative and legal practices.[69] For the village commune, Blickle writes that, "Norms for communal living had to be devised, organs for supervising adherence to the norms had to be established, institutions for settling violations of the norms had to be created. […] To regulate communal life the village commune developed a communal right of legislating; administrative organs for enforcing village laws were created in the form of village offices; and the adjudication of violations was handled by the village court."[70] Similarly in urban areas, the community developed along a path of political independence that included exemption from jurisdiction of external courts; curtailment of power of royal or episcopal bailiffs; participation in the choosing of a warden (*Ammann*) and eventually acquisition of the exclusive right of that appointment; acquisition of the right of high justice; and the elimination of serfdom in favor of personal freedom.[71] Indeed, the "community" began to see itself as an association capable of taking political action,[72] as a communal charter from Pfalz in the Tyrol in 1471 indicated:

[66] See BELL, Sacred Communities (as note 49).

[67] JACOB GRIMM/WILHELM GRIMM, Das deutsche Wörterbuch, Trier 2005; online at: http://dwb.uni-trier.de/de/.

[68] PETER BLICKLE, Communal Reformation. The Quest for Salvation in Sixteenth-Century Germany, THOMAS DUNLAP (trans.) (Studies in Central European Histories 1), Atlantic Highlands, NJ 1992, 154.

[69] BLICKLE, Communal Reformation (as note 68), 155.

[70] BLICKLE, Communal Reformation (as note 68), 156.

[71] BLICKLE, Communal Reformation (as note 68), 157.

[72] BLICKLE, Communal Reformation (as note 68), 159.

Let it be known to all who see, read, or hear this open declaration, that we, the neighbors who reside in the village of Pfalz, have jointly, unanimously, with good deliberation, and freely drawn up and made a statute, in particular for our honor and benefit and those of our descendants, and we have … devised and decreed the same.[73]

An earlier decree from the Tyrolean district of Stubai was issued in 1421 that similarly read:

if a judge is to be appointed in Stubai, the neighbors themselves [*die nachpaurschaft*] have the authority and the right to select three men from amongst themselves and propose them to a representative of the territorial lord; the representative then has the choice to pick one judge from the three, whichever he likes best.[74]

The political dimension of communalization spilled over into the ecclesiastical realm as well. The communalization or localization of the church involved the right to complain about the minister or pastor and request his dismissal, the right of the community to be heard when an appointment was being made, and finally the very right of the community to freely elect its pastor.[75] Indeed, in his treatise on ministry, Luther notes that:

For since we have proved all of these things to be the common property of all Christians, no one individual can arise by his own authority and arrogate to himself alone what belongs to all. […] But the community rights demand that one, or as many as the community chooses, shall be chosen or approved who, in the name of all with these rights, shall perform these functions publicly. […] Publicly one may not exercise a right without consent of the whole body or of the church.[76]

Going a step further, Luther declares that, "The authority and the dignity of the priesthood resided in the community of believers" and

A minister may be deposed if he proves unfaithful. […] In fact a spiritual minister is more readily removable than any civil administrator, since if he is unfaithful he should be less tolerable than a civil officer. The latter can be harmful only in matters of this life, whereas the former can be destructive of eternal possessions. Therefore, it is a privilege of the other brethren to excommunicate such a one and substitute someone else.[77]

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[73] Blickle, Communal Reformation (as note 68), 159.

[74] Blickle, Communal Reformation (as note 68), 161.

[75] Blickle, Communal Reformation (as note 68), 165.

[76] LW 40, 34 (Concerning the Ministry [1523]); in the original, WA 12, 189,17–19, 21–22, 25–26: "Nam cum omnium Christianorum haec sint omnia (uti probavimus) communia, nulli licet in medium prodire autoritate propria et sibi arripere soli, […] Verum haec communio iuris cogit, ut unus, aut quotquot placuerint communitati, eligantur vel acceptentur, qui vice et nomine omnium, qui idem iuris habent, exequantur officia ista publice […] publice exequi non licet, nisi consensus universitatis seu Ecclesiae."

[77] LW 40, 35, 35–36; in the original, WA 12, 190,22–23, 25–26, 28–31: "iure et dignitate sacerdotii in communi relictis"; "Sed deponi minister potest, si fidelis esse desinat, […] Imo hic minister spiritualis multo est mobilior, quam ullus civilis, quanto intolerabilior est, si infidelis fuerit, quam civilis, qui rebus tantum huius vitae nocere potest, hic vero aeternarum rerum vastator est. Ideo reliquorum fratrum est illum excommunicare et alium substituere."

Luther's position parallels in important ways the developments within the late medieval German commune. According to Blickle, "Pastor and church wardens supervised the moral and religious life of the members of the community, but with the growing communal self-confidence, the church wardens and the community also supervised the moral and religious life of the pastor." In an observation that resonates with Luther's plague treatise, Blickle asserts that late medieval communalization required common consent and agreement[78] – "It should be apparent that village and town could function only with the existence of a developed neighborliness, in the positive sense of an obligation of mutual aid in cases of recognized individual need."[79] What is more, the significant concept of the common weal developed in late medieval Germany as the sum of neighborliness and adequate livelihood, with the chief function of the "state" being the achievement of happiness through "good policy."[80] Blickle writes that "The common weal harmonizes extremely well with the New Testament notion of love for one's fellow man. Peasants and burghers confirm this in their use of the succinct phrase about the 'common good and Christian, brotherly love,' which were to be put into practice now that the 'pure gospel' had once again come to light. Brotherly love no longer manifested itself primarily toward the poor, as was the practice in the old church, but toward one's immediate neighbor."[81] In line with this emphasis on neighborliness, the late medieval pastor was obligated to reside in the community and look after pastoral duties conscientiously and in person.[82] The reformation, according to this interpretation, succeeded (in fact was only possible) by the appropriation of the burgher-peasant social organization of the community and the late medieval communalization that made every member of the community responsible for the political order.[83]

5. Conclusions

Plague was a central, and much discussed, issue in the early modern world.[84] Luther certainly was not the first to comment on the plague nor the first to venture an opinion about the advisability of flight from the plague. As we have seen, in fact Luther's writing on the plague rehashed many core themes in earlier and later literature in Germany and across Europe and the Ottoman Empire. These

78 Blickle, Communal Reformation (as note 68), 178.
79 Blickle, Communal Reformation (as note 68), 179.
80 Blickle, Communal Reformation (as note 68), 181.
81 Blickle, Communal Reformation (as note 68), 181–182.
82 Blickle, Communal Reformation (as note 68), 182.
83 Blickle, Communal Reformation (as note 68), 184.
84 See Dean Phillip Bell (ed.), Plague in the Early Modern World. A Documentary History, Milton Park/Abingdon/Oxfordshire 2019.

included the notion that plague was divine punishment for sin as well as consideration of some practical public health responses. Luther paid no attention to some issues that had been central to late medieval discussions (Christian and Muslim), including prayers to saints and the merit of processions. Instead, Luther highlights the role of the Devil – a theme later Lutheran writers would expand.

Most important was Luther's expansive treatment of the sacred obligations of ministers and public officials, which Luther developed far beyond the injunction of obligation to one's neighbor. Luther's emphases throughout his treatise must be placed within the late medieval context of discussions of the office of the minister and Luther's own notion of office and vocation, as well as the development of communalism, which hinged on the sacralization of the commune and the duties to other citizens and neighbors. Luther's writing on the plague engaged and developed several key themes in Luther's theology and must be placed in the context of his own body of work. At the same time, Luther's approach cannot really be understood without reference to important religious and political developments at the end of the Middle Ages.

Chapter 13

Luther and Priestly *Potestas* in the Late Middle Ages

Christopher Voigt-Goy

How Martin Luther's theology is related to late medieval thought is a complicated question that Luther scholars have recently addressed. My contribution to this discussion consists of showing how Luther developed his idea of the ecclesiastical office of the ordained priesthood in relation to the medieval understanding of *potestas* (power).[1] I begin this chapter by situating Luther's thought in relation to late medieval theories of priestly power advanced by Jean Gerson and Gabriel Biel. I then outline how Luther develops his understanding of the ordained ministry and the priesthood of all believers in the years between 1520 and 1523.

1. Late Medieval Background

Debates over the ecclesiastical office from the early thirteen century onwards were primarily concerned with the concept of *potestas* (power). This shift to conceptualizing the priesthood in terms of *potestas* began around 1140 with Gratian's Decretum (*Decretum Gratiani*). At the same time, Peter Lombard established the connection between priest and power by claiming that ordination bore a sacramental imprint. It is still unclear as to when and in what historical context the distinction between a sacramentally conferred indelible *potestas ordinis* (power of order) and an institutionally assigned and losable *potestas iurisdictionis* (power of jurisdiction) emerged. This distinction was important for the Scholastics' and Canonists' theories of the ecclesiastical office. German legal historian Udo Wolter summarizes the emerging rationale as follows: "Ecclesiastical offices are instituted to pursue different ends, and according to their ends they are endowed, respectively, with particular elements of the *potestas ordinis* and the *potestas iurisdictionis*."[2] The primary question for the papal church, then,

[1] I provide a detailed treatment of this subject in Christopher Voigt-Goy, Potestates und ministerium publicum. Eine Studie zur Amtstheologie im Mittelalter und bei Martin Luther (SMHR 78), Tübingen 2014.

[2] Udo Wolter, art. "Verwaltung, Amt, Beamte V–VI," in: Otto Brunner/Werner Conze/Reinhart Koselleck (eds.), Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe. Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland, 8 vols., Stuttgart 1972–1997, vol. 7 (1992), 26–

was how to negotiate the two-tiered system of powers. While the debate, unsurprisingly, resulted in different answers to this question, it fostered a wide consensus regarding some of its basic assumptions. In the late Middle Ages, specifically with Jean Gerson and Gabriel Biel, differences and consensus are represented, as I now briefly show.

Jean Gerson (1363–1429) was one of the main conciliarists of the Council of Constance (1414–1418) and was also chancellor of the University of Paris. In the midst of the crisis of the Great Schism, Gerson harshly criticized conceptions tipping the balance of the two-tiered system of ecclesiastical powers in favor of the *potestas iurisdictionis*. He rejected the (counterfactual) argument advanced by his teacher, Pierre d'Ailly, who drew on William Ockham's theology, that the church should be preserved "in uno solo."[3] The argument "in uno solo" runs as follows: If the situation arises in which all ordained clerics, as the church's representatives, would err or die, God would preserve the church – according to Matthew 28:20 – in one person. In this case, the last representative (of the *ecclesia ficta*) can legitimately rebuild the church because this person would have the sufficient means to do so, for example by summoning a council to reinstall the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Gerson thought that the difficulty of this argument rested on the possibility that the last representative could be a baptized layperson. Gerson had in mind the scholastic teaching on ordinations in cases of necessity. On this basis he argued that the Catholic Church would be utterly destroyed if its last representative were a baptized layperson. In this case, the church lacks the continuity of the *potestas ordinis*, i. e. its sacramentality. Even if God were to supernaturally create new priests with a *potestas ordinis*, this church would not be the same church that was in possession of the same sacraments Christ had instituted: "The church could fail in its steps and hierarchical office; in the sacrament to the end." Gerson thought it ludicrous that "in the case of death all would be priests." It was more plausible for Gerson to assume that until the end of the world, God would preserve at least one priest who was legitimately ordained in the papal church.[4]

Gerson continued to think about this problem during his stay in Constance. In his treatise *De potestate ecclesiastica*, which was read to the Council in 1417, Gerson underscored his emphasis on the *potestas ordinis*.[5] As the title indicates,

47, 31: "Kirchenämter sind zu unterschiedlichen Zwecken eingerichtet, und demgemäß sind sie in unterschiedlicher Weise mit den einzelnen Elementen der potestas ordinis und der potestas jurisdictionis ausgestattet." Trans. C. V-G.

[3] For Ockham's view, cf. Volker Leppin, "Die Aufwertung theologischer Laienkompetenz bei Wilhelm von Ockham," in: Elizabeth Strauss (ed.), Dilletanten und Wissenschaft. Zur Geschichte und Aktualität eines wechselvollen Verhältnisses (Philosophy & Representation), Amsterdam/Atlanta, GA 1996, 35–48.

[4] Jean Gerson, De Auferabilitate Papae ab Ecclesia, in: Jean Gerson, Opera Omnia, 5 vols., Louis Ellis du Pin (ed.), Hildesheim/New York 1987, vol. 2, 209–224, 213A: "Ecclesia deficere posset in suis gradibus & Officiis Hierarchicis; in suis etiam Sacramentis usque ad finem."; "si per casum mortui essent omnes Sacerdotes."

[5] Jean Gerson, De potestate ecclesiastica, in: Opera Omnia 2, 226–260. The classic study

Gerson's treatise does not solely treat the *potestas ordinis*. Rather, Gerson develops an entire ecclesiological system in which each particular power is merely a specific form of ecclesiastical power in general (*potestas ecclesiastica generalis*): "The ecclesiastical power is a power supernaturally and specifically given by Christ to the Apostles and their legitimate disciples until the end of the world for the edification of the militant church according to the laws of the gospel to attain eternal happiness."[6] This definition presupposes an important point. Gerson insists that ecclesiastical power should not be misunderstood as a gift of faith (a *donum*) that God supernaturally grants to all "pilgrims" in the militant church. The kind of *potestas* that God gives to the church in view of its ecclesiastical power is not the same gift as the *gratia gratum faciens* (gift of grace). Furthermore, this *potestas* is specifically given to the Apostles. It is bound up with the association of persons constituted by ordination in the apostolic succession, i. e. the church in the narrow sense. Gerson leaves no doubt that this association is structured according to degrees of hierarchy (*statibus hierarchicis*), with the pope at the top. A notion of the church without the papacy, the conciliarist is at pains to show, would contradict the very concept of the church. The concept of church always entails its parts, namely "Papatus, Cardinalatus, Patriarchatus, Archiepiscopatus, Episcopatus, Sacerdotium." The implication is that "if by imagination the papacy be cut off from the lower powers, the remains could not be called church."[7]

Gerson, however, does restrict the concentration of ecclesiastical power in papal power. He thinks that ecclesiastical power is distributed throughout the hierarchy of the *ordines*. The whole hierarchy – as the unity of the particular powers – represents the ecclesiastical power in general. Gerson's view has two implications: Firstly, each *status hierarchicus* (hierarchical state) is obliged to preserve the unity of the hierarchy, because otherwise the militant church with its power could not pursue its end, namely the mediation of salvation. Secondly, the corporate body of the church's *status* must secure the execution of each status's power, namely its office. While expanding on this second implication, Gerson's theory takes a decisive turn. He suddenly equates *officium* with *ius*. As Brian Tierney has shown, by *officium* Gerson means "a subjective power or right inhering in individual persons."[8] We must, of course, understand "individual person"

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on this treatise is Guillaume Henri Marie Posthumus Meyjes, Jean Gerson. Apostle of Unity. His Church Politics and Ecclesiology, J. C. Grayson (trans.), Leiden 1999.

[6] Gerson, De potestate, 227A: "Potestas Ecclesiastica, est potestas quae a Christo supernaturaliter & specialiter collata est suis Apostolis & Discipulis, ac eorum successoribus legitimis, usque in finem seculi ad aedificationem Ecclesiae Militantis, secundum Leges Evangelicas pro consecutione felicitas aeternae." Trans. C. V-G.

[7] Gerson, De potestate, 235C: "ut si Papatus per imaginationem praescindatur a reliquis potestatibus inferioribus, id quod superest non dicetur Ecclesia." Trans. C. V-G.

[8] Brian Tierney, The Idea of Natural Rights. Studies on Natural Rights, Natural Law, and Church Law 1150–1650, Grand Rapids, MI 1997, 211.

here as the *status* because Gerson's argument does not at all concern particular persons. What Gerson has in mind is that sacramental character has to do with *both* the power for preaching, hearing confession, distributing communion, collecting tithes and so forth, *and* that it always confers this power to such an extent that each ecclesiastical status can legitimately perform the duties it is held to do. To put it in traditional terms: the *potestas ordinis* and the *potestas iurisdictionis* are indivisibly connected to each other so that every institutional separation of the powers has to be understood as a violation of a God-given right. An example Gerson gives is the situation in which laypeople are granted the power to cast the decisive votes in a council of the church. This case is one of many examples Gerson offers in his treatise *De potestate ecclesiastica* that he also wrote to guide practical questions.[9]

Gerson's aim at the time of the Council of Constance was to connect the two powers by the idea of the sacramental *ordo* (order). The implication of Gerson's conceptual arrangement was similar to that of the thirteenth-century secular masters of the University of Paris, namely to make the *potestas iurisdictionis* a mere appendix of the *potestas ordinis*. It is important to note, however, that Gerson did not devalue the *potestas iurisdictionis*. On the contrary, he insisted on identifying it as a special, supernaturally induced power, perhaps even sacralizing it in a hitherto unknown manner. Thus, Gerson paved the way for the reevaluation of the two-tiered system of powers that Gabriel Biel undertook in his *Canonis Missae Expositio* in the late fifteenth century.[10]

Biel wrote the *Expositio* with the aim of improving pastoral practices. The document also notes Biel's interest in the two powers. Biel wrote the *Expositio* at a time during which the papacy had recovered from its crisis. Biel shows no interest in concentrating the *potestas* in the *ordo*, although he claims to draw on Gerson's *De potestate ecclesiastica*.[11] Instead, he takes up the basic rationale of the classic theory of powers Aquinas had outlined. Biel differs from Aquinas by placing a different emphasis on the powers given by ordination: "These two powers of consecration and of the keys are called *potestates ordinis sacerdotalis*. Neither are they equal, nor are they given to the Apostles at the same time. From them the first relates to the consecration of the true body of Christ. […] The second relates to the mystical body of Christ or its members. […] The first […] was given

[9] Cf. GERSON, De potestate, 249D–250A.

[10] I use the following edition, cited according to Lecture (Lect.), edited volume and page in brackets. GABRIEL BIEL, Canonis Misse Expositio, HEIKO A. OBERMAN/WILLIAM J. COURTENAY (eds.), 5 vols. (VIEG 31–34, 79), Wiesbaden 1963–1976. For Biel, cf. IRENE CRUSIUS, "Gabriel Biel – eine Karriere zwischen vita contemplativa und vita activa," in: ULRICH KÖPF/SÖNKE LORENZ (eds.), Gabriel Biel und die Brüder vom gemeinsamen Leben. Beiträge aus Anlaß des 500. Todestages des Tübinger Theologen, Stuttgart 1998, 1–24. See also GERHARD FAIX, Gabriel Biel und die Brüder vom Gemeinsamen Leben (SMHR 11), Tübingen 1999.

[11] BIEL, Expositio, Lect. 1 C and D (ed. 1:11 f.).

to the Apostles at the meal before the passion of Christ [Lk 22:19], the second after the resurrection [Jn 20:23]."[12] Biel intensifies the difference between the sacramental power of consecration and that of the keys. Should a bishop during ordination, Biel explains, transfer bread and communion cup to the candidate but not impose his hands, the ordained person would be able to consecrate the Eucharist but not to absolve sins *in foro interior* (in the internal forum).[13] With this claim, Biel rejects Aquinas's basic assumption that the *potestates ordinis* must be understood in a direct and indivisible referential context.[14]

As a consequence, Biel insists on the point that the possession of and execution of each and every *potestas* in the church is ultimately dependent on institutional mediation. Biel thus construes a theory of church powers based on the jurisdictional papal *plenitudo potestatis* (fullness of power). Biel understands the *plenitudo potestatis* as the epitome of the *potestas dispositionis ministrorum ecclesiae*, the power to appoint and to distribute the offices in the church, including the powers needed for them. Biel is not the first theologian to have understood the *plenitudo potestatis* in this way. Thomas Aquinas and Jean Gerson had already identified papal power as a power of the architecture of the church offices. However, Biel's understanding of papal power includes another important turn; since the priest acts according to institutional power – in fact by the papal mediation of his *potestas* – he always acts as a representative of this institutional power, *in persona ecclesiae* (in the person of the church). From this perspective, the priest is a kind of henchman of papal power for the distribution of the *merita ecclesiae* (merits of the church), the benefits of the *thesaurus ecclesiae* (treasure of the church) that the pope administers.[15]

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[12] The complete passage in Biel, Lect. 1 E (ed. 1:13): "Hee due potestates consecrationis et clavium dicuntur potestates ordinis sacerdotalis, neque eedem sunt, neque simul tempore collate apostolis, quarum una respicit consecrationem corporis christi veri, quoniam habens eam consecrare potest verum corpus et sanguinem christi virtute verborum sacramentalium. Secunda respicit corpus christi mysticum seu membra eius, quia habens eam potest solvere et ligare peccatores, fideles tamen qui sunt membra ecclesie numero si non merito, licet solutione fiant, etiam membra merito, prima ut dictum est collata est apostolis in cena ante christi passionem, secunda post resurrectionem."

[13] Biel, Expositio, Lect. 1 E (ed. 1:14): "Et si collata prima scilicet potestate consecrandi non procederet episcopus ad collationem aliarum, non esset ille perfecte in sacerdotem ordinatus. Possetque conficere corpus christi, non tamen ligare et solvere peccatores, quia ad hoc nondum fuisset sibi collata potestas."

[14] Cf. Charles Zuckerman, "Aquinas' Conception of the Papal Primacy in Ecclesiastical Government," in: AHDL 48 (1973), 97–134.

[15] Cf. Biel, Expositio, Lect. 26 D (ed. 1:242): "sunt in ecclesiastica hierarchia diversi status et ordines, secundum quos christi ministerium peragitur, ecclesia regitur, gratie et dona dispensantur. Unde sicut papa ratione supremitatis potestatem habet dispensandi thesaurum ecclesie, conferendo nunc plenissimam remissionem peccatorum, nunc partem tertiam penarum auferendo, nunc certi numeri dierum vel annorum indulgentiam conferendo secundum quod viderit ecclesie unitati et populorum devotioni expedire, ceteri quoque episcopi certos indulgentiarum dies concedunt, immo et simplices sacerdotes de eodem thesauro per penitentie sa-

The pope's administration of the church's treasure is, of course, a solely jurisdictional function. But, as Biel points out, this administration is due to the same power by which the Eucharist is sacramentally consecrated. This power is therefore crucial for mediating salvation. Drawing on Duns Scotus's theology, Biel argues that the *potestas consecrationis* (power of consecration) cannot be entirely separated from the *gratia gratum faciens* of the priest. As the "immediate and personal sacrifice," the priest's offer is not always pleasant to God, since the priest is "often a sinner." Since the priest offers the sacrifice *in persona ecclesiae*, the power of the militant church compensates for this defect. As the "mediate" but "principal" sacrificer, the offer of the militant church is always "accepted" by God, "because the church is always the holy and single bride of Christ."[16]

Against this background, it is clear that for Biel the Eucharist is but one of a variety of means by which the church's hierarchy distributes God's grace and gifts. It is worth noting that in his *Expositio* Biel firmly defends the (new) dogma of the indulgence for the deceased.[17] He repeatedly explains the efficacy of the sacrament of penance by equating it with the way indulgences are effective due to their papal proclamation.[18] In summary, Biel's *Expositio* reveals a theory of church powers which is reminiscent of a bureaucracy of salvation in the hands of the papacy. The priestly power and the *ordo* are – as a lively force on their own – rendered hollow. The priest's position is, in fact, reduced to that of a magician of consecration. Or, to put it in another way: The *potestas ordinis* is – in stark contrast to Jean Gerson's theory – a mere appendix to the *potestas iurisdictionis*.

Gerson's and Biel's positions should not be regarded in opposition to each other. Both theories share at least two basic assumptions, though different reasons are at play. First, both Gerson and Biel confirm the importance of the church's hierarchy with its two-tiered system of powers. The papacy with its power is – in Gerson's case – still ecclesiologically necessary. The priest with his power is – in

cramentum indulgentiam a penis largiuntur, per applicationem thesauri ecclesie ad illas vel illas personas secundum concessam potestatem."

[16] "quia ecclesia semper sancta est et unica sponsa Christi." Biel, Lect. 26 H (ed. 1:245): "Est autem duplex offerens, scilicet offerens immediate et personaliter, alius offerens mediate et principaliter. Primus est sacerdos consecrans et summens sacramentum, qui ita in persona sua auctoritate tamen divina hec perficit, quod nemo alius in sic offerendo secum concurrit. Offerens vero mediate et principaliter est ecclesia militans in cuius persona sacerdos offert, et cuius est in offerendo minister. […] Primus offerens non semper gratus est deo, nec semper sibi placet, quia sepe peccator est. Secundum offerens deo est semper acceptum, quia ecclesia semper sancta est et unica sponsa christi pudica, casta, maculam nesciens, neque rugam." For Duns Scotus's position, see Wolfgang Simon, Die Messopfertheologie Martin Luthers. Voraussetzungen, Genese, Gestalt und Rezeption (SMHR 22), Tübingen 2003, 95–100.

[17] Cf. Christopher Voigt-Goy, "Luther und das Kanonische Recht in den 'Resolutiones disputationum indulgentiarum virtute' (1518)," in: Volker Leppin (ed.), Reformatorische Theologie und Autoritäten. Studien zur Genese des Schriftprinzips beim jungen Luther (SMHR 85), Tübingen 2015, 92.

[18] Cf. Biel, Expositio, Lect. 27 G (ed. 1:262 f.).

Biel's case – still of importance as a transmitter of the church's treasure. Second, both theologians confirm the traditional exclusion of the laity in church affairs on the one hand, and the traditional difference between the church's power and the faith of the believers, the *gratia gratum faciens*, on the other hand. With these two shared assumptions, Gerson and Biel reinforced the formal framework of the institutionalized church of which they were a part.

2. Luther's Thinking to 1520

The indulgence controversy of 1517–1518 afforded Luther the opportunity to explicitly address the topic of the *potestas* and its *locus classicus* in Matthew 16:18–19. Although Luther only sporadically referred to the term *potestas* in his *Ninety-Five Theses*, his early opponents Johann Tetzel and Johannes Eck simultaneously (and independently of each other) pointed out that the sixth of Luther's *Theses* articulated a problematic understanding of priestly power. "The pope cannot remit any guilt, except by declaring and showing that it has been remitted by God; or, to be sure, by remitting guilt in cases reserved to his judgment."[19] Both Tetzel (in his 106th thesis from January 1518) and Eck (in his *Obelisci* from the same time) reproached Luther by claiming that his understanding of the *potestas* reduced the nature of priestly power. Both criticized Luther for ignoring the sacramental character of the priest's *ordo* with its objective force and efficacy.[20] Luther responded by outlining his understanding of the *potestas*, or more precisely the *potestas clavium* (power of the keys), in his *Resolutiones disputationum de indulgentiarum virtute* (*Explanations of the Ninety-Five Theses*) from May 1518. I summarize Luther's argument below.[21]

The priestly declaration of the absolution – Luther repeatedly refers to Matthew 16:19 – marks the turning point from God's foreign work to God's proper work. By God's foreign work Luther means the believer's experience of God's salvific will *sub forma irae abscondita* (under the hidden form of wrath). Through God's proper work, the believer comes to know God's salvation in the *pax conscientiae* (peace of conscience) as one's personal ultimate reality.[22] Luther thinks it important to avoid two misconceptions. On the one hand, the priestly dec-

[19] LW 31, 26 (Ninety-Five Theses or Disputation on the Power and Efficacy of Indulgences [1517])); in the original, WA 1, 233,20–21 (Disputatio pro declaratione virtutis indulgentiarum [1517]): "Papa non potest remittere culpam nisi declarando et approbando a deo."

[20] Cf. the texts by Tetzel and Eck in: Peter Fabisch/Erwin Iserloh (eds.), Dokumente zur Causa Lutheri (1517–1521), part 1: Das Gutachten des Prierias und weitere Schriften gegen Luthers Ablaßthesen (1517–1518), Münster 1988, esp. 324, 408–411.

[21] Cf. Karin Bornkamm, Christus – König und Priester. Das Amt Christi bei Luther im Verhältnis zur Vor- und Nachgeschichte (BHTh 106), Tübingen 1998, 84–90.

[22] WA 1, 540,30–541,33 (Resolutiones disputationum de indulgentiarum virtute [1518]) (= LW 31, 100–102).

laration should not be understood as a power that maneuvers the grace of God or endows the faithful with it. Luther points out against a possible objective misunderstanding that the priestly power of the keys is strictly subordinate to God's grace. Grace begins with God's foreign work. Even here, where one's faith is confused and uncertain, the person participates in God's work of salvation. On the other hand, the entire development and unfolding of the subjective reality of salvation cannot be understood to take place independently of the priest's declaration. Luther writes: "Therefore, God's remission effects grace, but the priest's remission brings peace, which is both the grace and gift of God, since it is faith in actual remission and grace."[23]

Luther's claim concerning the priest's declaration of the remission of sins did not appease Tetzel and Eck. In the *Explanations* Luther avoids any hint concerning the nature and objective efficacy of the sacramental *ordo*. Yet, he teaches the same point that he made in his early lectures, beginning with the *Dictata super Psalterium* (1513–1515) to his lectures on Hebrews (1517–1518). Luther claims that the priest's actions are symbolic references to God's law and gospel. The priest assures believers that personal faith is not a treacherous projection "nobis ex nobis" (to us from us).[24] Luther, however, never used the term *potestas* before the *Explanations* to make this point. The way he takes up the term *potestas* in the *Explanations* indicates that he is not interested in unfolding the term according to the traditional conceptual framework.

Nevertheless, Luther presupposes throughout these early years that the *potestas* is the power given to the church's priests as the successors of the Apostles. By virtue of his vocation, each office holder is a *vicarius Christi* to the office holder to whom he is subordinate. As Luther formulates it in the *Dictata*, one's superior deserves appropriate respect and awe.[25] Why does an office holder have such special authority? Luther had already addressed this question in his lectures on Romans. But beginning in the summer of 1518 through to his commentary on Galatians in 1519, Luther expands and sharpens his position. Luther reached the conclusion that the unique authority of an office holder rests upon the *proof* of this unique authority. This proof does not depend on an ordination or an *ordo*, as Luther points out in his criticism of the decretal *Translatio sacerdotio*.[26] It is also independent of a hierarchical status, as Luther emphasizes in his interpretation of the quarrel between Peter and Paul in Galatians 2. The proof, Luther contends, rests solely upon the office holder's act of preaching the Word of God instead of

[23] LW 31, 102 (Explanations of the Ninety-Five Theses or Explanations of the Disputation Concerning the Value of Indulgences [1518]); cf. (in the original) WA 1, 542,7–9: "Igitur remissio dei gratiam operatur, sed remissio sacerdotis pacem, quae et ipsa est gratia dei et donum, quia fides remissionis et gratiae praesentis."

[24] WA 57/3, 169,19–20 (Hebräervorlesung [1517/1518]) (= LW 29, 172).

[25] WA 55/2, 1021,186–190 (Dictata [1513–1515]).

[26] LW 31, 279–280 (Proceedings at Augsburg [1518]) (= WA 2, 19,17–19).

the human word. Luther attributes the capacity to judge whether the preached word is the Word of God or the human word to the consciences of those people hearing the sermon. Luther writes: "As often as the Word of God is preached, it renders consciences joyful, expansive, and untroubled toward God. […] As often as the word of man is preached, it renders the conscience sad, cramped, and full of fear in itself."[27]

There is a particular one-sidedness in the years around 1519 regarding how Luther attributes the legitimation of the authority of the church office solely to the testimony of personal conscience and faith. At this point in Luther's intellectual development, this testimony is merely the most obvious sign for the *potestas*. But the concept of *potestas* underwent a rapid change in Luther's thinking. The dynamic shift can be discerned in Luther's *Explanations* as he prepared for the June 1519 disputation with Eck in Leipzig. In the opening passage that addresses the power of the papacy, Luther advances a new understanding of the *potestas clavium*, referring again to Matthew 16:15–19. In this exegetical context, Luther finally rejects the idea that the *potestas* is to be attributed to an authority that is independent from faith and that must be acknowledged by faith. Luther now ventures the thesis that each and every believer possesses the power of the keys insofar as the believer adopts Peter's existential posture as "hearer of the fatherly revelation"[28] and as upright confessor of Christ: "Hence wherever the Word of God is preached and believed there is the true faith, this immovable rock; where, however, faith is, there is the church, there the bride of Christ; where, however, the bride of Christ is, there are all things the spouse owns. So faith has everything with her, what follows from faith: the keys, the sacraments, the power and all the rest."[29]

Luther was not yet aware of the implications of his idea that faith had absorbed the *potestas*. He continued to work out this idea between the summer of 1519 and the following summer (1520). His thinking moved in two very different directions. In the first direction – which Luther follows in the *Operationes in Psalmos* (1519–1521)[30] – Luther replaces the concept of *potestas* with the *opus* of the believer. Since all believers have but one work (*opus*), namely to become true Christians, they all have the same obligation and duty. Furthermore, God

[27] LW 27, 164 (Lectures on Galatians [1519]); in the original, WA 2, 453,2–6: "quoties verbum dei praedicatur, reddit laetas, latas, securas conscientiae in deum. […] quoties verbum hominis, reddit tristem, angustam, trepidam conscientiam in seipsa."

[28] WA 2, 190,8–12 (Resolutio Lutheriana super propositione sua decima tertia de potestate papae [1519]).

[29] WA 2, 208,25–29: "Quare ubicunque praedicatur verbum dei et creditur, ibi est vera fides, petra ista immobilis: ubi autem fides, ibi ecclesia: ubi ecclesia, ibi sponsa Christi: ubi sponsa Christi, ibi omnia quae sunt sponsi. Ita fides omnia secum habet, quae ad fidem sequuntur, claves, sacramenta, potestatem et omnia alia." Trans. C. V.-G.

[30] Cf. Wilhelm Maurer, Von der Freiheit eines Christenmenschen. Zwei Untersuchungen zu Luthers Reformationschriften 1520/1521, Göttingen 1949, 11–24.

has given them the capacity to attain this goal in the respective spheres of activity (church, politics, and family) they inhabit. In this context, it is unnecessary for Luther to assume a special gift of faith like a *potestas.*[31]

In the second direction, however, Luther still insists upon a unique authority of the church office, even including a *potestas* specifically given to the office holder. In his *Vom Papsttum zu Rom* against Augustin von Alveldt (June 1520), Luther introduces the power to rule (*regierende Gewalt*), which is in Luther's words "more" than the power of the keys because this power comprises "preaching, exhortation, consoling, worship, giving the sacraments and so forth." This power is, according to Luther, instituted by "divine order" to all bishops. The "bishop" stands in this context *pars pro toto* for all office holders in the church through an immediate and personal vocation in Christ, a vocation that the "bishop" performs out of love to Christ, i. e. in faith.[32] Luther does not revoke his position that faith absorbs the *potestas*. He now thinks that the *potestates* – the power of the keys in addition to the power to rule – are a special gift of faith, a *donum* that is *not* common to all believers.

Luther eventually merges both lines of thought, different as they are, when he begins thinking about the (famous) concept of the priesthood of all believers. The development of this idea is a complicated story, as we will see in the following section.

3. The Priesthood of all Believers (1520)

Luther addressed the idea of the priesthood of all believers in the first of his three attacks on the "walls of papacy," at the beginning of his treatise *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation* (August 1520). It is important to note that this first part of the treatise is, however, the most recent, written after the other parts had already been finished.[33] Thus Luther's introductory chapter should be interpreted as his reaction to problems that his reform program poses, and not as establishing the rationale of the reform program outlined in subsequent chapters. At least this is the case concerning the reform of the priesthood Luther advances in his fourteenth proposal.

Luther votes here in favor of priestly marriages. In view of priestly marriage, he makes some important comments regarding the installation of a pastor in a

[31] Cf. WA 5, 401,22–408,24 (Operationes in Psalmos [1519–1521]).

[32] WA 6, 300,3–8 (Von dem Papsthum zu Rom, wider den hochberühmten Romanisten zu Leipzig [1520]). Cf. Konrad Hammann, Ecclesia spiritualis. Luthers Kirchenverständnis in den Kontroversen mit Augustin von Alveldt und Ambrosius Catharinus (FKDG 44), Göttingen 1989, 17–123.

[33] Cf. the commentary of Thomas Kaufmann, An den christlichen Adel deutscher Nation von des christlichen Standes Besserung, Tübingen 2014, 1–34.

parish. While Luther stresses that each city must have a pastor or bishop according to the order of Christ and the Apostles, he stipulates only one formal requirement, namely moral integrity (according to Ti 1:6 and 1 Tm 3:2). Luther adds to this requirement, recommending that the pastor should be chosen by a free election: "It should be the custom for every town to choose from among the congregation a learned and pious citizen, entrust to him the office of the ministry … [to] minister (*regieren*) to the congregation and the community with word and sacrament."[34] The main problem with these proposals is – of course – Luther's opinion that a (male and married) layperson was capable of attaining the pastoral office in the church. Other than alluding to the biblical text, Luther offers no argument to back up his opinion. Luther here is thinking of a special, Christ-given authority of the office and not invoking a special, supernatural vocation of the office holder.

Luther addresses both issues in the opening chapter of *To the Christian Nobility*.[35] He frames the treatise with a particular polemic against the generic difference that canon law had ruled (drawing on a pseudo-Isidorian text) between clergy and laity. Luther argues against this difference by explaining that each believer is a member of a Christian community. Believers are all equal in the community in view of its religious dimension, but different from each other in view of the community's social and institutional needs. He stresses that "by baptism all become priests." When one member becomes a priest, that member does not relinquish the fundamental requirement of faith required for all believers. Luther also argues that persons could never become priests unless there were a "higher ordination" within them. With this opinion, he is – of course – desacralizing the sacrament of ordination, although he still acknowledges it as an institutional procedure. The subsequent thesis in this section of the treatise is more obscure. Because of the "higher ordination within us," Luther thinks that "we all have the same power." The meaning of this phrase is obscure because Luther does not define the term power in the opening chapter of the treatise. "Power" seems to mean just the possibility and only the possibility for each (male) believer to become a pastor (or priest), that is, a kind of disposition given by faith. In the context of *To the Christian Nobility*, power means nothing less, and nothing more than the disposition of faith. "We all have the same power" does not establish any parochial right of election, even if Luther repeatedly claims it.[36]

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[34] LW 44, 175 (To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation Concerning the Reform of the Christian Estate [1520]); slightly different in the original (WA 6, 440,30–32, 35): "Alszo lerenn wir ausz dem Apostel klerlich, das in der Christenheit solt alszo zugahenn, das einn ygliche stadt ausz der gemeynn eynen gelereten frummen burger erwellet, dem selbenn das pfar ampt befilhe … den hauffen und gemeyn … [zu] *regieren* mit predigen und sacramenten" (my emphasis, C. V.-G.).

[35] WA 6, 407,29–408,25 (An den christlichen Adel deutscher Nation von des christlichen Standes Besserung [1520]); cf. LW 36, 127–230 (The Misuse of the Mass [1521]).

[36] For a detailed analysis, see Voigt-Goy, Potestates (as note 1), 127–134. I do not agree with Kaufmann's interpretation in An den christlichen Adel (as note 34), 80–115.

The early development of Luther's concept of *potestas* in view of the priesthood of all believers has an ambivalent effect. On the one hand, "power" is reduced to a mere disposition, even if it is a disposition for all believers. On the other hand, the institutional office is reevaluated. The properties Luther had attached to the vocation of an office-holder by Christ are, in *The Christian Nobility* treatise, transferred to the institutionalized office for the purpose of ordering the parish. This understanding of the priesthood of all believers is similar to that advanced in the work against Alveldt (*Vom Papsttum zu Rom*).

A second aspect to the priesthood of all believers concept is similar to the line of thought Luther explored in the *Operationes in Psalmos* (mentioned above). This conception can be found in his *On the Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, written just a few weeks after *To the Christian Nobility*. In the *Babylonian Captivity* text, Luther insists that the office is a *ministerium* and explicitly rejects the idea that the *ministerium* comprises a *potestas*, "whereas Christ says nothing at all of power, but speaks only of faith."[37] The institution of the *ministeria* by Christ no longer refers to persons or their inner dispositions; nor does it refer to an institutionalized office. The sources of the *ministeria* are the promises of Christ, which he conferred upon baptism (Mk 16:16), penance (Mt 16:19), holy communion (1 Cor 11:24–25), and teaching (according to Jn 21:15–19). All of these promises are missions which believers are obligated to and empowered to fulfill. The believers are to be known as "ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God" (1 Cor 4:1).[38] Similar to what Luther recounted in the *Operationes*, the aim of the *ministeria* is to bring forth true Christians. The preaching of the promises of Christ achieves this aim, as it also strengthens the weak faith of Christians. Nevertheless, not anyone can exercise the ministry in a parish. Luther outlines three requirements for the legitimate exercise of Holy Communion, for example, and *pars pro toto* of other ministries. First, the person distributing communion must be authorized to do so. Luther explains in *On the Babylonian Captivity* that this requirement is already fulfilled if the person is a believer; God has obligated the believer, as Luther insists, to exercise this ministry and has also given the believer the gift to do this task. Secondly, all members of the parish must eagerly acknowledge that the ministry is performed *for them*. Lastly, all members of the parish must voluntarily consent to the person who ministers to them.[39] The priest/pastor is given, as Luther formulates, "only the ministry … yet with our common consent[.] [T]hey would then know that they have no right to rule over us except insofar as we freely concede it."[40] In *On the Babylonian Captivity*, Luther exclusively uses the term "vocation" for this consensus of the believers

[37] LW 36, 82; in the original, WA 6, 543,16–17: "cum Christus nihil de potestate sed de fide omnia agat."

[38] LW 36, 82 (= WA 6, 543,29–30).

[39] Voigt-Goy, Potestates (as note 1), 135–137.

[40] LW 36, 112; in the original, WA 6, 564,7–9 (De captivitate Babylonica ecclesiae praelu-

and does not at all attribute any supernatural vocation to an individual. This is a consequence of the fact that for Luther, all believers are *vocati* in an emphatic sense of the word. Believers can revoke their institutional vocation and dismiss the person in charge of the public ministry, if he is found unworthy: "[W]hoever does not preach the Word, though he was called by the church to do this very thing, is no priest at all."[41]

In the treatise *On the Babylonian Captivity*, Luther develops a more charismatic model of the office, which is also the model furthest away from the scholastic tradition of the office and its power. But it is the model Luther prefers in subsequent years. Even after the turmoil in Wittenberg during the first months of 1522, Luther defends this model in his treatise *Von beider Gestalt das Sakrament zu nehmen* ("Receiving Both Kinds in the Sacrament") published in April 1522. However, this is not the last stage of Luther's development.

4. Luther and *Potestas* (1523)

At the same time the turmoil in Wittenberg abated, Luther was drawn into several controversies regarding the inauguration of parish priests, beginning with Altenburg in 1522. Facing this new challenge, Luther rethought his conception of an office. He published the results in his writings to the parishes in Leisnig and Prague (1523).[42] These writings show a revival of the *potestas* idea, while the charismatic model of the office is noticeably marginalized.

Luther limits the priesthood of all believers in the Leisnig case to a state of emergency. If a parish pastor does not preach the gospel or administer the sacraments in the proper way, the parish community has the right to dismiss the office holder. In the case of a vacant position, the parish community might agree to ask one person to preach and administer the sacraments. This person must step back when a pastor is officially appointed.[43] In this case, the public office – or, as Luther eventually formulates in his writing to Prague: the *ministerium publicum verbi*[44] – represents the priesthood of all believers, but it is not completely dependent on it. As in *To the Christian Nobility*, the public office has an author-

dium [1520]): "solum ministerium, nostro tamen consensus"; "nullum eis esse super nos ius imperii, nisi quantum nos sponte nostra admitteremus."

[41] LW 36, 113; in the original, WA 6, 564,15–16: "qui non praedicat verbum, ad hoc ipsum per Ecclesiam vocatus, nequaquam sit sacerdos."

[42] The Leisnig text is entitled "Daß ein christliche Versammlung oder Gemeine Recht und Macht habe, alle Lehrer zu urtheilen und Lehrer zu berufen, ein und abzusetzen, Grund und Ursach aus der Schrift," in: WA 11, 408–416; Luther's writing to Prague: De instituendis ministris ecclesiae, in: WA 12, 169–196.

[43] WA 11, 412. In *De instituendis* Luther resolves the case of emergency in a slightly different way: see Voigt-Goy, Potestates (as note 1), 159–160.

[44] WA 12, 173,2–6.

ity *sui generis* or a specific power, meaning the power to rule the community as a "spiritual regiment" (*geistliches Regiment*) as Luther formulates. The only requirement for public office is, again, the candidate's moral integrity as stipulated by 1 Timothy.

Furthermore, of tantamount interest in the 1523 context is that Luther even retracts his earlier idea that the office holder must always be elected by the parish community. In his writings to the Leisnig community, Luther identifies three ways by which a holder of the public ministry can be appointed.[45] First, an upright bishop can appoint a pastor in the case of emergency without the participation of the parish community. Second, the parish community can elect – as I have already mentioned – a pastor in the case of emergency without the license of a bishop. Third, Luther thinks the ideal way to appoint a pastor is when an upright bishop and the parish community cooperate with each other; the parish-community presents the candidate to the bishop and the bishop appoints him to the ministry. In the case in which upright bishops are lacking, the territorial authority can be a fitting substitute. Already in 1523 Luther invents the category of the sovereign as the "emergency bishop" (*Notbischof*).[46]

To sum up: the development of Luther's ideas in 1523 concerning the appointment of parish pastors in 1523 neutralizes the spiritualizing tendency of Luther's understanding of the *potestas* by recovering the idea of an institutionally rich theory of the office.[47] The routine ministry is performed by the existing ecclesial hierarchy; faith that empowers each Christian is not sufficient when it comes to exercising the ministry. When Luther claims that a parish community has the right to appoint a pastor, he is referring to a well-known late medieval tradition. In brief: Luther continues to emphasize the traditional difference between clergy and laity by distinguishing between the public office and the priesthood of all believers. Luther's theology of the office would later become the basis for increased confidence in the emerging *status ecclesiasticus* of the churches of the Reformation even as the erasure of the difference between clergy and laity became their trademark. The charismatic potential of Luther's concept of the priesthood of all believers was appropriated, not by the Reformation churches, but by their more "radical Reformation" counterparts.

[45] WA 11, 413–416 (Dass eine christliche Versammlung oder Gemeine Recht und Macht habe, alle Lehre zu beurteilen und Lehrer zu berufen, ein- und abzusetzen. Grund und Ursach aus der Schrift [1523]) (= LW 39, 305–314).

[46] Cf. Karl Holl, Luther und das landesherrliche Kirchenregiment (1911), in: Karl Holl, Gesammelte Aufsätze, vol. 1: Luther, Tübingen ^{6}1932, 375 n. 2.

[47] Cf. Klaus Peter Voss, Der Gedanke des allgemeinen Priester- und Prophetentums. Seine gemeindetheologische Aktualisierung in der Refomationszeit, Wuppertal/Zürich 1990, 90.

Chapter 14

The Protestant Reformers and the *Analogia Fidei*

G. Sujin Pak

Scholars have often debated the precise contours of the relationship of the Protestant reformers to tradition. Though most point to the reformers' clear priority of Scripture over tradition, it is less clear just what is meant by "tradition." In his 1962 Dudleian Lecture at Harvard Divinity School, Heiko Oberman examined the concept of "tradition" from Irenaeus to the 1950 papal encyclical *Humani Generis*, the latter of which asserted the teaching authority of the Catholic Church.[1] Oberman proposed that in the early church, "kerygma, Scripture, and tradition coincide entirely."[2] Consequently, "tradition is not understood as an addition to the kerygma contained in Scripture." Rather, it is a revelation manifested in the "handing down of the *same kerygma* in living form." Thus, continued Oberman, "This implies for the Fathers the explicit denial of extra-Scriptural tradition."[3] Oberman therefore maintained that it is mistaken to identify the "rule of faith" (*regula fidei*) such as that held by Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Clement of Alexandria as equivalent to the Apostles' Creed or the authority of the church. Instead, the rule of faith is "revelation itself" – more precisely, the very "backbone and structure of Holy Scripture."[4] This view, in which kerygma, Scripture and tradition coincide entirely (with no extra-biblical tradition), Oberman designated as "Tradition I."[5] Next he identified a significant shift in the understanding of "tradition" in the teaching of Basil the Great (330–370 CE) and Augustine (354–430 CE), who each pointed to the authority of both written and oral tradition, thereby asserting an "authoritative extra-Scriptural oral tradition."[6] Oberman argued that "whereas Irenaeus and Tertullian taught the sufficiency of Scripture, with Augustine we meet with an authoritative extra-Scriptural oral tradition" that affirms a form of reciprocity between church and Scripture, in which the "church 'moves' the faithful to discover the authority of Scripture,

[1] Heiko A. Oberman, "Quo Vadis, Petre? The History of Tradition from Irenaeus to Humani Generis," in: Harvard Divinity Bulletin 26.24 (1962), 1–25.

[2] Oberman, "Quo Vadis, Petre?," 2.

[3] Oberman, "Quo Vadis, Petre?," 3.

[4] Oberman, "Quo Vadis, Petre?," 4–5.

[5] Oberman, "Quo Vadis, Petre?," 11.

[6] Oberman, "Quo Vadis, Petre?," 8–9.

[and] Scripture on the other hand refers the faithful back to the authority of the church."[7]

Such a view maintained the material sufficiency of Scripture but rejected Scripture's formal sufficiency, thereby asserting the necessity of the church's interpretation of Scripture and the recognition that Scripture does not directly address all matters of faith and practice. The church's work of interpretation therefore served the primary if not "sole purpose of preservation," in which the consensus of the church fathers "provides a safeguard against arbitrary interpretation."[8] Oberman designated this two-sources theory (Scripture and an extra-Scriptural oral tradition) as Tradition II. He viewed the clash between Tradition I and Tradition II as sharpening in the later Middle Ages, so that by the time of the Protestant reformations the Protestant reformers aligned with Tradition I and Trent with Tradition II. Consequently, the battle was more over "two radically different concepts of tradition" than between Scripture and tradition per se.[9] Luther's so-called "sola scriptura" principle, argued Oberman, maps onto Tradition I because, for Luther, there "are not two sources for the Christian faith, but two modes in which it reaches the church in every generation: Holy Scripture and the *viva vox evangelii*" (the living voice of the gospel).[10] In this way, Luther effectively defined "tradition" as the living Word passed down in a different mode. In contrast, the Council of Trent, affirmed that not all doctrinal truths are found in Scripture, but tradition serves as a second doctrinal source that supplements Scripture (i. e., "Tradition II"), allowing for the elevation of the authority of the church – specifically its teaching office – as equal, if not potentially above, the authority of Scripture.[11] Such a view, contended Oberman, opened the door to a third possibility – Tradition III – in which the teaching office of the church holds primacy of authority.[12]

Anthony Lane rightly challenges Oberman's configurations of the relationship of Scripture and tradition in pre-modern Christian history. According to Lane, Oberman failed "to give the church its proper place in the discussion of Scripture and tradition."[13] More to the point, he contends that the issue of the *teaching authority* of the church was a factor all along and not simply a factor that arose later in a so-called "Tradition III." Lane therefore proposes a model

[7] Oberman, "Quo Vadis, Petre?," 9–10.

[8] Oberman, "Quo Vadis, Petre?," 10.

[9] Oberman, "Quo Vadis, Petre?," 14.

[10] Oberman, "Quo Vadis, Petre?," 16.

[11] Oberman, "Quo Vadis, Petre?," 18.

[12] Oberman, "Quo Vadis, Petre?," 21. Oberman writes, "Whereas in Tradition I truth is grasped and held through reflection on Holy Scripture and in Tradition II through reflection on Scripture and tradition, in this last stage of Tradition III truth is grasped and held by introspection and self-analysis on the part of the Church localized in the Teaching Office."

[13] A. N. S. Lane, "Scripture, Tradition and Church. An Historical Survey," in: Vox Evangelica 9 (1975), 37–38.

that offers four different views of the relationship of Scripture, tradition, and the church's teaching. First is the coincidence view in which Scripture, tradition, and church coincide, and "tradition" is defined as apostolic tradition that coheres with Scripture (i. e., analogous to Oberman's "Tradition I").[14] The second is the supplementary view, in which Scripture is both materially and formally insufficient, so that tradition and the church's teaching become necessary supplements because of increasing recognition that the tradition and the church's teaching "contained elements not found in Scripture."[15] A case in point here, argued Lane, is the church's appeals to liturgical tradition as a "secondary proof in a doctrinal debate" or "primary proof for a doctrine not found in Scripture."[16] According to Lane, the Protestant reformers held a view not exactly identifiable with the coincidence view (i. e., Oberman's Tradition I). Rather, the Protestant reformers held an "ancillary view," in which they staunchly differentiated "tradition" from the church's teaching.[17] Lane contends that the Protestant reformers accepted certain forms of *tradition* that they viewed as ultimately scriptural – namely, apostolic tradition and the apostolic Creeds – but they rejected the *teaching authority* of the Catholic Church, particularly centered in its claim that only the pope and the Catholic priesthood have the authority to interpret Scripture.[18] Finally, Lane proposes a fourth view of the relationship of Scripture, tradition, and church teaching called the "unfolding view," which he regards as originating from a growing perception of the insufficiencies of Scripture and early tradition. It maintains that church teaching and doctrine must develop over time to meet the needs of the contemporary church.[19] In the unfolding view, it is therefore sufficient for the church merely to demonstrate that a contemporary church teaching is "implicit in the earlier tradition."[20]

While the models and distinctions set forth by Oberman and Lane are helpful, I contend that the Protestant reformers' views concerning the possibilities of the church's teaching authority are more complicated than these models suggest and require more precise attention to the various contexts to which the reformers were responding. Lane correctly asserts that the role of the church's teaching authority needs to be an explicitly separate part of the formula, in contrast to Oberman's tendency to collapse church teaching into tradition. Oberman and Lane agree that the Protestant reformers challenged the content of Catholic teaching and the teaching authority of the Catholic Church, even as they

[14] Lane, "Scripture, Tradition and Church," 39–40. In many ways, this "coincidence view" is analogous to Oberman's Tradition I with the addition of "church."
[15] Lane, "Scripture, Tradition and Church," 40–42.
[16] Lane, "Scripture, Tradition and Church," 41.
[17] Lane, "Scripture, Tradition and Church," 43.
[18] Lane, "Scripture, Tradition and Church," 43.
[19] Lane, "Scripture, Tradition and Church," 47.
[20] Lane, "Scripture, Tradition and Church," 47.

retained varying and specific positive conceptions and uses of "tradition." Yet, Oberman and Lane both remain silent concerning the possibilities of the Protestant reformers affirming some form of *a Protestant churchly teaching authority*, thereby implying its wholesale rejection. On the contrary, just as the Protestant reformers affirmed tradition insofar as it passed the test of Scripture, so also they aimed to retain a performance of the church's teaching authority insofar as it complied with the primary, supreme authority of Scripture. This becomes most clear in the context of Luther, Calvin, Melanchthon, and Bullinger's responses to the Anabaptists and other radicals, whereas in their responses to Roman Catholicism the rejection specifically of the Catholic Church's teaching authority resounds most loudly. One needs to be careful not to let these statements in the Catholic context outweigh the nuances that appear in other contexts, for the 'magisterial' reformers also sought to establish certain practices of the teaching authority of Protestant pastors in the face of various forms of radical anticlericalism. The ways in which Protestant reformers carved out a delimited teaching authority of Protestant pastors – regulated by Scripture and the Holy Spirit – deserve closer attention.[21]

Hence, this chapter explores Luther's conceptions of the church's teaching authority specifically, rather than his positive uses of "tradition," which others have already addressed helpfully, including first and foremost the work of Oberman and Lane. My analysis begins with a chronological exploration of Luther's use of Romans 12:6's *analogia fidei* ("analogy of faith") that traces shifts in his thought and ultimately provides a useful snapshot of how he understood the teaching authority of the church. Within a broader history of Protestant uses of the *analogia fidei*, Calvin, Melanchthon, and Bullinger – as well as the next generation of Lutheran and Reformed thinkers (i. e., Hunnius, Osiander, Beza, Pareus, Gwalther and Grynaeus) – differed from Luther by crystallizing the identification of the *analogia fidei* with the Apostles' Creed. The overall aim and effect, however, were ultimately the same as that of Luther: to uphold both Scripture's clarity and its supreme, overarching authority. In the end, the *analogia fidei* in Romans 12:6 served as a tool in the hands of the Protestant reformers for asserting and implementing Scripture's perspicuity and authority that guided and therefore included conceptions and practices of distinctly Protestant forms of church authority. The Protestant reformers employed various biblical models to establish a carefully *delimited* conception of the Protestant teaching office and its authority.

[21] How successful the Protestant reformers were at doing this is not our concern here. Our concern is only that this was one of their aims.

1. Luther on the *Analogia Fidei* and the Church's Teaching Authority

Many scholars have studied the role of the "rule of faith" (*regula fidei*) in the early church as well as across church history.[22] Yet, notably, the phrase "rule of faith" (*regula fidei*) is not a biblical phrase. The closest scriptural parallel comes from Romans 12:6, which reads, "We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us; prophecy according to the analogy of faith" (*analogia fidei*). Various studies trace the earliest use of the *regula fidei* to early church baptismal confessions and formulas, as found in the work of Irenaeus and Tertullian.[23] Irenaeus and Tertullian also pointed to the "rule of faith" or "rule of truth" as the central logic or *ratio* of Scripture itself.[24] Oberman therefore was not incorrect to draw a close identity of the *regula fidei* with Scripture; yet, he glossed over its extra-scriptural terminology. Notably, the early Luther employed the terminology of *regula fidei* in his *First Lectures on the Psalms*. From his 1515–1516 lectures on Romans forward, however, he switched to the more precisely biblical phrase *analogia fidei*. In the two most significant instances of his use of *regula fidei* in his *First Lectures on the Psalms*, Luther applied it as a generous hermeneutical principle stipulating that one should not reject a reading of Scripture so long as it does not conflict with the rule of faith.[25] Of note are his choice of the term *regula fidei* (rather than the *analogia fidei*) and its use to *expand* the possible acceptable readings of a text rather than to delimit them.

[22] See, for examples, Albert Cook Outler, "Origen and the Regulae Fidei," in: The Second Century 4.3 (1984), 133–141; Eric F. Osborn, "Reason and the Rule of Faith in the Second Century AD," in: Rowan Williams (ed.), Making of Orthodoxy. Essays in Honour of Henry Chadwick, Cambridge 1989, 40–61; Prosper S. Grech, "The Regula Fidei as a Hermeneutical Principle in Patristic Exegesis," in: Jose Krasovec (ed.), The Interpretation of the Bible. The International Symposium in Slovenia (JSOT Supp 289), Sheffield 1998, 589–601; L. William Countryman, "Tertullian and the *Regula Fidei*," in: The Second Century 2.4 (1982), 208–227; Paul M. Blowers, "The Regula Fidei and the Narrative Character of Early Christian Faith," in: Pro Ecclesia 6.2 (1997), 199–228; Bryan M. Litfin, "The Rule of Faith in Augustine," in: Pro Ecclesia 14.1 (2005), 85–101; Paul Hartog, "The 'Rule of Faith' and Patristic Biblical Exegesis," in: Trinity Journal 28.1 (2007), 65–86; also, John L. Thompson, "At the Margins of the Rule of Faith. Reflections on the Reception History of Problematic Texts and Themes," in: Journal of Theological Interpretation 7.2 (2013), 187–198.

[23] See Tomas Bokedal, "The Rule of Faith. Tracing its Origins," in: Journal of Theological Interpretation 7 (2013), 239–242 and Alistair Stewart, "The Rule of Truth … Which He Received through Baptism (Haer. 1, 9.4). Catechesis, Ritual, and Exegesis in Irenaeus's Gaul," in: Paul Foster/Sara Parvis (eds.), Irenaeus. Life, Scripture, Legacy, Minneapolis, MN 2012, 156.

[24] See Irenaeus, Haer. 1, 9–10 and Tertullian, Praescr. 9.

[25] LW 10, 462 (= WA 3, 518,45–48). Luther even added a personal anecdote of a time in which he rejected a reading and only later discovered the depths of its truth. See LW 10, 463 (= WA 3, 518,2–5). Similarly, in his comments on Ps 77:1, he enumerated the various literal, allegorical, tropological, and anagogical interpretations of the "works of the Lord," affirming them all "so long as the rule of faith does not object," LW 11, 14; in the original, WA 3, 533,29: "quamdiu regula fidei non repugnant."

Starting with his *Lectures on Romans* forward, however, Luther consistently preferred the biblical phrase *analogia fidei* to denote a biblical hermeneutical principle that served more to delimit faithful readings of Scripture rather than expand them. He more precisely identified the *regula fidei* with the rule of justification by faith alone.[26] He also depicted the *analogia fidei* of Romans 12:6 in prophetic terms (since the larger context of the passage pertains to prophecy), arguing that false prophets "prophesy on the basis of human judgment," whereas true prophets speak according to the analogy of faith – that is, without reliance on human wisdom, reason or experience, but, rather, solely according to faith that is "contrary to external appearance" and able "against all reason" to assert the impossible.[27] Luther clarified, "Prophecy must be in harmony with faith, so that it is concerned 'with things not seen' (Hebrews 11:1), lest by chance it become the wisdom of the world, which is concerned with things that are seen."[28] Thus, Luther argued that something that is "according to the analogy of faith" promotes trust in the unseen promises of God rather than human reason.[29]

For Luther, the *analogia fidei* is directly tied to prophecy because the phrase is directly tied to prophecy in the biblical text. It is important to realize that Luther defined "prophecy" first and foremost as the gift of interpreting Scripture, rather than the gift of predicting the future.[30] In this way, prophecy and the principle of the *analogia fidei* both cohere around a focus on *exegesis* – the right interpretation of Scripture. Indeed, Luther employed 1 Corinthians 14 (a text on the gift of prophecy) in several of his early 1520s writings to argue for the call of every Christian to read and interpret Scripture. Therefore in the early years of the 1520s, Luther employed the figure of the prophet and the gift of prophecy to defend the priesthood of all believers. A right application of Romans 12:6 of

[26] There are at least two likely reasons for this: he preferred strictly biblical terminology, and he increasingly rejected "rules" more broadly (especially monastic rules). The terminology of "rule of faith" reappears in his 1529 lectures on Isaiah, in which he identified it with the rule of justification by faith alone. Henceforth, if Luther employed the terminology of "rule of faith," this was his operative definition. See LW 17, 114, 256 (Lectures on Isaiah II [40–66] [1527–1530]) (= WA 31/2, 351,22–23; 459,14–15).

[27] LW 25, 445 (Lectures on Romans: Scholia [1515–1516]) (= WA 56, 452,11–15, 29–30).

[28] LW 25, 446; in the original, WA 56, 453,11–13: "Quod prophetia debet habere conuenientiam cum fide, Vt sit 'rerum non apparentium', Ne forte fiat sapientia mundi, Que est rerum apparentium."

[29] Luther supported this with an example of the seemingly absurd prophecies of Jeremiah when at "the very time of the siege of Jerusalem," when all hope was lost, Jeremiah exclaims, "Thus says the Lord: Houses and fields and vineyards shall again be possessed in this land." See LW 25, 445 (Lectures on Romans [1515–1516]) (= WA 56, 452,29–30).

[30] See LW 44, 134 (Open Letter to the Christian Nobility [1520]) (= WA 6, 411,22–36); LW 36, 149–150 (The Misuse of the Mass [1521]) (= WA 8, 495,34–496,8); also LW 40, 21, 32–34 (Concerning the Ministry [1523]) (= WA 12, 180,5–22, 188,20–189,27). For more on the ways Luther and other Protestant reformers defined prophecy as interpretation of Scripture, see my recent book, G. Sujin Pak, The Reformation of Prophecy. Early Modern Interpretations of the Prophet and Old Testament Prophecy (Oxford Studies in Historical Theology), New York 2018.

prophesying "according to the analogy of faith" is, for Luther, to interpret Scripture according to the analogy of faith. The *analogia fidei* serves as a hermeneutical principle to guide *anyone* in the right interpretation of Scripture.

A key question therefore arises, "How did Luther define 'faith'?" Unsurprisingly, he pointed to the definition of faith in Hebrews 11:1 as "the conviction of things not seen," thereby placing it in contrast to false reliance on the wisdom of the world ("which are concerned with things seen").[31] In his late 1520s comments on 1 Timothy 4:6, he similarly argued that to be "nourished in the words of faith" is to follow the words analogous to faith – that is, to follow the Word of God and not the "wisdom of the flesh."[32] His 1528–1529 debates with Zwingli and Oecolampadius over the Lord's Supper operated with a similar definition of faith as a trust in something unseen. He criticized Zwingli and Oecolampadius's contention that in the sacrament one receives merely physical bread and wine – physical things that can be seen – protesting that there is "no analogy of faith here. For all the words of Christ must foster faith and love and be in accord with faith, [as seen in] Romans 12:6."[33] Likewise, in the 1529 Marburg Colloquy, Luther exclaimed, "I am not concerned about what is contrary to nature but only about what is contrary to faith."[34] Luther viewed Zwingli and Oecolampadius's arguments that Christ cannot be bodily present in the sacrament as a wrong faith in things seen – limiting Christ to natural properties. Rather, an understanding in keeping with the *analogia fidei* fosters faith in things unseen. Luther contended that just as it cannot be defended by human reason that Christ was born of a virgin, so faith in the bodily presence of Christ in the sacrament is a matter of things unseen and not defensible by human reason.[35]

By 1529, Luther tied his definition of faith – and likewise his use of *analogia fidei* as a guide to proper interpretation of Scripture – even more directly to his doctrine of justification by faith alone. For example, in his comments on Isaiah 44:20 ("a deluded mind has led him astray"), he exclaimed, "Whatever is

[31] LW 25, 446 (Lectures on Romans) (= WA 56, 453,11–22).

[32] LW 28, 320 (Lectures on 1 Timothy [1527–1528]) (= WA 26, 75,38–76,2).

[33] See LW 37, 261–262, esp. 262 (Confession Concerning Christ's Supper [1529]); in the original, WA 26, 390,33–35: "Und sonderlich weil da kein analogia fidei ist, Denn es mů̊ssen ia alle wort Christi glauben und liebe treiben und dem glauben ehnlich sein Ro. 12."

[34] LW 38, 58 (The Marburg Colloquy and the Marburg Articles [1529]); in the original, WA 30/3, 131,26: "non curo, quod sit contra naturam, modo non contra fidem."

[35] For example, Oecolampadius insisted that Christ must be like humans in every respect and therefore cannot be bodily present in the sacrament. To this, Luther notably appealed to the analogy of faith, writing, "You are distinguishing between his humanity and his divinity; I am not concerned about this. […] Christ is in the sacrament substantially, as he was born of the Virgin. Here the analogy of faith is demanded according to the definition of faith in Hebrews 11:1." LW 38, 58–59; in the original, WA 30/3, 131,29–30, 132,25–27: "Vos distinguitis humanitatem et divinitatem, ego non curo. […] Substantialiter ut natus est e virgine, ita est in sacramento: Hic requiritur analogia fidei, ex definitione ad Heb. 11. cap."

outside faith, however attractive and toilsome it may be, is idolatry, because the opinion that we are justified by works apart from faith is the source of all idolatry. […] This is the rule of faith, that we are justified by the grace and mercy of God."[36] He employed the *analogia fidei* not only to demarcate right readings of Scripture from wrong according to whether they foster a right understanding of faith that leads to Christ, trust in God's promises, and an affirmation of justification by faith alone, he also increasingly implemented the *analogia fidei* as a tool to assert the prime authority of Scripture. In his 1527–1528 remarks on 1 Timothy 4:6, Luther argued that teaching and interpretation that are according to the analogy of faith do not preach the wisdom of the flesh; rather, they speak a word of faith that alone "has the Word of God."[37] Consequently, by the time of his lectures on the first half of Genesis in the late 1530s, he began to refer to the "analogy of faith *and of Holy Scripture*," thereby adding Scripture directly into the formula. He virtually equated the "analogy of faith" with the "analogy of Scripture" and began to use the "rule of Scripture" interchangeably with the *analogia fidei*.[38] Equating the *analogia fidei* with proper understandings of faith and as a "rule of Scripture" cumulatively served to (a) identify the teachings of the necessity of Christ and faith (not works) as they clear content of Scripture ultimately encapsulated in the doctrine of justification by faith alone and (b) to affirm the self-interpreting character of Scripture; these then ultimately functioned together (c) to uphold the authority and perspicuity of Scripture. In sum, Luther employed the *analogia fidei* as a powerful tool to demonstrate the authoritative, perspicuous content of Scripture – teachings on the correct nature of faith, the necessity

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[36] LW 17, 114 (Lectures on Isaiah II [1527–1530]); in the original, WA 31/2, 351,19–20, 22: "Quicquid est extra fidem, quamvis speciosum et laboriosum, est idolatria, quia opinio extra fidem operibus iustificari est fons omnis idolatriae. […] Nam haec est regula fidei gracia et misericordia dei iustificari." Similarly, in his comments on Isaiah 55:8 ("your thoughts are not my thoughts"), Luther asserted, "Believing Scripture and clinging to Christ are not our thoughts but God's," adding that the Sacramentarians have the wrong kind of faith and thus "forsake the Word and make a work for themselves." LW 17, 256; in the original, WA 31/2, 458,32–33: "Credere autem scripturae, inherere Christo non sunt nostrae cogitaciones, sed dei." 459,8–9: "relinquentes verbum suis cogitacionibus laborant."

[37] LW 28, 320 (1 Timothy [1527–1528]) (= WA 26, 75,38–76,2).

[38] On Genesis 6:3, he referred to the "analogy of both Holy Scripture and of the faith," and later he added, "This interpretation is in agreement with the analogy of faith and of Holy Scripture," LW 2, 16 (Lectures on Genesis); in the original, WA 42, 273,2: "analogiam tum Scripturae sacrae tum etiam fidei sequimur." Emphasized in English citation by G. S. P. On Genesis 17:22, Luther criticized the readings of this text by Catholic monks and counseled, "Therefore, they must be weighed according to the analogy of faith and the rule of Scripture," LW 3, 168; in the original, WA 42, 668,21–22: "Ideo examinandae sunt ad analogiam fidei, et scripturae Canonem." Just a few lines later, he referred to this rule simply as the "rule of Scripture." LW 3, 168 (= WA 42, 668,26). Similarly, on Genesis 22:11, Luther refuted the Catholic applications of the text, asserting that "it must have the analogy of faith and must be a revelation of the understanding of Scripture," LW 4:126; in the original, WA 43, 226,8–9: "ut habeat Analogiam fidei, et sit revelatio intellectus scripturae."

of Christ, and justification by faith alone – and enact Scripture as its own interpreter of the highest authority – as a rule unto itself.

Unsurprisingly, Luther employed all of these applications of the *analogia fidei* polemically against Roman Catholicism. In *The Misuse of the Mass* (1521), he chided the pope and Catholic priests in their assertion that the "church cannot err" that served to undergird their preference for human commandments over God's commandments. In this way, argued Luther, the Catholic leadership relied more upon human teaching than God's Word. He then invoked several biblical texts (1 Thes 5:21; 1 Pt 4:11; Rom 12:6; and Rom 15:18) to demonstrate that nothing is to be said among Christians "except that which we hold with certainty to be the Word of God."[39] To follow the analogy of faith, insisted Luther, is to teach and speak only that which is in accordance with faith and the Word of God. The pope and the priests failed to do this; instead, they placed God's Word last and followed their own opinions under the guise of church authority, when the only viable defense of the church's teaching authority is appeal to God's Word. Similarly, in his 1539–1540 comments on Genesis 22:11, Luther staunchly rejected the Roman Catholic use of John 16:12–13 to assert that "not everything necessary for our salvation was transmitted by Christ and the apostles."[40] To this, Luther responded by echoing Christ's own statement of Scripture's sufficiency, saying, "To all these ravings one should adduce in contradiction the words of Christ: 'They have Moses and the prophets.'"[41] He then added, "But if anything beyond [Scripture] is revealed, it must have the analogy of faith and must be a revelation of the understanding of Scripture; otherwise it is of the devil."[42] In this way, Luther appeared to allow that some things beyond Scripture could be asserted; yet, this is only possible if it coheres with Scripture and is ultimately an interpretation of Scripture that agrees with the central teachings of Scripture – the *analogia fidei*. In effect, Luther asserted the sufficiency of Scripture and its authority to condemn any claims of new teaching, employing the criteria of the *analogia fidei* and delimiting proper "revelation" to a revealed *interpretation* of Scripture.

In March 1531, Luther wrote a *Commentary on the Alleged Imperial Edict* that addressed its statement that "it is our will, mind and meaning that the preachers

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[39] LW 36, 195 (The Misuse of the Mass [1521]); in the original, WA 8, 534,24–25: "denn das wyr gewiβ fur gotts wortt halden."

[40] LW 4, 125 (Lectures on Genesis 21–25); in the original, WA 43, 225,37–38: "Finxerunt non omnia per Christum et Apostolos tradita esse, quae sunt ad salutem nostram necessaria." John 16:12–13 reads, "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth."

[41] LW 4, 126; in the original, WA 43, 225,41–42: "His deliriis omnibus opponatur vox Christi: 'Habent Mosen et Prophetas.'"

[42] LW 4, 126; in the original, WA 43, 226,8–9: "Quod si praeter haec aliquid revelatur, oportet, ut habeat Analogiam fidei, et sit revelatio intellectus scripturae. Alioqui diabolica est."

shall preach and teach the gospel according to the interpretation of Holy Scriptures and of the teachers approved and accepted by the universal holy Christian Church."[43] He exclaimed in reaction, "The pope has no intention of doing this, but on the contrary wants to be judge and master over all other teachers and also that he alone shall be heard above the gospels and Holy Scriptures. […] They say so unctuously that they want to teach the gospels according to the interpretation of Scripture and yet their intention is none other than to teach according to their own 'inspiration' and the pope's opinion."[44] On the other hand, insisted Luther, the Protestant reformers would joyously follow this edict, but since the Catholics do not, the reformers must cleave to the analogy of faith taught in Romans 12:6 and affirm only those "who teach what conforms to faith in Christ."[45]

A couple of key points stand out in these statements. First, Luther viewed the pope and the Catholic Church of his day as teaching and acting contrary to the *analogia fidei*; they failed to conform their teaching to faith and to Scripture. Indeed, he argued that they asserted the authority of the pope, Catholic teachers, and the church above and beyond the authority of Scripture – a form of the church's teaching authority that Luther could never accept. But equally noteworthy is the statement that he would not have rejected this teaching authority if it conformed to faith and the Word of God. One must then ask: Did Luther reject altogether the teaching authority of the church or just specifically the teaching authority of the Catholic Church of his day precisely because he believed it departed from God's Word?

Luther in fact stated that he and the Protestant reformers would gladly follow any teaching authority that operated within the proper boundaries of the primary authority of Scripture. Such an affirmation of the church's teaching authority if it submitted itself fully to the authority of God's Word appears similarly in several of Luther's other 1530s writings. In a 1533–1534 sermon Luther applied Psalm 45:10 to his own experience: "In the pope's house I have been baptized, I have been catechized, and I have learned Scripture. I would gladly render this honor to my people and my beloved fellow citizens so as not to forget my

[43] LW 34, 95 n. 37 (Commentary on the Alleged Imperial Edict [1531]); in the original, WA 30/3, 373,5–7: "Man soll (sagen sie) die Euangelia leren nach der auslegung der heiligen schrifft und lerer So von der gemeinen heiligen Christlichen kirchen approbirt sind."

[44] LW 34, 95; in the original, WA 30/3, 373,16–374,3, 6–8: "So wils auch der Bapst nicht thun, Sondern wil ruichter vnd meister seiñ vber die lerer allesamt dazu vber die Euangelia vnd heilige schrifft, vnd alleine gehort sein, […] Sie schmiren vns das maul, als wolten sie die Euangelia nach der schrifft auslegen leren, Vnd ist doch yhr meinung nicht anders denn nach yhr Einsprechung vnd nach des Bapsts dûnckel, zu leren."

[45] LW 34, 96; in the original, WA 30/3, 375,1–3: "Welcher lerer nû so leret, das dem glauben an Christo gemes ist, den wollen wir leren und halten." Luther argued this on the basis that they are "baptized in Christ to believe his Word;" they are not "baptized in teachers or pope or church." In the original, WA 30/3, 375,5–6: "Denn wir sind ynn Christum getaufft, das wir seinem wort gleuben sollen, vnd sind nicht auff lerer oder Bapst odder kirchen getaufft."

father's house, if only he would let me believe in Christ alone and preserve my conscience free from every burden. But the pope does not allow this, but demands that I follow his teaching and neglect Christ's Word."[46] Thus, the primary barrier to the Catholic Church's authority for Luther is not its claim to authority itself but his conviction that it places itself above God's Word, even sometimes neglecting and acting contrary to the Word of God. Similarly in his 1538 sermon on Psalm 51, Luther professed, "If the pope were able from the Word of God to prove his sacrifices and ceremonies, the way the Jews could their sacrifices, I should surely never have dared to raise any objection. But since he has instituted and commanded them without the Word, indeed against the Word, we condemn him with full right. [...] Except for the mere title of 'church,' the pope has absolutely nothing with which to defend himself and his traditions."[47] Luther highlighted the pope's appeal to non-scriptural entities to undergird his teaching authority – appeals to church and tradition – both of which Luther staunchly argued can only operate properly when they adhere to the primary authority of God's Word. Without this proper orientation, they have no authority at all. *Analogia fidei* served as a biblical rule for Luther that guided the proper understanding and practice of church authority. It constituted for Luther the avenue of a rightful practice of the church's teaching authority, focused in the church's interpretation of *Scripture*, thereby ensuring that any proper implementation of the church's teaching authority operates within and under the primary and overarching authority of Scripture. Yet, for this to work in the manner Luther envisioned as faithful, the conviction of Scripture's primacy of authority is not only necessary; the conviction of Scripture's *clarit*y is equally necessary to enable Scripture itself to serve as the authoritative guide to the church's interpretations and applications of Scripture.

[46] LW 12, 277 (Ps 45 [1532]); in the original, WA 40/2, 578,36, 579,13–16: "Sum enim baptisatus in domo Papae, sum catechisatus, didici scripturam; hunc honorem libenter habebo populo meo et civibus meis charissimis, ne obliviscar domus patris mei, tantum sinat, ut credam in Christum solum et conservem conscientiam liberam ab omni onere." Psalm 45:10 contains the phrase "forget your people and your father's house." Luther provided several related readings of this text: first, it teaches that Christ abrogated the Law and "the whole righteousness of the Law" and that one should forget this false righteousness and cleave to Christ; second, it teaches that the First Table of the Law (giving all glory and honor to God) always has priority over the Second, even if it is your "father's house"; last, he applied it to his own experience.

[47] LW 12, 396 (Ps 51); in the original, WA 40/2, 450,31–34, 451,17–18: "Quod si Papa sacra et Ceremonias suas eo modo ex verbo Dei posset probare, sicut Iudaei sacrificia sua, perfecto nunquam ausus essem aliquid contra hiscere. Nunc autem cum sine verbo, imo contra verbum ista instituerit et mandarit, summo iure damnamus eum. [...] Nam Papa praeter nudum Ecclesiae titulum prorsus nihil habet, quo se et traditiones suas tueri possit."

2. The *Analogia Fidei* and Biblical Models for a Protestant Churchly Teaching Authority

Luther not only affirmed the possibility of a teaching authority of the church when it rightly operates within and under the ultimate authority of Scripture; he put it into practice. He, alongside Zwingli, Bullinger, Bucer, and Calvin, implemented certain forms of a Protestant churchly teaching authority in the face of Anabaptist and other radical anticlericalism that targeted not only Catholic clergy but also Protestant clergy. Strikingly reversing their earlier emphasis upon applying prophecy (as interpretation of Scripture) to laypersons in the priesthood of all believers, Luther and Zwingli redirected their applications of prophecy and the *analogia fidei* to properly called and trained preachers and biblical scholars.[48] Anabaptist and other radicals not only challenged clerical authority; in the eyes of Luther and Zwingli, they exceeded the bounds of rightful claims to authority through appeals to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit apart from Scripture (i. e., new revelation), thereby potentially undermining Scripture's primary authority.[49] After 1524, when Anabaptism became a more clearly identifiable and separate movement, Luther clarified that the *public* task of interpreting Scripture – as well as discerning its right interpretation through the application of the principle of *analogia fidei* – belongs to one holding an established ministerial office and not to just any layperson. For example, in his 1532 *Infiltrating and Clandestine Preachers* written against Anabaptists in the region of Eisenach, Luther differentiated between the authoritative, public office exercised by a properly called minister from the private activity of a faithful layperson that ultimately holds no public authority.[50] In effect, after 1524, Luther and Zwingli increasingly

[48] For a fuller account of this history, see G. Sujin Pak, "Scripture, the Priesthood of All Believers, and Applications of I Corinthians 14," in: Jennifer Powell McNutt/David Lauber (eds.), The People's Book. The Reformation and the Bible, Downers Grove, IL 2017, 33–51. And Pak, Reformation of Prophecy (as note 30), 89–102.

[49] See Pak, Reformation of Prophecy (as note 30), 44–88. Consequently, Anabaptists and other radicals enabled possibilities for any layperson to claim authority by virtue of the Spirit.

[50] WA 30/3, 520–524 (Brief von den Schleichern und Winkelpredigern [1532]) (= LW 40, 386–391). Such is further evident in the *Synopsis Purioris Theologiae*, a seventeenth-century compendium of key Reformed teachings coming out of Leiden University. This compendium affirmed a clear distinction between private and public interpretation of Scripture: "The power of interpreting or passing judgment is twofold – either public or private, and both of them rest upon a special calling and gift. The power of judging the right and wrong meaning of Holy Scripture in a private capacity in matters indispensable to one's salvation applies to all the true believers for the strengthening of their personal faith and the upbuilding of another's according to the law of love, the measure of the grace received, and the reason for a different calling … The power to expound Scripture in public and of publicly deciding upon the truth of interpretation does not apply to everyone, but only to those who by their gifts and calling have been trained for this task." Synopsis Purioris Theologiae. Synopsis of a Purer Theology. Latin Text and English Translation, Disputations 1–23, Dolf te Velde (ed.), Riemer A. Faber (trans.) (SMRT 187), Leiden 2015, vol. 1, 5, 28–30, 32, 34–35.

employed the principle of the *analogia fidei* as a tool in the hands of established Protestant ministers toward the simultaneous purposes of asserting Scripture's prime authority and strengthening the authority of the Protestant pastor, for only the rightly called pastor is properly trained to apply the principle of the *analogia fidei* for the interpretation of Scripture on behalf of the church.

It is precisely the principle of the *analogia fidei* that enabled Protestants to practice a form of churchly teaching authority that they believed avoided the pitfalls of their contemporary Roman Catholic clergy's wrongful claims to authority. Luther had already established the *analogia fidei* as a biblical standard by which to read all of Scripture: that any exegesis of Scripture should align with its central purposes of fostering a right understanding of faith that leads to Christ, trust in God's promises, and an affirmation of justification by faith alone. Notably, Luther did not identify the *analogia fidei* directly with the Apostles' Creed. Instead, he employed it to demarcate teachings concerning the true nature of faith, the necessity of Christ, and justification by faith alone as the clear central content of Scripture.[51] Yet the next generation of Protestant reformers, including John Calvin, Philip Melanchthon, and Heinrich Bullinger, increasingly aligned the *analogia fidei* with the Apostles' Creed as a doctrinal framework and standard to guide all biblical interpretation.

In the 1535 Prefatory Address to King Francis I of France, John Calvin referred to the *analogia fidei* under very similar terms to that of Luther. He viewed it as a "clear rule to test all interpretation of Scripture," a rule centered in the recognition that "we are naked of all virtue, in order to be clothed by God."[52] Key to his definition of the *analogia fidei* is the view of salvation as an act of God's grace and not the result of human works. The concern that all glory properly belongs to God was also central to Calvin's rebuke of the Catholic Church's claim to authority.[53] Invoking the teaching of the church fathers as supporting the cause of the

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[51] Huldrych Zwingli employed the term *analogia fidei* similarly as a biblical principle to provide readings that promote a right understanding of faith. He also employed the *analogia fidei* as a principle that supported his interpretation of texts pertaining to the Lord's Supper. See the discussion by W. P. Stephens, The Theology of Huldrych Zwingli, New York 1986, 64–69, 76, 79, 114. Stephens makes no mention of Zwingli identifying the *analogia fidei* explicitly with the axioms of the Apostles' Creed. Notably, Luther also employed the *analogia fidei* to condemn allegorical readings of Scripture. For an example of this, see his 1523–1525 *Lectures on Deuteronomy*. LW 9, 25 (Lectures on Deuteronomy [1525]) (= WA 14, 561,17–25); also LW 40, 189 (Against the Heavenly Prophets in the Matter of Images and Sacraments [1525]) (= WA 18, 179,38–180,7); as well LW 2, 151 (Lectures on Genesis 6–19, to Gen 9 [1537]) (= WA 42, 367,32–368,2).

[52] John Calvin, Prefatory Address to King Francis I of France, in: John T. McNeill (ed.), Ford Lewis Battles (trans.), Institutes of the Christian Religion (LCC 20, 21), Philadelphia, PA 1960, 12–13. The full quote from CR 29, 12 in Latin reads, "Paulus (Rom 12) cum ad fidei analogiam omnem prophetiam formatam esse voluit, certissimam amussim posuit, qua probari scripturae interpretatio debeat. […] Quid enim melius atque aptius fedei convenit, quam agnoscere nos omni virtute nudos ut a Deo vestiamur."

[53] Calvin protested, "They think it of no concern what belief anyone holds or does not hold

Protestant Reformation, Calvin clarified both the limits of the church fathers' authority and the limits of the Catholic Church's authority: "Yet we are so versed in [the writings of the church fathers] as to remember always that all things are ours to serve us, not to lord it over us, and that we belong to the one Christ, whom we must obey in all things without exception. He who does not observe this distinction will have nothing certain in religion, inasmuch as these holy men were ignorant of many things, often disagreed among themselves, and sometimes even contradicted themselves."[54] The Catholic Church, argued Calvin, disregards this distinction when they hold the position that the authority of Scripture depends upon the church's judgment.[55] Ultimately, contended Calvin, all authority belongs to Christ as revealed in Scripture; the church fathers, church teaching, and tradition may be of service only insofar as they are in line with Scripture. Equally notably, Calvin allowed a place for these elements, as long as they submit to the supreme authority of Scripture.

In his 1539 comments on the *analogia fidei* as it appears in reference to prophecy in Romans 12:6, Calvin also identified prophecy as interpretation of Scripture (and not prediction), asserting that interpretation of Scripture should conform to the "rule of faith, lest at any point they should wander or deviate from the straight line." He continued, "By the word 'faith' [Paul] means the first principles of religion."[56] Later in his 1546 comments on 1 Corinthians 14, Calvin invoked the text of Romans 12:6 and its principle of the *analogia fidei* as the biblical answer to the question of what standard one should use to measure and

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regarding God and Christ, if only he submit his mind with implicit faith to the judgment of the church. The sight of God's glory defiled with manifest blasphemies does not much trouble them, provided no one raises a finger against the primacy of the Apostolic See and against the authority of the Holy Mother Church. […] even though they prove nothing of them from God's Word." Calvin, "Prefatory Address to King Francis I of France," 14. In the original, CR 29, 13–14: "Veram religionem, quae scripturis tradita est, quaeque inter omnes constare debuerat, facile et sibi et aliis ignoreare, negligere, despicere permittunt, parumque referre putant, quid quisque de Deo et Christo teneat, vel non teneat, modo, implicita fide, suam mentem ecclesiae iudicio submittat."

[54] Calvin, "Prefatory Address to King Francis I of France," 18–19. In the original, CR 29, 16–17: "Sic tamen in eorum scriptis versamur, ut semper meminerimus omnia nostra esse, quae nobis serviant, non dominentur, nos autem unius Christi (I Cor 3) cui per omnia sine exceptione parendum sit. Hunc delectum qui non tenet, nihil in religione constitutum habebit, quando multa ignorarunt sancit illi viri, saepe inter se conflictantur, interdum etiam secum pugnant."

[55] Calvin, "Prefatory Address to King Francis I of France," 22 (= CR 29, 18–19).

[56] John Calvin, The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans and to the Thessalonians, Ross Mackenzie (trans.), David W. Torrance/Thomas F. Torrance (eds.), Grand Rapids, MI 1995, 269. The full quote in Latin from CR 49, 239 reads, "Nam quum alibi (I Cor 14, 32) testetur, spiritum prophetae prophetis esse subiectum, et iubeat priorem qui loquebatur tacere, si cui sedenti revelatum fuerit: eadem ratione admonere hic potest eos, qui in ecclesia prophetant, quo suas prophetias ad fidei normam conforment, necubi aberrant a linea. Fidei nomine significat prima religionis axiomata, quibus quaecunque doctrina deprehensa fuerit non respondere, falsitatis sic convincetur."

discern right biblical interpretation.[57] Though Calvin did not specify the *analogia fidei*'s content beyond identifying it with the "first principles" of Christianity, he clearly asserted that humans do not actually judge Scripture. He wrote, "But as far as the actual judging is concerned, there is no doubt that it ought to be controlled by the Word and Spirit of God, so that only what is perceived to be from God receives approval, that nothing is condemned except by means of God's Word and, in short, that God alone is the charge of the judgment and that men are simply God's heralds."[58] Similar to Luther, Calvin employed the *analogia fidei* as a rule to test right interpretation of Scripture, by measuring how well a reading conforms to Scripture's teachings concerning faith, Christ, and salvation. Like Luther, Calvin staunchly rejected the Catholic Church's claims to a teaching authority above and beyond Scripture. He affirmed a place for tradition and the church's teaching authority as long as each are rightly conceived in submission to Scripture's prime authority. Yet, Calvin emphasized more clearly than Luther that when one employs the *analogia fidei* to discern right reading of Scripture, humans are not the actual judges of Scripture. Rather, God's Word and Spirit work in conjunction (for according to Calvin these are inseparable) to enable humans to herald and implement this work of discernment.[59]

Melanchthon held very similar applications of the *analogia fidei*. In his 1540 comments on Romans 12:6, he wrote, "Paul instructs that the interpretation of the Word of God be analogous or in agreement with faith; that is, it should not depart from the articles of faith nor extinguish true knowledge of Christ and faith in Christ."[60] Like Calvin, Melanchthon clarified that people per se are not judges of a right interpretation of Scripture; rather, the *norms* are the judges. These norms, wrote Melanchthon, "are the chief *doctrines* passed down in Scripture by the prophets and apostles and included in the Creed; these norms are the highest judges."[61] In this way, Melanchthon more directly connected the *analogia fidei* with the teachings of the Apostles' Creed.[62] Such a connection took hold

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[57] John Calvin, The First Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians, John W. Fraser (trans.), David W. and Thomas F. Torrance (eds.), Edinburgh 1960, 304 (= CR 49, 531).

[58] Calvin, First Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians, 304–305. In the original, CR 49, 531: "Sed quod ad censuram spectat, non ne quid approbetur nisi quod deprehendatur ex Deo esse: ne quid improbetur, nisi per eius verbum. Denique praesideat, Deus solus huic iudicio; homines tantum sint eius praecones."

[59] See Calvin, Institutes 1.9.3.

[60] Philip Melanchthon, Commentarii in Epistolam Pauli ad Romanos hoc anno M. D. XL; recogniti et locu pletati, Straßburg 1540, 288: "Praecipit igitur ut interpretation verbi Dei sit analoga, id est, consentiens fidei, hoc est, ne discedat ab articulis fidei, ne extinguat notitiam veram Christi et fidem in Christum."

[61] Philip Melanchthon, Commentarii in Epistolam Pauli ad Corinthios (1551), in CR 15, 1170 (emphasis added): "De norma non dubium est, simpliciter normam esse capita doctrinae tradita in scriptis propheticis et apostolicis, et comprehensa in symbolis. Et haec norma est tanquam summus iudex."

[62] To be clear, Melanchthon is certainly not the first in Christian history to identify the

in the next generations. Particularly in the Reformed tradition going forward, Reformed exegetes increasingly identified the *analogia fidei* of Romans 12:6 with the central articles of the Christian faith as expressed in the Apostles' Creed. For example, in his 1550/1551 third sermon in the *Decades*, Heinrich Bullinger identified the *analogia fidei* with the articles of the Apostles' Creed, asserting the analogy of faith as the first principle of faithful exegesis.[63] Theodore Beza also defined the *analogia fidei* as the "axioms in the Christian faith found in the Apostles' Creed" in his comments on Romans 12:6, as did Rudolf Gwalther (1580), John Jacob Grynaeus (1591), and David Pareus (1609).[64] Later Lutherans, such as Lucas Osiander (1583), similarly advocated the use of key Christian doctrines as guides to right exegesis.[65]

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analogia fidei with the Apostles' Creed. This is an affirmation found in several early church fathers' teachings.

[63] Bullinger wrote, "First, since the Apostle Paul would have the exposition of the Scriptures to agree fitly and in every point proportionally with our faith, as it is said in Romans 12. […] Let it therefore be taken for a point of catholic religion not to bring in or admit anything in our expositions that others have alleged against the received articles of our faith contained in the Apostles' Creed and other confessions of the ancient fathers." HEINRICH BULLINGER, Fiftie Godlie and Learned Sermons, divided into five Decades, conteyning the chiefe and principall pointes of Christian religion, H. I. (trans.), London 1577, 26.

[64] THEODORE BEZA, Theodori Bezae Annotationes majors in Novum Dn. Nostri Jesu Christi Testamentum, Genève 1594, 131. Rudolph Gwalther wrote, "Paul comprehends this under the analogy of faith according to which all prophecy ought to be directed. Truly, such he calls the principles of faith that are certain axioms of the Christian religions that are generally called the Apostles' Creed." RUDOLPH GWALTHER, In D. Pauli apostolic epistolam ad Romanos homiliae, Tiguri 1580, 169b. John Jacob Grynaeus commented, "What is the measure of faith? Holy Scripture … But the epitome of Scripture is the Apostles' Creed. For that reason, Tertullian calls it the norm or rule of faith," JOHN JACOB GRYNAEUS, Exegesis epistolae beati Pauli Apostoli ad Romanos quae exemplar sanorum sermonum continent …, Basel 1591, 558. David Pareus provided an extensive definition of the *analogia fidei* from being revelation of truth to the measure of faith. Most clearly, he asserted, "The Apostle prescribes a norm to which all prophecy is directed. Therefore, by faith others understand the rule of Scripture and the axioms of the faith, such as comprehending the Creed of the apostolic faith, by which they have made clear the truth from Scripture. It is clear that the analogy of faith is in harmony and agrees with the heads of faith. […] Therefore, all interpretations, disputations, questions, and meaning should be examined in the church according to the norm of sacred Scripture and the Apostles' Creed, and they should conform to these." DAVID PAREUS, In divinum ad Romanos S. Pauli ap. Epistolam Commentarius, S. I. 1609, 949, 949–950.

[65] Lucas Osiander counseled that obscure passages of Scripture should be guided by "the principle heads of heavenly doctrine and certain clear dogmas." LUCAS OSIANDER, Epistolae S. Pauli Apostoli Omnes, Quotquot extand luxta Veterem seve Vulgatam translationem, ad Graecum Textum emendata et brevi ac perspicua explicatione illustrata: insertis etiam praecipuis Loci Communibus, in lectione sacra observandis, Tubingae 1583, 323. Aegidius Hunnius emphasized that the interpretive principle of the *analogia fidei* as letting Scripture be its own interpreter. He defined the *analogia fidei* as following the "consent of the whole tenor of Scripture," so that any reading should be tested "according to the consensus and tenor of the prophetic and apostolic writings." AEGIDIUS HUNNIUS, Epistolae divi Pauli Apostoli ad Romanos Expositio plana et perspicua cum Praefatione, Frankfurt a. M. 1590, 419, 424.

Protestant uses of the *analogia fidei* thus developed from a so-called purely scriptural principle to more explicit appeal to sources such as the Apostles' Creed – sources viewed as ultimately "scriptural," yet cognizant that they are not Scripture itself. This could be interpreted as a development from a more singularly scriptural principle that emphasized Scripture's self-interpreting and perspicuous character to an increasingly doctrinal focus, in which central Christian *doctrines* outlined in creedal form serve as the guide to right exegesis of Scripture. Evident in this development, as well, was the recognition that human leaders bore the work of mediating judgments about right doctrine and right interpretation of Scripture, while also emphasizing that ultimately *God* – the true Authority – enacts these judgments through the guidance of Scripture and the aid of the Holy Spirit.

Such developments responded to specific contexts and pressures. On the one hand, Protestants rejected the teaching authority of the Catholic Church (as operating beyond the bounds of Scripture) and asserted that ultimately only God possesses rightful authority to judge doctrine and interpretation. They contended that God provides such discernment through the perspicuous content of Scripture, doctrinal content outlined in Scripture-based creeds, and the certainty bestowed in the hearts of believers by the Holy Spirit.[66] The *analogia fidei* operationalized this interpretive principle of Scripture's perspicuity. Yet, in response to Anabaptist and other radical pressures, Protestants sought to strengthen not only Scripture's authority but also the authority of the Protestant pastor. They developed and deepened a concept and exercise of a proper *teaching authority* of the church, but they also aimed to demarcate its proper boundaries. Lutheran and Reformed leaders formed a multi-pronged response to what they viewed as disorderly, even "seditious," practices of Anabaptists and other radicals – from grounding their Protestant churches even more firmly in the biblical traditions of the church (including, in particular, the Apostles' Creed and Trinitarian theology) to demarcating the proper boundaries of lay participation in the public ministries of the church to buttressing Protestant *clerical* authority. In other words, in the face of Anabaptist and radical anticlericalism now aimed precisely

[66] Luther and Calvin wrote of the inner witness of the Holy Spirit who provides the certainty of Scripture's truth. Luther proclaimed, "Everyone may be certain of the Gospel when there is the testimony of the Holy Spirit in their own person that this is the Gospel." In the original, WA 30/2, 688,2–4 (De potestate leges ferendi in ecclesia [1530]): "Certus erit de Euangelio unusquisque in semetipso testimonium habens spiritus sancti, hoc est Euangelion." "Word will not find acceptance in human hearts before it is sealed by the inward testimony of the Spirit," Calvin, Institutes 1.7.4. Huldrych Zwingli preached a famous sermon in 1522 precisely on the "clarity and certainty of the Word of God," in which he argued that Scripture teaches that every Christian can be taught directly by God through Scripture by the aid of the Holy Spirit. Also see Hulrych Zwingli, "Of the Clarity and Certainty of the Word of God," in: CR 88, 328–384. This document can also be found in Zwingli/Bullinger, Selected Translations, G. W. Bromiley (trans./ed.) (LCC 24), Philadelphia, PA 1953, 49–95.

at *Protestant* clergy and their authority, Lutheran and Reformed leaders found themselves in the challenging position of re-asserting a proper role of clerical authority while also not falling into the so-called trap of Roman Catholic clerical tyranny.[67] They sought to assert Protestant clerical authority (a form of church authority) squarely within the bounds of the supreme authority of Scripture – a clerical authority that never forgot its limits and had practices in place to keep these limits perpetually in mind.

The next generation of Lutherans and Reformed leaders carved out a practice of a Protestant churchly teaching authority that sought to squarely submit to and operate within the supreme authority of Scripture. In the first place, they asserted the principle of *analogia fidei.* In practice this meant that the pastor or ministerial leader did not judge doctrine or a right interpretation of Scripture by virtue of his or her own authority. Rather, employing the key doctrinal loci of Scripture outlined in the Apostles' Creed (e. g., God as creator, Trinity, Christology, saving events of Christ life), ministers aimed faithfully to enact *Scripture's* authority – the teachings, doctrines, and practices already clearly outlined in Scripture itself. Secondarily, the next generation of Protestant leaders strived to promote, cultivate, and accentuate the necessary character and virtues of the Protestant pastor. They painted a picture of the proper godly disposition of the Protestant pastor who has been rightly called and trained. A godly pastor should be humble, teachable, accept correction cheerfully and willingly, not be driven by personal ambition, and willing to submit to another who offers a better, more biblical teaching.[68] In this way, Lutheran and Reformed church leaders aimed to foster the kind of disposition that would most consistently embody and enforce the *analogia fidei* principle, for it takes humility and teachableness to put aside one's ego and ambition and to be able to hear and follow the Holy Spirit's guid-

[67] A study of the history of interpretation of 1 Corinthians 14 (a text on prophecy) reveals that Lutheran and Reformed alike increasingly deployed this text to defend and strengthen Protestant clerical authority to judge right doctrine and biblical interpretation while simultaneously insisting that human pastors are ultimately not the judges. Instead, the chief doctrines of the Christian faith laid out clearly in Scripture are the judges. See especially PHILIP MELANCHTHON, CR 15, 1170–1174. Lutheran and Reformed exegetes also interpreted this text precisely between the tensions of Roman Catholic so-called "tyranny" and Anabaptist so-called "sedition." For examples, see HEINRICH BULLINGER, In Priorem D. Pauli ad Corinthios Epistolam Commentarius, Tigvri apvd Christoph froscho mense ivn 1534, 183v–184v. MELANCHTHON, CR 15, 1176–1177. THEODORE BEZA, Theodori Bezae Annotationes majores (as note 64), 233a. For a more detailed account of the history of interpretation of 1 Corinthians 14 in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, see PAK, Reformation of Prophecy (as note 30), 198–211.

[68] See the exhortations of Rudolph Gwalther and David Pareus concerning the right disposition of godly pastors.

RUDOLF GWALTHER, In Epistolam D. Pauli Apostoli ad Corinthios Priorem D. Rodolphi Gualtheri Pastoris Ecclesie Tigurinae Homiliarum archetypi, Tiguri in officina Foshoviana 1590, 289r, 291r, 297v.; DAVID PAREUS, In Divinam ad Corinthios S. Pauli Apostoli Epistolam Commentarius, Frankcofurti 1609, 970, 971, 975.

ance in interpreting Scripture and discerning its best application for contemporary needs and contexts.

3. Conclusion

Heiko Oberman argued that Scripture, tradition and kerygma coincided completely for Protestant reformers, so that they adhered to a form of what Oberman termed "Tradition I." Yet completely missing from Oberman's model is any account of the church's teaching authority. Anthony Lane's description of the "ancillary view" of the Protestant reformers more squarely attends to the role of the church's teaching authority. Lane asserts that the Protestant reformers sharply differentiated *tradition* from the church's *teaching authority*: they accepted certain forms of tradition that they viewed as ultimately scriptural while rejecting the teaching authority of the Catholic Church. The seeming implication of Lane's silence concerning the possibilities of a Protestant churchly teaching authority is that the Protestants rejected the teaching authority of the church altogether. But, through an exploration of the Protestant reformers' uses of the *analogia fidei*, one sees that the role of the teaching authority of the church was not only a central factor in the equation (that was ignored by Oberman), but also that it is a factor not simply rejected by the Protestant reformers. On the contrary, the Protestant reformers not only affirmed certain forms of tradition as scriptural and therefore authoritative; they also affirmed certain forms of Protestant churchly authority when it operated within and under the ultimate authority of Scripture. Though Protestants often rejected the teaching authority of the Catholic Church, they did so not because churchly teaching authority per se was illegitimate. Rather, they rejected it precisely because they believed it did not uphold Scripture's principal authority. It remained within the realm of possibilities that a church and its leaders could assert a form of authority so long as it upheld, implemented and ultimately operationalized *Scripture's* premier authority, which was exactly what the Protestant church leaders aimed to implement in response to Anabaptist and radical challenges. It seems less correct to assert that Scripture, tradition, and teaching authority coincide altogether for the Protestant reformers. Rather, it is more precise to say that for the Protestant reformers Scripture remained apart as the standard by which to measure any proper authoritative place of tradition *and* the church's teaching authority, necessitating a clear differentiation between scriptural and unscriptural tradition and between churchly teaching authority that upholds Scripture's ultimate authority and that which usurps it. While this might sound like a *sola scriptura* principle; it is more accurately a *prima scriptura* principle, for it clearly aimed to allow and enable both the authority of certain forms of tradition *and* certain forms of the teaching authority of the church.

Chapter 15

The Priesthood and Its Critics

Christine Helmer

1. Reform

The imperative within an institution or a community to initiate reform is a sign that internal problems have been recognized and hopes have risen of finding a better way of doing things. A person who comes to see that her online browsing habits have become a problem vows to reform her habits; a community – a congregation, for example, or a neighborhood association – that confronts the unjust social consequences of prior management decisions makes plans to change directions. Persons and communities are living organisms and it is as such that they need to reform themselves from time to time in order to thrive. Change and growth, degeneration and decline, express life. At certain points in the history of the organism, individuals intuit that stagnation results in problems, that inertia presents dilemmas. These problems register in feelings – the feeling of the terrified conscience in the face of the judging God, to use a well-known example from the history of western Christianity. Persons or communities so moved may respond by trying to discern the causes of stagnation and then to respond. They probe feelings of dissatisfaction – and more, the feeling that something has gone horribly awry – to figure out what to do next. And they might get to work, experimenting with solutions, imagining new possibilities, attempting to reorient themselves, to recover or to reinvent a mission that seems to have been lost.

The Christian church since its origins understood reform as necessary for its corporate life. *Ecclesia semper reformanda*: the church fundamentally exists in a state of ongoing reform. Councils and committees, religious writers and theologians, laity and bishops have in the history of the church imagined, inspired, and introduced adjustments for daily existence. Sometimes, the feelings that signal something is wrong provoke an anxious caution, in which case only minor adjustments may be possible; at other times, when the sense of crisis is widely enough shared and deeply enough felt more radical steps may be taken. Prophets speak; ordinary people protest, often at great personal risk; church councils called. The church is called to accountability in many different ways and reoriented towards a more true and just vision. This is the best-case scenario. In

the worst case, the recognition that something has gone dreadfully wrong may lead to defensiveness, reaction, and the suppression of critical voices, for without change, the church petrifies; without reform, it becomes deformed; and without a vision, the people perish (cf. Hb 2:2).

When is reform necessary? Who calls for it and on what grounds? What is the relationship between individual reform, on the one hand, and the reform of the institutions within which individuals come to be and live their lives, on the other? Such questions become especially exigent when it is the church that is embarking on reformation because the church as an entity exists precisely at the intersection of the individual and the corporate whole. This becomes clear in the case of the sixteenth-century reformer Martin Luther. In 1517, following a dreadful period of personal trial when he seemed to be experiencing the community's lack in his own soul and body, he called the church to reform a theology of indulgences that he insisted obscured the true message of the gospel. By 1519, the nexus Luther had drawn between his own struggles to formulate an understanding of Christ's work in justifying the sinner and the church's failures in this regard had come to be seen as dangerous attacks on the religious order.[1] By 1520 Luther had denounced the church's insistence on its own singular role in dispensing salvation. His excommunication from the church and ban from the empire followed a year later. What Luther intended as a call to theological, religious, and liturgical reform was perceived as a revolution; his reforming impulse got caught up in and became contributory to the volatile historical, economic, political, and ecclesial conditions of the early sixteenth century. Luther's attempt to reform the Catholic Church ended up in schism.

Luther's reform in this way offers a case study that opens key questions regarding the nature of religious reform and the interconnections between the personalities, on the one hand, and the social and political conditions, on the other, under which reform was promoted and in which reform took hold or failed. The study of Luther's early sixteenth-century moment is akin to playing three-dimensional chess: every piece is moving on several distinct planes at once! The study of the early sixteenth century religious reforms addresses theological ideas as embodied by particular persons within distinctive lives; it examines these ideas, which often had their origins within a particular life with its discrete problems and needs, in their development via the intersubjective practices of teaching, disputation, and preaching; and it traces how ecclesial, political, and social interests come to inflect such schoolwork. What Luther intended and how he was received – and what the two: the reformer's intentions and what were made of them – are questions that have been asked since the day Luther first spoke

[1] See the new book on Luther's debate with Johannes Eck in Leipzig 1519 that Eck strategically oriented to a debate about church authority. Markus Hein/Armin Kohnle (eds.), Die Leipziger Disputation von 1519. Ein theologisches Streitgespräch und seine Bedeutung für die frühe Reformation (Herbergen der Christenheit 25), Leipzig 2019.

of reform and they continue to bedevil and provoke research today. They have become especially urgent in light of contemporary Catholicism's struggles with many of the problems Luther called attention to five hundred years ago.

Luther insisted on God's grace in Christ as the central content of theological reform. His impulse in doing so arose first from his own spiritual crisis and then from his great sense of pastoral responsibility. Yet, at the same time, his theology of justification was related to his understanding of the institutional priesthood, as Cardinal Cajetan and Johannes Eck had discerned in 1518 and 1519. That justification became the basis for a new understanding of the priesthood of all believers has long been a consensus among Protestant theologians and a foundation of Protestant identity. In this essay, I propose a new look at the relationship between justification and the priesthood, this time from the perspective of the medieval Luther. I argue that in the early years of reform, while Luther was just developing his theology of justification, he was also working out its implications for a theology of the priesthood. Two questions in particular concerned him: first, who has the power and authority to reform the priesthood and, second, on what grounds is the priesthood to be reformed? To understand how Luther thought about these questions requires that we do as he did, which is to reach back to the Middle Ages, specifically the political theology of the fourteenth-century philosopher and Franciscan, William Ockham (1285–1347).

Ockham is known to have advanced philosophical theories that led to the formation of the *via moderna*, which was the philosophical orientation of Luther's intellectual formation. The particular treatise by Ockham that Luther seems to have had in mind when he was formulating his thoughts on the priesthood is *A Short Discourse on Tyrannical Government.* Ockham wrote this in the 1340s when he was in political exile in Bavaria.[2] Ockham's ideas about the authority of Scripture and of reason as the grounds upon which criticism of the papacy might be raised served Luther well in those years in which he was concerned with the question of the church's mediation of Christ's grace. To appreciate Luther's turn to Ockham, however, we must first tread with Luther the path Luther directed back to the master, specifically the vexatious and dangerous problem of the relationship between Luther's new understanding of justification and the ecclesiastical and soteriological role of the priesthood.

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[2] The Latin title of this text is Breviloquium de principatu tyrannico super divina et humana, specialiter autem super Imperium et subiectos imperio, a quibusdam vocatis summis pontificibus usurpato (A Short Discourse on the Tyrannical Government Over Things Divine and Human, but Especially Over the Empire and Those Subject to the Empire, Usurped by Some Who Are Called Higher Pontiffs). The Latin text is found in Richard Scholz, Wilhelm von Ockham als politischer Denker und sein Breviloquium de principatu tyrannico (Schriften des Reichsinstituts für ältere deutsche Geschichtskunde [Monumenta Germaniae historica]), Leipzig 1944; with the English translation: William of Ockham, A Short Discourse on Tyrannical Government, John Kilcullen (trans.), Arthur Stephen McGrade (ed.) (Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought), Cambridge 1992.

2. Justification and the Priesthood

The early sixteenth century Catholic Church, much like the fourteenth century papal court in Avignon, was badly in need of reform. Luther was deeply unnerved by what he saw in Rome on a visit there in 1514.[3] With the reform movement in full swing a few years later, Luther directed his pugnaciousness, salaciousness, and scatological bite to what he had seen in his walks around the holy city. His ire was unrestrained, in particular, when directed at clerical hypocrisy:

> Trusting in the external anointing by which their hands are consecrated, in the tonsure and in vestments, they not only exalt themselves above the rest of the lay Christians, who are only anointed with the Holy Spirit, but regard them almost as dogs and unworthy to be included with themselves in the church. Hence they are bold to demand, to exact, to threaten, to urge, to oppress, as much as they please. In short, the sacrament of ordination has been and still is an admirable device for establishing all the horrible things that have been done hitherto in the church, and are yet to be done. Here Christian brotherhood has perished, here shepherds have been turned into wolves, servants into tyrants, churchmen into worse than worldlings.[4]

Rather than representing the spirit of Christ as a *ministerium*, priests instead exercised *dominion* over the laity. They withheld the sacraments; read the canonical hours to themselves; held private masses; preened gorgeous, costly vestments; and were preoccupied with promoting their personal interests, financial, political, and sexual. Luther's criticism directed against priestly abuses, specifically with regard to what he saw as sacramental malpractice, is documented in the 1520 treatise *On the Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, written a few weeks prior to another treatise whose title sharply contrasts with it, *On the Freedom of a Christian*. This juxtaposition of captivity and freedom established Luther's reform program: whereas the church holds Christians captive to its voracious quest for power, Christ sets Christians free from sin. The church, to which has been given the responsibility to mediate Christ's freedom to the laity, has defaulted on its duties.

Luther connects the two treatises of 1520 by contrasting freedom in Christ and the "tyranny" of the church. The contrast is made on a distinctive theological point that Luther underscores in the *Freedom* treatise: justification is not the privilege of the priesthood; it is the work of Christ. By insisting on its own es-

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[3] Michael Massing, Fatal Discord. Erasmus, Luther, and the Fight for the Western Mind, New York 2018, 162–165.

[4] LW 36, 112 (On the Babylonian Captivity of the Church [1520]); in the original, WA 6, 563,32–564,5: "qua fiducia corporalis unctionis, quo manus eorum consecrantur, deinde rasurae et vestium non modo caeteris laicis Christianis, qui spiritu sancto uncti sunt, sese praeferunt, sed ferme ut canes indignos, qui cum eis in Ecclesia numerantur, habeant. Hinc quidvis mandare, exigere, minari, urgere, premere audent. Summa, sacramentum ordinis pulcherrima machina fuit et est ad stabilienda universa portenta, quae hactenus facta sunt et adhuc fiunt in Ecclesia. Hic periit fraternitas Christiana: hic ex pastoribus lupi, ex servis tyranni, ex Ecclesiasticis plus quam mundani facti sunt."

sential role in justifying sinners, the church held dispensation of justification hostage. To combat what Luther saw as the church's power over the mediation of grace, he insisted on justification by Christ alone. Christ's mystical union with the soul, not the church's sacramental mediation of grace, is the language Luther uses in the *Freedom* treatise to describe Christ's work. His imagery for faith's work is bridal mysticism without priestly intervention. "The third incomparable benefit of faith is that it unites the soul with Christ as a bride is united with her bridegroom."[5] Union with Christ transforms the soul and its destiny. The soul absorbs Christ's virtues of righteousness and salvation, while Christ takes up human vices and their consequences of death and damnation.[6] Through an exchange of attributes, Christ's person is gifted to the sinner, and the sinner is taken up into Christ. A new identity for the sinner is accomplished in Christ, one of freedom from sin.

As Else Marie Wiberg Pedersen argues in her essay in this volume, Luther draws upon theological and exegetical inheritances from Gregory the Great and Bernard of Clairvaux for this mystical imagery.[7] But the idea that the mystical union between Christ and sinner effects an exchange of attributes is new to Luther. In the context of the *Freedom* treatise, Luther parses the *communicatio idiomatum* not in the Christological terms of the two natures doctrine, but in the mystical conceptuality of a *soteriological* exchange. Christ's person is given to the bride as her gift; the bride becomes a new person in Christ, freed from the vices that were hers before the "happy exchange." Christ's person effects his work of gift and exchange. What Christ has, who he is, becomes the bride's possession. Luther alludes to the famous passage in Song 2:16 ("My beloved is mine and I am his") in his new theology of justification: "for if Christ is a bridegroom, he must take upon himself the things which are his bride's and bestow upon her the things that are his."[8] Significant here is that justification is moved from its theological connection to the sacraments into the personal relation of the mystical union.[9] This insight will have systematic-theological implications for Luther's

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[5] LW 31, 351 (On the Freedom of a Christian [1520]); in the original, WA 7, 54,31–32: "Tertia fidei gratia incomparabilis est haec, Quod animam copulat cum Christo, sicut sponsam cum sponso."

[6] LW 31, 351: "Let us compare these and we shall see inestimable benefits. Christ is full of grace, life, and salvation. The soul is full of sins, death and damnation. Now let faith come between them and sins, death, and damnation will be Christ's, while grace, life, and salvation will be the soul's." In the original, WA 7, 54,38–55,2: "Conferamus ista, et videbimus inaestimabilia. Christus plenus est gratia, vita et salute, Anima plena est peccatis, morte et damnatione. Intercedat iam fides, et fiet, ut Christi sint peccata, mors et infernus. Animae vero gratia, vita et salus."

[7] Else Marie Wiberg Pedersen, "'You are Mine, and I am Yours'. The Nuptial Motif in Luther's Theology," ch. 10 in this volume.

[8] LW 31, 351; in the original, WA 7, 55,3–4: "oportet enim eum, si sponsus est, ea simul quae sponsa habet acceptare et ea quae sua sunt sponsae impartire."

[9] For a detailed account of Luther's theology of justification in the *Freedom* treatise, see

understanding of the church, in particular, for the way in which the church mediates, communicates, and dispenses justification. The doctrine of justification entails the doctrine of the church. But how?

In the *Freedom* treatise, Luther immediately turned from the personal to the communal. He invokes Christ's twofold office of priest and king in precisely the terms of the gift of Christ's person that he had invoked in the bridal passage. The Christian idea of the twofold office is based on the Old Testament anointing of priest and king. Christ, who is high priest and king, gives the gift of this identity, and thereby the gift of the rule of the church, to Christians. For Luther, then, the communal implication of the personal soteriological exchange of attributes is that all Christians are priests and kings.

> Now just as Christ by his birthright obtained these two prerogatives [kingship and priesthood], so he imparts them to and shares them with everyone who believes in him according to the law of the above-mentioned marriage, according to which the wife owns whatever belongs to the husband. Hence all of us who believe in Christ are priests and kings in Christ, as I Pet. 2 [:9] says: "You are a chosen race, God's own people, a royal priesthood, a priestly kingdom."[10]

The marital image, captured previously in terms of the Christ-sinner relation, gives way to a discussion of a community in which those who believe in Christ "are priests and kings in Christ." First Peter 2:9 is the biblical foundation for this tradition, a verse Luther cites in his treatise. Luther explains that Christ's gift of this twofold office establishes the new community of those Christ justifies. Justification is constitutive of a new social organization: a royal and holy priesthood comprised of priests and kings. When the individual is freed from her sin, she is free to participate in a community in which a new kind of rulership applies: rather than one in which there is only one king and one priest, Christ rules a community in which the leadership is provided by all. Christ as king confers his kingship on all members of his body; the same holds true for his priestly office. A "royal priesthood" is the result of justification.

Of particular concern to Luther was whether papal ordination was a necessary dimension of the Christian order he envisaged. Christopher Voigt-Goy has shown how Luther struggled with the entailments of justification for his understanding of both the ordinary and the ordained priesthood.[11] Between 1520

ch. 2 of Peter Folan, S. J., Matters of Interpretation. Biblical Methodology in the Lutheran-Catholic Dialogue on the Doctrine of Justification, Ph.D. Diss., Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA 2019.

[10] LW 31, 354; in the original, WA 7, 56,35–57,1: "Quemadmodum autem Christus primogenitura sua has duas dignitates obtinuit, ita impartit et comunes easdem facit cuilibet suo fideli matrimonii praedicti iure, quo sponsae sunt quaecunque sponsi sunt. Hinc omnes in Christo sumus sacerdotes et reges, quicunque in Christum credimus, Sicut 1. Pet. 2. dicit 'Vos genus electum, populus acquisitionis, sacerdotium regale et regnum sacerdotale."

[11] I am summarizing Christopher Voigt-Goy on Biel, in his essay, "Luther and Priestly *Potestas* in the Late Middle Age," ch. 13 in this volume. See also the excellent monograph:

and 1523 Luther held a number of positions on this question, from the provocative insight of attributing the royal priesthood to the laity, to an ecclesial polity in which the community selects a representative according to the model of the pastoral letters in the New Testament, to the reservation of ecclesial leadership to the ordained priest. To a great extent, Luther was struggling with these questions within the tradition he inherited from Gerson and Biel regarding the distinction between (1) the *potestas iurisdictionis*, which Biel privileged as the power by which church organization dispenses grace on the basis of the *gratia gratum faciens* given to all believers, including ordained priests, after the resurrection; and (2) the *potestas ordinis*, the power of consecration, specifically of the Eucharist, which is due to the power given at ordination. Biel thought that juridical power was primary. Every priest required forgiveness; no priest was exempt from receiving absolution. While even a bad priest possessed the power of consecration (*potestas ordinis*), he needed the forgiveness that is given to the entire church.

At this early point in his theological articulation, Luther had not definitively decided on how to construe church leadership. It required decades more to work out an answer to this question in view of the regularization of new parishes. Luther's understanding of the church's ministry was made up of moving parts: his developing clarity concerning justification, the historical circumstances involving emergency ordinations, and relevant to what follows in the next two sections of this essay, biblical interpretation and the relation between church and world. The questions of who is empowered or permitted to interpret the Bible and how the Bible might be mobilized in the cause of clerical reform further reveal Luther's connection to the Middle Ages, because it was in the process of articulating his theology of the church's rule that Luther took up Ockham's political theology.

3. Christological Semantics

The early years saw Luther gain clarity with respect to justification by Christ alone. They also saw him struggle to work out a theory of the church and its priests, those assigned the work of mediating Christ's benefits. The problem had to do with the starting point: if Christ is the basis of individual freedom – and by extension corporate freedom – then grace becomes the rationale by which the church exists. Priests participate in the reception of this grace, as does the laity. So, then, on what basis is the leadership role of priests to be legitimated? Are they the beneficiaries of an added grace? Or do they participate in Christ's rule of the

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Christopher Voigt-Goy, Potestates und ministerium publicum. Eine Studie zur Amtstheologie im Mittelalter und bei Martin Luther (SMHR 78), Tübingen 2014.

church through organizational offices, as stakeholders in the institution, in organizational language?

While Luther does not provide a definitive answer to these questions in the reform's early years, he is preoccupied with the topic of the reform of the priesthood throughout. A key text in Luther's developing theology of the priesthood is the series of sermons he delivered on the New Testament pastoral letter of 1 Peter.[12] The famous passage of 1 Pt 2:9, which identifies the recipients of the letter as a "royal priesthood," is of note in the context of Luther's developing theology. The designation alludes to the two offices of Christ (priest and king), which Luther as we have seen, interpreted in the *Freedom* treatise as Christ's gift to all Christians. It is unclear precisely when Luther preached these sermons; 1522 or 1523 have been identified as likely possibilities. Caspar Cruciger transcribed the sermons for publication in 1523 and the Strasbourg Reformer Martin Bucer translated them into Latin the following year.[13]

The text of the sermons offers a detailed look at how Luther connects justification with the priesthood. Luther followed the *lectio continua* method of preaching through the entire biblical book of 1 Peter, which allowed him to connect the two topics of justification and the priesthood by the order in which they are discussed in the biblical text. Luther summarizes the central theme of the sermons in the introduction. The book of 1 Peter is about the gospel, he writes, specifically how faith in Christ alone justifies.[14] This announcement is immediately followed by a polemical comment attacking "pope and councils" for wrongly claiming they alone have the power to judge Christian teaching. Not the church hierarchy, Luther retorts, but "all Christians" have the capacity "to judge all books and teachings as to whether they [proclaim] the gospel or not."[15] The connection between the gospel and the church is the capacity to discern the truth of the gospel as the criterion for adjudicating biblical interpretation. Scripture requires interpreters in order to understand the gospel correctly, and these interpreters are those who have a "right understanding" of the gospel message.[16] Luther preaches his sermons as an exercise in biblical interpretation that yields a correct understanding of the gospel, and on this hermeneutical basis, he works out a critical perspective for establishing the meaning of "church" and the priesthood.

Luther's aim in the sermons is to work out the correct meaning of the gospel in contrast to what he deems a false understanding. When he reads 1 Pt 1:2b

[12] WA 12, 298–399 (Epistel S. Petri gepredigt und ausgelegt. Erste Bearbeitung [1523]). All translations of this text are by C. H.

[13] WA 12, 249–250 (introduction).

[14] WA 12, 260,9–10.

[15] WA 12, 260,28–31: "Denn was nicht auff dise art gepredigt odder geschrieben wirt, da magstu frey eyn urteyl fellen, das es falsch ist, wie gůtt es scheynet. Dise macht zů urteylen haben alle Christen, nicht der Bapst odder Concilii, die sich rhůmen, wie sie alleyn macht haben, die lere zů urteylen."

[16] WA 12, 259,4: "und ein rechten verstand davon fasse."

("through the sanctifying work of the Spirit"), Luther focuses his understanding of the gospel as God's work in view of the Holy Spirit's work of sanctification. This passage affords Luther the opportunity to connect his understanding of God's work with the term, "church" (*Kirche*). There is a struggle for the correct understanding of God's work of sanctification. On the one hand, Luther identifies the nature of God's work as "the sanctification, that God works in us."[17] On the other hand, "the pope and the bishop" identify their rule with the church, and demand obedience to what they deem is holy.[18] Already in the first sermon Luther draws attention to the question of who is capable of identifying the truth about the church: those who understand that God sanctifies the church and thereby renders it holy or those who think that the church hierarchy defines the means for achieving holiness? Luther thus steers the connection between justification and the priesthood in the direction of the work of biblical interpretation.

Luther layers on aspects of his understanding of the gospel as he works through the first chapter of 1 Peter. He interprets the sprinkling of Christ's blood (1 Pt 1:2c) as the preaching about Christ who stands before the Father "for us." The theme of the divine work "in us" is complemented with the theme of the divine "goods" as the Father's gifts given to Christians on account of Christ and without human merit.[19] Christ is the "treasure" (*schatz*) that God gives to all Christians, the "advocate" (*fursprecher*) before the Father.[20] Luther thus recapitulates what he noted as the central message in the *Freedom* treatise, namely the communication of all of Christ's attributes to the sinner so that the sinner becomes a "new person" (*macht eyn newen menschen*).[21] Furthermore, Luther underscores how faith is the way by which the gospel's content becomes a reality in the human person. It is a divine work; "God works faith in us."[22] The gospel in its entirety is a gift – the gift of the Holy Spirit's work of sanctifying sinners; the gift of Christ's work of advocating for them before the Father; and the gift of God's work of creating faith as the way in which its content – the gospel – becomes a new reality driving personal identity.

A mystical theme courses through Luther's sermons as their *cantus firmus*. The passage of 1 Pt 2:2a ("Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk") provides him with the exegetical occasion to deepen this theme. Luther refers to the Song of Songs in order to connect the "longing for milk" clause with

[17] WA 12, 262,25: "denn die heylickeyt, die Gott ynn uns wirckt."

[18] WA 12, 262,19–21: "Als auch den namen 'Kirche', Das der Bapst und Bischoff die kirch sey, Sprechen, die kirch habs gepotten, wenn sie nach yhrem muttwillen thun, was sie wollen."

[19] WA 12, 263,12–268,35.

[20] WA 12, 266,31–32, 268,15.

[21] WA 12, 298,31.

[22] WA 12, 294,4, 5–8: "Solcher glawb … Gott schaffet yhn ynn uns, darumb das es Christus mit seynem blůtt verdienet hat, wilchem er darumb die herlickeyt geben und zů seyner rechten hand gesetzt hatt, das er durch die Gottis krafft den glawben ynn uns schaffete."

actual nursing from breasts. The early church and medieval legacy of Gregory the Great's and Bernard of Clairvaux's treatment of this topic may be glimpsed within Luther's exegesis of this particular passage.[23] An intriguing play with erotically charged texts (Else Marie Wiberg Pedersen's term is "queering"[24]) is evident as Luther explicitly cites references to breasts in Song 4:5 ("Your two breasts are like two fawns, twins of a gazelle, that feed among the lilies") and 1:13 ("My beloved is to me a bag of myrrh that lies between my breasts") and connects these passages with 1 Pt 2:2a. The erotic exchange between bridegroom and bride is transposed into the register of the New Testament epistle. Just as young children nurse from breasts, so too Christians young in the faith must nurse. The analogue in the latter case are preachers, who have the gospel as the content of their proclamation.[25] Luther continues to hew to the motif of connecting bridal mysticism to a soteriological exchange between Christ and sinner. When commenting on the term "holy priesthood" in 1 Pt 2:5, he recapitulates the exchange, alluding to Song 6:3 ("I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine; he pastures his flock among the lilies"). Christ is the bridegroom who gives everything he has and all that he is to the bride.[26] The way by which the exchange occurs is, in Luther's reading, the preachers who nurse the Christians as they "feed among the lilies." Inspired by the 1 Pt 2 text, Luther connects a Christ-based mystical soteriology with the church.

Luther's aim with this analogy – preachers/breasts – is to bring his hearers to the right understanding of faith and to a singular appreciation for Christ's treasure that is given as gift. This theory of justification entails the existence of the church in a particular way, which Luther works out in view of the passage on Christ as cornerstone in 1 Pt 2:4 ("Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight"). This passage, activated by the "rejection" clause, becomes the explicit exegetical site of confrontation between two different interpretations. Luther's insistence all along on the centrality of Christ's work in justifying the sinner is now focused on connecting this identification with a theology of the church based on Christ, the cornerstone. In the background is Saint Peter, the epistle's author, as Luther acknowledges, who in-

[23] For a survey of these two thinkers and their appropriation by Luther, see ch. 10 by Else Marie Wiberg Pedersen in this volume.

[24] Pedersen discusses Luther's "queering" of the relevant biblical passages in ch. 10 in this volume.

[25] WA 12, 303,6–11: "Die brůste aber, die diese milch von sich geben und die jungen kindlin seugen, sind die prediger ynn der Christenheyt, wie der breutgam zur braut sagt Canti: 3. 'Du hast zwue brůste wi zwey junge hynnlin.' Die sollen haben eyn bůchel myrhen umb sich hangen, wie die brautt spricht Canti: 1. 'Meyn lieber ist wie eyn bůschel myhren, das myr zwisschen den brůsten henget', das ist, das man ymmer Christum soll predigen."

[26] WA 12, 307,23–27: "Denn syntemal Christus der brewtigam ist, und wyr die braut sind, so hatt die braut alles, was der breutigam hatt, auch seynen eygenen leyb. Denn wenn er sich der braut gibt, so gibt er sich yhr gar was er ist, und widderumb gibt such yhm die braut auch."

sists that the cornerstone refers to Christ.[27] Peter, whom Christ designated as the rock upon which he builds the church (cf. Mt 16:19), now becomes the biblical author who points to Christ as the church's foundation.[28] This step will become significant in what follows, when Luther explains that Christ's twofold office of priest and king, inspired by the terms "a spiritual house, a holy priesthood" in 1 Pt 2:5, are both grounded in Christ. Christ grounds the church. Any other interpretation that assigns the church's foundations to the work of the "builders" is wrong.

The conflict in Luther's sermons on 1 Pt 2 arises between the two interpretations. On the one hand, Luther claims that the church is grounded on Christ as gift. Throughout the sermons, he points out that this is the correct understanding of the relevant passages regarding Christ as cornerstone of the church. On the other hand, Luther identifies the papal church as a hierarchy that by human law demands works.[29] On the one hand, the church is identified as a community in which all share in Christ's benefits and "no one has more power than another"[30]; on the other hand, the church is the institution in which the priesthood has power to demand and require. Luther inserts himself into the conflict by referencing the (very personal!) attacks against him as heretic launched by the papal church. "The builders […] say, 'You are a heretic, haven't you claimed that one should not do good works? Alas you must die!'"[31] The conflict has to do with who has the authority to define "church" and "priests": those who intercede for each other and preach the gospel or those who demand sacrifices and obedience.

At stake throughout the sermons is the capacity to interpret the meaning of the gospel correctly and then to apply this interpretation to judge the church and its priests. In his interpretation of 1 Peter, Luther works out an understanding of Christ as gift and Christ's centrality to the church as its cornerstone. This perspective has significant implications for theologically viewing those entrusted with building the church. Luther takes the term "elder" ("Presbyteros") in 1 Pt 5:1 and explains that the original meaning of this Greek word has to do with an assembly of "old wise men," rendered in German translation as "Die Eltisten."[32] In this way, Luther strips *Presbyteros* of the ecclesial connotations that were dictated by its Vulgate translations, instead establishing a new Christolog-

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27 WA 12, 305,14: "Und sihe, wie S. Peter die wort nympt und deut den steyn auff Christum."

28 WA 12, 387,26–28: "Und hie demůttigt sich S. Peter, spricht nicht, das er eyn uberherr sey, wie wol ers macht hette gehabt, weyl er eyn Apostel Christi war."

29 WA 12, 331,31–32: "Der Bapst hatt da mit unrecht gehandlet, das er die leut mit gesetzen hatt wollen zwingen und dringen."

30 WA 12, 309,7: "nicht das eyner mehr gewallt habe denn der ander."

31 WA 12, 305,32–33: "Sprechen, 'du bist eyn ketzer, weristu, man sol nit gůtte werck thun? Ey du must sterben!'"

32 WA 12, 387,13; 387,4; 386,15.

ical semantics to define the terms "priest" and "bishop." These men, according to Luther, are those who teach a correct understanding of Christ as the common ground of faith.[33] Teachers and preachers of true doctrine are those who communicate "a true understanding of faith."[34] Only these are to be identified as "proper" (*rechte*) bishops and priests.[35]

What Luther accomplishes by means of this hermeneutic is a semantic shift regarding terms of the church's leadership. He applies the Christological criterion of gift that he worked out through his biblical interpretation to the terms "priest and bishop." True priests and bishops are those who preach Christ as gift. The opposing position takes priests and bishops as those who hold Christians captive to a false understanding of Christ. The pope, or vicar of Christ, interprets Scripture to yield a Christ who demands human works. This pope, as Luther is famous for saying, is the "Antichrist."[36] While Christ sets free, the Antichrist takes captives.[37] Those who pay obeisance to the pope as "head" should say, "yes I take him to be a head, a head of debauchery and scandal."[38] While Christ tells the truth about the sinner's forgiveness, the pope lies by demanding human works.

It may be possible to look back at Luther across five hundred years to view his condemnations of papal "debauchery and scandal" as example of the nearly preternatural courage his descendants celebrate in him or as instances of his irrepressible coruscating humor. But when Luther's Protestant admirers see only boldness and wit – and his Catholic detractors see only crudeness and vulgarity – both overlook the personal and existential price such statements extracted from Luther, who was a good, devout, pious, and obedient Catholic. He did not say such things lightly, and when he said them, he trembled. To get to the point where he challenged the church on such fundamental grounds, Luther, as all good medieval theologians and churchmen, required a guide and an authority, a figure who might help him ground his dissent and his insight in the tradition itself. For this, he turned to Ockham. It was Ockham who made it possible for Luther to speak the truth he knew, to transform the insights derived from his own experience and his reading of Scripture into a program of institutional reform.

[33] WA 12, 361,22–23: "Weren sie rechte Bischoff, so sollten sie leren den grund des glawbens, das yhn alle Christen ynn gemeyn wůsten."

[34] WA 12, 286,7.

[35] WA 12, 361,22.

[36] WA 12, 361,30: "Drumb ist er der Endchrist."

[37] WA 12, 361,31–32: "Was Christus frey macht, das bindt der Bapst. Christus sagt, es sey nicht sund, so sagt der Bapst, es sey sund."

[38] WA 12, 361,25–26: "Also, wenn man dich fragt, ob du willt den Bapst fur eyn hewbt haben, sprich: 'jha ich will yhn fur eyn hewbt haben, fur eyn hewt der bősswicht und buben."

4. Ockham's Appeal to Scripture and Reason

A significant clue concerning Luther's implicit appeal to a broader late medieval discussion concerning biblical interpretation is given in his discussion of 1 Pt 3:15 ("Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an account for the hope that is in you"). Luther maintains that this passage is addressed to all Christians, whether "priests, laity, man, woman, old and in whatever estate one finds oneself."[39] Every Christian must know the "ground and reason for one's faith."[40] He knows how provocative and risky such an argument is, referring to a medieval canon that the church forbade the laity to read Scripture and translates this demand into his conception of antithesis.

> There, the devil decisively placed an attack. [Through the church's command that the laity should not read Scripture], the devil tore the laity away from Scripture and thought: "If I can instigate a situation in which the laity does not read Scripture, then I can orient the priests away from the Bible to Aristotle, so that they can launder what they wish, and the laity must listen to what I preach. But if the laity could read Scripture, then the priests must also study it, so that they are not punished or overcome."[41]

But Luther insists in placing direct responsibility on Christians to have a correct knowledge of the faith. The test of the validity of this knowledge is *in extremis*. In the case in which the dying person has a faith "like that of the councils, pope or fathers," then the devil will taunt the person. "Do you have the kind of faith that they had when they erred?" Luther captures the inevitable outcome: "then the devil will have won and will pull you down into hell.[42] In this passage Luther stages a confrontation with the devil to address the significant question concerning the possibility that the church might err. The question of what happens to the church when the pope errs was one that preoccupied William Ockham and the other conciliarists in the later Middle Ages.

Ockham himself had come under ecclesial fire for his literary battle against the Avignon papacy of John XXII, Benedict XII, and Clement, and for his defense

[39] WA 12, 360,4–5: "zu allen Christen, pfaffen, leyen, man und weyb, jung, alt und was stands sie ymer sind."

[40] WA 12, 360,5–7: "das eyn yglicher Christ soll grund und ursach wissen seyns glawbens, und kunden ursach und antwort geben, wo es nott were."

[41] WA 12, 360,7–14: "Nu hat man bissher verpotten, das die leyen die schrifft nicht lesen sollen. Denn da hat der teuffel eynen hůbschen griff troffen, das er die leut von der schrifft risse, und also gedacht: wenn ich mache, das die leyen die schrifft nicht lesen, will ich darnach die pfaffen von der Bible ynn Aristotelem bringen, das sie waschen was sie wollen, so so můssen die leyen hŏren was sie yhn predigen, sonst, wenn die leyen die schrifft lesen, můsten die pfaffen auch studieren, das sie nicht gestrafft und ubir wunden wurden."

[42] WA 12, 360,16–20: "Wenn du nu nicht weyssist eynen grund deyner hoffnung und sprichst: 'Ich will glewben wie die Concilia, der Bapst und unsere veter glewbt haben', so wirtt der teuffel antwortten: 'Ja wie, wenn sie yrreten?' so hatt er gewonnen und reysst dich ynn die hell hyneyn."

of Ludwig of Bavaria – himself excommunicated by the pope – to whom the theologian fled. Ockham stayed safely under Ludwig's protection until his death in Munich in 1347. The issue at stake in this confrontation was Franciscan poverty, specifically the ideal of "gospel poverty" that inspired Saint Francis to give up a legal right to material possessions.[43] Ockham together with other leaders of the Franciscan order saw the pronouncements of John XXII defending the legal right to "things consumable in use," such as food and clothing, as contradicting earlier teaching. A papal commission in Avignon had singled Ockham out in the mid-1320s for points of heresy, although he was never officially condemned by the pope. During his sojourn in Bavaria, Ockham took up the topic of papal power. He worked out arguments against its excesses in addition to addressing a defense of mendicant poverty against what he deemed to be the pope's erroneous pronouncements on the matter of owning possessions. To combat papal power and error Ockham advocated arguments "supported by canonical Scripture or clear arguments."[44]

Ockham composed the six books of his *Short Discourse on Tyrannical Government* in order to identify papal error in the realm of temporal goods. Who can criticize the pope when he errs? The medieval idea of *plenitudo potestatis* that assigned papal power over spiritual and temporal jurisdictions was the matter for debate. Pope John XXII had advocated legal rights to temporal possession against the mendicants who renounced these possessions. Whose position was the correct one? Or in other words, can the pope err?

Ockham addressed this question as a matter of *biblical interpretation*.[45] He focused on the passage in Matthew 16:16–19, in which Christ gives to Peter the power to bind and loose. Did this passage legitimate papal power over worldly rule? According to the *plenitudo potestatis* argument Ockham was combating, the answer was yes. Ockham refers to Innocent III in characterizing the papal interpretation of this passage. "By these words we are given to understand that, according to Innocent, Christ excepted nothing from the power of Peter and his successors." Ockham represents the papal position regarding obedience: "Further, by divine precept the pope should be obeyed in whatever is not wrong in itself […]; therefore the pope has this kind of fullness of power in both temporal and spiritual things."[46] The pope's "fullness of power" (*plenitudo potestatis*) extends over spiritual matters – namely things having consequences in eternity –

[43] See McGrade, "Introduction," in: Ockham, A Short Discourse (as note 2), xvii. Historical details in this paragraph adapted from McGrade's "Introduction," xvi–xviii.

[44] Ockham, A Short Discourse (as note 2), bk. 5, ch. 4 (137).

[45] I once asked Marilyn McCord Adams if Ockham explicitly used only biblical interpretation to advance theological claims, and she responded that it was only in his works on poverty that he turned exclusively to biblical interpretation.

[46] Ockham, A Short Discourse (as note 2), bk. 2, ch. 2 (20); in the original, in Scholz (as note 2): "Quibus verbis datur intelligi, quod secundum Innocentium Christus a potestate Petri et successorum eius nichil excepit"; "Amplius ex precepto divino in omnibus, que non sunt de

and over temporal matters, which in the medieval world consisted of jurisdiction denoted by the political term, Holy Roman Empire. By this argument from biblical interpretation, the pope's power extends over temporal possessions and, thus, poverty is not a requirement for the papal office.

Ockham combats this interpretation with two arguments. The formal argument has to do with the question of *who* has the authority to interpret Scripture. On this point Ockham insists that the papal requirement concerning obedience to his interpretation is to be checked by those who are trained as experts in the area of biblical and theological knowledge.[47] The theologians are the experts in questions of knowledge of the faith. Thus Ockham writes that the experts can denounce John XXII who errs when he claims that "use of fact cannot be separated from lordship or ownership."[48] But Ockham widens the range of expertise to include "anyone who knows the truth with certainty, whether he knows it by faith alone, if it is the sort of truth that relates to faith, or by evident argument or certain experience, if it can be known that way."[49] This appeal was, as German church historian Volker Leppin argues, to the laity who can judge papal assertions.[50] These are the "intelligent Christians who love truth and justice."[51] They have the hermeneutical expertise to understand Christ's words in Scripture and to adequately distinguish between the literal and allegorical interpretation of Luke 22:38 in which Christ gives his disciples two swords.[52] This passage had been used since Pope Gelasius (d. 496) to legitimate papal power over temporal jurisdiction. Now, Ockham insists, Christians can judge this passage according to criteria of faith and sound reasoning and determine whether the pope's allegorical interpretation adds power over the temporal realm and thus reaches be-

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se illicita, obediendum est pape, […] ergo papa habet huiusmodi plenitudinem potestatis tam in temporalibus, quam in spiritualibus." (55)

[47] Ockham, A Short Discourse, bk. 1, ch. 7 (12); in Scholz: "Quam ergo et quantam et in quibus casibus et super quos papa habeat potestatem ex iure divino et a solo Christo, inquirere ad theologos principaliter spectat, non autem ad alios […] ad theologos, tractatores divinarum scripturam, spectat." (48)

[48] Ockham, A Short Discourse, bk. 5, ch. 4 (138); in Scholz: "Sic etiam error Iohannis 22, quod in rebus usu consumptibilibus usus facti non potest a dominio seu proprietate separari, est tam apertus etiam simplicibus, quod etiam simplices debent iudicare, ipsum errare." (176)

[49] Ockham, A Short Discourse, bk. 5, ch. 4 (137); in Scholz: "Huic respondeo, quod iudicare de hoc per modum simplicis cognitionis et exterioris assertionis, […] pertinet ad quemlibet certitudinaliter cognoscentem veritatem, sive cognoscat eam per solam fidem, si sit talis veritas, quod ad fidem spectat, sive per rationem evidentem vel experientiam certam, si sit cognoscibilis tali modo." (175–176)

[50] On the competence of the laity, see Volker Leppin, "Die Aufwertung theologischer Laienkompetenz bei Wilhelm von Ockham," in: Elizabeth Strauss (ed.), Dilletanten und Wissenschaft. Zur Geschichte und Aktualität eines wechselvollen Verhältnisses (Philosophy & Representation), Amsterdam/Atlanta, GA 1996, 35–48.

[51] Ockham, A Short Discourse (as note 2), bk. 5, ch. 7 (142); in Scholz: "apud intelligentes christicolas, veritatis et iustitie dilectores" (180).

[52] Ockham, A Short Discourse, bk. 5, ch. 3 (133).

yond Christ's meaning. According to Ockham, Christians have the formal authority to interpret Scripture using evidence and arguments.

By what criterion do Christians judge Scripture? Ockham refers specifically to the Bible's material content, namely the gospel of freedom. Early in his treatise, Ockham claims that the "gospel law" is the "law of perfect freedom" that prohibits any instance in which Christians might be the "pope's slaves."[53] McGrade captures Ockham's position: "Lex evangelica est lex libertatis. This constitutes one of Ockham's chief objections to the extreme papalist conception of *plenitudo potestatis*."[54] Ockham argues that gospel freedom restricts the argument in support of the pope's fullness of power: the pope does not have jurisdiction over Christians in ways that restrict their freedom in Christ.

> It is therefore not beneficial to the community of the faithful that the pope should have the power to impose on them, without fault of theirs and without clear reason, burdens to which they are not bound by divine or natural law or by their own obligation freely assumed, since through the stupidity or weakness of the supreme pontiff such a power might lead to their destruction, temporal and bodily as well as spiritual.[55]

Evangelical freedom is, for Ockham, the basis for Christian community. Ecclesiastical governance must be organized to solely promote Christian freedom from sin.

In his sermons on 1 Peter, Luther raised the question of obedience to the faith of the councils and pope; he responded with a claim that resonated with Ockham's thought. Responsibility for Christian faith is based on freedom in Christ. Christians must know how to interpret Scripture; they must know the Christological criterion and be able to use reason to apply it correctly. As Ockham does, Luther connected Christian freedom with the competency of Christians to evaluate Scripture and judge doctrine, and so he was able to show that justification entails a particular exegetical approach to Scripture. Biblical interpretation is the prerogative of the Christian. In situations of debate, the Christian has the responsibility for ascertaining the truth of the gospel. Ockham's relevance for Luther is precisely on this point: his commitment to the use of reason to articulate the truth of Christian faith. Justification entails Christian responsibility for the church.

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[53] Ockham, A Short Discourse, bk. 2, ch. 3 and 4 (22, 25).

[54] Arthur Stephen McGrade, The Political Thought of William of Ockham. Personal and Institutional Principles (Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought III/7), London/New York 1974, 141.

[55] Ockham, A Short Discourse (as note 2), bk. 2, ch. 5 (28); in Scholz: "Propter quod non expedit communitati fidelium, ut papa habeat potestatem gravia imponendi fidelibus sine culpa eorum et absque causa manifesta, ad que nec per ius divinum nec per ius naturale nec per propriam obligationem spontaneam constringuntur, quia talis potestas propter stultitiam vel nequitiam summi pontificis posset esse in destructionem tam temporalem et corporalem, quam spiritualem fidelium." (62)

5. Spiritual and Worldly Priesthood

Luther grounded his criticism of the papal priesthood in his interpretation of Scripture, specifically in its claims about Christ as source and agent of grace. He took "reason" as important tool in ascertaining the Bible's Christ-centered theology of justification. The biblical interpreter recognizes the centrality of Christ in the work of justification. Reason, for Luther, does more than merely assent to the truth of faith; with its capacity for making distinctions, reason makes it possible to judge an interpretation as to its truth or falsity. In condemning the papal church's theology of justification by human works that contradicts Christ's gift of righteousness, Luther made use of reason's critical function. Pressed further, reason is capable of making another important distinction, one that strikes at the core of the church's power. And Luther found in the passage, 1 Pt 2:5,[56] grounds for elaborating on the important distinction between "spiritual" and "worldly."

Luther just finished expounding on an understanding of priesthood in v. 4 based on Christ's gift of the priestly office that creates a community of priests who preach the gospel and intercede on behalf of each other before God. He then goes on to insist, "Now this is the true priesthood […]: [The true priest is] is one who offers spiritual sacrifices, and prays for the community and preaches."[57] Luther defines the term "spiritual sacrifice" in this passage in contrast to his criticism of the "worldly" priesthood of the papal church. The contrast Luther achieves is between the spiritual priesthood, the recipients and creation of Christ's freedom, and the external or worldly priests who are concerned with externalities, outfits, anointings, and so on. He contrasts these worldly priests with the spiritual sacrifices made by ordinary Christians, who are concerned with "abandoning" sinful works, such as "lust, hypocrisy, and hate."[58] The papal priests, according to Luther, are intent on amassing vices: "one can see that this miserable folk is up to its neck in greed, fornication, and all other kinds of vice."[59] Spiritual sacrifice, according to Luther's interpretation of 1 Peter, is the effect of the gospel of freedom. Worldly ostentation is its binary opposite.

On the one hand, Luther identifies the "spiritual" with the gospel's inner effects, such as holiness and chastity.[60] Christians who live as beneficiaries of Christ's gift exhibit these inner spiritual realities in lives striving for freedom from vices. On the other hand, Luther denounces the "worldly" priesthood.

[56] "like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." (NRSV)

[57] WA 12, 309,24, 25–26: "Das ist nu das rechte priesterthumb, […] Das man geystlich opffere, und fur die gemeyn bete, und predige."

[58] WA 12, 307,14, 13.

[59] WA 12, 307,6–7: "wie man sihet, das das elend volck ynn geytz und hurerey und allerley laster sticket. "

[60] WA 12, 295,10–11, 26–28.

While these priests coopt the term "holy" to describe their estate, they falsify this term by their actions. Luther explains that while Christians are "holy" by virtue of Christ's benefits, the priests who identify their ordination as "holy" demonstrate, in fact, the opposite.[61] They wear external signs of their holiness, such as the miter, and they demand external sacrifices from ordinary Christians, such obeisance and kissing of rings. With characteristic sarcasm, Luther denounces the reliance of the priestly mass on the external anointing: "If the distribution [of the Eucharistic elements] and the greasing [anointing] makes a priest, then I could also grease and anoint the hoofs of a donkey, so that it could also be a priest."[62]

Luther works out the central Christological claim as gift that he then extends to define terms associated with church leadership. Terms such as "priest" and "bishop" are now taken to signify Christians on the basis of their inner freedom in Christ. The church that is built on Christ is a "spiritual" church, in which all Christians share in Christ's priestly work of intercession. All exhibit sacrifices that are the effects from Christ's gift of freedom from sin. A church based on external outfits and anointings is oriented to worldly power and vices. From the perspective of the "spiritual" church, Luther criticizes the "worldly" church for using its worldly demonstrations to magnify worldly power and to exist in a manner enjoying worldly vice. The medieval theologian Luther calls on as precedent for using the spiritual/worldly distinction as critically productive is none other, once again, than William Ockham.

In his treatise on tyrannical government, Ockham employed the distinction between spiritual and worldly to combat John XXII's attacks on mendicant poverty. The specific tool he used was the common political theological distinction between the two medieval powers of church and temporal authority. These two powers were intertwined in complicated relations throughout the Middle Ages, negotiating and renegotiating their respective jurisdictions for centuries. The church held the final appeal of authority. The dominant exegetical position on the office of the keys in Matthew 16 and Christ's giving of two swords to his disciples in Luke 22:38 was that the church had both powers and merely lent the temporal power to the temporal authorities.[63] Ockham held that the two powers were to be distinguished according to the "spiritual/worldly" distinction. The church had jurisdiction over the spiritual regiment; it could not be called upon to authorize imperial power. And vice versa; the emperor and political authorities were not to have power in the spiritual realm.[64]

[61] WA 12, 307,10–12.

[62] WA 12, 309,30–31: "Wenn das bescheren und schmyeren eyn priester macht, so kund ich eym esel auch wol die pfotten schmyeren und salben, das er auch eyn priester were."

[63] Ockham, A Short Discourse, bk. 2, ch. 2 (19–21); bk. 5, ch. 5 (139–141).

[64] McGrade, Political Thought (as note 55), 78–79.

What Ockham meant by spiritual was akin to the definition that Luther later assigned to it. Spiritual means freedom from sin. The church exists to distribute the freedom of the gospel. The limits to this jurisdiction consist of the avoidance of imposing more rules. McGrade summarizes Ockham's position: "In the simplest terms, Ockham held that the exercise of power and authority in the church should be kept to a minimum."[65] On this basis of the gospel, McGrade argues that Ockham "sought to diminish the juridical character of church government within its own sphere."[66] Ockham denounced the heresy of John XXII of precisely overstepping his spiritual jurisdiction. The pope had introduced lordship or ownership of temporal things into the spiritual domain.[67] Ockham's treatise on tyrannical government addresses the two powers with the aim of explaining why ecclesial jurisdiction is specified by gospel. Any attempts to amass worldly power falsify the gospel's truth.

In the case of papal heresy, theologians and teachers have the responsibility to correct the error. Sometimes, political authorities have this duty: Ockham thinks that by virtue of being Christians, political leaders may exercise their Christian responsibility in the spiritual regiment if they conclude the situation warrants this extreme measure. Yet Ockham is cautious here, restricting intervention to "defend truths already certified as authentically Christian by non-secular processes" and warning against such intervention for secular gain.[68] Political correction in ecclesiastical affairs also does not entail setting up a rival church structure. Rather, worldly leaders intervene in the spiritual realm on the basis of their status as Christian leaders. For both Ockham and Luther who lived in territories in which a Christian prince defied papal power, this position was not only theologically innovative – it made good sense!

This feature of Ockham's theology is crucial to Luther's criticism of the papal church and its priests. Like Ockham, Luther called the church to reform by redirecting it away from externals and back to the central truth of freedom from sin. Luther's was a powerful attack on the way in which the spiritual governance of the spiritual realm held Christ captive. The spiritual regiment – the papal priesthood – had become worldly; the worldly – lay Christians and Christian political leaders – were spiritual according to Luther's biblical semantics. The reform of the worldly priesthood was the prerogative of the spiritual priesthood. Christians who distinguished between Christ's freedom and external ostentation, freedom from sin and obeisance to false authorities, spiritual rule and worldly power were true priests and its critics.

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65 McGrade, Political Thought (as note 55), 145; also 148: "We shall see in the next section that an ideal of evangelical freedom for spiritual leadership is accompanied by Ockham by a somewhat dry and functional view of the formal relations between the papal government and the body of believers."

66 McGrade, Political Thought (as note 55), 140.

67 See Ockham, A Short Discourse, bk. 3, ch. 14–16 (99–104).

68 McGrade, Political Thought (as note 55), 131–132.

6. The Medieval Luther's Challenge Today

If the church is to live, it requires reform. Just as any living organism, the church constantly negotiates continuity and novelty, inner freedom and external pressure, tradition and future. Sometimes the call for reform is subtle, sometimes it is prophetic, sometimes it is provocation. When reform is directed at sites of power, it can be perceived as revolution. Such was the case with Luther's calls for theological reform. They entailed the church and its priests.

Luther's reforms of justification led him to probe the issues of biblical interpretation and who has the authority to criticize false interpretations. The matter of justification was linked to church authority, and with it, the critique of those who interpreted Scripture in such a way as to promote their own power. Like Ockham before him, Luther promoted church reform. Like Ockham, Luther appealed to Scripture in order to determine the truth of the gospel. Through biblical study, Luther was able to clearly reason that Christ's gift is opposed to clerical power, the spiritual priesthood has nothing to do with the worldly ostentation of ordained priests, and Christ's power means the setting free of consciences bound by canon law. In the early years of the reform, Luther was committed to the idea that Christian freedom was the basis for Christ's rule in the church. This commitment entailed the critique of the church, specifically its cooption of worldly accoutrements of power. As Ockham had countered papal wealth by a scriptural mandate on the basis of Christ's poverty, so too Luther called for the reform of the church on the basis of Christ's inner freedom. Christ's work of justifying sinners founds a community characterized by faith and love. Any monopoly on power that compromises Christian freedom falsifies the gospel. In these circumstances, Christians have a responsibility to correct false interpretations of the Bible and to call for church reform.

Luther's call for clerical reform continues to be a provocation. The church, like any organization, has an inherent will to power. Even those assigned the task of feeding Christ's lambs and sheep (cf. Jn 21:15–17) are not immune from aspirations to power. A recent letter that then-Pope Benedict XVI distributed to his "brother priests" on June 16, 2009 exhibits a decisive celebration of clerical status. Benedict XVI quotes the patron saint of priests, Jean-Marie Vianney on this one-hundred and fiftieth anniversary of his birth, "O, how great is the priest! … If he realized what he is, he would die … God obeys him: he utters a few words and the Lord descends from heaven at his voice, to be contained within a small host …"[69] Luther, himself an ordained priest and vowed religious, recognized the corrosive effects of the clerical will to power over the laity. The rule of Christ

[69] Benedict XVI, Letter of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI proclaiming a year for priests on the 150th anniversary of the "Dies Natalis" of the Curé of Ars (June 19, 2009), 2; online at: http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/letters/2009/documents (accessed Dec. 19, 2019); citing Vianney in Jean-Marie Vianney/Bernard Nodet, "Le Sacerdoce, c'est

could be corrupted by lording one's power over people, rather than serving them with the gospel's comfort. Such corruption was fatal. If the entire church errs, together with the pope, then the eternal salvation of all Christians is imperiled.

In the wake of the sexual abuse crisis by priests and its cover-up by church authorities, Benedict recommended a program that, rather than calling for a reform of priestly power, instead promoted an intensification of personal spirituality among priests and laity. Because the priestly vocation is of a spiritual nature, it requires spiritual strength. Through regular masses between a priest and their bishop, the "fraternal" concelebration of the mass will strengthen the commitment to celibacy as well as increase the positive effects of ministry.[70] Benedict further encouraged spiritual discipline by sincere attention paid to the three vows that religious orders take, namely poverty, chastity, and obedience.[71]

Five hundred years ago, Luther identified a different path of reform, one more comprehensive and foundational. It included all Christians in taking up responsibility for Christ's rule of the church, a responsibility that was based on Christ's gift of justification to all. By calling all Christians to task, Luther put a check on the church's will to power over the laity. If all are equal participants in the community of faith, then one group cannot usurp the rule for its own aggrandizement.

Luther's reform provokes because it is directed at the church's will to power. This power, like any institutionally granted power, is a liability in the fallen world. What makes this power so pernicious, as Luther diagnosed it, is its falsification of the very gospel that it was appointed by Christ to proclaim. This falsification may take the form of legitimation of its rule by the appeal to the supernatural; or it may usurp worldly power in the form of wealth or demands for obeisance; or the church can muster raw power to combat and kill those who refuse to submit. The Middle Ages was a time of ecclesial corruption. Luther took up resources used before him to reform the church again. He called attention to the church's misuse of power, and pointed Christians to a scriptural semantics that legitimated the church's rule on the basis of Christ as gift. The medieval Luther might just be the resource needed today to criticize the church's politics of exclusion and assumptions of arrogance and to direct the attention of all Christians to Christ.

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l'amour due Coeur de Jésus," in: Le Curé d'Ars, sa pensée, son coeur. Textes choisis de Jean-Marie Vianney (foi vivante 23), Mappus 1966, 101.

[70] Benedict XVI, Letter, 8.

[71] Benedict XVI, Letter, 7.

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