How the Mind of Christ is Formed in Community: The Ecclesial Ethics of Richard Hooker

UFFMAN, CRAIG,DAVID

-Abstract-

How do practices contribute to the formation of the mind of Christ in community such that the community truly becomes the body of Christ?" This dissertation demonstrates that Christ acts on his Church through a complex interaction of community and practices to generate the identity, diversity, and virtue of his body. This is a controversial claim because many hold that the matter of virtue rightly consists of adherence to cherished foundations like Scripture and tradition accompanied by calls to obedience. Nonetheless, this study seeks to identify resources to help the Church imagine a virtue ethics appropriate to a 21st century communion ecclesiology. It does so by reading Richard Hooker as an ecclesial ethicist.

Examining Hooker's accounts of Scripture, participation, and liturgical practices, the dissertation develops a Hookerian account that extends the ecclesial ethics of Stanley Hauerwas and Sam Wells on both ends. On the front end, it derives from first principles an account of how humans come to see themselves as part of the theodrama in which improvisation is required. On the back end, it grounds improvisation in a theory of mimetic virtue. Along the way it shows how a largely Barthian Christology coheres with a positive account of sacramental practices and that a Hauerwasian emphasis on practices is not sectarian. Hooker's repudiation of appeals to timeless absolutes in ethical reasoning and his demonstration that the self-ordering of the Church is phronetic action means that contemporary "liberal accommodationism" and "postliberal traditionalism" can no longer coopt Hooker to justify their ideologies.

How the Mind of Christ is Formed in Community

THE ECCLESIAL ETHICS OF RICHARD HOOKER

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY
CRAIG DAVID UFFMAN

,

DURHAM UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY
2014

-Table of Contents-

-Abbreviations & Bibliographic Notes-

In what follows, unless otherwise indicated, quotations from Hooker are taken from the Folger Library edition of Hooker's works, which I take to be the current Hooker canon. I have modernized orthography and punctuation for the sake of uniformity and intelligibility.

With few exceptions, I have used the Turabian notes-bibliography style. Accordingly, for Kindle books, I have included both the Kindle location and fixed coordinates such as a section title, chapter, paragraph or other number.

Citations *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiastical Politie* follow a dual reference system which includes the divisions used in John Keble's 19th century edition. When citing quotations, I provide an abbreviated form of the book title, period, Hooker's book number, period, Hooker's chapter number, period, and then Keble's section number. After a semi-colon, I provide a more precise reference using the Folger's volume number, colon, page number, period, and line number(s). For example: *Laws*.V.56.1; 2:234.31-235.3 refers to the book entitled Laws, Hooker's fifth volume, Hooker's 56th chapter and Keble's first section. The quote is be more precisely designated as Folger's second volume, page 234, beginning at line 31 and concluding at line 3 on page 235.

When cited, the title of each of Hooker's works appears in the following abbreviated form:

Learned Discourse	*A Learned Discourse of Justification, Works, and How the Foundation of Faith is Overthrown*
Laws	*Of the Lawes of Ecclesiastical Polity*
Pride	*A Learned Sermon of the Nature of Pride*
Dublin	*Dublin Fragments*
Jude	*The First Sermon on Part of St. Jude*
FLE	*The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker*

Other Abbreviations

CD	Barth, Karl. *Church Dogmatics*
ST	Aquinas, Thomas. *Summa Theologiae*

Citations of *Church Dogmatics* follow the standard convention of listing the Volume and Part-Volume. However, for the convenience of those accessing *CD* online as I do, I've followed the additional convention of listing the Paragraph and Sub-Section followed by the page number. For example: CD II/2 §33.1.184.

-Statement of Copyright-

The copyright of this thesis rests with the author. No quotation from it should be published without the author's prior written consent and information derived from it should be acknowledged.

-Acknowledgements-

I shall always remember the sermon my former professor, Jo Bailey Wells, preached at my ordination at which she challenged me with the metaphor of a hippo. Let Augustine of Hippo be your guide in this, she said. Aim always to contribute to the Church as both a scholar and a priest. Jo once told me that doing a PhD thesis was the loneliest work you will ever do, and she was right. I am accordingly grateful for her charge, remembered multiple times since, which has encouraged me to persevere through the long days, weeks, and months of writing.

I give thanks for the mentoring and inspiration of my former professor, Sam Wells, who took time from his work as a London vicar to discuss my treatment of his and Stanley Hauerwas' work. I owe a similar debt to Bishop Graham Kings. Both Sam and Graham encouraged this project through their scholar-priest examples and through significant practical support.

They say that when the student is ready, a teacher will appear, and that's what I've discovered in my relationships with my two outstanding advisors, Mark McIntosh and Chris Insole. What a gift it is to receive a reading list tailored to your interests, and to have professors willing and able to respond with patient and rich answers to your questions. I am profoundly aware that I have been sculpted by their pedagogical art, by their willingness to walk alongside me as I chased every rabbit that caught my fancy, and by their wisdom and patience in guiding me towards the discovery of the manuscript's final shape. I am so very grateful to be their student.

I owe a debt of gratitude to four scholars whose patient tutoring via correspondence shaped my thinking about this project in important ways. Torrance Kirby and David Neeland provided electronic copies of their own work, which I otherwise might not have encountered, in order to help me comprehend key parts of Hooker's thought. They and Egil Grislis patiently tutored me on Hooker from the historian's perspective, clarifying for me concepts that proved important in this project. Similarly, Jennifer Herdt graciously shared her work in order to teach me by example the method of rational reconstruction I have pursued here.

I'd be remiss if I did not offer thanks to my congregation at St. Thomas' Episcopal Church in Rochester, NY, for allowing their priest the time and space to pursue this inquiry and for providing a concrete context from which arose its most significant questions. I am so richly blessed to be their pastor.

My learning has been enriched immeasurably by my friend and colleague of many years, Derek Woodard-Lehman. Derek tutored me informally as we carpooled together every day for three years while pursuing our MDiv degrees at the Duke Divinity School, and that relationship has continued as doctoral students. Derek had provided nuance especially in his area of research, Karl Barth, and thought alongside me through many of the philosophical questions that appear in this manuscript. More importantly, our long distance online companionship - manifested in discussions of the theological questions of the day - made the long road of doctoral research a joy.

Finally, I give thanks to my wife, Claudia Uffman, for forgoing so much so that I might climb this mountain. This project would not have been possible without her emotional and practical support. My days with Hooker are now indelibly connected in my mind with her chocolate-chip-lunch-box bars. Thanks be to God.

Feast of St. Matthew, 2014
Rochester, NY

- Chapter 1 -
Introduction

PRELUDE: THE MIND OF CHRIST IN COMMUNITY

The birth of an inquiry

The seed of this study was a New Testament course I took many years ago on the use of *mimesis* in Paul's corpus. As one destined for the priesthood, the course left an indelible impression on me of how mimesis was central to Paul's evangelistic method. Two concepts especially imprinted on me.

The first concept is that of "the mind of Christ." Paul speaks both of our being baptized "in Christ" and also of Christ being in us. "Christ in us" became for me a phrase denoting what Paul meant when he called Christians to be of "one mind." Over time that phrase evolved into "the mind of Christ." I understand "the mind of Christ" to be the community's sharing of an inner disposition in tune with the rationality of God. When Paul calls the Church at Corinth to be of one mind, he intends for them to be one body, drawn by the Holy Spirit into an encounter with Christ the Reconciler to whom they respond with the recognition of a political identity given in and for him. That political identity is shared by the elite and the common multitude, creating their unity while sustaining their diversity. This shared unity in diversity, manifest in a common Pentecostal grammar, constitutes the *koinonia* through which Christ is reconciling the world. Throughout this inquiry, I denote that unity and disposition with the phrase "the mind of Christ."

The second concept that impressed me in my study of mimesis in Paul was that Paul himself understood that it takes time to form the mind of Christ in Christian community. In Galatians 4.19, Paul uses the imagery of childbirth to characterize his relationship with the Galatians: "My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you...." The community birthed by Christ through Paul's work must remain in connection with Paul until it reaches the maturation point signified by birth. Imitation of one already formed in Christ is the

crucial factor. Formation of the mind of Christ in community takes time, and requires both apprenticeship and immersion.

If the seeds of this study were planted during my study of Paul, they were fertilized by the angst of a broken Church. In the last decade, my own ecclesial location, The Episcopal Church, suffered a tragic schism as we wrestled with how evolving Western sexual norms might inform our self-ordering. Relations with our sister Anglican provinces in Asia and Africa either soured or manifested broken communion as we committed legislatively to the path of ordaining partnered gay bishops and blessing same-sex marriages. And, most recently, ecumenical progress between the Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic church chilled as the Church of England embraced the commitment to ordain female bishops. Fractured communion led me to ponder the factors that make that shared political identity, that *koinonia*, such a fleeting dream.

The painful reality of broken communion led to this inquiry regarding how the mind of Christ is formed in community: how might it be true that different approaches to ethical reasoning might fund a politics of opposition rather than the politics of reconciliation? Or, rather, to express it in the terms of my inquiry, what is the connection between our Christian truth claims and the generation of communities who embody the mind of Christ? Since the hope is to cooperate with Spirit's sustenance of the mind of Christ, Christology seems a reasonable starting point, but any inquiry into the formation of the mind of Christ in communities is at the same time a question of ecclesiology, for ecclesiology is about the embodiment of Christology. My question became "how do the practices of the Church lead to communities of virtue that denote the triune God?"

The fire of Sabah

My interest in the practices of the Church is not merely driven by the hope for reconciled communities of virtue. As a priest in The Episcopal Church, my intuition was that practices ought to be the key to reigniting the Gospel fire in a denomination

that lost more than 350,000 baptized members between 2003 and 2012.[1] But my personal experience is that close attention to liturgical practices does not predictably correlate with that fire. I observed moribund parishes which set the highest standard in terms of the rigor of their compliance to liturgical standards but which manifested neither a clear sense of mission nor an evangelistic impulse.[2] Indeed, an influential study found that "formal liturgy" "and regular use of 'kneeling'" were correlated with "a *negative* effect on growth."[3] I wanted to understand why ecclesial practices sometimes generate Gospel heat, but in other cases block the wind that sustains the fire.

I discovered that fire in Sabah. An independent study on planting the missional church led me to the Anglican Diocese of Sabah in Western Malaysia, where a mentor sent me with the promise that there I would experience the Church as it is described in the Acts of the Apostles. As I approached St. Patrick's Anglican Church for the first time on a hot summer day, I was amazed to witness the baptism of thirty-one adults and children. The parish membership grew in six years (1992-1998) from 841 to 2,109, and now numbers more than 3,000, with over five hundred trained lay leaders leading more than three hundred cell groups in weekly mid-week gatherings. Sunday attendance includes five congregations worshiping in Malay, Chinese, and English vernaculars. As my mentor promised, I witnessed something extraordinary in Sabah. There one finds a diocese enflamed with a palpable pentecostal tongue.

What's the difference between the moribund but rigorously liturgical American parish and the Gospel flame I witnessed in Sabah? Clearly, many factors contribute to church growth, and my purpose here is not to examine them. What interests me, however, is the church's own account of her growth. Church leaders point to their cell

---

1. "Baptized Members By Province and Diocese 2002-2012," http://www.episcopalchurch.org/sites/default/files/baptized_members_by_province_and_diocese_2002_-_2012.pdf (accessed June 30, 2014).
2. The most predictive attribute of a growing congregation is having "a clear mission and purpose." "Growing congregations are clear about why they exist and what they should be doing." C. Kirk Hadaway, *Facts on Episcopal Church Growth: A New Look At the Dynamics of Growth and Decline in Episcopal Parishes and Missions Based on the Faith Communities Today 2005 (Fact 2005) National Survey of 4,100 Congregations*, Research-Based Perspectives for Building Vital Faith Communities (The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society and Faith Communities Today, 2005), 18.
3. Ibid., 17. Emphasis original.

groups as the key factor. They've organized their parish in groups which meet weekly to practice the practices of the Church, just as a baseball team practices the practices of a champion. From the time a child is eighteen months old, every gathering begins and ends with worship. That's every gathering – whether its apparent purpose is work, play, or simply sharing the blessings of community. Parish life consists primarily of worship in a variety of simple forms, and mostly in the home and workplace. Worship, and not merely liturgy, is the daily work of the people. Such focus generates clarity of mission. At St. Patrick's, the palpable content that permeates the air is the electricity animating a society of souls whose relationship to one another is constituted by three thousand communally-mediated personal relationships with Jesus Christ.

I share this reflection upon my Malaysian experience to name an impulse that shaped this study. In Sabah, I began to suspect that it is insufficient merely to point to Scripture, the creeds, and the prayer book and expect the mind of Christ to be formed in the communities who curate the wisdom they contain. Those texts prescribe cherished means by which communities gravitate towards the good. But they don't tell us how to move a local community's norms to the good they demarcate, and they don't give an account of how the Holy Spirit works in local communities to sustain them by inviting their particular responses to the phenomena of their lives. It is the local norming – the rich variety of our responses in history to first principles – that makes the church much more than a moribund skeleton mouthing prescribed texts, and instead a breathing, adapting, and loving organism, the mystical, living body of Christ. My question became, "How do the practices of the Church generate that pentecostal tongue? How do practices contribute to the formation of the mind of Christ in community such that the community truly becomes the body of Christ?"

METHODOLOGY

The concerns of this study

My quest to understand the formative power of ecclesial practices led me to Richard Hooker. I turned to Hooker as I recognized that many of the tensions in the

contemporary Church are not about doctrine, but about how we should order our common life such that it manifests the good. We are most often divided on the question of how we recognize the good. If we by some chance agree on the good, we then stumble over the next question, which is how to move from our current location towards the good we want to manifest. Differently weighted values like justice and charity lead us to different conclusions about the path to the good in the occasions when we agree on its content. Similarly, the intellectual disputes of Hooker's context were, for the most part, not over differences in doctrinal content, but rather over practical questions about the self-ordering of the national church. Can a female serve as governor of the local church? Does God require governance of the Church by bishops? Hooker recognized that such disputes arise from differences in our understanding of how we know what we know. Hooker can illuminate our understanding of how ecclesial practices form us because he answered the question of how we know what we know by developing from first principles a robust defense of ecclesial practices.

Precisely because the fragments of the contemporary Church are so often divided by the question of how we know what we know, the concern of this study is to identify resources to help the Church imagine a communion ecclesiology appropriate to 21st century dynamics. It does so by examining the response of Richard Hooker to challenges to the Church arising, like ours, from a pivotal change in the Western social imaginary.[4] Richard Hooker is especially interesting because he shares many of the emphases of contemporary ecclesial ethicists,[5] including a substantial deployment of Aristotle, an emphasis on the centrality of Jesus, and a high valuation of the tradition and practices of the Church.[6]

I seek to answer the question, "how is the mind of Christ formed in community?" My thesis, in brief, is that Christ acts on his church through a complex interaction of

---

4.   The social imaginary is "the way that we collectively imagine, ever pre-theoretically, our social life." Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Belknap Press, 2007), 146.
5.   I deploy the category, "ecclesial ethicists," as a technical term throughout this study. I specify its meaning below. See page 14.
6.   Samuel Wells, *Christian Ethics: An Introductory Reader,* 1 ed. (Wiley-Blackwell, 2010-05-10), 154-155.

community and practices to generate the reconciled political identity, diversity, and virtue of his body.

It would seem that this is an obvious thesis. But to suggest that the matter of virtue is complex is to engage in controversy. It is just this complexity that Hooker's interlocutors denied, and that is often denied in our time through our affinity for universal ethics that ground moral reasoning in competing foundations in the hope of determining outcomes once and for all. To suggest that the formation of the mind of Christ in community is more complex than referral to another's preferred foundation is to engage in controversy.

It seems warranted, therefore, to unpack my simple thesis here in order to illuminate the complexity involved in forming the mind of Christ in community. Accordingly, the more detailed thesis that shaped this study is that Christ the Creator, encountered historically and actually, blesses our common life by evoking our creative response to grace with conditioned forms of law, *scientia*, and social structures. These historically encountered forms are the contingent, provisionally-known, and yet reliable signs and tokens of goodness which create the context in which the Spirit draws us to recognize and respond to our relation to Christ the Reconciler, grasping and transforming both the "common multitude" and the elite, generating through common worship and sacramental practices the political identity, diversity, and virtue of the visible mystical body of Christ through which God is reconciling the world.

In other words, there are no shortcuts. Enduring communion manifests the good. We cannot define the good in advance. To obtain the good, we have to cultivate virtue. We cultivate virtue by being the Church. We become the Church when Christ himself tutors us in the pentecostal tongue. It is that simple. It is that complex.

The Wellsian typology

By examining Hooker's defense of the relationship between ecclesial practices and virtue, theology can better imagine and talk about an ecclesiology appropriate to the challenges of our time. In the conclusion of this study, I will demonstrate why this is

so by applying the Hookerian ethics developed in this study to a contemporarily divisive issue - the ordination of women as bishops.

The route to this constructive destination will include a secondary effort to extend the proposal of Stanley Hauerwas and Samuel Wells regarding the connection between the Church's worship and its ethics. In my view, Hauerwas and Wells helpfully point to the *fruits* of that connection: attention to the practices of the Church shapes the way Christians describe our world and thereby transforms the way we think and act. One of my constructive aims is to extend their work by describing *how* that happens. How does the Holy Spirit work through ecclesial practices to generate the passion and virtue of the Body of Christ? Listening to Hooker will teach us much about the inner-working of this connection between practices and virtue, but he only takes us part of the way to our destination. When Hooker is silent or vague about this connection, I will turn to Hauerwas and Wells to probe more deeply.

I will deploy a Wellsian typology as my fundamental framework for reading Hooker. Throughout this inquiry I assume the typology of ethics provided by Wells and Ben Quash, and I see this inquiry as a work within the domain of what they describe as 'ecclesial ethics.' Their other two categories are "universal" and "subversive" ethics. Wells describes their typology in his *Christian Ethics: An Introductory Reader*:

> Universal ethics - whether grounded in right intentions, right actions, right outcomes, or right relationships - tends to focus on the moment of decision as the central question in ethics.... Subversive ethics redescribes that moment and that decision by pointing out the power relationships and unspoken assumptions hidden within the decision and (in some cases) the whole construction of the need for and nature of the decision." Ecclesial ethics share many of the criticisms of universalists made by subversive ethicists, especially in emphasizing that it is "the particular information, which universal ethics shuns, that makes ethics comprehensible." Ecclesial ethicists focus not on decisions, but on people, based on a new Aristotelianism, insisting that good decisions are made by people of good character, and good character arises from particular practices, habits, and descriptions of reality that help disciples respond to God and one another.[7]

According to Wells' typology, "the constructive dimension of ecclesial ethics" is not on "moments of decision" but "the description and the evaluation of" "other

---

7.   Ibid.

significant issues."[8] In chapter three, I will describe one set of Hooker's interlocutors, the Ramist realists, who, by my reading, sought to develop the slogan, *"sola scriptura,"* into a technology productive of right decisions. In contrast, Hooker's constructive account in *Laws* is centered on the defense of ecclesial practices as the crucial means by which virtue is formed. Like contemporary ecclesial ethicists, his vision for the Church of England is predicated on the claim that the most fruitful focus of ethics is on the cultivation of virtue and not on the exhaustive definition of right actions in advance. As my argument unfolds, it will become clear that Hooker also emphasizes the other key themes characteristic of ecclesial ethicists:

1)   "the reassertion of confidence in those institutions - notably the church - that survive but which are shorn (or losing sight) of the practices that give their continued existence meaning;"[9]

2)   a concern that ahistorical approaches to discernment lead to "inadequate description[s] of the ethical situation if the circumstances, commitments, and characters of those most closely involved are not taken into account;"[10]

3)   an account of virtue "recovered from Aristotle, Augustine, and Aquinas" which foregrounds "the notions of practice (a cooperative activity that defines excellence or human ends), telos (the final purpose of life), and tradition (which requires virtues to be sustained;"[11]

4)   a stress on the priority of habit formation as a crucial means by which the Spirit "shape[s] the imagination of persons by so training them in community... within a tradition that they learn to take the right things for granted and thus at the moment of decision act apparently effortlessly without anxiety or dismay;"[12] and, finally,

5)   a Scriptural hermeneutic which reads Scripture not as a catalogue of universal axioms but as the grand drama of which all humans are a part, and which thereby communicates the dispositions constitutive of Christian identity.[13]

The noteworthy aspects of Hooker's thought I wish to appropriate accordingly have to do with his own defense of the ecclesial practices of the Elizabethan Church. Throughout this study, I will read Hooker as an ecclesial ethicist, using Wells' typology as a framework which invites attention to the emphases above, and thereby serves as a handy guide to excavation of core principles. I will then use the harvested core principles to develop a thick account of his treatment of ecclesial practices.

---

8.   Ibid., 155.
9.   Ibid., 155-156.
10.   Ibid., 162.
11.   Ibid.
12.   Ibid., 163.
13.   Ibid.

Inductive and Historical

In reading Hooker as an ecclesial ethicist, I understand myself to be faithfully re-describing Hooker's thought in such a way that I can appropriate it for my constructive project. I take this method to be consistent with what Hauerwas commends in his *Working with Words: On Learning to Speak Christian*:

> For it is my conviction that the work of the theologian is word work, or, as John Howard Yoder would have it, the task of theology is "working with words in the light of faith." Accordingly, Yoder describes the approach he takes in *Preface to Theology* as inductive and historical—that is, he invites his students (and readers) to watch Christians at work doing theology to see what they can learn from those who have tried to do theology in the past.[14]

With my fundamental framework of reading Hooker as an ecclesial ethicist in view, I intend to read Hooker's "ideas in their historical and social contexts, sensitive to what [he] could have meant by what [he] said, but not to stop at that, since in the end what I care about is making up my own mind about various things."[15] In this study, the "various things" are contemporary questions about the role of ecclesial practices. Accordingly, my interest is in what Hooker might say to us were he to sit at the table as a participant in our contemporary discourse.

Some questions that concern historians will therefore be less significant in my project. For example, Hooker scholars have long debated the provenance of Hooker's thought. To what extent is Hooker influenced directly by Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas and other ancient and Reformation era thinkers? For my purposes, questions of provenance are less fruitful. Because of my method, I can be agnostic about the question of whether Hooker gets his Aristotelianism directly from the philosopher, from Aquinas, or from his tutor, John Rainold. Similarly, I will sidestep debates about whether Hooker's Christian Platonism comes to him directly from Augustine, Pseudo-Dionysius, or is mediated through Aquinas. Rather than immerse myself in questions of provenance, my method allows me to assert that Hooker deploys recognizable tenets of what some describe as Platonism, Aristotelianism, Augustinianism, and Thomism at different points in his argument, and to move on to

---

14.   Stanley Hauerwas, *Working With Words: On Learning to Speak Christian*, Kindle ed. (Wipf & Stock Pub, 2011-02-16), Kindle location 95, Preface, para 5.

15.   Jennifer A. Herdt, "Email Message to Author," (November 30, 2012).

consider how those careful deployments serve his constructive and rhetorical purposes.

That said, I understand my method to be, with Yoder and Hooker himself, "inductive and historical."[16] First, I will attend closely to Hooker's historical and social contexts and to his actual words, with the aim of reading Hooker for Hooker's sake. That is, I will let Hooker speak for himself, naming occasionally what I take to be incorrect interpretations and proposing interpretations that I believe to be more faithful to his meaning. Second, I will pivot clearly towards my constructive purpose either by appropriating his thought with or without qualification or by extrapolating from his texts and contexts to what he might say were he to know what we know and were he to face the challenges we presently face. In other words, ultimately I hope to harvest commitments that a contemporary Hooker would be justified in accepting today based upon the available evidence - 'Hookerian' commitments derived through extension of the logic of his texts that we ourselves are justified in holding today.

This two-step method is most evident in my treatment of Hooker's account of sacramental practices. In chapters four and five, I exegete Hooker's account of our fellowship with God and demonstrate how such fellowship is particularly intense in the sacraments. In both chapters, I pivot to my constructive purpose by bringing Hooker into conversation with contemporary thinkers who enable me to clarify ambiguities in, correct, or extend Hooker such that we are justified in appropriating Hookerian concepts in our contemporary discourse. This method enables me to explain how Hooker's account of fellowship with God connects with a Hookerian account of mimetic virtue.

Most of this study consists of watching Hooker at work so that we can learn from him. My focus is on the present, however, and my methodological purpose is to place a Hookerian voice at the table in conversation with contemporary ecclesial ethicists. My aim is to read Hooker as an ecclesial ethicist in a way that will provide a constructive result for our contemporary challenges. With that aim in view,

---

16.   Hauerwas, *Working With Words*.

throughout this study, I will hold Hooker explicitly or implicitly in conversation with the work of ecclesial ethicists whose focus in recent years has been on how virtue is formed through the practices of the Church. The two most prominent of these are Stanley Hauerwas and Samuel Wells. I will say more about them shortly.

Qualifications

My constructive goals entail some necessary limitations on this inquiry's utility for others. They also entail the probability that some of my assumptions and arguments will be problematic or controversial within the domain of Hooker scholarship. While I will not try to anticipate all of these limitations and potential areas of controversy, I do wish to acknowledge the limited and potentially problematic nature of my method and claims about Hooker while maintaining that these limitations and the possibility of controversy in some of my claims about Hooker do not impede the inquiry's explanatory and theological power in the particular way I intend to deploy Hooker. That is, I believe that, in spite of these limitations and potential problems, Hooker, as appropriated in this study, can speak powerfully and fruitfully to contemporary ethics on the question of how virtue is formed by practices and other means.

I have already hinted at one such limitation. Because I rely on Elizabethan and Renaissance scholars and Hooker biographers to color Hooker's local context, historians themselves will find little here *regarding his context* that is not already well-known in Hooker scholarship, though I do believe my study may generate some interesting questions that are worthy of further historical exploration. One example of this potential for further contextual investigation is the extent to which Hooker's rhetoric in *Laws* was influenced by his reactions to the rise of Ramism at Cambridge. In addition, my account of Hooker's rhetorical moves in order to appropriate a Thomist account of mimetic virtue within a Reformation context may suggest interesting avenues for historians to explore.

I anticipate that some may have a methodological concern. I am not, like the historian, seeking a 'best reading' of Hooker. Rather, I am reading Hooker through the lens of a contemporary typology. Historians may charge, therefore, that my

reading of Hooker as an ecclesial ethicist is anachronistic. I agree. It is intentionally so. With Rorty, I respond that "such enterprises in commensuration are, of course, anachronistic. But if they are conducted in full knowledge of their anachronism, they are unobjectionable."[17] My method is inductive, seeking to discover Hooker not for the purpose of reforming Hooker but in order to bring his method and principles to bear on contemporary problems. That is, I do not claim that Hooker was unjustified in holding certain viewpoints based on a premise that we occupy an allegedly superior contemporary vantagepoint, but rather, after attending carefully to his actual words, I consider whether we ourselves are justified in describing things in the same way today. In addition, I do not ask Hooker to embrace "a premise he never formulated" or to offer an opinion "on a topic he never considered."[18]

I hope this study poses a potent theological and philosophical challenge to those who presuppose a universal "ethics for everybody."[19] My inquiry is self-consciously a work in ecclesial ethics, and so I begin with the premise that the conversation I wish to nourish with Hooker's insights is a limited conversation of the Church and about the Church. I expect that my account of Hooker's thinking about the natural law will be provocative for universal ethicists who read Hooker as supporting their views.

One category of universal ethics directly engaged in this study is biblicism. In chapter three I draw a contrast between Hookerian ethics and what I dub 'Ramist realism, demonstrating how Hooker rebutted the claims of his Ramus-inspired colleagues that were based on appeals to timeless absolutes. Hooker's arguments would likely discomfit contemporary biblicists who share characteristics with the Ramist Puritans of the Elizabethan era.

Similarly, I engage in this study those who seek an ethical foundation in the dogma of a magisterium or in a timeless, immutable understanding of natural law or human nature. In my view, Hooker's description of the natural law as contingent,

---

17. Richard Rorty, "The Historiography of Philosophy: Four Genres," in *Truth and Progress: Philosophical Papers (Philosophical Papers (Cambridge)) (Volume 3),* (Cambridge University Press, 1998-03-13), 251.
18. Ibid., 252.
19. Samuel Wells and Ben Quash, *Introducing Christian Ethics*, 1 ed. (Wiley-Blackwell, 2010-03-02), 113.

dialectically-known, and often mutable mitigates against ethical judgments grounded in the premise of an immutable natural law.

There are, however, those within the domain of ecclesial ethics with whom I see this project in conversation. This conversation is, for the most part, only implied within the study itself. I want to acknowledge such implicit engagement here with just a few remarks regarding my intentions.

In conversation with Protestant theologians seeking an account of virtue that does not require a eudaemonism based on "substance" metaphysics or an infusion of grace, my project suggests that the way to such an account may be through Hooker.[20] The Hookerian account which emerges in this study unites Hooker's Reformed eudaemonism, a description of the real presence based on Wilfred Sellars' account of personhood, and Wells' improvisational ethics. Its hallmarks are the virtue of *phronesis* and the method of dialectic, both grounded in a Barthian Christology. As a Reformed account of mimetic virtue, my hope is that it may point the way to a Barthian account of virtue.

En route to my destination, this study responds to the suggestions of Hauerwas and Wells, who, in their *Christian Ethics*, suggest constructively that the Eucharist is "a corporate practice for discerning the good."[21] In chapter five, I summarize criticism of their emphasis on the priority of practices in nurturing the virtue of the community. I answer criticism of ecclesial ethicists by deriving from first principles an explanation for the role of practices in formation of the mind of Christ in community. In particular, I respond to charges that an emphasis on practices is excessively immanentist and potentially sectarian. My study qualifies and justifies ecclesial ethicists' emphasis on sacramental practices.

One luminary whose voice appears throughout this study is Karl Barth, many of whose arguments, in my view, Hooker anticipated. As a contemporary voice in the

---

20. For example, this seems to me the trajectory implied by Derek Woodard-Lehman's groundbreaking dissertation on Karl Barth. Derek Woodard-Lehman, "Freedom and Authority - the Ethics of Revelation in Karl Barth" (PhD Dissertation, Princeton University, 2014).
21. Stanley Hauerwas and Samuel Wells, *The Blackwell Companion to Christian Ethics*, Second ed., Blackwell Companions to Religion (Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 9.

Reformed stream of which Hooker was a part, Barth provides clarity and depth in matters that Hooker sometimes addressed only peripherally. My selective deployment of Barth ought not suggest that this is a Barthian account. That is not my intent. Indeed, I do not claim that Barth would approve of the account offered here, particularly as it pertains to sacramental practices. That said, those who worry about the christological implications of Barth's doctrine of reconciliation will likely find cause for concern in my critique of Hooker, for my own reading of Hooker is no doubt influenced by my immersion in Barth's Christology.

Some of my assumptions and presentations of Hooker's context will no doubt rankle historians in ways that are trivial with respect to my arguments. For example, some historians have begun to question whether terms such as "Lutheran," "Calvinist," and "Reformed," can be used meaningfully in a description of late sixteenth century Protestantism. Their point is that such terms evolved slowly both in their usage and meaning, and it is anachronistic to project monolithic meanings onto those terms from our historical position. I take their point, but I nonetheless use the term "Reformed" repeatedly in my descriptions of Hooker's context precisely because he himself used it, and because my interpretation does not rely on a historically precise understanding of what he meant in his usage of that term.

Hooker's context

As Diarmaid MacCulloch reminds us in his essay surveying Hooker's reputation, Hooker's legacy "is not as straightforward as it has sometimes been portrayed."[22] Peter Lake famously described him as the inventor of Anglicanism in his 1988 study,[23] while ever since the nineteenth-century it has been a commonplace to credit Hooker with the doctrine of an Anglican *via media* "between the extremes of Roman Catholicism and continental Protestant Reform."[24] MacCulloch shows that there has been since

---

22. Diarmaid MacCulloch, "Richard Hooker's Reputation," in *A Companion to Richard Hooker,* ed. W.J. Torrance Kirby, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition (Brill Academic Publishers, 2008), 564.
23. Peter Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans? Presbyterianism and English Conformist Thought From Whitgift to Hooker* (London; Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1988), 230.
24. W.J. Torrance Kirby, "Introduction," in *A Companion to Richard Hooker,* ed. W.J. Torrance Kirby, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition (Brill Academic Publishers, 2008), xxix.

the decade of his death the tendency to portray Hooker as the preeminent defender

of whatever agendas suited the competing parties within what came to be known as

Anglicanism. The difficulty in locating Hooker historically arises from the parties'

habit of appropriating Hooker's prestige to their own cause:

> Thus Hooker entered the eighteenth century a moderate Whig, a Lockean Whig, a moderate Tory, a ceremonialist parson, and a Non-juring defender of the Church's apostolic government. By now indeed anyone in English politics who wanted a name to command instant respect or who wanted to score a debating point for their cause was ready to quote Hooker: even Socinians and Deists tried it on.[25]

MacCulloch attributes the association of Hooker with an Anglican *via media* to

the Oxford Movement. John Keble published a scholarly edition of his *Works*, and the

Tractarians "excavated [Hooker] for discussion of the *via media*, a concept by then

give canonical status in the Anglican writings of John Henry Newman,"[26] even though

Hooker's view of justification "was the very reverse of Mr. Newman's."[27] As

MacCulloch notes, "in late Victorian England, Anglo-Catholics rather than

Evangelicals wrote Anglican church history."[28] As a result, until the late twentieth-

century, Anglican historiography was largely determined by the lens of nineteenth-

century ecclesiastical conflict, and Newman's notion that Hooker charted a middle

way between Rome and Geneva remains pervasive at both the scholarly and popular

levels.

The interpretative practice of mining Hooker in the abstract and

compartmentalizing his thought dominated Hooker scholarship until the early

twentieth century, when it became fashionable to locate Hooker in the domain of

medieval scholasticism and to emphasize his debts to Thomas Aquinas.[29] Without

challenging the identification of Hooker with Thomist thought, Arthur McGrade

(1960s) and Cargill Thompson (1980), theorized that Hooker's theology and politics

are coherent if and only if Hooker is read primarily as a polemicist immersed in the

---

25. MacCulloch, "Richard Hooker's Reputation," 600.
26. Ibid., 609.
27. Henry Fish, *Jesuitism Traced in the Movements of the Oxford Tractarians* (London: Hamilton, Adams, 1842). in MacCulloch, "Richard Hooker's Reputation," 608.
28. Ibid., 609.
29. W.J. Torrance Kirby, "From 'Generall Meditations' to 'Particular Decisions': The Augustinian Coherence of Richard Hooker's Political Theology," in *Sovereignty and Law in the Middle Ages and Renaissance,* ed. Robert Sturges, Arizona Studies in the Middle Ages and Renaissance (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 44.

ecclesiastical controversies of the Elizabethan period who subordinated his logic to whatever was demanded by his polemics.[30] McGrade and Thompson helpfully focused interpretation of Hooker on his Elizabethan context, and a large number of studies in the past thirty years have helped to clarify this context.

Hooker studies have benefitted significantly in recent decades by widespread interest in sixteenth-century England generally and the Henrician and Elizabethan churches specifically. Studies by Diarmaid MacCulloch, Christopher Haigh, Patrick Collinson and others have suggested that the notions of monolithic continental and English Reformations, of a monolithic Elizabethan culture, and of a monolithic English Puritanism, are unsustainable.[31] In Hooker's time, there were significant differences among schools and individuals within those schools with regard to the key doctrinal and ecclesiastical questions of the day.[32] Evaluation of Hooker is therefore more complex than it was thought in previous generations. Puritans, it turns out, can no longer be dismissed as lacking in intellectual substance. Similarly, the description of Hooker as an apologist for the Elizabethan Settlement requires considerable nuance; most recent studies portray him as a creative interpreter who is properly recognized as mostly an apologist but also as a critic of established doctrines and structures.[33]

This focus on his Elizabethan context drew much needed attention to Hooker's apologetic intent. Whom was he trying to persuade? Since the publication of the Folger Edition of Hooker's works (completed in 1990), studies by Peter Lake,Torrance Kirby, and a host of Hooker scholars have shown the significant difficulty in sustaining the premise of an Anglican *via media* between Rome and

---

30. Ibid., 45-46.

31. Referring to the entrenched portrait of Hooker and the *via media*, Patrick Collinson deplores "the damaging mistake of writing the history of that Church in the anachronistically dichotomous terms of an Anglicanism not yet conceived and an alien Puritanism not yet clearly disowned." Patrick Collinson, *The Religion of Protestants : The Church in English Society, 1559-1625*, vol. 1979 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), ix. See also Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Later Reformation in England, 1547-1603, Second Edition (British History in Perspective)* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2001).; Christopher Haigh, *English Reformations: Religion, Politics, and Society Under the Tudors* (Oxford University Press, USA, 1993).; Peter Lake, *Moderate Puritans and the Elizabethan Church* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

32. Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans*, 8-10.

33. Philip Secor, "In Search of Richard Hooker," in *Richard Hooker and the Construction of Christian Community (Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies),* ed. Arthur Stephen McGrade, (Mrts, 1997).

Geneva.[34]

Indeed, perhaps the most intriguing question in current Hooker studies involves his relation to mainstream reformed orthodoxy. An increasing number of scholars now locate Hooker in substantial continuity with the magisterial reformers and suggest that the Thomist influence is more nuanced than previously thought.[35] In this view, Hooker's apologetic intent is to persuade moderate Puritans that the Elizabeth Settlement is consistent with reformed orthodoxy and that the claims arising from the presbyterian crisis are consistent not with reformed orthodoxy but rather with the doctrines of the radical reformers.

In this view, the presenting cause for Hooker's treatise was an intramural theopolitical struggle between Geneva-inspired English protestants advocating presbyterian reforms and doctrinally similar Prayer Book protestants[36] advocating conformity with the Elizabethan Settlement. Both factions considered themselves reformed; the presbyterian advocates were relatively more influenced by Geneva and Calvin, while the conformists were relatively more influenced by Zurich and Vermigli.[37] The two groups had competed for leadership of England's Reformed

---

34. As McGrade notes, the "Anglican *via media* must indeed be understood as a *via*, a "way" among powerful and competing alternatives, a path on which 'strenuous exertion, adaptation, and improvisation' are constantly required, not as the one right place to be for all eternity." Arthur Stephen McGrade, "Forward," in *Richard Hooker and the Construction of Christian Community (Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies),* ed. Arthur Stephen McGrade, (Mrts, 1997), xv.. For full treatments of the difficulty in sustaining Newman's idea of a middle way between Rome and Geneva, see Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans.* and Kirby, "Introduction to a Companion to Richard Hooker,"

35. Kirby, "From 'Generall Meditations' to 'Particular Decisions': The Augustinian Coherence of Richard Hooker's Political Theology," 44-48.

36. These descriptions are borrowed from A.G. Dickens account of the divisions among the Marian exiles, in which he contrasts the Geneva Puritans and the Prayer Book Puritans. A.G. Dickens, *The English Reformation [2nd Edition]* (Pennsylvania State University Press, 1989).

37. Kirby has demonstrated the profound influence of Zurich through Vermigli and Bullinger in several journal articles. See W.J. Torrance Kirby, "The Civil Magistrate and the 'Cura Religionis': Heinrich Bullinger's Prophetical Office and the English Reformation," in *Heinrich Bullinger (1504-1575),* ed. Emidio Campi and Peter Opitz, Zürcher Beiträge zur Reformations-geschichte (Zurich: Theologische Verlag Zurich, 2007).; W.J. Torrance Kirby, "Peter Martyr Vermigli's Epistle to the Princess Elizabeth on Her Accession (1558): A Panegyric and Some Pointed Advice," *Perichoresis* 5.2, (2007): 3-21.; W.J. Torrance Kirby, "The Charge of Religion Belongeth Unto Princes:' Peter Martyr Vermigli on the Unity of Civil and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 94, (2003): 161-175.; W.J. Torrance Kirby, "From Florence to Zurich Via Strasbourg and Oxford: The International Career of Peter Martyr Vermigli (1542-1562)," in *Bewegung Und Beharrung: Aspekte Des Reformierten Protestantismus 1520-1650. Feschrift Für Emidio Campi,* (Leiden and Boston: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2009).

caucus since the reign of Mary.

Rather than merely recycling the conformist polemics of the previous two decades and engaging English presbyterians in a series of interpretative skirmishes over specific Scriptural passages, Hooker attacked those advocating presbyterian reforms on three fronts. First, he showed how their proposed reforms belied an insufficient commitment to reformed christological and pneumatological dogma. Second, he challenged as inconsistent with reformed dogma their soteriological account of how grace functions in the economy of redemption. Finally, he refuted the theological premises of their presbyterian polity by showing that the reformed theopolitical emphasis on the hypostatic union leads to an ecclesiological vision of a visible, mystical Body of Christ under the earthly jurisdiction of a civil head served by bishops. In short, Hooker's account of how Christian community is constructed is grounded thoroughly in the reflections of the magisterial reformers on the salient theological issues of the Reformation, and he used cherished principles of the magisterial reformers to reject Geneva protestant demands for a presbyterian polity.

This emerging school of historiography, locating Hooker in substantial continuity with the magisterial reformers as he engages moderate Puritans polemically, figures prominently as the background of my study. Because my primary method is to read Hooker as an ecclesial ethicist, Hooker's texts are foregrounded. This historiography is significant in this study to the extent that it informs my exegesis of Hooker's texts.

In addition, throughout this inquiry I presuppose that Hooker and his *Laws* are rightly situated within a frame in which Hooker engages his interlocutors - consisting of both opponents and allies - with an account of how we know what we know that acknowledges a shared history and tradition and competes for heirship to their common predecessors on the basis of his distinctive answers to that question. I build upon Lake's suggestion that a key set of Hooker's interlocutors were moderate Puritans, many of whom were influenced by the introduction of Ramist method at Cambridge in the late Elizabethan period. In chapter three, I will propose that Hooker's ethics can be seen in sharp relief when compared to this contemporaneous

teaching by his colleagues. In the historical perspective stipulated here, Hooker's ethics challenged the premises of this group of colleagues, which included both conformists and presbyterians, offering a distinctive answer to the question of how we rightly discern the good.[38]

Nomenclature

(1) The Elizabethan context

Hooker scholars exhibit a variety of ways of categorizing the various players in the Elizabethan debates. Kirby, for example, uses the term "Disciplinarian" to denote those English divines who advocated a polity based on Geneva's example. I've adopted Peter Lake's categories in this study in order to differentiate between groups who exhibited widespread agreement on doctrine but differed in their assessments of the practical implications of doctrine, especially in the areas of liturgy and governance.

Following Lake, 'presbyterian' denotes those "who can be shown to have espoused or defended the presbyterian platform of church government."[39] "Conformist' denotes those "who chose to make a polemical fuss about the issues of church government and ceremonial conformity and who sought to stigmatize as puritans those less enthusiastic about such issues than themselves."[40] Finally,

> "The term 'puritan' is used to refer to a a broader span of opinion, encompassing those advanced protestants who regarded themselves as the 'godly', a minority of genuinely true believers in an otherwise lukewarm or corrupt mass. It is therefore used as a term of degree, or relative religious zeal rather than as a clear-cut party label. Thus, while all presbyterians were puritans, not all puritans were presbyterians."[41]

I recognize that 'puritan' is a contested category, but use it here as a convenient way of denoting the bulk of Hooker's colleagues, whether conformist or presbyterian.

Similarly, I recognize that "Reformed" is a contested category, to the extent that

---

38. I am not concerned here with whether Hooker self-consciously constructed *Laws* in response to this group of interlocutors. I leave that argument to the historians. It will become clear, however, as a by-product of my inquiry, that *Laws* - whether intentionally or not - provides a withering assault on the assumptions underlying the Ramist teachings of his Cambridge colleagues.
39. Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans*, 7.
40. Ibid., 8.
41. Ibid., 7-8.

historians debate whether the term had yet developed widespread usage by the 1590's. I use it here as I perceive Hooker used it - as a convenient way of denoting the shared beliefs and loose affinities of Protestant churches influenced especially by the distinctive streams of Geneva (Calvin) and Zurich (Bullinger).

(2) 'Empiricist' and 'the phenomenal'

In my rendering, Hooker posits a fundamentally empiricist epistemology in which all human knowing is derived from the phenomenal. By 'empiricist' I denote a very rich conception of 'the empirical' including both causes (material and efficient) and reasons (what Aristotle described as formal and final causation).

Given this rich conception of the empirical, 'the phenomenal' is that which appears to ordinary human perception and reason in the spaces of causes and reasons. This includes the special category of revelation, which transcends human reason but is nonetheless encountered as phenomena perceived using the same human psychology. Either I am historically correct in this rendering, or this is a point of reparative reasoning in which my Hookerian account diverges intentionally from the historical Hooker in service of my objective of appropriating and adapting Hooker for contemporary ethics.

(3) Universal theological claims vs universal ethics

Throughout this study, I distinguish between between universal ethical claims and God's universal command that all created things exist in loving relation to Christ the Creator. I will claim in the next chapter that Hooker himself makes this distinction and that it plays an important role in his account of virtue. I perceive this distinction to be consistent with, though pressing upon, the typology of Wells and Quash,[42] and that, in so pressing, I am following a similar move made by Hauerwas.[43] Implicit here

---

42. Wells recognizes this distinction. In introducing his typology of ethics with excerpts from Barth's doctrine of God, Wells notes that, "…. It becomes clear that, though the command of God is universal, the ability to respond to that command is limited to "those who are elected in Jesus Christ to be covenant-partners with God."Wells and Quash, *Introducing Christian Ethics*.; Wells, *An Introductory Reader*, 100.

43. Stanley Hauerwas similarly differentiates between God's universal command and the ecclesial reception of that command with his universal claim that the cross and resurrection denote the "grain of the universe": "…. the witness of Christians across time would not have been

is the distinction between God's universal address to humankind and the subset of humans who have noetic access to that address. In the Hookerian grammar I develop in this study, only those who come to know Christ as Reconciler have noetic access to Christ's universal command.[44]

In contrast, in Wells' typology, the universal ethicist presupposes that Christian ethics are "ethics for everybody."[45] We shall see that, for Hooker, such a claim is problematic to the extent it funds efforts to ground ethical arguments in a pre-historical or ahistorical foundation, whether by categorizing Roman dogma as supernatural law or by viewing Scripture as a catalogue of timeless universal axioms.

Roadmap

My inquiry proceeds in five chapter-length moves following this introduction. This study builds from chapter to chapter, so it will be most fruitful to engage it in the order presented.

Chapter two, "Reading Richard Hooker as an Ecclesial Ethicist," is foundational. I use Wells' typology to guide excavation of Hooker's sub-surface commitments which lead to his conclusions about the role of ecclesial practices in nurturing the virtue of the British people. Of particular importance are theological and rhetorical moves which enable him to re-describe a recognizably Thomist account of mimetic virtue

---

possible if God had not vindicated Christ's sacrifice on the cross through resurrection and ascension. On the basis of such witnesses, Christians can rightly claim that to bear the cross is not a confession peculiar to them; rather their lives reveal the "grain of the universe."Stanley Hauerwas, *With the Grain of the Universe : The Church's Witness and Natural Theology : The Gifford Lectures Delivered At the University of ST. Andrews in 2001*, Kindle ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Brazos Press, 2001), 224.

44. Humans are "by nature sons of Adam," but God's "saving efficacy… bringeth forth a special offspring among men containing them to whom God hath given the gracious and amiable name of sons." These sons of God are "progeny… by spiritual and heavenly birth" of Christ, "the second Adam." This "life as all other gifts and benefits groweth originally from the Father and commeth not to us but by the Son, nor by the Son to any of us in particular but through the Spirit." *Richard Hooker, The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker: Of the Lawes of Ecclesiastical Polity, Preface Books I-Iv, and V (Two Volumes), Library edition ed. (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1977-01-01).* All citations to Hooker's works will follow the standard dual reference system which includes the divisions used in John Keble's 19th century edition. When citing quotations, I provide an abbreviated form of the book title, period, Hooker's book number, period, Hooker's chapter number, period, and then Keble's section number. After a semi-colon, I provide a more precise reference using the Folger's volume number, colon, page number, period, and line number(s). *Laws*.V.56.6; 2:237.29; V.56.6; 2:237.25-28; V.56.6; 2.238.1-3; V.56.7; 2:238.12-15.

45. Wells and Quash, *Introducing Christian Ethics*, 113.

within the grammar of the Elizabethan Church. We'll see that Hooker adapts the Thomist concept of eternal law to frame his claims about how we know what we know. He posits an empiricist psychology which generates knowledge through inductive reasoning in response to encounters with phenomena in the natural, Scriptural, and spiritual domains. This leads him to a recognizably Aristotelian account of how we recognize the good.

In chapter three, I contrast the Hookerian ethics developed in the preceding chapters with ethical perspectives that arise from universal perspectives. A key move is to recognize that there are no timeless absolutes to be discovered in dogma or Scripture upon which ethics can be grounded. The only foundation is Jesus Christ himself. One's narrative location is the proper focus of ethical reasoning because the general can only approximate the natural law, for our general prescriptions inevitably exclude information that comformity with the natural law demands.

Given this foundation, in chapter four I ask, "if all human knowledge of the good is *a posteriori*, how do we ever gain assurance of the rightness of our knowledge beyond the inherent weaknesses of our probabilistic reasoning?" Hooker answers by pointing to our participation in Christ through his real presence in our lives. For Hooker and us, the fundamental question is, "how is Christ really present to us?." On my account, Hooker offers an ontology in which Christ is locally, diachronically, and synchronically present in the individual human heart, irrupting into temporality in order to establish relationships of fellowship with the elect. Christ meets us in our particularity, establishing our rational recognition of a shared history, such that we are justified in our claims about him.

In chapter five, drawing upon the proposal of Stanley Hauerwas and Sam Wells regarding the role of liturgy in forming virtue in the community, I explore the role of ecclesial practices in nurturing and sustaining such sanctifying relationships. The Spirit uses the most ordinary phenomena of nature - like rainbows, the tactile feel of oil, the smell and taste of wine and bread, the cleansing experience of water - to sustain us in our journey, leading us over time toward a thick knowledge of the

Messiah's dispositions. Through practices - both sacramental and non-sacramental, Jesus' history becomes our history, we discover ourselves addressed by him in our particularity, and we discover ourselves transformed by his action upon us. By steps and degrees, disciples learn to take the right things for granted, and, imitating him, learn to improvise in their ethical actions so that they carry on in the same way as Christ and also in the same way as citizens of the eschatological New Jerusalem.

All of the foregoing constitute elements of what I will describe, with a nod to Sam Wells' *Improvisation*,[46] as a Hookerian christodramatic ethics. But how is a christodramatic ethics significant? How does it help us to imagine an ordering of the Church that is relevant in our time?

I conclude with a case study, examining a recent dispute in the Anglican Communion regarding women's ordination, to demonstrate how the Hookerian ecclesial ethics developed in this study might shape the debate and avoid fracture of the bonds of affection between opposing sides. Such a possibility is ecumenically significant. By holding together community, individuality, and an understanding of how Christ is really present to us in our communal practices, a Hookerian ethics helps us to imagine a communion ecclesiology appropriate to the challenges of our time.

---

46. Samuel Wells, *Improvisation : The Drama of Christian Ethics* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Brazos Press, 2004).

- Chapter 2 -
Reading Richard Hooker as an ecclesial ethicist

THE BIG PICTURE: HOOKER'S RHETORICAL STRATEGY

How do we discern the good? How do we know that the actions we propose are good? That our laws are right in the sense of corresponding to God's law? Hooker's fundamental response to these questions, as I shall argue in the remainder of this study, is that the answer is not as obvious as his interlocutors suggest. Our knowing of the right and good is a complex process for which there are no shortcuts that allow us to bypass the careful cultivation of virtue.

In this chapter, my historical argument will be that Hooker identified serious flaws in the foundation underlying certain positions of English presbyterians, Ramist realists,[47] and even his conformist allies. *Laws,* therefore*,* may be fruitfully read as an extended disputation with these mostly offstage interlocutors. In *Laws*, he attacks their proposals and defends his own brand of Reformed catholicism as the most prudent vision for the Church of England. My account of Hooker's purpose is therefore consistent with what I described in chapter one as the emerging school of historiography which describes Hooker as one who, in substantial continuity with the magisterial Reformers, polemically engaged colleagues with whom he was largely in agreement on doctrinal matters. On my reading, Hooker's most significant polemical engagement focused not on the matters of action - whether a woman can govern a national church, for example - but on the question of how we know what we know, a question that was central to the task of creating laws for the Church of England.

The key historical move in this chapter is to notice that Hooker's answer to that question closely matches the answers given by those whom Wells' and Quash's have classified as "ecclesial ethicists." Insights arise when we read Hooker as a "bridge

---

47.   I describe this group in detail in the next chapter. See "The Ramist Realists" on page 85.

figure between universal and ecclesial ethicists,"[48] recognizing his turn to Aristotle, his emphasis on the centrality of Jesus, and his high valuation of the tradition and practices of the Church as efforts to inoculate the Church of England against his era's most problematic ideas. In what follows, I read Hooker as an ecclesial ethicist in order to excavate core principles he applies in his defense of ecclesial practices.

Such excavation is both necessary and fruitful. Given my objective of understanding how our practices contribute to virtue, one might infer that the most direct path is sufficient - all that is needed is a harvest of the many insights one finds in Book V of Hooker's *Laws*, which contains his defense of ecclesial practices. The challenge is more complex than that, however. Hooker rightly recognized that our thinking about ecclesial practices necessarily entails sub-surface philosophical, theological, anthropological, and christological commitments. More importantly, he recognized that the *decisive* differences separating Geneva-inspired advocates of Presbyterian reforms and Zurich-inspired defenders of the Elizabethan Settlement were at the level of these sub-surface commitments. Consequently, Hooker's rhetorical strategy primarily aimed beneath the surface of the decades-long debates about practices, bishops, and female headship of the national church. He built his arguments about those presenting issues on the foundation of a rich account of their philosophical, theological, anthropological, and christological presuppositions. In other words, he began his defense by turning to first principles.

For that reason, we cannot fully comprehend Hooker's treatment of ecclesial practices without attending to his philosophical, theological, anthropological, and christological commitments. Hooker intentionally set out to produce an "Aristotelian demonstration"[49] of his claims. Consequently, he begins with the doctrine of God and derives his claims about the ordering of the Church step-by-step, proposing an ontology, an account of the natural law, an anthropology, and an epistemology. Only

---

48. Wells and Quash, *Introducing Christian Ethics*, 191. Wells and Quash apply this description to Oliver O'Donovan in differentiating him from other ecclesial ethicists, largely because he is "more sympathetic to natural law perspectives." Wells and Quash locate Hooker within their category of "universal ethics." One of the fruits of my project is the demonstration that Hooker rightly is categorized as an ecclesial ethicist.
49. *Laws*.I.6.3; 1:75, note w.

after laying this foundation does he turn to the presenting causes of his treatise – matters of action involving the proper self-ordering of the Church of England. Harvesting his ideas fruitfully will require excavation and, in a few cases, critique and repair. By attending closely to the shape of Hooker's Aristotelian demonstration, we receive a rich account of ecclesial practices that is derived from first principles.

What's at stake

Such excavation can become overwhelming given the extraordinary breadth of Hooker's thought. One could easily lose sight of how each thread contributes to the portrait of how the mind of Christ is formed in community. With that complexity in mind, I will foreshadow my exegetical account with a 'big picture' sketch of Hooker's project, explaining what I think he was trying to achieve, why he made certain moves, and how those moves are significant for the current constructive account. My exegetical demonstration will follow this section and take up the bulk of this chapter.

By my reading, the grand challenge shaping the intellectual discourse of the Church of England in Hooker's era was not about *whether* the Church would manifest a robust form of Reformed catholicism, but about its *content*.[50] What makes a church recognizable as a model of Reformed catholicism? Among the many participants in the discourse between 1580-1600, Geneva-inspired presbyterians presented one cluster of views, and Zurich-inspired conformists presented another.[51] Hooker, an intellectual leader of the latter cohort, dialectically engaged both his opponents and his allies, proposing a vision for an English Reformed catholicism that inherited the strengths of both sets of views while overcoming their weaknesses.

The salient presenting issues during this period concerned matters of action.

---

50. Kirby argues this persuasively in W.J. Torrance Kirby, *Richard Hooker, Reformer and Platonist* (Aldershot, Hants, England ; Burlington, VT: Ashgate Pub., 2005). I intend my phrase, "Reformed catholicism" as a shorthand for the synthesis of Reformed dogma and Christian Platonism which Kirby documents. The key point is to recognize that, in Hooker's context, the choice was not between Rome and Geneva, but between competing accounts of how to be Reformed, all of which strived to distinguish the Church of England from the ways of the Radical Reformers and the Roman church.

51. For the case that Elizabethan divines and Elizabeth herself were influenced strongly by the Zurich over and against Geneva, see W.J. Torrance Kirby, *The Zurich Connection and Tudor Political Theology (Studies in the History of Christian Thought)*, 1st Edition ed. (Brill Academic Pub, 2007-08-30).

Controversy surrounded the royal supremacy, the designation of the queen as female governor of the church, and the extent to which the English church would be governed by ordained bishops and priests. For the purposes of this study, however, the presenting issue of greatest interest was that of ecclesial practices: to what extent should the Church of England prescribe sacramental and non-sacramental practices which are not ordained clearly in Scripture and which manifest continuity with the anathematized Roman Church? Hooker's Book V of *Laws,* the heart of his treatise, is an extended defense of a wide range of practices, ranging from the sign of the cross and commemoration of the saints to the Eucharist.

Underlying these presenting causes was a host of prior questions. How do we know what we know? How do we discern the good? How do we read Scripture in support of our ethical discourse? When can a church justifiably depart from its received traditions? What authority should we assign to human laws not derived from Scriptural mandates? Are sacramental practices merely formal rituals, or do they, in some mystical sense, edify?

These deeper questions transcend their presenting causes. They are asked by every generation. Even after the presenting causes ceased to be urgent as the conformists consolidated power and established facts on the ground, the deeper questions remained sources of tension.[52] The questions persist because competing answers lead inevitably to competing visions for the Church. So it was for the Church of England as it approached the seventeenth century. At stake for Richard Hooker were not just questions about whether Elizabeth could head the Church of England or whether psalm-singing would be allowed in worship, but, more importantly, fundamental claims about how the Holy Spirit creates and sustains the virtue of the English people.

---

52. The presenting questions were already answered and enshrined in ecclesial or commonwealth law by the time Hooker's *Laws* was published, and open opposition to the Elizabethan Settlement was diminished. Nonetheless, skirmishes continued between the presbyterians, conformists, and other Elizabethan divines throughout the 1590s largely along the same philosophical lines. See Lake, *Moderate Puritans.* for a good account of these ongoing tensions, and especially the controversy over the Lambeth Articles.

The givens of the emerging Reformed orthodoxy

In this study, I read Hooker as an ecclesial ethicist and Hooker's *Laws* as a powerful and passionate apology for an ecclesial vision grounded in a particular account of virtue. In the next chapter, I will describe an opposing account promoted by Cambridge-based Ramist realists. Hooker's treatise presents a sustained argument for a mimetic account of virtue grounded in a eudaimonistic view of the created order. Why do we need the royal supremacy? Why do we need bishops? Why do we need long-cherished sacramental and non-sacramental practices? Threaded throughout Hooker's eight volumes is the resounding answer, "Because they are instrumental means of grace through which the Spirit creates and sustains us as a commonwealth of virtue." On my account, *Laws* is a carefully architected apology for a vision of Reformed catholicism which cherishes and cultivates these instrumental means in order to cooperate with the Spirit's sanctifying action.[53]

Hooker's apology, however, had to carry on in the same way as his Elizabethan intellectual circles in order to be comprehensible and persuasive. Hooker could not, for example, simply retrieve a Thomist account of virtue and argue as though its descriptions were coherent with the normative descriptions of his circles. He could not simply retrieve a Thomist ontology and argue that its worldview was continuous with Reformed descriptions of the world and humankind's location within it. He could not do these things because key concepts underlying his community's normative descriptions of the world had shifted as a result of the Reformation (which was already well into its third generation of leaders when Hooker wrote). In order to sustain his argument, he had to frame his account of virtue within a Reformation grammar and worldview.

The most important 'given' for Hooker's Reformed contemporaries was a

---

53. As William Harrison notes, "In the *Lawes*, Hooker is concerned with sanctification and the place of the human person in the process; justification is a peripheral matter and rarely discussed." William H. Harrison, "Powers of Nature and Influences of Grace in Hooker's Lawes," in *Richard Hooker and the English Reformation,* ed. W.J. Torrance Kirby, (Dordrecht ; Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003), 15.

Protestant account of the doctrine of justification by grace through faith.[54] This, in turn, had associated commitments. The first of these is the anthropological premise that humans have no innate capacity to know the mind of God.[55] A second associated given is that humans know the good exclusively through God's contingent and gracious acts of revelation.[56] In addition to these givens were a pervasive skepticism towards reason as a means of discerning God's will and a pervasive anxiety about claims that humans contribute to our own salvation in any way.[57] All of these were

54. The adjective, 'Protestant,' is key. The Roman Church embraced the doctrine of justification, too, of course. I refer here specifically to descriptions by the magisterial Reformers which diverged from those of Rome in the 16th century, particularly rejecting notions of grace as an infused substance and denying any role in justification to the ecclesial authority of the Pope.

55. Some may say Thomas held this position, too. By my reading, however, Aquinas describes a rationalist (and not an empiricist) anthropology including the human capacity to recognize the transcendentals through intellection. This seems to be a claim that humans have a capacity for *a priori* knowledge of the good. Occam apparently read Aquinas this way, too, and famously rejected that possibility with his razor. Thomist scholars Joseph P. Wawrykow and John L. Jenkins seem to agree, also. Wawrykow writes (commenting on ST I.78,82-83): "There is in each human both a passive and active intellect. The active is responsible for abstracting intelligible species from sense knowledge; these intelligible species are imprinted on the passive intellect, which retains these species." Joseph P. Wawrykow, *The Westminster Handbook to Thomas Aquinas*, Westminster Handbooks to Christian Theology (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005-07-20), 6; John L. Jenkins, *Knowledge and Faith in Thomas Aquinas*, Kindle for iPad ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2007), Kindle location 1384, Chap 4, para 1-5.; Ibid., Kindle location 1436, Chap 4, Sec 1, para 11-12.. See also *Thomas Aquinas, The Summa Theologica of ST. Thomas Aquinas (Five Volumes) (Christian Classics, 1981), I.85.6. Thomas Aquinas, An Annotated Translation (With Some Abridgement) of the Summa Contra Gentiles of Saint Thos Aquinas, trans. Joseph Rickaby (London: Burns and Oates, 1905), III.108.* Future citations of these classics of Thomas Aquinas will use the shortnames of *ST* and *SCG*.

56. Again, some may object that "we find this in Aquinas, too," and I agree. However, what's in view here is not a proper reading of Thomas, but a historical reaction to readings of Thomas by the magisterial Reformers, whether they were correct or not. Denis Janz argues persuasively that Luther read Thomas through the lens of his mentor, which was a misreading. John Bowlin argues persuasively - against Jean Porter *et al*, that "Aquinas considers the human good contingent, and it is this contingency, this difficulty, that the prudent and the just must address if they are to avoid moral failure and will true goods with constancy." The logic of my argument in "Hookerian prescription: The priority of the particular" (chapter three, beginning at page 96) is that Hooker agrees with Aquinas, if Bowlin is right about Aquinas. Denis R. Janz, *Luther and Late Medieval Thomism: A Study in Theological Anthropology*, Kindle ed. (Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2009-12-15). John R. Bowlin, *Contingency and Fortune in Aquinas's Ethics (Cambridge Studies in Religion and Critical Thought)*, Reissue ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2010-06-10), 55.

57. In asserting that hyper-Augustinian anxiety about pelagianism informed discourse in Hooker's context, I am not suggesting that such concerns were actually warranted with respect to Aquinas. Indeed, I don't believe Thomas argued that humans contribute to our own salvation in a Pelagian way. But I am suggesting that Luther's critique of Thomas sufficiently shaped Reformation discourse such that English Calvinists in the 1590s projected their anxieties about pelagianism onto Thomas. This anxiety resonates in the anonymous *A Christian Letter*, the only refutation of Hooker's *Laws* published during his lifetime. "*A Christian Letter* With Hooker's Notes," in *The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker, Volume Iv: Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity: Attack and Response, the Folger Library. The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity) (V. 4),* ed. John E. Booty, (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1982-01-01). See also Egil Grislis, "Providence, Predestination, and Free Will in Richard Hooker's Theology," in *Richard Hooker and the English Reformation,* ed. W.J. Torrance Kirby, (Dordrecht ; Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003); W. David Neelands, "Richard Hooker and the Debates About Predestination, 1580-1600," in *Richard Hooker and the English Reformation,* ed. W.J. Torrance Kirby, (Dordrecht ; Boston: Kluwer Academic

constraints which shaped the grammar with which Hooker could describe his vision for the Church.[58]

Hooker's great achievement, in my view, is the construction of an account of virtue that is coherent within a Reformation grammar and worldview. His account of virtue addresses the givens of his time. For Hooker, such an account, and not the competing accounts of his interlocutors, is the hallmark of Reformed catholicism.

Key moves of interest in this study

It is with good reason that so many commentators have associated Hooker with Thomas Aquinas through the centuries. Though Hooker cites Thomas clearly only about eight times,[59] reading Hooker's Book I of *Laws* can feel like one is reading an English compilation of Aquinas' greatest hits. Allusions and echoes abound, and it may be that Hooker intentionally imitated the structure of *Summa Theologiae* in composing his doctrinal treatments.[60]

One should be cautious in identifying Hooker simply as "the English Thomas," however, for at least two reasons. First, such an identification underweights the fact that Hooker was a brilliant and wide-ranging scholar in his own right who drank deeply from the same wells as Thomas. Except when he quotes Thomas directly, similarities may well be due to his own synthesis of Plato, Aristotle, Pseudo-Dionysius, or early-church fathers like Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, Gregory of Nyssa, Cyril of Alexandria, or Augustine of Hippo. Indeed, one might just as reasonably be led to describe Hooker as "The English Aristotle" and "The English Augustine" given

---

Publishers, 2003); Jennifer A. Herdt, *Putting on Virtue: The Legacy of the Splendid Vices*, Reprint ed. (University Of Chicago Press, 2012-05-09), Part III.

58. One could argue that each of these givens appear in medieval thinkers like Thomas Aquinas *et al*, too. But that's not the point I am making here. My point is that, at minimum, Hooker's historical location in late Elizabethan England required a redescription of these givens in a grammar intelligible to a community hostile to Rome for geopolitical, ecclesiological, and theological reasons and heavily influenced by the language and concepts of the late Reformers.

59. W. David Neelands, "The Theology of Grace of Richard Hooker" (PhD Dissertation, Trinity College and University of Toronto, 1988), 304.

60. Peter Munz identifies more than one hundred passages with obvious debts to Thomas, and John S. Marshall proposes "that Hooker deals with the principal doctrinal topics in the order. and in the spirit, of Thomas' *Summa Theologiae*." Ibid., 306-307.

his similarly heavy debts to each of them in other parts of his corpus.[61] In my view, such temptations inadequately capture how Hooker actually used the authorities he deploys.[62] The second, more important cause for caution is that such an identification could lead one to miss Hooker's creativity in imagining how one might describe an account of mimetic virtue within the constraints of the emerging Reformed orthodoxy.

Noticing Hooker's creativity is the task of this section. Since the similarities to Thomas are hard to miss,[63] my purpose here is to invite attention to certain Hooker adaptations while continuing to share my 'big picture' impressions of his rhetorical strategy. In anticipation of the detailed exegetical account which appears in the next section, this section provides the highlights of those adaptations with a focus on their role in Hooker's rhetorical strategy.

Hooker's first major adaptation is to propose his own version of the doctrine of *duplex cognitio Dei* using Thomas' conception of the eternal law. Hooker's re-conception describes the cosmos and its providential ordering in terms of the first and second forms of the eternal law. The first eternal law, opaque to humankind, is that which governs the inner life of the triune God. The second eternal law, in contrast, is known by all creatures through the light of reason, and expresses the divine will throughout the created order. Hooker derives the natural law and all human laws from

---

61. This point is argued by A.S. McGrade in an essay analyzing Hooker's usage of medieval and patristics sources. See Arthur Stephen McGrade, "Classical, Patristic, and Medieval Sources," in *A Companion to Richard Hooker*, ed. W.J. Torrance Kirby, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition (Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2008).

62. In a penetrating polemical essay, "Thomas's Alleged Aristotelianism, or Aristotle Among the Authorities," Mark Jordan says of Thomas what I believe it true for Hooker, as well, with respect to the most prominently deployed authorities we find in Hooker: "For Thomas, Aristotle is not a unique or perennial authority. Aristotle is a pagan author whose texts can be brought into helpful constellation with other authorities. Thomas does not regard Aristotle as a block of doctrine to be carried in whole. He treats Aristotle instead as the teacher behind a set of pedagogical texts. The unity of the teaching is just the dialectical congruence that thoughtful reading can perform. For all of these reasons, Thomas is not tempted to misleading imitation of Aristotle." Hooker is neither merely the English Thomas, the English Augustinian, nor the English Aristotle precisely because he treats them as teachers, reads them thoughtfully, and deploys them discriminately in responding to specific theological or philosophical questions. Mark D. Jordan, *Rewritten Theology: Aquinas After His Readers*, 1 ed. (Wiley-Blackwell, 2005-12-23), 87.

63. I agree with Neelands' view that, on the subjects of law, nature, grace, and Christology, "Hooker's treatments so clearly follow Thomas on certain topics that dependence must be assumed." Neelands, "The Theology of Grace of Richard Hooker," 307.

the second eternal law. This adaptation enables him to claim that human laws - such as the ecclesiastical laws of England - have the same origin as Holy Scripture. The differences in authority we assign them are not due to different origins but due to different levels of vulnerability to probabilistic error.

Hooker's second major adaptation is to propose a psychology that carries on substantially in the same way as the magisterial Reformers, while adapting their anthropology by recovering a more optimistic account of human intellectual capacities after the Fall. Hooker's reparation generates two claims that are important in this study. First, for Hooker, human faculties remain apt in spite of the Fall, with both a will that desires the good and a light of reason which renders humans capable of comprehending the good. Our vision of the good is obscured *partially* by sin. Second, Hookerian psychology denies innate access to knowledge of the good. Unlike the angels, humans cannot participate in the mind of God through intellection of the transcendentals. For Hooker, the light of reason in humans is reduced to an innate capacity for discursive logic that enables us to deduce reliably the principles of the eternal law and the relations of things to each other. Our minds are blank slates at birth, but we grow in our knowledge of the good through our empirical experience of God's actions upon us.

Hooker's third key move arises from this psychology. On the basis of these adaptations, Hooker argued that humans have no possibility of engaging the Word objectively. He appropriates the Thomist description of the relative authorities of Scripture, doctors of the Church, and philosophy, and he adapts the Thomist distinction between revelation and reason.[64] The only objective element is God's *Logos* - the eternal law proclaimed through "the sacred books of Scripture... the glorious works of nature... by spiritual influence...[and] in some things...only by worldly experience and practice."[65] Yet we engage these always through the light of reason, which is inherently subjective. In our encounter with all of these we are vulnerable to

---

64. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* 1.8.2. Subsequent citations of Aquinas will follow the standard convention of listing abbreviated for the book, the part number, the question, and article number. For example *ST* 1.8.2.
65. *Laws*.II.1.4; I:147.27-148.7.

probabilistic error in our comprehension of what is revealed due to the noetic effects of sin and the inherent limitations of human finitude.

So how do we recognize the good? Hooker answers that we flock to the signs and tokens by which humankind has historically marked their encounter with the good. The inherited wisdom is that we recognize the good most reliably when we subject ourselves to the communal process of discernment through which humans dialectically engage what previous generations have named as the signs and tokens marking the good. The chief of these is Scripture, which is reliable and sufficient with respect to the supernatural path to the good that is Christ. But all the world is a symphony singing the Word of God's revelation of the good. Additional signs and tokens by which we come to know the eternal law include human laws, customs, and sacramental practices of the Church (spiritual experiences).

Hooker's Aristotelian demonstration – that the eternal law is manifest in our laws and sacramental practices and that humans deductively recognize the good through God's actions upon us – provides a crucial starting point as we strive to understand how the mind of Christ is formed in community. Yet one further Hookerian distinction is needed. Hooker proposes that the proper distinction for ethical reasoning is not between reason and faith, but between knowledge and practical wisdom. In seeking the good, our communal discernment is about 'matters of action', which, in my view, is Hooker's invocation of the Aristotelian virtue of *phronesis*. Phronesis is an important concept throughout this study. I will be driving towards the claim that our ecclesial practices generate mimetic virtue, which, in turn, entails the capacity to make phronetic judgments which are good because they are patterned on the mind of Christ.[66]

---

66. Kirby argues in Kirby, *Richard Hooker, Reformer and Platonist*. that Hooker's Aristotelianism is often overemphasized by scholars. He notes that Hooker balances the two great traditions of Christian Neoplatonism, the Augustinian and the Pseudo-Dionysian. Though Hooker rejects a Platonist epistemology in favor of a more Aristotelian empiricism, he does not drive a wedge between Aristotle and Plato. By my reading, Hooker had a strong Aristotelian bent in his epistemology and ethics, perhaps received from his tutor, Rainold, who lectured on Aristotle. He also relied extensively on Christian Platonism, particularly in his accounts of the law and in his description of participation in Christ. In both of these, it seems to me that he imitated Thomas.

The foregoing provides the highlights of the subterranean journey on which Hooker takes us before turning to his surface engagement in defense of Elizabethan ecclesial practices. With that preliminary sketch in view, I now turn to the task of excavating the concepts we will need in the remainder of the study.

FAITH FORMS CHARITY: SOME EPISTEMOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

The preceding section sketched the highlights which unfold exegetically in the rest of this chapter. My aim in what follows is to excavate key aspects of Hooker's ontology, psychology, and his account of our communal discernment of the good. The concepts presented here are logically prior to and presupposed by Hooker's critique of Ramist realism and his account of our participation in Christ which are my focus in chapters three and four.[67] My intent is to prepare the reader for concepts assumed later in this inquiry by providing a highly focused exegetical summary of Hooker's thought, expanding my discussion only where I feel more clarification is warranted in order to support the constructive freight that appears in the subsequent chapters.

My summary of Hooker's sub-surface commitments proceeds in three related but distinct sub-sections. The first two demonstrate key moves Hooker makes to appropriate a Thomist account of mimetic virtue, and the third demonstrates his deployment of five Aristotelian epistemological concepts. First, I turn to Hooker's account of the objective knowledge of God. I will sketch Hooker's version of the *duplex cognitio Dei*, a common Reformed doctrine he shaped for his rhetorical purpose of refuting key arguments of those advocating Genevan reforms. The key move is to recognize that, for Hooker, all creatures encounter Christ as Creator and Governor, which means that the natural law that all creatures encounter is Christ himself. Next, I sketch aspects of Hooker's psychology that are presupposed in my constructive chapters. The key move is to recognize that Hooker subtly adapts medieval

---

67. I consider Hooker's scriptural hermeneutic and his critique of Ramist realism in ""Special Equity" and the particular" on page 82. I examine Hooker's account of participation in Christ in "Participation as Fellowship" on page 119.

psychology to reflect the Reformation dogmatic claim that faith precedes charity, which thereby limits crucially how humans recognize the good. The third part follows from this, taking note of Hooker's re-imagining of how we recognize the good. I will claim that Hooker deploys the Aristotelian methods of *phenomena*, *endoxa*, *dialectic*, and the virtues of *episteme* and *phronesis* in order to make the point that our decisions about the good are necessarily local, particular, and mutable. The key move is to recognize that, for Hooker, the creation of godly laws is properly a question about the creation of a godly people precisely because all ethical reasoning is the subject matter of the virtue of *phronesis*.

The concepts mined in this section set up appropriation of his accounts of participation and practices that constitute the heart of this study, for reflection on how the Spirit creates a godly people leads Hooker to an extended defense of Elizabethan liturgical practices. These four introductory moves will therefore help the reader make sense of the constructive proposals I will offer in the remainder of this inquiry.

In this what follows, I agree with historical reconstructions of Hooker's account of reason by Neelands,[68] Kirby,[69] Lake,[70] and Shuger.[71] My emphasis on dialectic and contingency in describing our discourse regarding the natural law is consistent with Porter,[72] Jenkins,[73] and, most fully, Bowlin.[74]

My account of Hooker's epistemology comports with Wells' and Quash's description[75] of Hooker, but clarifies that more nuance is required in describing

---

68. W. David Neelands, "Scripture, Reason, and 'Tradition'," in *Richard Hooker and the Construction of Christian Community (Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies)*, ed. Arthur Stephen McGrade, (Binghamton: MRTS, 1997).
69. W.J. Torrance Kirby, "Reason and Law," in *A Companion to Richard Hooker*, ed. W.J. Torrance Kirby, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition (Brill Academic Publishers, 2008). See also W.J. Torrance Kirby, "Richard Hooker's Theory of Natural Law in the Context of Reformation Theology," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 30, no. 3 (Autumn 1999): 681-703.
70. Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans*. See chap."Reason and Scripture."
71. Debora K. Shuger, *Habits of Thought in the English Renaissance : Religion, Politics, and the Dominant Culture*, vol. 13 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).
72. Jean Porter, *Natural and Divine Law: Reclaiming the Tradition for Christian Ethics (Saint Paul University Series in Ethics)* (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999-12-14).
73. Jenkins, *Knowledge and Faith*.
74. Bowlin, *Contingency and Fortune in Aquinas's Ethics (Cambridge Studies in Religion and Critical Thought)*.
75. Wells and Quash, *Introducing Christian Ethics*, 104, 113, and 119.

Hooker's understanding of the natural law. Hooker's ethics are not universal in the sense that they are "ethics for everybody" but are more limited in scope in the sense of "ethics for our community." "The sources of Christian ethics are available to everybody and binding on everybody,"[76] but the historical manifestation of the natural law is necessarily local, contingent, and particular. By my reading, Hooker is properly read as an ecclesial ethicist. *Pace* Wells and Quash, Hooker is not a universal ethicist, but, like Oliver O'Donovan, "a kind of bridge figure between ecclesial ethics and universal ethics."[77]

Though my rational reconstruction of Hooker's hermeneutics is largely consistent with the readings of scholars cited above, my rendering of it in the Aristotelian grammar of *phenomena*, *endoxa*, and *dialectic* is uncommon among Hooker scholars. In describing Hooker's account in this way, I am not suggesting that Aristotle is exclusively or directly the source of his thinking, but rather that Aristotle's influence is evident. In terms of how this came to be, I note Torrance Kirby's suggestion that Hooker's "method is a somewhat eclectic blend of Renaissance (Erasmian) humanism (as is Calvin's) with certain scholastic (especially Neoplatonic and Aristotelian) elements (compare Peter Martyr Vermigli here)."[78]

In what follows, my most significant disagreement is with the popular attribution to Hooker of the memes, "Scripture, Tradition, and Reason" and "Three-Legged-Stool." I perceive my position to be largely in accord with the consensus of Hooker scholars over the past three decades in challenging these memes. I therefore disagree with those who suggest that Hooker treated reason as an *alternative* source of authority alongside Scripture and tradition, and also disagree with those who suggest that Hooker similarly commended the authority of 'tradition' - understood narrowly as the received dogma of the Church.[79] If there is a three-legged-stool to be found in Hooker, its legs are "Phenomena, Endoxa, and Dialectic."

---

76. Ibid., 191.
77. Ibid.
78. Torrance Kirby, "E-Mail Message to Author," (July 10, 2012).
79. These readings have a long tradition, spanning at least two centuries. Diarmaid MacCulloch traces that reading in MacCulloch, "Richard Hooker's Reputation,"

As signaled in my synopsis, one could render a rough sketch of Hooker's account of the Christian life by pointing to Thomas Aquinas and then accounting for certain adaptations arising from the Reformation claim that faith forms charity. Three of these adaptations - the first having to do with emanation of the eternal law, the second with psychology, and the third with epistemology - will prove important in this study to the extent that they circumscribe the means by which humans discern the good. I introduce those adaptations here.

Hookerian ontology

Hooker's first major adaptation is to propose his own version of the doctrine of *duplex cognitio Dei* using Thomas' conception of the eternal law. The key move in this sub-section is to argue that, ultimately for Hooker, the law one meets in nature is Christ himself, the divine *Logos*, and Christ meets us uniquely in our particularity. These points emerge when one considers carefully his doctrine of the *duplex cognitio Dei*. This move allows him to argue subsequently that Scripture and human laws share the same origin.

In developing his version of this Reformed doctrine, Hooker shows that all humans encounter Christ the Creator and Governor, thus investing Christ's authority in both the natural and supernatural laws. Reasoning from first principles, he notes that, "from the Father, by the Son, through the Spirit, all things are."[80] The agency of the Son is clear.

Hooker's rhetorical strategy, in my view, is to defend the ecclesial laws constituting the Elizabethan settlement by demonstrating that they are derived from the same divine source as Scripture. To do this, he appropriates Thomas' notion of the eternal law. Hooker adapts Thomas by distinguishing between what he describes as first and second forms of the eternal law. These two forms enable Hooker to add more emphasis to the distinction between the inner life of the triune God and the communication of the triune God's will within the created order. By emphasizing this

---

80.   *Laws*.I.2.2; 1.59.29-30. Cf. *Laws*.I.2.3; I:60.18-20, where Hooker states, "To himself he is a law in all those things, whereof our Savior speaketh, saying, "my Father worketh as yet, so I" (John 5:17).

distinction, Hooker's re-description of the eternal law carefully coheres with the Reformation's emphasis on the concepts of the ontological and economic Trinity and its anthropological premise that humans have no innate capacity to know the mind of God.

The eternal law

As even the pagans know, God is the first cause and law of all things, "assign[ing] unto each thing the kind" and "moderat[ing] the force and power" that determine each thing's "form and measure of working."[81] The 'personal wisdom of God' is in all things; all things participate in God as an effect participates in its cause.[82] Because "only the works and operations of God have him both for their worker and author of the law whereby they are wrought,"[83] the first eternal law is "that order which God before all ages hath set down with himself, for himself to do all things by."[84] This first eternal law, which is "that law which as it is laid up in the bosom of God,"[85] includes "those natural, necessary, and internal operations of God, the generation of the Son, [and] the proceeding of the Spirit."[86] This law, however, is opaque to creatures, for "we are neither able nor worthy to open and look into [it]."[87]

While the first form of the eternal law governs the inner life of the triune God and manifests its creative power, Hooker's second form governs earthbound voluntary agents. From the divine perspective, the content of the first and second forms of the eternal law is identical, for they both express God's will; however, creatures encounter God's will only in the second form, which communicates the eternal Word to the created order.[88]

---

81. *Laws*.I.2.1; 1.58.27-30.
82. *Laws*.V.56.5; 2.236.28-29. Cf. Aquinas: "When something receives particularly that which belongs to another universally (or totally), the former is said to participate in the latter." Thomas Aquinas in his *Commentary on Boethius's De hebdomadibus* in John Wippel, "Metaphysics," in *The Cambridge Companion to Aquinas (Cambridge Companions to Philosophy)*, ed. Norman Kretzmann and Eleonore Stump, (Cambridge University Press, 1993-05-28).. Loc. 1255. Sec. V, para 2.
83. *Laws*.I.2.2; 1.59.3-4.
84. *Laws*.I.2.6; 1.63.2-3. Cf. *ST* I-II.93.1
85. *Laws*.I.3.1; 1.63.15-16.
86. *Laws*.I.2.2; 1.59.6-8.
87. *Laws*.I.2.5; 1.62.11.
88. Kirby, "From 'Generall Meditations' to 'Particular Decisions': The Augustinian Coherence of

The second form of the eternal law encompasses all "that which with himself in all his works he hath set down as expedient to be kept by all his creatures."[89] For Hooker, the second form of the eternal law incorporates "any kind of rule or canon"[90] that determines the actions of things within time and space.

There are many such determinative rules and canons, so Hooker organizes his description of them into two primary categories - the natural and the divine law. Within the former genus, Hooker identifies species of law corresponding to distinctions among created beings. He interweaves his account of the law with his account of cosmological order.

The natural law

Natural law is that "which ordereth [all] natural agents,"[91] a category that, for Hooker, properly includes all created beings. Yet, for expedience, he further categorizes natural agents according to whether they are involuntary or voluntary agents. Involuntary agents, which Hooker sometimes calls necessary agents, are those things "void of life"[92] "which keep the law of their kind unwittingly, as the heavens and elements of the world, which can do no otherwise than they do,"[93] while voluntary agents are characterized by rational or "intellectual natures."[94] Voluntary agents share the trait of rationality but are also of two kinds - material and immaterial. Earthbound voluntary agents (animals) manifest rationality in material form, while celestial voluntary agents (e.g., angels) manifest rationality in immaterial form.[95] Humans are a special class of the former category, distinguished from other animals by the desire to imitate God through their pursuit of "knowledge of truth and by growing in the exercise of virtue."[96]

Various species of natural law correspond to this description of reality.

Richard Hooker's Political Theology," 51-52.
89. *Laws*.I.3.1; 1.63.8-9.
90. *Laws*.I.3.1; 1.63.14.
91. *Laws*.I.3.1; 1.63.18.
92. *Laws*.I.6.2; 1.75.2.
93. *Laws*.I.3.2; 1.64.6-8.
94. *Laws*.I.3.2; 1.64.9.
95. *Laws*.I.4.1; 1.69.20-71.3.
96. *Laws*.I.5.3; 1.74.1.

Involuntary natural agents are ruled by "the determination of the wisdom of God, known to God himself the principal director of them."[97] Hooker names as "celestial and heavenly law" "that which Angels do clearly behold and without any swerving observe."[98] For spirits and angels are ruled by "their intuitive intellectual judgment concerning the amiable beauty and high goodness of that object, which with unspeakable joy and delight doth set them on work."[99] Irrational living agents, such as "beasts," are ruled by their instinctive "judgment of common sense or fancy concerning the sensible goodness of those objects wherewith they are moved."[100] In contrast, "the rule of voluntary agents on earth is the sentence that reason giveth concerning the goodness of those things which they are to do."[101]

It is difficult to overemphasize this last claim. Hooker names the law that rules earthbound voluntary agents "the law of reason." For Hooker, the human *telos* is to participate in the rationality of God, and humans do that when they are ruled by the Word spoken which is comprehended exclusively via the light of reason. This foreshadows what we will see below: Hooker describes our noetic access to the good entirely in terms of our discursive capacity.

The key move here is to notice that the natural law is a subject which acts upon all created beings, drawing them toward fulfillment of their *telos*. By re-describing the eternal law in terms of its first and second forms, Hooker clarifies that the actuality of divine alterity is ever present to created beings.[102] In Book I of *Laws*, Hooker's speaks

---

97. *Laws*.I.8.4; 1.84.20-21.
98. *Laws*.I.3.1; 1.63.18-20.
99. *Laws*.I.8.4; 1.84.26-85.2.
100. *Laws*.I.8.4; 1.84.24-25.
101. *Laws*.I.8.4; 1.85.2-4.
102. While he would express "serious reservations" about Hooker's eudaemonism, Barth agrees with Hooker's basic description of the law as alterior (Hooker's eternal law) and interior (Hooker's discursive judgments about the law made possible by the light of reason which commands the will). "An imperative to which I owe absolute obedience must necessarily come in the most radical sense from within, in order that it may claim me most radically within. A command which transcends our actions cannot in the last analysis be merely a command which I have given myself on the basis of what I myself have seen and experienced and felt and judged of the good and the true and the beautiful. It must come to me as something alien, as the command of another, demanding as such that I should make its content the law of my life. If there is an ought, it must not be the product of my own will, but touch from outside the whole area of what I can will of myself. It must lay upon me the obligation of unconditioned truth—truth which is not conditioned by myself." Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, trans. G.W. Bromilly and T.F. Torrance (Edinburgh: T&T Clark International, 1956), Part 2, vol. 2, 651. Subsequent citations of *Church Dogmatics* follow the

of this subject in an abstract grammar. I shall argue below that this subject whose Word orders all natural agents is the eternal *Logos*, the Christ himself. For Hooker, the natural law and human freedom are never separated from their christological ground.

The supernatural path in Christ

All of the species of natural law are derived from the second form of the eternal law; they govern all things so that God's purpose is fulfilled. As Hooker narrates it, these laws governing all things would have been sufficient to bring each created thing to its *telos* in God, were it not for the Fall. Because the natural way to our *telos* of eternal blessedness is blocked by the original and persistent reality of sin, God makes known "the supernatural way of salvation and law for them to live in that shall be saved."[103] Hooker alludes to Augustine's *de Trinitate* in describing how God causes healing of the will so that humans return to God:

> Whereas we now love the thing that is good, but especially in respect of benefit to us, we shall then love the thing that is good only or or principally for the goodness of beauty in itself. The soul being in this sort as it is active, perfected by love of that infinite good, shall, as it is receptive be also perfected with those supernatural passions of joy, peace, and delight.[104]

Since "the natural path to everlasting life" is the habit "of doing good" and "performing exactly the duties and works of righteousness,"[105] a way blocked by sin, "God hath revealed a way mystical and supernatural, a way directing unto the same end of life."[106] That supernatural way "that leadeth us from misery into bliss" is the way of virtue.[107]

Here Hooker follows Aquinas closely. God grants the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity that are the ground of all other virtues, where faith is trust in the

---

standard convention of listing the Volume and Part-Volume. However, for the convenience of those accessing Barth online as I do, I've followed the additional convention of listing the Paragraph and Sub-Section followed by the page number. For example: *CD* II/2 §38.1.651. On Barth's correction of Kant on the question of the alterity and interiority of the divine command, see Woodard-Lehman, "Freedom and Authority," 162-164.

103. *Laws*.I.11.5; 1.117.10-12.
104. *Laws*.I.11.3; 1.113.18-23.
105. *Laws*.I.11.5;1.117.
106. *Laws*.I.11.6; 1.118.15-16.
107. *Laws*.I.11.6; 1.118.22.

"hidden wisdom in Christ,"[108] where hope's "highest object... is that everlasting goodness which in Christ doth quicken the dead," and where "the final object [of charity] is that incomprehensible beauty which shineth in the countenance of Christ the son of the living God...."[109]

For Hooker, God's laws concerning this deliverance of humankind from the consequences of sin:

> ... are supernatural, both in respect of the manner of delivering them which is divine, and also in regard of the things delivered which are such as have not in nature any cause from which they flow, but were by the voluntary appointment of God ordained....[110]

The key move here is to notice that, alongside the natural law that governs all things, Hooker describes a "supernatural" or "divine" law that God has revealed as the path by which sinful humankind is directed to eternal blessedness. That path is participation in the Christ. The second form of the eternal law is communicated to humans, therefore, through both the natural law and the supernatural path revealed in Scripture and the Sacraments.

Christ the Logos

We've seen that Hooker derives the natural law and all human laws from the second form of the eternal law. This adaptation sets up the rhetorically crucial claim that human laws - such as the ecclesiastical laws of England - have the same origin as Holy Scripture. As we shall see below, the difference in authority we assign them is due not to different origins but to different levels of vulnerability to probabilistic error. But Hooker's account of the eternal law suffers from its abstract grammar. In this sub-section, therefore, I propose a minor reparation that clarifies, for the purposes of this study, the identity of the subject who orders all created things.

In his introduction to the concept of law, Hooker leaves some ambiguity as to

---

108. Hooker here associates Christ with Wisdom and *Logos*, and also speaks of its hiddenness. This corresponds with Barth's notion of an veiling and unveiling of the divine will; Hooker sees human comprehension of revelation as dialectic in a manner similar to Barth.

109. *Laws*.I.11.6;119.1-3.

110. *Laws*.I.11.6; 1.119.18-24. Note the echo of Scotus here. Hooker is at pains to clarify that this supernatural path is not necessary, but dependent entirely upon the will of God.

how the agency of the Son is made effective. It fit Hooker's rhetorical purposes to speak of the *Logos* in abstract terms in Book I of his treatise, but what he implies there, he makes explicit throughout Book V in his discussion of the real presence of the Son in our sacramental practices.[111] It seems to me that Hooker understands the eternal law to be the divine *Logos*, and the divine *Logos* to be the Son.[112] Even if it could be shown that Hooker did not intend to make such an identity, we are justified in explicitly identifying the One whom we encounter in the created order not just as the *Logos* but as Jesus Christ himself. That is, the following clarification is warranted and will be assumed throughout this study: the objective content we encounter in the wondrous works of nature and through the fruits of "worldly experience and practice," is not some abstract law or 'first cause' but none other than Jesus Christ himself.[113]

Given this reconstruction, I am in a position to summarize the first set of key Hookerian concepts upon which the rest of this study will rely. For Hooker, the objective basis of human knowledge of God is the divine *Logos* - the eternal law which both creates and governs that which is created so that the created order expresses the will of the triune God. Appropriating and adapting both Aquinas and Calvin in framing his defense of the Elizabethan settlement in terms of his own doctrine of the

111. It is *possible* that Hooker means that the Logos is not identical to the Son, but is an abstract principle willed by and governing the inner life of the Triune God. This seems to be the argument of A.S. McGrade and Lee Gibbs. Their suggestion is that Hooker might intend to say that the Logos is the abstract principle of the divine will, that the first form of the eternal law corresponds to God's absolute power, and the second form corresponds to God's ordained power. I disagree with this view. If their proposal is correct, however, he seems to understand the distinction between the absolute and ordained power of God in the sense in which "there are many things that are in accordance with the right law that God can do but does not do." In my view, the distinction between the first and second form of the eternal law, then, would be the distinction between divine potentiality and what God actually causes, where only the latter is expressed within the created order. David Neelands attributes this position to McGrade and Gibbs, citing FLE 6.98, n. 30 in Neelands, "Scripture, Reason, and 'Tradition'," 77, n. 8.

112. Cf. John Calvin, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Acheron Press, 2012-12-15), I.5,II.14.. Torrance Kirby agrees. Kirby has argued widely that Hooker's presentation is consistent with many early church fathers in its reliance on the NeoPlatonic ideas of a first principle, idea of ideas, that is the source of all creation. On the other hand, Kirby holds that Hooker identifies the eternal law as the Logos and Son. See Kirby, "Reason and Law,"; Kirby, *Richard Hooker, Reformer and Platonist.*; Kirby, "Richard Hooker's Theory of Natural Law in the Context of Reformation Theology".;W.J. Torrance Kirby, "Creation and Government: Eternal Law as the Fountain of Laws in Richard Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity," in *Divine Creation in Ancient, Medieval, and Early Modern Thought, Essays Presented to Dr Robert D. Crouse,* ed. Willemien Otten, Walter Hannam, and Michael Treschow, Studies in Intellectual History (Leiden and Boston: E.J. Brill, 2007).

113. *Laws.*II.1.4; 1.148.3-4.

duplex cognitio Dei, Hooker distinguishes a second form of the eternal law, identical in content to the form governing the internal life of God but expressed in such a way that it irrupts into temporality and spatiality. All humans therefore encounter Christ historically and actually as Creator and Reconciler through our encounter with the *Logos ensarkos* within the created order. In addition, the elect know Christ as Deliverer or Redeemer especially through our encounter with the *Logos ensarkos* in Scripture and the sacraments.[114]

This second form of the eternal law - *the Logos ensarkos* - is manifest in the natural law known universally by humans through the faculty of reason. This natural law is itself manifest in unwritten form as 'common sense' and, for the providential governance of political societies, in the four kinds of positive law that order individuals, communities, nations, and the Church.[115] Yet, because the natural way to our *telos* of eternal blessedness is blocked by the original and persistent reality of sin, the Trinity delivers humans through the special revelation of God in Christ as encountered in Scripture and the sacraments (what Hooker describes as the 'divine law').[116] Thus, both the natural law and the divine law are derived from and express the eternal law; they collectively constitute God's creative and governing will within the created order.

Notice that, with the crucial exception of a personal relationship with the exalted Son, the human agent's encounter with the eternal law is neither absolute, material, nor immediate. Rather the human agent encounters the eternal law in the conditioned and mediated forms of Scripture, positive law, or custom, and always locally, temporally, and indirectly.[117] Here, even before we encounter Hooker's psychology, we

---

114. *Laws*.V.56.6; 2:237.25-28.
115. *Laws*.I.15.3; 1.131.25-132.20.
116. *Laws*.I.11.6; 1.118.13-119.24.
117. Woodard-Lehman, in discussing Barth's discussion of the authority *of* the Word and *under* the Word, notes that Barth describes the authority of the Word as immediate, absolute, and material, and describes the divine command that the human agent experiences as "the heteronomy of mediate, relative, and formal authority." In my view, Hooker's eudaemonistic account of the natural law agrees in important ways with Barth's description of how the human agent experiences grace as command. Woodard-Lehman, "Freedom and Authority," 184.

see that that the eternal law can be known only in its immanent, sensible forms.[118] Hooker therefore would partially agree with Barth that, "Apart from its immanent heteronomous correlates, God's Word would be mute. God's command would be silent."[119] Hooker, however, is more ready than Barth to include the practices of the Church and the symphony of the created order in the set of immanent, sensible forms through which the eternal law is mediated.

The key finding here is that, for Hooker, all creatures encounter Christ as Creator and Governor, which means that *the natural law that all creatures encounter is Christ himself*. Christ is the concrete universal. As we shall see in chapter four, Hooker's doctrine of the *duplex cognitio Dei* provides a necessary foundation for his doctrine of our participation in Christ.

Hookerian anthropology

Eudaemonism encumbered by sin

The first thing that must be said about Hooker's theological anthropology is that it is teleological. Hooker's eudaemonism may be his most prominent resemblance to Thomas Aquinas. His anthropology begins with the observation that, at the beginning of life, we are most different from the angels in the fact that they have the full knowledge of God we seek and we have no understanding of God at all: "men if we view them in their spring, are at the first without understanding of knowledge at all. Nevertheless from this utter vacuity they grow by degrees, till they come at length to be even as the Angels themselves are."[120] However, humans potentially grow to possess the full knowledge of God that is always the mark of the angels. Humans naturally thirst for knowledge of God and therefore knowledge of the good, and this thirst drives the journey which leads to knowledge of the good.[121]

---

118. My concern here is to describe Hooker's account of the natural law. I will return to this point, however, in responding to John Webster's complaint that the ecclesial ethicists' account of the Church is excessively immanentist.
119. Ibid., 187. This is Woodard-Lehman's summation of Barth's account of how theonomy becomes hetoronomy for the human agent.
120. *Laws*.I.6.1; 1.74.20-24.
121. *Laws*.I.5.2; 1.73.9-20.

An infinite gulf, however, separates the finite from knowledge of God so that knowledge of God depends on divine revelation.[122] While this is a standard premise of Reformation theology,[123] Hooker's subtle understanding of why this is so turns out to be important to our study. In what follows, I will briefly comment on Hooker's understanding of sin and its epistemological implications.

Like Calvin, Hooker described the noetic effects of sin with the metaphor of sight.[124] There is a distinction between that which is revealed and that which is known by the light of reason. While God does indeed reveal throughout creation that which ought to lead humans to recognize God rightly as Creator, the noetic effects of sin are such that humans misperceive that which is revealed. Human reason is *nearly* blinded by sin such that we see that which God reveals in creation wrongly.[125] Given the reality of faith, however, the study of creation has a fruitfulness like that of Scripture: both creation and Scripture have a common source in God and thus lead to reliable knowledge of God. A key premise for Hooker, as with Calvin, is that, given faith, humans can reliably know the law by which the Creator governs temporal existence.[126]

---

122. *Laws*.I.11.5; 1.1.116.2-117.12.

123. Barth reminds us that this is not merely a philosophical limitation, but a theological implication of the alterity of God. Not merely *"finitum non capax infiniti"* but *"homo peccator non capax verbi Domini."* Barth, *CD*, 1/1 §6.3.220.. Neder amplifies: "Barth is not merely rejecting an unwarranted mixing of divine and human essences considered abstractly. He is rejecting a confusion of divine and human *decisions* - the divine decision of election and the corresponding decision of faith and obedience - and *therefore* divine and human essences." Adam Neder, *Participation in Christ: An Entry Into Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009), 13. Emphasis original.

124. Hooker was distinctive in following Calvin closely in describing sin in terms of cognition rather than will. As with Calvin, for Hooker, "blindness is now an acute stigmatism that can be corrected by the light of faith and the spectacles of Scripture." As we shall see, Hooker's doctrine of participation, therefore, describes the means by which Christ heals our sight. David Steinmetz lists twenty-four 16th century theologians who embraced the claim that a natural knowledge of God is possible but disagreed with Calvin's account of it. Calvin, per Steinmetz, was 'singular' in claiming that the noetic effect of the Fall caused a misperception of revelation. Hooker, however, followed Calvin in this. These others saw the noetic effects in terms of sin's bondage of the will, David Curtis Steinmetz, *Calvin in Context*, 2nd ed. (Oxford University Press, USA, 2010-10-14), 30.

125. Just as knowledge of the good is an act of reason (caused first by a turning of the will), "there was never sin committed wherein a less good was not preferred before a greater, and that willfully." Our natural thirst for knowledge is frustrated by ignorance, for the good we seek "hath evidence enough for itself, if reason were diligent to search it out." But communal "neglect" of the good causes "a show of that which is not," and we choose that which is "less good." Sometimes, in our choices, we are deceived by Satan; "sometimes the hastiness of our wills prevent[ ] the more considerate advice of sound reason," and "sometimes the very custom of evil make[s] the heart obdurate against whatsoever instructions to the contrary." *Laws*.I.7.7; I:80:24-29, 81:10-16.

126. Hooker's treatment of the noetic effects of sin are developed in the *Dublin Fragments*, wherein he differentiates his view from his fellow English Calvinists, and closely conforms to

For Hooker, human faculties remain apt in spite of the Fall, for humans still have "a reasonable understanding, and a will thereby framable to good things, but [are] not thereunto now able to frame [themselves]."[127] The Trinity foreknew this, and predestined Christ's reconciling mission "to countervail this our imbecility, and to serve as his hand, that thereby we which cannot move ourselves, may be drawn, but amiably drawn."[128] God causes the doxastic restructuring[129] required in us that make possible our apprehension of cause and effect, so that we are able *in faith* to pursue the good boldly, while our knowledge of it nonetheless remains enshrouded in an unfolding mystery.

Hookerian psychology

This leads to a second key premise of Hooker's theological anthropology. When Hooker considers the doxastic restructuring that heals our relational capacities, he describes something similar to, yet subtly distinct from, a Thomist psychology. In what follows, the key move is to notice that Hookerian psychology denies innate access to knowledge of the good. For Hooker, the light of reason in humans is reduced to an innate capacity for discursive logic that enables us to deduce reliably the principles of the eternal law and the relations of things to each other. Our minds are blank slates at birth, but we grow in our knowledge of the good through our empirical experience of God's actions upon us. This distinction will prove crucial in his accounts of how we recognize the good, our participation in Christ, and are the reason practices are so important to the Church.

Calvin's metaphor of sight. See Richard Hooker, "The Dublin Fragments," in *The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker, Volume Iv: Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity: Attack and Response, the Folger Library. The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity),* (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1982-01-01). Subsequent citations to this documents will be cited with the short name, *Dublin.* For more on Hooker's treatment of sin, see Grislis, "Providence, Predestination, and Free Will in Richard Hooker's Theology," and Neelands, "Richard Hooker and the Debates About Predestination, 1580-1600,"

127. *Dublin*.2; 4:103.19-21.
128. *Dublin*.2; 4:103.21-24.
129. I've borrowed the phrase "doxastic causality " from John Jenkins in his account of Aquinas' *Posterior Analytics.* The doxastic causality condition is the state in which the principles of an Aristotelian demonstration "are 'better known' to us" and have become "the cause or epistemic ground of our assent to the conclusion" of the demonstration. I take this state to mark the moment of what is often called justifying grace.It is the moment in which we recognize Christ as our Reconciler. Jenkins, *Knowledge and Faith*, Kindle location 626, Chap. 1, Sect. 1.7, para 8.

According to Thomas, a property of the intellect is its indefectibility in recognizing the quiddity of at thing.[130] We apprehend a thing when we realize its essence, which is to say that to apprehend a thing is to perceive its inherent nature. Because both speculative and practical reasoning rely upon the natural light of one's participation in the divine, a human subject recognizes the goodness of an object through its participation in the divine Mind.[131] This natural light of reason is imprinted on all things "subject to Divine providence" whereby "they derive their respective inclinations to their proper acts and ends."[132] Thereby, human reason, unaided by grace, participates in the eternal law and is therefore able to reach conclusions in accord with it.[133]

From this summary, it seems that Thomist psychology supports a rationalist theory of knowledge.[134] To know a thing in its particularity is to participate in God's knowledge of its particularity. Knowledge of a thing begins with intellection of its essence through our participation in the divine Mind, triggering consciousness of our *innate* knowledge of its essence through our recognition of it. We have *a priori* knowledge which is not gained from experience but resulting from our rational nature (our *intellectus*). I shall argue below that Hooker subtly adapts this psychology by

---

130. *Thomas Aquinas, ST, I.85.6.*; Thomas Aquinas, *SCG*, III.108.4.

131. "The name intellect is derived from the fact that it apprehends what is innermost and profound in the thing: for to understand (*intelligere*) is "to read what is within" (*intus legare*). Sense and imagination apprehend only superficial accidents; only the intellect goes to the interior and essence of a thing." Jenkins, *Knowledge and Faith*, Kindle location 1436, Sect. 4.1.

132. *Thomas Aquinas, SCG, I-II.91.2.* "Since all things subject to Divine providence are ruled and measured by the eternal law, as was stated above (Article [1]); it is evident that all things partake somewhat of the eternal law, in so far as, namely, from its being imprinted on them, they derive their respective inclinations to their proper acts and ends.

133. *Ibid., I-II.109.2.* Thomas states that "…in the state of integrity, as regards the sufficiency of the operative power, man by his natural endowments could wish and do the good proportionate to his nature, such as the good of acquired virtue; but not surpassing good, as the good of infused virtue."

134. By my reading, Thomas teaches a *rationalist* psychology because he assumes the innate capacity for intellection of transcendentals. By innate ability, I refer to the capacity for humans to apprehend the quiddity of a thing. Note that this recognition happens prior to any discursive operation on the idea of the object. That is, recognition of the essence of a thing happens prior to judgments about its relatedness to other beings or its diversity, and prior to judgments about its truth or falsehood. The natural light of reason is such that, following recognition of a thing's essence, though one's knowledge is imperfect and one may have substantively more to learn about the inherent nature of the thing, one has a reliable preliminary grasp of it. There is a reliable correspondence between the idea of the quiddity of the thing formed in the intellect and its reality. Wawrykow agrees. See note 55 on page 36. Jenkins, *Knowledge and Faith*, Kindle Loc. 1436, 1610, Sect 4.1, 4.5.; John Milbank and Catherine Pickstock, *Truth in Aquinas (Radical Orthodoxy)*, Kindle ed. (Routledge, 2000), Kindle location 706, Chap. 2, Sect. 2, para 5-6.

assuming we have no such innate capacity beyond the capacity to reason discursively, and that human knowledge of the good is *a posteriori*, accumulating as a result of discursive reasoning in response to phenomena. Hookerian psychology does not support a rationalist theory of knowledge.

In a brief description, Hooker describes the human as constituted by body and soul. The soul is further divided into a 'diviner' and a 'baser' part (these might correspond to Thomas' *intellectus* and *ratio,* respectively, though Hooker does not describe them with Thomist language). Hooker speaks of a 'spirit of our minds' that seems to correspond to the 'diviner part.' In our perfected state, the spirit of our minds directs the soul. Because, in our redeemed state, the light of reason enables the mind to comprehend the eternal law in our encounters with it, the eternal law is thereby hierarchically mediated from soul to body within the human person. That is, the soul is most excellent and directs our bodies "and the spirit of our minds the soul."[135] The "understanding faculty of the mind" (seemingly corresponding to Thomas' *ratio*) produces "mandates" experienced by the will as commands. The eternal law is thereby mediated, making known to us what our duties to God and our neighbor.[136]

This bears a strong resemblance to the Thomist psychology if one grants the correspondences I have suggested might be present between 'diviner part' and *intellectus*, and between the 'understanding faculty of the mind' and *ratio*. But Hooker continues, explaining that whatever the mind knows about 'the grand mandates' requiring obedience by the will and about the existence, "power, force, wisdom, and other properties" of God, it learns "by the same method" by which it learns of "our duty... towards man."[137] We discover that the apparent continuity with a Thomist psychology gives way to a significant discontinuity, for the exclusive method by which

---

135. *Laws*.I.8.6; I:87.1-6.
136. While Hooker here acknowledges a natural law that governs the creature, I will argue in chapter five that the force of his logic is that Christian ethics focuses properly not on decisions, but rather on the cultivation of the virtue of the Christian. See "Knowing God and Recognizing the Good, Revisited" on page 191.
137. *Laws*.I.8.7; I:87.7-12. "This is therefore the first law whereby the highest power of the mind requireth general obedience at the hands of all the rest concurring with it unto action. Touching the several grand mandates which being imposed by the understanding faculty of the mind must be obeyed by the will of man, they are by the same method found out whether they import our duty towards God or towards man."

we learn of our duty to God and man is discursive reasoning.

Whereas Aquinas imagined an *intellectus* capable of accessing God's knowledge of the transcendentals because of human participation in Being and thereby enabling judgments about the relations of things,[138] Hooker imagines the mind of man as like a blank slate - with *no innate capacity to apprehend the quiddity of things*, and especially God. We don't have an innate knowledge of God: "We bring not the knowing of God with us into the world."[139] Hooker describes "the soul of man" [as] at the first like a book, wherein nothing is written, and yet all things may be imprinted."[140]

Furthermore, reality is constituted by particulars. Humans apprehend particulars directly and without mediation and have unconfused contact with reality: "We know things either as they are in themselves, or as they are in mutual relation one to another."[141] Humans intuit such relations between things by observing cause and effect empirically. Whereas the Thomist psychology assumes we innately have *a priori* knowledge residing in our *intellectus*, Hooker's psychology assumes we have no such innate capacity beyond the capacity to reason, and that human knowledge is *a posteriori*, accumulating as a result of discursive reasoning in response to phenomena.

Hooker restricts the Thomist psychology of intellection to the angels, and seems to collapse the human intellect to *ratio*, such that the light of reason is reduced to an innate capacity for discursive logic that enables humans to *deduce* reliably (yet probabilistically) the principles of the eternal law and the relations of things to each other. We are born with minds that are open slates, but we do indeed come to know the agency of God, an eternal law that we experience as a divine pressure, guiding things to their *telos* of participating in the divine rationality. Importantly, this knowledge is the *empirical* knowledge of an act upon us.[142] For Hooker, there is no natural intellection of transcendentals. Reason is reduced almost entirely to the

---

138. Jenkins, *Knowledge and Faith*, Kindle loc. 1384, chapt. 4, para 3, chapt 4, sect 4.1, sect 4.5. See also Milbank and Pickstock, *Truth in Aquinas*, Kindle location 673-706, Chapt. 2, sec. 2.
139. *Laws*.V.21.3; II:85.25-26.
140. *Laws*.I.6.1; I:74.26-27.
141. *Laws*.I.8.6; I:86.23-25.
142. *Laws*.I.3.4; I: 67.17-20.

discursive function.

According to Hooker's psychology, therefore, either we recognize goodness through "knowledge of the causes whereby it is made such" or, lacking the philosopher-king's comprehension of the causes, we discover it through recursive attention to the "signs and tokens" whose presence corresponds to our experience of goodness.[143] The first seems to be an allusion to the Aristotelian maxim that we understand a thing only when we comprehend its causes,[144] for Hooker declares that it "is the most sure and infallible way."[145] Yet, because so few are willing to "tread so long intricate mazes for knowledge sake," the latter way of studying signs and tokens of goodness is most common.[146]

This psychology, which arises from the Reformation insight that faith precedes charity, is decisive for Hooker's account of our participation in Christ and helps us anticipate why, in his view, ecclesial practices are of such great importance to the formation of the mind of Christ in the community. How is it possible, given this psychology, for finite humans to know the eternal Christ as our Christ as Creator and Redeemer? If humans do not have an innate capacity to know the good through intellection of transcendentals, then how can we have confidence that our laws reflect the divine will at all? We can anticipate already that Hooker's ultimate answer, in keeping with Reformation dogma, will posit the irruption of the Christ into time and space, transcending those impermeable boundaries so that we might know the mind of Christ through successive encounters. That's the account I will develop over the next three chapters. In the next section, however, we will see that Hooker begins to answer these questions by adapting a recognizably Aristotelian epistemology which is once again evocative of Thomas, though adapted subtly for his Reformation context.

---

143. *Laws*.I.8.2; I:82.29-30.
144. Aristotle, *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation, Vol. 1 (Bollingen Series Lxxi-2)*, ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984-09-01). *Phys*.194b18; *A Po*. 71 b 9–11, 94 a 20.
145. *Laws*.I.8.2; I.83.1-2.
146. *Laws*.I.8.2; I:83.3-4.

Hookerian epistemology

In the last section, I showed that Hooker adapts the medieval notion of the light of reason by rendering it in a decidedly more empiricist register. Reason is reduced almost entirely to the discursive function. There is no innate knowledge of the good. That move locates Hooker safely alongside the magisterial Reformers, who similarly constrained human knowledge of the good to revelation. As we have already seen, however, Hooker adapted two Thomist teachings which enable him to avoid a strict voluntarist perspective. First, he assigned the status of revelation to the phenomena Christians experience throughout the created order. He achieved this with his innovative appropriation of the Thomist notion of the eternal law within a Reformed account of the *duplex cognitio Dei*. The law Christians encounter in the created order has the same source as the supernatural law we encounter in the Scripture and the sacraments (Rom. 1:18-20).[147] Second, as we have already seen, he appropriated the Thomist doctrine that human faculties remain apt in spite of the Fall, "and a will thereby framable to good things,"[148] a move which enabled him to describe the human condition as primarily a cognitive rather than a voluntaristic problem.[149]

What emerges from these preliminary moves are eudaemonistic accounts of the created order as revelatory and of the human person as one who intrinsically desires the good but has no possibility of knowing the good apart from such revelation. Moreover, human psychology permits knowledge gains only through the discursive function of the innate light of reason as the person responds to encounters with other particulars within the created order. Given these accounts, it remains for Hooker to explain how humans recognize the good, and how, given the reality of sin and the

---

147. "This is because what is known about God should be plain to them because God made it plain to them. Ever since the creation of the world, God's invisible qualities—God's eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, because they are understood through the things God has made. So humans are without excuse." (Rom 1:19–20 CEB)

148. Hooker, "Dublin," 103. Hereafter all references to this will be indicated with the short name, *Dublin*. Hereafter all references to this volume will be cited with the document short name, the abbreviation FLE, the volume number, page number, and line numbers, as in *Dublin*, FLE 4.103.19-21.

149. As noted above, Hooker and Calvin are notable among the Reformers in describing sin primarily in the grammar of cognition rather than will. See note 124 on page 53.

frailties of the human mind arising from our finitude, communities adjudicate competing descriptions of the good. With those questions in view, I turn now to summarize Hooker's re-imagining of how we communally recognize the good. The key move here is to notice how Hooker deploys the Aristotelian methods of *phenomena*, *endoxa*, and *dialectic* and the virtues of *episteme* and *phronesis*. I will argue that Hooker's claim is that we recognize the good most reliably when we subject ourselves to the communal process of discernment through which we dialectically engage what previous generations have named as the signs and tokens marking the good.

Phenomena

As we saw above, Hooker's well-known optimism about nature's efficacy as a pedagogue presupposes that nature has been redeemed, and that we encounter in nature the enfleshed Christ as he reigns both on his cross and his throne. Christ, through nature, teaches God's law in sundry ways.[150] Indeed, Christ engraves human hearts not exclusively through Scripture, but also through "the glorious works of nature," personal experience of the Spirit's direction, and the fruits of "worldly experience and practice:"

> Some things she [Wisdom] openeth by the sacred books of Scripture, some things by the glorious works of nature, with some things she inspireth them from above by spiritual influence, in some things she leadeth and traineth them only by worldly experience and practice. We may not so in any one special kind admire her that we disgrace her in any other, but let all her ways be according unto their place and degree adored.[151]

Hooker's pithy claim requires some unpacking. Wisdom is the subject, acting upon its object, humankind, and it acts by causing encounters with Scripture, nature, spiritual influences, and the practical world of organized society. Our encounters with Scripture, nature, "worldy experience and practice," here distinguished from "spiritual influence," are all products of the senses. "Spiritual influences" - which I will develop

---

150. *Laws*.I.16.5; I.138.21-22; *Laws*.I.16.5; I.138.33-139.1-3; *Laws*.I.8.3; I:84.7-16; Richard Hooker, "A Learned Sermon of the Nature of Pride," in *The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker, Vol. 5: Tractates and Sermons,* (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1990-01-01). 312. Hereafter all references to this sermon will be indicated with the short name, *Pride*. Hereafter all references to this volume will be cited with the document short name, the abbreviation FLE, the volume number, page number, and line numbers, as in *Pride*, FLE 5.312.15-18.

151. *Laws*.II.1.4; I:147.27-148.7.

as our experience of the real presence over the course of the next three chapters - seemingly occupy for Hooker a special category to the extent that we struggle to describe them with the grammar of sensory experience. Yet spiritual influences are also *experiences* in the sense of encounters with that which is beyond the self. For Hooker, all of the means by which Wisdom engraves human hearts entail encounters with external agents.

In explaining how Christ teaches God's law, Hooker seems to have in mind Aristotle's method of "*phainomena*, the appearances, or, more fully, the things appearing to be the case."[152] Christ tutors us in the eternal law through our God-empowered reasoning about phenomena we encounter in daily life. We learn to recognize the 'signs and tokens' indicative of goodness through attention to phenomena and communal reflection on the mysteries they present.

The insight that Christ schools humans invariably through our experience of phenomena is fundamental to Hooker's account of our participation in Christ, which I will introduce in chapter four. This is a theology which holds that phenomena are the exclusive source of our knowledge of goodness and for the concepts we use in our discernment of goodness. We recognize the good through direct and particular experiences. Whether Wisdom teaches us through our hearing of Scripture proclaimed, or through our participation in "the glorious works of nature," or through our personal experience of the Spirit's direction, or through the fruits of "worldly experience and practice," the infallible knowledge that guides our ethical action is imprinted through our experience of phenomena. And we acquire such knowledge not in an instant but over a lifetime:

> For whatsoever we know, we have it by the hands and ministries of men, which lead us along like children from a letter to a syllable, from a syllable to a word, from a word to a line, from a line to a sentence, from a sentence to a side, and so turn over.[153]

152. Christopher Shields, "Aristotle," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Summer 2012 Edition),* ed. Edward Zalta, (Stanford: Center for the Study of Language and Information, 2013), 7.
153. Richard Hooker, "The First Sermon on Part of ST. Jude," in *The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker, Vol. 5: Tractates and Sermons,* (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1990-01-01). Hereafter all references to this sermon will be indicated with the short name, *Jude. FLE 5.*15.8-25.

As we shall see, for Hooker, Scripture and the sacraments are phenomena themselves. Phenomena like the Church lead us to them, helping us to recognize them as the most reliable signs and tokens of goodness. They themselves are phenomena directing our attention to the person of Jesus the Christ.

The claim that the Church and commonwealth are themselves phenomena through which Christ schools humankind is important to Hooker's account. They signal that Hooker's account, in spite of its insistence that all encounters with the Word are inherently subjective, does not slide down the self-centered slope which leads to relativism or an account of the Church governed by private judgment. As we shall see in the next section, Hooker's deep sense of the limits of human reason, brought about by our sin and finitude, lead him to a highly communitarian and christocentric account of our discernment of the good.

Endoxa

We saw above that Hooker holds that phenomena are the exclusive source of our knowledge of goodness and also for the concepts we use in our thinking about goodness. Christ's Spirit teaches us to recognize the good through particular experiences of phenomena. Hooker sees Scripture, the works of nature, worldly practice, and our personal experience of the Spirit's direction as distinct categories of phenomena through which Christ schools humankind. But if all knowledge arises from inherently subjective experiences of phenomena, how does the community avoid idolatry?[154] Hooker answers that "the most certain *token* of evident goodness is if the general persuasion of all men do so account it."[155] For Hooker, we mitigate the perils of subjectivity through attention to the 'signs and tokens' of goodness.

---

154. Hooker served in an ecclesial context in which Calvinist anxiety about the perils of subjectivity in discerning God's will were a given. I will develop this further in discussion the Ramist realists in chapter five. Cf. Calvin, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, I:XI.8.. "The human mind, stuffed as it is with presumptuous rashness, dares to imagine a god suited to its own capacity; as it labours under dullness, nay, is sunk in the grossest ignorance, it substitutes vanity and an empty phantom in the place of God. To these evils another is added. The god whom man has thus conceived inwardly he attempts to embody outwardly. The mind, in this way, conceives the idol, and the hand gives it birth."
155. *Laws*.I.8.3; I:83.17-19. Emphasis added.

In this sub-section, I will develop a thick account of these signs and tokens by recalling the Aristotelian concept of *endoxon*. The key move is to recognize that, similarly to Aquinas,[156] Hooker rhetorically bundles the Church's accumulated knowledge, whether discerned through our encounters with Scripture, human laws, or the spiritual domain, into endoxa, and thereby shows that they share a common source in the eternal law. This strategy enables him subsequently to argue, over and against certain Puritan interlocutors, for the preservation of Elizabethan sacramental practices on the basis that our encounters in the spiritual domain also nourish virtue. Similarly to Scripture, they communicate the eternal law to the baptized.[157]

This task immediately brings into view a common fallacy in popular depictions of Hooker's legacy. It is a commonplace to attribute to Hooker a doctrine in which 'tradition' is placed alongside Scripture and reason as part of a three-fold set of authorities that legitimately guides Christian thought. The corrections needed to the contemporary commonplace are two-fold. First, Hooker does not posit Scripture, tradition, and reason as three *alternative* sources of authority we rightly use in our discernment of the good. Rather, in keeping with scholasticism, he sets *nature* and Scripture alongside each other as sources of all knowledge, both of which are derived from the eternal law and, therefore, both of which we 'jointly and not severally'[158] use in our discernment of the good. Second, Hooker's category of nature includes the aforementioned categories of nature's glorious works and our worldly experience and practice, with the accumulated knowledge from all sources passed down from generation to generation as the 'voices of men' and, in some cases, as localized human laws.

These two corrections lead to the following clarifications which will unfold below.

---

156.   Thomas Aquinas, *ST*, I.8.2..
157.   Barth agrees partially with Hooker's recognition of the eternal law in human customs and positive law. I believe the Hookerian account is rightly qualified by (and that Hooker would agree with) Barth's distinction in describing the relation between the eternal and human law in Barth, *CD*, III/4 §53.1.66. As Woodard-Lehman observes, "Barth draws distinctions between human laws that obscure the divine law and those that witness to it. And, here, Barth insists that divine law not only can be mediated by human law. It must be. And though divinely given, we must also give this law to ourselves and to one another." Woodard-Lehman, "Freedom and Authority," 184, note 89.
158.   *Laws*.I.14.5.I.129.11.

First, for Hooker, communities discern the good through attention to the eternal law as it is discerned jointly and not severally in nature and Scripture, mediated always through the light of reason. Second, communities accumulate the knowledge of the eternal law in the form of endoxa.

When Hooker suggests that "the general and perpetual voice of men is as the sentence of God himself,"[159] and when he speaks of that which nature teaches,[160] he speaks as one long-immersed in the Aristotelian scholastic tradition during his tenure at Corpus Christi college. By my reading, when Hooker refers to 'the voice of men' and more generally in terms of that which reason discerns in nature, his meaning in such references is nuanced, an allusion to *endoxa,* the Aristotelian method paired with Aristotle's method of *phainomena*.[161] Consideration of *endoxa* is not merely respect for those who go before us, but a reliable process of puzzle-solving by which we resolve mysteries arising from our study of phenomena. That process consists of gathering and testing 'the signs and tokens of goodness,' setting aside those which fail testing, moving forward by critical examination of the ways in which our most authoritative predecessors framed those puzzles.[162] I take Hooker's 'voices of men' to be broader and more complex than the Thomist "Doctors of the Church."[163] It incorporates accumulated wisdom in both ecclesial and non-ecclesial domains, and it includes both the expert discoveries derived from formal scholastic method and the informally derived wisdom we denote by "common sense." It encapsulates communal reflection in response to all kinds of phenomena, including Scripture and spiritual experience, shapes the concepts by which we describe them, and thereby articulates the norms

---

159. *Laws*.I.8.3; I:83.3-84.1.
160. See, for example, *Laws*.1.14.5
161. Endoxa are "those opinions are reputable which are accepted by everyone, or by the majority, or by the wise - i.e., by all, or by the majority, or by the most notable and reputable of them." Aristotle, *Complete Works Vol 1*. *Top*. 100b21–23.
162. "We must, as in all other cases, set the phenomena before us and, after first discussing the difficulties, go on to prove, if possible, the truth of all the reputable opinions about these affections or, failing this, of the greater number and most authoritative; for if we both resolve the difficulties and leave the reputable opinions undisturbed, we shall have proved the case sufficiently." Aristotle, *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation, Vol. 2 (Bollingen Series Lxxi-2),* ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984-09-01). *EN* 1145b1-7.
163. Thomas Aquinas, *ST*, 1.1.8 ob 2. Wawrykow, *Handbook for Thomas Aquinas*, 13-15.

that inform our experience of them.

This background illuminates Hooker's complaint about the philosophical method of his interlocutors. I will develop this contrast in detail in chapter three by comparing Hooker to his Ramist realist colleagues. I anticipate that argument now in order to illuminate Hooker's teaching about the role of *endoxa* in Hooker's account of reason.

Hooker appropriates and adapts the Thomist conception of authorities in our pursuit of sacred knowledge. Hooker adapts the Thomist distinction between revelation and the intrinsic and extrinsic authorities mediated through reason.[164] He retains the Thomist ranking of authorities according to their probabilistic character. In Hooker's appropriation *all* the sources are treated as revelatory in character because they reveal the eternal law, and all are mediated via the light of reason. In place of the distinction between revelation and reason, Hooker's domains consist of direct and indirect revelation. These Hookerian domains, however, are re-framed in ways supportive of Hooker's extended argument with presbyterians and Ramist realists.[165]

First, there is a domain within which only Scripture expresses the eternal law in a manner comprehensible to fallen humanity. That domain is the supernatural path to eternal beatitude that is the incarnate Christ.[166] Importantly, in Hooker's schema, not all things found in Scripture belong to this supernatural domain.

Many of the questions that arise in communal life belong to a second domain in which the eternal law is expressed both by divine law (Scripture) and the natural law of reason. There is a distinction here between Scripture's revelation of the supernatural law of God's deliverance of humankind in and through Christ and Scripture's recordation of the histories and practices of particular communities in biblical history. We shall see in chapter three that, in contrast with his interlocutors, Hooker assigned

---

164. Thomas Aquinas, *ST*, 1.8.2.
165. In my view, this is motivated in part by the rhetorical challenge. Hooker is seeking to refute a view of *sola scriptura* that claims the only reliable source of our knowledge of the good is Scripture. Rhetorically, Hooker must demonstrate that positive laws derived from the accumulated wisdom of the ages also articulate the eternal law, even though it is more vulnerable to probabilistic error. I develop this claim below.
166. *Laws*.I.11.6; 1.118.15-16.

different levels of authority to different parts of the Scriptural narrative on the basis of this distinction. Simply put, the Hookerian account holds that Scripture contains both supernatural and natural law, where the former denotes the Gospel of the deliverance of humankind by Jesus Christ.

Within this latter domain, in which the eternal law is revealed to humans through Scripture, "the glorious works of nature," personal experience of the Spirit's direction, and through the fruits of "worldly experience and practice," the proper philosophical method by which the good is discovered begins with the particularities of the puzzle the community confronts.[167] The community then gathers and tests the *endoxa* which seem to be applicable, and thereby reaches conclusions which may or may not validate the received wisdom. Hooker's recurring complaint was that, within this second domain, his opponents failed to recognize the authority of these non-scriptural sources, and, when applying scriptural guidance, failed to assess adequately whether and how general principles from Scripture were applicable to the particularities of the presenting ethical questions.

I noted above the commonplace attribution to Hooker of a doctrine in which 'tradition' is placed alongside Scripture and reason as part of a three-fold set of authorities that legitimately guides Christian thought. That depiction is problematic for a number of reasons,[168] but for our present purpose it is sufficient to clarify that Hooker infrequently referred to 'tradition,' and when he did, he almost always used the term in a highly negative sense.[169] By my reading, Hooker distinguishes *endoxa* (or 'voice of men,' as Hooker referred to it) from 'tradition' in the sense of Roman Catholic sacred tradition having an authority like that of Scripture. 'Tradition,' for

---

167. I discuss this point in the next section where I describe Hooker's emphasis on dialectical discourse. I develop this concept in great detail with respect to scriptural reasoning in chapter two. See "Hookerian prescription: The priority of the particular" on page 96.

168. Within reflections on the mutability of ecclesiastical laws, Hooker proposes not a three-legged stool, but a hierarchy of authorities. Those authorities are, ranked according to their ordering on a probabilistic spectrum, (1) that which Scripture plainly delivers regarding its subject matter, the supernatural path in Christ; (2) the general and perpetual voice of men; and (3) the judgments rendered by "the Church by her ecclesiastical authority" in the local and immediate sense. In context, Hooker is responding directly to claims by Thomas Cartwright that laws need not be obeyed if judged by individuals to be inconsistent with Scripture. Hooker, like Whitgift before him, is asserting the current authority of the Church headed by Queen Elizabeth to order the affairs of the national church.

169. Neelands, "Scripture, Reason, and 'Tradition'," 93.

Hooker, usually referred to Roman Catholic declarations pertaining to things necessary to salvation, the authority of which was forcefully rejected by the Reformers. Hooker rejected the addition of Roman 'traditions as a part of supernatural necessary truth,' noting that 'we do not reject them only because they are not in the Scripture but because they are neither in Scripture nor can otherwise sufficiently by any reason be proved to be of God.'"[170]

As we have seen, Hooker's doctrine of *duplex cognitio Dei* traces the genealogy of both human positive law and Scripture to the eternal law in order to demonstrate that both manifest God's law. In Hooker's schema, Scripture is the sole element in the category of 'divine law,' whereas various forms of law constitute the category of natural law. The importance of this schema is not solely in the distinction it protects between the natural and supernatural paths to eternal blessedness, nor in the clarity it provides about which sources of authorities govern in each domain. The schema also illuminates differences in the reliability we reasonably assign to those authorities. Elements in the category of divine law are reasonably assumed to be of the highest reliability because they, by definition, consist of direct revelation of God within history. The principles thereby revealed carry the authoritative rank of necessity. In contrast, elements in the category of natural law are derivative, consisting of socially mediated and historically experienced principles, and thus, though they have their origins in the eternal law, are subject to the compounded probabilistic errors of human receipt and transmission. The principles thereby revealed cannot be said to be necessary because they are only provisionally known.

Rome's error was categorical. Roman 'tradition' was not divine law, but human law. Rejection of Roman tradition properly was not a matter of naming all things Roman as false, but rather of naming as idolatrous the claim that Roman tradition has the same authority as scripture's account of the supernatural path in Christ.[171]

---

170. *Laws*.I.14.5; 1.129.22-24. This is a significant example of Hooker's rejection of appeals to timeless absolutes. I describe Hooker's allergy to timeless absolutes in chapter two. See "Appeals to timeless absolutes" on page 103.
171. "Whether we do now stand bound in the sight of God to yield to traditions urged by the Church of Rome the same obedience and reverence we do to his written law, honoring equally and adoring both as divine; our answer is no. They that so earnestly plead for the

Rhetorically, Hooker's careful distinction between Roman 'tradition' and the 'voices of men' enabled him to distinguish Elizabethan ecclesial practices received from Rome from Roman dogma, and thereby argue for their retention.

In contrast with his negative view of Roman 'tradition,' Hooker held a high view of the authority of 'the voice of men.' As I have suggested above, however, the trajectory of credible opinions in resolving a question is not a source of authority separate from and alternative to reason, but rather is *itself* a phenomenon presented to and examined by reason. Consideration of *endoxa* is not consideration of some authority severable from reason, but rather is integral to proper philosophical reasoning. As I will show in the next sub-section, in each considered question, the voice of men properly is heard, examined critically, and either affirmed, rejected, or amended.

Hooker does not, therefore, posit a three-fold set of authorities by which the baptized discern the way to the good, but rather sets nature and Scripture alongside each other. After Scripture, the voices of men are most reliable, followed by local ecclesial laws and customs:

> It sufficeth therefore that nature and Scripture do serve in such full sort that they both jointly and not severally either of them be so complete that unto everlasting felicity we need not the knowledge of any thing more than these two may easily furnish our minds with on all sides, and therefore they which add traditions as a part of supernatural necessary truth have not the truth but are in error.[172]

For Hooker, Christ schools the Church in the eternal law through both nature and Scripture.[173] Though they differ in the reliability we reasonably assign them as

---

authority of Tradition, as if nothing were more safely conveyed than that which spreadeth it self by report, and descendeth by relation of former generations unto the ages that succeed, are not all of them (surely a miracle it were if they should be) so simple, as thus to persuade themselves; however if the simple were so persuaded, they could be content perhaps very well to enjoy the benefit, as they account it, of that common error. What hazard the truth is in when it passeth through the hands of report, how maimed and deformed it becometh; they are not, they cannot possibly be ignorant. *Laws*.I.3.2; I:123.5-18.

172. *Laws*.I.14.5.I.129.10-16.

173. Hooker's account of the relation between nature and Scripture is consistent with the scholastic tradition. Porter notes that, though "theologians frequently equated nature and reason...," "the scholastics do distinguish between nature, understood specifically as pre-rational, and the characteristically human ability to reason." Hooker's 'voices of men' (*endoxa*) correspond to the scholastic school source called 'reason.' Given that identity, one can say that Hooker, with the scholastics, saw "nature, reason, and Scripture as three mutually interpreting sources for moral norms." Porter, *Natural and Divine Law*, 85,121.

sources of authority, the Church must attend to both in order to discern the good. Both sets of phenomena are mediated via the light of reason. The Church mitigates the perils of subjectivity through attention to the 'signs and tokens' of goodness discerned in response to encounters with both sets of phenomena, and such wisdom is gathered and passed on from generation to generation in the form of endoxa, and sometimes in the form of positive law.

Dialectic

Because the various sources of phenomena through which Christ schools the Church in the eternal law differ in the reliability we reasonably assign them as signs and tokens of the good, and because sin and creaturely finitude inevitably impede our comprehension of the good, communities must have a way of resolving contradictions and tensions in such discernment. The key move in this sub-section is to recognize that Hooker understood the process of creating such wisdom in the sense of the Aristotelian method of *dialectic*.

If nature's voice is "God's instrument," and "the general and perpetual voice of men is as the sentence of God himself," then God reveals Godself through both nature and the transmission of received wisdom from generation to generation. This is a christocentric natural theology, an optimistic view of the revelatory role of nature, but one that simultaneously is aware of the problems inherent in the methods of receipt and transmission. Hooker's observation that "the voice of men" is the "perfectest and strongest" "sign and token," is descriptive and not prescriptive. He is fully aware of the probabilistic nature of all signs and tokens. His phenomenological point is that the most important way that humans discern the good is through study of received wisdom about the good.

For Hooker, discourse is the primary means by which nature tutors. Whatever principle we choose as our subject, "it was at the very first found out by *discourse*, and drawn from out of the very bowels of heaven and earth."[174] "The law of reason or human nature is that which men by *discourse* of natural reasons have rightly found out

---

174. *Laws*.I.8.5; I:86.10-11. Emphasis added.

themselves to be all for ever bound unto in their actions."[175] Good laws are those "draw[n] from the laws of nature and God, by *discourse* of reason, aided with the influence of divine grace."[176] Whereas, the "mysteries of heavenly truth" are taught readily in Scripture, "… all kinds of knowledge else have that virtue in themselves whereby they are able to procure our assent unto such conclusions as the industry of right *discourse* doth gather from them."[177] That most reliable token of goodness, most commonly referred to by Hooker to as 'the voice of men,' is the trajectory of conclusions reached by men through the time-honored process of rational and communal discourse.

Hooker's emphasis on rational discourse arises from a commitment to logic as a means by which valid conclusions are reached in developing all forms of knowledge.[178] God presupposes human reason in God's self-revelation: "God hath not moved their hearts to think such things as he hath not enabled them to prove."[179] Indeed, the incarnated Christ relied on the tension of rational disputation to reveal the light:

> Our Lord and Savior himself did hope by disputation to do some good, yea by disputation not only of but against the truth, albeit with purpose for the truth….There is as yet no way known how to dispute or to determine of things disputed without use of natural reason.[180]

Disputation is the reliable and orderly means through which humans seek truth together and reach conclusions that contribute to knowledge and authorize communal actions. Via public discourse, we discover the eternal law and establish norms consistent with it to which all in the community are bound:

> … of this we are right sure, that nature, Scripture, and experience itself have all taught the world to seek for the ending of contentions by submitting itself unto some judicial and definitive sentence, whereunto neither part that contendeth may under any pretense or color refuse to stand.[181]

---

175. *Laws*.I.8.8; I:89.28-31. Emphasis added.
176. *Laws*.III.8.18;.I:235.14-16. Emphasis added.
177. *Laws*.V.21.3; II.85.18-21. Emphasis added.
178. As we shall in chapter five, Hooker's Cambridge-based interlocutors agreed. The dispute arose because many of them preferred the logic of Peter Ramus to that of Aristotle.
179. *Laws*.V.10.1
180. *Laws*.III.8.17; 1.234.2-9.
181. *Laws*.Preface.6.1; I.24-28.

Disputation is thus a means of knowledge, though fraught with a probability of error. Course correction is often necessary. Through discourse, we accept and reject the norms of the past as experience warrants. This dialectic pattern is how we discover laws consistent with the eternal law. Such humble, self-critical discourse is necessary if communities are to discern the good. For example, trial and error brought an evolution in the forms of government men prefer,[182] and is the means by which a community receives and tests the conclusions of those it recognizes as authoritative and thereby itself contributes to knowledge.[183] Through calm and patient logic, the community discerns the truth.[184]

For Hooker, the dialectical nature of principles derived from human experience of the eternal law arises from the probabilistic nature of human judgments and the contingency of the good.[185] As I will show in chapter three, Hooker's opponents erred in their opposition to certain ecclesiastical laws as a consequence of their habit of lifting general principles from Scripture and applying them without due regard to the particularities that rightfully determine whether and how such principles may be applied. Such generalities do not illuminate but instead are like "cloudy mists cast before the eye of common sense."[186]

We are right, therefore, to expect to encounter goodness near where "the universal consent of men" suggest it may be found, for the dialectical process of transmission of such wisdom from generation to generation clears the mists that cloud our eyes, giving us cause for confidence that we can in fact recognize the good we are to do:

> The light therefore which the star of natural reason and wisdom casteth is too bright to be obscured by the mist of a word or two uttered to diminish that opinion which justly hath been

---

182. *Laws*.I.10.5; 1. 100.16-101.11.
183. Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *ST*, I-II.94.2.
184. *Laws*.V.21.2;84.1-5. "Our desire is in this present controversy, as in the rest, not to be carried up and down with the waves of uncertain arguments, but rather positively to lead on the minds of the simpler sort by plain and easy degrees till the very nature of the thing itself do make manifest what is truth."
185. As John Bowlin argued with respect to Aquinas, so it was with Hooker: "the goodness of the will's object… can change as fortune does, haphazardly, unexpectedly, and independent of our bidding." Bowlin, *Contingency and Fortune in Aquinas's Ethics (Cambridge Studies in Religion and Critical Thought)*, 54.
186. *Laws*.V.9.2;1.43.29-30.

received concerning the force and virtue thereof even in matters that touch most nearly the principle duties of men and the glory of the eternal God.[187]

Episteme and Phronesis

I conclude this introductory sketch of selected Hooker claims by turning to Hooker's distinction between "matters of faith" and "matters of action," which, on my account, are his deployment of the Aristotelian virtues of *episteme* and *phronesis*. The distinction between *episteme* and *phronesis* will be prominent in the remainder of this inquiry. In this section, I will argue that, for Hooker, our decisions about the good are mostly local, particular, contingent, and, therefore, mutable. The key move is to recognize that the cultivation of virtue necessarily precedes godly laws because our ethical choices flow from the virtue of *phronesis*. In what follows, I will first explain why this distinction was important to Hooker's rhetorical strategy, examine how he deployed it, and propose a qualification to his distinction which I believe enables us to appropriate it in our contemporary discourse.

Undergirding much of Hooker's rhetoric is a strong philosophical commitment to the idea that faith and reason are not disjunctive. Reason so dominates human psychology that faith presupposes reason. This insight draws attention to a position held by many of Hooker's colleagues that is not uncommon today. Many Puritans - both opponents and allies of Hooker's - were influenced by Ramist realism taught in the 1590's and onward at Cambridge by William Perkins and others.[188] Extending the logic of *sola scriptura*, they argued for the exclusive authority of Scripture in ethical reasoning based on the assumption that faith and reason are disjunctive. On this view,

---

187. *Laws*.III.8.17; 1.234.25-31.
188. See "The Ramist Realists" on page 85. My proposal in chapter two is that they were important interlocutors in the background of *Laws*. From his post at Cambridge. William Perkins, in particular, spawned generations of clergy schooled in his way of avoiding the error of subjectivity through a rejection of scholastic Aristotelian logic in favor of a method grounded in the work of Peter Ramus. At its heart, it was deeply anxious about how subjectivity impedes our discernment, so it created an exegetical method that serves like a technology which, they felt, enables us to mine the eternal law objectively from Scripture. This background helps to clarify why Hooker carefully carved out a space for the exclusive authority of Scripture, and then argued that the mere presence of a practice in Scripture is not axiomatic for us today, and, conversely, that the mere absence of a practice in Scripture is not warrant for eliminating it from our common life. Deployment of the categories of *episteme* and *phronesis* complicates the suggestion that we mine universal axioms from Scripture by denying the premise that the paths to the good are singular.

faithfulness entails obeying Scripture rather than one's subjective reason in all aspects of life. Hooker rejected this premise, insisting that the first question to consider is "whether the light of reason be so pernicious that in devising laws for the church men ought not by it to search what may be fit and convenient."[189] Hooker claimed that it is impossible to choose between Scripture and reason because reason precedes, is integral to, and follows our engagement of Scripture. Humans cannot choose between faith and reason. Humans cannot choose to avoid subjective engagement with Scripture precisely because human psychology is fundamentally rational.

Hooker claimed that his opponents' puzzlement was due to two category errors. The distinctions needed are not between faith and reason but, first, between the domain in which Scripture alone can direct us and the domain in which other sources of knowledge contribute helpfully. The second distinction is between matters of faith and matters of action. The first distinction sheds light on the need for the second.

The category, 'things necessary to salvation,' pertains to the first domain, which Hooker calls 'supernatural.' Only Scripture is authoritative with regard to the supernatural path to eternal bliss given in Jesus Christ. That said, those principles of salvation found in Scripture themselves are phenomena that humans encounter and gather dialectically into *endoxa* that we thereupon encounter embedded in human positive laws. In addition to the obvious prohibitions against murder and adultery, Hooker seems to have in mind here scriptural imperatives enshrined into positive ecclesiastical law, such as the requirements for baptism and eucharist. Discovered originally in Scripture, these divine laws are also manifest in natural law as ordinances of the Church. They include the bond Christ creates in all who participate in him and "the kind of worship" appropriate to him:

> ... unto the Church as it is a society supernatural this is peculiar, that part of the bond of their association which belong to the Church of God must be a law supernatural, which God himself hath revealed concerning that kind of worship which his people shall do unto him.[190]

---

189. *Laws*.III.8.18; 1:235.3-5.
190. *Laws*.1.15.2; 1:131.16-20.

Such divine laws are of the category of knowledge, and, being eternally true, are immutable. So the first category error has to do with things either necessary or unnecessary to salvation, and the recognition that exclusive scriptural authority and immutability pertain only to the former, for "they belong forever, yea, although they be positive laws, unless being positive God himself which made them alter them."[191]

From this arises the second distinction. We discover divine law originally in Scripture alone, but because we also encounter it in its endoxic manifestations as positive ecclesiastical laws, and because both Scripture and positive law therefore treat matters essential and non-essential to salvation, when evaluating our positive laws, we must further distinguish between the matters they treat. Hooker proposes accordingly that the proper distinction for ethical reasoning is not between reason and faith, *but between matters of faith and matters of practical action*:

> Touching matters belonging unto the Church of Christ the we conceive, that they are not of one suit. Some things are *merely* of faith, which things it doth suffice that we know and believe; some things not only to be known but done, because they concern the actions of men. Articles about the Trinity are matters of *mere* faith, and must be believed. Precepts concerning the works of charity are matters of action, which to know, unless they be practiced, is not enough. This being so clear to all men's understanding, I somewhat marvel that they especially should think it absurd to oppose *Church-government* a plain matter of action unto matters of faith, who that themselves divide the gospel into *Doctrine* and *Discipline*.[192]

Hooker's distinction between matters of '*mere* faith' and 'matters of action' is crucial to his larger argument against his opponents' method of ethical reasoning. I propose that this distinction can be most fruitfully understood in terms of the Aristotelian virtues of knowledge (*episteme*) and practical wisdom (*phronesis*). In contrast with the virtues of *episteme* and *techne*,[193] *phronesis* is an intellectual virtue consisting of excellence in action towards the end of producing the good, "a true and

---

191. *Laws*.1.15.3; 1.131.32-132.1.
192. *Laws*.3.3.2; 1:210.1-13 Emphasis original
193. Aristotle, *Complete Works Vol 2*. *EN* 1139b.18-36, 1140a.1-23. For Aristotle, the intellectual virtue of knowledge is attained through study of a field's causes. One reasons inductively from first principles, proceeds through deduction to the particulars, and reaches demonstrable conclusions. In contrast with *episteme*, *techne* is not the understanding of an object through comprehension of its causes, but 'a seasoned state of capacity to make.' *Techne* is often translated into English as 'art' or 'craft.' But perhaps the most important aspect of *techne* for our purposes is that it is an intellectual excellence oriented towards production of a thing. In chapter two, I will argue that the Ramist realists strived to cultivate *techne* through their exegetical method rather than the *phronesis* they should have preferred.

reasoned statement of capacity to act with regard to the things that are good or bad for man."[194] Cultivation of the virtue of *phronesis* necessarily precedes godly laws because such laws are the fruit of a people skilled in deliberating about how "to act with regard to the things that are good and bad." Adopting that nomenclature for our analysis, we can substitute those Aristotelian concepts in my conclusion above, and declare that Hooker proposes that the proper distinction for ethical reasoning is not between reason and faith, but between the respective subject matters of knowledge (*episteme*) and practical wisdom (*phronesis*).

Recognizing Hooker's deployment of these Aristotelian virtues puts in perspective Hooker's distinction between 'matters of mere faith' and 'matters of action.' It is not that faith and reason are opposed, but that matters of faith, as the subject matter of *episteme,* involve knowledge of things that are necessary and eternal, and matters of action, as the subject matter of *phronesis,* have to do with deliberation 'about what is good and expedient.' The principles of that which *is good* cannot change precisely because they are necessary and eternal, while that which is *conducive to the good* cannot be demonstrated and must be chosen through deliberation, for, inherently, it can be otherwise than it currently is.

Hooker recognized the potential for puzzles in the subject matters of both faith and action. He ranked ecclesial sources of authority on a probabilistic spectrum

---

194. *EN* 1140a.24 - 1140b.12. "Regarding practical wisdom [*phronesis*] we shall get at the truth by considering who are the persons we credit with it. Now it is thought to be a mark of a man of practical wisdom to be able to deliberate well about what is good and expedient for himself, not in some particular aspect, e.g., about what sorts of thing conduce to health or to strength, but about what sorts of things conduce to the good life in general. This is shown by the fact that we credit men with practical wisdom [phronesis] in some particular respect when they have calculated well with a view to some good end which is one of those not the object of any art. Thus in general the man who is capable of deliberating has practical wisdom. Now no one deliberates about things that cannot be otherwise nor about things that it is impossible for him to do. Therefore, since knowledge [*episteme*] involves demonstration, but there is no demonstration of things whose first principles can be otherwise (for all such things might actually be otherwise), and since it is impossible to deliberate about things that are of necessity, practical wisdom cannot be knowledge nor art; not knowledge because that which can be done is capable of being otherwise, not art because action and making are different kinds of thing. It remains, then, that it is a true and reasoned statement of capacity to act with regard to the things that are good or bad for man. For while making has an end other than itself, action cannot; for good action itself is its end. It is for this reason that we think Pericles and men like him have practical wisdom, viz. because they can see what is good for themselves and what is good for men in general; we consider that those who can do this are good at managing households or estates."

because there is a distinction between a principle and our comprehension of the principle that has to do with our method of knowing. Though the principles constituting matters of faith are eternal and immutable, they are to be distinguished from our comprehension of them. The methods by which we deduce these principles socially and historically - through our encounter of the Christ the Redeemer in Scripture, the phenomena constituting our encounter with the Christ the Governor in the created order, our creation and gathering of *endoxa*, and our dialectical discourse regarding these things - render our comprehension inherently uncertain. Therefore, though the principles themselves are eternal and therefore immutable, we might reasonably expect ongoing disputation regarding them, and expect a trajectory in meanings of the concepts we use to speak about them.

While Hooker acknowledges this potential need to correct the concepts we use in speaking of matters of faith (such as God's deliverance in Christ), the need for correction is clearer in matters requiring phronetic judgement. Refusing to make such corrections can be perilous. Hooker notes that "The end wherefore laws were made may be permanent, and those laws nevertheless require some alteration, if there be any unfitness in the means which they prescribe as tending unto that end and purpose."[195] The potential for error is greatest in matters of action wherein multiple options are possible. *Phronesis* is an intellectual virtue of a godly commonwealth, precisely because:

> Men's consultations are always perilous. And it falleth out many times that after long deliberation, those things are by their wit even resolved on, which by trial are found most opposite to public safety. It is no impossible thing for states, be they never so well established, yet by oversight in some one act or treaty between them and potent opposites, utterly to cast away themselves forever.[196]

Laws having to do with the practical action of ordering the state or church are among the subject matter of *phronesis*. Such laws are deliberative choices made in cases which may be otherwise than they are; those choices are not necessary, but provisional. Such laws are therefore mutable. This signals the importance of Hooker's objection to ahistorical thinking, and his insistence that such laws are contingent and

---

195. *Laws*.III.10.3; 1.242.13-16.
196. *Laws*.III.11.9; 1:254.1-7.

mutable. The phronetic character of laws pertaining to matters of action means that the expedient chosen eventually becomes no longer expedient, requiring their amendment or abolition:

> Laws, as all other things human, are many times full of imperfection, and that which is supposed to be behooveful unto men, proveth often times most pernicious. The wisdom which is learned by tract of time findeth the laws that have been in former ages established needful in later to be abrogated. Besides that which sometime is expedient doth not always so continue, and the number of needless laws unabolished doth weaken the force of them that are necessary.[197]

Hooker's opponents argued that the doctrine encapsulated with the slogan, *sola scriptura*, means that universal axioms discovered in Scripture should exclusively determine matters of action, including questions about how the church is ordered. In response, Hooker insisted that there is much that Scripture does not plainly deliver, and there is much that Scripture leaves unsaid, leaving the Church of England to determine how best to order itself in each context:

> .... no more is by us maintained, than only that Scripture must needs teach the Church whatsoever is in such sort necessary, as hath been set down, and that it is no more disgrace for Scripture to have let a number of things free to be ordered at the discretion of the Church, than for nature to have left it unto the wit of man to devise his own attire, and not to look for it as the beasts of the field have theirs...."[198]

Reflecting on these general principles, Hooker presses his point that the Church is warranted in making ecclesiastical laws pursuant to the good with an eye to that which is expedient and convenient in its own historical context. Scripture provides only general guidance with regard to the ordering of the Church. Referring to the scriptural mandates cited by his opponents, he observes that:

> ... these rules are no such laws as require any one particular thing to be done, but serve rather to direct the Church in all things which she doth, so that free and lawful it is to devise any Ceremony, to receive any order, and to authorize any kind of regiment, not special commandment being thereby violated, and the same being thought such by them, to whom the judgment thereof appertaineth. as that is it not scandalous, but decent, tending unto edification, and setting forth the glory of God, that is to say, agreeable unto the general rules of holy Scripture....[199]

---

197. *Laws*.IV.14.1;1:336.24-31.
198. *Laws*.III.4.1; 1:213.2-8.
199. *Laws*.III.7.4; 1:128.19-24.

Now that I've highlighted Hooker's deployment of the Aristotelian virtues of *episteme* and *phronesis*, we are in a position to notice how they function rhetorically in his treatise.[200]

On my account, the distinction between the subject matters of *episteme* and *phronesis* echoes the logic of Augustine's distinction between that which is worthy of our clinging and that which is a means to that which is so worthy.[201] They help us recognize the potential to create idols out of the signs and tokens of grace by confusing our practices and ordering of our common life with the eternal realities into which they draw us. The distinction is helpful because Hooker is engaged in a dispute about such signs and tokens of the good ‑ questions, for example, about whether the Church of England should have bishops, whether a female queen can head the church, and whether certain ecclesial practices are warranted.

His deployment of *episteme* and *phronesis* enables him to clarify that such questions are not, with certain exceptions, of the category of things which are eternally given (that which is good and the only thing worthy of our clinging). Rather, they are of the category of questions about that which is conducive to the good. As we shall see in chapter six, this will enable Hooker to claim that multiple paths are consonant. The phronetic character of ecclesial laws means that they are not universally applicable, but particular to a concrete community such as the Church of England. Our decisions about that which is conducive to the good are offered with the humility which recognizes that such laws are necessarily mutable because of the vulnerability to probabilistic error that attends all practices derived from natural law. Rome can be Rome, Geneva can be Geneva, and England can be England. To those who argued that the Elizabethan Church should conform to the norms of the emerging Reformed

---

200. In my discussion of criticism of the ecclesial ethicists and their emphasis on practices, I will connect phronesis with Jeffrey Stout's account of cognitive and practical commitments. In the Hookerian account, I understand ought-to-do judgments and practical commitments to be the subject matter of the virtue, phronesis. See page 199.

201. Augustine of Hippo, *Augustine: On Christian Doctrine*, trans. D.W Robertson (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1958).10. "The things which are to be enjoyed are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, a single Trinity…." By my reading, Augustine makes a sharp distinction intended to help us recognize our propensity for turning the means of grace into idols. Constituents of the temporal economy of salvation are unworthy of our clinging. They are not to be enjoyed; they are to lead us to the one thing that is to be enjoyed, which is the Trinity.

consensus which took its lead from Geneva, Hooker argued that it is right and proper for the Church of England to make decisions about its self-ordering which diverge from the paths of both Geneva and Rome.

The Big Picture Revisited

The ultimate destination of this inquiry is an account of how the mind of Christ is formed in Christian communities, with the secondary objective of explaining how ecclesial practices contribute to the creation of a virtuous community. Thus far, we've paid close attention to key moves Hooker made in order to adapt a recognizably Thomist account of mimetic virtue and deploy it such that it was intelligible within the conceptual norms of Reformed orthodoxy. The chief of these dogmatic claims was that, until we know Christ the Redeemer, humans do not have noetic access to the good due to sin and human finitude. We've seen that Hooker appropriated a recognizably Thomist ontology and anthropology, and, like Thomas and his immediate predecessors in the medieval scholastic tradition, deployed Aristotelian methods and epistemological concepts. We are now in a position to see how the concepts excavated in this chapter will be important in the ensuing chapters.

To sharpen my Hookerian account of virtue, in the next chapter I will contrast it with competing accounts which, in my view, were among Hooker's primary rhetorical targets. Hooker's ontology will play an important role, and his deployment of Aristotelean epistemological concepts will be foregrounded. By providing an account of the natural law grounded in the eternal law, these sub-surface commitments enable Hooker to criticize a deontological ethics based on his opponent's implementation of a *sola scriptura* hermeneutic, and to defend his own account in a grammar intelligible to them.

In chapter four, I will be considering Hooker's account of our participation in Christ and proposing a way to describe the real presence that prepares us for the subsequent account of mimetic virtue. Hooker's adaptation of the Thomist conception of eternal law will help us to describe how *all* humans naturally participate in Christ, while *many* are in communion with Christ. Also, we have now clarified that

the reformed catholic context presupposes that humans have no innate access to the good, and that all human learning about the good develops through our encounters with the signs and tokens of grace. Hooker's psychology will help us to recognize the need for and imagine a grammar to describe a personal relationship with Christ that is intelligible within a context of reformed catholicism.

I'll develop that account of virtue in chapter five, following reflection on Hooker's teaching about ecclesial practices. Once again, Hooker's ontology and psychology will help us to imagine an account of the real presence that is intelligible within a reformed catholic context while also helping us to think more robustly about the relationship between the real presence and virtue.

The Hookerian psychology and especially the concepts of *endoxa* and *phronesis* will figure prominently in my final chapter, in which I will consider how the Hookerian account might help us to frame contemporary ethical questions and think about a global communion ecclesiology.

The Christian life according to Richard Hooker: a preliminary sketch

The hope of the chapters that follow is to consider the aggregate effects of these Hookerian ontological, anthropological, and epistemological commitments and to contemplate how they might fruitfully inform our contemporary ethical discourse. My proposal will be that such consideration leads to a christodramatic ethics that vindicates Hauerwas and Wells' turn to ecclesial practices as a means of our discerning the good, and that have important implications for how we imagine a global Church in the 21st century.

For now, the significance of the christodramatic ethics developed in this study might be best anticipated through a preliminary glimpse of a metaphor to which I'll return in my final chapter.

For Hooker, life for all humans is like a journey to the summit of "the highest of the mountains" (Is 2:1). At the summit - indeed, in a certain sense identical to the

summit - is re-union with Jesus Christ, the cause of our journey. Christ summons all humans to the summit, but not all respond. Those who do respond do not reach the summit in a single ecstatic moment, but simply hear Christ's call, turn, and take the first step onto the trailhead. We pilgrims begin the journey, but, partially blinded as though in a fog, find ourselves at times in brambles, on dangerous precipices, and, often, simply lost in the wilderness. We have no way of orienteering on our own.

There are thus certain questions we ask as we try to make our way to the summit. Some of those have to do with the nature of our destination - its worthiness, its beauty, its goodness. These are questions about the summit itself. These first questions are of the category of *episteme*, and they do indeed have universal answers.

Other questions have to do with how to move toward the summit safely from wherever we find ourselves on the mountain. This second set of questions are of the category of *phronesis*. They have to do with our next steps toward the summit. Precisely because the mountain is itself alive, shaped by phenomena like wind, rain, quake, and fire, as well as by the pilgrims who precede us, we cannot always simply follow the well-trod trail. While the summit itself remains constant, the best way forward depends on our location on the mountain. The right path to the summit is inherently local, contingently known, and particular to our coordinates at our moment in time.

How then do we find our way to the summit given the fog through which we see only dimly? Thus far, only a partial answer has been given. Christ is not only our destination, but our sustainer. Christ alone guides us. But how? Given the fog and the great distance, how do we hear and recognize his voice? How do we rightly navigate?

Hooker answers with his doctrine of our participation in Christ and a defense of liturgical practices. But before turning to those (in chapters five and six), we need to consider why the facile account of *sola scriptura* proposed by certain Puritan leaders provides an insufficient answer.

- Chapter 3 -

"Special Equity" and the particular

In his Preface to *Laws*, Hooker unmasks how the habits of thought nourished by his opponents function in service of their project of wresting ecclesial power from the Elizabethan conformists. Their ideology is justified by timeless truths discovered in both Scripture and the early church fathers. The task of this chapter is to appropriate Hooker's extensive critique of their universal claims. I can summarize that critique by simply alluding to the Wellsian distinction beween universal and ecclesial ethicists. In short, Hooker would agree with Wells and Quash that "the particular information, which universal ethics shuns… makes ethics comprehensible."[202]

To demonstrate this claim, I will dig into Hooker's unmasking of his opponents' ideology with the hope of understanding more clearly why universal ethics are problematic. First, I will comment briefly on his rhetorical and polemical method. Next, I will examine the concepts and methods of a subset of his opponents whom I dub the Ramist realists. My claim is not that Hooker's opponents were all Ramist realists, but that Ramist realism was a rising ideology gaining traction among opponents and colleagues alike during the 1590s. I'll then contrast them with Hooker by briefly commenting on his critique of their view of Scripture in general, and then by digging deeply into his critique of their ethical reasoning. Finally, I will thicken the Hookerian account by offering both philosophical and theological critiques of Ramist realism, holding it in conversation with Barth's doctrine of election.

Unmasking ideology

As noted in chapter one, Hooker scholars have long noted his polemical tone, and Hooker scholarship in recent decades has increasingly characterized Hooker as a Reformed polemicist in substantial continuity with the magisterial reformers. By my reading, Hooker engaged much of his career in an intramural theopolitical struggle

---

202.   Wells and Quash, *Introducing Christian Ethics*, 192.

between Geneva-inspired English divines advocating presbyterian reforms and doctrinally similar colleagues advocating conformity with the Elizabethan Settlement. Renaissance scholars Debora Shuger and Arthur Ferguson sharpen our understanding of Hooker's purpose,[203] helping us to see that *Laws* was not mere polemic in support of those espousing support of the Elizabethan settlement.[204] To the contrary, *Laws* is an artful effort to unmask and debunk a rising ideology, nourished by Ramist commitments and infecting opponents and colleagues alike, which justified radical reform by denying England's "history of... legitimate discernment" and "mak[ing] the Bible a timeless absolute."[205]

Hooker signals this in his Preface to *Laws*. "The common sort" are not moved to favor his opponents' proposals by "the force of particular reasons," for "the multitude never did nor could so consider [particular reasons] as to be therewith wholly carried."[206] Rather,

> ... certain general inducements are used to make salable your cause in gross, and when once men have cast a fancy towards it, any slight declaration of specialities will serve to lead forward inclinable and prepared minds.[207]

Presbyterian propaganda seeks its ends through six steps. First, his opponents rip the current ecclesial leadership "with marvelous exceeding severity and sharpness of reproof,"[208] casting themselves typologically as heirs of the Old Testament prophets. Second, they "impute all faults and corruptions wherewith the world abounds" to the Elizabethan settlement.[209] Third, they "propose their own form of church government as the only sovereign remedy of all evils, and... adorn it with all the glorious titles that

---

203. Arthur B. Ferguson, *Clio Unbound: Perception of the Social and Cultural Past in Renaissance England*, Duke Monographs in Medieval and Renaissance Studies, vol. 2 (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1979), 207-224; Shuger, *Habits of Thought*, 26-30.
204. Conformists may have successfully routed English presbyterians politically by the early 1590s, rendering the possibility of further reforms unlikely in the short term. My suggestion is that Hooker recognized that, by 1592, the ideology was suppressed but not eradicated, and therefore his treatise is less an attack on their proposals for reform and more an attack on the ideology underlying their proposals for reform.
205. Rowan Williams, "Forward," in *A Companion to Richard Hooker,* ed. W.J. Torrance Kirby, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition (Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, 2008), xxi.
206. *Laws*.Preface.3.5;I.15.6-9.
207. *Laws*.Preface.3.5;I.15.9-12.
208. *Laws*.Preface.3.6;I.15.15-16.
209. *Laws*.Preface.3.7;I.15.20-21.

may be."[210] Fourth, they:

> ... fashion[ ] the very notions and conceits of men's minds in such sort that when they read the Scripture, they may think that every thing sounds toward the advancement of [presbyterianism], and to the utter disgrace of the contrary.[211]

Because "their minds are forestalled and their conceits perverted beforehand,"[212] the uninformed are persuaded that the orders of "pastors, elders, doctors, and deacons"[213] are seen clearly in Zion and Jerusalem while all other forms of governance are to be associated with Samaria and Babylon.[214] Fifth,

> From hence they proceed to a higher point, which is the persuading of men credulous and over capable of such pleasing errors, that it is the special illumination of the holy Ghost whereby they discern those things in the word, which others reading yet discern them not.[215]

Hooker continues, describing how the sixth step in presbyterian propaganda generates division:

> After that the fancy of the common sort hath once thoroughly apprehended the Spirit to be author of their persuasion concerning [the presbyterian proposals], then is instilled into their hearts that the same Spirit leading men into this opinion doth hereby seal them to be God's children, and that, as the state of the times now standeth, the most special token to know them that are God's own from others is an earnest affection that way. This hath bred high terms of separation between such and the rest of the world, whereby the one sort are named The Brethren, the godly, and so forth, the other worldlings, timeservers, pleasers of men not of God, with such like.[216]

The final step is to teach the credulous to be impervious to the logic of their dissenting neighbors:

> But be they women or be they men, if once they have tasted of that cup, let any man of contrary opinion open his mouth to persuade them, they close up their ears, his reasons they weight not, all is answered with rehearsal of the words of John, "We are of God; he that knows God, hears us; as for the rest, you are of the world, for this world's pomp and vanity it is that you speak, and the world whose you are hears you.[217]

We don't have to speculate about why Hooker wrote *Laws* because he tells us in his Preface. Hooker's masterpiece is an artful effort to unmask and discredit an

---

210. *Laws*.Preface.3.8;I.16.2-4.
211. *Laws*.Preface.3.9;I.16.9-12.
212. *Laws*.Preface.3.9;I.16.28.
213. *Laws*.Preface.3.9;I.17.2.
214. *Laws*.Preface.3.9;I.17.1-5.
215. *Laws*.Preface.3.10;I.17.10-14.
216. *Laws*.Preface.3.10;I.18.8-17.
217. *Laws*.Preface.3.10;I.19.22-27.

ideology that fueled discontent within the Elizabethan Church. Hooker is less clear in identifying his interlocutors, but he does name some of them. The most obvious of these are the allies of his old opponent from the Admonition Controversy of the 1580s, Thomas Cartwright, whom he regularly quotes. By extension, we might say that Hooker's interlocutors included all those who continued to resist the Elizabethan Settlement. By my reading, Hooker also understood himself to be in conversation with presbyterian opponents and conformist allies alike, both of whom were exposed to an ideology emanating from a prolific circle of Cambridge divines, the Ramist realists. To that group and their ideology, I now turn.

THE RAMIST REALISTS

The task of this section is to bring into view contrasting assumptions about how we recognize the good. A bringing-into-view is necessary because our assumptions about how we recognize the good entail prior philosophical and anthropological commitments that function as givens in our ethical reasoning. By examining key sub-surface commitments of one subset of Hooker's opponents, 'givens' that are prior to their surface-level disagreements over scriptural hermeneutics, Hooker's own philosophical and anthropological commitments will be seen in sharp relief. The task of the next section will then be to follow the contrast, drawing out the implications of these presuppositions for the way we understand both the authority and the art of reading Scripture.

The contrast I want to draw is with an outlook I shall denote as *Ramist realism*. While I shall point to an actual group who manifested this outlook in Hooker's time, my focus is on the present. I also deploy Ramist realism as a type, a recognizable habit of thought with a capacious tradition within Western Christianity. I take Barth's distinction between biblical and biblicist thinking to be referring to this outlook,[218] and, similarly, I take Stanley Hauerwas to have this outlook in view in his critique of

---

218. See Karl Barth, *Karl Barth's Table Talk*, ed. John D. Godsey, Scottish Journal of Theology, vol. Occasional Papers (10) (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1963). *CD*/IV.1.§§60.1.

literalism in his *Unleashing the Scripture: Freeing the Bible From Captivity to America*.[219] While I don't believe that contemporary biblicists are conscious of an inheritance from Ramist realism, reflection on the premises of Ramist realism does, I believe, enable us to understand these habits of thought helpfully, and thereby helps us to see Hooker's contrasting commitments more clearly.

Ramist realism denotes habits of thought which presuppose the possibility of *objective* knowledge of the good through the application of logic to Scripture. Christian ethics are biblical ethics in the sense that Scripture is seen as the singularly valid source of authority from which universal axioms can be mined. We discern the good through systematic exegesis of a particular kind. Such exegesis avoids the perils of human subjectivity.

The contrast I want to draw, however, requires deeper excavation of the premises underlying such thinking. To do that, I will draw upon historians' accounts of Hooker's colleagues who practiced and cultivated the Ramist realism perspective at Cambridge during the period in which Hooker penned his masterpiece. My method is to highlight some key underlying premises of Ramist realism and then to show how and why Hooker explicitly refuted those premises. The result, I trust, will be a more nuanced view of Hooker.

While Hooker mentions this group polemically in *Laws*, the scholarship on the influence of Ramism in English Puritanism is sparse.[220] Peter Lake provides valuable insight into its practice through his ground-breaking studies of the puritanism of Laurence Chaderton, Edward Daring, Thomas Cartwright, William Whitaker, and William Bradshaw, *Moderate Puritans and the Elizabethan Church*.[221] John Morgan similarly documents the embrace of Ramism by Cambridge Calvinists in his *Godly Learning: Puritan Attitudes Towards Reason, Learning and Education, 1560-1640*,[222] noting

---

219. Stanley Hauerwas, *Unleashing the Scripture: Freeing the Bible From Captivity to America* (Abingdon Press, 1993-10-01).
220. Neelands hints at this influence, noting that "Calvin, who followed the Reformers of the Rhineland in explaining the sense of the sanctification wrought in the person by grace, was chiefly influenced by the new logic of Ramus, which Hooker criticized." Neelands, "The Theology of Grace of Richard Hooker," 328.
221. Lake, *Moderate Puritans*.
222. John Morgan, *Godly Learning: Puritan Attitudes Towards Reason, Learning and Education,*

that "Dudley Fenner, in England, made Ramism the cornerstone of much (but certainly not all) future puritan thought by the extremely significant step of changing Ramus' examples from classical to scriptural texts."[223] Both of these engage positively the 1980 PhD dissertation of Donald McKim, *Ramism in William Perkins*.[224] McKim documented the use of Ramist methodology by a wide variety of English Calvinists as part of his project of demonstrating the influence of Ramism in Puritan thought. The most prominent of these was the subject of his study, William Perkins. A highly influential scholar and contemporary of Hooker's, William Perkins' Ramist realism provides a stark contrast to the Hookerian account of Christian formation developed in this study.[225]

Both McKim and Lake describe Perkins as a 'moderate' Puritan who did not advocate the presbyterian form of government. A contemporary of Hooker's, Perkins is of interest in the current study because his legacy stretches from his late sixteenth century work as a prominent professor at Christ College Cambridge to the seventeenth century work of John Milton.[226] Perkins "fostered... the Puritan plain style method of preaching" that was a presenting issue in Hooker's treatise, developed the form of Biblical exegesis that came to be seen as the Puritan alternative to "the methods of continental Protestant scholastics," and, most importantly, taught that Ramism "provided... a secure philosophical and epistemological basis for the belief

---

1560-1640 (Cambridge University Press, 1988-04-29), 106-112.

223. Ibid., 109.

224. Donald K. McKim, "Ramism in William Perkins" (PhD Dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1980). See also Donald K. McKim, "The Functions of Ramism in William Perkins' Theology," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 16, No. 4, (Winter 1985): 503-517.

225. By inventing the term, Ramist realism, I am not taking a position in historical debates about any of the figures mentioned or on the extent or influence of Ramism among Cambridge Calvinists. My purpose is not to make historical claims about Ramist Puritans or to the extent that Hooker consciously engaged the Ramist Puritans in his own works. I focus on the use of Ramism by Hooker's contemporaries in order to place in sharp relief the Hookerian account of Christian formation developed in this study. Placed in contrast to Ramist Puritanism, the significance of Hooker's achievement stands out. I appropriate the descriptions of McKim, Lake, and Morgan in order to hold their descriptions in contrast with Hooker's thinking. My arguments do not depend on these scholars' historical claims about Ramism because I am deploying their descriptions heuristically in order to provide insights into recognizable contemporary habits of thought with which I want to draw a contrast. My contrast would hold even if these scholars' historical claims about Ramism were refuted because it is evident from Hooker's account - quoted below - that Hooker engaged dialectically *some* group holding substantially similar beliefs described here as Ramist realism.

226. McKim, "Ramism in William Perkins," 286-288.

that humans can ascertain the mind of God...."[227]

Perkins was a leading player at Cambridge, shaping its curriculum during the time when Hooker, an Oxford scholar himself, was immersed in his defense of the Elizabethan settlement. While Perkins did not advocate Genevan-style reforms, "the list of Cambridge Ramists reads like a list of the most radical Cambridge Puritans."[228] Significantly, both allies and opponents of Hooker's might well have embraced the presuppositions of Ramist realism that I describe below.

Ramist method entails "definition and division."[229] In contrast with the Aristotelian scholastic method taught by Hooker, syllogisms do not prove the truth of propositions, but merely "solve doubts when questions arose in matters of definition and division."[230] The key principle of Ramist epistemological method is to divide knowledge areas into opposing binaries or dichotomies.[231] McKim notes that, "As Perkins approached a passage or text he applied Ramist method: defining, dividing, classifying from general to specific."[232] A key assumption underlying this method was that, by so doing, "the "interior logic" or thought pattern of the author could be plainly shown. The inner relationships of all parts of the discourse became immediately visible."[233] Since the author of Scripture is the Holy Spirit, "The interior logic of the Holy Spirit, who stood behind the formation of Scripture, could be opened to view."[234] Ramist realists believed that their exegetical method "could lay bare the very mind of God Himself."[235] The exegete thereby discovered 'natural truths' in the Bible that are universal in application and that are, because of the method, free from the taint of human subjectivity.[236]

The key observation here has to do with the theological and philosophical

---

227. Ibid., iv-v.
228. Ibid., 297.
229. Ibid., 77.
230. Ibid.
231. Ibid., iv.
232. Ibid., 295.
233. Ibid., 296.
234. Ibid., 298.
235. Ibid.
236. Morgan, *Godly Learning: Puritan Attitudes Towards Reason, Learning and Education, 1560-1640*, 106-112.

premises underlying Ramist realist method. "Perkins never attempted to justify or "prove" the divisions he made. To him these divisions had yielded *self-evident axioms*, the validity of which was beyond question."[237] The presupposition of Ramist exegesis is not only that the language of Scripture is *perspicuous*, but that the meaning clearly expressed and easily understood is *axiomatic*. The task of the exegete, then, is not to move from the particulars of the pericope to a logically sound conclusion based on the text, but to "discover the 'arguments' already present in his text."[238] These axiomatic arguments discovered in the text are *objectively* known "'universal rules'... discovered as refractions of the mind of God...."[239] "This was so because for the Ramists, the 'arguments' were built into the very fabric of the universe itself."[240]

McKim clarifies the ethical implications of these premises:

> In all this it was assumed that the mind will immediately give its assent to all true propositions which were actually axioms. Thus Scripture quotations alone were sufficient to prove a point since these can function in discourse as self-evidencing axioms. In Perkins and the other Ramists, the Scripture citation is usually all that is needed to support a "division" made.[241]

For the Ramist Puritan, right thinking is inseparable from right living, and right living is constituted by "artifacts"[242] demonstrating one's assent to self-evident axioms discovered in Scripture. The rightful task of theology, therefore, is not to discern the good but to assert the true:

> The system of Ramus gave sure results for the Ramist to whom the subject/ object problem was not an obstacle. It gave access to truth that did not need to be proved in the scholastic, Aristotelian fashion. Instead, truth need only be asserted. For the Puritans who followed Ramus, Christian doctrine was a series of self-evincing axioms. These axioms were so self-evident as to remove all doubts of their truth.[243]

Right living is the activity that produces "that which has been made well or done well" - where 'well' is defined by the "universal rules" discovered through the Ramist method.[244] The project of defining and dividing in order to discover the principles of right living is urgent not because it manifests participation in the life of God, but

---

237. McKim, "Ramism in William Perkins," 296. Emphasis added.
238. Ibid.
239. Ibid., 300.
240. Ibid., 299.
241. Ibid., 302.
242. Ibid., 301.
243. Ibid., 304.
244. Ibid., 301.

because it fulfills the conditions God establishes for the contingent covenantal relationship between Creator and creature. Right action is urgent, and it consists of obedience to universal truths discovered dichotomously.

Ethics, therefore, are expressed rightly in the language of deontological axioms. The key questions are about how the community reliably recognizes what God commands and how it develops individuals willfully submissive to those commands. The discourse is not about 'knowledge of God' understood as personal participation in the life of God, but 'knowledge of God's arts' understood as logical discovery of universal rules ordained by God. The theological grammar subtly shifts from God as subject, interacting here and now with human subjects, to God's art as object, acted upon by human subjects capable of comprehending its refraction through ratiocination.

Implicit in Ramist realism is a philosophical optimism about human access to reality that cohabits oddly with the theological pessimism expressed in the doctrine of total depravity. The Ramist realist is no nominalist: "Ramists believed that all concepts are objectively real."[245]

Deeply embedded within Ramist realism are two worldview-shaping assumptions. First, *sola scriptura* is no longer a slogan pertaining narrowly to how one knows one's status before God, but a dogmatic claim about the only means by which humans have access to divine truths about right thinking and right living. We discover God's "art" through Scripture alone.[246] Where such an assumption prevails, it is difficult to appreciate a central role for the sacraments, which is perhaps why it was necessary for Hooker to devote an entire volume to the defense of sacramental practices. Second, Ramist realism presupposes a reality that can be truthfully described through division into neat binaries and reductive epitomes. A world whose truth is known through divisive dichotomies is quite distinct from a world dialectically known and described in syllogistic syntheses. We ought not be surprised when these different views of the

---

245. Ibid., 299.
246. Ibid., 301.

world yield different views of the Church.

HOOKERIAN CRITIQUE: THE NATURE OF SCRIPTURE

On Hooker's account, the resistance of certain Puritans to the Elizabethan Settlement was grounded in epistemological error. That is, their demand that the laws of England and practices of the Church be justified exclusively by biblical sources was an instance of what Wittgenstein would later describe as "philosophical puzzlement" that can only be "dissolved by pointing out where wrong turns were made."[247] His critique of his opponents' scriptural hermeneutics arises directly from the foregoing philosophical premises and consisted of at least five counterpoints. We've already seen his primary claim - (1) that the supreme authority of Scripture pertains particularly and narrowly to the revelation of the supernatural path to our beatitude in Christ and not to all matters of action in life.[248] In addition to this, Hooker asserted, in direct refutation of the presuppositions of Ramist realism: (2) that the authority of Scripture is not self-authenticating, (3) that its axioms are not perspicuous, (4) that there is no possibility of an objective interpretive stance that delivers us from the risk of interpretative error, and (5) that we cannot merely extract self-authenticating axioms from Scripture but rather must reach fitting conclusions by reasoning inductively from the particular narrative context of principles drawn from Scripture.

The jurisdiction of Scripture

Hooker was sharply critical of what he considered "a dangerous extremity" - the claim that "Scripture did not only contain all things in that kind necessary, but all things simply, and in such sort that to do anything according to any other law were not only unnecessary, but even opposite unto salvation, unlawful and sinful."[249] If God had intended all things to be contained in Scripture, then God would "clean have abrogated amongst them the law of nature."[250] The stakes in refuting this claim are

---

247. Brad J. Kallenberg, *Ethics as Grammar: Changing the Postmodern Subject* (South Bend: Univ of Notre Dame Press, 2001-09), 187.
248. *Laws*.I.14.1; 1:124.29-32. *Laws*.I.14.1; 1: 126.1-13.
249. *Laws*.II.8.7; I:191.21-25.
250. *Laws*.II.8.6;I:190.10-11.

high: "Admit this, and what shall the Scripture be but a snare and a torment to weak consciences, filling them with infinite perplexities, scrupolosities, doubts insoluble, and extreme despairs."[251]

Hooker worried equally about a correlative claim by his opponents - the erroneous notion that *sola scriptura* means that "the choice of good and evil in the daily affairs of this life"[252] is to be determined exclusively by scriptural axiom:

> Make all things sin which we do by direction of nature's light and by the rule of common discretion without thinking at all upon Scripture, admit this position, and parents shall cause their children to sin, as oft as they cause them to do anything, before they come to years of capacity and be ripe for knowledge in the Scripture.[253]

Decrying such puzzlement about the meaning of *sola scriptura*, Hooker insisted upon the distinction between "whatsoever is in such sort necessary,"[254] and matters non-essential to salvation:

> ... it is no more disgrace for Scripture to have let a number of things free to be ordered at the discretion of the Church, than for nature to have left it unto the wit of man to devise his own attire, and not to look for it as the beasts of the field have theirs....[255]

While Scripture does indeed provide all things necessary to salvation, that doctrine is not to be understood to mean that Scripture is "the only law whereby God hath opened his will touching all things that may be done, but there are other kinds of laws which notify the will of God...."[256] Rather, the doctrine presupposes that Wisdom teaches by Scripture, nature, "spiritual influence,... [and] in some things... only by worldly experience and practice."[257] Furthermore, the doctrine is correctly understood to assert that Scripture teaches "all things which are necessary to be known that we may be saved, but known with the presupposition of knowledge concerning certain principles whereof it receiveth us already persuaded, and then instructeth us in all the

---

251. *Laws*.II.8.6;I:190.16-19.
252. *Laws*.II.8.6;I:190.15-16.
253. *Laws*.II.8.6;I:191.4-9.
254. *Laws*.III.4.1; I: 213.3-4.
255. *Laws*.III.4.1; I: 213.4-8.
256. *Laws*.II.1.4; I.147.15-17.
257. *Laws*.II.1.4; I.147.27-148.6.

residue that are necessary."[258]

Not self-authenticating

Hooker is quite concerned "that the benefit of nature's light be not thought excluded as unnecessary"[259] in our seeking of an ethical foundation in Scripture. One of the reasons is that, though knowledge of our "salvation could not be obtained"[260] without it, Scripture is not self-authenticating. This insight arises from philosophy: "Scripture indeed teacheth things above nature, things which our reason by itself could not reach unto."[261] Precisely because "Scripture teacheth all supernaturally revealed truth,"[262] human authority is necessary for us to learn what Scripture teaches. "... unless besides Scripture there were some thing which might assure us that we do well, we could not think we do well, no not in being assured that Scripture is a sacred and holy rule of well-doing."[263]

Because scripture's supreme authority has to do particularly with the supernatural path Christ has revealed, and we are unable to recognize Christ's authority until we have a personal relationship with him, "Scripture could not teach us the things that are of God unless we did credit men who have taught us that the words of Scripture do signify those things."[264] Here Hooker refutes his interlocutors on anthropological grounds: "Now it is not required or can be exacted at our hands that we should yield unto any thing other assent than such as doth answer the evidence which is said to be had of that we assent unto."[265] This criterion arises from the foregoing philosophical premises regarding human participation in the rationality of God. "The greatest assurance generally with all men is that which we have by plain aspect and intuitive beholding."[266] The authority of Scripture arises from "that which we see with our

---

258. *Laws*.I.14.1; I.126.5-9.
259. *Laws*.I.14.1; I.129.1-2.
260. *Laws*.III.8.13; I:231.4
261. *Laws*.III.8.12; I:230.7-8.
262. *Laws*.III.8.13; I:231.2-3.
263. *Laws*.II.4.2; I:153.22-25.
264. *Laws*.II.7.3; I:177.31-33.
265. *Laws*.II.7.5; 1:179.25-27.
266. *Laws*.II.7.5; 1:179.10-12.

eyes;"[267] a man assents to Scripture as the Word of God "because we hold that his speech revealeth there what himself seeth...."[268]

Scripture, therefore, is not self-authenticating; rather, the Church testifies to the authority of Scripture, authenticating it through its concrete witness. Reason need only assent to the testimony of the Church regarding scripture's authority if the actions of the Church evince scripture's divine origins. Scripture becomes authoritative - in the eyes of rational men and women - only when the actions of the Church mean what they must mean if the Church is to perform the truth that is Christ.

Furthermore, that Scripture is not self-authenticating renders false his opponents' claims regarding the universality of axioms extracted from Scripture whose subject is not the supernatural path revealed in Christ. Such claims, if generally accepted by the community, are binding only upon the community. Such claims are about and for the community and not about and for all humanity, for "it is the general consent of all that giveth them the form and vigor of laws."[269] Christian ethics are of the Church, by the Church, and for the Church.

Not perspicuous

We saw above that the Ramist realists translate the claim that Scripture contains all things necessary to salvation into a doctrine of scripture's perspicuity. Hooker addresses directly the question of "whether *containing in Scripture* do import express setting down in plain terms, or else *comprehending* in such sort that by reason we may from thence conclude all things which are necessary."[270] We see here the distinction between the Ramist claim that Scripture contains perspicuous axioms and the humanist assumption that scriptural comprehension requires reasoning from the particularity of texts as phenomena to general conclusions about their meanings.

Hooker proceeds by distinguishing between two categories of subject matter in

---

267. *Laws*.II.7.5; 1:179.20.
268. *Laws*.II.7.5; I:179.22.
269. *Laws*.VIII.6.11; III.403.10.24.
270. *Laws*.I.14.2; I.126.14-17. Emphasis original.

Scripture in like fashion to his treatment of scripture's jurisdiction. He invokes Augustine's point that truths regarding the supernatural path Christ has revealed "are plainly set down in Scripture so that he which heareth or readeth may without any great difficulty understand."[271] Thus Scripture is perspicuous with respect to the supernatural path of salvation. Yet some things aren't so plain and therefore require a learning not available to all men:

> Other things also there are belonging (although in a lesser degree of importance) unto the offices of Christian men which because they are obscure, more intricate and hard to be judged of, therefore God hath appointed some to spend their whole time principally in the study of things divine to the end that in these more doubtful cases their understanding might be a light to direct others.[272]

Scripture, then, is neither self-authenticating nor plain in its meaning, at least once one moves beyond claims about the saving action of Jesus Christ and into questions of matters of action. In the latter category, expertise in scriptural interpretation tends to be required, and the world rightly admires the "pillars" whose "great and rare skill" of interpretation and "whose exercises, labors, and divine studies [God] hath so blessed."[273]

Not objective

Related to the argument against perspicuity is the observation that Scripture does not contain axioms that can be *objectively* known. The vagaries of human subjectivity cannot be avoided by shouts of *sola scriptura*. Scripture is neither self-authenticating nor self-interpreting. Hooker demonstrates this by reference to his opponents' own love of proof-texting:

> ... even such as are readiest to cite for one thing five hundred sentences of holy Scripture, what warrant have they, that any one of them doth mean the thing for which it is alleged? Is not their surest ground most commonly, either some probable conjecture of their own, or the judgment of others taking those Scriptures as they do?[274]

His opponents "ground themselves on human authority, even when they most

---

271. *Laws*.Preface.3.2; I:13.11-12.
272. *Laws*.Preface.3.2; I:13.12-18.
273. *Laws*.II.7.4; I:179.3-8.
274. *Laws*.II.7.9; I:184.34-185.4.

pretend divine."[275] The Spirit does not directly illuminate us in the reading of Scripture such that human reason is bypassed in biblical interpretation,[276] One cannot "go from the books of Scripture to the sense and meaning thereof"[277] by "exclud[ing] the use of natural reasoning."[278] This ought not cause anxiety, for Scripture is not reduced in its power through acknowledgement of our subjectivity:

> ... in respect of that end for which God ordained it, perfect, exact, and absolute in itself, we do not add reason as a supplement of any maim or defect therein, but as a necessary instrument, without which we could not reap by the scripture's perfection that fruit and benefit which it yieldeth.[279]

As we saw in the previous chapter,[280] the common reduction of Hooker's hermeneutics to the formula of "Scripture, Tradition, and Reason" is highly problematic, not least because Hooker refused to place Scripture and reason in opposition. Instead, he presented - already in the 1590s - a compelling 'post-liberal'[281] argument: reason precedes and is necessarily integral to all scriptural exegesis. There is no stance of objectivity from which humans can engage Scripture.

HOOKERIAN PRESCRIPTION: THE PRIORITY OF THE PARTICULAR

We've seen that Hooker argues that all humans are governed by the eternal law. Yet, Hooker strongly resists universal prescriptions of the good, especially when it comes to the self-ordering of the church. Instead of such prescriptions, the Hookerian account is characterized by the priority of the particular.

To get a preliminary feel for the depth of Hooker's emphasis on the particular, one can turn to his doctrine of predestination in the *Dublin Fragments*. In describing

---

275. *Laws*.II.7.9; I:185.6-7.
276. *Laws*.III.8.15.
277. *Laws*.III.8.15; I:233.9-10.
278. *Laws*.III.8.15; I:233.15-16.
279. *Laws*.III.8.10; I:227.2-9.
280. See page 63.
281. George A. Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age* (Westminster John Knox Press, 1984).

God's response to sin, Hooker, adapting Aquinas, distinguishes between God's *determining* will and God's *positive* will.[282] God does not predestine humans to be sinners, but rather responds to their sin as the "accidental event" it is.[283] This distinction between God's determining and positive wills is decisive for Hooker in reflecting on predestination. God's determining will is that all be saved, but God's positive will is concerned with "vengeance against Satan and Satan's slaves."[284] Hooker seems to see graceful ethical reasoning as properly in analogy to God's treatment of humanity, understood in Thomist terms of God's antecedent and consequent will. Essential/accident, determining/positive, general/particular - throughout his corpus, Hooker turns repeatedly to these distinctions in his quest for truthful descriptions. Nowhere is the distinction between the general and the particular more significant than in his prescription for the ethical reasoning by which communities discern the good.[285]

Hooker is often described as an apologist for the status quo, but this confuses his cognitive commitments with their consequences. He appears to be an apologist because he insists that the starting point in Christian ethics is to listen to the Church. That cognitive commitment leads to an inherently conservative (though not illiberal) posture:

---

282. Aquinas, citing Damascene, speaks of God's "antecedent will" and God's "consequent will." The antecedent or determining will does not refer to God's self-determining or divine establishing, but rather to the will wherein God determines humanity. "It may be said of a just judge, that antecedently he wills all men to live; but consequently wills the murderer to be hanged. In the same way God antecedently wills all men to be saved, but consequently wills some to be damned, as His justice exacts. Nor do we will simply, what we will antecedently, but rather we will it in a qualified manner; for the will is directed to things as they are in themselves, and in themselves they exist under particular qualifications." ST. 1a.19.6 ad 1.

283. *Hooker, "Dublin," 32.*

284. Richard Hooker, "Notes Towards a Fragment on Predestination," in *The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker, Volume Iv: Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity: Attack and Response, the Folger Library. The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity) (V. 4),* (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1982-01-01), 94. Hereafter referred to as *Notes Towards a Fragment on Predestination* followed by volume, page, and line numbers.

285. The Hookerian account necessarily speaks of the *particular* because the distinction I have described here permeates Hooker's corpus. In the 21st century, however, *particular* is less helpful because it can become itself an abstraction, and imply support for the notion of a reality behind the reality we encounter in history. That is not the way I use it in this study. In the Hookerian account, the phenomena we experience reliably refer to the reality of the objects we encounter, and the general/particular distinction distinguishes the inferences we make as we encounter phenomena from the cases, situated in discrete contexts, to which we might apply them.

> ... there is cause why we should be slow and unwilling to change without very urgent necessity the ancient ordinances, rites, and long-approved customs of venerable predecessors. The love of things ancient doth argue staidness, but levity and want of experience maketh apt unto innovations. That which wisdom did first begin and hath been with good men long continued, challenges allowance of them that succeed, although it plead for itself nothing. That which is new, if it promise not much, doth fear condemnation before trial; till trial, no man doth acquit or trust it, what good soever it pretend and promise.[286]

We saw in chapter two that, for Hooker, the "voices of men" carry the greatest weight after that which "Scripture doth plainly deliver."[287] But to what human authorities does he refer? To answer this, we have to dig a bit into Hookerian political concepts.

Hooker recognized that his rendering of the *duplex cognitio Dei* in terms of a second form of the eternal law has political implications. When viewed from the perspective of human access to knowledge of God, all humans and especially all the baptized are equal:

> For we have here only the being of Sons of God, in which number how far soever one may seem to excel another, yet touching this *that all are sons they are all equals*, some happily better sons than the rest are, but none any more a son than another.[288]

As Neelands notes, for Hooker, "there is no effective or practical difference, just as there is not perceptible difference, between the visible and invisible church, except at the end, when it shall be clear if there be any in the church who do not persevere."[289] If there is no *practical* difference between the visible and the invisible church until the fulfillment of time, then, when theology speaks of a right ordering of the church, the practical assumption must be that we are all, translocally and transtemporally, equal in our status before God and that the Spirit may use anyone at any moment to confess the Word given.[290]

Hooker therefore admonished his opponents who urged that the Church of

---

286. Laws.V.7.3; II.36.26-37.8

287. *Laws*.V.8.2;II.39.8. For the priority of voices of men, see *Laws*.I.8.2-3.

288. *Laws*.V.56.12;II.244.7-11. Emphasis added.

289. W. David Neelands, "Richard Hooker on the Identity of the Visible and Invisble Church," in *Richard Hooker and the English Reformation,* ed. W.J. Torrance Kirby, (Dordrecht ; Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003), 109.

290. John Howard Yoder, "Sacrament as Social Process: Christ the Transformer of Culture," in *The Royal Priesthood: Essays Ecclesiological and Ecumenical,* (Herald Press (PA), 1994), 371-373.

England adopt the presbyterian discipline of Geneva in lieu of the polity of the Elizabethan church. They failed to appreciate that the Elizabethan polity united the Christians of the commonwealth in one "society of souls,"[291] binding together the elite and the common multitude under God while preserving the diversity that gave the commonwealth its vigor. Their denial of the rightfulness and necessity of setting apart bishops, presbyters, and deacons as guardians of ecclesial law was simply wrongheaded:

> The most natural and religious course in making of laws is that the matter of them be taken from the judgment of the wisest in those things which they are to concern. In matters of God, to set down a form of public prayer, a solemn confession of the Articles of Christian faith, rites, and ceremonies meet for the exercise of religion, it were unnatural not to think the Pastors and Bishops of our souls a great deal more fit than men of secular trades and callings.[292]

This judgment of the wisest in the matters of God is characteristic of the best form of ecclesial government, for the best government is that which is "administered by the best," by those excelling all the others together in excellence:[293]"

> Inequality as touching gifts and graces they grant because this is so plain that no mist in the world can be cast before men's eyes so thick but that they needs must discern through it that one minister of the gospel may be more learned, holier, and wiser, better able to instruct, more apt to rule and guide than another....[294]

The things essential to salvation are for the most part so "familiar and plain that truth from falsehood and good from evil is most easily discerned in them, even by men of no deep capacity. And of that nature for the most part are things absolutely unto all men's salvation necessary, either to be held or denied, either to be done or avoided."[295] But some things aren't so plain and therefore require a learning not available to all men:

> Other things also there are belonging (although in a lesser degree of importance) unto the offices of Christian men which because they are obscure, more intricate and hard to be judged of, therefore God hath appointed some to spend their whole time principally in the study of things divine to the end that in these more doubtful cases their understanding might be a light to direct others.[296]

---

291. *Laws*.V.77.2; 2.425.14-19.
292. *Laws*.VIII.6.11; 3.403.10.24
293. Aristotle, *Complete Works Vol 2*, Pol.1288b.34-38.
294. *Laws*.VII.3.1; 3.153.16-21.
295. *Laws*.Preface. 3.2; 1:13.5-9.
296. *Laws*.Preface. 3.2; 1:13.12-18.

In short, the equality of our access to knowledge of God and of our election in Christ does not mean that we are equal in the gifts and graces must conducive to the fruitfulness of the church. Our differences matter, and our ecclesiastical polity rightly presupposes a high valuation of the judgment of the wisest. Our election in Christ entails a gift of a political identity shared by the elite and the common multitude, creating our belongingness to a particular society of souls whose governance scheme is a democratically-inclined polity which places a high value on the diversity of our gifts and graces.

The "voice of men" for Hooker, therefore, seems to entail a continuous translocal and transtemporal conversation in which all humans share and debate the coordinates of the good. Some of these coordinates are enshrined in local custom, some in local positive law, and some in "the general and perpetual voice of men" which is like "the sentence of God himself."[297] With respect to ecclesial law, then, 'the voices of men' does not correspond merely to 'doctors of the church', although such experts have a special role.

In this continuous conversation, the "bare consent of the whole Church" trumps the discretion of the local church.[298] Hooker would thus agree wholeheartedly with Barth "that the Church is constituted as the Church by a common hearing and receiving of the Word of God."[299] Endoxa rightly carry enormous weight in guiding the local church's and the disciple's discernment.

Yet, even in listening to the whole Church, Hooker denies the timeless appeal to a golden era. We see this in Hooker's deployment of ancient and medieval church authorities. In a comparison of Cartwright's and Hooker's appeals to the church fathers, John Luoma notes:

> Perhaps the most interesting point in Hooker's use of consensus is that it is not enmeshed in an overestimation of any age - even that of the apostles.... He shows great reverence for the early church (the majority of his citations are from the first six hundred years), but he does not neglect any century.[300]

---

297. *Laws*.I.8.3;I.84.1-2.
298. *Laws*.V.8.2;II.39.22-23.
299. Barth, *CD*, 1/2 §§20.2, 588..
300. John K. Luoma, "Who Owns the Fathers? Hooker and Cartwright on the Authority of the

Luoma notes that what distinguishes Hooker is that he "is willing to gather his consensus from throughout the history of the church."[301] He adds,

> Hooker consciously attempts to form a broad based consensus, allowing each Father to speak for himself as part of a multifaceted consensus (consisting of Scripture, reason, and the Fathers) but weaving each into a comprehensive argument.[302]

For Hooker, there was no golden era whose voice halts the deliberative process or circumscribes the questions we may ask and the answers that are possible. The Church is equally vulnerable to error in all ages, even though not all generations have been equal in their faithfulness. Our discourse is both translocal and transtemporal. Though there is ambiguity, there is continuity: "No, the Church of Christ, which was from the beginning, is and continues unto the end, of which Church all parts have not been always equally sincere and sound."[303]

Hooker describes at length the rationale underlying his view of proper ethical reasoning in the ninth chapter of Book V. The English presbyterians, as we have seen, pressed for radical change in the ecclesial laws concerning worship practices and governance, and they grounded their arguments in appeals to universal axioms mined from Scripture or the early church fathers. In refuting such Ramist-like thinking, Hooker emphasized the importance of inductive thinking that attends properly to the particularity of things. Generalities, Hooker said, are "cloudy mists cast before the eye of common sense":

> The cause of [their] error is ignorance what restraints and limitations all such principles have in regard of so manifold varieties as the matter whereunto they are applicable doth commonly afford. These varieties are not known but by such experience from which to draw the true bounds of all principles to discern how far forth they take effect, to see where and why they fail, to apprehend by what degrees and means they lead to the practice of things in show though not indeed repugnant and contrary one to another, requireth more sharpness of wit, more intricate circuitions of discourse, more industry and depth of judgment than common ability doth yield. So that general rules, till their limits be fully known (especially in matter of public and ecclesiastical affairs), are, by reason of the manifold secret exceptions which lie hidden in them, no other to the eye of man's understanding than cloudy mists cast before the eye of common sense. They that walk in darkness know not whether they go.[304]

Primitive Church," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 8, no. 3 (October 1977), 56.

301. Ibid., 57.
302. Ibid., 58.
303. *Laws*.III.10.1;I.201.9-12.
304. *Laws*.V.9.2;II.43.16-31.

General axioms are popular "because of their plainness at the first sight," but "men of exact judgment [know] such rules are not safe to be trusted over far."[305] "No wise man will desire himself to be cured [by general rules] if there be joined with his disease some special accident" that distinguished his case from others "in the same infirmity, but without the like accident" because it could "be to him either hurtful or at the least unprofitable."[306] For the same reason:

> ... we must not, under a colorable commendation of holy ordinances in the Church, and of reasonable causes whereupon they have been grounded for the common good, imagine that all men's cases ought to have one measure.[307]

Central to Hooker's prescribed model for ethical reasoning is the concept of '*special* equity.' The adjective is decisive. 'Equity' seems to denote for Hooker a conformity to the natural law with attention to justice and fairness. 'Special' denotes a prudential departure from the general rule in a particular case intended to bring about such conformity. Special equity attends to the data differentiating the particular from the general, and modulates ethical reasoning as needed so that the justice which the general law seeks is obtained:

> Not without singular wisdom therefore it hath been provided, that as the ordinary course of common affairs is disposed of by general laws, so likewise men's rarer incident necessities and utilities should be with *special equity* considered. From hence it is that so many privileges, immunities, exceptions, and dispensations have been always with great equity and reason granted, not to the edge of justice, or to make void at certain times and certain men through mere voluntary grace or benevolence that which continually and universally should be of force (as some understand it) but very truth to practice general laws according to their right meaning.[308]

Because of their broad reach, good laws are necessarily expressed in general language, and the more far-reaching the consensus to which the Christian listens, the more generally the judgment of the Church is expressed in custom and law. This leads to inequity. The universal reasoning of his opponents fails to achieve the good the natural law intends because it fails to attend to "material circumstances" that ought to shape their reasoning:

---

305. *Laws*.V.9.2; II.44.3-5.
306. *Laws*.V.9.2; II.44.5-10.
307. *Laws*.V.9.2; II.44.10-13.
308. *Laws*.V.9.3;II.44.13-24. Emphasis added.

> Moral laws are the rules of politics, those politics which are made to order the whole Church of God unto all particular churches, and the laws of every particular church rules unto every particular man within the body of the same church. Now because the higher we ascend in these rules the further still we remove from these specialties, which being proper to the subject whereupon our actions must work, are therefore chiefly considered by us, by them least thought upon that wade altogether in the two first kinds of general directions, their judgment cannot be exact and sound concerning either laws of churches or actions of men in particular because they determine of effects by a part of the causes only out of which they grow, they judge conclusions by demipremises and half principles, they lay them in the balance stripped from those necessary material circumstances which should give them weight, and by show of falling uneven with the scale of the most universal and abstracted rules, they pronounce that too light which is not if they had the skill to weigh it.[309]

Thus far, we've seen Hooker's critique of the Ramist realist presuppositions about the nature of Scripture and also his general laws and the priority of the particular in ethical reasoning. I turn now to his critique of appeals to scriptural timeless absolutes in ethical reasoning.

HOOKERIAN CRITIQUE: REASONING BY NON SEQUITUR

Appeals to timeless absolutes

We have already seen that Hooker rejected his opponents' claims to a golden era in their appeals to the church fathers. Similarly, he rejected appeals to a golden era in Scripture, recognizing as *non sequiturs* their deployment of timeless absolutes whether discovered in the Old or New Testaments. He foreshadowed this challenge to their logic in his Preface to *Laws*:

> ".... it is the error of the common multitude to consider only what hath been of old, and, if the same were well, to see whether still it continue; if not, to condemn that presently which is, and never to search upon what ground or consideration the change might grow; such rudeness cannot be in you so well borne with whom learning and judgment hath enabled much more soundly to discern how far the times of the church and the orders thereof may alter without offense...."[310]

What Hooker signals in his Preface he delivers in the fourth book of his first volume, describing discoveries of timeless universal axioms in Scripture as uncertain or insufficient:

> "For it is out of doubt that the first state of things was best, that in the prime of Christian religion faith was soundest, the scriptures of God were then best understood by all men, all parts of godliness did then most abound: and therefore it must needs follow that customs, laws, and ordinances devised since are not so good for the Church of Christ, but the best way is to cut off later inventions, and to reduce things unto the ancient state wherein at the first they were. Which rule or canon we hold to be either uncertain or at leastwise insufficient, if not both."[311]

---

309. *Laws*.V.81.4;II.476.34-477.16
310. *Laws*.Preface.4.4; I.23.28.31.
311. *Laws*.IV.2.1; 1.276.30-277.8.

Appeals to timeless absolutes serve ideology by shutting down conversation or by setting boundaries on the kinds of questions that can be asked and the ranges of answers that are permissible. There are multiple forms of such appeals. One can, for example, appeal to abstract values like equality or justice. Alternatively, one can appeal to creation's primordial ordering to justify a return to that 'natural' state. Hooker's interlocutors deployed a third method, most frequently appealing to a golden era to which the Church must return. As Hooker notes, the intended rhetorical effect of such appeals to timeless absolutes is to manipulate discourse through circumscription.

In contrast, Hooker denies the indefeasibility of the judgments of all eras:

> The glory of God and the good of his Church was the thing which the apostles aimed at, and therefore ought to be the mark whereat we also level. But seeing those rites and orders may be at one time more, which at another are less available unto that purpose, what reason is there in these things to urge the state of one only age as a pattern for all to follow?[312]

Hooker asks, "Are we bound while the world standeth to put nothing in practice but only that which was the very first?"[313] He concludes, "Our end ought always to be the same, our ways and means thereunto not so."[314] His prescription, in brief, is to be informed by the superabundance of God's love as reflected in the extraordinary diversity in both nature and in the Church itself:

> A more dutiful and religious way for us were to admire the wisdom of God, which shineth in the beautiful variety of things, but most in the manifold and yet harmonious dissimilitude of those ways, whereby his Church upon earth is guided from age to age, throughout all generations of men.[315]

The priority of the particular permeates Hooker's defense of ecclesial practices in Book V. For example, presbyterians challenged the Elizabethan practice of ordaining presbyters and deacons without title and popular election by appealing to the apostolic era. In defending the practice, Hooker argued that the ancient era was not intrinsically normative unless the situation then and now is identical:

---

312. *Laws*.IV.2.3; I.278.15-21.
313. *Laws*.V.20.4;II.75.8-10.
314. *Laws*.IV.2.3; I.278.14.15.
315. *Laws*.III.11.8; I.253.15-20.

> We forget not to examine whether the present case be the same which the ancient was or else do contain some just reason of which it cannot admit altogether the same rules which former affairs of the Church now altered did then require.[316]

Similarly, he defended the Elizabethan practice of providing residences and 'livings' to ministers as an example of "special privilege" in contrast with mere "privilege":

> For the voice of equity and justice is that a general law doth never derogate from a *special* privilege, whereas if the one were contrary to the other, a general law being in force should always dissolve a privilege. The reason why so many are deceived by imagining that so it should do and why men of better insight conclude directly it should not doth rest in the *subject or matter itself*, which matter *indefinitely* considered in laws of common right is in privileges considered as *beset and limited with special circumstances* by means whereof to them which respect it, but by way of generality it seems one and the same in both, although it be not the same if once we descend to particular consideration thereof.[317]

Defending the procession of the cross during worship, Hooker makes the point that precedent does not require that we attach the same meanings to things that generations before us did. To say it *was* so long ago, does not mean that it *is* so today. The meanings we associate with symbols evolves. He gives the example of the brazen serpent which was of soteriological significance to the Hebrews and remained a processional symbol in Jewish worship until the time of King David, by which time it had become merely "a memorial sign or monument of God's miraculous goodness towards them."[318]

In chapter after chapter of Book V, Hooker presses home his claim of the divine authority for local churches to evolve practices suitable to their specific contexts. He provides a history of rogation processions and other litanies, demonstrating their significant evolution since 506 CE.[319] Defending the Elizabethan liturgical calendar, he demonstrates that different churches in history have followed different fasting patterns and days of the week. He similarly demonstrates evolution in the vocations, authority, and support of deacons and presbyters.[320] And he describes such evolution using the Aristotelian category of *phronesis*: "So that the instituting and ordaining

---

316. *Laws*.V.80.8;II.468.10-13.
317. *Laws*.V.81.4; II.476.19-30 Emphasis original
318. *Laws*.V.65.18;II.318.1-2.
319. *Laws*. V.41.2-3; II.163.6 - 165.2.
320. *Laws*.V.78.5; V.80.3.

both of these and all other times of like exercise is as the Church shall judge *expedient for men's good*."[321]

Defending rites of burial against charges that they are unbiblical and noncontinuous with those of the Apostolic era, Hooker asks rhetorically, "Again if it might be proved that no such thing was usual among them, has Christ so deprived his Church of judgment that what rites and order soever the later ages thereof have devised the same must needs be inconvenient?"[322] In Book VI, Hooker traces the history of the practice of penitence, showing how it evolved in response to the Church's changing cultural situation. Initially, the practice was voluntary, individual, and public. Over time it became voluntary and private, then mandatory and private, and then, in the Elizabethan Church, "external repentance for a sacrament, internal for a virtue."[323] Explaining why churches reasonably have such authority to evolve ecclesial practices locally, Hooker quotes Acts 27.38 - the story of Paul throwing food into the sea during a storm - as an example of casting off the good for a greater good.[324] "For of two such evils being not both evitable, the choice of the less is not evil."[325]

So what is the rule? In what conditions does the local church have the discretion to "cast off the good for a greater good?" This question returns us to what I've suggested are his deployments of the virtues of *episteme* and *phronesis*. Near the beginning of Book V, he explains:

> The Church hath authority to establish that for an order at one time which at another time it may abolish, and in both do well. But that which in doctrine the Church doth now deliver rightly as a truth, no man will say that it may hereafter recall and as rightly avouch the contrary. Laws touching matter of order are changeable by the power of the Church; articles concerning doctrine not so.[326]

---

321. *Laws*.V.72.9; II.391.19-21.
322. *Laws*.V.75.4;II.412.20-23.
323. *Laws*.VI.4.3; III.17.15-16.
324. *Laws*.V.9.1;II.42.8-11.
325. *Laws*.V.9.1;II.42.12-13.
326. *Laws*.V.8.2;II.38.17-23.

Appeals to false analogies

The Ramist method of defining, dividing, and classifying encouraged the frequent use of typologies and reasoning by analogy. But it is one thing to analyze things by placing them in logical categories, and quite another to reason ethically by claiming that Old Testament and apostolic practices prefigured and thereby dictated contemporary Christian practices. A species of appeals to timeless absolutes, such appeals tend to exclude the particular information which might modulate reasoning from the general case in order to achieve equity. Hooker consistently refuted ideological claims of his interlocutors by unmasking their use of false typologies and analogies.

One such claim was that Christ had forbidden all change of laws set down in Scripture.[327] In support of this, opponents proposed that the household of the Jews prefigured the household of Christ. Since there was but one enduring law of Moses governing that people, they claimed, so, too, did Christ intend for there to be one set of ecclesiastical laws for his own household. Hooker denied such prefiguration:

> "... seeing that nations are not all alike, surely the giving of one kind of positive laws unto one only people, without any liberty to alter them, is but a slender proof, that therefore one kind should in like sort be given to serve everlastingly for all."[328]

In order to argue that no practice should be warranted if it is not first found in Scripture, Thomas Cartwright appealed to Paul's teaching that "meats and drinks... are sanctified... by the word of God."[329] In Cartwright's logic, Paul's claim that meat and drinks are sanctified defines the category of things which may be used or done by disciples. Those things explicitly mentioned in Scripture may be used; all others belong to the type of things which may not be used. Hooker set aside the appeal, noting that "though meats and drinks be... sanctified by the word of God, and by prayer, yet neither is this a reason sufficient to prove that by Scripture we must of

---

327. *Laws*.III.11.1; I.246.title
328. *Laws*.III.11.6; I.251.7-10.
329. *Laws*.II.2.3;I.151.20-21. The scriptural reference is to 1 Tim 4:5.

necessity be directed in every light and common thing which is incident into any part of man's life."[330]

Opponents, in arguing against the use in worship of non-canonical readings, including the apocrypha, appealed to the example of the rules governing the Jewish Temple, in which nothing could be brought into the temple - "neither brooms, nor fleshhooks, nor trumpets, but those only which were sanctified."[331] Hooker refuted the claim on the grounds that it posited a false analogy: "it would be demanded by what rule the legal hallowing of brooms and fleshhooks must needs exclude all other readings in the Church save Scripture."[332]

Responding to opponents upset because the priest offers the bread and wine to individuals during the Eucharist, whereas Jesus denoted the entire gathering of disciples in his "Take, eat, and drink,"[333] Hooker recognized that sermons and sacramental are different types of remembering, and that Jesus and a contemporary priest are not analogues. He wittily summarized his consistent objection to false analogies, "The softness of wax may induce a wise man to set his stamp or image therein; it persuadeth no man that because wool hath the like quality it may therefore receive the like impression."[334]

To be clear, Hooker did not deny the use of analogical reasoning. Quite the opposite. As we saw above in his use of the church fathers, he granted the authority of precedent:

> In Scripture we grant every one man's lesson to be the common instruction of all men, so far forth as their cases are like, and that religiously to keep the Apostle's commandments in whatsoever they may concern us, we all stand bound.[335]

That said, in order for precedent to have force, the similarity between precedent and the particular case must be strong, for "the laws positive were not framed without

---

330. *Laws*.II.2.3;I.150.24-28.
331. *Laws*.V.20.1;II.2.72.14-15. I render *besomes* as brooms.
332. *Laws*.V.20.2;II.2.73.12-14. I render *besomes* as brooms.
333. *Laws*.V.68.1; II.344.7.
334. *Laws*.V.68.2; II.346.9-21.
335. *Laws*.III.11.11; I.256.20-24.

regard had to the place and persons for which they are made."[336]

For example, when his opponents argued for correspondences between factions in Corinth and Rome of which Paul wrote and the presbyterians opposing Elizabethan sacramental practices, he named the analogy as false. There is no analogy between Jewish and Gentile Christians and the "weak brethren" of the Elizabethan Church, and there is no analogy between "scandalous meats" and "ceremonies which have been abused in the church of Rome."[337] "Between these two cases are great odds."[338] "For neither are our weak brethren as the Jews, nor the ceremonies which we use as the meats which the Gentiles used."[339] "Their use of meats was not like unto our of ceremonies, that being a matter of private action in common life, where every man was free to order that which himself did; but this a public constitution for the ordering of the Church."[340]

Cartwright also compared the nurse who baptizes an infant to a thief who uses a seal stolen from a prince:

> As by the seal which the prince has set apart to seal his grants with, when it is stolen and set to by him that has no authority, there grows no assurance to the party that has it; so if it were possible to be the seal of God which a woman should set to yet for that she has stolen it and put it to not only without but contrary to the commandment of God, I see not how any can take any assurance by reason hereof."[341]

Hooker refuted Cartwright's argument against the efficacy of baptism by a female nurse by naming Cartwright's deployment of a false analogy:

> Their argument taken from a stolen seal may return to the place out of which they had it. For it helpeth their cause nothing... That God has committed the ministry of baptism unto special men, it is for order's sake in his Church, and not to the end that their authority might give being or add force to the sacrament itself.[342]

Similarly, Hooker denied the false analogies by which those "rapt with the pang of

---

336. *Laws*.III.11.6; I.250.32-251.1
337. *Laws*.IV.12.7; I.324.21-23.
338. *Laws*.IV.12.7; I.324.29.
339. *Laws*.IV.12.7; I.324.30-31.
340. *Laws*.IV.12.7; I.325.6-9
341. *Laws*.V.62.19; II.285 See notes.
342. *Laws*.V.62.19; I.285.11-286.6.

a furious zeal"[343] argued for the razing of English churches due to the claim that they'd been tainted by the rites of Rome in the same way the high places of Israel had been tainted by the worship of idols:

> Now whereas commandment was also given to destroy all places where the Canaannites had served their gods, and not to convert any one of them to the honor of the true God: this precept had *reference unto a special intent and purpose* which that there should be but one only place in the whole land whereunto the people might bring such offerings, gifts, and sacrifices as their Levitical law did require.... we should likewise consider how great a difference there is between their proceedings, who erect a new commonwealth which to have neither people nor law, neither regiment nor religion the same that was, and theirs who only reform a decayed estate by reducing it to that perfection from which it hath swerved. In this case we are to retain as much, in the other as little of former things as we may. Since therefore examples have not generally the force of laws which all men ought to keep, but of councils only and persuasions not amiss to be followed by them whose case is the like, *surely where cases are so unlike as theirs and ours*, I see not how that which they did should induce, much less any way enforce, us to the same practice."[344]

The foregoing militates against recommendation of the Ramist realist method of discerning the good. Scripture is not properly seen as a catalog of axioms productive of bald moral maxims. This is not a claim that Scripture is anything less than a fount of divine wisdom. Rather, it is a claim that, as a general rule, such wisdom cannot be discovered simply by extracting texts out of context and positing them as timeless axioms for moral reasoning. Hooker insists that a proper biblical hermeneutic recognizes the particularity of narrative, and reasons from the particular to the general, giving historical and cultural context its due, rather than presuming the axiomatic nature of biblical texts. Furthermore, he insists that gracious ethical reasoning similarly recognizes the priority of the particular, attending to the circumstances of cases in order to fulfill the general intent of the natural law, which positive law can only approximate. The good consists of that which is both beneficial and amiable, and Scripture often recognizes a range of possible paths.

HOOKERIAN CRITIQUE: NO RAMIST SHORTCUTS

The Hookerian account developed so far contrasts sharply with this brief sketch of Ramist realism. Ethics do not take the form of divine command theory. There is no avoiding the subjectivity of our encounter with Scripture and ethical reasoning

---

343. *Laws.* V.17.1;II.61.16.
344. *Laws.* V.17.5;II.63.17-64.5 Emphasis added.

requires a priority on the particular. In what follows, I switch to a more constructive register in order to underscore salient features of the emerging Hookerian account. First, I will take note of significant philosophical differences that are decisive in our descriptions of reality. Second, I will suggest that the Reformation doctrine of election leads properly to a view of reality that is open, and in which there are no universal rules apart from Christ. If my suggestions are sustained, then skepticism toward Ramist-like appeals to timeless absolutes is in order on scriptural, philosophical, and theological grounds.

Hooker writes of "the poverty" of Ramism, pointing to its suggestion that Ramist method makes knowledge of the mind of God accessible without substantial investment in true arts and learning. Hooker lampoons Ramist method for its "marvelous quick dispatch," revealing "as much almost in three days, as if it dwell threescore years with them."[345] For Hooker, the "speedy discourse" of Ramism restrains discernment, limiting human knowledge of God to the generalities accessible to the least of men. Such short cuts are not the path to wisdom.

Stanley Hauerwas, quoting John Howard Yoder, observes that "the task of theology is 'working with words in the light of faith.'"[346] "Working with words" entails working with our descriptions of reality, which is the special domain of philosophical and theological inquiry (reason and revelation). Describing reality requires a grammar, and grammar is the domain of philosophy. The philosopher engages our discourse on matters of practical divinity so that our reasoning is grounded in reality. The theologian does so, however, "in light of faith." That is, the theologian deploys philosophy from the perspective of faith. To describe reality so that it is grounded in ultimate reality is to describe reality so that it is grounded in that which God has revealed about God and creation, which is to say we must speak of God, "but the God to whom and about whom we must speak defines the words we use."[347]

---

345. *Laws*.1.6.4; 1:76.9-20.
346. Hauerwas, *Working With Words*, Kindle location 81-100, Preface, para 5-7. Hauerwas quotes Yoder, citing John Howard Yoder, *Preface to Theology: Christology and Theological Method* (Brazos Press, 2007-09-01), 41..
347. Hauerwas, *Working With Words*, Kindle location 81-100, Preface, para 5-7.

The philosophy and theology underlying the Hookerian account contrast sharply with those of the Ramist realist. Philosophically, the account diverges in its description of how humans know reality. Theologically, the account diverges in its description of the stakes of our knowing. I will describe the philosophical divergences here, and reserve discussion of the theological differences in the next section.

Hooker's complaint about the 'speedy discourse' of Ramist method points directly to the most fundamental philosophical difference. In the Hookerian account, binaries and epitomes can not sufficiently describe reality in all its complexity. Reality defies description through reduction. One reason for the complexity of the world is the ongoing creativity that reflects creation's participation in the rationality of God. Hooker appropriates the Aristotelian concepts of phenomenon, endoxon, and dialectic in order to describe human experience of and engagement with this creativity. Humans encounter phenomena, dialectically gather endoxa that describe these phenomena, and then create structures and concepts in response to phenomena that then themselves become phenomena for all who follow. Reality is not fixed, but open.

We saw that Ramist realism evinces a philosophical optimism about human access to reality, but that optimism is circumscribed by the qualification that such access is exclusively in the form of axiomatic principles discovered in Scripture. The current account is optimistic as well, but in a different way. Reality is directly known, but always phenomenally.[348] The phenomena we experience reliably refer to the reality of the objects we encounter, though we are always vulnerable to probabilistic error in our apprehension of them. As I will develop in the next chapter,[349] our descriptions of reality occupy two descriptive domains - the spaces of causes and reasons. In the interpretative stance of causes, we reason inductively by identifying efficient causes. This *scientific* knowing is least resistant to reductive summarization and categorization schemes. Yet this is not our only manner of knowing. We also experience things and ideas as final causes; they manifest themselves to us rationally through their addressing

---

348. See page 60.
349. See page 132.

us and through our responses to them - through our shared history. We know them personally in their particularity. We are justified in our claims about their dispositions. When we make such claims, we do so within the descriptive domain of the logical space of reasons. Such personal knowing defies schematic reduction. It cannot be exhausted in binaries and epitomes. Ramist method gives no account of *personal* knowing.

Dialectic, not division

A second, related philosophical difference follows from this. The Hookerian account of this study privileges phenomena, endoxa, and dialectic as the primary methods of inquiry into the nature of reality. These methods are themselves phenomena - concepts known within the logical space of reasons. The privileging of these tools, however, entails assumptions about the nature of reality and human participation in it. This is best seen in contrast. To argue for them as methods of ethical discernment over and against the method of mining axioms objectively discovered in Scripture is to presuppose something about reality and human knowledge of it. At minimum, such privileging assumes that dialectical discourse more fruitfully assists us in knowing the good.

The dialectic common in Hooker's era was derivative of the medieval scholastic practice based on Aristotelian dialectics. In my Hookerian account, I do not denote merely that particular form, but rather the broader category of dialectical deduction appropriate "for training, for conversational exchange, and for sciences of a philosophical sort."[350] We have already seen that conversational exchange with moral exemplars is particularly important in the formation of mimetic virtue. Dialectical discourse generally involves premises to be tested and relevant endoxa. One of the potential results of such testing may simply be the negation of the premise. In that instance, it simply resolves binaries in a fashion similar to Ramist method. Yet the premise might instead be affirmed, elevated partially into a new premise, or transformed through correction. The key move here is to notice the orientation

---

350. Aristotle, *Complete Works Vol 1,* Top. 101a26-b4.

towards a "*mediating* synthesis":

> Dialectic is a tool whose chief use is to resolve and reconcile binaries, not through a median synthesis (something like splitting the difference and avoiding extremes), but through a *mediating* synthesis (sublation as elevation, transformation, abolition, and preservation all at once) It is overcoming contradictions and resolving tensions by inheriting the strengths of predecessor/competitor theories and practices while overcoming their weaknesses.[351]

This orientation towards synthesis in our primary method of ethical discernment signals a worldview quite distinct from that reflected in intellectual inquiry grounded by self-authenticating axioms. It implies a communal quest for knowledge of the good in which address and response are expected, and in which our conclusions are at best probabilistic. More importantly, however, it sees this communal quest itself as creative and open. Through dialectic, humans overcome contradictions and resolve tensions, creating a mediating synthesis that not only describes the good, but (potentially) manifests the good.

Dialectic and the doctrine of election

Underlying the deployment of phenomena, endoxa, and dialectic as primary methods of inquiry is a presupposition involving the nature of reality, or at least the nature of human communal knowing. That presupposition contradicts the premise underlying the claim that we objectively know universal rules ordained by God directly through discovery of axioms in Scripture. This presupposition is not merely related to a scriptural hermeneutics but precedes and informs it. Creation is open and ongoing. In the Church's language game, the community participates in the rationality and creativity of God dialectically, not just by creating new synthetic concepts but also by re-creating structures that are the context of our life with God. The orientation towards synthesis signals the premise that humans do not just encounter God's creativity, but imitate and cooperate with it. In so doing, humans do not merely obey universal rules ordained by God, but *participate* in the rationality of God.

I must offer at this point a provisional attempt to think beyond Hooker in order to underscore the importance of the christodramatic ethics which will follow. In the

---

351. Derek Woodard-Lehman, "Email Message to Author," (August 2, 2013). Emphasis original.

foregoing, dialectical discourse is presented as a method of inquiry that characterizes communal life in Christ. I alluded to a presupposition that precedes and informs hermeneutics. It might appear that I am merely suggesting that the presupposition is to be identified with a preferred resolution to a problem in epistemology. My argument might thereby be reduced to the claim that we rely upon dialectical discourse rather than Ramist-like methods because of its greater pragmatic merit - dialectical discourse is more fruitful because creation is complex. But such reduction would be to miss a larger point that I feel is largely unrealized in Hooker, but to which Barth points.

My claim is indeed that dialectical discourse is preferable to Ramist-like alternatives because creation is complex. The important points, however, are that this is an ontological problem, not merely an epistemological one, and that *there are no universal rules upon which our ethics can be grounded*.

Precisely because "election is 'new every morning'" there is new creation, and because there is new creation, creation is indeed 'open.'[352] Our descriptions of reality must be dialectic because our knowledge of God is determined by God's continuing act of election which itself constitutes the cosmos. Put another way, our epistemological problem is not merely - with Aristotle - that our knowledge is probabilistic at best because of human finitude, but that our object of study - the cosmos - is itself dynamic and complex (rather than static) due to God's continuing creative acts of justification. In epistemology, we have to deal with both the soteriological problem of our blindness and the ontological problem of the dynamism of creation.[353]

We saw in my description of Hooker's doctrine of participation that the self-determination of the Father is to be in relation to the Son, and the identity of the Son is determined by relation to the Father. Our participation in Christ's humanity arises

---

352. David W. Congden, "*Creatio Continue Ex Electione*: A Post-Barthian Revision of the Doctrine of *Creatio Ex Nihilo*," *Koinonia* XXII, (2010), 49.

353. I am indebted to David Congden for helping me to recognize that this is an ontological problem, not merely an epistemological one.

ultimately from the triune God's self-determination to be present to God's creation.

As Barth observed, in speaking of the divine decision of election, "we are not dealing

with a systematic relationship but with one which can be the object and content only

of a law which is itself spirit and life, concrete history."[354] In speaking of Christ's

election, "there is no reason whatever why we should suddenly substitute for this

concept a concept of isolated and static being."[355] Christ's election is decisive for

history, "an eternal happening,"[356] yet this is not to be understood as God's static

agenda:

> Only as concrete decree, only as an act of divine life in the Spirit, is it the law which precedes all creaturely life. In virtue of its character and content this decree can never be rigid and fixed. It can never belong only to the past. Because it is God's decree it must, of course, be constant, authoritative and powerful. But because it has pleased God to let it be a concrete decree, it never ceases to be event.[357]

David Congden clarifies the implications of Barth's insight:

> ... the divine life-in-the-Spirit that constitutes the living actuality of election takes place within the event of Jesus Christ. The awakening work of the Spirit does not simply point toward a finished and completed reality in the past; it is rather constitutive of the event itself....The Spirit does not enable a mere "recollection" of a "completed and isolated" election. Instead, the Spirit actualizes the contingent "repetition" of Christ's election in both hidden and manifest forms, thus extending the originating event to embrace new concrete particularities ....[358]

God's self-determination to be for us is not an abstraction that happened pre-

temporally, but a reality that happens in every moment as Christ re-creates and

governs the cosmos. God meets us always in our irreducible particularity. Hence,

"election is 'new every morning'":

> What happens in the present and the future is not simply the noetic acknowledgement or recognition of what has already happened on behalf of all in Jesus Christ. Rather it is Christ himself confronting us today, proclaiming the divine "Yes" to us and to all. The act of election is thus no eternally past or perfect decision, but it repeatedly occurs as a particular, concrete event in the pentecostal totality of Christ's past, present, and future historicity... Election itself is a continuous election: it is God's continuous reaffirmation of Godself as God-for-us and God's continuous reaffirmation of the creature as creature-for-God.[359]

---

354. Barth, *CD*. 2.2.§§33.184.
355. Ibid.
356. Ibid.
357. Ibid.
358. Congden, *"Creatio Continue Ex Electione,"* 48.
359. Ibid., 49.

God's continuing creative acts of justification constitute creation, and this has immense ethical implications:

> Creation, we can thus say, is an eternal act rooted in the eternal Word of God who is self-determined by the eternal decision of election.... Creation, properly speaking, is new creation. We cannot isolate an old creation, or "nature," from which to draw general theological or ethical concepts. Our only epistemic access to creation is through election, and thus through the Spirit of God who meets us in the word that justifies sinners. Moreover, since election is a continuous christological event, so too is creation.[360]

A profound implication for ethics thus arises from the doctrine of justification. Precisely because Christ's Spirit meets us personally, reconciling us in our particularity, Christ's "creative act repeats itself in the justifying word that declares new life to dead sinners."[361] Creation is always new creation. Therefore, "we cannot isolate an old creation, or "nature," from which to draw general theological or ethical concepts." There are no universal rules, no original created human nature to which we can point in order to ground our ethics, no axioms governing matters of action that we can mine in order to secure our covenantal position with God. There is only Christ himself, "the concrete universal, the contingent event that is universally significant in that it includes all other people and events within its singular reality."[362]

Ramist-like methods of definition and division, therefore, are properly rejected as methods of theological and ethical inquiry. This rejection is not merely on pragmatic grounds, but because their deployment represents theological puzzlement: a failure to recognize that theological inquiry is an ontological problem, not merely an epistemological one. Our descriptions of reality must be dialectical because our knowledge of God is determined by God's continuing act of election which itself constitutes the cosmos. Reality is neither fixed materially nor static, but dynamic, and there are no universal rules to be mined or upon which to ground our ethics, precisely because of Christ's justifying acts of re-creation.

---

360. Ibid.
361. Ibid.
362. David Congden, "Email Message to Author," (August 9, 2013).

CHAPTER SUMMARY

We are now in a position to take measure of what has been said about the contrast between Hookerian and Ramist scriptural hermeneutics. We have seen that the Hookerian account rejects the assumptions of Ramist hermeneutics. The divine wisdom found in Scripture is neither self-authenticating, self-interpreting, objective, nor universal. Scripture is not a catalog to be mined, but a practice that forms us in the mind of Christ.[363] The Ramist scriptural hermeneutics postulated the possibility of direct, objective knowledge of God's law. As we have seen, Hooker denied this possibility, insisting that God is always wholly other and the good therefore only indirectly, inferentially, and probablistically known. Ramist-like hermeneutics treats Scripture as a catalogue of timeless absolutes, and through its focus on the general loses sight of the particular. But the particular is the proper focus of ethical reasoning precisely because the general can only approximate the natural law, for though our faculties are apt, our universal judgments are necessarily contingent and inherently probabilistic efforts to clear "the mists that cloud our eyes."[364]

So far, we've seen Hooker's powerful critique of Ramist-like ethical reasoning. But this tells us, negatively, only that such reasoning is not how the mind of Christ is formed in community. We've not yet seen Hooker's positive account, though we have anticipated some of its tenets. The Hookerian account maintains the centrality of Christ and the priority of Scripture's witness to Christ. Our engagements with Scripture are phenomena and therefore inherently subjective in the same way as our encounters with the glorious works of God. No Ramist shortcut can provide an objective foundation upon which to base our ethical reasoning.

If Ramist realism is a false path, how, then, is the mind of Christ formed in community? Hooker's answer begins with an account of our participation in Christ. To that we now turn.

---

363. This perspective of Scripture as a *practice* is manifest in chapters 18-22 (on preaching and teaching) and 37-40 (on psalms and canticles) of Book V of *Laws*.
364. *Laws*.V.9.2;1.43.29-30.

- Chapter 4 -
Participation as Fellowship

INTRODUCTION

Is there an objective ground for our judgments of the good? Is there a connection between Christian cognitive and practical commitments and the generation of communities who embody the mind of Christ? How does the community of Christ reliably discern the good? In this chapter, we will only begin to answer these questions because we will quickly see that the question of how the mind of Christ is formed in communities is deeply theological. Our inquiry quickly leads us into the ecclesiological, epistemological, and soteriological domains. We'll enter each of these domains in order to explore more fully the epistemic role of the Spirit. The task of this chapter will be to consider in depth the agency of the Spirit in calling the elect into fellowship with Christ. I will argue that the Spirit actuates a reciprocal knowing of and responsiveness to Christ mediated by a sociality, an interactivity, and a history of shared life, all of which are constituted by a restored rationality. Such fellowship, we shall see in the next chapter, provides the epistemic ground of our ethical reasoning.

The key move is to notice Hooker's two levels of description of the real presence of Christ. The first level describes the real presence in the relational terms of the covenant of grace, while the second level clarifies how Christ is truly present to us in our personal relationships with him, redirecting our reification of the real presence from physically proximate things to the hearts of believers. Reflection on these two levels of description of the real presence sets up our consideration of practices in the next chapter.

The arguments of this chapter unfold in three movements. The first movement recalls Hooker's distinction between our universal participation in Christ the Creator and Governor and our personal participation in and fellowship with Christ the Reconciler, and describes that participation in relational terms of the covenant of

grace. The second movement explains why our personal experience of Christ's real presence is best described in grammar appropriate to the space of reasons. The final movement explains how Christ is really present to the community both diachronically and synchronically.

In my exegesis of Hooker's account of participation which is presented throughout this chapter, I largely agree with readings of Kirby,[365] Shuger,[366] Harrison,[367] and Irish.[368] Kirby and Shuger both take note of Hooker's deployment of dual epistemologies, describing them as Platonic and Augustinian. I propose that these are best rendered as the grammars appropriate to the spaces of causes and reasons, respectively. I disagree with Rasmussen's 'presence and absence' description of Hooker's sacramental hermeneutic.[369] My reading of Hooker's account of participation disagrees with those who read his account as largely Thomist in character. Though there are strong similarities, the anthropological and epistemological commitments examined in chapter two required that Hooker re-describe our participation in Christ in a Reformation grammar.

PARTICIPATION IN CHRIST

---

365. Kirby refers to Hooker's dual epistemologies in most of his descriptions of Hooker's account of the law, usually describing them in terms of Neoplatonic ontology and Augustinian political theology, wherein he, like me, focuses on Hooker's use of a relational semantic field (e.g., conjunction, copulation, etc.) and the hypostatic union. For a good example of this emphasis, see Kirby, *Richard Hooker, Reformer and Platonist*.
366. Shuger, *Habits of Thought*. 43.
367. Harrison makes the point, with which I agree, that the subject of *Laws* is sanctification, not justification. Harrison, "Powers of Nature and Influences of Grace in Hooker's Lawes,"
368. Charles W. Irish, "'Participation of God Himself:' Law, the Mediation of Christ, and Sacramental Participation in the Thought of Richard Hooker," in *Richard Hooker and the English Reformation: Studies in Early Modern Religious Reforms,* (Dordrecht ; Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003).
369. Barry G. Rasmussen, "Presence and Absence: Richard Hooker's Sacramental Hermeneutic," in *Richard Hooker and the English Reformation: Studies in Early Modern Religious Reforms,* (Dordrecht ; Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003).

Real Presence as Conjunction

In his account of the real presence of Christ, Hooker re-describes Thomas' account using the grammar of a thinner ontology implied by Luther's insight regarding Christ's personal indwelling. For Hooker, this results in two levels of description. The first follows from the Reformation insight that faith forms charity,[370] and the second is an effort to redirect a misplaced reification of the real presence in his interlocutor's descriptions of the sacraments.

The first level of description engaged Puritan colleagues dialectically. Because intellection of transcendentals is no longer possible (carrying on in the same way as the magisterial Reformers),[371] Hooker's task was to describe how participation in Christ is possible given our finitude. One sees in Hooker's solution the marks of both Thomist and Augustinian thinking. Aquinas described life with God in terms of love and fellowship, and Hooker certainly imagined a life with God in which such fellowship leads to transformation. Nonetheless, Aquinas described Christ's real presence relatively more within the semantic field of participation (e.g., intellection of transcendentals, transformation, theosis), and Hooker described it relatively more within the semantic field of the covenant (copulation, conjunction, interaction). In doing so, Hooker follows Augustine in relying upon hypostatic concepts to describe our access to Christ's divinity through his humanity.[372]

Hooker turned to a second level of description in order to respond to philosophical puzzlement that ensued in light of Luther's insight regarding the nature of Christ's real presence within the heart of believers. This puzzlement had theological consequences related to the doctrines of election and predestination that included anxieties about whether one has or does not have Christ, and whether one's

---

370. Here I allude to Reformation 'givens' regarding the human possibility of *a priori* knowledge of the good, discussed above in chapter two. See"What's at stake", page 33.
371. See "Hookerian psychology" on page 54.
372. This relatively greater emphasis on hypostatic union may have been a rhetorically strategic move. Torrance Kirby argues that the doctrine is central to Hooker's argument for the female royal headship of the Church of England. See W.J. Torrance Kirby, *Richard Hooker's Doctrine of the Royal Supremacy* (Leiden ; New York: E.J. Brill, 1990), Chapter IV.

relation to Christ could be threatened by the alleged heresy or apostasy of others within one's community. It also had ecclesiological consequences in the form of questions about 'superstitious' ecclesial practices, the role of ordained ministers, and the possibility of female leadership of the church. This second level of description sought to correct a misplaced reification of the real presence in the sacraments.

In what follows, I will first examine these two levels of description exegetically. The key moves are to recognize that Hooker describes the real presence in term of conjunction, that he locates that real presence within the heart and soul of the believer, and that our participation in Christ grows by steps and degrees as we are sustained in a personal relationship - a fellowship - with him.

Universal participation in Christ

Hooker's first level of description engages the magisterial Reformers dialectically. Luther's decisive insight, for Hooker, is that charity is formed by faith. Encapsulated in this pithy statement are premises about the impossibility of finite and sinful creatures knowing God without God's prior gracious action, the presence of Christ in the heart of the believer, and the Augustinian emphasis on the conjunction of Christ's humanity and divinity. Christ justifies, giving his indwelling and personal presence, and such presence constitutes the forgiveness of sins (*favor*) and the gift of God himself (*donum*).[373]

Yet Luther's view is dualistic. Either one is possessed by Christ or possessed by sin. No knowledge of God is possible without Christ's indwelling. Luther was deeply skeptical of Erasmus' account of mimetic virtue.[374]

Hooker embraced most of this. The clear point of departure was that Hooker strived to imagine a coherent account of mimetic virtue consistent with the insight that charity is formed by faith. For Hooker, the human *telos* is participation in the divine rationality.[375] Hooker's account of the real presence is thus bounded on the one

373. Tuomo Mannermaa and Kirsi Irmeli Stjerna, *Christ Present in Faith: Luther's View of Justification*, 1st Fortress Press Ed ed. (Fortress Press, 2005-01-31), 19.
374. For Luther's skepticism of mimetic virtue, see Herdt, *Putting on Virtue*, Chap 6.
375. "Concerning perfections in this kind [those desires which grow externally] that by

hand by the asymptote of human finitude, and on the other hand by a teleological account of the cosmos which presupposes that all creatures participate in their Creator.[376]

For Hooker, participation, when fully realized, is fundamentally *relational*, characterized by mutual subjection and reciprocity. We possess Christ and Christ possesses us by "special interest property and inherent copulation."[377] This is the participation of those who know Christ as Reconciler. But not all persons manifest such knowing. There are those who know Christ only as Creator and Governor. There is thus a level of participation fundamental to all, and another level that characterizes only those who know Christ as Reconciler.

The first level of participation in Christ is that which is common to all creation. Hooker begins with an allusion to the observation that a cause inherently participates in its effects and an effect in its cause:

> ... we may from that which hath been before sufficiently proved assume to our purpose these two principles, that every original cause imparteth itself unto those things which come of it, and Whatsoever taketh being from any other the same is after a sort in that which giveth it being.[378]

With these principles, Hooker demonstrates that the Father and the Son mutually participate in one another: "It followeth hereupon that the Son of God being light of light, must needs be also light in light."[379] Following a reflection on the inner life of the triune God, Hooker concludes that "The Son [is] in the father as light in that light out of which it floweth without separation; the father [is] in the Son as light in that light which it causeth and leaveth not."[380]

We see in Hooker's Trinitarian illustration a significant echo of the Thomist understanding of participation and communion. Creaturely participation in the divine

---

proceeding in the knowledge of truth and by growing in the exercise of virtue, man amongst the creatures of this inferior world aspireth to the greatest conformity with God." *Laws*.I.5.3;I.73.32-74.3.

376. Hooker develops this teleological cosmology fully in *Laws*.I.5.
377. *Laws*.V.56.1; 2:234.29-31.
378. *Laws*.V.56.1; 2:234.31-235.3
379. *Laws*.V.56.1; 2:235.3-5.
380. *Laws*.V.56.2; 2:235.25-27.

is grounded in the principle of "impartation" of causes in their effects.

Hooker develops his doctrine of participation in four moves within his defense of the sacraments. By tracing these moves, we see more clearly that the account of practices in chapter five is derived from first principles.[381] The first move is to ground his doctrine in reflection on the Trinity. The second move is to consider differences between the participation of the Triune Persons in each other and participation of humans in Christ. A third move establishes the possibility of the local and ongoing presence of Christ within history using Hooker's doctrine of conjunction. Finally, Hooker describes the material interaction through which Christ gives himself in covenantal relationship through sacramental practices. I will trace the first of these in this chapter and the fourth in the next chapter.

Participation within the Trinity

Hooker grounds his theory of participation in doctrine of the Trinity. He follows his metaphor of the Christ who is both "light of light" and "light in light" with an extended discussion of the relationship between the persons:

> The persons of the Godhead, by reason of the unity of their substance, do as necessarily remain one within another as they are of necessity to be distinguished one from another, because two are the issue of one, and one the offspring of the other two, only of three one not growing out of any other. And since they all are but one God in number, one indivisible essence or substance, their distinction cannot possibly admit separation. For how should that subsist *solitarily* by itself which hath no substance but *individually* the very same whereby others subsist with it, seeing that the multiplication of substances in particular is necessarily required to make those things subsist apart which have the selfsame general nature, and the persons of that Trinity are not three particular substances to whom one *general* nature is common, but three that subsist by one substance *which itself is particular*, yet that all three have it, and their several ways of having it are that which maketh their personal distinction? The Father therefore is in the Son, and the Son in him, they both in the Spirit, and the Spirit in both them.[382]

Hooker's presentation is instructive. Shared participation in the divine Being does not cause the relation of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. That is, shared participation is not logically prior to their relatedness. Rather, relatedness is constitutive of the identity of both Father and Son. The self-determination of the Father is to be in

---

381. This derivation from first principles answers one of the common criticisms of the ecclesial ethicists. See "Criticism of the Ecclesial Ethicists", page 193.
382. *Laws*.V.56.2; 2.235.5-21; Emphasis original.

relation to the Son, and the identity of the Son is determined by relation to the Father. The determination of the Son by the Father is that the Son should "flow without separation" from the Father, and the self-determination of the Father is that the Father shall cause and "leaveth not" the Son. In the self-determination of the Father and in the determination of the Son by the Father, their "mutual inward hold" and "copulation" are "inherent." The Son participates in the Father not as a consequence of an innate intellection of the mind of the Father made possible through a common material Being, but as a consequence of their *inherent* relatedness. For Hooker, Father and Son are essentially related because the Father determined that it would be so.

Human participation in the Trinity

As noted above, Hooker distinguishes two degrees of human participation in God. The first, common to all creatures, is the ontological participation of the effect in its cause and the cause in its effect. The second, arising exclusively from the acceptance of the human's election in Jesus Christ, is interpersonal, though "in no sort like unto that" of the interpersonal relation between Father and Son.[383] This second level of participation corresponds to Luther's indwelling of Christ in the heart of the believer.

The participation in God common to all creatures is that which is integral to the relation between Creator and creature. Hooker sees this within the framework of his description of Christ the Creator, for "all things which God in their times and seasons hath brought forth were eternally and before all time in God as a work unbegun is in the artificer which afterward bringeth it unto effect."[384] This universal participation in God results from the objective presence of Christ in all created things. Christ participates in all things in the sense of piercing them with his animating power:

> All things are therefore partakers of God, they are his offspring, his influence is in them, and the personal wisdom of God is for that very cause said to excel in nimbleness or agility, to pierce into all intellectual pure and subtle spirits, to go through all, and to reach unto every

---

383. *Laws*.V.56.5; 2.236.21-22.
384. *Laws*.V.56.5; 2.237.15-18

thing which is. Otherwise, how should the same wisdom be that which supporteth, beareth up, and sustaineth all?[385]

Hooker's second degree of human participation in Christ is personal in analogy to the relation of the persons of the Trinity. As I will explain in the next section, *personal* participation is not potential but *actual* and *historical*,[386] denoting a knowledge of and union with one another that arises through a concrete history, like that of a daughter with her mother.

Hooker clarifies that the personal participation of humans in Christ is radically different from that of the incarnated Son in the Father due to human finitude:

> All other things that are of God have God in them and he them in himself likewise. Yet because their substance and his wholly differeth, their coherence and communion either with him or amongst themselves *is in no sort like* that before mentioned.[387]

Human participation in Christ, therefore, has two degrees corresponding to Hooker's version of the *duplex cognitio Dei*. All created things participate in Christ the Creator and Governor, where participation is described in terms of causes and effects. Yet not all created things participate personally in Christ in the sense of having a lived history through which both God's nature and authentic human nature are revealed through interactions occurring within time and space. Only those who accept their eternal election by Christ participate personally in Christ through a mystical

---

385. *Laws*.V.56.5; 2.236.26-32
386. My usage of the phrase 'historically and actually' is an intentional invocation of Barth's actualistic ontology and ecclesiology, which I suggest Hooker would embrace. As Woodard-Lehman observes, "Like faith itself, in both its kerygma and dogma, the Church is nothing other than its common conversation and confession that results. We might call this Barth's "actualistic ecclesiology.""Woodard-Lehman, "Freedom and Authority," 210. "Actual and historical" are the hallmarks of Barth's "actualism," and, for George Hunsinger, have precise technical meaning in Barth's usage. My usage of these terms follows Hunsinger's explanation of Barth's actualism: "This pattern appears again and again in the *Church Dogmatics*. The church, the inspiration of Scripture, faith, and all other creaturely realities in their relationship to God are always understood as events. They are not self-initiating and self-sustaining. They are not grounded in a neutral, ahistorical, or ontological relationship to God independent of the event of grace. Nor are they actualizations of certain ontologically given creaturely capacities. Rather, they have not only their being but also their possibility only as they are continually established anew according to the divine good pleasure. They have their being only in act - in the act of God which elicits from the creature the otherwise impossible act of free response." George Hunsinger, *How to Read Karl Barth: The Shape of His Theology, With Special Reference to the Conception of Truth*, Kindle ed. (Oxford University Press, USA, 1994-04-29), Kindle loc. 439, Chap 1, para 7.
387. Laws.V.56.6; 2:236.18-26. Emphasis added.

conjunction:

> For in him we actually are *by our actual incorporation into that society* which hath him for their head and doth make together with him one body (he and they in that respect having one name) for which cause by virtue of this mystical conjunction we are of him and in him even as though our very flesh and bones should be made continuate with his.[388]

Thus, Hooker acknowledges the ontological basis by which all creatures participate in Christ the Creator, but distinguishes between that and the personal participation in Christ that mystically transforms the eternally elect as they respond responsibly to the revelation of Christ the Reconciler. The participation fundamental to all creatures does not constitute "being in Christ" in its fullest, saving sense:

> It is too cold an interpretation, whereby some men expound our being in Christ to import nothing else, but only that the self-same nature, which maketh us to be men, is in him, and maketh him man as we are. For what man in the world is there which hath not so far forth communion with Jesus Christ? It is not this that can sustain the weight of such sentences as speak of the mystery of our coherence with Jesus Christ. The Church is in Christ as Eve was in Adam. Yea by grace we are every of us in Christ and in his Church, as by nature we are in those our first parents. God made Eve of the rib of Adam. And his Church he frameth out of the very flesh, the very wounded and bleeding side of the Son of Man. His body crucified and his blood shed for the life of the world, are the true elements of that heavenly being, which maketh us such as himself is of whom we come.[389]

Here Hooker strikes a soteriological note that will be important in what follows. All humans participate ontologically in Christ the Creator and Governor, but it is only that personal participation in which Christ is known as Reconciler which mystically and salvifically transforms. The soteriological point is that the means of that personal participation in Christ - the means of grace - is the encounter with Christ in his human nature - the human nature reconciled to the divine, "his body crucified and his blood shed." The body and blood offered "for the life of the world" are inseparable from the divine; they are indeed "the true elements of that heavenly being" which transform us into that which he is eternally - authentic humanity, reconciled to the Father. Fellowship - understood as personal, reconciling participation in the Christ - is participation in the human nature that is inseparable but distinct from the divine nature of our risen Lord, the *Logos ensarkos*.

---

388. *Laws*.V.56.7; 238.29-239.5; Emphasis added.
389. *Laws*.V.56.7; 2:239.13-26

Copulation and conjunction

For Hooker, the Church is conjoined to Christ as Eve was to Adam, formed by Christ's body and blood just as Eve was formed from Adam's rib. The joyful and transforming participation in Christ to which all are called is not merely Platonic, but, in analogy to the sexual union, is material and personal, a deep fellowship characterized by a reciprocal "inward hold," "possession," and "inherent copulation."[390] Similarly, the community of those who respond responsibly to their election are "offspring of God"[391] who are "sprung out of [Christ]"[392] and whom "Christ... knoweth and loveth... even as parts of himself,"[393]

This portrait of a union that is material and personal raises a significant philosophical question: how can Christ be present locally and across time? If Jesus died two thousand years ago, how can such union - in analogy to the sexual union of Adam and Eve - be possible for disciples living in the twenty-first century? How can the body and blood of Jesus of Nazareth by which we are conjoined to Christ be locally present to Christian communities in our time?

The question of how the body and blood of Jesus is present locally is not merely a question in sacramentology; it is immediately christological and ultimately soteriological. For our purposes, it is not just about the Eucharist. Rather, consideration of how Christ is present in the Eucharist is decisive for our understanding of how Christ is present in all ecclesial practices, and therefore becomes decisive for our understanding of the role of practices in the formation of Christ in community.

We saw in the previous section that, for Hooker, personal, reconciling participation in Christ just is participation in the human nature that is inseparable but distinct from the divine nature of our risen Lord, the *Logos ensarkos*. But how does one

---

390. *Laws*.V.56.1; 2:234.29-31.
391. *Laws*.V.56.5; 2.237.23
392. *Laws*.V.56.6; 2.238.5-6
393. *Laws*.V.56.7; 2.239.5-6

encounter Christ's human nature? Calvin was willing to grant Christ's reconciling

presence in the Lord's Supper "in a special manner" yet insisted that Christ's local

presence is constituted by his divine nature because his flesh "will remain in heaven till

he come to judgement." Undergirding this is the Reformed doctrine that the

Lutherans dubbed *extra Calvinisticum* which gives us the concepts of *Logos asarkos* and

ensarkos. The concepts were:

> ... an attempt by the Reformed to maintain: (1) the proper, Chalcedonian distinction between the natures, and (2) that the natures remain unaltered and undiminished. Therefore the Word is fully incarnate in the human Jesus, but is etiam extra carnem – *also* outside the flesh.[394]

Darren Sumner observes that Calvin's method of refuting the Lutheran doctrine

of ubiquity was problematic to the extent that it posits a Word that is both "fully

incarnate in the human Jesus" and "also outside the flesh." The conception seems to

imply the existence of a Christ who can be known known apart from Jesus of

Nazareth:

> The primary concern of the Fathers was that the body of the Word did not bind him to time and space, bringing a hiatus to his divine transcendence. This has more to do with the character of the person who becomes incarnate (as emerged in the kenosis debates) than with the metaphysical reality of the hypostatic union per se. The subtle shift in the extra's center of gravity among the Reformed after 1564 is evident in the illustration of 'Antwerp on the ocean': that Antwerp is located on the ocean does not mean that Antwerp covers the whole world. The analogy was originally to explain Christ's presence at the right hand of the Father: so the fact that Christ is everywhere by virtue of his divinity (the ocean) does not mean that his humanity is everywhere as well.[395]

As Sumner concludes, "The implication of this constructive use of an ancient

principle is that the *extra Calvinisticum* retains for the Logos a transcendent way of

being in which he is not incarnate."[396]

Hooker seems to have been aware of this problem. He agreed with Calvin that

Christ's "human substance in itself is naturally absent from the earth, his soul and

body not on earth but in heaven only."[397] Yet Hooker importantly diverges from

Calvin[398] in granting the possibility of the local presence of Christ's human body "after

---

394. Darren Sumner, "The Twofold Life of the Word: Karl Barth's Critical Reception of the *Extra Calvinisticum*," *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 15, no. 1 (January 2013): 42-57. 43.
395. Ibid.
396. Ibid., 44.
397. *Laws*.V.55.6-7; 2.231.22-24.
398. Here I diverge from Kirby. By my reading, Hooker is more nuanced than Calvin in

a sort":

> .... because this substance is inseparably joined to that personal word which his very divine essence is present to all things, the nature which cannot have in itself universal presence hath it *after a sort* by being nowhere severed from that which everywhere is present. For inasmuch as that infinite word is not divisible into parts, it could not in part but must needs be wholly incarnate, and consequentially wheresoever the word is it hath with it manhood.[399]

Hooker quickly dismisses the Lutheran doctrine of ubiquity but endeavors to preserve Luther's key insight that Christ must be present locally to us in his humanity if we who are finite are to know the divine. His constructive method is to adopt analogical language. He deploys the phrases "after a sort" and "in some sort" to point to a mystical reality that can only be described with the humility of metaphor: "The nature which cannot have in itself universal presence hath it *after a sort* by being nowhere severed from that which everywhere is present."

Hooker distinguishes between "the person of Christ" and "the whole of Christ." A person, as I suggest below,[400] is one with whom it is possible to share a lived history through which his or her nature is revealed. A person, therefore, is both a subject who reveals himself and an object that is capable of being known. One can know a person without encountering all of a person. So it is, "after a sort," with Christ:

> For *the person of Christ is whole*, perfect God and perfect man wheresoever, although the parts of his manhood being finite and his deity infinite we cannot say that *the whole of Christ* is simply everywhere, as we may that his deity is and that his person is by force of deity.[401]

How do we encounter the humanity of the risen Lord locally though it is located at the right hand of the Father in heaven and lacks the attribute of ubiquity? "By force of deity." The force of deity causes the possibility and the efficacy of our personal

---

describing how Christ's humanity can be locally present while Christ's body sits at the right hand of the Father. Kirby sees Calvin and Hooker as nearly identical in locating the risen Lord at the right hand of the Father, and notes that Hooker holds that the mystical body is not present locally. My reading has Hooker addressing the problem I mention with the *extra Calvinisticum* more subtly by gesturing towards an explanation of how we can claim we encounter Christ's humanity even though he reigns at the right hand of the Father. This is not a claim that Christ's body is located otherwise, but an explanation of how we can nonetheless experience his humanity locally in our sacramental practices. Kirby and I agree that Hooker describes our experience of the presence locally in terms of the hypostatic union.

399. *Laws*.V.55.6-7; 2.231.24-31. Emphasis added.
400. See "Personhood" on page 134.
401. *Laws*.V.55.8; 2.231.33-232.13. Emphasis original.

participation in Christ through the conjunction of the divine and human natures in Christ:

> For *somewhat of the person of Christ* is not everywhere in that sort namely his manhood, *the only conjunction* whereof with deity is extended as far as deity, the actual position restrained and tied to a certain place. Yet presence *by way of conjunction* is in some sort presence.[402]

Reification Redirected

I turn now to Hooker's second level of description. Here the key moves are to understand that there are two forms of justified knowing - one in the realm of causes and the other in the realm of reasons, that a personal relationship is manifest in a shared history, and that our personal experience of Christ's real presence is experienced in the space of reasons, not causes. On the basis of this account, we can understand how the Spirit creates the personal relationships with Christ that are essential to the account of mimetic virtue I will introduce in the next chapter.

Reconstructing Calvin's de-reification project

Earlier, I alluded to Hooker's effort to redirect a misplaced reification of the real presence on the part of his interlocutors. The interlocutors in view here clearly include those holding Roman and Lutheran perspectives of the real presence.[403] It is easy to imagine, however, that Hooker also addressed his Elizabethan colleagues, whether for or against Genevan reforms, who evinced an insufficient valuation of the real presence, failing to appreciate its sanctifying role in ecclesial practices.[404]

We saw in the previous section that all humans participate in Christ naturally, but that only those elect who respond responsibly to their election participate in Christ personally in the sense of the mutual indwelling that Luther describes. Hooker describes this personal participation in terms of the encounter with Christ's humanity which is conjoined with Christ's divinity. Given Luther's dualistic proclamation that one either has Christ within or does not, much is at stake in the doctrine of the real

---

402. *Laws*.V.55.8; 2.231.33-232.13. Emphasis original.
403. *Laws*.V.67.11; 2:340.2-15.
404. As Lake observes, Archbishop Whitgift, ostensibly an early sponsor of Hooker's project, defended the rites and ceremonies of the Church of England by denying them the duty of edification. Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans*. 39.

presence within the heart of believers. Does one have Christ or not? Is my neighbor's sinfulness, heresy, or apostasy potentially a threat to Christ's real presence within me? Is my own sin? And what is the significance of ecclesial practices grounded in the premise that Christ is really present in the community and in individuals?

In different ways, Roman and Lutheran doctrine reified real presence in the sacraments. Calvin resisted this reification, famously responding with his weak form of the real presence, which firmly locates Christ's humanity at the right hand of the Father. Hooker's challenge was to defend the ecclesial practices of the Elizabethan Church against claims that those practices are tainted by the 'dangerous superstition' of Rome. Hooker responded by rationally reconstructing Calvin's account in order to illuminate the essential connection between one's personal relationship with Christ and one's successive encounters with Christ's real presence, particularly in the sacraments.[405]

Two kinds of knowing

Hooker's second level of description is signaled by his repeated use of linguistic cues such as "after a sort" which qualify his explanation of how Christ's humanity is present even though Christ is exalted in heaven. These qualifications imply that there are at least two ways of experiencing the presence of phenomena. Hooker, however, is vague here, and does not tell us what he is denoting. In what follows, I shift into a more constructive register to suggest that Hooker's 'after a sort' cues reflect an ontology described in the grammar appropriate to the space of reasons.

As noted in chapter two,[406] all human knowledge is derived from the phenomenal due to creaturely finitude. Given Hooker's rich conception of the empirical, I suggest

---

405. Here I depart from Kirby, who sees Hooker's account as identical to Calvin's. My proposal is that Hooker subtly adapted Calvin's weak doctrine of the real presence in order to suggest that, though the risen Christ's body is located in Heaven, we nonetheless encounter it locally. This is not a claim that Christ's body is located otherwise, but a suggestion that we can nonetheless experience his humanity locally in our sacramental practices. I shall demonstrate in what follows that, for Hooker, Christ's body can indeed, "in some sort," be present locally by force of deity even though his body is constrained to be at the right hand of the Father in heaven. Neelands also sees Hooker's position as diverging from Calvin and owing inspiration to Cyril of Alexandria via Thomas instead. Cf. Neelands, "The Theology of Grace of Richard Hooker". 312-4.

406. See page 59.

that 'the phenomenal' is that which appears to ordinary human perception and reason in the spaces of causes and reasons. The phenomena we experience reliably refer to the reality of the objects we encounter (though, as Hooker himself emphasized, we are vulnerable to probabilistic error in our apprehension of all phenomena). There is that which we know because we comprehend cause and effect empirically - the realm of causes in which we know *scientifically* through inductive identification of material and efficient causes. Such knowledge is communicable diachronically and synchronically, and capable of being gathered as endoxa and tested dialectically.

Yet the space of causes is not the only manner of our knowing. We also know things and ideas that are manifest to us - through experience of their 'manifest image.' That is, we know them not through our identification of their material or efficient causes but through our experience of them as final causes.

Aristotle taught in his *Physics* that descriptions which adequately explain phenomena include accounts of their material, formal, efficient, and final causes. Yet there is an important distinction between having sufficient comprehension of all four causes and having justification to make claims about the phenomena encountered. If we encounter a statue of a president, we are justified in our claim that it is a statute of a president even if we don't know its material or its sculptor. Though we may be unable to offer a scientific description of it that would satisfy Aristotle, its final cause is manifest to us.[407]

Final causes are manifest to us rationally. Such knowing is the product of rational causation. We need not be skeptical of such knowing. We are justified in making claims about them and can offer justification for our claims. When we make such claims, we place our characterization of the object of our knowing in 'the logical space of reasons.'[408]

---

407. Aristotle, *Complete Works Vol 1. Phys.*194b23–35

408. Wilfrid Sellars, *Science, Perception and Reality* (Ridgeview Pub Co, 1991-06-01). §36. My treatment and deployment of Sellars' conception of the logical space of reasons is informed by Kevin Hector, *Theology Without Metaphysics: God, Language and the Spirit of Recognition (Current Issues in Theology, No. 8)* (Cambridge University Press, 2011-10-31).

Personhood

Personal relationships belong not to the realm of material relations and efficient causation but to the realm of rational relations and final causality. They belong to the logical space of reasons.[409] In personal relationships, we know persons as persons - their final end. Or, better, as persons carrying on towards their final end. We know them as both formal and final causes.

Not all persons are human,[410] and personhood is not synonymous with human nature. There is a distinction between a human and a person that is akin to the distinction between the potential and the actual. A human is a neuro-physiological system, but a person is more than this. A person has the capacity to feel, to experience emotions, to think, and to act, and the patterns in which these capacities are actuated constitute dispositions in the literal sense. A person's "second nature" is manifest as dispositions.[411]

Dispositions constitute the nature of a person, but their nature is represented through successive acts. To know the nature of a person, therefore, requires encounters of the successive acts through which their dispositions are revealed. Dispositions will be central in this study when I turn to the question of mimetic virtue in the next chapter, but for now the key point is that a person's nature is manifest to us as dispositions, and dispositions are revealed to us through successive representations, which is to say one's person is manifest to us through successive encounters with their thoughts, words, and actions.

A personal relationship, therefore, is one in which the attention of two persons is directed to each other such that they encounter the successive acts of the other through which their natures are revealed. Such attention requires an initiating

---

409. I am indebted to my colleague, Derek Woodard-Lehman, for introducing me to Sellars and the reasons/causes distinction.
410. Per the account offered here, other communicable mammals might be described as persons. And so can the Trinity.
411. Wilfrid Sellars, "Metaphysics and the Concept of a Person," in *Box 34, Folder 3,* ed. Special Collections Department Archives of Scientific Philosophy, Wilfrid S. Sellars Papers, 1899-1990 (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh), 28.

instance of attention-getting (such as the Thomist moment of doxastic causality), and then a series of reciprocating representations, of action and response, through which revelation of natures is communicated. More simply: a personal relationship is constituted by a shared history of address and response.[412]

Real presence

The foregoing helps us to imagine the possibility of the local presence of Christ's human nature. We saw before that we encounter the humanity of Christ in spite of his body's location at the right hand of the Father in heaven by way of the conjunction of his human and divine natures. We now are in a position to see how this is possible. His human nature is integral to his personhood, and is locally and universally present by the force of his divine nature.

Perhaps this is best comprehended through an analogy. Imagine one sees a daughter just as she walks past a window. All one captures is a glimpse of the shoulder of a female form in a red sweater but one's shared history enables one to recognize that form as "daughter." All that was present was the shoulder, but yet in that glimpse of a shoulder we encounter the whole person: "that's my daughter, my beloved!" Through the conjunction of her body with her personality which we have come to know, the fullness of her person is present to us and our shared history with her is evoked immediately in us. We experience her presence even though we have seen only a part of her body. "… presence *by way of conjunction* is in some sort presence."

The reverse case is also true. When we capture only a glimpse of an aspect of her

---

412. This account of personhood, derived from philosopher Wilfred Sellars, compares remarkably well with Barth's distinction between a 'state' and 'history.' Neder notes, "Barth defines history by contrasting it with what he calls a state (*Zustand*). According to Barth, the concept of a state 'involves the idea of something completely insulated within the state in question, the idea of a limitation of its possibilities and therefore of its possible changes and modes of behavior.'" Neder, *Participation in Christ*, 32-33. In contrast, Barth says that "History, therefore, does not occur when the being is involved in changes or different modes of behaviour intrinsic to itself, but when something takes place upon and to the being as it is. *The history of a being begins, continues and is completed when something other than itself and transcending its own nature encounters it, approaches it and determines its being in the nature proper to it, so that it is compelled and enabled to transcend itself in response and in relation to this new factor.* The history of a being occurs when it is caught up in this movement, change and relation, when its circular movement is broken from without by a movement towards it and the corresponding movement from it, when it is transcended from without so that it must and can transcend itself outwards." Barth, *CD*, III/2.§44.3.158. Emphasis added.

personality which we have come to know through our shared history, the fullness of her person, which is inseparable from her body, is evoked immediately in us. There is a *rational* presence. Though her body is at the same time elsewhere, it is in some sort present to us by force of her personality (or, what some might call her *spirit*). Presence *by way of conjunction* is in some sort presence.

So, Hooker points out, Christ's body can indeed, in some sort, be present locally by force of deity even though his body is constrained to be at the right hand of the Father in heaven. He does not try to explain the nature of this presence beyond the linguistic cues indicating metaphor (*after a sort* and *in some sort*), but rather describes it as mystical. Yet he seems to hint here at something quite important to our contemporary discourse. This hint leads me to propose the reconstruction of Hooker's account of being that follows.

It seems that "after a sort" refers to a relational presence that is manifest within a *personal relationship* in the sense of a shared sociality, actualized in interactions of address and response across the horizon of time. Such presence is real because the relationship is real. That is, it is the presence of a significant relation that is forged only through a shared history. Presence need not be *physically* proximate in order to be real.

Hooker seems to have in view here an account of being that describes reality (and participation) not merely in terms of material or efficient causation, but in other terms ('after a sort'). He does not make explicit those other terms, but only gestures toward his perspective with his emphasis on the possibility of interpersonal relations that communicate the whole person without being dependent on the proximate physical presence of that person. This is a different ontology, an account of being that is based not on material or efficient causation but on relation, reason, and action. It is an account of being described in terms of formal and final causation.

Authentic relationships in which persons participate in one another are mediated by physical things and events (shared bread, shared wine, shared water, shared milk, shared honey, shared oil). They are also mediated by memories of shared experiences

which are also physical to the extent they are mapped in phonemes and graphemes in the mind. Yet real relationships cannot be reduced to the material or physical things that mediate them or to the sum of all such material events through which they are mediated. Relationships are more than the materials that mediate them. That is, the physical properties of the persons or things in relation do not, themselves, determine the structure of their relation. We can relate to humans as though they are inanimate resources to be discarded when consumed, and we can relate to wooden things as though they are gods. And, tragically, we do. The relational presence which communicates the whole person is not determined by physical proximity of the person's matter.

Authentic relationships are expressions of communion between persons within history, and not exchanges of properties that can be sufficiently described in terms of material or efficient causation. Expressions of communion occupy "the space of reasons" in the sense that there exists a reciprocal knowing of and responsiveness to one another arising from a shared history. Hooker seems to be gesturing toward something like this in his description of interpersonal participation that is not determined by physical proximity but by something else. "After a sort" thus seems to indicate a different account of being: a relational presence that is not determined by physical proximity but is nonetheless real, a presence mediated by reciprocal address and response across the horizon of time. It denotes a well known phenomenon - the meaningful presence of persons united through their shared history.

If this is correct, then Hooker seems to be implying that participation in Christ does not depend upon an exchange of properties, and therefore no theories of transubstantiation or consubstantiation are needed in order to justify claims that Christ is really and locally present in our sacramental practices.[413] The reality of our relation to Christ within the context of a sacramental act is not dependent upon the physical presence of Christ's humanity. Instead of an exchange of properties (*communicatio idiomatum*), our participation entails an expression of interpersonal

---

413. This is in fact the move Hooker makes when discussing the Eucharist. See See page 177 for Hooker's rejection of transsubstantiation and consubstantiation.

knowing of and responsiveness to Christ arising from a shared covenantal history. *Communicatio actionis reconciliantis Christi*, not *communicatio idiomatum*.[414] The meaning of our relation to Christ within the context of our sacramental acts is dependent upon the intelligibility of our responsiveness to Christ given the context of our shared history with him.[415] To the extent that our practices express our recognition of and response to the grace communicated as a summons to have our lives determined by Christ's covenant of grace, our participation in Christ in our sacramental practices is real.[416]

The communication of Christ's real presence

Yet more must be said. The assertion that the reality of our relation to Christ is not dependent upon the physical proximity of Christ's humanity is not a claim that our relation to Christ is possible without the real presence of Christ's humanity. Rather, it is a claim that real presence is not to be confused with physical presence. The real presence of Christ's exalted body *is* essential to Hooker's soteriology.

To understand why, we need merely recall Hooker's account of the eternal law and the discussion with which this chapter began regarding human participation in the Trinity.[417] Pre-temporally, God willed that all creation would be eternally in a

---

414. The communication of the reconciling actions of Christ, not the communication of properties, more clearly describes what is expressed in the personal relationship the Spirits creates between the elect and Christ.

415. *Fellowship,* rather than *participation,* more carefully describes the communion with Christ in which the divine is simultaneously alterior and immanent. This subtle distinction partially answers one of John Webster's criticisms of those who emphasize practices. Participation understood as fellowship clarifies that the real presence through which the Spirit acts in practices never ceases to be alterior even as the practices proclaim Christ's immanence. Compare Barth: "To put it in the simplest way, what unites God and us men is that He does not will to be God without us, that He creates us rather to share with us and therefore with our being and life and act His own incomparable being and life and act, that *He does not allow His history to be His and ours ours, but causes them to take place as a common history.*" Ibid., IV/ 1.§57.1.7. Emphasis added. As Neder notes, per Barth, "God share[s] his being with humanity.... by including humanity in the history of the Covenant." Neder, *Participation in Christ*, 44. For Webster's criticism and my response, see "John Webster's Barthian Critique" on page 193.

416. Compare Barth: "What is the nature of objective participation in Christ? The answer, [Barth] responds, 'is that *we ourselves are directly summoned*, that we are lifted up, that we are awakened to our our truest being as life and act, that we are set in motion by the fact that in that one man God has made Himself our peacemaker and the giver and gift of our salvation.'" Ibid., 46-47. Neder quotes Barth, *CD*, IV/1 §57.14.. Emphasis added.

417. On human participation in the Trinity, see "Human participation in the Trinity" beginning on page 125. On the essentiallity of human relatedness to God and other creatures, see "Hookerian ontology" on page 44.

particular relation to its Creator, a relation of action in which God moves eternally towards God's creation. Furthermore, God willed that the very being of God's creatures entails a relatedness to God and to each other that is essential to their nature, a relation of action in which all creatures move symphonically and reciprocally toward their Creator. Precisely because of the covenant of grace, humans are essentially relational and related to Christ and each other, and their reality consists of this action, this movement. Real presence is not to be confused with physical presence because real presence is manifest as an event in which one experiences being addressed by one wholly other than oneself in the logical space of reasons.

Relatedness to Christ is not an abstraction, but a pretemporal act of creation. The real *presence* of Christ, similarly, is not an abstraction but a temporal event in which one recognizes that one is addressed by Christ. Communion with Christ, therefore, requires neither the capacity to participate innately in the divine Mind nor materiality in order to be real. Communion with Christ requires a re-membering, a re-cognition, a re-conciliation of a relation that is already intrinsic to humans. Real presence is not to be confused with physical presence because its reality consists of this actual and historical re-membering, re-cognition, and re-conciliation of a relation that just is the reciprocal address and response of Creator and creature.[418]

Real presence to the community

For Hooker, it is insufficient to claim that we share in Christ's destiny and the benefits of his exaltation simply because we share his human nature:

> It is too cold an interpretation, whereby some men expound our being in Christ to import nothing else, but only that the self-same nature, which maketh us to be men, is in him, and maketh him man as we are. For what man in the world is there which hath not so far forth communion with Jesus Christ? It is not this that can sustain the weight of such sentences as speak of the mystery of our coherence with Jesus Christ.[419]

---

418. Compare Barth. Ibid., III/2.§44.3.164. As Neder notes, "Barth describes the event of human fellowship with God in a variety of ways: the transcending of human beings by God and the corresponding human transcendance of one's state; the procession of divine action and the return of fitting human action; the divine election of humanity and the human election of God, and so on. All these ways of speaking point to the same event: the union of God and humanity that occurs as God's command is met with human obedience." Neder, *Participation in Christ*, 35.

419. *Laws*.V.56.7; 2:239.14-19

Participation in Christ requires more than mere sharing of his human nature. As Paul taught the Philippians, participation entails a "know[ing of] Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by *becoming like him in his death*" (Phil. 3:10 NRSV). Participation in Christ's exaltation entails necessarily a sharing in his humiliation; there can not be a knowing of one without the other, because they dynamically interpret one another. To share in his humiliation and exaltation - to claim the events of his death and resurrection as one's shared history with him - is to share in his body and blood.

> The Church is in Christ as Eve was in Adam. Yea by grace we are every of us in Christ and in his Church, as by nature we are in those our first parents. God made Eve of the rib of Adam. And his Church he frameth out of the very flesh, the very wounded and bleeding side of the Son of Man. His body crucified and his blood shed for the life of the world, are the true elements of that heavenly being, which maketh us such as himself is of whom we come.[420]

Hooker implies a distinction that highlights the importance of human sharing in Christ's body and blood. The participation in Christ that all creatures share - as the effects caused by Christ the Creator - can be qualified as *natural* participation. This is the participation all humans share as sons and daughters of the First Adam. Our natural participation in Christ is *potentially* personal, arising as it does from the persons of the Trinity whose desire it is to be known by creation with the clarity and consequent adoration natural to the heavenly hosts. As we saw in the previous section, *actual* personal participation in Christ entails a reciprocal knowing of and responsiveness to Christ mediated by a sociality, an interactivity, and a history of shared life, all of which are constituted by rationality. Our rationality, however, no longer avails for us naturally because the noetic effects of sin include a distorted rationality, a blindness, a forgetfulness of our creaturely relation to our Creator, and the adoration of idols.

Only our relationship with Jesus, the Second Adam, perfects our rationality and restores our sight, re-establishing the possibility of an actual personal participation in Christ. We participate in the First Adam *naturally* through our sharing in the rib he

---

420. *Laws*.V.56.7; 2:239.19-26

gave for the First Eve. We participate in the Second Adam through our sharing in the body and blood he shed for the Second Eve, the Church. The risen and glorified body of the Second Adam, which encompasses simultaneously his exaltation and humiliation, his Resurrection and Cross, is the cause of the Second Eve. The Church, as the effect, participates in its cause in a way that transcends time and space by sharing in the body and blood which alone perfects human rationality and restores human sight, recovering for us our forgotten but natural identity, our shared history through which Christ the Creator, Governor, and Reconciler is really, personally present.

Perhaps, then, 'after a sort,' is indeed a different kind of presence, a presence that is not only genuine communion because it is mediated by a sociality, an interactivity, and a history of shared life, but a presence that is also appropriate to Christ's particular body in its identity as the cause of our redemption - that non-material rational presence of a cause in its effects.[421]

Real presence to discrete individuals

There is a distinction between this claim of the possibility of Christ's humanity being locally present rationally, socially, actually, and historically to the Church, and the further claim that Christ is so present to discrete individuals. How is Christ present in such a way that we individually encounter the phenomenon of "that mutual inward hold which Christ hath of us and we of him in such sort that each possesseth other by way of special interest property and inherent copulation?"[422]

For Hooker, the answer arises once again from the universality of the presence of the human nature *by way of conjunction*. "Session at the right hand of God is the actual exercise of that regency and dominion wherein the manhood of Christ is joined and matched with the deity of the Son of God."[423] The Son in his humanity wills what the

---

421. I am indebted to my colleague, Jeff Boldt, for helping me to clarify my thinking about the possibility of a presence appropriate to a cause that Christ's body possesses but which our bodies do not possess.
422. *Laws*.V.56.1; 2:234.29-31.
423. *Laws*.V.55.8; 2:233:12-14.

Father wills, and, as "the head to the Church which is his body[424]" reigns as the "one to whom all hearts are open, all desires are known, and from whom no secrets are hid."[425] The Son's soul and, "in some sort," his body "is present in all things in which [his] deity... worketh":

> Touching the manner how he worketh as man in all things, the principal powers of the soul of man are the will and the understanding, the one of which two in Christ assenteth unto all things, and from the other nothing which deity doth work is hid. So that by knowledge and assent the soul of Christ is present in all things which the deity of Christ worketh. And even the body of Christ itself although the definite limitation thereof be most sensible doth notwithstanding admit in some sort a kind of infinite and unlimited presence likewise.[426]

In similar fashion, we encounter not only Christ's human nature, but that particular humanity that cooperates perfectly with and is reconciled to the divine "in all things":

> Again as the manhood of Christ may after a sort be everywhere said to be present because that person is everywhere present from whose divine substance manhood nowhere is severed; so the same universality of presence may likewise seem in another respect applicable thereunto, namely by *cooperation with deity* and that *in all things*.[427]

By way of conjunction of the two natures, even though Christ's body sits at the right hand of the Father in heaven, we encounter universally and locally the obedient Second Adam - authentic humanity - and we *as individuals* are possessed by the one who gave himself for us: "This government therefore he exerciseth both as God and as man; as God by essential presence with all things, as man by cooperation with that which is essentially present."[428]

Real presence across generations

A final soteriological point remains. So far we have seen that the exalted Christ's body is physically located on his divine throne from which he rules creation as Christ the Governor, and that his body is present locally and individually to all things through

---

424. *Laws*.V.55.8; 2:233.23.
425. "The Collect for Purity." *The Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and Other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church Together With the Psalter Or Psalms of David According to the Use of the Episcopal Church (The Church Hymnal Corporation, 2006).* 355.
426. *Laws*.V.55.8; 2:233.30-234.7.
427. *Laws*.V.55.8; 2.231.33-232.13. Emphasis original.
428. *Laws*.V.55.8; 2: 233.28-30.

our historical natural relation to his whole person as God's Son. We have also seen that *actual* personal participation in Christ entails a reciprocal knowing of and responsiveness to Christ mediated by a sociality, an interactivity, and a history of shared life, all of which are constituted by a restored rationality. This rationality is restored through our sharing in his body and blood, as we are re-created by our share in the rib of the Second Adam. But how is our encounter with his humanity salvific *in our time* given our great chronological distance from the events of his life, death, and resurrection? How do we relate to his person as Reconciler given the great gulf of time?

Hooker reasons that the aforementioned universal encounter with the person of Christ which draws us to recognize him as Lord and Reconciler is, through the conjunction of his divine and human natures, locally and actually present not only across time but "throughout all generations of men." His divinity - which transcends time - causes his humanity to be present across time:

> For his body being a part of that nature which whole nature is presently joined in deity wheresoever deity is, it followeth that his bodily substance hath everywhere a presence of true conjunction with deity. And for as much as it is by virtue of that conjunction made the body of the Son of God by whom also it was made a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, this giveth it a presence of force and efficacy throughout all generations of men.[429]

Thus, the properties of his divine nature render the acts of his humanity - especially his "sacrifice for the sins of the whole world" - infinitely communicable from generation to generation. Though his death on the cross was that of a man who shared our humanity, nonetheless, the triune God communicates that finite act infinitely for the benefit of each generation so that God's will of reconciliation shall be done:

> Albeit therefore nothing be actually infinite in substance but God only in that he is God, nevertheless as every member is infinite by possibility of addition, and every line by possibility of extension infinite, so there is no stint which can be set to the value or merit of the sacrificed body of Christ, it hath no measured certainty of limits, bounds of efficacy unto life it knoweth none, but is also itself infinite in possibility of application.[430]

---

429. *Laws*.V.55.9; 2.234.7-13.
430. *Laws*.V.55.9; 2.234.14-20.

A Barthian clarification

Before turning to the implications of Hooker's doctrine of participation for our study of how the mind of Christ is formed in community, a Barthian clarification of Hooker's doctrine is warranted. This clarification is related to the insight the *logos asarkos* and the *logos ensarkos* are neither chronological nor exclusive. Rather, they mutually participate in the humiliation and glorification of God.[431]

This leads to a potentially fruitful conversation between Hooker and Barth. As we have seen, Hooker develops the *extra Calvinisticum* by showing that the humanity of Christ, and indeed the merits of the humiliation of the *Logos asarkos*, are present in the encounter with the risen Lord, even though the location of Christ's body is the throne of God in heaven. Hooker's "after a sort" and "by way of conjunction" are the rhetorical vehicles by which he argues for the immanence of Christ's humanity, an argument that is central to his project of defending the sacramental practices of the Church of England as essential ways in which the mind of Christ is formed in community. Barth adds some helpful clarity to Hooker's constructive suggestion.

From our perspective in history, we never can know the eternal law as anything but *logos ensarkos*. As Barth cautioned, "Do not ever think of the second Person of the Trinity as only Logos. That is the mistake of Emil Brunner. There is no Logos *asarkos*, but only *ensarkos*."[432] That insight follows from his crucial observation that Jesus Christ just is the subject of election. God can not be known apart from "the perception of His presence and action as incarnate Word."[433] Hunsinger summarizes this point: "We have noetic access to the Holy Trinity only through this mode, which represents its secondary objectivity."[434] Thus, the objective content we encounter in

---

431. Sumner, "The Twofold Life of the Word: Karl Barth's Critical Reception of the *Extra Calvinisticum*". 55-7.

432. Barth, *Karl Barth's Table Talk*. 49 in Sumner, "The Twofold Life of the Word: Karl Barth's Critical Reception of the *Extra Calvinisticum*". Sumner notes "These sessions occurred between the winter of 1953 and the summer of 1956."

433. *Barth, CD. Vol. 4, Part 1. 181.* Subsequent citations will follow the standard convention of listing the Volume and Part-Volume. For example, *CD* IV/I.181.

434. George Hunsinger, "Election and the Trinity: Twenty-Five These on the Theology of Karl Barth," *Modern Theology* 24, no. 2 (April 2008): 179-198. 194.

our time historically and actually is never an abstract *logos asarkos* but rather always the

enfleshed Son, Jesus Christ. Hooker seems to anticipate this conclusion:

> God hath glorified in heaven that nature which yielded him obedience and hath given unto Christ even in that he is man such fullness of power over the whole world that he which before fulfilled in the state of humility and patience whatsoever God did require, doth now reign in glory till the time that all things be restored.[435]

Quite simply, if we encounter Christ at all, we encounter the enfleshed Christ, and

if we encounter the enfleshed Christ at all, we encounter Christ whose divinity and

humanity dynamically interpret one another[436]:

> Does not everything depend on our doing justice to the living Jesus Christ? But, at root, what is the life of Jesus Christ but the act in which God becomes very God and very man, positing Himself in this being? What is it but the work of this conjunction? Presupposing that we are speaking of the living Jesus Christ, can the being of Jesus Christ be distinguished from what actually takes place, as the act of God, in His existence as the Son of God and Son of Man?[437]

For Barth, that Christ's humanity is present in any encounter with the divine

follows from the recognition that God is the one who in his self-determination chose

never to be except to be for humankind, and therefore that the humiliation of the Son

of God is integral to the identity of the exalted Son of Man. Any encounter with

Christ is simultaneously and necessarily an encounter with both Christ's divine and his

human nature:

> Does not everything depend on the inter-connexion: that the exaltation of the Son of Man begins and is completed already in and with the happening of the humiliation of the Son of God; and conversely that the exaltation of the Son of Man includes in itself the humiliation of the Son of God, so that Jesus Christ is already exalted in His humiliation and humiliated in His exaltation? Is it not the case, then, that His being in the unity of God and man is this history in its inter-connexion? If we are speaking in any respect of this history, can we really abstract from the literal sense of the two concepts? Do we really see and understand Him concretely if we do not see Him in this twofold movement, and at the same time in both the one movement and the other, so that there can be no question of a halt and therefore of a "state"? We ask again: How could He be the living Jesus Christ if He were not the One He is in this movement?[438]

Barth enables us to be more emphatic in asserting the possibility of local real

presence of Christ while at the same time proclaiming Christ as the King who sits at

---

435. *Laws*.V.55.8; 2:232.31-233.5
436. Sumner, "The Twofold Life of the Word: Karl Barth's Critical Reception of the *Extra Calvinisticum*". 56.
437. *CD* IV/2.109
438. *CD* IV/2.110.

the right hand of the Father. For, as Sumner observes, Barth closes the gap between

Creator and creature:

> Where Lutheran Christology suggested that the Word crosses the gap between the Creator and the creature, and Reformed Christology that the Word bridges the gap (remaining on both sides), Barth's actualist Christology suggests instead that in his person Jesus Christ closes the gap. God and humanity remain distinct, but are unequivocally reconciled in the event of the Son's incarnate life.[439]

Precisely because he closes the gap between Creator and creature (while

maintaining divine alterity), *de facto* participation in Christ is, for Barth, the direct

work of "the living Jesus Christ" upon the heart of the believer, testifying to and

imparting himself through the agency of the Holy Spirit:

> The beginning of the Christian life takes place in a direct self-attestation and self-impartation of the living Jesus Christ, in His active Word of power which goes forth *hic et nunc* to specific men in the work of the Holy Ghost.[440]

To which our reconstructed Hooker, sitting today in a pub drinking a beer with

Barth, might reply in imitation of Barthian prose, "Yes, and the living Jesus Christ

testifies and imparts himself to the believer without requiring a "substantialist form of

ancient metaphysics as applied to the problem of an ontology of the person,"[441] and

while remaining wholly other to the believer. And he does this by the action of his

Spirit who establishes a personal fellowship between Christ and the believer in the

logical space of reasons."

COMMUNION WITH CHRIST

So far we have observed Hooker as he derives from first principles an account of

being that describes how humans participate in Christ's humanity, as well as the

necessity and possibility of participation in Christ's humanity by sharing in his body

and blood, and I've suggested a few points which might be more fruitfully re-described

---

439. Ibid., 56.
440. Barth, *CD*, IV.4.31-32.
441. Bruce L. McCormack, "Karl Barth's Historicized Christology: Just How "chalcedonian" is it?," in *Orthodox and Modern: Studies in the Theology of Karl Barth,* (Baker Academic, 2008-10-01), Kindle location 2602, Sect 2, para 8.

in a contemporary grammar which borrows from Barth and Sellars. But I have said very little so far about how the fellowship with Christ that's in view here actually happens. In what follows, our focus begins to shift from theoretical to practical reason, for the question becomes, "from a practical perspective, how are Christians sanctified?"

In framing the question this way, I hope to evoke Hooker's distinction between *episteme* and *phronesis*. While the virtue of *episteme* cultivates in us the habit of seeing the world realistically (i.e., with resurrection eyes), Hooker sees the self-ordering of the Church as the subject matter of the virtue of *phronesis* (i.e., how we manifest the good given what we see with resurrection eyes). The practical things we do to cooperate with God in the cultivation of virtue, in God's sanctification of our community, arise from practical wisdom. They require cultivation of skills in phronetic judgment. To learn what is conducive to the good, we gravitate to the givens - those signs and tokens of God's presence among us about which we learn from the testimony of the voices of men. As with all such *endoxa*, they are only contingently known, fraught as they are with the probabilistic nature of human judgments.[442]

When we consider the question of how we are sanctified, we therefore enter the realm in which all answers offered are necessarily contingent and inherently probabilistic efforts to clear "the mists that cloud our eyes."[443] Hooker's optimistic account of how the Spirit works through our dialectical discourse gives us cause for confidence that we can in fact recognize how we best cooperate with God in nurturing the fellowship that sanctifies.

The most genuine communion

I've already anticipated much of what follows in describing the real presence using the grammar of a personal relationship with Christ within the logical space of reasons. In what follows, it only remains to apply the foregoing concepts in describing the Christian journey. The journey metaphor is appropos because Hooker's account of

---

442. *Laws*.III.3.2; 1:210-1-13.
443. *Laws*.V.9.2;1.43.29-30.

sanctification begins with the assertion that we begin our walk along the Way as an open book; Christ imparts himself not instantaneously in a solitary event, but "by degrees."[444] Charity does not bloom instantly at the point of doxastic causality. Rather, Christ gives "the Spirit of Christ," a knowing of "that saving truth," that justifying faith in Christ which Peter called "the seed of God." From this seed alone, communion with Christ grows, and, through that communion, the mind of Christ is formed within us.

According to Hooker, the first degree of communion with Christ consists of "the participation of his Spirit."[445] This expression immediately generates the potential for confusion, for, in the preceding sections treating his account of being, I have asserted that all creatures participate naturally in Christ the Creator. I named that natural participation "the first degree of participation." The important key to interpretation is attention to the distinction between communion and ontological participation. In the preceding sections, I distinguished between this natural participation that is proper to all creatures and the *personal* participation that is a *potentiality* for all humans. We saw that this potentiality for personal participation is actualized only in the space of reasons in which a reciprocal knowing develops through our sociality, interactions, and shared history. This *actualized* personal participation in Christ corresponds to what Hooker describes as "communion with Christ."[446] The first degree of communion marks the transition from merely potential personal participation to actual personal participation:

> That which sanctified our nature in Christ, that which made it a sacrifice available to take away sin is the same which quickeneth it, raised it out of the grave after death, and exalted it unto glory. Seeing therefore that Christ is in us as a quickening Spirit, the first degree of communion with Christ must needs consist in the participation of his Spirit which Cyprian in that respect well termeth germanissimam societatem, the highest and truest society that can be between man and him which is both God and man in one.[447]

Here we see why I have spoken of a first degree of participation which precedes

---

444. *Laws*.V.56.10; 2:242.5.
445. *Laws*.V.56.8; 2:240.27.
446. *Laws*.V.56.8; 2:240.26.
447. *Laws*.V.56.8; 2:240.22-30.

Hooker's first degree of communion. Hooker identifies this transition point as what Cyprian called the most genuine communion, *germanissimam societatem*, that "highest and truest" communion created by the action upon us "of his Spirit." The selfsame Spirit who sanctified Jesus, consecrating him so that he might be for us a holy sacrifice, washing away our sin and its effects, sanctifies us. "Christ is in us as quickening Spirit;" we participate in him through the agency of the Holy Spirit, who gathers the sons of God through the gift of "vocation or adoption" in Christ, a gift that brings about their re-birth in the second Adam.

Christ acts upon us through the agency of the Spirit he sends, creating this most genuine communion, grasping us in order to create that "mutual inward hold... in such sort that each possesseth other by way of special interest property and inherent copulation."[448] The movement from that first degree of participation, which is common to all creatures, to the next degree of participation in which our potential for a personal relationship with Christ is actualized, is marked by Christ's gift of his own Spirit. This corresponds to what Luther describes as the real presence of Christ in the heart of the believer.

An actualized personal relationship

We see now that this movement from potential to actualized personal participation or, more simply, fellowship, is coincident with what Augustine called the outer and inner graces. Though we may have known of God's great deeds in history, though we may or may not have heard of Jesus of Nazareth, these downward movements by God in history seem initially external to us, a story about and for someone else. In moving us from natural participation to genuine communion, however, Christ acts upon us, giving us the inner grace of his Spirit so that we re-cognize him, and, in that meeting, we discover ourselves willing and empowered to respond intelligibly to him. The seed of faith is planted, and in that seed the flowering of our worship is already, though only potentially, present. By degrees, his story becomes our story, God's great deeds become God's great deeds *for us*, and we

---

448. *Laws*.V.56.1; 2:234.29-31.

discover ourselves in a new personal relationship - the most genuine communion - with God and with all creation. The seed of faith flowers over time into hope, charity, and the perfection of character that is the good fruit of worship and the content of obedience.

Christ achieves this by planting the "seed of God" within our souls, by pouring his Spirit into our hearts:

> The first thing of his so infused into our hearts in this life is the Spirit of Christ, whereupon the rest of what kind soever do all both necessarily depend and infallibly also ensue, therefore the apostles term is sometime the seed of God, sometime the pledge of our heavenly inheritance, sometime the handsell or earnest of that which is to come.[449]

We see here Hooker's continuity with the magisterial Reformers. Faith precedes charity. The content of the grace poured into our hearts is Christ himself, given through the agency of the Spirit, and the seed of faith grows through this unmerited presence of Christ within, flowering over time into charity.

Hooker's claim that Christ infuses his Spirit into our hearts ought to be interpreted metonymically. Humans have no innate capacity for intellection of transcendentals, nor any natural access to the divine Mind. The planting of the seed of God is truly a real presence, truly an occupation and possession by the Spirit, but such real presence is not to be understood as the presence of an embodied material substance, as though the infinite were in some way confined within or dependent upon the finite. "Christ's infused grace" is the unmerited gift of Christ's presence to us, filling and possessing us, through the agency of Christ's Spirit.

Hooker's meaning can perhaps be best understood through analogy to what we denote when we describe someone as being "possessed by demons." The concept of the demonic, common in some form to most cultures, denotes what seems to be an experience of one's consciousness being so overtaken by a distortion of authentic humanity that one is no longer able to function with normal human agency, but rather manifests a destructive agency. In art, this phenomenon is often depicted with

---

449. *Laws*.V.56.11; 2:243.9-14.

abnormally large heads, upper arms, or genitalia, signifying how such distortion is commonly manifested in the mind and in our power and sexual relations. 'Possession' denotes an occupation of the mind by something external to it such that the self is no longer able to respond consistently to its own will. Healing consists of liberation from the alien force that controls one's will.

Similarly, when we say a person is filled with Christ's Spirit, we denote a state in which one's personal center seems to have been occupied by something external to it, though in this case it is a benevolent possession: she or he has been 'possessed' by Christ's Spirit, and responds to his will. Once again, there is transformed agency, except in this case, that agency is creative, constituted by a new-found charity, a "relational receptivity" to God and one's neighbor.[450] In both cases, one experiences the phenomenon of an external subject acting decisively upon oneself with the consequence of a change in human agency. When Hooker speaks of Christ's infused grace, he describes the real presence of Christ within us, benevolently occupying our personal centers, transforming us through the renewal of our minds[451], so that our holiness is his.

That Hooker intends his description of the infusion of Christ's Spirit into our hearts to be understood metonymically is evident from his more detailed description of this moment in his *A Learned Discourse on Justification*. "Infused into our hearts" means "dwelling in the soul of man, ... inhabit[ing] and possess[ing] the mind":

> The cause of life spiritual in us is Christ, not carnally or corporally inhabiting, but dwelling in the soul of man, as a thing which (when the mind apprehendeth it) is said to inhabit and possess the mind. The mind conceiveth Christ by hearing the doctrine of Christianity. As the light of nature doth cause the mind to apprehend those truths which are merely rational, so that saving truth, which is far above the reach of human reason, cannot otherwise than by the Spirit of the Almighty be conceived. All these are implied wheresoever any one of them be mentioned as the cause of spiritual life. Wherefore when we read that "the Spirit is our life," [Rom 8:10, KJV] or "the Word our life," [Phil 2:16; 1 Jn 1:1] or "Christ our life," [Col 3:4] we are in every one of these to understand that our life is Christ, by the hearing of the Gospel apprehended as a Saviour, and assented unto by the power of the Holy Ghost.[452]

---

450. "Relational receptivity" is John Milbank's phrase. John Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason (Political Profiles)* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2006). 429.

451. Rom. 12:1-2

452. Richard Hooker, "A Learned Discourse of Justification," in *The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker, Vol. 5: Tractates and Sermons,* (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1990-01-01). 137-8. Hereafter all references to this document will be indicated with the document short name, *Learned Discourse. FLE* 5.137-8.

This infusion of grace - this gift of possession by the Holy Spirit, that constitutes the most genuine communion, is not a material substance but rather is concomitant with a knowing of "that saving truth" wherein Christ is "apprehended as a Savior." In Richard Rohr pithy's phrasing, "The inner knowledge of God's love is itself the Indwelling Presence."[453] A personal relationship is actualized, manifested as a knowing in the logical space of reasons wherein we are rendered able to justify obedience to his will. Christ encroaches upon us so that we can no longer maintain our distance from him.[454] We re-cognize the identity and relation received at birth that we have heretofore misapprehended, and discover ourselves motivated to respond rightly. This identity is first and foremost of one in *personal* and life-changing historical *relation* to Jesus Christ as Creator, Governor, and Reconciler, a covenantal relation in which we are summoned to a new path, a path walked by all called to a common life *in* Jesus Christ, sharing in the vocation of Israel to be a light to all the nations.

First steps of a lifelong pilgrimage

This summons to a new path walked by all so called to a common life in him brings into view a second knowing that is concomitant with genuine communion. Our communion with the Second Adam is actualized through our communion within the Second Eve. We are in Christ actually by our actual incorporation into his Church:

> Our being in Christ by eternal foreknowledge saveth us not without our actual and real adoption into the fellowship of his saints in this present world. For in him we actually are by our actual incorporation into that society which hath him for their head and doth make together with him one body (he and they in that respect having one name) for which cause by virtue of this mystical conjunction we are of him and in him even as though our very flesh and bones should be made continuate with his.[455]

The first step of communion with Christ, therefore, marks the transition from merely natural participation in "Christ, working as a creator, and a governor of the

---

453. Richard Rohr, *Immortal Diamond: The Search for Our True Self,* Kindle ed. (Jossey-Bass, 2013-01-22). 163.
454. *CD* IV/3.1.202.
455. *Laws*.V.56.7; 2:238.23-239.5

world by providence,"[456] to that "highest and truest society"[457] in which he implants the seed of God through the gift of his Spirit, possessing our minds so that we know him personally and are incorporated into his Church. Yet, that is just the beginning of our journey sanctification by him, for "Christ imparteth plainly himself by degrees."[458]

> But the participation of Christ importeth, besides the presence of Christ's person, and besides the mystical copulation thereof with the parts and members of his whole Church, a true actual influence of grace whereby the life which we live according to godliness is his, and from him we receive those perfections wherein our eternal happiness consisteth.[459]

As we live with Christ as our head and within the body that is his Church, he is truly and actually present to us and in us, and our lives - to the extent we manifest obedience to his will - are his. We are consecrated for holiness and then led to a knowing of what holiness is, summoning us to live according to a godliness that is his. Our lives are journeys toward the summit of *scientia*. We are sanctified "by steps and degrees...till the day of [our] final exaltation to a state of fellowship in glory."[460]

Chapter Summary

Thus far, an account of how Christ the Reconciler is really and personally present in the heart and soul of the faithful. This account, derived from first principles, suggests that the reality of our personal relation to Christ is not dependent upon the physical proximity of Christ's humanity precisely because, as a final cause, it happens within the logical space of reasons. The Spirit causes a reciprocal knowing of and responsiveness to Christ mediated by a sociality, an interactivity, and a history of shared life, all of which are constituted by a restored rationality. The significance of our relation to Christ is dependent upon the intelligibility of our responsiveness to Christ given the context of our shared history with him. To the extent that our actions express our recognition of and response to Christ's summons to have our lives determined by him, our fellowship with Christ is real.

---

456. *Laws*.V.56.10 2:242.11-12
457. *Laws*.V.56.8; 2:240.22-30
458. *Laws*.V.56.10 2:242.5-6
459. *Laws*.V.56.10; 2:242.28-243.4
460. *Laws*.V.56.13; 2:244.12-25

So we have seen now an account of how the Spirit actuates personal relationships with Christ, but that does not explain how the mind of Christ is formed in *community*. How does the community develop the capacity to discern the good that it must have, if it is to act as it must act, if it is to proclaim what it must proclaim, if its common life is to denote the triune God? Hooker answers by describing how ecclesial practices cultivate communities of character. We'll examine his description in the next chapter.

- Chapter 5 -
Practices and mimetic virtue

INTRODUCTION

We saw in the preceding chapter that Hooker describes our participation in Christ largely in terms of the covenant of grace, relying relatively more on the semantic field of relation (copulation, conjunction, interaction) to describe our personal relationships with Christ. Our participation is authentic fellowship in the sense of the participation of two persons in each other who become as one while remaining wholly other to one another, a union in which they share a history of interactions through which their dispositions are revealed and reciprocally shaped. We saw also that we can describe our encounters with the Christ in the grammar appropriate to personal relationships, the grammar Sellars described as the logical space of reasons. Furthermore, I've suggested that, through successive personal encounters, we come to know Christ's dispositions, and come to recognize him as Reconciler whom we trust as the Lord of Life.

This description of ongoing interactive interpersonal communion sets up the argument of the current chapter. I will argue that such interpersonal communion precedes and provides the necessary context for our recognition and imitation of Christ as the Supreme Exemplar. Ecclesial practices thereby provide the successive iterations through which virtue is formed mimetically over a lifetime.[461] The mind of Christ is formed in community by the Spirit's actuation of personal relationships through which Christ reveals his dispositions and tutors us, so that, through mimesis, we are "transformed by the renewing of [our] minds" (Rom. 12:2).

Here the key move is to understand how the personal relationship forged by Christ through ecclesial practices provides the necessary context for our justifiable

---

461. Tom Wright describes Paul's worldview in terms of story, practice, and symbol. I find Wright's treatment especially interesting because, as mentioned in my introductory chapter, my thesis began with the observation of the priority of mimesis in Paul's account of how the mind of Christ is formed in Christian community. I take Wright's heuristic deployment of story, practice, and symbol as roughly comparable to my usage of 'practices' here. Practices, in this study, include story and symbol. See the first two chapters of N. T. Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*, Kindle ed., Christian Origins and the Question of God, vol. 4 (Fortress Press, 2013-11-01).

trust in Christ as the supreme exemplar. I proceed in four movements. The first introduces the work of two ecclesial ethicists whose work it is the hope of this study to extend, Stanley Hauerwas and Samuel Wells. The second extends concepts introduced in the preceding chapter, regarding our experience of being addressed by and responding to Christ, by developing a thicker concept of the particularity of human agents in our encounter with Christ. The third movement provides an exegetical account of the sacraments, demonstrating how our encounter of the real presence of Christ in practices generates and sustains our personal relationships with him. The final movement returns to the work of Wells and introduces the work of virtue ethicist Linda Zagzebski to propose that the personal relationship with Christ caused by the Spirit via ecclesial practices leads ultimately to "thick concepts" that are productive of virtue. With these four moves, I will complete my description of the Hookerian account of how the mind of Christ is formed in community. I will conclude the chapter by considering how the Hookerian account answers key critics of the ecclesial ethicists.

In the exegetical treatments found in the third section, I agree with readings of Hooker's account of sacramental practices by Kirby,[462] Shuger,[463] Harrison,[464] and Irish.[465] I disagree with Rasmussen's implication that Hooker sees the bread and wine as channels of the real presence, and argue instead that Hooker evinces the Franciscan "triggering" form of instrumentalism. I disagree with Stafford's description[466] of Hooker's sacramental hermeneutic as "Thomistic" and, instead, see Hooker closely

---

462. Kirby offers an excellent account of Hooker's understanding of the sanctifying effects of non-sacramental practices. W.J. Torrance Kirby, "Of Musique With Psalms: The Hermeneutics of Richard Hooker's Defence of the 'sensible Excellencie' of Public Worship," in *Lutheran and Anglican: Essays in Honour of Egil Grislis,* ed. John Stafford, (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2009).

463. Shuger is especially helpful in recognizing how the Eucharist generates political identity. Debora K. Shuger, ""Societie Supernaturall": The Imagined Community of Hooker's Lawes," in *Richard Hooker and the Construction of Christian Community (Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies),* ed. Arthur Stephen McGrade, (Mrts, 1997).

464. Harrison, "Powers of Nature and Influences of Grace in Hooker's Lawes,"

465. Irish, "'Participation of God Himself:' Law, the Mediation of Christ, and Sacramental Participation in the Thought of Richard Hooker,"

466. John K. Stafford, "Grace, Sin, and Nature: Richard Hooker's Theology of Baptism," in *Richard Hooker and the English Reformation: Studies in Early Modern Religious Reforms,* (Dordrecht ; Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003).

following Calvin and other Reformed influences. Accordingly, my account largely agrees with the insights of Egil Grislis[467], although my constructive extension of Hooker's 'after a sort' ontology - which Grislis also highlights - naturally diverges from Grislis' historical reconstruction.

THE ECCLESIAL ETHICISTS

When we turn fully to the question of *how* the mind of Christ is formed in community, it is important to recognize that, for Hooker, the crucial means by which that happens includes participation in a well-ordered political society. A well-ordered community is essential to both commonwealth and church because the formal cause of a godly nation is a community of character.[468] Or, rather, Christ himself is that formal cause; the community of character that is the formal cause of godliness and virtue is what "antiquity doth call... Christ's body."[469]

Christ is also the efficient cause of a godly nation. For "Christ doth personally administer the external regiment of outward actions in the Church by the secret inward influence of his grace giveth spiritual life and the strength of ghostly motions thereunto...."[470] Christ causes the outer graces by causing the inner graces. The gift of spiritual life translates the elect into his kingdom and establishes not just a society but a *communion* of saints, an abiding spiritual fellowship:

> These being brought to the obedience of faith are every where spoken of as men translated into that kingdom wherein whosoever is comprehended Christ is the author of eternal salvation in them. They have a high kind of ghostly fellowship with God and Christ and saints....[471]

---

467. Egil Grislis, "Reflections on Richard Hooker's Understanding of the Eucharist," in *Richard Hooker and the English Reformation: Studies in Early Modern Religious Reforms,* (Dordrecht ; Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003).

468. Here I allude to a Hauerwas classic on virtue which reflects on this Aristotelian doctrine that Hooker presupposes. Stanley Hauerwas, *A Community of Character: Toward a Constructive Christian Social Ethic,* 1 ed. (University of Notre Dame Press, 1991-01-31).

469. *Laws.*V.77.2; 2.425.14-19

470. *Laws.*VIII.4.5; 3.362.19-22

471. *Laws.*VIII.4.6; 3.365.15-19

For Hooker, liturgical practices - understood in the broadest sense of all the components of our common worship - are essential means of grace through which Christ knits the political society of the elect into a spiritual body. Through ecclesial practices, the mystical society of souls is knitted into something much more than an association of individuals sharing an affinity for the exercise of the Christian religion. As Hooker describes it, that society is indeed knitted into Christ's body.[472]

For Hooker, the sacraments render the elect "*mystical member[s]*" of Christ, causing us to experience "a real transmutation of our souls and bodies from sin to righteousness."[473] Psalm-singing and a bounty of other practices of the church trigger this transformation, rendering the church "both a society and a society supernatural."[474] Indeed the elevation of the hearts of men of common worship and prayer are the very means by which Christ's Spirit transforms "the society of souls"[475] into the "visible mystical body which is his Church."[476]

Crucially for Hooker, the Spirit transforms our common life so that it becomes itself a sacrament that denotes the inner life of God and draws others into it. Discernment of the good therefore happens at the intersection of ecclesiology and Christology. Our question eventually becomes "how do the practices of the Church lead to communities of virtue that denote the triune God?"

Phrasing the question this way helps us to see that our study is ultimately a problem in ecclesial ethics. The question presupposes that the goal of Christian community is to denote the triune God (the resulting ethics ought therefore be eschatological), and it also presupposes a critical connection between those

---

472. *Laws*.V.77.2; 2.425.14-19
473. *Laws*.V.67.7; 2.335.32-336.15. Emphasis added.
474. *Laws*.I.15.2; 1:131.10-11
475. *Laws*.V.77.2; 2.425.14-19
476. *Laws*.V.24.1; 2:111.24-27. I am indebted to Debora Shuger for pointing out the richness of Hooker's phrase, "mystical visible body" of Christ. Shuger notes, "*Lawes* posits a visible mystical body united by common agreement on the objects of their love: a community realized in antiphonal chant, sacramental participation, and pastoral care. Hooker views the church as primarily a house of prayer and sacramental worship; he is, moreover, the first Elizabethan Protestant to define the church in this way." Shuger, ""Societie Supernaturall"," 324.

communities and the nurturing of virtue. But this premise is not uncontested. Since Kant, and particularly during Reinhold Niebuhr's era, act consequentialism and deontology have dominated Christian ethics. However, since the 1974 publication of Stanley Hauerwas' *Vision and Virtue*,[477] his 1975 publication of *Character and the Christian Life*,[478] and also the publication in 1981 of Alasdair MacIntyre's *After Virtue!*,[479] there has been a renaissance in the field of virtue ethics.[480] Karl Barth ("speech-acts"), Hans Urs von Balthasar ("deed-words"), Hans Frei ("narrative"), George Lindbeck ("culture"), and Ludwig Wittgenstein ("practice") figure prominently as precursors in this field. This return to classical-medieval approaches to ethics has, in turn, spawned renewed interest in virtue formation as described by Paul, Augustine, and Thomas Aquinas. Ecclesial ethicists, who, like Hooker, are highly influenced by Aristotle, often emphasize the practices of the Church as the key to the creation of virtue.

Ecclesial ethics, advocated by a growing number of scholars influenced by Stanley Hauerwas and one of Barth's students, John Howard Yoder, is a form of virtue ethics which may be fairly described as a form of *a posteriori* casuistical reasoning that seeks its foundations in the practices of the Church. It looks to the practices of the Church based on an important theological claim the emphasis of which distinguishes this school from others. The school places great priority on the particularity of Christian community. God chooses to reveal Godself through human contingency - through Israel manifest as the Jews, as Jesus, and as the Church. To abstract from the particularities of community is to depart from God's way of revealing Godself to the world. This school is skeptical of approaches that discover ethical norms in and for the general culture; rather, ethical questions are bounded by Hauerwas' maxim that

---

477. Stanley Hauerwas, *Vision and Virtue: Essays in Christian Ethical Reflection* (Fides Publishers, 1974).
478. Stanley Hauerwas, *Character and the Christian Life: A Study in Theological Ethics* (University of Notre Dame Press, 1994).
479. Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory, Third Edition* (University of Notre Dame Press, 2007).
480. Samuel Wells, "How the Church Performs Jesus' Story: Improvising on the Theological Ethics of Stanley Hauerwas" (PhD Dissertation, University of Durham, 1995), 15-17.

"the task of the Church is to be the Church." Ethical questions and answers are particular to concrete Christian communities.

The ecclesial ethicist hermeneutic assumes that the Church bears the truth revealed in Christ in its beliefs, and that one knows what the Church believes through reference to its practices. The Spirit guides the world to grasp the truth about the triune God and itself by creating communities whose words and practices communicate the meanings necessary to reveal that truth. Virtue creation is about learning how to tell reliably the truth about God through our actions. The habits of our common life are therefore an essential part of the Spirit's epistemic role: the practices of the Church are the crucial means by which the Spirit reveals to the world the truth it does not know. If we want to know the truth about God, we turn to our worship, where the Spirit guides our discernment-in-communion so that, in our liturgical practice, we utter the truth about God. If we want to learn about the greatest good, the greatest truth, and the greatest beauty - if we want to inquire about how God meets our needs - we turn in confidence to our sacramental practices because Jesus has promised to meet us there.

Samuel Wells' 1995 Durham University dissertation, *How the Church Performs Jesus' Story: Improvising on the Theological Ethics of Stanley Hauerwas*, is perhaps the most influential recent study in ecclesial ethics. Published in two parts, *Transforming Fate into Destiny: The Theological Ethics of Stanley Hauewas* (2004)[481] and *Improvisation : The Drama of Christian Ethics* (2004),[482] his dissertation extends Hauerwas by adding a much needed eschatological emphasis and by reading him in conversation with Wittgenstein, constructively emphasizing the priority of practice in habit formation. Worship is like a Christian version of the playing fields of Eton, preparing disciples for the eschatological Battle of Waterloo. Through common worship and dramatic immersion in our story (Scripture), the Spirit embeds the mind of Christ in

---

481. Samuel Wells, *Transforming Fate Into Destiny: The Theological Ethics of Stanley Hauerwas* (Wipf & Stock Pub, 2004-03-04).
482. Wells, *Improvisation*.

community so that disciples can improvise Christianly such that our godly play in the world points to the eschatological reality of which we are the first fruits. Wells develops this further in his *God's Companions: Reimagining Christian Ethics* (2006),[483] showing how every act in the Eucharist and in baptism performs a fundamental truth-claim of the Gospel, forming the mind of Christ in disciples through the repetition of baptism and Eucharist.

Of special interest in the current study are Wells' conclusions about the role of practices and the task of theology. As I described in chapter three, some of Hooker's opponents advocated a Ramist approach to ethical reasoning that involved the mining of timeless absolutes from Scripture in response to questions of right action. Hooker rejected that approach both on hermeneutical and philosophical grounds, maintaining instead the Aristotelian approach which begins with the observation that the material cause of virtue is a virtuous community. Hooker defended the liturgical practices of the Church of England by demonstrating how they contribute to the production of a virtuous community. Hooker argued against a biblicist deontological ethics in favor of a virtue ethics. Wells makes a similar argument:

> When ethics is understood as the adjudication of tricky cases of conscience by balancing moral principles, the practice is implicitly socially conservative - since it assumes there is nothing fundamentally wrong with the status quo, only with its anomalies. In contrast, the Christian community lives within a tradition based on a story which in many respects contradicts the assumptions of the contemporary social status quo. How then does the community faithfully live out its story?[484]

According to Wells, both deontology and acts consequentialism are theological errors.[485] The error involves confusion about the task of Christian ethics. The task is not to defend tradition or a particular ethical conclusion with regard to a proposed act. Rather, the task is "to describe the world in which Christians perceive themselves to live and act, and to help the Christian community form practices consistent with

---

483. Samuel Wells, *God's Companions : Reimagining Christian Ethics* (Malden, MA ; Oxford: Blackwell Pub, 2006).
484. Wells, "How the Church Performs Jesus' Story," 198.
485. Wells, *An Introductory Reader*, 154-155.

life in such a world."[486] Wells' allusion to preparing disciples for the Battle of
Waterloo highlights the connection between such description and practices: practices
are productive of right actions precisely because they instill right descriptions of the
world in disciples. In short, practices produce a virtuous community by causing
disciples *to take the right things for granted*.[487] I will return to this insight later in the this
chapter.[488]

ADDRESS AND RESPONSE

We turn now to an account of *how* ecclesial practices are instrumental in the
formation of the mind of Christ in Christian community. Because Hooker is vague or
silent on certain relevant questions, my method will be to hold Hooker in
conversation with Wells and other contemporary virtue ethicists in order to
extrapolate as needed from Hooker's account. Here, as in the preceding sections, the
key move is to understand that Hooker defends the formational significance of
practices, crafting a subtle synthesis of an Aristotelian account of virtue with an
account of being and a psychology that are sensitive to sixteenth century philosophical
concerns. The next two sections explain how they function particularly in baptism and
the Eucharist, respectively. On the basis of this account, we can render a general
account of practices which holds that common worship and sacramental practices are
signs and tokens by which the Spirit draws us to recognize and respond to our relation
to Christ the Reconciler, grasping and transforming both the "common multitude"
and elite, generating the political identity, diversity, and virtue of the visible mystical
body of Christ.

---

486. Ibid.
487. Wells, "How the Church Performs Jesus' Story," 216.
488. See "Mimetic virtue" on page 186.

Dispositions revealed

We saw in chapter two that Hooker's ontology and psychology retain Aristotelian emphases on the contingency of events and the significance of virtue in making the moral life nonetheless possible, while expressing these emphases within an account of being that is sensitive to Reformation concerns about the implications of human finitude.[489] We have seen throughout this study that Hooker tends to describe objective reality in terms of the space of causes: there is a form of relation that is proper to all created things that we can depict in terms of the presence of a cause in its effects. We know objective reality directly through imperfect empirical observation and inferences of causal relations.[490]

Yet, how can a personal God be known personally given the gulf between the finite self and its divine ground? In the preceding chapter, I argued that the Hookerian account answers with an ontology that locates such possibility not within the space of causes but within the space of reasons.[491] In short, there is a kind of knowing, born of our shared history and experienced as shared communion, that is not constituted by "an empirical description of [an] episode or state" but which subsists "in the logical space of reasons, of justifying and being able to justify what one says."[492] Our identity as rational *persons* is constituted, not by our humanity, but by our sociality, our activity and our participation in a history. Our knowing of other rational and communicative creatures, whether human or non-human, consists of an actual sharing in their sociality, in interactions with them, and in a sharing in their history. Our knowing of such persons is not reducible to epistemic facts.

---

489. See "Hookerian anthropology" on page 52.
490. See, for example, "Hookerian epistemology" on page 59. See also "Universal participation in Christ" on page 122.
491. Hooker, of course, did not use Sellar's language. The contemporary philosophical grammar reflects my constructive proposal which makes explicit that in only implicit in Hooker's account. See "Real presence" beginning on page 135.
492. John McDowell, *Sellars and the Space of Reasons*. (lecture., University of Pittsburgh, 2009), http://www.pitt.edu/~brandom/me-core/downloads/McD Cape Town talk--Sellars EPM.doc. In context, McDowell quotes Sellars, *Science, Perception and Reality*, Part VIII, § 106.36.

Agency and community

It is a convenient fiction to describe the psychology of individuals as though individuals can be isolated from the community of which they are a part. It is also a convenient fiction to speak of the community as though we can set aside momentarily the reality of the agency of individuals. The truth, however, is that these two cannot be separated, for they are mutually articulating.

In the preceding chapter, I described the development of interpersonal relationships in terms of address and response. We experience ourselves as addressed by another subject and we respond to them. The sequence of such calls and responses - our shared history - generates a personal relationship. As the subject addresses us successively, he reveals his dispositions, and we become able to make justifiable claims about his nature. We, as subjects, recognize him as subject. We know him.

Yet this pattern of address and response does not happen in a vacuum. It happens within a community. A disciple who dwells in the divine rationality necessarily does so as one whose identity is shaped by community, and not by just one community, but by the many circles of which she is a part. To the extent that she is a free and rational agent, she responds to an address by a single subject from within the web of her communal circles, simultaneously constraining and directing her responses to that address according to the norms of her circles. In her response to the one subject, she, at least tacitly, addresses her other circles, engaging and shaping their norms dialogically.

Address and response between two subjects regarding matters of action are never private affairs, though at times we like to pretend they are. They are inherently communal and dialectical, articulating our communally-shaped descriptions of the world and our own locations within it. Addressing and responding to fellow subjects in our practical reasoning, we continuously adjudicate our normative descriptions and judgments. "Practical reason," therefore, is "a kind of interchange of attempts at

justification among persons, each of whose actions affect what others would otherwise be able to do, and all this for a community at a time."[493] Our practical reasoning is thus itself a communal practice.[494]

This leads to what may now be an obvious fact about the specific judgments we render as we respond to those who address us. Our responses are not shaped merely by the communal norms that pertain to specific premises; they are determined as well by the community's practice of moral reasoning itself.[495] The way a community determines what questions may be asked and what serves as justifiable reasons communicate a worldview that, in turn, affects one's ethical reasoning.[496]

Much can be deduced from this observation, but my interest now is simply to thicken our view of the narrative situatedness of the calls and responses of our interpersonal relations. The community shapes individual agency in both how we hear that which is addressed to us and how we determine our free and rational responses. The questions we feel free to ask and the reasons that are normatively available to justify our beliefs and actions influence profoundly how we adjudicate our descriptions of the world and our place in it.

The interpersonal relation in view in this study is of course that between Christ and each of his elect. Isolating the single subject's relation to Christ simplifies analysis, but, of course, the dynamic is more complex. The community determines to a significant degree how we hear ourselves as addressed by Christ and also how we determine our free and rational response. All of this has significant implications for how we order the Church, the hermeneutics we validate, and the form of our ethical reasoning, and highlights the importance of such decisions for each generation. My concern here, however, is to accentuate the specificity of our personal address by

---

493. Robert B. Pippin, *Hegel's Practical Philosophy: Rational Agency as Ethical Life*, 1 ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2008-11-17), 273-274.
494. Ibid., 273.
495. Ibid., 276.
496. I examine Hooker's critique of appeals to timeless absolutes throughout chapter three. See "Hookerian critique: Reasoning by non sequitur" on page 103.

Christ. Though we hear his call always within a social circle which qualifies our hearing, Christ calls us by name.[497]

We saw in the previous chapter that we participate in Christ by recognizing his real and justifying presence. Christ justifies, giving his indwelling and personal presence, and such presence constitutes the forgiveness of sins and the gift of God himself. The foregoing helps us to anticipate another difficulty with universal ethics.[498] As we saw in chapter three, it is "the particular information, which universal ethics shuns, that makes ethics comprehensible."[499] Christ does not reconcile us in the abstract; nor does he address us in the abstract. Christ's Spirit meets us personally, reconciling us in our particularity. To be coherently Christocentric, our ethics should reflect this particularity.[500]

Agency oriented theodramatically

Sam Wells, in *Improvisation*, provides such an approach to ethics. Just as Jesus Christ met the Samaritan woman at the well, redirecting her to the water of life,[501] so he meets us where we stand, teaching us to see the world as it is redeemed by him, and to carry on in such a way that our lives proclaim that eschatological reality.

Wells' improvisational ethics combines the recognition that ethical reasoning consists of phronetic judgments with a crucial eschatological dimension. As he notes, it is insufficient for Christian ethics to be merely teleological; to be proper Christian ethics, they must be eschatological:

> Eschatology brings a shape to Christian theology and in turn to Christian ethics. By providing an end to the story it enables us to perceive that the Christian narrative is indeed a story, not an endless sequence of events. Since the end is provided from outside, it is not humanity's task to bring this end about. Christian ethics is therefore about acting in accord with the ending that will come about, rather than acting so that a desirable end will come about.[502]

---

497. "But now, says the LORD — the one who created you, Jacob, the one who formed you, Israel: Don't fear, for I have redeemed you; *I have called you by name*; you are mine." (Is 43:1 CEB) Emphasis added.
498. Wells, *An Introductory Reader*., 154-5.
499. Ibid., 155.
500. See note 285 on page 97 on my usage of 'particularity' throughout this study.
501. Wells, *Improvisation*., 103-114.
502. Wells, "How the Church Performs Jesus' Story".189.

Because Christian ethics are properly eschatological, Christian ethics are neither merely creation-centric nor merely biblical ethics. Neither are they pre-social or primordial or in any sense ahistorical. That is, Christian agency is properly oriented on an axis beginning with the creation stories, through the drama of Israel culminating in Jesus and his Church, and ending in the biblical vision of the New Jerusalem. Such ethics exegete creation eschatologically . Taking the right things for granted therefore involves first and foremost the capacity for an individual to be knowledgeable of and attentive to the great drama of God (theodrama). Moreover, it requires that the Christian see oneself as an actor immersed in that drama. Drawing upon Wittgenstein, Wells teaches that the ethical life is about going on in the same way as those who went before us in the theodrama, while responding responsibly to stimuli within our own context, where responding responsibly consists of going on in such a way that our actions go in the same way as those who succeed us. That is, our actions should be in continuity with the stories of Israel, Jesus, and the Church while also pointing eschatologically to the eternal reality of the New Jerusalem. The crucial dimension that Wells adds is this last eschatological dimension.

THE ROLE OF PRACTICES

Hooker's account of practices

In the preceding section, I suggested that a properly Christocentric ethics reflects the specificity of our address by and response to Christ. I also suggested, following Wells, that such an ethics helps us to locate ourselves within Christ's temporal drama, and reorients us toward the New Jerusalem.

With these qualifications registered, I turn now to Hooker's account of practices. The key move is to recognize that ecclesial practices are the primary means by which Christ schools us in his nature by revealing his gracious disposition towards his creation and towards us personally. Practices provide the setting of our successive

encounters with Christ's real presence through which the Spirit forms our personal relationship with him.

We know Christ personally by sharing in his life. But that sharing in his life is possible only because God acts to make such sharing possible. Given the subjective and rational reality of our personal participation in Christ's life *through ecclesial practices*, Christ's love for us becomes intelligible, and we are thereby justified in willing what Christ wills and making claims about his nature. Because of this intelligibility, we know him and respond responsibly, which is to say we respond with worship and obedience to his summons.

Non-sacramental practices

Before turning to Hooker's account of sacramental practices, it is important to recall what I noted in the previous chapter - that consideration of how Christ is present in the sacraments is decisive for our understanding of how Christ is present in all ecclesial practices, and therefore decisive for our understanding of the role of practices in the formation of Christ in community.[503] This focus on the sacraments ought not lead one to conclude that Christ is in some sense less present in non-sacramental practices, or that the aforementioned principles of practices apply only to sacramental practices. While the sacraments are indeed central, Hooker saw Christ's sanctifying presence in and defended as edifying a wide range of non-sacramental practices. It is no accident that Book V of his *Laws* is the largest of his works. It contains eighty-one chapters, most of which defend non-sacramental ecclesial practices. Hooker defends the use of beautiful church buildings,[504] reading Scripture publicly,[505] public and common prayer,[506] singing of psalms,[507] commemoration of

---

503. See page 128.
504. *Laws*.V.11-17.
505. *Laws*.V.18-22.
506. *Laws*.V.23-36, 41-49.
507. *Laws*.V.37-40.

exemplars and other festivals of the Church,[508] fasting,[509] the churching of women,[510] ordination practices,[511] and the rite of reconciliation.[512] While the sacraments are indeed unique, the principles of practices apply to a wide range of ecclesial acts which sanctify to the extent that they successively represent Christ in the heart of the disciple.

It is ironic that Hooker's emphasis on practices was criticized by his fellow Puritans as Pelagian or seen as evidence of his affinity for Rome.[513] To the contrary, an emphasis on ecclesial practices such as those he defended - and many more which could be added today - is "more realistic about sin and more hopeful about reconciliation than those approaches that trust the reason/nature/creation complex to derive our knowledge of what should be from what is."[514] In that sense, it is a profoundly *evangelical* commitment, in the richest sense of the word:

> For some the label 'evangelical' points to a checklist of traditional doctrines and for others to a key inner experience. I mean neither. For a practice to qualify as 'evangelical' in the functional sense means first of all that it communicates news. It says something particular that would not be known and could not be believed were it not said. Second, it must mean functionally that this 'news' is attested as good; it comes across to those whom it addresses as helping, as saving, and as *shalom*. It must be public, not esoteric, but the way for it to be public is not an *a priori* logical move that subtracts the particular. It is an *a posteriori* political practice that tells the world something it did not know and could not believe before. It tells the world what is the world's own calling and destiny, not by announcing either a utopian or a realistic goal to be imposed on the whole society, but by pioneering, a paradigmatic demonstration of both the power and the practices that define the shape of restored humanity. The confessing people of God is the new world on its way.[515]

Psalm-singing

One example will suffice to demonstrate Hooker's claim. In Book V of *Laws*, Hooker defends the liturgical practice of singing psalms. The music of psalms transforms us, creating harmony within us through its etching of God's harmonizing

---

508. *Laws*.V.69-71.
509. *Laws*.V.72.
510. *Laws*.V.74.
511. *Laws*.V.76-81.
512. *Laws*.VI.1-6.
513. This is the thrust of the only effort to refute *Laws* published during Hooker's lifetime, *A Christian Letter*. See "A Christian Letter,"
514. Yoder, "Sacrament as Social Process: Christ the Transformer of Culture," 371.
515. Ibid., 373.. Emphasis original.

Word in our minds:

> The reason hereof is an admirable facility which music hath to express and represent to the mind more inwardly than any other sensible means the very standing, rising, and falling, the very steps and inflections every way, the turns and varieties of all passions whereunto the mind is subject, yea so to imitate them, that whither it resemble unto us the same state wherein our minds already are or a clean contrary, we are not more contentedly by the one confirmed than changed and led away by the other. In harmony the very image and character even of virtue and vice is perceived, the mind delighted with their resemblances and brought by having them often iterated into a love of the things themselves.[516]

Hooker quotes St. Basil to support his claim that the singing of psalms is a means of grace by which the seed of virtue is planted in the community:

> [Quoting St. Basil:] For (saith he) whereas the holy spirit saw that mankind is unto virtue hardly drawn, and that righteousness is the less accounted of by reason of the proneness of our affections to that which which delighteth, it pleased the wisdom of the same spirit to borrow from melody that pleasure, which mingled with heavenly mysteries, causeth the smoothness and softness of that which toucheth the ear, to convey as it were by stealth the treasure of good things into man's mind. To this purpose were those harmonious tunes of psalms devised for us, that they which are either in years but young, or touching perfection of virtue as yet not grown to ripeness, might when they think they sing, learn. O the wise conceit of the heavenly teacher, which hath by his skill found out a way, that doing those things wherein we delight, we may also learn that whereby we profit.[517]

Christ's Spirit uses the singing of psalms to transform the society of the elect into a community by "strengthen[ing] our meditation of those holy words,... mak[ing us] attentive, and... raising up the hearts of men...."[518] The music of psalms is

> ... a thing whereunto God's people of old did resort with hope and thirst that thereby especially their souls might be edified; a thing which filleth the mind with comfort and heavenly delight, stirreth up flagrant desires and affections correspondent unto that which the words contain, allayeth all kind of base and earthly cogitations, banisheth and driveth away those evil secret suggestions which our invisible enemy is always apt to minister, watereth the heart to the end it may fructify, maketh the virtuous in trouble full of magnanimity and courage, serveth as a most approved remedy against all doleful and heavy accidents which befall men in this present life....[519]

Some principles particular to the sacraments

Some ground-clearing is necessary before I proceed to the task of analyzing in more detail Hooker's account of how practices form the mind of Christ in community. The necessity arises from the fact that Hooker distinguishes between the

---

516. *Lawes* V.38.1; 2:151.14-24
517. *Laws*.V.38.3; 2:153.17-154.4
518. *Laws*.V.39.4; 2:15-18
519. *Laws*.V.39.4; 2:158.18-29

sacraments of baptism and Eucharist and other ecclesial practices because of the special roles they play in the creation and sustenance of Christian community.

That the sacraments have a unique and necessary role is not obvious to all contemporary Christian communities, and it was not obvious to many of Hooker's contemporaries, either. The hope of Hooker's sponsors was that his treatise would successfully defend the Elizabethan Settlement against English presbyterian opponents, and a major part of that effort was a defense of the rites and ceremonies of the English church. Yet, even Hooker's sponsors were not persuaded of the *mystical* significance of the sacraments. Hooker's primary sponsor, Archbishop Whitgift, defended the rites by ridding them of their mystical content, valuing them merely as formal acts that were the only objective evidence available by which one could discern one's participation in the visible church. Moreover, this objective evidence was sufficient because faith, for Whitgift, was an act of the intellect entirely. As Lake put it in his review of Whitgift's works, "all that was necessary to induce true belief was the availability of right doctrine (either preached or read)."[520]

Implicit in this view are three significant premises commonly held by both Hooker's contemporaries and by many Christians today. First, the understanding of faith as an act of the intellect that is induced by exposure to right doctrine implies an understanding that knowledge is primarily cognitive; that is, it implies that to know is to master concepts or propositions that are true. This contrasts profoundly with the conjunctive account of fellowship with Christ presented in this study - the idea of a personal knowing grounded in a shared history. Second, if the cure for unbelief is right information, then to edify is to provide right information. Indeed, Whitgift made this explicit. His defense of the rites and ceremonies of the Church of England denied sacraments the duty of edification.[521] Finally, the position that faith is preceded and caused by knowledge of right doctrine (and that edification consists of imparting right

---

520. Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans*, 39.
521. Ibid.

doctrine) implies that the central concern of the Church should be justification of the individual. Faith is understood exclusively in terms of justifying faith, and thus edification is, too. An inability to conceive of faith primarily in the grammar of sanctification, a de-mystified account of the sacraments, a laser-like focus on the justification of individuals, and a fear of Pelagianism circumscribe one's ability to imagine sacramental practices as primary means by which the mind of Christ is mystically formed in community over time. All of these positions can be found in contemporary Christian communities. The Hookerian account challenges these premises.

These issues turn on the question of the purpose of the sacraments. Hooker dismisses unequivocally the claim that "all the benefit we reap by sacraments be instruction:"[522] "It greatly offendeth that some, when they labor to show the use of the holy sacraments, assign unto them no end but only *to teach* the mind, by other senses, that which the word doth teach by hearing."[523] If that is all the sacraments do, then rational communities will set aside the sacraments in favor of preaching, which is a much more efficient form of instruction.[524] But if sacraments do more, then these communities act irrationally.

Hooker similarly dismisses conceptions of the sacraments in terms of "bare *resemblances* or memorials of things absent, neither for *naked* signs and testimonies assuring us of grace received before."[525] To the contrary, Hooker asserts, introducing the instrumentality principle, the sacraments are "means effectual whereby God when we take the sacraments delivereth into our hands that grace available unto eternal life, which grace the sacraments represent or signify."[526]

Depending on one's perspective, one can ascribe sundry secondary purposes to the

---

522. *Laws*.V.57.1 2:245.1-6
523. *Laws*.V.57.1 2:244.28-31.
524. *Laws*.V.57.1 2:245.1-6
525. *Laws*.V.57.5; 2:247.16-22. Emphasis original.
526. *Laws*.V.57.5; 2:247.16-22.

sacraments, but their primary purpose derives from their role in the covenant of grace:

> ... their chiefest force and virtue consisteth... in that they are heavenly ceremonies, which God hath sanctified and ordained to be administered in his Church, first as marks whereby to know when God doth impart the vital or saving grace of Christ unto all that are of capable thereof, and secondly as means conditional which God requireth in them unto whom he imparteth grace.[527]

Hooker names two ways that the sacraments fulfill their chief role in the covenant of grace. In the first of these, Hooker agrees with Archbishop Whitgift in affirming their formal character as objective marks of Christ's presence to his Church. Because God is invisible, God blesses Christians by giving "them some plain and sensible token whereby to know what they cannot see."[528] Through the sacraments, "Christ and his holy Spirit with all their blessed effects... give notice of the times when they use to make their access, because it pleaseth almighty God to communicate by sensible means those blessings which are incomprehensible."[529]

But Hooker adds a caveat mandated by the covenant: the sacraments are a "means conditional" by which God imparts grace. As Hooker later clarifies, "Neither is it *ordinarily* his will to bestow the grace of sacraments on any, but by the sacraments."[530] The sacraments are not just a means of instruction, and not just a visible sign of Christ's real presence, but are a means of grace bestowed only through their performance - with few exceptions that are not of interest to the present study.

We encounter here an obstacle to interpretation. Hooker is not always consistent in his use of the word 'grace.' Usually 'grace' serves synonymously with what I have denoted variously by "the local presence of Christ's whole person" or "Christ's real presence" or "Christ and his Spirit's presence." But sometimes Hooker uses grace to denote "Christ's real presence, along with his blessed effects." That is, sometimes grace also includes particular consequences of Christ's presence that are particular to the context of that presence. For example, in baptism, the grace bestowed includes

---

527. *Laws*.V.57.3 2:245.31-246.2.
528. *Laws*.V.57.3 2:246.2-7.
529. *Laws*.V.57.3 2:246.15-20
530. *Laws*.V.57.4; 2: 246.32-33.

both Christ's real presence and the impartation of that justifying faith associated with the seed of God, whereas in the Lord's Supper, the grace bestowed includes both Christ's real presence and the sanctifying effects that perfect us by degrees over the course of our lives.[531] In all cases, grace means, at minimum, the real presence of Christ to the individual believer and the Church.

The final ground-clearing task is simply to note that which has been observed previously: that the assurance of our encounter with the real presence of Christ comes not from an innate capacity to participate in the Divine Mind through intellection of transcendentals, but entirely as a consequence of the covenant of grace. But those covenantal promises are sufficient for us to boldly approach the throne of grace:

> That saving grace which Christ originally is or hath for the general good of his whole Church, by sacraments he severally deriveth into every member thereof; sacraments serve as the instruments of God to that end and purpose, moral instruments the use whereof is in our hands the effect in his; for the use we have his express commandment, for the effect his conditional promise; so that without our obedience to the one there is of the other no apparent assurance, as contrariwise where the signs and sacraments of his grace are not either through contempt unreceived or received with contempt, we are not to doubt but that they really give what they promise, and are what they signify.[532]

At the conclusion of my examination of Ramist realism in chapter three, I noted Hooker's implication that no Ramist shortcut can provide an objective foundation upon which to base our ethical reasoning. I began the last chapter with the question, "Is there an objective ground for our judgments of the good?" Here, at last, we find our answer. "We are not to doubt but that they really give what they promise, and are what they signify." For the Hookerian account, there is indeed an objective foundation from which arises our recognition of the good. The epistemic ground is proclaimed in the covenant of grace: Christ's divine promise to be present to the faithful in our sacramental fellowship with him. The epistemic ground is none other than Christ himself, who gives himself in fellowship in the sacraments.

In what follows, I will examine Hooker's connection between this epistemic

---

531.   *Laws*.V.57.6; 2:248.4-14
532.   *Laws*.V.57.5; 2:247.5-16.

ground, our sacramental practices, and the development of Christian character in the minds of the elect. By considering the principles of instrumentality and rationality in baptism and eucharist, we will see that Hooker associates transformation of the minds of the elect in the encounter with Christ during ecclesial practices.[533]

Instrumentality in practices

Hooker's account of practices manifests the principle of instrumentality. The principle of instrumentality holds that the role in practices of ordinary things is not to be vessels of Christ's real presence, but, rather, simultaneously to enact and to proclaim the personal relationship that constitutes Christ's real presence to us. The word 'vessel' in this is significant. A vessel carries a thing within its boundaries; it is a container, a receptacle. So the principle of instrumentality is a claim that, on Hooker's account, ordinary created things do not themselves carry or contain Christ's real presence. They are not channels of grace themselves. Rather, they are instruments of grace that make Christ's real presence intelligible to us.

In his commentary on sacraments in general, Hooker notes an integral connection between the particular grace to be conveyed and the common utility of the elements selected: "Grace intended by sacraments was a cause of the choice, and is a reason of the fitness of the elements themselves."[534] Fitness of use is a quality of instruments. But instruments can be channels or conveyors as well as implements, so the attribute of fitness does not clarify Hooker's instrumentalism sufficiently.

This distinction is of interest because the Reformed streams, going back to the debates leading to the *Consensus Tigurinus*, divided on the question of the nature of instrumentalism in the sacraments. Influenced by older debates between Thomists

---

533. Hooker evinces a pragmatic view of baptism, concerning himself much less than Barth with the distinction between *de jure* and *de facto* participation in Christ. Barth sought to protect in his descriptions "the freedom and sovereignty of God or the perfection of Jesus Christ's person and work, and indeed...cohere[nce] with his pneumatology, theology of the resurrection, and indeed his view of participation in Christ in general." In contrast, Hooker's focus was on ecclesiology. In an era in which Puritan colleagues pressed for exclusion of the ungodly from the Church of England, Hooker emphasized the objective nature of the visible church as the only church we are ordained to govern. Neder, *Participation in Christ*, 84.
534. *Laws*.V.58.1; 2:248.19-25.

and Franciscans, Reformers advocated different forms, with the more Lutheran view embracing the Thomist sense of instrumentalism that might loosely be described as "channeling" and those influenced by Bullinger embracing the Franciscan sense of "triggering."[535]

Triggering avoids any suggestion that the elements are secondary causes: the elements, by the agency of the Spirit, render a particular state in the partaker. For example, the rainbow triggered in the faithful descendants of Noah confidence in God's promise never again to destroy the world by flood (Genesis 8:1 - 9:17), yet the rainbow did not thereby become a cause of that effect. The Spirit alone was the cause of such confidence, working in the hearts of the faithful to render in them a state of confidence concomitant with their sighting of the rainbow.[536] The rainbow is an instrument in the Franciscan sense of triggering, but not in the Thomist sense of channeling.

This example helps us to locate Hooker firmly in the Franciscan camp with respect to instrumentality in the sacraments. For he cites a similar example - that of Moses and the serpent - in clarifying the relation between grace and the elements:

> Which grace also they that receive by sacraments or with sacraments, receive it from him and not from them. For of sacraments the very same is true which Solomon's wisdom observeth in the brazen serpent,"He that turned towards it was not healed by the thing he saw, but by thee O savior of all." This is therefore the necessity of sacraments.[537]

This suggests that Hooker is consistent with the *Consensus Tigurinus* in seeing the elements as *organum* of grace in the sense of triggers of the effects caused by the Spirit.[538] The elements are not vessels or channels of grace. Indeed, the elements

---

535. John H. Leith and W. Stacy. Johnson, *Calvin Studies Iv : Presented At a Colloquium on Calvin Studies At Davidson College and Davidson College Presbyterian Church, Davidson, North Carolina* (Davidson, NC: Davidson College, 1988). See also Reinhold Seeberg, *Text-Book of the History of Doctrines*, trans. Charles E. Hay, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1952), 2:126-127.
536. I am indebted to my colleague, Tom McGlothlin, for this illustration.
537. *Laws*.V.57.4; 2: 246.30 - 247.5; Hooker quotes Wisdom 16:7. Cf. Calvin, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*. IV.14.18.
538. Heinrich Bullinger and John Calvin, *"Consensus Tigurinus," Creeds of Christendom, with a History and Critical notes*, http://www.creeds.net/reformed/Tigurinus/tigur-latin.htm (accessed July 12, 2013).

"contain *in themselves* no vital force of efficacy, they are not physical but *moral instruments* of salvation, duties of service and worship, which unless we perform as the author of grace requireth, they are unprofitable."[539]

Defending the necessity of baptism, Hooker establishes explicitly the instrumentality of the water. Baptism is not "a cause for grace, yet the grace which is given them with their baptism doth so far forth depend on the very outward sacrament that God will have it embraced not only as a sign or token what we receive, but also as an *instrument* or mean whereby we receive grace...."[540]

From this we can conclude that Hooker's account of baptism exhibits the principle of instrumentality: neither the water nor the ordinary washing it achieves are vessels of Christ's real presence. Rather, the outer act of washing by water, when combined with the words explaining God's inner action of washing away sin, simultaneously enacts and proclaims the personal relationship that constitutes Christ's real presence to us, and, in that encounter, renders the effects that the Spirit intends.

As we consider the Eucharist, it is necessary to distinguish the principle of instrumentality developed here. Hooker offers an instrumentalist view of the Eucharist that, in his assessment, renders the theories of consubstantiation and transubstantiation "unnecessary."[541] My interest here is not to engage his dismissal of these theories but to follow his particular application of the principle of instrumentality. His usage differs from that of Aquinas, who also offered an instrumentalist view of the Eucharist. As Liam Walsh notes, Aquinas held that "[Christ's] humanity, joined to his divinity in hypostatic union, is an attached *instrument* of the divine; his sacraments are detached *instruments* by which the divine causality of grace, active in his humanity, reaches humans in place and time."[542] Hooker, with Calvin, did not embrace the Thomist notion of secondary causation. As

---

539. *Laws*.V.57.4; 2:246.20-30. Emphasis original.
540. *Laws*.V.60.2; 2:255.1-6. Emphasis added.
541. *Laws*.V.67.11; 2:340.10-15.
542. Liam Walsh, "Sacraments," in *The Theology of Thomas Aquinas,* ed. Rik Van Nieuwenhove and Joseph Wawrykow, (University of Notre Dame Press, 2010-08-15), 347.

we shall see, the physical elements of the sacraments are instruments on Hooker's account, too, but only as a result of their contingent usage by God in fulfillment of the covenant of grace.

Hooker is explicit in his affirmation of the instrumentality of the bread and the wine. In reflecting on how best to interpret the words of institution, he notes, "The bread and cup are his body and blood because they are causes instrumental upon the receipt whereof the *participation* of his body and blood ensueth."[543] He clarifies how this instrumentality is manifest in contrasting Lutheran and Roman views with his own account. The proper exposition of Christ's words of institution are:

> This hallowed food, though concurrence of divine power, is in verity and truth, unto faithful believers, *instrumentally* a cause of that mystical participation, whereby as I make myself wholly theirs, so I give them in hand an actual possession of all such saving grace as my sacrificed body can yield, and as their souls do presently need, this is 'to them and in them' my body....[544]

This pithy summary is a dense application of Hooker's principle of instrumentality. Some unpacking is in order.

"This is 'to them and in them'" affirms the real presence of Christ in the sacrament but locates that presence in the faithful believer: "The real presence of Christ's most blessed body and blood is not therefore to be sought for in the sacrament, but in the worthy receiver of the sacrament."[545] Hooker emphasizes that the sacrament "exhibit[s]" grace but "they are not really nor do really contain in themselves that grace which with them or by them it pleaseth God to bestow."[546] Rather, the Spirit acts to render the transformation of bread and wine in the heart and soul of the worthy receiver:

---

543. *Laws*.V.67.5; 2:334.16-19. Emphasis original.
544. *Laws*.V.67.12; 2: 341.1-7, Emphasis added.
545. *Laws*.V.67.5;2:334.30-32.
546. *Laws*.V.67.6;2:335.7-10.

> I see not which way it should be gathered by the words of Christ when and where the bread is his body and or the cup his blood but only in the very heart and soul of him which receiveth them.[547]

Though the elements themselves are not to be identified as themselves the real presence of Christ, and are not to be described as containers of his real presence, Christ is nonetheless "wholly theirs"[548] by virtue of "that mystical participation"[549] caused by Christ's Spirit. Hooker cites Tertullian, Irenaeus, and Theoderet to explain how this is so:

> Christ is personally there present, yea present whole, albeit a part of Christ be corporally absent from thence; that Christ assisting this heavenly banquet with his personal and true presence doth by his own divine power add to the natural substance thereof supernatural efficacy which addition to the nature of those consecrated elements changeth them and maketh them that unto us which otherwise they could not be; that to us they are thereby made such instruments as mystically yet truly, invisibly yet really work our communion or fellowship with the person of Jesus Christ as well in that he is man as God, our participation also in the fruit, grace, and efficacy of his body and blood, whereupon there ensueth a kind of transubstantiation in us, a true change both of soul and body, an alteration from death to life.[550]

The elements neither are the real presence nor contain the real presence, and neither are their natural properties changed such that they no longer are what they are naturally. Rather, they are rendered more than they naturally are only for the worthy receiver. To their natural substance is added an "efficacy" that changes and makes them "unto us which otherwise they could not be." Specifically, the Spirit uses "such instruments" to create "our communion or fellowship with the person of Jesus Christ" and also to cause "our participation also in the fruit, grace, and efficacy of his body and blood."

This is more readily understood by reference to my earlier example of the rainbow.[551] God chose to use the rainbow as a sign of his promise never again to destroy the earth by flood. The rainbow, of course, remains the natural phenomenon it was before God chose to adopt it for this purpose, and the natural phenomenon is

---

547. *Laws*.V.67.6;2:335.3-6.
548. *Laws*.V.67.12; 2: 341.4.
549. *Laws*.V.67.12; 2: 341.3-4.
550. *Laws*.V..67.11; 2:338.14-340.4
551. Calvin, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, IV.14.18.

itself not to be confused with the divine restraint. Nonetheless, once God decided to use the rainbow for the new purpose of being a sign of his covenant faithfulness, the ordinary rainbow gained a supernatural efficacy. Something was added to it that rendered it no longer what it naturally is, at least when it is beheld by the heirs to God's promise. Its *ontology* has been changed by divine decree though its *physical* properties remain unchanged.

God used an ordinary physical thing to edify Noah in his faith. There is a cause and effect relationship here, but the cause is not contained in the rainbow. Rather, the Spirit alone is the cause, and the role of the rainbow is whatever the Spirit makes of it. Similarly, the effects are not contained in the rainbow. Rather, the edifying effect is triggered by the sign of the rainbow, manifested entirely within the heart and soul of the worthy receiver.

In like fashion, Christ chose to use ordinary things like wine and bread as signs of his promise always to be Christ-with-us. The wine and bread remain what they were before Christ chose to use them for this purpose. They are not to be confused with the real presence they signify. Once Christ decided to use them as signs of the New Covenant of his Body and Blood, the bread and wine gained a supernatural efficacy. When consecrated, something is added to them that renders them no longer what they naturally are, at least when beheld by those who trust in Christ's promise. What they are - their being - changes, though their physical properties remain unchanged.[552] Their being changes solely because of the additional role that Christ the Creator assigned them within his covenant of grace. When consecrated, they become sure signs of his real presence, edifying those who consume them in faith.

The cause of our sanctification, Christ's real presence, is not contained in the bread and wine. Rather, the Spirit alone is the cause, and the role of the elements is whatever the Spirit makes of them. Similarly, the edifying effects of the sacrament are not contained in the elements. Rather, the edifying effects are instrumentally

---

552.   I am indebted to Tom McGlothlin for this illustration.

triggered by the elements, manifested entirely in the heart and soul of the worthy receiver.

From this we can see that the Hooker's particular form of instrumentalism in the Eucharist is coherent with that derived from first principles above. Ordinary things like water, bread, and wine are not channels of grace themselves. Rather, they are instruments of grace that make Christ's real presence intelligible to us. And we, and not the elements themselves, are acted upon in the sacrament. For when we remember him, we ourselves are re-membered. On this basis, Hooker is able to offer his famous observation that it is not the bread and wine that are transformed, but us: "there ensueth a kind of transubstantiation *in us*, a true change both of soul and body, an alteration from death to life."[553]

In the next section, we will see that this transubstantiation in us occurs through our reunion with Christ, a reunion described in the grammar of the logical space of reasons.

Rationality in practices

It is fundamental to our Hookerian account that the *telos* of humans is to participate in the rationality of God. The principle of rationality holds that our participation in the life of God takes place in the logical space of reasons. This is not to say that faith consists of assent to propositions or that faith is merely intellectual, but rather to say that participation is experienced as a knowing of the whole person of Christ through our communicative nature, our interactions, and our shared history with him. Christ's reconciling actions for us are rendered intelligible and become

---

553. *Laws*.V..67.11; 2:339.7-340.1. Emphasis added. Note that the edifying effects of the sacrament do not entail a material washing away of a sinful substance or a material transformation of the properties of the human. Rather the transubstantiation of the human entails an ontological transformation, an alteration from death to life. This is remarkably similar to Barth's account. As Neder notes, "He offers an alternative account in which human participation in God occurs not on the level of a cleansing or transformation of human nature (substantially understood) by either the divine "essence" or "energies," but rather as an event of covenant fellowship in which human beings do not become gods, but rather the human beings they were created to be." Neder, *Participation in Christ*, 45.

known by our rational faculties.

Hooker does not focus much, in his treatment of baptism within *Laws,* on the rational nature of our participation. This is most likely because his primary concern in *Laws* is sanctification and not justification, and so he satisfies himself mostly with brief references to the imparting of the seed of God within the soul of the baptized. However, some evidence that Hooker locates the participatory element of baptism in the logical space of reasons is visible in the way he describes the role of the rite in our ongoing relationship with Christ. In discussing the significance of Christ's words in instituting the baptismal rite and the necessity of its physical action and spoken words, he describes baptism as a door into the household of God and a first step in our journey of sanctification. It is:

> ... baptism which both declareth and maketh us Christians. In which respect we justly hold it to be the door of our actual entrance into God's house, the first apparent beginning of life, a seal perhaps to the grace of election before received, but to our sanctification here a step that hath not any before it.[554]

Designation of baptism as a door and a first step in an ongoing journey reflect the language of event and history. Hooker is clear in declaring that baptism initiates a new relationship, or at least a new stage in a largely unrealized relationship. The event described is that of the subject, Christ, acting upon another subject, the baptized, and, as such, the event is, formally, the first *personal* interaction between Christ and the baptized. The event is seen as the beginning of a history that will be shared and ongoing. The consequence of the event is the occupation of the heart of the baptized by Christ's Spirit such that Christ's actions become communicable and intelligible to the baptized in the sense of providing justification for beliefs about Christ. Sociality, interaction, shared history, and intelligibility of final causes - these are the coordinates of the logical space of reasons.

Lest we be uncertain of this, we need only turn to Hooker's *Learned Discourse of*

---

554. *Laws.*V.5.60.3; 2:256.16-26.

Justification wherein he considers justifying faith, the bestowal of which is marked by the baptismal event. Christ's Spirit:

> ... inhabit[s] and possess[es] the mind.... As the light of nature doth cause the mind to apprehend those truths which are merely rational, so that saving truth, which is far above the reach of human reason, cannot otherwise than by the Spirit of the Almighty be conceived.[555]

Hooker develops this observation regarding the rational nature of our participation in his defense of the use of interrogatories in the baptismal rite. He notes that "We find by experience that... faith be an intellectual habit of the mind and have her seat in the understanding."[556] The rational nature of faith, however, does not imply that faith's object is known in the way that we know empirical facts. Rather, Hooker describes a knowing in which Christ's person becomes intelligible to us in spite of the limits of reason. Such knowing is born of Christ's downward action in the forms of revelation and the Spirit's gift of the supernatural virtue of faith by which such revelation is rendered intelligible:

> That which is true and neither can be discerned by sense, nor concluded by some natural principles, must have principles of revealed truth whereupon to build itself, and an habit of faith in us wherewith principles of that kind are apprehended. The mysteries of our religion are above the reach of our understanding, above discourse of man's reason, above all that any creature can comprehend. Therefore the first thing required of him which standeth for admission into Christ's family is belief. Which belief consisteth not so much in knowledge as in acknowledgement of all things that heavenly wisdom revealeth; the affection of faith is above her reach, her love to Godward above the comprehension which she hath of God.[557]

Similarly, our encounter with Christ during the Eucharist is best described with the grammar of the logical space of reasons.

Hooker locates the real presence of Christ not in the sacrament but "in the worthy receiver of the sacrament;"[558] "the bread is his body and or the cup his blood but only in the very heart and soul of him which receiveth them.[559] Moreover, Hooker unequivocally maintains that Christ is efficaciously present. Indeed, Christ's real

---

555. *Learned Discourse*.26; FLE 5:137.30-138.4
556. *Laws*.V.63.2; 2:291.19-21.
557. *Laws*.V.63.1; 2:290.20-31
558. *Laws*.V.67.5;2:334.30-32.
559. *Laws*.V.67.6;2:335.3-6.

presence in the heart and soul of the receiver, triggered by the sign of Christ's promise to be Christ-with-us, renders an ontological change in the receiver like that rendered in the bread and wine by virtue of their selection as the ordinary objects which trigger the edifying effects in the worthy receiver. What the receiver *is* - her ontology - is transformed by the real presence of Christ within her heart and soul such that her being is altered: Christ causes "a true change both of soul and body, an alteration from death to life."[560] This echoes Luther. Christ dwells within, and such presence constitutes both reconciliation (*favor*) and the gift of God himself (*donum*). In short, the real presence of Christ within the worthy receiver transforms her such that she herself becomes a sign of Christ's real and sanctifying presence in the community.

From this it should be clear that Hooker is a long way from the memorialism of Zwingli. To say that we experience the real presence of Christ according to the rationality principle, and to clarify that Hooker's instrumentalism is of the 'triggering' form, is not to say that Hooker believes that the sacrament merely triggers the recollection of Christ in our imagination. To the contrary, Hooker denies this, emphasizing that the sacrament induces a personal knowing:

> ... not by surmised imagination but truly, even so truly that through faith we perceive in the body and blood *sacramentally presented* the very taste of eternal life, the grace of the sacrament is here as the food which we eat and drink.[561]

In short, the sign of Christ's new covenant of grace renders intelligible to us Christ's real presence such that we are justified in our belief that he addresses us with his promise in the sacramental food and drink. Moreover, such personal knowing of Christ's presence renders intelligible to us "what the grace is which God giveth us, the degrees of our own increase in holiness and virtue..., [and] the strength of our life begun in Christ.[562]"

We encounter here the mystery. The surprising thing is that it is located neither

---

560. *Laws*.V..67.11; 2:339.7-340.1. Emphasis added.
561. *Laws*.V.67.1; 2:331.13-16. Emphasis added.
562. *Laws*.V.67.1; 2:331.9-12.

in the transformed properties of the bread and the wine nor the spiritual transport of the people to heaven. Instead, the mystery is in the 'mystical conjunction' that the Spirit causes in the human person. The eternal is naturally unknowable by humans because of our finitude – and because of the astigmatism of sin[563] – but nonetheless the Spirit crosses the buffer zone, re-creating a personal knowing of the unknowable by binding the covenant of grace to ordinary phenomena like bread and wine. How does the Spirit do that? How does the Spirit communicate knowledge of Christ's reconciling actions to our rational faculties such that they become intelligible as actions toward us and for us? How does the Spirit create Christ's Indwelling Presence such that we experience ourselves as addressed personally by Christ's love? Therein lies the mystery.

Yet it is clear that, for Hooker, our participation in Christ and his participation in us – by way of sacramental practices – occurs in what I have described as the logical space of reasons. In the Eucharist, Christ's history becomes our history, we discover ourselves addressed by him from both his throne and his cross, and we discover ourselves transformed by his action upon us. For:

> … these mysteries do as nails fasten us to his very cross, that by them we draw out, as touching efficacy, force, and virtue, even the blood of his gored side, in the wounds of our Redeemer we there dip our tongues, we are died red both within and without, our hunger is satisfied and our thirst forever quenched, they are things wonderful which he feeleth, great which he seeth and unheard of which he uttereth whose soul is possessed of this paschal lamb and made joyful in the strength of this new wine, this bread hath in it more than the substance which our eyes behold, this cup hallowed with solemn benediction availeth to the endless life and welfare both of soul and body, in that it serveth as well for a medicine to heal our infirmities and purge our sins as for a sacrifice of thanksgiving, with touching it sanctifieth, it enlightneth with belief, it truly conformeth us unto the image of Jesus Christ; what these elements are in themselves it skilleth not, it is enough that to me which takes them they are the body and blood of Christ, his promise in witness hereof sufficeth, his word he knoweth which way to accomplish.[564]

---

563. "Astigmatism" is Steinmetz's metaphor for Calvin's account of sin, which I borrow and apply to Hooker. See note 124, page 53. Like Calvin, Hooker described the noetic effects of sin in cognitive terms. Our "natural thirst for knowledge" is frustrated by ignorance, for the good we seek "hath evidence enough for itself, if reason were diligent to search it out." But communal "neglect" of the good causes "a show of that which is not," and we choose that which is "less good." Sometimes, in our choices, we are deceived by Satan; "sometimes the hastiness of our wills prevent[ ] the more considerate advice of sound reason," and "sometimes the very custom of evil make[s] the heart obdurate against whatsoever instructions to the contrary." See *Laws* I.7.7; I.8.11.
564. *Laws*.V.67.13; 2:343.5-24.

Section summary

Thus far, an account of our participation in Christ especially as it is mediated through the sacraments of baptism and Eucharist. We have seen that Christ's Spirit uses ordinary water, bread, and wine as instrumental causes of the effect of Christ's real presence in us. As Hooker observes, it is we who are transubstantiated, not the elements themselves. The final cause is not transformed bread and wine but transformed humanity, and our encounter with such transformed subjects is known by us in the logical space of reasons. The key point is that the practices themselves are not containers or channels of Christ's real presence, but triggers through which the Spirit efficaciously draws us by steps and degrees into an ever-deepening personal fellowship with Christ.

MIMETIC VIRTUE

Improvisation

In their *Christian Ethics*,[565] Stanley Hauerwas and Sam Wells argue that ethical reasoning for the church is properly done as worship, and that a proper Christian ethics is rightly determined by our worship. Their volume follows Wells' argument that every act in the Eucharist and baptism performs a fundamental truth-claim of the Gospel, forming the mind of Christ in disciples through the repetition of practices instituted by Christ. Of particular interest to this study is the insight, upon which their approach is based, that practices produce a virtuous community by causing disciples to take the right things for granted. The way the Church identifies those 'right things' it should take for granted is by reference to Christ himself.

I would clarify, however, that it is not the practices themselves that teach us the right things to take for granted, and it is not the practices that correct our vision so that we see the world the way it really is, but rather it is Christ himself. Virtue is born

---

565. Hauerwas and Wells, *Christian Ethics*.

not of practices but of a personal rationality. As we have seen, practices actualize and sustain the personal relationship through which Christ's history becomes our history. In that personal relationship, we discover ourselves addressed by him, and we discover ourselves transformed by his action upon us.

But, if this is correct, how does Christ teach us the proper descriptions of the world? How does Christ himself teach us the right things to take for granted? How are we ourselves agents?

In his *Improvisation*, Wells draws upon the language of the theatre to emphasize that Christian ethics are necessarily dramatic. They do not merely require the ability to make aesthetic judgments. They require such judgments in a context of interpersonal address and response such that those judgments keep the story going. The particularity and contingency of human life require that Christian agents improvise in response to particular ethical questions such that their responses carry on in the same way towards the New Jerusalem. Such improvisation is art, and, as Aristotle, Aquinas, and Hooker taught us, the art of making phronetic judgments is learned only at the feet of masters.

But from whom does one learn such an art? In what follows, I will propose that sacramental practices generate the personal relationship with Christ that sets the necessary conditions for our imitation of him which, in turn, motivates right motivations. Before proceeding to that proposal, however, some background is necessary.

Mimesis

Linda Zagzebski's 'divine motivation theory'[566] provides a way forward.

Most distinctively Christian ethics seem to be deontological in that they presuppose a 'divine command theory' which characterize ethics in terms of obedience

---

566. Linda Trinkaus Zagzebski, *Divine Motivation Theory*, Kindle ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2004-08-02).

to divine law that is grounded in the creation accounts. Zagzebski has proposed an alternative – which she dubs 'divine motivation theory – which is grounded in Christology and which explains the formation of virtue in terms of the formation of *motives* corresponding to those of Christ. We learn virtuous behavior by looking to moral exemplars, and that virtuous behavior we observe is constituted by appropriate motive dispositions and corresponding actions that we can imitate.[567]

For the purposes of this study, I am chiefly interested in Zagzebski's account of how the imitation of moral exemplars – including Christ – motivate right actions. In what follows, I will argue that the Spirit generates the personal relationship with Christ that sets the necessary conditions for such imitation through sacramental practices.

According to Linda Zagzebski, virtue is formed through the creation of perceptions that are both affective and cognitive and acquired through experience.[568] Zagzebski calls these perceptions emotions. Repetitive encounters with situations and/or objects lead us to create "affective dispositions," and, in combination with our efforts to create mental maps of our world, these dispositions lead to the development of "thick concepts" which result in patterns of emotional responses to similar stimuli. Virtue arises from the creation of the right thick concepts which, in turn, motivate right actions.[569]

Zagzebski turns to the concept of "moral exemplar" in order to provide a foundation for her theory.[570] The right emotional response to a given situation/object is that response which one might observe in the moral exemplar in similar circumstances. The actions that correspond to particular emotions are those actions which one might observe when the moral exemplar has those emotions. We know what virtuous behavior is by looking to moral exemplars, and that virtuous behavior

---

567. Ibid., 219. "Good motives for us are forms of imitating the divine motives."
568. Ibid., 64-66.
569. Ibid., 64-65.
570. Ibid., 48-49.

we observe is constituted by appropriate motive dispositions and corresponding actions that we can imitate.

For Zagbeski, virtue is an embedded habit humans develop by imitating moral exemplars. The supreme exemplar Zagbeski has in view is the Christ.[571] However, we should not expect other humans to share perfectly his emotions, his responses, and his ends precisely because of the incommunicability of humans: there is something in particular that is of value in each human beyond that which is attributable to human nature. Because of this particularity, virtue does not consist of being a perfect imitator of the exemplar. The difference that makes us unique means that virtue necessarily does not consist of conformance to a uniquely appropriate emotion, response, or end that we observe in Christ, but rather describes *a range of fitting emotions, responses, and ends*, all of which describe a range of ideal selves. Though the Christ defines the ideal range of virtuous motives and actions, divine motivation theory insists on the particularity of this ideal for each individual.

This insistence on the particularity of individuals even as they seek to imitate Christ illumines the significance of narrative in ethical formation. Narrative exposes humans to the emotions, responses, and ends of Christ and those who followed Christ well, offering not just the supreme exemplar, but a rich variety of exemplars whose story is one of imitating the Christ well. In our encounter with their engagement of the world as mediated through narrative of which understand ourselves to be a part, we form those thick concepts that lead to motive dispositions, and thereby learn how to respond within the range of ideal emotions and actions to the stimuli of our contexts.

Sacramental practices and right motivations

Zagzebski's account of affective dispositions which lead to the development of "thick concepts" intersects well with Wells' emphasis on practices which lead us to

---

571.   Ibid., 226.

take the right things for granted. Both emphasize the significance of repetitive encounters, as well as the creation of mental maps or descriptions that help us to see the world rightly. And both point to how these thick concepts help us to navigate ethically in the encounter with unfamiliar stimuli.

As noted above, it is not practices but Christ's action upon us through practices which lead us to take the right things for granted. Moreover, we have seen that Christ acts upon on us through sacramental practices to initiate and sustain the personal relationships through which Christ's Spirit sanctifies us. But what is the relationship between these things? How does Christ utilize sacramental practices to provide the gift of the right thick concepts through which we take the right things for granted?

My proposal is that the personal relationship created through sacramental practices provides the necessary pre-conditions for the mimesis through which Christ schools us. The relationship in which one experiences being addressed by Christ and responds to Christ grows over time. Interactions accumulate, and one grows in one's appreciation of a shared history. One consequence of this personal relationship is a knowing of Christ such that his nature and will are rendered intelligible in the sense of producing justifiable belief in Christ as one's Lord. This justifiable belief, made possible only through the personal relationship with him, establishes the roles of exemplar and disciple described by Zagzebski. These are the necessary pre-conditions for mimesis.

To be clear, Christ is the supreme exemplar, but we encounter not just Christ, but also the phenomena of others who have imitated and are imitating Christ. The community in Christ properly provides a rich variety of exemplars whose story is one of imitating Christ well.

From this we see that through the sacraments and through the community that the sacraments create, Christ schools us as we are immersed in his story such that it becomes our story, or, rather, such that we begin to see ourselves as part of his story. Even better, as Wells might say, Christ sanctifies us as we see ourselves as actors in

the theodrama, called to improvise responsibly in such a way that our actions point to the New Jerusalem. Through our imitation of him, he creates our "affective dispositions" and, ultimately, our mental maps of the world that correct our vision so that, over time, we see the world as it really is. By steps and degrees, Christ develops in us the thick concepts which determine our improvisational responses to the contingent and variegated stimuli of life. Virtue arises from the creation of the right thick concepts which, in turn, motivate right actions. In this way, Christ utilizes sacramental practices to generate virtue in the body of which he is the head.

Knowing God and Recognizing the Good, Revisited

So how do humans recognize the good? We've seen that, for Hooker, the entire created order is God's symphony of truth,[572] communicating God's Word by which all things come to know who and what they are in God's mind. Hooker could say today, with Hans Urs von Balthasar, that "Although ever since Luther we have become accustomed to call the Bible 'God's Word', it is not Sacred Scripture which is God's original language and self-expression, but rather Jesus Christ."[573] In Hooker's rendering, that language and self-expression is the eternal law, which is perfectly transmitted but imperfectly received by the human rational agent, who then weaves that Word into the community's common life through law, community norms, social structures, and shared practices. The Spirit gathers particular individuals into Christ's Church, drawing them into personal relationships with Jesus Christ through which Christ tutors them mimetically in the pentecostal grammar which heals and empowers their relational capacities, and generates the norms, structures, and practices through which the Church hears and embodies the Word. Yet, whether Christians recognize the Word in Scripture, communal practices, the created order, or in the spiritual experiences through which we receive our conjunction with Christ, and whether we

---

572. I allude here to von Balthasar's phrase, which I take to be an apt description that Hooker could have adopted himself. Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Truth is Symphonic: Aspects of Christian Pluralism*, ed.:28 (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1987). 7-10.

573. Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord, Vol. 1: Seeing the Form (the Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics)* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2009-06-01). 23.

conceptualize our encounters with it in terms of causes or reasons, all human knowing of the good is derived from the phenomenal. This includes the special category of revelation, which transcends human reason but is nonetheless encountered as phenomena perceived using the same human psychology. As we have seen throughout this study, this psychology has important implications for the defeasability of our communal judgments about the good, and the methods of ethical reasoning we embrace.

Extension through synthesis with Wellsian improvisation and Zagbeski's divine motivation theory locates the Hookerian account squarely in the ecclesial ethicists' camp. It clarifies what I suggest Hooker himself understood: that the proper focus of Christian ethics is neither 'decisions' nor 'power' nor "right actions" nor "right outcomes" nor abstract values like equality. Rather, the proper focus of Christian ethics is the "character" of the Christian.[574]

It also highlights the ethical significance of another thread we've seen throughout this study - Hooker's priority on the particular. For with Barth, Hauerwas, Wells, and other ecclesial ethicists, Hooker resists reduction of Christ to either an Enlightenment sage dispensing wisdom or to a new Moses figure dictating universal moral axioms. Rather, the Hookerian account sees the Christ as the self-expression of the triune God, calling humans to the abundance of love unleashed when we imitate the divine fellowship by living as one with the other without annihilating difference. Christ calls us to imitate his always creative dispositions, but not by ceasing to be individuals called by name. Because Christ is always wholly other, he calls us to imitate his dispositions in our unique narrative location, participating in the rationality of God by creatively manifesting the good he teaches us to desire. This returns us once more to the virtue of *phronesis*, the capacity to manifest the good for the sake of the good. In the Hookerian account, Christian virtue just is *phronesis*, reconfigured as the

---

574. Per the Wellsian typology of ethical systems, universal ethics focus on decisions, subversive ethics focus on power relationships, and ecclesial ethics focus on character. Wells and Quash, *Introducing Christian Ethics*, 113-115.

capacity to create in our narrative location the good that we desire precisely because the risen Lord himself desires it.

CRITICISM OF THE ECCLESIAL ETHICISTS

We've reached at last a preliminary answer to the question of how the mind of Christ is formed in community, and we've seen that the Hookerian account answers in terms of mimetic virtue that is cultivated by the Spirit in the Church's practices. Because the Hookerian account emphasizes the importance of practices, it is vulnerable to criticism aimed originally at ecclesial ethicists who emphasize narrative and practices. Critics of ecclesial ethicists have focused on four core concerns: their reluctance to make explicit claims about God and creation and a correlative tendency to identify the Church with its social ethics, the conflation of truth with the faith or beliefs of a particular community, and an overly-realized eschatology that leads to an irresponsible sectarianism. Related to these concerns are complaints that those who emphasize practices don't attend closely to the specific words of Scripture and that they give insufficient attention to particular Christian doctrines. Criticism is widespread and centered mostly around the work of Hauerwas due perhaps to the prominence of his corpus. Critiques by John Webster and Christopher Insole are illustrative of these concerns. In the remainder of this chapter, I will summarize their critiques and consider how the Hookerian account answers them.

John Webster's Barthian Critique

For John Webster,[575] the ecclesial ethicists err to the extent that their description of the Church is based on what the Church does (its practices) rather than on what the Church suffers (God's actions upon the Church). In their insistence that the visible Church not be separated from its language and practices, those who emphasize practices are vulnerable to the charge that they are identifying the phenomena of the

---

575. John Webster, "The Church and the Perfection of God," in *The Community of the Word: Toward an Evangelical Ecclesiology*, ed. Mark Husbands and Daniel J. Treier, (IVP Academic, 2005-03-18), Kindle location 856-864, Sec. 1, para. 4.

- 194 -

Church with the revelation of God's reign. Due to their reluctance to speak about first principles - and especially the "perfection of God," their account of the Church is excessively immanentist and reflects an overly realized eschatology.

While acknowledging the importance of the effort to reintegrate theology with the concrete life of the Church after decades of the "ecclesiological minimalism of much modern Protestantism," Webster criticizes the efforts of post-liberals for "ecclesiological inflation". Webster notes three consequences of the description of the Church in terms of its practices, all of which he summarizes as a distortion of the "asymmetry of gospel and church." The first consequence is an "immanentist account of the Church which lacks strong interest in deploying direct language about God." The second consequence is an overemphasis on the Church "as visible human communion,"[576] an emphasis that he rightly notes is particularly strong in the Anglican Communion currently. The third consequence is the relegation of the Gospel to mere background, offering "little critical or corrective force upon the way in which Church practice is conceived." Webster's concerns can best be summarized by his pithy and ironic description of this school: "In short: Schleiermacher, not Barth."[577]

Webster's criticisms seemingly arise from two helpful Barthian concerns. First, ecclesiology must flow from proper confession of the alterity and perfection of the triune Word. Second, "the norm of ecclesiology" must be "the particular character of God as it is made known in revelation, rather than some common term in ecclesiology and theology proper (such as the term *relation*, which is almost ubiquitous in contemporary discussion)."[578] The consequences that worry him issue from these concerns. My Hookerian account shares Webster's Barthian concerns and seems to meet his critique successfully.

We've already seen that Hooker explicitly satisfies the two overarching concerns

---

576. John Webster, "The Visible Attests the Invisible," in *The Community of the Word: Toward an Evangelical Ecclesiology*, ed. Mark Husbands and Daniel J. Treier, (IVP Academic, 2005-03-18), Kindle location 1149-1159, Sect. 1, para. 4.
577. Ibid.
578. Webster, "The Church and the Perfection of God," Kindle location 880, Sect. II, para. 1.

- 194 -

from which Webster's portents derive. In his appropriation of Thomas' description of
the eternal law, Hooker takes care to emphasize the alterity of the Trinity by
conceiving it in a first and second form. Furthermore, Hooker himself echoes
Webster's concern that ecclesiology be grounded in the perfection of God: "the being
of God is a kind of law to his working: for that perfection which God is, giveth
perfection to that he doth."[579] Hooker's argument begins where Webster would have it
begin - the extraordinary superabundance of the triune God:

> The general end of God's external working is the exercise of his most glorious and most
> abundant virtue: which abundance doth show itself in variety, and for that cause this variety is
> oftentimes in Scripture expressed by the name of *riches*.[580]

Similarly, we saw that the eternal law, for Hooker, is none other than the
humiliated and exalted Christ. Christ is the eternal law, the Governor, Sustainer, and
Reconciler of creation. Already we've seen that ecclesial laws have their source and
standard in the eternal law, and thus in Christ. Humans come to know "the particular
character of God as it is made known in revelation"[581] through the Spirit's cultivation
of personal relationships with Christ. Clearly, the Hookerian account satisfies
Webster's second concern.

Webster's worries about "an immanentist account of the Church" and his concern
that an emphasis on practices will lead to an overemphasis on the Church "as visible
human communion" are both related to Webster's encounter with ecclesiologies that
are insufficiently pneumatological.[582] We would expect from the foregoing that
Hooker easily satisfies this concern, and that is correct. Webster's insistence that a
focus on practices not lead us to lose sight of the invisible church is worth pondering,
however, for it helps to make explicit that which has been merely implicit in the
Hookerian account developed thus far.

---

579. *Laws*.I.2.2; I.59.5-6.
580. *Laws*.I.2.4; 1.61.6-9. Emphasis original.
581. Ibid.
582. Webster, "The Visible Attests the Invisible," Kindle location 1145, Sect.1, para 5.

First, the current account satisfies Webster's concern by explaining how the Spirit generates the personal relationships with Christ that cause the common confession that constitutes the Church. Hooker cautions us regarding the invisibility of those so reconciled. We are unable "to show any cause why mercy may not do good where it will, and wheresover it will justice withhold good."[583] We can speak of those who are eternally elect, temporally obdurate, and eternally reprobate, but we are unable to sort ourselves into those categories here and now, for we don't know if, when, or how the Spirit may bear fruit (Matt 25:31-44).

This leads to a profound consequence for ethics and ecclesiology. As David Neelands notes, for Hooker, "there is no effective or practical difference, just as there is not perceptible difference, between the visible and invisible church, except at the end, when it shall be clear if there be any in the church who do not persevere."[584] If there is no *practical* difference between the visible and the invisible church until the fulfillment of time, then, when theology speaks of a right ordering of the church, the practical assumption must be that we are all equal in our status before God. That is, we must assume that *all* are elect, and that our use of categories like godly and ungodly are presumptuous because their contents are known only to God, and premature because time is not yet fulfilled. Therefore, in ordering the church politically, we rightly begin with an assumption of equality in its members:[585]

> Howbeit concerning the state of all men with whom we live (for only of them our prayers are meant) we may till the worlds end, for the present, always presume, that as far as in us there is power to discern what others are, and as far as any duty of ours dependeth upon the notice of their condition in respect of God, the safest axioms for charity to rest itself upon are these, "He which already believeth is;" and "He which believeth not as yet may be the child of God." It becometh not us during life altogether to condemn any man seeing that (for anything we

---

583. *Dublin*.43; 4.161.26-28.
584. Neelands, "Hooker on the Visible and Invisable Church," 109.
585. This may seem a commonplace to contemporary ears that may be accustomed to Eucharistic prayers which proclaim that Christ is the "Savior and Redeemer of the world", "a perfect sacrifice for the whole world" sent "to bring to fulfillment the sanctification of all." These are, respectively, phrases from Eucharistic prayers A, B, and D of the *Book of Common Prayer* of the Episcopal Church. But the division of the world into the godly and the ungodly, and the instinct to exclude the ungodly from the church, are perennial weeds in the history of Protestantism, and were among the priorities of Hooker's opponents.

know) there is hope of every man's forgiveness the possibility of whose repentance is not yet cut off by death.[586]

This pragmatic emphasis on the visible church, combined with Hooker's high pneumatology, leads to Hooker's remarkable and pithy definition of the Church as "that visible mystical body."[587] Hooker refuses to identify the Church either as the community whose liturgical practices are visible to the world or as the invisible multitude whose circumcised hearts are visible only to God (Rom. 2.29). For Hooker, precisely because Christ is really present in the Church's worship, the visible liturgical practices unite all the elect translocally and transhistorically into a "society supernatural"[588] that is simultaneously empirical and non-empirical. The body of Christ is always visible and mystical.[589]

This defends the current account from charges of excessive immanentism. But it also returns a suggestion to Webster and other Barthians. The Hookerian account of the Church - as the people visibly, translocally, and transhistorically gathered by the Spirit and governed by Christ the Eternal Law - maps nicely to Barth's account of the Church as the people liberated at the intersection of autonomy, heteronomy, and theonomy. As Woodard-Lehman observes in discussing Barth's account of revelation, "Theonomy in itself is inert. Apart from its immanent heteronomous correlates, God's Word would be mute. God's command would be silent."[590] On this Hooker and Barth agree: it is proper for theology to emphasize the ecclesial practices by which the Word is made visible. for without such visibility, "God's Word would be mute."[591]

Webster expresses concern that those who emphasize ecclesial practices give insufficient attention to first principles about God, creation, and to Scripture. The Hookerian account, however, is derived from first principles, beginning with the

---

586. *Laws*.V.49.2; 2:203.15-25.
587. *Laws*.24.1; 2:111.24-27.
588. *Laws*.I.15.2; 1:131.11
589. Shuger, ""Societie Supernaturall"," 320.
590. Woodard-Lehman, "Freedom and Authority," 187.
591. Hooker and Barth differ, of course, in the priority they assign sacramental practice.

doctrine of the perfection of God, as Webster commends, and describing creation, as Aquinas did, in terms of the eternal law. Hooker defends Scripture reading and proclamation as essential ecclesial practices. Scripture is necessarily a primary focus of the Hookerian account because the written Word is our most reliable testimony to the incarnate Word. Immersion in Scripture generates the iterative encounters with Jesus Christ by which the disciple develops the shared sociality of a personal relationship through which Christ's dispositions are revealed. Webster's criticism on this count is unfounded. A Hookerian emphasis on ecclesial practices presupposes that disciples are bathed daily in Scripture.

Christopher Insole's Wittgensteinian Critique

In a critique of Hauerwas,[592] Christopher Insole raises similar concerns about the reluctance of ecclesial ethicists to ground their critique of liberalism in theological first principles. Like Webster, he concludes that their account of the Church is excessively immanentist, constructivist, and suffering from the very Enlightenment epistemology that it is their aim to critique. For Insole, those who emphasize practices in speaking of truth (and, therefore, virtue) are vulnerable to the criticism that they misappropriate Wittgenstein's understanding of practices. In order to 'bury skepticism' they claim that truth is accessible to us through the observation of a community's practices. Insole offers a challenge to the ecclesial ethicists centered on two common interpretations of Wittgenstein's use of the word 'practice.' If, by practices, one refers to replicable processes that are communicable, then Insole has no concern, for such an understanding is what Wittgenstein had in mind. However, if, by practices, one refers to the activities of an actual community, and claims that the beliefs of that community are constituted by their practices, then one succumbs to the folly of the empiricists whom one seeks to correct. Meaning is not constituted by our practices, but rather is manifested in them. We can observe what a community

---

592. Christopher Insole, "The Truth Behind Practices: Wittgenstein, Robinson Crusoe and Ecclesiology," *Studies in Christian Ethics* 20.3, (2007): 364-382.

believes by attending to their practices, but the practices themselves do not constitute meaning immanently. Beliefs are prior to practices.[593]

Moreover, we must always mind the gap between truth and beliefs that arises from our finitude, and thus not identify truth with practices. To claim an identity of a community's practices with truth is to claim an identity of a particular community's beliefs with truth, which is to presuppose privileged access of that community to truth which is inaccessible to those outside the community. That means that practices are therefore inherently incommunicable. An account of virtue based on knowledge of God that is inherently incommunicable results in an account of the Church that is constructivist and sectarian. Accordingly, Insole sees in the work of Stanley Hauerwas (in particular) an emphasis on practices that is "sceptically-driven, constructivist and empiricist"[594] to the extent that Hauerwas' emphases on practices are received as an implicit claim that the Church's practices constitute Christian truth and community.

Insole's philosophical critique is especially relevant because he gestures plausibly toward a cause of divisions within the Church. He helpfully reminds us that our speech about ecclesial practices attends carefully to the criterion of communicability across the boundaries of actual communities or else it risks contributing to our fragmentation. I am in full sympathy with Insole's concerns, but I think some nuance is needed. I also think he misreads Hauerwas. Finally, the Hookerian account satisfies his concerns.

These conclusions are best seen when we substitute Jeffrey Stout's language of 'commitments' in lieu of Insole's word, 'beliefs.' Following Robert Brandom, Stout differentiates between doxastic or cognitive commitments and practical commitments. "Cognitive commitments are commitments to a claim or a judgment, whereas practical commitments are commitments to act."[595] "Ought-to-do

---

593. Ibid., 373-374.
594. Ibid., 377.
595. Jeffrey Stout, *Democracy and Tradition (New Forum Books)* (Princeton University Press, 2005-07-05), 211.

judgments… make explicit a commitment to the material soundness of a practical inference."[596] I take Stout's cognitive commitments to be the subject matter of the virtue of *episteme*, and practical commitments to be the subject matter of the virtue of *phronesis*. With these substitutions, I agree with Insole that the cognitive commitments of a community are not constituted by its practices. Both cognitive and practical commitments are prior to practices. Practices instead *manifest* both kinds of commitments. So far, so good. The Hookerian account satisfies Insole's concern.

But the preceding account of practices shows that, importantly, practices do not *merely* manifest our commitments. By observing our actions, others can and do make inferences about the cognitive and practical commitments that motivate our actions.[597] We have seen that successive encounters with others lead us to create inferentially our own cognitive commitments regarding the dispositions of those we encounter, and our own practical commitments regarding those dispositions we will or will not imitate.[598] As we participate in practices, certain persons are recognized as entitled to "discursive authority and responsibility" which lead us to recognize their commitments as authoritative for ourselves.[599] The Hookerian account names these authorities *exemplars* and names Jesus as the supreme exemplar. So practices don't constitute commitments, but practices do reveal both cognitive and practical commitments, and, because ecclesial practices are social practices, the commitments our practices manifest, in turn, generate new cognitive and practical commitments within our social circles. Commitments are prior to practices, but practices dialectically shape both cognitive and practical commitments and thereby generate the unity and diversity that mediates the mind of Christ. *Lex credendi, lex orandi, lex vivendi*.

Insole also warns against identifying a concrete community's practices with truth. Following Hooker's ontology, I understand Insole's reference to the concept, truth, to

---

596. Ibid., 210.
597. Ibid.
598. See "Mimesis" on page 187.
599. Ibid.

be about fulfillment of a thing's *telos*. Truth is a thing's proper becoming. Cognitive commitments are commitments to claims about a thing's proper becoming or judgments about whether certain actions manifest a thing's proper becoming. When Insole cautions us not to identify an actual community's practices with truth, I do not take him to be expressing an epistemological skepticism; that is, I do not take him to be insisting that a fundamental reality stands beyond ordinary experience. Rather, I take him to be reminding us of the probablistic error inherent in our reasoning as a consequence of both creaturely finitude and sin. The Hookerian account agrees. "For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face" (1 Cor 13:12). But Insole presses further. On his account, such an identification signals the assumption of privileged access to meaning by that concrete community, renders its practices inherently incommunicable and thus unintelligible to those outside that community, and therefore renders its claims about them "constructivist and sectarian."[600]

Insole's warning that ecclesial ethicists' focus on practices can become sectarian is worth probing. Insole judges claims and judgments as incommunicable if and only if one cannot justify them across the boundaries of concrete communities. The problem is the claim of privileged access - the appeal to an authority whose credibility cannot be accessed by those outside the community. For example, Insole sees Hauerwasian emphasis on practices as constructivist and sectarian to the extent that Hauerwas claims that Christian practices should diverge from the world's practices because Christians have privileged access to the source of all truth. My interest here is in Insole's implication that a claim of unique access to authority necessarily leads to sectarianism. That's important because the Hookerian account, like Hauerwas *et al*, makes such a claim. As we saw in chapter four, there are those whose participation in Christ is merely ontological - the participation of an effect in its cause, and there are those who recognize they are addressed by Christ and respond with cognitive and practical commitments that reflect their recognition of him as Lord.[601] Is the

---

600. Insole, "The Truth Behind Practices," 376-378.
601. See "Communion with Christ" on page 146.

Hookerian account sectarian?

Wittgenstein himself, upon whom Insole bases his critique, seems to suggest that there are certain claims for which linguistic communities require no justification and for which they take no challenge seriously. John Bowlin reminds us of Wittgenstein's left foot:

> 360. I know that this is my foot. I could not accept any experience as proof to the contrary. - That may be an exclamation; but what follows from it? At least that I shall act with a certainty that knows no doubt, in accordance with my belief.[602]

There are certain claims that are communicable simply because they belong to the set of "judgments about the goodness of certain ends and about the truth of certain propositions" that "mark the outer boundary of rational speech and human conduct."[603] They require no justification because they "specify... and generate our most basic linguistic practices."[604] Bowlin explains:

> If language cannot be used without accepting certain judgements on authority, judgements that give our concepts substance, then we can assert no principle of credibility that escapes this dependence upon trust. At best, such a principle could do no more than point out that as language-using creatures we must take certain judgements for true (*On Certainty*, §§191, 205-6). Nature requires no less.[605]

"God has taught me that this is my left foot."[606] Certain actions that need no justification ensue from God's authoritative teaching that this is my left foot. I will walk with a certainty that this is my left foot. "God has taught me that Christ is Creator, Sustainer, and Reconciler of the world." Certain actions that need no justification ensue from God's authoritative teaching that Jesus is Lord and Redeemer. From their moment of doxastic causality, "Christians can rightly claim that to bear the

---

602. Ludwig. Wittgenstein, *On Certainty / Uber Gewissheit*, trans. G.E.M. Anscombe and Denis Paul Wittgenstein (Basil Blackwell, 1969). in John R. Bowlin, "Nature's Grace: Aquinas and Wittgenstein on Natural Law and Moral Knowledge," in *Grammar and Grace: Reformulations of Aquinas and Wittgenstein,* ed. Jeffrey Stout and Robert MacSwain, (London: SCM Press, 2004), 165.

603. Ibid., 164.

604. Ibid.

605. Ibid., 167.

606. Ibid.

cross is not a confession peculiar to them; rather their lives reveal the "grain of the universe."[607] The Hookerian account, which claims that all created things encounter and are governed by the eternal law that is the Word, agrees that the most fundamental Christian commitment is that when we follow Jesus Christ, we align ourselves with the grain of the universe. That cognitive claim generates Christian linguistic practice.

But is it a sectarian claim? I think not. The Hookerian account gives a positive account of pagan virtue precisely because it does not claim that the Church has *privileged* access to Christ. All created things encounter Christ's universal address. Human faculties remain apt in spite of the Fall, "and a will thereby framable to good things."[608] The distinction between Church and world is not that of *ontological* access but of *noetic* access. Those whose noetic access to Christ's universal address empower them to recognize Christ as Lord are differently accountable, for their noetic access communicates Christ's command that they live in such a way that they proclaim Christ's Lordship in the world. All encounter Christ's authoritative Word, but some are sent with trumpets as its heralds. It is not a matter of ontological but noetic access. It is not a matter of Church and world as two distinctive linguistic communities. It is a matter of Israel's vocation to be a herald of the world Christ's Word re-creates (John 20:21-22; Cf. Gen. 2:7).

Perhaps the distinction between ontological and noetic access is the key to understanding Hauerwas' refrain that the task of the Church is to be the Church. I take that refrain to signal Hauerwas' premise that, with his incarnation, Christ has ushered in a new humanity. Christ has redeemed the world, and that changes all things. In his humiliation and exaltation, the risen Christ proclaims a new covenant, and the Spirit summons all humans into Christ's new covenantal community whose members the Spirit equips with an enflamed pentecostal tongue so that the body of

---

607. Hauerwas, *With the Grain of the Universe*, 224.
608. *Dublin* 2; 4:103.19-21.

Christ proclaims the Word within and across time. Certain cognitive and practical commitments are communicable simply because cross and resurrection mark the outer boundaries of rational speech within the world Christ has redeemed. The task of the Church is to manifest the commitments proper to this re-created and redeemed world.

Stout's distinction between cognitive and practical commitments help to clarify why it is difficult to sustain charges of sectarianism when applied to ecclesial ethicists like Hauerwas (and the current Hookerian account). Just as the Hookerian account developed thus far emphasizes the alterity of God, Hauerwas, with his Barthian Christology, maintains the conceptual gap between the Word and human commitments that denote it. As Webster complains, those who emphasize practices devote relatively little time to describing fundamental cognitive commitments at all. Their focus is on the practical inferences and commitments that logically follow such cognitive claims. But Hauerwas does not, as Insole worries, identify truth with the practices of an actual community. Rather, he dialectically engages others within the Church regarding what its ought-to-do judgments and *practical* commitments ought to be *given* the cognitive commitments that generate its most basic linguistic practices.

This is how I understand Hauerwas and Wells, who, in their *Christian Ethics,* propose constructively that the Eucharist is "a corporate practice for discerning the good."[609] They do not propose a new foundationalism. Rather, Hauerwas and Wells invite the Church to reflect dialectically on what our concrete practical commitments should be given the cognitive commitments that generate the most basic linguistic practice of the Church - the Eucharist. They point the Church, in other words, to the virtue of *phronesis*. Ethical reasoning from principles mined from deconstruction of and reflection upon the Eucharist and other ecclesial practices is similar to ethical reasoning from principles mined from Scripture: such premises ought not be construed as self-authenticating, perspicuous, or objective. Ecclesial practices

---

609. Hauerwas and Wells, *Christian Ethics,* 9.

themselves are not a foundation; only Christ, who tutors us in our particularity, is.

Chapter Summary

So, thus far: Hooker defends ecclesial practices on the grounds that they are the means of grace by which Christ's Spirit sanctifies us. He derives an account of such practices grounded in first principles, beginning with reflection on the Trinity. Humans participate in Christ not through an innate capacity to know God through intellection of transcendentals, but through the personal relationship with Christ that the Spirit creates in the heart of the individual. Through sacramental practices, Christ's history becomes our history, we discover ourselves addressed by him in our narrative location, and we discover ourselves transformed by his action upon us. This transformation caused by the Spirit renders possible a personal relation in which disciples are mentored by Christ himself, enabled to see him as the ultimate exemplar.

By steps and degrees, disciples learn to take the right things for granted, and, imitating him, learn to improvise in their ethical actions so that they carry on in the same way as Christ and also in the same way as citizens of the eschatological New Jerusalem. The Spirit causes us to recognize that we are addressed by Christ the Reconciler, actualizes our personal relationship with him, leads us to respond justifiably to him as Lord, and ultimately generates the right 'thick concepts' that are productive of virtue.

- Chapter 6 -
Conclusion

HOOKER'S ADDRESS

Hooker, the ecclesial ethicist

When one reads Richard Hooker as an ecclesial ethicist, an unexpectedly *liberal* impression surfaces. But this liberality is more congenial to Edmund Burke than to Thomas Paine,[610] and addresses a stunning rebuke to Enlightenment liberals who sit on both sides of the aisle in contemporary Western society. When we penetrate the fog surrounding Hooker's reputation, we discover his humanist commitment to a world governed by a natural law that is contingently given and at best probabilistically known. We discover he derives from both theological anthropology and the doctrine of election a strong sense of human equality under God, and describes the Church as the mystical visible society in which the elite and common are equals in their fellowship with God. We discover his challenge to those who fail to appreciate the good already embodied in their inherited practices and social structures. And we discover his deep skepticism of ethical reasoning which justifies either the sanctification or repeal of those practices and structures on the basis of appeals to timeless absolutes. As the fog dissipates, we see that Hooker's famous three-legged stool of Scripture, reason, and tradition is not what we thought, and neither contemporary "liberal accommodationism" nor "postliberal traditionalism"[611] can claim Hooker as an apostle of their ideologies.

---

610. Burke echoes Hooker to the extent that he sees received institutions as contingently given signs and tokens of the good, or, as Burke put it, as "prescriptive." Yuval Levin distinguishes Burke's and Paine's liberalism in his *The Great Debate: Edmund Burke, Thomas Paine, and the Birth of Right and Left*. Burke's "conservative liberalism" sought to assure liberality through "the gradual accumulation of practices and institutions of freedom and order," whereas Paine justified violence (e.g., the French Revolution) if necessary to re-set society to an ordering revealed through reflection on our natural origins. Yuval Levin, *The Great Debate: Edmund Burke, Thomas Paine, and the Birth of Right and Left*, Kindle ed. (Basic Books, 2013-12-03).

611. Miroslav Volf, "When Gospel and Culture Intersect: Notes on the Nature of Christian Difference," in *Pentecostalism in Context: Essays in Honor of William W. Menzies*, ed. Wonsuk Ma and Robert P. Menzies, (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 233.

That conclusion signals the new direction to which I turn in this final chapter. I have shown in the preceding chapters that Hooker is fruitfully read as an ecclesial ethicist. But the hope of this study has not been merely to answer the question, "who is Richard Hooker?" Rather, my ultimate destination has been to answer the question, "who is Richard Hooker *for us*? In particular, what does he teach us about how the mind of Christ is formed in community? I have tried to read Hooker bifocally - through the lens of *his* context, but always with a second context in focus - that of the particular contemporary questions we seek to answer.[612] So far, the emphasis has been on his context in order to listen to what he said and meant. In this chapter, however, I'd like to shift into a different tone and focus in order to gesture toward how the Hookerian account can fruitfully inform our contemporary discourse.

We've now appropriated Hooker, and he sits comfortably at the table with us, recognizable as an ecclesial ethicist. Overhearing our discourse which is dominated by deontological claims, he leans toward us, reminding us that the eternal law cannot be fulfilled unless we engage things as they actually are in their particularity. In this chapter, I will respond to his address by performing what he bids us to do - to shift our focus from the general to the particular. At this point, it is right and proper to attend to that second focus and reflect upon who Hooker is for the parish, for our ethical discourse, and for our hopes for a global communion. If we are listening to Hooker, that will necessarily entail locating questions in their narrative situation, which I will achieve through the methods of a thought experiment and two case studies in ecclesiology. Before making that focal shift, however, I will first recapitulate what we've learned so far.

How the mind of Christ is formed in community

This study began with a complex thesis, and in the preceding chapters I have sought to open up methodically Hooker's argument that Christ acts on his church through a complex interaction of community and practices to generate the identity,

---

612. Rorty, "The Historiography of Philosophy: Four Genres," 247.

diversity, and virtue of his body.

In chapter one, I suggested that Hooker may be helpful to our contemporary discourse because he, like us, lived in an context in which the most divisive questions turned on the underlying question of how we know what we know. Like ours, the Elizabethan epistemological answers to that underlying question were in a state of flux. I suggested there are important resonances between his defense of Elizabethan liturgical practices and the emphases of contemporary ecclesial ethicists. I proposed that, by examining these resonances and reading Hooker as an ecclesial ethicist, we can learn much about how the mind of Christ is formed in communities.

In chapter two, I uncovered Hooker's rhetorical strategy, given his aim of defending the Elizabethan Settlement against an array of interlocutors which included Ramist realists claiming objective access to the good through privileged illumination by the Holy Spirit. I showed that Hooker defended ecclesial and civil laws by demonstrating their derivation from the eternal law, and that Hooker described an anthropology which limits human access to the good to that which is possible given an empiricist, rather than rationalist, psychology. Reflection on this psychology led me to suggest that, for Hooker, all human knowing is derived from the phenomological, and therefore, apart from divine revelation, the good is at best probablistically and contingently known.

Chapter three revealed that Hooker's treatise was a particularly fitting unmasking of English presbyterian ideology and a compelling refutation of Ramist realism as an ethical framework. Perhaps most importantly, I argued that ethical appeals to timeless absolutes are problematic given the doctrine of election. This leads to Hooker's 'special equity' rule of ethical discernment: generalizations of the natural law inherently leave out information that must be considered if one is to conform to the demands of the eternal law in a particular situation.

In chapter four, I built upon the ontological and anthropological account, examining Hooker's account of our participation in Christ. Given Hookerian

emphasis on the alterity of God and our empiricist psychology, participation is best described as fellowship. The key move was a non-substantialist description of the real presence using the grammar of *personhood* borrowed from Wilfrid Sellars. By distinguishing between that which is known in the spaces of causes and reasons, I argued that the Spirit establishes a personal knowing of Jesus in the logical space of reasons that leads ultimately to the personal relationship with Jesus that is true fellowship.

In chapter five, I built upon this description of the personal fellowship the Spirit creates by demonstrating how ecclesial practices provide the context of our address and response to Jesus Christ which constitutes our personal knowing of him. Through sacramental practices, Christ's history becomes our history, we discover ourselves addressed by him in our narrative location, and we discover ourselves transformed by his action upon us. We recognize him as our supreme exemplar. This, in turn, provides the ground of mimetic virtue. Christ himself tutors his church, teaching us to imitate his dispositions, to take the right things for granted, and to pursue the good for the good's sake.

We have seen that the content of the mind of Christ - the '*what* is known?' question - consists of both objective and subjective knowledge. *All* humans encounter Christ in our narrative situatedness as Creator and Governor through our encounter with the enfleshed Son, Jesus Christ, within the created order, and *some* recognize Christ as Reconciler. The objective content of the knowledge revealed in the encounter with Christ is not a set of propositions about natural law but is Jesus Christ himself, and this knowledge is first and foremost of a personal and life-changing historical relation to Jesus Christ as Creator and Reconciler, a personal relation through which all are summoned to a new common life in Jesus Christ, sharing in the vocation of Israel to be a light to all the nations.

We have seen as well that the mind of Christ that is formed in community does not consist merely of objective knowledge about Christ, but consists of justifying and

sanctifying dispositions shared by the community. Formation is not an event but a lifelong process. The description of the process by which such formation happens turns out to be complex. The *who*, for example, is part of the *how*: the community is the one formed and is also a means by which the Spirit forms. Conversely, the *how* is part of the *who*: we recognize the community being formed by observation of persons and groups who perform practices by which they are simultaneously set apart and transformed. This transformation caused by the Spirit renders possible a personal relation in which disciples are mentored by Christ himself, having been enpowered to see him as the ultimate exemplar. By steps and degrees, disciples learn to take the right things for granted, and, imitating him, learn to improvise in their ethical actions so that they carry on in the same way as Christ. Christ tutors his Church himself so that their actions announce the eschatological reality of the New Jerusalem.

To suggest that the matter of virtue is complex is to engage in controversy, however. Many are quick to insist that the matter is simple.[613] Some suggest that virtue

---

613. Virtue is not complex for those who identify virtue as obedience to perspicuous divine commands and who deny the possibility of a eudaemonistic ethics. I refer here to those whom Herdt describes as holding a hyper-Augustinian view, an approach to ethics arising from "a demand for a kind of freedom and thus a kind of disinterestedness that Augustine himself would not have found intelligible" (105). Herdt traces this view to late medieval voluntarism, noting that its demand for "an utter break with eudaimonism" (105) displaced the desire to participate in the rationality of God, replacing it with the quest for the selfless love of God manifested by *a pure obedience* utterly stripped of "intrinsic meaning for the agent" (106). *Obedience*, not participation, is key, evidence of "a free but finite will bending to a free and infinite will" (106). Herdt, *Putting on Virtue*. But if one maintains that it is not possible for humans to participate in God's rationality because of our finitude, then our *telos* will likely be conceived in terms of union with God. Such union is obedience, where obedience denotes compliance with universal rules (obedience is not the cause but the form or mark of such union). Sin is a great threat to the community because our relation to God is described in voluntaristic terms. The community's status before God may be described as contingent upon conformance to axioms about divinely mandated behaviors. Participation in Christ, if at all possible, tends to be described much more in Stoic language about suffering because participation in God's rationality is impossible philosophically. In my view, Ephraim Radner presupposes this identification of virtue with deontological obedience in his recent *Brutal Unity*. Ephraim Radner, *A Brutal Unity: The Spiritual Politics of the Christian Church* (Baylor University Press, 2012-10-15). In contrast with the hyper-Augustinian view, the Hookerian account embraces the irony motif of Hauerwas and Wells. Irony is, for Wells, a "genre of eschatology." It is the "contrast between how things appear and how they are...." "An eschatological perspective is intensely ironic. It truly transforms fate into destiny." Wells is critical of "Christian realists" who describe faithfulness in terms of adapting to the 'givens' that "prevail in the contemporary world," such that the ethical task is to "adjudicat[e] between competing 'givens.' Wells contrasts this with an ethics that sees "the only 'given' is the Church's narrative: all else is potentially 'gift.'"Wells, "How the Church Performs Jesus' Story," 174, 212. Rather than describing suffering in the grammar of *ironic* participation in the superabundance of God, those whom Herdt describes as hyper-

is simply a matter of doing God's will, and doing God's will is simply a matter of obeying God's law, which is itself perspicuously identifiable in either Scripture, dogma, or the tenets of secular humanism. Some assume virtue to be identical to obedience to universal axioms mined from tradition, from Scripture, or via cool, detached Enlightenment 'reason.' Or, as Luther's harsh criticisms of Aristotle, Aquinas, and Erasmus evince, a focus on virtue often provokes anxieties about Pelagianism.[614] To suggest that the formation of the mind of Christ in community is more complex is therefore to engage in controversy.

Hooker's address to us

The Hookerian account unsettles us because it takes seriously the claim that, "The Church's one foundation is Jesus Christ our Lord."[615] Taking seriously such a claim as an ethical proposition challenges the ideologies with which we seek to obtain or maintain power. Hooker redirects our attention to a particular kind of liberality - the kind that blossoms only in the soil of freedom that just is governance by Christ, *the eternal law*.

Hooker addresses liberal accommodationism regarding the authority of reason in justifying its claims. Reason is not a cool, detached ratiocination, capable of putting the universe under its microscope. Rather, reason connotes participation in the rationality of God which, for human agents, means being ruled by the eternal law expressed in creation which is comprehended exclusively via the light of reason. Whether encountered in the form of divine or natural law, the eternal law, which is Christ himself, is always *subject*, acting upon all created beings, drawing them toward

---

Augustinian describe suffering in terms of the acceptance of fate that constitutes union with God, rather than participation in God.

614. For treatment of Luther's criticisms of Aristotle, Aquinas, and Erasmus, see Steven Ozment, *The Age of Reform 1250-1550: An Intellectual and Religious History of Late Medieval and Reformation Europe*, ed.:427 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1980); Janz, *Luther and Late Medieval Thomism: A Study in Theological Anthropology*; Herdt, *Putting on Virtue*. Jennifer Herdt traces what she calls the hyper-Augustinian concerns about an emphasis on virtue and its vulnerability to Pelagianism.

615. "The Church's One Foundation" (No 545) in *The United Methodist Hymnal* (Nashville, TN: United Methodist Publishing House, 1989.)

fulfillment of their *telos*. For Hooker, there is simply no such thing as a human agent who is liberated by reason, capable of distance from her objects of study, and flourishing in self-rule.

Reason, for Hooker, *always entails rule by the eternal law* which is Christ himself. So when Hooker speaks of the authority of reason in ethical discernment, he never denotes a capacity for moral judgment severable from the person of Jesus Christ.[616] Hooker would object today to ethical proposals justified by appeals to the authority of reason but which contradict the dispositions of Jesus Christ.[617] Such proposals, Hooker would tell us, are, by definition, *irrational*.

Similarly, Hooker addresses both postliberal traditionalism and contemporary biblicism[618] regarding how we know what we know. Human reason connotes participation in the rationality of God, but that participation is *fellowship* created by

---

616. Hooker would therefore heartily agree with John Howard Yoder's address to liberal accommodationism as expressed in his *Authentic Transformation: A New Vision of Christ and Culture*. Yoder, responding to the 20th century phenomenon of appeals to the Holy Spirit in such a way that the Spirit is merely the religious garb in which we dress our cool, detached ratiocination, reminded H. Richard Niebuhr that the Holy Spirit is never severable from the person of Jesus Christ: "[The] intention of the post-Nicene doctrine of the Trinity was precisely not that through Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, differing revelations come to us. The entire point of the debate around the nature of the Trinity was the concern of the Church to say just the opposite; namely, that in the Incarnation and in the continuing life of the Church under the Spirit there is but one God." John Howard Yoder, Glen Stassen, and D.M. Yeager, *Authentic Transformation: A New Vision of Christ and Culture*, ed. Glen Stassen (Abingdon Press, 1995-06), 62.

617. E.g., proposals involving eugenics. In a message posted to his Twitter account on August 20, 2014, atheist Richard Dawkins made the following proposal: "I think abortion is right if the woman wants an abortion. Down syndrome is one very good, and extremely common reason, to want it." He went on to propose that aborting children diagnosed with Down's syndrome manifests the good. I imagine Hooker would be appalled by the proposition, and observe that, by definition, such reasoning is *irrational* because reason can not justify such a proposal without contradicting Christ. Christ reveals the divine disposition to create, and not, destroy life, and also that the divine love is most abundantly found enveloping those marginalized by human societies. The Hookerian point is that to be rational, a proposal cannot contradict Christ's dispositions. Richard Dawkins, Twitter post, August 20, 2014 (3:55 p.m.), accessed September 5, 2014, http://twitter.com/richarddawkins.

618. Biblicism is Barth's word, and I invoke Barth's distinction here between biblical and biblicist. Barth, *CD*, 4/1 §60.1.368. For an example of postliberal traditionalism, see Philip Turner's appeal to Hooker in opposing The Episcopal Church's decision to ordain Anglicanism's first openly gay bishop. Philip Turner, "Episcopal Authority Within a Communion of Churches," in *The Fate of Communion: The Agony of Anglicanism and the Future of a Global Church,* ed. Ephraim Radner and Philip Turner, (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2006), Section 'Authority and the Three-Legged Stool or, Perhaps Better, the Four-Legged Bench'. Contemporary biblicism denotes the geneaological descendents or Ramist Realism, as described in chapter three. In my view, Albert Mohler, R.C. Sproul, and J.I. Packer exemplify contemporary biblicism in this sense.

Christ eternally in the covenant of grace and recognized and received by the human agent as a result of the Spirit's irruption into time. Participation as fellowship means that Christ, the eternal law, is always *wholly other* even when 'as one' with those who participate in him. And that means we have no innate access to the divine Mind, no way of bypassing the risk of human subjectivity, no way of hearing the divine Word except as it is communicated through and to an imperfect, corruptible, natural form. And therefore there is no point at which we can avoid probabilistic error, no ahistorical absolute to which we can refer that will relieve us of responsibility for our *historical* hearing, no foundation upon which we can rest that will deliver us from our finite need for this fellowship through which Jesus himself tutors us. Our traditions can never be more than our communal *approximations* of the good. The eternal law is expressed *in* them, but is *always other* than them.

Our endoxa, therefore, are signs and tokens of the good, like rocks marking the location of a well. The rocks have enormous weight, but they can never say more to each generation than "this is where we've discovered the fountain of life in the past." To live - to know the good, each generation actually has to go past the rock and enter the well to drink themselves from the living water. Precisely because Christ re-creates and blesses anew as he justifies in each and every encounter, ethical appeals to timeless absolutes must not shut down the conversation as we seek to name the coordinates of the good. As Rowan Williams put it:

> Hooker's world is one shaped by a maker's intention; and that intention is unmistakeably the diffusion of bliss in a world of history and difference, a world therefore of argument and interpretation, even, we could say, of that intellectual charity which takes trouble with the recalcitrant stranger in order to make him or her a partner in discourse.[619]

CHARACTER, NOT DECISIONS

Recognition of the dynamic nature of reality enables us to complete the metaphor preliminarily sketched in the introduction of this study (see "The Christian life

---

619. Williams, "Forward," xxv-xxvi.

according to Richard Hooker: a preliminary sketch" on page 80). There I described Hooker's view of human life using the metaphor of a journey to the summit of the highest mountain, where union with Christ at the summit is our destiny. Ethics have to do with how to move toward the summit safely from wherever we find ourselves on the mountain. Ethical questions have to do with our next steps toward the summit. I anticipated there (chapter two) the conclusion that is now in full view. The right path to the summit is inherently local, contingently known, and particular to our coordinates at our moment in time. Now we understand that this is due to an ontological problem: our path to the summit can not be universally known in advance precisely because of Christ's justifying acts of re-creation (see page 115).

I asked then, "how do we find our way to the summit given the fog through which we see only dimly?" In particular, given the fog and the great distance, how do we hear and recognize Christ's voice? How do we rightly navigate? We can now answer that navigation is possible because Christ is really present to us in our practices. Christ creates a personal relationship with us through the Spirit and addresses us in our particularity. Through mimesis, Christ shapes us along our journey, equipping us and guiding us out of the brambles into which we wander, away from precipices, and through our periods of wilderness wandering. We find our way to the summit that is our destiny by improvising in response to Christ's voice which addresses us, justifying and re-creating us in each encounter by steps and degrees.

The statement that there are no universal rules upon which to ground our ethics ought not be understood as an assertion that there is nothing we can say in advance about right actions. To the contrary, there is much indeed that can be said. The first thing is simply to invoke all that has been said regarding the role of one's community in shaping its members. The community's endoxa, communicated didactically and through mimesis, provide the images of the world as we assume it to be. Hauerwas and Wells call them convictions. They "become assumptions, habits, and even reflexes through years of practiced use. It is these skills, rather than moments of rational

decision, that will frame Christian life."[620]

Endoxa can not determine in advance what our right actions must be but they do shape how we perceive the phenomena we encounter. Moreover, community norms draw attention to actions most likely to constitute a prudential response. The Christian agent is not left to invent the good from scratch. As Wells notes, "Improvisation is not about being clever or original, but about being so trained in one's tradition that one trusts that the obvious is the appropriate."[621] There are no universal rules but there are contingent, provisionally-known, and providentially-given signs and tokens by which the community has marked the coordinates of the good. Just as the apprentice plumber is not sent without thermodynamic principles and mimetic experience to guide him, so, too, the apprentice Christian is not sent without endoxa and mimetic experience to guide her.

For this reason, the focus of Christian ethics is properly on the cultivation of character. This is a controversial claim for those immersed in cultures whose canons presuppose a universal ethics, such as the United States, whose founding document begins with a claim about the "inalienable rights" of "all men."[622] As Wells and Quash note, "if one were to sum up universal ethics in one word, that word would probably be "decision."[623] Similarly, "if one were to sum up subversive ethics in one word, that word would probably be "power."[624] Finally, "if one were to sum up ecclesial ethics in one word, that would would be "character."[625] Ecclesial ethicists, like Hooker and Aquinas before them, recognize that the proper focus of Christian ethics is not on right actions or right outcomes, but on cultivating the character of the individuals who constitute the society of souls - on virtue. In short, the focus of Christian ethics should be on cooperating with the Spirit's formation of the mind of Christ in

---

620. Wells, "How the Church Performs Jesus' Story," 215.
621. Ibid., 230.
622. The American Declaration of Independence names as its first "self-evident truth" the claim that "all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights...."
623. Wells and Quash, *Introducing Christian Ethics*, 113.
624. Ibid., 114.
625. Ibid.

community.

By listening closely to Hooker as he reasoned from first principles to a defense of the ecclesial practices of the Elizabethan Church, we've seen why this is so. That conclusion does not arise from a skeptical observation that we can never agree on right actions and outcomes, though that may be so. And it does not arise merely from the epistemological conclusion that humans lack innate knowledge of the good, though I believe that is so. And it does not arise merely from the recognition that appeals to timeless absolutes too often justify our violence, though I believe that is so, also. Rather, the conclusion that the right focus of Christian ethics is on the cultivation of character arises from the recognition that our knowledge of God is determined by God's continuing act of election which itself constitutes the cosmos. We cannot exhaustively prescribe the good because reality is not fixed materially but dynamic. The right focus of Christian ethics is on character precisely because of Christ's justifying acts of re-creation. Character, in the Hookerian account, is the art of creating the good for the sake of the good. The person of high character, because of her personal relationship with Christ, knows his dispositions, desires the good she therefore recognizes in her own narrative context, and acts with 'special equity' in order to conform to the eternal law. The ecclesial ethicists are right: the focus of Christian ethics is properly on cooperating with the Spirit's formation of the mind of Christ in community.

THE VIRTUE OF PRACTICES

The focus on character leads ecclesial ethicists to an emphasis on practices. Critics have complained that ecclesial ethicists fail to ground their claims about practices in the Church's historic confessions about God and creation, that they tend to identify the Church with its social practices, that they inappropriately identify truth with the practices of a particular community, and that their logic leads to an irresponsible sectarianism. In this study, I've shown that the Hookerian account,

which similarly connects character to the Church's practices, is in fact derived from the doctrine of the Trinity and thoroughly grounded in Scripture.[626] Hooker takes care to emphasize the otherness of the Trinity and begins his argument with the extraordinary superabundance of the triune God. Moreover, I've emphasized that the Hookerian account exhibits a high pneumatology, for the Spirit generates the personal relationships with Christ that cause the common confession that constitutes the Church. I defended the Hookerian emphasis on the visible Church, for, from a practical perspective, we must assume that *all* members are elect, and that our use of categories like godly and ungodly are premature because time is not yet fulfilled. Moreover, I argued that charges of excessive immanentism and sectarianism miss the mark. The Hookerian account does not suggest that practices *constitute* the cognitive and practical commitments of a community, but rather that, in its practices, a community's commitments are manifest. By pointing to the practices of actual communities, ecclesial ethicsts are not claiming that such communities have privileged access to the truth. Rather, recognizing the role of exemplars in tutoring the Church, ecclesial ethicists point to the practices of actual communities as exemplary of what the Church's judgments and practical commitments *ought to be*, given the logic of the Church's generative linguistic commitments.

This recapitulation of what we've learned returns me to where I began this chapter. Given these things, I'd like to reflect upon who Hooker is for the parish, for our ethical discourse, and for our hopes that the Church's universal's fragments will be reconciled. I have three suggestions.

---

626. See "The eternal law" on page 45 for Hooker's derivation of the eternal law from the Trinity, "Human participation in the Trinity" on page 125 for how the Spirit generates fellowship with Christ, and "Mimetic virtue" on page 186 for the connection between our fellowship with Christ and the cultivation of virtue.

The mind of Christ in the local parish

My first suggestion pertains to parish leadership. As a parish priest, it seems to me that the Hookerian account has much to say that helps us understand how parish leaders can contribute to or impede the Church's mission. My suggestion is actually a set of practical commitments that seems warranted by the findings of this study regarding how the mind of Christ is formed in community. Before describing those commitments, however, I first need to introduce the elements of a Hookerian Christian pedagogy.

Central to Hooker's virtue ethics is the premise that virtuous actions are performed by virtuous people. Since virtuous actions follow rationally from cognitive and pragmatic commitments about objects and principles, it is important that we recall that such conclusions flow with consistency from persons comprehending in a thick way those objects and principles. In other words, such actions flow from persons with *habits of thought* corresponding to an accurate comprehension of and prudential responses within their field of encounter.

As we have seen, Hooker seems to presuppose much of Aquinas' Aristotle-inspired theory about how such practical wisdom is formed within individuals. His claim that humans begin as open books (see "The most genuine communion" on page 147), his mockery of the Ramist realists,[627] his deployment of the Aristotelian methods of phenomena, endoxon, and dialectic as well as the Aristotelian virtues of *episteme* and *phronesis* (see "Episteme and Phronesis" on page 72) led Hooker, like Aquinas, to describe the Christian life as a journey towards knowledge of God. I argue that we can fruitfully thicken the Hookerian account, therefore, by recalling briefly the pedagogical premises that, though undeveloped in his corpus, Hooker presupposed.

Aquinas describes two stages along the path to non-sacred *scientia*. In the first stage, one takes note of certain effects and inquires about their causes. Such causes

---

627. *Laws*.1.6.4; 1:76.9-20.

"are often hidden, and can only be discovered through more accessible effects."[628] Discovery of such causes involves demonstrations in which the cause and effect relationship between objects is shown. Once such causes are understood, a learner proceeds to the second stage characterized by "a sort of cognitive re-structuring, so that his belief that something is a cause itself becomes the cause of (in the sense of epistemic ground of or reason for) his belief that something else is the effect."[629] This re-structuring in our mind involves a "re-arrangement in our doxastic structure, so that the causes, which were formerly less familiar, become more familiar and better known; and the effects, formerly better known, come to be believed on the grounds of our belief in the cause."[630]

This then is a Thomist description of the path to *scientiae* in general. We master the principles of a subject matter, relying upon the "cognitive potencies which [we] have by nature," "grasp[ing] the quiddities of [objects] by [our] intellect and … reason[ing] discursively from premises to conclusions."[631] In pursuit of *scientia*, "we must submit ourselves to the training and guidance of masters within a field so that we may acquire the needed habits and realize fully our cognitive potentiality."[632]

For both Thomas and the Zagzebski theory of divine motivation I've synthesized into the Hookerian account, the practice of apprenticeship is necessary, for one seeking to attain *scientia* "must submit himself to a teacher, and accept on the teacher's authority instruction about and guidance in the acquisition of habits necessary to become adept in the craft."[633] The master to whom we submit then walks alongside us as we receive the doxastic re-structurings required and as we begin to perceive in new ways the causes and effects of our world, such that our habits of

---

628. Jenkins, *Knowledge and Faith*, Kindle location 660, Chap 1, sect 1.7, para 16.
629. Ibid., Kindle location 660, Chap 1, sect 1.7, para 17.
630. Ibid.
631. Ibid., Kindle location 757, chap. 2, sec 2.1, para 8. Hooker, as we have seen, denied that humans innately grasp the quiddities of objects. That distinction suggests that Hooker would have placed even greater priority on mentoring relationships in which a trusted master communicates endoxa.
632. Ibid., Kindle location 712, chap. 1, sec 1.8, para 3.
633. Ibid.

thought produce accurate recognition of Christian concepts and puzzles and prudential actions in response to them. As I developed in chapter five (see "Mimesis" on page 187), the path to discipleship goes through *mimesis*.

The Hookerian account clarifies that the mind of Christ is formed in community by Christ himself. Christ tutors the society the Spirit gathers by establishing personal relationships with Christ through which Christ's dispositions are revealed and inscribed in the endoxa of the community for which Christ is Lord. On the basis of the foregoing, I suggest that the pedagogy that best cooperates with the Spirit's action in creating disciples is characterized by three forms of learning. First, trusted mentors, themselves tutored by Christ, didactically instruct an inquirer in the first principles - the generative cognitive commitments of the linguistic community that is the Church. Second, mentors accompany the inquirer along the road to Emmaus, walking alongside them as their eyes are opened and they begin to develop new practical commitments - new ways of being that reflect their new recognition that the world has been redeemed by Christ. Third, mentors create opportunities for immersion experiences in which the new pilgrim walks alone in this new world she's perceived, practicing the new skills developed solo, and then reflecting upon her experience with the mentor.

These three elements of the Hookerian Christian pedagogy don't necessarily occur in the order in which I've described them. It may be the unexpected immersion in the Christian life while on a mission trip or serving food with a friend which awakens the student. Or it may be that learning the skill of knitting with Christian friends generates questions for which the first principles are the answers. But all three are necessary to an effective Christian pedagogy for children, youth, and adults. When all three are not part of the steady diet of all age groups, the Church becomes malnourished.

With this pedagogical focus in view, I can now explain my first suggestion. In my introduction (see "The fire of Sabah" on page 9), I confessed that one of the

motivations for this study was a professional curiosity about why, if sacramental practices matter as much as ecclesial ehticists claim, I observe parishes which adhere rigorously to liturgical standards but which manifest neither a clear sense of mission nor an evangelistic impulse. Attendance trends, participation metrics, and the evident lack of energy led me to describe them as moribund. I contrasted such experiences with the pentecostal fire I observed in similarly Anglican parishes in Sabah, Malaysia. I wondered why it is that we observe parishes with similar commitments to ecclesial practices but nearly opposite trajectories in terms of apparent missional effectiveness. Though there are too many variables to isolate here to justify assertions about the causes of the differences, I believe this study has uncovered some factors that may help to explain the differences.

To illustrate the set of practical commitments I wish to commend in the parish, I'd like to imagine three different ecclesial settings, all of which share the same denominational liturgical standard, and all of which are historically part of my personal experience. I recognize that such a thought experiment is unusual in a PhD dissertation (though perhaps more common in a ThD thesis). As a parish priest, it is evident to me that the Hookerian account has important implications for liturgical praxis, homiletics, biblical hermeneutics, and catechesis. It therefore impacts how ministers equip the saints in the art of ethical discernment. Since Hooker's treatise concerns particular views of these things and defends practices performed specifically in parochial settings, I would be remiss if I did not point to these implications by way of illustrative examples. By critiquing illustrative settings, my intent is to perform the phronetic discrimination that Hooker teaches us. To that end, I've summarized these illustrations in Table I.[634] I will describe these settings first and then critique them based on the Hookerian account of how the mind of Christ is formed in community.

Church A's senior minister is a master of the liturgy. He strives to be orthodox in his teaching. Orthodoxy in his case denotes teaching within the boundaries of "the

---

634. See Table I, "Illustrative examples of ministerial leadership," on page 224.

tradition" which, by his account, excludes doctrinal 'innovations' from Luther and all Protestants. Of my three examples, he emphasizes the liturgical practices which Hooker defends more than any other, rigorously following the classical Anglican spirituality consisting of weekly Eucharist, daily office, and daily devotion, and complementing these with medieval Catholic practices such as the Benediction and the Angelus. His piety reflects an understanding of the real presence as explained in terms of transubstantiation, and his sacerdotal self-understanding is that his role is to *administer* the means of grace, and, primarily, to *distribute* the grace which is objectively given in the sacramental elements. The sacrament *is* the medicine of Christ, he teaches, and his task is to dispense that salvific medicine. Preaching is subordinate to this task. He understands preaching to be a practice which complements the Eucharist, and so each week he prepares brief reflections from assigned Gospel lessons which he interprets through the lens of the Eucharist.

Church B's senior minister is a master of evangelistic preaching and she, too, strives to be orthodox in her teaching. Orthodoxy denotes for her continuity with an ongoing dramatic "hermeneutical frame of reference" that her seminary professors taught her to name the *regula fidei*.[635] Her sacramental ministry consists exclusively of baptism and Eucharist. She leads two distinctive services, one which might be called traditional, featuring organ music, and the other which might be called non-traditional to the extent that it is less formal in its style and language and incorporates a wide range of musical styles. In lieu of daily office, she reads Scripture and theological texts daily, and each morning prays extemporaneously, following loosely a skeletal structure including thanksgiving, adoration, confession, and petition. Her understanding of the real presence is closest to Hooker's, and so, through the example of her own joyful demeanor, she strives to lead the congregation to a communal yet subjective encounter with the real presence. Preaching is primary, and she understands the Eucharist to be the altar call at which her preaching aims. She preaches eighteen-

---

635. Paul M. Blowers, "The *Regula Fidei* and the Narrative Character of Early Christian Faith," *Pro Ecclesia* VI, no. 2 (1997), 202.

minute sermons from Old and New Testaments using a narrative form which seeks to help the hearer locate himself within the story.

Church C's senior minister is a gifted preacher who also strives to be orthodox in his teaching, which denotes for him an interpretive framework for Scripture which is recognizably in the genealogical line of what I've described as Ramist realism. His sacramental ministry consists strictly of private baptism when folks request it, and his congregation is not accustomed to the Eucharist, which reflects his neo- Zwinglian view that the rite is an antiquated memorial which is interesting but non-essential to creating a thriving flock. Worship is non-sacramental but vibrant, featuring a talented instrumental band, outstanding singing in which the congregation joins, and reaches its apogee in the sermon. He preaches topically, drawing topics from the news, and showing how the wisdom of Jesus and the commands of Scripture are relevant to our common life and anchor us ethically. There are no altar calls. Instead, he measures his success in terms of the numbers of folks who respond to his preaching by attending services and by flowing out into the community in missional action, feeding the poor, healing the sick, and preaching liberation to the oppressed.

We can anticipate how the Hookerian account would critique these ministerial profiles by simply recalling a primary learning of this study: that, for Hooker, there is no direct intermediary between the shepherd and his flock. Christ tutors his flock directly. And he does that through personal relationships through which Jesus addresses the disciple. All other heteronomous influences, including creeds, confessions, systematic theologies, and human mentors, serve as signs and tokens, leading the thirsty to the well. But the inquirer must drink ultimately from the living water in terms of experiencing Christ's personal address. In terms of forming the mind in Christ, the key is the cultivation of a historical personal relationship between the inquirer and Christ in which the inquirer experiences herself as addressed directly and authoritatively in her narrative situatedness. The Hookerian account views ministerial methods which cultivate such a personal relationship positively.

	Minister A	Minister B	Minister B
Hermeneutic	Orthodoxy denotes teaching within the boundaries of "the tradition" which by his account excludes doctrinal innovations from Luther and later	Orthodoxoy denotes continuity with the *regula fidei*, understood as a dramatic framework.	Derivative of Ramist realism
Sacramental practices	Classical Anglican spirituality consisting of weekly Eucharist, daily office, and daily devotion, and complementing these with medieval Catholic practices.	Limited to baptism and Eucharist.	Consists strictly of private baptism when folks request it. No Eucharist.
Real presence	Piety includes sets of micro-rituals based on transubstantiation. Grace is objectively given in the sacramental elements, and clergy task is to administer that salvific medicine.	Like Hooker's. Strives to lead the congregation to a communal yet subjective encounter with the real presence.	Neo- Zwinglian view. Rite is an antiquated memorial which is interesting but non-essential to creating a vibrant flock.
Non-sacramental practices	Limited to daily office	Skeletal structure to prayer life including thanksgiving, adoration, confession, and petition.	Missional action such as feeding the poor, healing the sick, and preaching liberation to the oppressed.
Preaching	Subordinate to Eucharist. Preaches 10-minutes reflections largely interpreting the Eucharist	Preaching is primary. Preaches 18-25 minute sermons using a narrative approach which seeks to help the hearer locate himself within the story.	Worship is non-sacramental but vibrant. Reaches its apogee in simple, "relevant" 10-minute sermons, which clarify what duty demands.

Table 1: Illustrative examples of ministerial leadership

From this, we can anticipate that the Hookerian account criticizes the hermeneutics of ministers A and C to the extent that they teach that the histories of discernment by recent and current communities are in some sense irrelevant to our knowledge of the good. As we saw in chapter three, Hooker strongly resists the notion of an ahistorical Christ who speaks to us timelessly rather than within our own history. In particular, the Hookerian account resists orthodoxies that exclude particular eras (such as everything since the Reformation) or which reduce Scripture to universal axioms (such as in Ramist realism). Hooker would likely commend Minister B, who reads Scripture in concert with the whole Church and understands scriptural reading as dialectical participation within a narrative.

Turning to the pedogical role of practices, the Hookerian account challenges both Ministers B and C, and asks further questions about Minister A's practices. The notions of private baptism and a church that does not gather in Eucharist receive harsh rebukes, for Hooker sees these as communal acts with formal significance. Baptism is a public communal act wherein the community acknowledges its faith in Christ's promise that the Spirit has caused the baptisand to experience - or that the baptisand will experience - the doxastic restructuring that signals recognition of Christ as Lord, which is to recognize Christ's authority as the supreme exemplar worthy of imitation. Similarly the Eucharist formally makes visible the mystical body of Christ. Such visibility is itself a means of grace through which the Spirit gathers the elect, for the visible body is the primary heteronomous structure through which the Word speaks. To Minister B, the Hookerian account would commend a host of additional sacramental practices which, while distinct from the two ordained sacraments themselves, similarly mediate the Word in a particularly authoritative way. Hooker himself thus defends confirmation, ordination, holy matrimony, the reconciliation of a penitent, the commemoration of the saints, and the anointing of the sick. Hooker would likely applaud Minister A's rich array of classical spiritual practices. The Benediction and Angelus might raise a Hookerian brow, but a Hooker seated at a contemporary table would listen patiently and carefully to learn more from

the minister about how those practices manifest the good. In particular, in their actual execution, how well do they communicate Christ's dispositions?

Much would depend on the ministers' accounts of the real presence. As we saw in chapter four, Hooker directly criticizes the sacramental views of both Ministers A and C. He dismisses C's view as misguided, for Christ is freely and sovereignly present in the Church's sacramental practices.[636] Yet, *pace* Minister A, the objective presence of Christ in the Eucharist is assured not by a transubstantiation of the elements but by the promises of God in the covenant of grace. For Hooker, Christ transsubstantiates *those who sup with him*. The important thing in the current example, however, is not the metaphysics that serve as our handmaiden in thinking about the real presence, but the recognition that the real presence is a *personal* and *historical* presence, an irruption of the eternal into time. The minister who understands the real presence in terms of transubstantiation is vulnerable (but not inevitably prone) to the error of reducing the real presence to materiality, as though the wafers themselves are salvific pills, and thereby pedagogically impeding the cultivation of a *personal* relationship in which the risen Christ speaks authoritatively into the life of the one who communes *with* him.

The Hookerian account would commend all three of our ministers for the non-sacramental practices that are already habitual, while urging them to learn from the practices of the other two. The important thing is that the practices be coherent responses to our experience of being addressed by Christ, and therefore that they be justifiably seen as imitative of his dispositions. Missional action, extemporaneous prayer, and formal prayer in the name of the Lord are signs and tokens of grace; they are historically coherent responses to the experience of being addressed by Christ. Hooker would urge each of the ministers to pursue a full and variegated menu of such practices.

---

636. Barth and Hooker diverge here. Barth worries that the claim that Christ is objectively present in sacramental practices "might impinge upon God's freedom and sovereignty in the bestowal of grace and salvation." In my view, Barth is rightly concerned but goes too far. Part of the genius of the Hookerian account is that it maintains God's freedom and sovereignty. Neder, *Participation in Christ*, 83.

Perhaps the most important word from Hooker to parish leaders has to do with the art of preaching. When the aim of preaching is to cooperate with the Spirit in forming the mind of Christ in the congregation - which it often is - the best methods would be those which invite the hearer to locate themselves as characters within the theodrama, and which draw hearers (so situated) into an encounter with the person of Jesus Christ such that his dispositions are given focus. This is hardly novel in terms of preaching theory,[637] but the Hookerian account provides the theological justification of such narrative and dramatic methods.

Therefore, Hooker would ask sharp questions of Minister C. The very question of whether Christ the eternal law is "relevant" would be nonsensical to Hooker, for to be human is to participate in Christ's rationality, and the question of relevance presupposes a realistic option of irrationality. Similarly, Hooker would be deeply critical of preaching that effectively presents Jesus as though he was a first century Moses dictating timeless absolutes, or that presents Jesus as an Enlightenment sage dispensing timeless wisdom which *may* be relevant to 21st century persons. The same questions, perhaps less pointedly, would be addressed to Minister A. Is preaching given sufficient time, and does the method of preaching present Jesus' multi-dimensional personhood such that his nature is revealed narratively? Or is that hard work left undone in favor of a reflection that simply re-describes - perhaps in poetic terms - the preacher's favorite theory of atonement? If preaching does not reveal Jesus' descriptions of and responses to the world he encountered and thereby reveal his cognitive and pragmatic commitments, then it offers insufficient support for the cultivation of mimetic virtue.

---

637. E.g., Eugene L. Lowry, *The Homiletical Plot, Expanded Edition: The Sermon as Narrative Art Form*, Exp Sub ed. (Westminster John Knox Press, 2000-12-01); Thomas G. Long, *The Witness of Preaching, Second Edition*, 2 ed. (Westminster John Knox Press, 2005-10-20); Fred B. Craddock, *Preaching*, Anniversary ed. (Abingdon Press, 2010-05-01). Narrative preaching which presents the dispositions of Jesus in a personal form is a core characteristic of African-American preaching.

The Mind of Christ in Ethical Discourse

My second suggestion concerns ethical reasoning about the self-ordering of the church. As Wells and Quash observe in describing the perspective of ecclesial ethicists, "it is precisely the particular information which universal ethics shuns, that makes ethics comprehensible."[638] My suggestion is that ecclesial ethicists' critique of universal claims can be fruitfully re-stated to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate justifications in our discourse about the self-ordering of the church.

Universal ethical claims are usually accompanied by ahistorical justifications, but election to life in Christ is always election to life within a narrative location, and so our ethical reasoning should always take account of our actual and historical particularities. To put this in Hookerian terms: universal axioms are always general, but in order to generalize human experience, the best a universal axiom can be is an *approximation* of the natural law. Sin and creaturely finitude mean that there will always be a gap between our generalities and the engaged way that Christ is God-with-us in our narrative situatedness. Justifications of our claims regarding the self-ordering of communities are properly historical, not ahistorical. They take account of the "circumstances, commitments, and characters of those most closely involved."[639] We can therefore restate the ecclesial ethicists' critique as follows: "Ethical appeals to timeless absolutes result in 'inadequate descriptions.' Proper ethical justifications relate Christ's dispositions, as revealed in the theodrama, to the circumstances of actual communities, and they imagine how Christ might nourish those communities here and now."

This circumscription of the range of appropriate justifications helps us to anticipate what I will show below - that irreconcilable positions concerning the self-ordering of the Church often feature inappropriate appeals to timeless absolutes on both sides of the debate. On both sides, the parties assume uncritically that proper

---

638. Wells and Quash, *Introducing Christian Ethics*, 192.
639. Ibid.

ethical reasoning entails mining universal axioms from Scripture and tradition – or other sources – in order to conquer opposition in an dispute over what 'God commands.'

But the parties ask the wrong question. Proper ethical reasoning does not merely ask "what does God command?" as in deontological reasoning, precisely because Jesus is not properly reduced to a first-century Moses issuing divine commands.[640] That's the error of the Ramist realists. Jesus is properly recognized as much more than Moses. He is the the embodiment of the triune God's decision to be eternally God-with-us; Jesus is the embodied and risen Christ who summons us to live in fellowship with him. Because we recognize God's self-determination is to be-with-us and sustain us, scriptural reasoning about the church's self-ordering asks, "what ought to be the practical commitments of our community today in order "to receive [the] superabundant gifts of God from every possible source?"[641]

The distinction I am advocating is best seen with an example. In what follows, I will consider briefly how universal and subversive ethics have debated the question of women's ordination to the episcopate within two related communities within the Anglican Communion, the Episcopal Church and the Church of England.[642] My purpose simply is to illustrate that appeals to timeless absolutes are characteristic of both universal and subversive ethical approaches. I will not attempt to offer a comprehensive description of the long and many-dimensioned debate. Fortunately, the House of Bishops of the Church of England has already done that with their *Women Bishops in the Church of England? A Report of the House of Bishops' Working Party on Women in the Episcopate*.[643]

The Church of England's debates over the consecration of women bishops

---

640. I am indebted to Sam Wells for this contrast between Jesus and Moses and the propensity of universal ethicists to confuse the two.
641. Wells, *God's Companions*, 36.
642. The Episcopal Church consecrated its first female bishop in 1989, and the Church of England approved plans to begin consecrating female bishops on July 14, 2014.
643. *Women Bishops in the Church of England? A Report of the House of Bishops' Working Party on Women in the Episcopate, ed. Michael Roffen (London: Church House Publishing, 2004).*

generally gravitated towards a small cluster of New Testament texts: 1 Corinthians 11.12-16, 14.34-38, 1 Timothy 2.11-15, Ephesians 5.21 and Galatians 3.27-28. At stake, opponents argue, is the notion of *headship*.

For example, David Lickess voiced the common claim by opponents that 21st century consecration of women bishops is prohibited scripturally, because:

> ... there are clear NT markers that women are not to have authority in the Church to exercise headship (1 Tim 2.12), & there's no record of any women doing so in the Early Church, or of one having a sacramental or episcopal ministry.[644]

Roger Beckwith similarly argued that Paul's epistles prohibit female headship in the congregation:

> According to the testimony of St Paul in First Corinthians 11 and 14 and First Timothy 2, headship in the congregation, as in the home, should be exercised by a member or members of the male sex. He declares male headship to be [a] creation ordinance, which was reinforced at the fall, and still obtains after the coming of Christ. The offices of presbyter and bishop are offices of headship, as their very titles, meaning 'senior man' and 'overseer', indicate.[645]

These two examples are characteristic of the claims of opponents of women's ordination who argue on the basis of scriptural authority. The two examples are distinct, however. The first appeal is to a golden era. Lickess, like many opponents, presupposes that the practice of "the Early Church" is normative for all subsequent ages with respect to the vocational possibilities of women. Beckwith would certainly agree, but he grounds his appeal not in apostolic practice but in eternity. For him, male headship is a primordial, indeed, pre-social absolute. The very cosmos itself presupposes male headship, and since governance of bishops entails headship, female bishops are an impossibility.

Geoffrey Kirk argues, in contrast with but towards the same objective of these conservative evangelical arguments, that it is an exegetical mistake to identify headship (*keyphale*) with authority. Instead, headship can be understood only in terms of Christ's precedence as "Head of Table:"

---

644. *Ibid., 139.*
645. Ibid., 153.

> [Christ's] headship of the Church, moreover, is related to headship within the Church and within the domestic church (the Christian family) in a way that only can be described as meta-analogical: the submission of wives to husbands (Ephesians 5:22-3) and the wearing of head-coverings by women (1 Corinthians 11.3-10ff.) are not merely expressions, but outworkings of this ultimate headship which devolves upon the Son as the offspring of the Father.[646]

Arguing that the Lord's Supper is a Passover meal, and that, because Passover is a rite in which "the [male] *paterfamilias* hands down the history of salvation to the youngest [male] present," Kirk proposes that "... the bishop who presides at [the Eucharist] does so as the image of the Father. The bishop is the bridegroom of his local church and the *paterfamilias* who heads its eucharistic table."[647] Because in ancient celebration of the Passover rite, the *paterfamilias* was male, Kirk argues that, through analogy, the head who presides at the Eucharist must be male:

> That authority in the Church ('headship') is directly related to table presidency at the Pascha of the New Israel, and that all this is related to the manner in which the paterfamilias, in home and Eucharist, is the icon of Christ (Ephesians 5:23-32) should be apparent to every unprejudiced reader.[648]

Notice that Kirk does not argue here that male headship is eternally normative for *all* human social orderings, and he does not argue that governance by a female is prohibited on the basis of apostolic practice. Rather, his argument is analogical: we know that women cannot be bishops because bishops preside at the Eucharist and women cannot preside at the Eucharist. We know this, he argues, because the Eucharist was in the moment of its institution a Passover meal, and only males could preside at the Passover meal in the first century. Since women could not preside at the Passover meal, women cannot preside at the Eucharist, and, if women cannot preside at the Eucharist, then women cannot be bishops.

Kirk's argument is derivative of Roman Catholic reasoning. Aidan Nichols, describing pontifical illuminations by Paul VI and John Paul II, similarly argues on the

---

646. Geoffrey Kirk, "Fatherhood, Headship, and Tradition," in *Consecrated Women? Women Bishops - a Catholic and Evangelical Response,* ed. Jonathan Baker, (Canterbury Press, 2013-05-08), 171. Emphasis added.
647. Ibid., 172.
648. Ibid., 172-173.

basis of "the nuptial theological symbolics"[649] that "the notion of the bishop as paternally generative bridegroom for the particular church takes on enhanced importance in the context of the celebration of the Eucharist."[650] The bishop, per Nichols, is the "sacrament of the Bridegroom" who "exercise[s} the Father's paternity through Christ in the Holy Spirit...."[651] We know that a bishop must be male, therefore, because "the sacramentality of the ministerial priest in this prior "Christoform' configuration requires the natural resemblance of his gender to Christ the bridegroom."[652]

Whereas Lickess and Beckwith appeal to putative norms of either primordial or apostolic golden eras, Kirk and Nichols combine an appeal to a golden era (the era of Jesus' earthly ministry) with a purportedly controlling analogy that similarly produces a timeless absolute of male headship.

On the opposite side of the argument, proponents seemingly take for granted the premise that the self-ordering of a Pauline apostolic community is necessarily binding upon the contemporary Church. Their rebuttal therefore does not deny that premise but rather engages, like Travers and Whitgift in the Elizabethan era, over whose exegesis correctly interprets the controlling texts. Hence, Paula Gooder, for example, argues that "the Ephesians passage [Eph. 5:23-32] is about internal domestic relationships not about Church order."[653] Similarly, the stakes in 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 are not as suggested by opponents of women's ordination: "Women are not forbidden from engaging fully in the public profession of worship but are encouraged to do so in appropriate clothing. The point seems not to be subordination of one to the other but gender differentiation."[654]

---

649. Aidan Nichols, "The Bishop as Bridegroom of His Church: A Roman Catholic Contribution," in *Consecrated Women? Women Bishops - a Catholic and Evangelical Response*, ed. Jonathan Baker, (Canterbury Press, 2013-05-08), 161.
650. Ibid., 162.
651. Ibid., 163.
652. Ibid.
653. *Women Bishops?*, 162.
654. Ibid., 163.

Similarly, Trevor Hart argues not about whether apostolic practice is normative for contemporary practice, but whether the opponents' describe apostolic practice correctly:

> In fact we know the opposite is true. In Romans 16, for example, Paul refers to women holding the offices of deacon (Phoebe in verse 1), 'fellow worker' in Paul's ministry of the gospel (Priscilla in verse 3) and, strikingly, apostle (Junia in verse 7); and in 1 Corinthians 11 itself he alludes to women praying and prophesying in church, roles which, as one writer puts it, 'made them far more prominent and equal to men than they would have been in Judaism in this period'
>
> . . . Clearly, then, Paul did not think women unsuited to roles of responsible and authoritative ministry within the church, and any interpretation of 1 Cor 14.33-35 and 1 Tim 2.11-14 must reckon fully with this fact and be consistent with it.[655]

In the foregoing, we see examples, from both sides of the debate, of justifications based on appeals to precedent, either understood to be the golden era of the apostolic generation or human origins. But universal ethicists are not alone in appealing to claims about human origins as a way of rendering their arguments unassailable. Subversive ethicists do the same. This subversive perspective pervades the 1970's debates over women's ordination that took place in the United States within the Episcopal Church. The distinction, however, is that subversive ethicists often ground their arguments not in claims about timelessly-ordained ecclesial practices but in claims about timeless *natural values*.

In the Episcopal Church debates over women's ordination to the priesthood, we see the reasoning of Enlightenment liberalism. If we reason our way back to human origins, detaching humankind from all the developments and constructed social relations that cloud our judgment, we can discover what authentic humanity is. And it turns out that authentic, pre-social humanity manifests certain values that have been lost in time and must be recovered. Notice that this is quite different than an appeal to putative norms found in the primordial stories of Genesis. Though the logic is similar, the source of authority is not Scripture, but Enlightenment conclusions about human origins. In the illustration to which I turn from The Episcopal Church's

---

655. Ibid., 164.

discourse, the timeless value requiring recovery is *equality*. The historic result of the discourse was the irregular (non-canonical) ordination of eleven women by retired bishops which was followed by crisis and schism within the The Episcopal Church.

Carter Heyward, one of the first women ordained, explained, "Whereas prayer book revision is a matter of taste, women's ordination is a matter of justice."[656] The tacit assumption underlying Heyward's description of the ordination of women in terms of *justice* is that we know what is *just* by looking at humanity in its natural, pre-historic state. Her argument exemplifies Enlightenment liberalism's presupposition that we have the capacity to peer into our pre-history to determine what is natural and thereby to identify our "natural rights."[657] When reason recognizes that humanity's pre-historic state is one of gender equality, then any deviation from gender equality can be described as a matter of justice and inalienable *rights*, and restoring justice can be construed as an urgent concern that justifies revolution, and not just reform, of the existing social ordering. Revolution is not only warranted but perhaps necessary because only power can overturn the unjust power relations entrenched by the status quo. Summarizing the rationale given for the irregular but valid ordination of eleven women to the priesthood in 1974, Pamela Darling observes that, "restoring equality between men and women as symbolized in the priesthood was a greater good than traditional church discipline."[658] The timeless value of equality justified revolutionary action:

> They discovered that they could step outside the system and survive, and the possibility of changing the system by deliberately breaking its rules became thinkable. This was a generation

656. Pamela W. Darling, *New Wine: The Story of Women Transforming Leadership and Power in the Episcopal Church*, ed. NewWine (Cowley Publications, 1994-08), 123.

657. Compare Thomas Paine. "What does Paine see when he looks past history to our natural beginnings? The very method of searching after the natural human condition in this way suggests to Paine one inescapable fact about man first and foremost: At his origin, man is an individual. And because he has no social relations to start with, he is burdened by no social distinctions and therefore is equal to all other men. Social hierarchies have no natural foundation….To imagine that we are unchanged since the beginning of time is to believe that the means of human generation and the procession of generations through time tell us nothing of great importance about human life. That is, social relations and distinctions built up over generations have no inherent authority." Levin, *The Great Debate*, 45.

658. Darling, *New Wine: The Story of Women Transforming Leadership and Power in the Episcopal Church*, 129-130.

well acquainted with the civil disobedience tactics of both the civil rights and antiwar movements, actions widely viewed as justifiable means to bring about change within an unwieldy or resistant system. When the duly constituted authorities of the institutional church, in the form of both the General Convention and subsequently their individual dioceses and bishops, refused to do what the activists believed was right, some felt justified in proceeding without authorization.[659]

As I noted above, my interest and intent is not to catalogue exhaustively the arguments of opponents and proponents of women's ordination to the episcopate. My concern is simply to illustrate that both sides often justify their positions on the basis of appeals to timeless absolutes. They offer other justifications, of course, which do not rely on such appeals.[660] To the extent that their proposals rely on appeals to timeless absolutes, however, their arguments are vulnerable to the Hookerian critique outlined in chapter three.

As we have seen, Hooker denies the indefeasibility of the judgments of all eras:

> The glory of God and the good of his Church was the thing which the apostles aimed at, and therefore ought to be the mark whereat we also level. But seeing those rites and orders may be at one time more, which at another are less available unto that purpose, what reason is there in these things to urge the state of one only age as a pattern for all to follow?[661]

We saw in chapter three that, while teaching us to place a high value on *endoxa*, Hooker also urges an allergy to generalizations based on appeals to timeless absolutes. Such generalizations fail to fulfill the natural law because they fail to follow Christ's pattern of 'special equity.' Jesus neither feeds nor judges *in general*. Rather, Christ justifies by meeting all thirsty Samaritan women and men at the well and gives us in *our particular narrative situatedness* the precise form of living water we need to live (John 4:1-42). Therefore, Hooker asks, "Are we bound while the world standeth to put nothing in practice but only that which was the very first?"[662]

We saw that, in his treatment of the Church Fathers, Hooker listens carefully to the authority of every generation, for all are part of the transtemporal discourse

---

659. Ibid., 131.
660. For example, opponents offer the *pragmatic* argument that consecration of women bishops will damage ecumenical relations with the Roman Catholic and other churches.
661. *Laws*.IV.2.3; I.278.15-21.
662. *Laws*.IV.2.3; I.278.15-21.

created by the Spirit. Hooker concludes, *"Our end ought always to be the same*, our ways and means thereunto not so."[663] Moreover, we saw that the Hookerian account's prescription is that our ethical reasoning should be informed by the superabundance of God's love as reflected in the extraordinary diversity in both nature and in the Church itself:

> A more dutiful and religious way for us were to admire the wisdom of God, which shineth in the *beautiful variety* of things, but most in the manifold and yet *harmonious dissimilitude* of those ways, whereby his Church upon earth is guided from age to age, throughout all generations of men.[664]

The Hookerian account would therefore potentially result in different conclusions about women's ordination in different generations. Stephen Sykes is probably correct in suggesting that Hooker would not have argued for women's ordination in 1595, but that the logic of his ethics left open the possibility of a future generation making that choice.[665] Hookerian ethics would place a high value on the long tradition of the male-only priesthood without seeing that self-ordering as immutably prescriptive for all generations. Consideration of historical precedent is important and interesting, but such precedent does not compel those who follow. The question of self-ordering, for Hooker, cannot merely be "what does God command?" - which presupposes comprehensive knowledge of what God contingently wills - but rather, "how do we in our generation best manifest the good, as we have come to know it, in our life with God?" With the ecclesial ethicists, the Hookerian account would engage in the debates over women's ordination with the question, ""what ought to be the practical commitments of our community today in order "to receive [the] superabundant gifts of God from every possible source?"[666]

---

663. *Laws*.IV.2.3; I.278.14.15
664. *Laws*.III.11.8; I.253.15-20. Emphasis added.
665. *Women Bishops?, 169-171*.
666. Wells, God's Companions. Wells, *God's Companions*, 36..

THE MIND OF CHRIST IN THE CHURCH UNIVERSAL

My third suggestion concerns the implications of the Hookerian account for ecumenical relations. Again, the Church of England's debates over women's ordination bring into view the possibility of restoration and reconciliation of the Church's fragments. Some opponents of women's ordination argued that:

> Ordaining women as bishops would lead the Church of England to differ from those provinces within the Anglican Communion who do not have women bishops and would further damage ecumenical relationships with those churches, such as the Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches, in which... the ordination of women is not accepted.[667]

This worry that a decision to create female bishops would affect ecumenical relations seems to have been pragmatic. Within three days of the decision, Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby wrote the Church of England's ecumenical partners with this concern in view, noting that "we are also aware that our other ecumenical partners may find this a further difficulty on the journey towards full communion."[668]

The concern that such a decision might harm ecumenical relations seemingly arises from an assumption that ethical reasoning about the self-ordering of a local church properly sorts such decisions into the categories of necessity and adiaphora. My suggestion is that the possibility of reconciliation would be heightened if contemporary leaders recognized, with Hooker, that the categories of necessity and adiaphora insufficiently describe the ethical task of ecclesial self-ordering. Questions of self-ordering are matters of action and not matters of knowledge. As such, they are the subject matter of phronesis. They concern the creation of the good for the sake of the good.[669] My suggestion is that ecumenical relations would be less fraught if leaders recognized that decisions about self-ordering are *phronetic* and not *epistemic* matters. To develop this suggestion, I will draw upon an account of an actual ecumenical breach, and then explain how the Hookerian account might inform our approach to

---

667. *Women Bishops?, 134.*
668. Justin Welby, "Archbishop Writes to Ecumenical Partners About Women Bishops," http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/5371/archbishop-writes-to-ecumenical-partners-about-women-bishops (accessed July 17, 2014).
669. See "Episteme and Phronesis" on page 72.

ecumenical relations.

In 1963, Anglican delegates gathered in Toronto for a landmark meeting known as the Third Anglican Congress. It was a time of great hope for the Anglican Communion. Kennedy reigned in Camelot, the remaining colonies of the former British Empire were well on their way to nationhood, the Second Vatican Council was in session, and the time seemed ripe to embrace a new vision for the Anglican Communion: "Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence in the Body of Christ" (MRI). MRI envisioned a future in which a radical ecclesiology would replace colonial relationships rooted in Western hegemony. As Ian Douglas notes, MRI celebrated the commitment of constituent members of the communion to "interdependence, mutual responsibility," and to relations characterized by "equality and partnership between all Anglicans."[670]

The sunny hope of 1963 constrasts starkly with the urgent call in 2004 for Anglican churches throughout the world to walk together in *synodality*.[671] The bonds of affection binding Anglican provinces into a global communion were tragically broken, and the Lambeth Commission's call was an effort to name a way forward. The fruit of their efforts, a work in ecclesiology named *The Windsor Report (TWR)*, was born amidst the shattered post-colonial dreams of mutual responsibility and interdependence celebrated at the 1963 Anglican Congress. The chairman of the Lambeth Commission, Archbishop Robin Eames, explained:

> The decision by the 74th General Convention of the Episcopal Church (USA) to give consent to the election of bishop Gene Robinson to the Diocese of New Hampshire, the authorising by a diocese of the Anglican Church of Canada of a public Rite of Blessing for same sex unions and the involvement in other provinces by bishops without the consent or approval of the incumbent bishop to perform episcopal functions have uncovered major divisions throughout the Anglican Communion. There has been talk of crisis, schism and realignment. Voices and declarations have portrayed a Communion in crisis.[672]

According to the authors of *The Windsor Report*, "crisis, schism, and realignment"

670. Ian T Douglas, "The Exigency of Times and Occasions: Power and Identity in the Anglican Communion Today," in *Beyond Colonial Anglicanism : The Anglican Communion in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Ian Douglas, T. and Pui-lan Kwok, (New York: Church Publishing, 2001), 27-28.
671. *Windsor Report 2004: Lambeth Commission on Communion (Windsor Report) (London: Anglican Communion Office, 2004), 32.*
672. Ibid., 4.

once again were the fruit of unilateral decisions by the North American churches regarding their own self-ordering. In this case, the self-ordering concerned the vocational and marital possibilities of gay persons.

The Windsor Report's authors partially explain the crisis by deploying the Reformation concepts of necessity and adiaphora. They correctly point out the concept of adiaphora was:

> ... invoked and developed by the early English Reformers, particularly in their claim that, in matters of eucharistic theology, specific interpretations (transubstantiation was particularly in mind) were not to be insisted upon as 'necessary to be believed', and that a wider range of interpretations was to be allowed.[673]

It is important to notice that the distinction between necessity and adiaphora, as Hooker was at pains to remind his interlocutors, mostly concerned matters of knowledge, the subject matter of the virtue of *episteme*. The concept, adiaphora, properly concerns the domain of cognitive commitments. I qualify this claim, however, because there is a point at which *episteme* and *phronesis* converge. In what follows, I will touch briefly on this qualification. I name this qualification in passing because, for the most part, we can ignore the qualification because questions about the self-ordering of the Church are outside of this convergence.

My qualification is to concede that there is a point at which matters of knowledge and action intersect. The distinction between matters of faith and matters of action breaks down when pressed in the soteriological direction. There are some practical actions which are universally demanded of Jesus' disciples and thus are not appropriately categorized as local, particular, and contingent. Hooker himself names ecclesial laws requiring the sacraments of baptism and Eucharist as immutable and non-contingent. As we saw in chapter four, they are so because those actions are ordained by Christ. They are 'necessary to salvation' to the extent that Christ uses them instrumentally to convey his real presence. For Hooker, they are part of the divine law prescribed in both Scripture and human law:

> Some things in such sort are allowed that they be also required as necessary unto salvation, by way of direct, immediate, and proper necessity final, so that without performance of them we

---

673. Ibid., 38.

cannot by ordinary course be saved, nor by any means excluded from life observing them. In actions of this kind our chiefest direction is from Scripture, for nature is no sufficient teacher what we should do that we may attain unto life everlasting.[674]

In other words, Christology complicates the *episteme/phronesis* distinction at a certain point. Christ's election generates a universal ethical demand requiring an act which cannot be distinguished as either a matter of faith or action. The universal ethical demand is for a personal *knowing*. The action *is* the knowing. But once we get beyond this intersection of knowing and doing that Hooker names the supernatural path in Christ, the distinction becomes more helpful. For the means by which we manifest our acceptance of our redemption, except for the special categories we've mentioned, are of a *phronetic* character. That's where the local, particular, and contingent nature of endoxa arises, and therefore where the distinction is helpful.

With that qualification, I return to my assertion that the necessity/adiaphora commitment properly pertains to cognitive commitments and not to the pragmatic commitments by which we respond to our election in Christ. As Aristotle taught, a cognitive commitment is *necessary* if it can be demonstrated that "it cannot be otherwise."[675] Adiaphora is the category of cognitive commitments - matters of knowledge - which *can* be otherwise. The English Reformers' deployment of adiaphora to describe beliefs about how Christ is really present in the Eucharist was a claim that it is impossible to demonstrate that "it cannot be otherwise" than transubstantiation theory proposes. Necessity and adiaphora properly are categories concerned with *cognitive* commitments and are unhelpful in negotiationg practical commitments.

Unfortunately, *The Windsor Report*'s authors confuse matters of knowledge and matters of action. They apply the Protestant categories of necessity and adiaphora to matters of action, also. They name Romans 14.1-15.13 and 1 Corinthians 8-10 as "the classical biblical statements [of the concept of adiaphora]:"

> There, in different though related contexts, Paul insists that such matters as food and drink (eating meat and drinking wine, or abstaining from doing so; eating meat that had been

---

674. *Laws*.II.8.3; I.187.30-188.4
675. See note 194 on page 75 for more on the distinction between *episteme* and *phronesis*.

offered to idols, or refusing to do so), are matters of private conviction over which Christians who take different positions ought not to judge one another.[676]

But, of course, these are matters of action, not knowledge. These are *practical* commitments and not cognitive commitments. They are the subject matter of the virtue of *phronesis* because "that which can be done is capable of being otherwise."[677] Indeed, Paul himself speaks of these actions in the grammar of *phronesis* - performing the good for the sake of the good. *The Windsor Report*'s authors read the 16th century concept of adiaphora into the text.

The authors apply the categories of necessity and adiaphora to matters of action in order to make the claim that there are some behaviors which scandalize and thereby threaten a community with disintegration:

> Paul is quite clear that there are several matters – obvious examples being incest (1 Corinthians 5) and lawsuits between Christians before non-Christian courts (1 Corinthians 6) – in which there is no question of saying "some Christians think this, other Christians think that, and you must learn to live with the difference". On the contrary: Paul insists that some types of behaviour are incompatible with inheriting God's coming kingdom, and must not therefore be tolerated within the Church.[678]

While the authors are correct in asserting that, for Paul, certain types of behavior are incoherent and must not be tolerated within Christian community, one need not confuse matters of knowledge and matters of action in order to circumscribe Christian behavior. Rather than inappropiately applying the epistemological concepts of necessity and adiaphora to matters of action, the Hookerian account describes the ethical behaviors mentioned - incest and lawsuits between Christians - and other sinful actions as privations of the good.

To clarify why conflating matters of knowledge (*episteme*) and matters of action (*phronesis*) is significant ecumenically, I will demonstrate briefly how Hooker maintains this distinction without sacrificing the Church's prophetic "No" to incoherent and intolerable behavior. To do that, I'll recall Hooker's description of sin.

Eschatology drives our Hookerian account of sin. If human destiny is to "proceed

---

676. Ibid.
677. See note 194 on page 75.
678. Ibid., 39.

in the knowledge of truth and grow in the exercise of virtue,"[679] then sin is a detour

along the way to that destiny.[680] Just as knowledge of the good is an act of reason,

"there was never sin committed wherein a less good was not preferred before a greater,

and that willfully."[681] Our "natural thirst for knowledge"[682] is frustrated by ignorance,

for the good we seek "hath evidence enough for itself, if reason were diligent to search

it out."[683] But communal "neglect" of the good causes "a show of that which is not,"

and we choose that which is "less good."[684] Sometimes, in our choices, we are deceived

by Satan; "sometimes the hastiness of our wills prevent[ ] the more considerate advice

of sound reason," and "sometimes the very custom of evil make[s] the heart obdurate

against whatsoever instructions to the contrary."[685] "Lewd and wicked custom" is

particularly problematic, for it "smother[s} the light of natural understanding" such

that, over time, "men will not bend their wits to examine whether things wherewith

they have been accustomed be good or evil."[686] Long entrenched evil custom within

the community, therefore, is the reason that, though "the greatest part of the law

moral being so easy for all men to know... so many thousands of men notwithstanding

have been ignorant even of principal moral duties, not imagining the breach of them

to be sin."[687] Sin, for Hooker, is willfully and irrationally choosing a lesser good.

Hooker maintains the capacity to name behaviors as unacceptable without

resorting to the binary construction of necessity and adiaphora and without confusing

knowledge with action. Sin *in a general sense* can be described in binary form in terms of

obedience/disobedience to God's desire that we act rationally and thereby participate

in the divine rationality. Sin in a *phenomenological* sense, however, cannot be described

---

679. *Laws*.I.5.3; I.73.32-74.1
680. Lake notes that "compared to the views of other protestants, Hooker's vision of sin as a species of ignorance, a sort of intellectual laziness, seemed almost benign." Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans*, 150.
681. *Laws*.I.7.7; I.80.24-29.
682. *Laws*.I.7.7; I.81.16.
683. *Laws*.I.7.6; I.80.24-29
684. *Laws*.I.7.7; I.80.5, 24-29.
685. *Laws*.I.7.7; I.81.1-2, 4-5.
686. *Laws* I.8.11; I.91.30-34.
687. *Laws*.I.8.11; I. 91.25-29.

sufficiently with a simple Ramist binary. Phenomenologically, sin, for Hooker, is always a matter of willfully preferring "a less good... before a greater."[688] Actions such as incest and lawsuits between Christians are irrational in that they diverge from the path of a Christian's and a Christian community's proper becoming. Or, to frame this using the grammar of the preceding chapter: sinful actions reflect incoherent practical commitments given the cognitive commitments that generate the most basic linguistic practice of the Church - the Eucharist. When we see the redeemed world rightly, we move rationally in thanksgiving towards the good. Sin is blindness and therefore cognitive failure for Hooker.[689]

From this phenomenological description of sin in terms of our irrational failure to perform the good for the sake of the good, we can see that it is insufficient and reductive to categorize practical actions using the epistemological categories of necessity and adiaphora. Either we accept Christ's particular Word to us in our narrative situation or not, but *a spectrum of concrete responses are possible*, ranging from the performance of the greatest good to its irrational opposite. Rather than reducing our possible responses to the necessity/adiaphora binary, it is more fruitful to describe the range of possible responses as Hooker did: eschatologically, in terms of our proper becoming. To what extent do we recognize the *fullness* of the good expressed in this practical action? To what extent does this action manifest the good's privation?

Recognition that Christian ethics is about our *phronetic* response to the grace of God helps us to see that questions about our ecclesial self-ordering are not properly framed in terms of necessity and adiaphora. They are, rather, the subject matter of *phronesis*, the virtue of creating the good for the good's sake. The goal of mimetic virtue is not the replicable *production* of events in which God's law is obeyed, but rather the *performance* of the good for its own sake, which constitutes exemplary obedience. The distinction is crucial "because action and making are different kinds of

---

688. *Laws*.I.7.7; I.80.25-26.
689. See note 124 on page 53.

things.... For while making has an end other than itself, action cannot; for good action itself is its end."[690] Like a poem or a song or the dramatic arts, the goal of phronetic action is the good itself, "and that which can be done is capable of being otherwise."[691] *"Sundry actions may be equally consonant unto the general axioms of the Scripture"*[692] precisely because of the superabundance of the good.

The authors of *The Windsor Report* claim that the Anglican crisis of 2004 arose in part because of a dispute over whether certain actions were properly categorized as necessity or adiaphora. North American churches thought "that the questions they were deciding were things upon which Christians might have legitimate difference, while large numbers of other Anglicans around the world did not regard them in this way.[693] This diagnosis also underlies the aforementioned 2014 concern that the consecration of women bishops by the Church of England will harm its ecumenical relations. But questions of whether women or gay persons can become bishops, or whether a church must have bishops at all, are questions of ecclesial self-ordering. They are matters of *phronesis*, not *episteme*. Liberated from the false dichotomy of necessity and adiaphora, charity recognizes that many ways are consonant and makes space for the other.

Ecumenical relations harden when leaders exhibit puzzlement by confusing *episteme* and *phronesis*. The possibility of reconciliation between ecumenical counterparts would be heightened if leaders recognized that decisions about self-ordering are *phronetic* and not *epistemic* matters. It is more ecumenically fruitful to do as Hooker did: to describe the range of possible self-orderings in terms of the Church's eschatological becoming. Given our eschatological orientation, to what extent do we recognize the *fullness* of the good expressed in a practical decision to order the local church in a certain way? To what extent does this action manifest the

---

690. Aristotle, *Complete Works Vol 2*, EN.1140a.24 - 1140b.12.
691. Ibid.
692. *Laws*.III.2.1; I: 207.29-208.9. Emphasis added. In context, Hooker is explaining why the Genevan discipline is not the only self-ordering a church can embrace and remain a church. "Sundry actions are equally consonant...."
693. *Windsor Report, 21.*

good's privation? And, drawing upon the discussion of women's ordination above, given the witness of our ecumenical counterparts, how ought the practical commitments of our community today evolve in order "to receive [the] superabundant gifts of God from every possible source?"[694] Is there good already in our midst that our practical commitments exclude?

The Eucharist is the Church's most basic linguistic practice. As such, the Eucharist generates certain practical commitments - certain ought-to-be judgments about our relations with other Christians and their communities. These include the practical commitments to preserve all Christian's "place at God's table," to "sit at table with one another," to "recognize the sacramental and moral discipline and order required" to maintain sacramental bread-sharing, and to "share in the practices of this special act of sharing in Christ's body...."[695] As Wells and Quash note, "this is a hierarchical and sequential series designed to sustain unity."[696] The binary grammar of necessity and adiaphora can drive us to a binary description of our unity as well: either we are in, or out, of communion with our ecumenical counterparts. But recognizing that the self-ordering of the church is phronetic action helps us also to see that some self-orderings manifest the fullness of the good more than others, but only those oriented towards the privation of the good could conceivably *necessitate* "the severing of communion."[697] "Sundry actions may be equally consonant...."[698]

Recognition that "sundry actions may be equally consonant," precisely because of the superabundance of the good, means that our unity in and with Christ is not based on, caused, or constituted by our being of one accord in matters of action. Geneva can be Geneva, Zurich can be Zurich, Rome can be Rome, and England can be England. Unison in our self-ordering is not the formal cause of unity. Rather, the reverse is true - Christian community is solely dependent upon "our shared commitment to and

---

694. Wells, *God's Companions*, 36.
695. Wells and Quash, *Introducing Christian Ethics*, 306.
696. Ibid.
697. Ibid.
698. *Laws*.III.2.1; I: 207.29-208.9

promise to be with the risen Jesus"[699] - a commitment caused by Christ's Spirit. This shared commitment is created and sustained through the personal relationship with the transcendent unity, even in tension and dissonance, that is our mutual indwelling in Christ through which the Spirit cultivates the faith, hope, and charity which makes authentic communion possible. The recognition that all ethics are phronetic is prior to and sustained by the concrete unity which cherishes God-given diversity.

Hookerian ethics therefore helps the church to imagine a robust communion ecclesiology in which diverse societies of souls, blessed with an abundance of richly variegated gifts, outlooks, and dispositions, are given the space of freedom and welcomed within a global communion which is ever striving towards "polyphonous concord[700]" in matters of faith and action, such that they coherently speak the common Pentecostal grammar which constitutes the visible mystical body of Christ through which Christ is reconciling the world. Such speech joins the symphony[701] through which the Word of God is heard and through which the love of God is manifest.

RICHARD HOOKER'S REPUTATION, REVISITED

As I noted in my introduction, Richard Hooker's reputation has evolved in the four hundred years since his death. It is a commonplace within Anglican discourse to hear Hooker's name invoked to justify proposals that seek to negotiate 'a middle way' between entrenched positions. In my experience, those present often have no idea or have long sense forgotten what those entrenched positions were, but they nod affirmatively, for everyone knows that Hooker taught the Church to seek the *via media* in order to keep our ecclesial factions under one big tent. If asked, some present could confidently explain that Hooker sought the middle way between Geneva and Rome,

---

699. Rowan Williams, "Incarnation and the Renewal of Community," in *On Christian Theology (Challenges in Contemporary Theology)*, (Wiley, 1999), 237.
700. Balthasar, *Truth is Symphonic: Aspects of Christian Pluralism*, 7-10.
701. Ibid.

and for that reason, the Anglicanism Hooker envisioned became the perfect tradition for couples seeking to compromise between twenty-first century Protestantism and Roman Catholicism.

Of course, as MacCulloch reminds us,[702] Hooker neither sought a middle way between Geneva and Rome nor suggested that seeking the middle way is the prudential way of a pilgrim Church. The myth of Hooker's middle way, of course, is a Tractarian fiction, deployed by Newman and his colleagues to justify their nineteenth century platform. The commonplace, in this case, is universally-known nonsense. My study discovered no cause to challenge the current consensus of Hooker scholars: Hooker did not aim for a middle ground between Geneva and Rome, but instead engaged most of his career in an intramural theopolitical struggle between Geneva-inspired English protestants advocating presbyterian reforms and Zurich-inspired English protestants advocating conformity with the Elizabethan Settlement. To this, I've added the proposal that Hooker's treatise seems perfectly designed as a repudiation of the Ramist realism arising at Cambridge at the time Hooker published *Laws*.

It is also a commonplace to hear Hooker's name invoked to justify practical proposals for the Church on the basis of the three pillars of Scripture, reason, and tradition. We've seen, however, that these are not standalone silos of authority from which one chooses as needed to advance one's projects. Rather, they are interrelated categories of dialectically constructed endoxa which store a community's deductions about the eternal law based on its life with Christ the Creator, Governor, and Reconciler. Because the eternal law *is* Jesus Christ, those endoxa are derived from the Word and inseverable from the Word. It is impossible that either Scripture, reason, or tradition rightly contradict Jesus Christ. Whether we appeal to Scripture, tradition, or reason, it is impossible that we avoid Christ's pressure upon us, guiding us to act as necessary to close the gap between our enshrined generalizations about the eternal law

---

702. MacCulloch, "Richard Hooker's Reputation,"

and its particular demands in the moment of our encounter with our neighbor. Therefore, contemporary "liberal accommodationism" and "postliberal traditionalism"[703] can no longer coopt Hooker to justify their ideologies. There is no avoiding the living Word with which Christ addresses us.

Which returns us to the question of Hooker's reputation. When I began this project, I noted Hooker's similarities to contemporary ecclesial ethicists and decided to use 'ecclesial ethicist' as a heuristic device with which to interrogate Hooker. Along the way, the device gave way to description: I discovered that Hooker *is* an ecclesial ethicist. During a time of great flux in his culture's premises about how we know what we know, Hooker identified serious flaws in the foundation underlying certain positions of his Elizabethan colleagues - both opponents and allies. He preserved an account of virtue evocative of Aristotle, emphasized the centrality of Jesus, and placed a high valuation on the tradition and practices of the Church as the most reliable, dialectically-identified signs and tokens of the good. And he did all of this within an Elizabethan Reformed grammar that already evinced skepticism toward a "substantialist form of ancient metaphysics as applied to the problem of an ontology of the person."[704] His achievement is extraordinary.

So who is Hooker *for us?*

As I have shown in this study, it is with good reason that scholars throughout the ages have noticed Hooker's significant debts to Aquinas. He quoted, alluded to, or borrowed from Thomas extensively, and his accounts of the eternal law and of the Christian life as a journey of sanctification are recognizably Thomist in character. We've seen, however, that we understate his genius if we simply note his resonances with Aquinas. For, in a hyper-Augustinian era, Hooker achieved a great synthesis. He described a vision of the Church that unites a *Reformed* description of the alterity of God and fellowship with Jesus Christ with an account of mimetic virtue. The

---

703. Volf, "When Gospel and Culture Intersect," 33.
704. McCormack, "Karl Barth's Historicized Christology: Just How "chalcedonian" is it?," Kindle location 2602, Sect 2, para 8.

Reformed quality of his catholicism is decisive. If Hooker is "the English Thomas," he is also the "Anglican Barth."

-Bibliography-

Aristotle. *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation, Vol. 1 (Bollingen Series LXXI-2)*. ed. Jonathan Barnes. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984.

_____. *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation, Vol. 2 (Bollingen Series LXXI-2)*. ed. Jonathan Barnes. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984.

Augustine of Hippo. *Augustine: On Christian Doctrine*. Translated by D.W Robertson. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1958.

Balthasar, Hans Urs von. *Truth is Symphonic: Aspects of Christian Pluralism*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1987.

_____. *The Glory of the Lord, Vol. 1: Seeing the Form (the Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics)*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2009.

"Baptized Members By Province and Diocese 2002-2012." (2013): http://www.episcopalchurch.org/sites/default/files/baptized_members_by_province_and_diocese_2002-_2012.pdf (accessed June 30, 2014).

Barth, Karl. *Church Dogmatics*. Translated by G.W. Bromilly, and T.F. Torrance. Edinburgh: T&T Clark International, 1956.

_____. *Karl Barth's Table Talk*. Vol. Occasional Papers (10). Scottish Journal of Theology, ed. John D. Godsey. Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1963.

Blowers, Paul M. "The *Regula Fidei* and the Narrative Character of Early Christian Faith." *Pro Ecclesia* VI, no. 2 (1997): 199-228.

"*A Christian Letter* With Hooker's Notes." In *The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker, Volume Iv: Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity: Attack and Response, the Folger Library. The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity) (V. 4)*, ed. John E. Booty, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1982.

Bowlin, John R. "Nature's Grace: Aquinas and Wittgenstein on Natural Law and Moral Knowledge." In *Grammar and Grace: Reformulations of Aquinas and Wittgenstein*, ed. Jeffrey Stout, and Robert MacSwain, 154. London: SCM Press, 2004.

_____. *Contingency and Fortune in Aquinas's Ethics (Cambridge Studies in Religion and Critical Thought)*. Reissue ed. Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Bullinger, Heinrich, and John Calvin. "*Consensus Tigurinus*." *Creeds of Christendom, with a History and Critical notes* http://www.creeds.net/reformed/Tigurinus/tigur-latin.htm (accessed July 12, 2013).

Calvin, John. *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Acheron Press, 2012.

Collinson, Patrick. *The Religion of Protestants: The Church in English Society, 1559-1625*. Vol. 1979. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982.

Congden, David W. "*Creatio Continue Ex Electione*: A Post-Barthian Revision of the Doctrine of *Creatio Ex Nihilo*." *Koinonia* XXII, (2010): 33-53.

Craddock, Fred B. *Preaching*. Anniversary ed. Abingdon Press, 2010.

Darling, Pamela W. *New Wine: The Story of Women Transforming Leadership and Power in the Episcopal Church*. Cowley Publications, 1994.

Dickens, A.G. *The English Reformation [2nd Edition]*. Pennsylvania State University Press, 1989.

Douglas, Ian T. "The Exigency of Times and Occasions: Power and Identity in the Anglican Communion Today." In *Beyond Colonial Anglicanism : The Anglican Communion*

in the Twenty-First Century, ed. Ian Douglas, T., and Pui-lan Kwok, New York: Church Publishing, 2001.

Ferguson, Arthur B. *Clio Unbound: Perception of the Social and Cultural Past in Renaissance England*. Vol. 2. Duke Monographs in Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1979.

Fish, Henry. *Jesuitism Traced in the Movements of the Oxford Tractarians*. London: Hamilton, Adams, 1842.

Grislis, Egil. "Providence, Predestination, and Free Will in Richard Hooker's Theology." In *Richard Hooker and the English Reformation*, ed. W.J. Torrance Kirby, Richard Hooker and the English Reformation, 79-96. Dordrecht ; Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003.

————. "Reflections on Richard Hooker's Understanding of the Eucharist." In *Richard Hooker and the English Reformation: Studies in Early Modern Religious Reforms*, 339. Dordrecht ; Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003.

Hadaway, C. Kirk. *Facts on Episcopal Church Growth: A New Look At the Dynamics of Growth and Decline in Episcopal Parishes and Missions Based on the Faith Communities Today 2005 (Fact 2005) National Survey of 4,100 Congregations*. Research-Based Perspectives for Building Vital Faith Communities, The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society and Faith Communities Today, 2005.

Haigh, Christopher. *English Reformations: Religion, Politics, and Society Under the Tudors*. Oxford University Press, USA, 1993.

Harrison, William H. "Powers of Nature and Influences of Grace in Hooker's Lawes." In *Richard Hooker and the English Reformation*, ed. W.J. Torrance Kirby, 339. Dordrecht ; Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003.

Hauerwas, Stanley. *Vision and Virtue: Essays in Christian Ethical Reflection*. Fides Publishers, 1974.

————. *A Community of Character: Toward a Constructive Christian Social Ethic*. 1 ed. University of Notre Dame Press, 1991.

————. *Unleashing the Scripture: Freeing the Bible From Captivity to America*. Abingdon Press, 1993.

————. *Character and the Christian Life: A Study in Theological Ethics*. University of Notre Dame Press, 1994.

————. *With the Grain of the Universe : The Church's Witness and Natural Theology : The Gifford Lectures Delivered At the University of ST. Andrews in 2001*. Kindle ed. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Brazos Press, 2001.

————. *Working With Words: On Learning to Speak Christian*. Kindle ed. Wipf & Stock Pub, 2011.

Hauerwas, Stanley, and Samuel Wells. *The Blackwell Companion to Christian Ethics*. Second ed. Blackwell Companions to Religion, Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.

Hector, Kevin. *Theology Without Metaphysics: God, Language and the Spirit of Recognition (Current Issues in Theology, No. 8)*. Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Herdt, Jennifer A. *Putting on Virtue: The Legacy of the Splendid Vices*. Reprint ed. University Of Chicago Press, 2012.

Hooker, Richard. *The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker: Of the Lawes of Ecclesiastical Polity, Preface Books I-IV, and V (Two Volumes)*. Library edition ed. Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1977.

————. "Notes Towards a Fragment on Predestination." In *The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker, Volume IV: Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity: Attack*

and Response, the Folger Library. The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity) (V. 4), 81-97. Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1982.

_____. "The Dublin Fragments." In *The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker, Volume IV: Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity: Attack and Response, the Folger Library. The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity)*, 99-169. Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1982.

_____. "A Learned Discourse of Justification." In *The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker, Vol. 5: Tractates and Sermons*, 83-170. Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1990.

_____. "A Learned Sermon of the Nature of Pride." In *The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker, Vol. 5: Tractates and Sermons*, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1990.

_____. "The First Sermon on Part of St. Jude." In *The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker, Vol. 5: Tractates and Sermons*, 13-57. Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1990.

Hunsinger, George. *How to Read Karl Barth: The Shape of His Theology, With Special Reference to the Conception of Truth*. Kindle ed. Oxford University Press, USA, 1994.

_____. "Election and the Trinity: Twenty-Five These on the Theology of Karl Barth." *Modern Theology* 24, no. 2 (2008): 179-198.

Insole, Christopher. "The Truth Behind Practices: Wittgenstein, Robinson Crusoe and Ecclesiology." *Studies in Christian Ethics* 20.3, (2007): 364-382.

Irish, Charles W. "'Participation of God Himself:' Law, the Mediation of Christ, and Sacramental Participation in the Thought of Richard Hooker." In *Richard Hooker and the English Reformation: Studies in Early Modern Religious Reforms*, 339. Dordrecht ; Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003.

Janz, Denis R. *Luther and Late Medieval Thomism: A Study in Theological Anthropology*. Kindle ed. Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2009.

Jenkins, John L. *Knowledge and Faith in Thomas Aquinas*. Kindle for iPad ed. Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Jordan, Mark D. *Rewritten Theology: Aquinas After His Readers*. 1 ed. Wiley-Blackwell, 2005.

Kallenberg, Brad J. *Ethics as Grammar: Changing the Postmodern Subject*. South Bend: Univ of Notre Dame Press, 2001.

Kirby, W.J. Torrance. *Richard Hooker's Doctrine of the Royal Supremacy*. Leiden ; New York: E.J. Brill, 1990.

_____. "The Charge of Religion Belongeth Unto Princes:' Peter Martyr Vermigli on the Unity of Civil and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction." *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 94, (2003): 161-175.

_____. *Richard Hooker, Reformer and Platonist*. Aldershot, Hants, England ; Burlington, VT: Ashgate Pub., 2005.

_____. "Creation and Government: Eternal Law as the Fountain of Laws in Richard Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity." In *Divine Creation in Ancient, Medieval, and Early Modern Thought, Essays Presented to Dr Robert D. Crouse*, ed. Willemien Otten, Walter Hannam, and Michael Treschow, 405-423. Leiden and Boston: E.J. Brill, 2007.

_____. "Peter Martyr Vermigli's Epistle to the Princess Elizabeth on Her Accession (1558): A Panegyric and Some Pointed Advice." *Perichoresis* 5.2, (2007): 3-21.

_____. "The Civil Magistrate and the 'Cura Religionis': Heinrich Bullinger's Prophetical Office and the English Reformation." In *Heinrich Bullinger (1504-1575)*, ed. Emidio Campi, and Peter Opitz, 935-950. Zurich: Theologische Verlag Zurich, 2007.

_____. *The Zurich Connection and Tudor Political Theology (Studies in the History of Christian Thought)*. 1st Edition ed. Brill Academic Pub, 2007.

_____. "Introduction." In *A Companion to Richard Hooker*, ed. W.J. Torrance Kirby, Brill Academic Publishers, 2008.

_____. "Reason and Law." In *A Companion to Richard Hooker*, ed. W.J. Torrance Kirby, Brill Academic Publishers, 2008.

_____. "From Florence to Zurich Via Strasbourg and Oxford: The International Career of Peter Martyr Vermigli (1542-1562)." In *Bewegung Und Beharrung: Aspekte Des Reformierten Protestantismus 1520-1650. Feschrift Für Emidio Campi*, Leiden and Boston: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2009.

_____. "Of Musique With Psalms: The Hermeneutics of Richard Hooker's Defence of the 'sensible Excellencie' of Public Worship." In *Lutheran and Anglican: Essays in Honour of Egil Grislis*, ed. John Stafford, 127-151. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2009.

_____. "From 'Generall Meditations' to 'Particular Decisions': The Augustinian Coherence of Richard Hooker's Political Theology." In *Sovereignty and Law in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, ed. Robert Sturges, 43-65. Turnhout: Brepols, 2011.

_____. "Richard Hooker's Theory of Natural Law in the Context of Reformation Theology." *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 30, no. 3 (1999): 681-703.

Kirk, Geoffrey. "Fatherhood, Headship, and Tradition." In *Consecrated Women? Women Bishops - a Catholic and Evangelical Response*, ed. Jonathan Baker, Canterbury Press, 2013.

Lake, Peter. *Moderate Puritans and the Elizabethan Church*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982.

_____. *Anglicans and Puritans? Presbyterianism and English Conformist Thought From Whitgift to Hooker*. London; Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1988.

Leith, John H., and W. Stacy. Johnson. *Calvin Studies IV : Presented At a Colloquium on Calvin Studies At Davidson College and Davidson College Presbyterian Church, Davidson, North Carolina*. Davidson, NC: Davidson College, 1988.

Levin, Yuval. *The Great Debate: Edmund Burke, Thomas Paine, and the Birth of Right and Left*. Kindle ed. Basic Books, 2013.

Lindbeck, George A. *The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age*. Westminster John Knox Press, 1984.

Long, Thomas G. *The Witness of Preaching, Second Edition*. 2 ed. Westminster John Knox Press, 2005.

Lowry, Eugene L. *The Homiletical Plot, Expanded Edition: The Sermon as Narrative Art Form*. Exp Sub ed. Westminster John Knox Press, 2000.

Luoma, John K. "Who Owns the Fathers? Hooker and Cartwright on the Authority of the Primitive Church." *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 8, no. 3 (1977): 45-59.

MacCulloch, Diarmaid. *The Later Reformation in England, 1547-1603, Second Edition (British History in Perspective)*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2001.

_____. "Richard Hooker's Reputation." In *A Companion to Richard Hooker*, ed. W.J. Torrance Kirby, Brill Academic Publishers, 2008.

MacIntyre, Alasdair. *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory, Third Edition*. University of Notre Dame Press, 2007.

Mannermaa, Tuomo, and Kirsi Irmeli Stjerna. *Christ Present in Faith: Luther's View of Justification*. 1st Fortress Press Ed ed. Fortress Press, 2005.

McCormack, Bruce L. "Karl Barth's Historicized Christology: Just How "chalcedonian" is it?" In *Orthodox and Modern: Studies in the Theology of Karl Barth*, Baker Academic, 2008.

McGrade, Arthur Stephen. "Forward." In *Richard Hooker and the Construction of Christian Community (Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies)*, ed. Arthur Stephen McGrade, Mrts, 1997.

————. "Classical, Patristic, and Medieval Sources." In *A Companion to Richard Hooker*, ed. W.J. Torrance Kirby, 51-87. Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2008.

McKim, Donald K. "Ramism in William Perkins." PhD Dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1980.

————. "The Functions of Ramism in William Perkins' Theology." *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 16, No. 4, (1985): 503-517.

Milbank, John. *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason (Political Profiles)*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2006.

Milbank, John, and Catherine Pickstock. *Truth in Aquinas (Radical Orthodoxy)*. Kindle ed. Routledge, 2000.

Morgan, John. *Godly Learning: Puritan Attitudes Towards Reason, Learning and Education, 1560-1640*. Cambridge University Press, 1988.

Neder, Adam. *Participation in Christ: An Entry Into Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics*. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009.

Neelands, W. David. "The Theology of Grace of Richard Hooker." PhD Dissertation, Trinity College and University of Toronto, 1988.

————. "Scripture, Reason, and 'Tradition'." In *Richard Hooker and the Construction of Christian Community (Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies)*, ed. Arthur Stephen McGrade, Binghamton: MRTS, 1997.

————. "Richard Hooker and the Debates About Predestination, 1580-1600." In *Richard Hooker and the English Reformation*, ed. W.J. Torrance Kirby, 2, Dordrecht ; Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003.

————. "Richard Hooker on the Identity of the Visible and Invisble Church." In *Richard Hooker and the English Reformation*, ed. W.J. Torrance Kirby, 2, 99-110. Dordrecht ; Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003.

Nichols, Aidan. "The Bishop as Bridegroom of His Church: A Roman Catholic Contribution." In *Consecrated Women? Women Bishops - a Catholic and Evangelical Response*, ed. Jonathan Baker, Canterbury Press, 2013.

Ozment, Steven. *The Age of Reform 1250-1550: An Intellectual and Religious History of Late Medieval and Reformation Europe*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1980.

Pippin, Robert B. *Hegel's Practical Philosophy: Rational Agency as Ethical Life*. 1 ed. Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Porter, Jean. *Natural and Divine Law: Reclaiming the Tradition for Christian Ethics (Saint Paul University Series in Ethics)*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999.

Radner, Ephraim. *A Brutal Unity: The Spiritual Politics of the Christian Church*. Baylor University Press, 2012.

Rasmussen, Barry G. "Presence and Absence: Richard Hooker's Sacramental Hermeneutic." In *Richard Hooker and the English Reformation: Studies in Early Modern Religious Reforms*, 339. Dordrecht ; Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003.

Women Bishops in the Church of England? A Report of the House of Bishops' Working Party on Women in the Episcopate. ed. Michael Roffen. London: Church House Publishing, 2004.

Rohr, Richard. *Immortal Diamond: The Search for Our True Self*. Kindle ed. Jossey-Bass, 2013.

Rorty, Richard. "The Historiography of Philosophy: Four Genres." In *Truth and Progress: Philosophical Papers (Philosophical Papers (Cambridge)) (Volume 3)*, 363. Cambridge University Press, 1998.

Secor, Philip. "In Search of Richard Hooker." In *Richard Hooker and the Construction of Christian Community (Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies)*, ed. Arthur Stephen McGrade, Mrts, 1997.

Seeberg, Reinhold. *Text-Book of the History of Doctrines*. Translated by Charles E. Hay. Vol. 2. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1952.

Sellars, Wilfrid. "Metaphysics and the Concept of a Person." In *Box 34, Folder 3*, ed. Special Collections Department Archives of Scientific Philosophy, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh.

————. *Science, Perception and Reality*. Ridgeview Pub Co, 1991.

Shields, Christopher. "Aristotle." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Summer 2012 Edition)*, ed. Edward Zalta, The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Summer 2012 Edition), Stanford: Center for the Study of Language and Information, 2013.

Shuger, Debora K. *Habits of Thought in the English Renaissance : Religion, Politics, and the Dominant Culture*. Vol. 13. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990.

————. ""Societie Supernaturall": The Imagined Community of Hooker's Lawes." In *Richard Hooker and the Construction of Christian Community (Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies)*, ed. Arthur Stephen McGrade, 307-330. Mrts, 1997.

Stafford, John K. "Grace, Sin, and Nature: Richard Hooker's Theology of Baptism." In *Richard Hooker and the English Reformation: Studies in Early Modern Religious Reforms*, 339. Dordrecht ; Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003.

Steinmetz, David Curtis. *Calvin in Context*. 2nd ed. Oxford University Press, USA, 2010.

Stout, Jeffrey. *Democracy and Tradition (New Forum Books)*. Princeton University Press, 2005.

Sumner, Darren. "The Twofold Life of the Word: Karl Barth's Critical Reception of the *Extra Calvinisticum*." *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 15, no. 1 (2013): 42-57.

Taylor, Charles. *A Secular Age*. Belknap Press, 2007.

The Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and Other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church Together With the Psalter Or Psalms of David According to the Use of the Episcopal Church. The Church Hymnal Corporation, 2006.

Thomas Aquinas. *An Annotated Translation (With Some Abridgement) of the Summa Contra Gentiles of Saint Thos Aquinas*. Translated by Joseph Rickaby. London: Burns and Oates, 1905.

————. *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas (Five Volumes)*. Christian Classics, 1981.

Turner, Philip. "Episcopal Authority Within a Communion of Churches." In *The Fate of Communion: The Agony of Anglicanism and the Future of a Global Church*, ed. Ephraim Radner, and Philip Turner, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2006.

Volf, Miroslav. "When Gospel and Culture Intersect: Notes on the Nature of Christian Difference." In *Pentecostalism in Context: Essays in Honor of William W. Menzies*, ed. Wonsuk Ma, and Robert P. Menzies, Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997.

Walsh, Liam. "Sacraments." In *The Theology of Thomas Aquinas*, ed. Rik Van Nieuwenhove, and Joseph Wawrykow, University of Notre Dame Press, 2010.

Wawrykow, Joseph P. *The Westminster Handbook to Thomas Aquinas*. Westminster Handbooks to Christian Theology, Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005.

Webster, John. "The Church and the Perfection of God." In *The Community of the Word: Toward an Evangelical Ecclesiology*, ed. Mark Husbands, and Daniel J. Treier, IVP Academic, 2005.

————. "The Visible Attests the Invisible." In *The Community of the Word: Toward an Evangelical Ecclesiology*, ed. Mark Husbands, and Daniel J. Treier, IVP Academic, 2005.

Welby, Justin. "Archbishop Writes to Ecumenical Partners About Women Bishops." (2014): http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/5371/archbishop-writes-to-ecumenical-partners-about-women-bishops (accessed July 17, 2014).

Wells, Samuel. "How the Church Performs Jesus' Story: Improvising on the Theological Ethics of Stanley Hauerwas." PhD Dissertation, University of Durham, 1995.

————. *Improvisation : The Drama of Christian Ethics*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Brazos Press, 2004.

————. *Transforming Fate Into Destiny: The Theological Ethics of Stanley Hauerwas*. Wipf & Stock Pub, 2004.

————. *God's Companions : Reimagining Christian Ethics*. Malden, MA ; Oxford: Blackwell Pub, 2006.

————. *Christian Ethics: An Introductory Reader*. 1 ed. Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.

Wells, Samuel, and Ben Quash. *Introducing Christian Ethics*. 1 ed. Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.

Williams, Rowan. "Incarnation and the Renewal of Community." In *On Christian Theology (Challenges in Contemporary Theology)*, 225-238. Wiley, 1999.

————. "Forward." In *A Companion to Richard Hooker*, ed. W.J. Torrance Kirby, xv - xxvi. Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, 2008.

Windsor Report 2004: Lambeth Commission on Communion (Windsor Report). London: Anglican Communion Office, 2004.

Wippel, John. "Metaphysics." In *The Cambridge Companion to Aquinas (Cambridge Companions to Philosophy)*, ed. Norman Kretzmann, and Eleonore Stump, Cambridge University Press, 1993.

Wittgenstein, Ludwig. *On Certainty / Uber Gewissheit*. Translated by G.E.M. Anscombe, and Denis Paul Wittgenstein. Basil Blackwell, 1969.

Woodard-Lehman, Derek. "Freedom and Authority - the Ethics of Revelation in Karl Barth." PhD Dissertation, Princeton University, 2014.

Wright, N. T. *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*. Vol. 4. Kindle ed. Christian Origins and the Question of God, Fortress Press, 2013.

Yoder, John Howard. "Sacrament as Social Process: Christ the Transformer of Culture." In *The Royal Priesthood: Essays Ecclesiological and Ecumenical*, Herald Press (PA), 1994.

————. *Preface to Theology: Christology and Theological Method*. Brazos Press, 2007.

Yoder, John Howard, Glen Stassen, and D.M. Yeager. *Authentic Transformation: A New Vision of Christ and Culture*. ed. Glen Stassen. Abingdon Press, 1995.

Zagzebski, Linda Trinkaus. *Divine Motivation Theory*. Kindle ed. Cambridge University Press, 2004.