

STUDIA PATRISTICA

VOL. LIII

Papers presented at the Sixteenth International Conference
on Patristic Studies held
in Oxford 2011

Edited by
MARKUS VINZENT

Volume 1:
Former Directors



PEETERS
LEUVEN – PARIS – WALPOLE, MA
2013

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VOL. LIII

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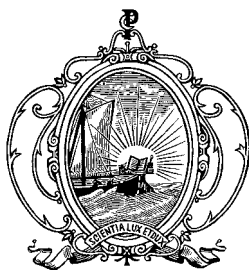
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Abbreviations

AA.SS	see ASS.
AAWG.PH	Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen Philologisch-historische Klasse, Göttingen.
AB	Analecta Bollandiana, Brussels.
AC	Antike und Christentum, ed. F.J. Dölger, Münster.
ACL	Antiquité classique, Louvain.
ACO	Acta conciliorum oecumenicorum, ed. E. Schwartz, Berlin.
ACW	Ancient Christian Writers, ed. J. Quasten and J.C. Plumpe, Westminster (Md.)/London.
AHDLMA	Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge, Paris.
AJAH	American Journal of Ancient History, Cambridge, Mass.
AJP	American Journal of Philology, Baltimore.
AKK	Archiv für katholisches Kirchenrecht, Mainz.
AKPAW	Abhandlungen der königlichen Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin.
ALMA	Archivum Latinitatis Medii Aevi (Bulletin du Cange), Paris/Brussels.
ALW	Archiv für Liturgiewissenschaft, Regensburg.
AnalBoll	Analecta Bollandiana, Brussels.
ANCL	Ante-Nicene Christian Library, Edinburgh.
ANF	Ante-Nicene Fathers, Buffalo/New York.
ANRW	Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt, ed H. Temporini <i>et al.</i> , Berlin.
AnSt	Anatolian Studies, London.
AnThA	Année théologique augustinienne, Paris.
APOT	Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English, ed. R.E. Charles, Oxford.
AR	Archivum Romanicum, Florence.
ARW	Archiv für Religionswissenschaft, Berlin/Leipzig.
ASS	Acta Sanctorum, ed. the Bollandists, Brussels.
AThANT	Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments, Zürich.
Aug	Augustinianum, Rome.
AugSt	Augustinian Studies, Villanova (USA).
AW	Athanasius Werke, ed. H.-G. Opitz <i>et al.</i> , Berlin.
AZ	Archäologische Zeitung, Berlin.
BA	Bibliothèque augustinienne, Paris.
BAC	Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, Madrid.
BASOR	Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, New Haven, Conn.
BDAG	A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, 3rd edn F.W. Danker, Chicago.
BEHE	Bibliothèque de l'École des Hautes Études, Paris.
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium, Louvain.
BGL	Benedictinisches Geistesleben, St. Ottilien.
BHG	Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca, Brussels.
BHL	Bibliotheca Hagiographica Latina Antiquae et Mediae Aetatis, Brussels.

BHO	Bibliotheca Hagiographica Orientalis, Brussels.
BHTh	Beiträge zur historischen Theologie, Tübingen.
BJ	Bursians Jahresbericht über die Fortschritte der klassischen Altertums- wissenschaft, Leipzig.
BJRULM	Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, Manchester.
BKV	Bibliothek der Kirchenväter, ed. F.X. Reithmayr and V. Thalhofer, Kempten.
BKV2	Bibliothek der Kirchenväter, ed. O. Bardenhewer, Th. Schermann, and C. Weyman, Kempten/Munich.
BKV3	Bibliothek der Kirchenväter. Zweite Reihe, ed. O. Bardenhewer, J. Zel- linger, and J. Martin, Munich.
BLE	Bulletin de littérature ecclésiastique, Toulouse.
BoJ	Bonner Jahrbücher, Bonn.
BS	Bibliotheca sacra, London.
BSL	Bolletino di studi latini, Naples.
BWAT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten Testament, Leipzig/Stuttgart.
Byz	Byzantion, Leuven.
BZ	Byzantinische Zeitschrift, Leipzig.
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft, Berlin.
CAr	Cahiers Archéologique, Paris.
CBQ	Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Washington.
CChr.CM	Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis, Turnhout/Paris.
CChr.SA	Corpus Christianorum, Series Apocryphorum, Turnhout/Paris.
CChr.SG	Corpus Christianorum, Series Graeca, Turnhout/Paris.
CChr.SL	Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina, Turnhout/Paris.
CH	Church History, Chicago.
CIL	Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum, Berlin.
CP(h)	Classical Philology, Chicago.
CPG	Clavis Patrum Graecorum, ed. M. Geerard, vols. I-VI, Turnhout.
CPL	Clavis Patrum Latinorum (SE 3), ed. E. Dekkers and A. Gaar, Turnhout.
CQ	Classical Quarterly, London/Oxford.
CR	The Classical Review, London/Oxford.
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, Louvain. Aeth = Scriptores Aethiopici Ar = Scriptores Arabici Arm = Scriptores Armeniaci Copt = Scriptores Coptici Iber = Scriptores Iberici Syr = Scriptores Syri Subs = Subsidia
CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum, Vienna.
CSHB	Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae, Bonn.
CTh	Collectanea Theologica, Lvov.
CUF	Collection des Universités de France publiée sous le patronage de l'Association Guillaume Budé, Paris.
CW	Catholic World, New York.
DAC	Dictionary of the Apostolic Church, ed. J. Hastings, Edinburgh.

DACL	see DAL
DAL	Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie, ed. F. Cabrol, H. Leclercq, Paris.
DB	Dictionnaire de la Bible, Paris.
DBS	Dictionnaire de la Bible, Supplément, Paris.
DCB	Dictionary of Christian Biography, Literature, Sects, and Doctrines, ed. W. Smith and H. Wace, 4 vols, London.
DHGE	Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastique, ed. A. Baudrillart, Paris.
Did	Didaskalia, Lisbon.
DOP	Dumbarton Oaks Papers, Cambridge, Mass., subsequently Washington, D.C.
DOS	Dumbarton Oaks Studies, Cambridge, Mass., subsequently Washington, D.C.
DR	Downside Review, Stratton on the Fosse, Bath.
DS	H.J. Denzinger and A. Schönmetzer, ed., Enchiridion Symbolorum, Barcelona/Freiburg i.B./Rome.
DSp	Dictionnaire de Spiritualité, ed. M. Viller, S.J., and others, Paris.
DTC	Dictionnaire de théologie catholique, ed. A. Vacant, E. Mangenot, and E. Amann, Paris.
EA	Études augustinienes, Paris.
ECatt	Enciclopedia Cattolica, Rome.
ECQ	Eastern Churches Quarterly, Ramsgate.
EE	Estudios eclesiasticos, Madrid.
EECh	Encyclopedia of the Early Church, ed. A. Di Berardino, Cambridge.
EKK	Evangelisch-Katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament, Neukirchen.
EH	Enchiridion Fontium Historiae Ecclesiasticae Antiquae, ed. Ueding-Kirch, 6th ed., Barcelona.
EO	Échos d'Orient, Paris.
EtByz	Études Byzantines, Paris.
ETL	Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses, Louvain.
EWNT	Exegetisches Wörterbuch zum NT, ed. H.R. Balz <i>et al.</i> , Stuttgart.
ExpT	The Expository Times, Edinburgh.
FC	The Fathers of the Church, New York.
FGH	Fragmente der griechischen Historiker, Berlin.
FKDG	Forschungen zur Kirchen- und Dogmengeschichte, Göttingen.
FRL	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments, Göttingen.
FS	Festschrift.
FThSt	Freiburger theologische Studien, Freiburg i.B.
FTS	Frankfurter theologische Studien, Frankfurt a.M.
FZThPh	Freiburger Zeitschrift für Theologie und Philosophie, Freiburg/Switzerland.
GCS	Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller, Leipzig/Berlin.
GDV	Geschichtsschreiber der deutschen Vorzeit, Stuttgart.
GLNT	Grande Lessico del Nuovo Testamento, Genoa.
GNO	Gregorii Nysseni Opera, Leiden.

GRBS	Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies, Cambridge, Mass.
GWV	Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht, Offenburg.
HbNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament. Tübingen.
HDR	Harvard Dissertations in Religion, Missoula.
HJG	Historisches Jahrbuch der Görresgesellschaft, successively Munich, Cologne and Munich/Freiburg i.B.
HKG	Handbuch der Kirchengeschichte, Tübingen.
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament, Tübingen.
HO	Handbuch der Orientalistik, Leiden.
HSCP	Harvard Studies in Classical Philology, Cambridge, Mass.
HTR	Harvard Theological Review, Cambridge, Mass.
HTS	Harvard Theological Studies, Cambridge, Mass.
HZ	Historische Zeitschrift, Munich/Berlin.
ICC	The International Critical Commentary of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, Edinburgh.
ILCV	Inscriptiones Latinae Christianae Veteres, ed. E. Diehl, Berlin.
ILS	Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae, ed. H. Dessau, Berlin.
J(b)AC	Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum, Münster.
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature, Philadelphia, Pa., then various places.
JdI	Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Berlin.
JECS	Journal of Early Christian Studies, Baltimore.
JEH	The Journal of Ecclesiastical History, London.
JJS	Journal of Jewish Studies, London.
JLH	Jahrbuch für Liturgik und Hymnologie, Kassel.
JPTh	Jahrbücher für protestantische Theologie, Leipzig/Freiburg i.B.
JQR	Jewish Quarterly Review, Philadelphia.
JRS	Journal of Roman Studies, London.
JSJ	Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period, Leiden.
JSOR	Journal of the Society of Oriental Research, Chicago.
JTS	Journal of Theological Studies, Oxford.
KAV	Kommentar zu den apostolischen Vätern, Göttingen.
KēTh	Kerk en Theologie, 's Gravenhage.
KJ(b)	Kirchliches Jahrbuch für die evangelische Kirche in Deutschland, Gütersloh.
LCL	The Loeb Classical Library, London/Cambridge, Mass.
LNPF	A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, ed. P. Schaff and H. Wace, Buffalo/New York.
L(O)F	Library of Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church, Oxford.
LSJ	H.G. Liddell and R. Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, new (9th) edn H.S. Jones, Oxford.
LThK	Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche, Freiburg i.B.
MA	Moyen-Âge, Brussels.
MAMA	Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua, London.
Mansi	J.D. Mansi, Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio, Florence, 1759-1798. Reprint and continuation: Paris/Leipzig, 1901-1927.
MBTh	Münsterische Beiträge zur Theologie, Münster.

MCom	Miscelanea Comillas, Comillas/Santander.
MGH	Monumenta germaniae historica. Hanover/Berlin.
ML	Mediaevalia Lovaniensia, Louvain.
MPG	See PG.
MSR	Mélanges de science religieuse, Lille.
MThZ	Münchener theologische Zeitschrift, Munich.
Mus	Le Muséon, Louvain.
NGWG	Nachrichten der Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen.
NH(M)S	Nag Hammadi (and Manichaean) Studies, Leiden.
NovTest	Novum Testamentum, Leiden.
NPNF	See LNPF.
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version.
NRTh	Nouvelle Revue Théologique, Tournai/Louvain/Paris.
NTA	Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen, Münster.
NT.S	Novum Testamentum Supplements, Leiden.
NTS	New Testament Studies, Cambridge/Washington.
OBO	Orbis biblicus et orientalis, Freiburg, Switz.
OCA	Orientalia Christiana Analecta, Rome.
OCP	Orientalia Christiana Periodica, Rome.
OECS	Oxford Early Christian Studies, Oxford.
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta, Louvain.
OLP	Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica, Louvain.
Or	Orientalia. Commentarii editi a Pontificio Instituto Biblico, Rome.
OrChr	Oriens Christianus, Leipzig, then Wiesbaden.
OrSyri	L'Orient Syrien, Paris.
PG	Migne, Patrologia, series graeca.
PGL	A Patristic Greek Lexicon, ed. G.L. Lampe, Oxford.
PL	Migne, Patrologia, series latina.
PLRE	The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire, ed. A.H.M. Jones <i>et al.</i> , Cambridge.
PLS	Migne, Patrologia, series latina. Supplementum ed. A. Hamman.
PO	Patrologia Orientalis, Paris.
PRE	Paulys Realencyklopädie der classischen Alterthumswissenschaft, Stuttgart.
PS	Patrologia Syriaca, Paris.
PTA	Papyrologische Texte und Abhandlungen, Bonn.
PTHr	Princeton Theological Review, Princeton.
PTS	Patristische Texte und Studien, Berlin.
PW	Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft, ed. G. Wissowa, Stuttgart.
QLP	Questions liturgiques et paroissiales, Louvain.
QuLi	Questions liturgiques, Louvain
RAC	Rivista di Archeologia Cristiana, Rome.
RACH	Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum, Stuttgart.
RAM	Revue d'ascétique et de mystique, Paris.
RAug	Recherches Augustiniennes, Paris.
RBen	Revue Bénédictine, Maredsous.
RB(ibl)	Revue biblique, Paris.

RE	Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche, founded by J.J. Herzog, 3e ed. A. Hauck, Leipzig.
REA(ug)	Revue des études Augustiniennes, Paris.
REB	Revue des études byzantines, Paris.
RED	Rerum ecclesiasticarum documenta, Rome.
RÉL	Revue des études latines, Paris.
REG	Revue des études grecques, Paris.
RevSR	Revue des sciences religieuses, Strasbourg.
RevThom	Revue thomiste, Toulouse.
RFIC	Rivista di filologia e d'istruzione classica, Turin.
RGG	Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart, ed. Gunkel-Zscharnack, Tübingen
RHE	Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique, Louvain.
RhMus	Rheinisches Museum für Philologie, Bonn.
RHR	Revue de l'histoire des religions, Paris.
RHT	Revue d'Histoire des Textes, Paris.
RMAL	Revue du Moyen-Âge Latin, Paris.
ROC	Revue de l'Orient chrétien, Paris.
RPh	Revue de philologie, Paris.
RQ	Römische Quartalschrift, Freiburg i.B.
RQH	Revue des questions historiques, Paris.
RSLR	Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa, Florence.
RSPT, RSPH	Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques, Paris.
RSR	Recherches de science religieuse, Paris.
RTAM	Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale, Louvain.
RthL	Revue théologique de Louvain, Louvain.
RTM	Rivista di teologia morale, Bologna.
Sal	Salesianum, Roma.
SBA	Schweizerische Beiträge zur Altertumswissenschaft, Basel.
SBS	Stuttgarter Bibelstudien, Stuttgart.
ScEc	Sciences ecclésiastiques, Bruges.
SCh, SC	Sources chrétiennes, Paris.
SD	Studies and Documents, ed. K. Lake and S. Lake. London/Philadelphia.
SE	Sacris Erudiri, Bruges.
SDHI	Studia et documenta historiae et iuris, Roma.
SH	Subsidia Hagiographica, Brussels.
SHA	Scriptores Historiae Augustae.
SJMS	Speculum. Journal of Mediaeval Studies, Cambridge, Mass.
SM	Studien und Mitteilungen zur Geschichte des Benediktinerordens und seiner Zweige, Munich.
SO	Symbolae Osloenses, Oslo.
SP	Studia Patristica, successively Berlin, Kalamazoo, Leuven.
SPM	Stromata Patristica et Mediaevalia, ed. C. Mohrman and J. Quasten, Utrecht.
SQ	Sammlung ausgewählter Quellenschriften zur Kirchen- und Dogmengeschichte, Tübingen.
SQAW	Schriften und Quellen der Alten Welt, Berlin.
SSL	Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense, Louvain.

StudMed	Studi Medievali, Turin.
SVigChr	Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae, Leiden.
SVF	Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta, ed. J. von Arnim, Leipzig.
TDNT	Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Grand Rapids, Mich.
TE	Teologia espiritual, Valencia.
ThGl	Theologie und Glaube, Paderborn.
ThJ	Theologische Jahrbücher, Leipzig.
ThLZ	Theologische Literaturzeitung, Leipzig.
ThPh	Theologie und Philosophie, Freiburg i.B.
ThQ	Theologische Quartalschrift, Tübingen.
ThR	Theologische Rundschau, Tübingen.
ThWAT	Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament, Stuttgart.
ThWNT	Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, Stuttgart.
ThZ	Theologische Zeitschrift, Basel.
TLG	Thesaurus Linguae Graecae.
TP	Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association, Lancaster, Pa.
TRE	Theologische Realenzyklopädie, Berlin.
TS	Theological Studies, New York and various places; now Washington, D.C.
TThZ	Trierer theologische Zeitschrift, Trier.
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen, Leipzig/Berlin.
USQR	Union Seminary Quarterly Review, New York.
VC	Vigiliae Christianae, Amsterdam.
VetChr	Vetera Christianorum, Bari (Italy).
VT	Vetus Testamentum, Leiden.
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary, Waco.
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, Tübingen.
WZKM	Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes, Vienna.
YUP	Yale University Press, New Haven.
ZAC	Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum, Berlin.
ZAM	Zeitschrift für Ascese und Mystik, Innsbruck, then Würzburg.
ZAW	Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, Giessen, then Berlin.
ZDPV	Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins, Leipzig.
ZKG	Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte, Gotha, then Stuttgart.
ZKTh	Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie, Vienna.
ZNW	Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche, Giessen, then Berlin.
ZRG	Zeitschrift für Rechtsgeschichte, Weimar.
ZThK	Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche, Tübingen.

FORMER DIRECTORS

60 Years (1951-2011) of the International Conference on Patristic Studies at Oxford: Key Figures – An Introductory Note

Gillian CLARK, Bristol, UK

Between the 15th International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 2007, and the 16th Conference, 2011, patristics lost Henry Chadwick and Robert Markus. Both were outstanding for scholarship and publication, for ecumenical and international concerns, and for encouragement and support of others in the field. Both were Directors of the Conference. Maurice Wiles, Christopher Stead and Henry Chadwick were, as Frances Young puts it, the triumvirate behind Elizabeth Livingstone in 1983, 1987, 1991 (with Rowan Williams) and 1995 (with Rowan Williams and Robert Thomson). Elizabeth Livingstone has been known to every delegate of the Conference over a very long period and, at least after Cross's death, did virtually all the organisation herself and in a very personal and dedicated way. It was a watershed for the Conference when she decided she must retire. The 13th conference, 1999, was the first at which the Board of Directors included colleagues from other universities: Robert Markus and Frances Young.

The Directors of the 16th Conference thought it would be appropriate to convene a two-day workshop on the contribution to patristic studies of key figures of the Conference, Chadwick and Markus, Wiles and Stead, and of one very active scholar, W.H.C. Frend, who was a presence but not a Director. The invited speakers approached their task in different ways: that is the point of workshops. Those who spoke on the four former Directors had all known and worked with their subjects: Rowan Williams with Henry Chadwick, Frances Young with Maurice Wiles, Catherine Rowett with G.C. Stead, and William Klingshirn with Robert Markus. Eric Rebillard did not know W.H.C. Frend, but does know the territory on which Frend especially worked. Delegates who attended the workshops offered perceptive comments and memories and prompted lively discussion. We are especially grateful to Wolf Liebeschuetz.

After the conference, we solicited two further contributions: Elizabeth Livingstone on F.L. Cross, founder of the Conference, who was the sole Director of the first five meetings (1951 to 1967); and Mark Edwards and Markus Vinzent on J.N.D. Kelly, who was sole Director in 1971. We hope in another context to consider the work of E.J. Yarnold, who was a Director only in 1999, but who did so much for *Studia Patristica*.

F.L. Cross founded the Conference to bring together scholars from different national and denominational traditions of patristics. As several of these papers point out, individual scholars and the Conference itself also helped to integrate patristics with other disciplines: classics, history, philosophy, archaeology. We hope that the Conference will continue to be international, ecumenical, interdisciplinary, and an encouragement to all in the field.

F.L. Cross

Elizabeth LIVINGSTONE, Oxford, UK

The idea of an international conference on Patristic Studies apparently came from Patrick McLaughlin (1909-1988), then at St Anne's Soho. Leslie Cross (1900-1968), who had recently been elected Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity and Canon of Christ Church, took McLaughlin in to dinner in Hall. Cross was normally a silent person. He had recently returned from making one of the first post-war tours of Germany and was keen to bring Germans back into the heart of European culture. He was also deeply conscious of the damage to the Christian mission posed by denominational divisions which were far more serious then than they are now. When McLaughlin mentioned the idea of an international conference on the Fathers who had lived before the division of the East and the Western Churches, Cross picked it up immediately; indeed McLaughlin's diaries record that he was somewhat irritated by Cross's persistence.

Throughout his life Cross seems to have embraced various projects with enthusiasm and persistence. Perhaps partly because of his apparent shyness, he was able to persuade people to do what he asked. He also had the ability to organize things, working behind the scenes. This dates back to the Anglo-Catholic Congress of 1933 and his work on the Committee, and later as editor of the *Lexicon of Patristic Greek*, his work on sections of *Collins Encyclopedia*, *Chambers Encyclopedia* and the *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*. So now he quickly recruited Leonard Prestige, then Chancellor of St Paul's Cathedral, to be President of the embryo conference, holding that his name on the literature would add weight to the project. Describing himself as Secretary (or sometimes Secretary General), he wrote to the leading Patristic scholars of the day inviting them to come to Oxford at their own expense and give the main lectures. Other scholars were asked to give shorter papers and (usually) persuaded that the time allotted to them was not an insult to their dignity. Cross also persuaded his colleagues in the Theology Faculty to act as chairmen for the divisional sessions, keeping order and making sure that the time-table was rigidly observed, and often getting their colleges to provide meeting rooms without making any charge.

Cross's concept of these conferences, and indeed of his whole life, was one of promoting learning linked with prayer. So he invited to the early conferences a fair number of parish clergy and religious who had an interest in the Fathers but no academic position. They, as well as promising research students, were

even encouraged to present short papers. The Conference time-table often included Orthodox Vespers and assumed that members would attend services in the Cathedral or elsewhere. There were arrangements for Roman Catholic priests to say Mass each day, serving each other. But, in the days when ecumenical contacts were limited, the academic nature of the Conference was stressed: the main meetings were held in the Examination Schools, under the chairmanship of the Vice-Chancellor, who happened to be the Dean of Christ Church. Despite all this care, at the last moment Jesuit members were forbidden to attend the Conference on the ground that it was crypto-ecumenical. Cross was momentarily devastated. Two leading Jesuits in fact attended, having taken care not to receive the instructions from Rome, and one, Père Gribomont, read a major paper. Subsequently the Society of Jesus has provided open and invaluable support.

During September 1951, the month in which the first conference took place, Cross had the cover of the programme changed from 'International Conference on Patristic Studies' to 'First International Conference on Patristic Studies'. By the time the 250 or so members arrived – a colourful body they were – they knew that further gatherings were envisaged and a small committee was formed. They apparently thought of a conference moving from place to place, as so many similar bodies do. Prestige, who knew the score, sarcastically suggested that the second conference should go to Istanbul. It soon became clear that Oxford was to be the home of any subsequent Patristic Conferences, partly because of the absence of any rivalry between Catholic and Reformed Theology Faculties and later the preference of transatlantic scholars for an English-speaking country, but very largely because of the recognition that Cross had an ability and enthusiasm which would be hard to find elsewhere.

In the years before each Conference he went touring Europe to find out what were the trends that were surfacing in Patristic scholarship and who had interesting ideas. He also conducted a huge correspondence. After the conference was over, papers offered for publication were sent to him. Although the conference programmes referred to an 'editorial committee' and even an 'International Editorial Committee', I doubt that such a body ever existed.¹ Cross took advice on individual papers but for the most part made his own decisions, editing where necessary and reading and sending out proofs. He also returned the papers which were unpublishable, often with a personal note. Even with secretarial help, this occupied a large amount of time and energy. I also noticed that when the Conference funds got low, they were mysteriously replenished. Not long before he died he told me to try to see that there was provision for Patristic Conferences to continue, expressing a wish that responsibility should be taken over by either the Theology Board at Oxford or the

¹ For political reasons Kurt Aland's name appeared as co-editor of the Proceedings of the Second Conference.

British Academy; at the time he was too ill to make any formal move. Happily the Theology Board accepted the responsibility and, thanks to Maurice Wiles, the conferences were saved. It was, however, clear that no one person of the right calibre would take on the role that Cross had played and directors were needed.

Maurice Frank Wiles¹

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ABSTRACT

This paper is an attempt to capture the most important contributions to the subject of patristics made by Maurice Wiles, a former Director of the International Patristic Conferences in Oxford. It attempts to delineate his legacy, noting his influence on graduate students who have become the scholars and teachers of the future, as well as those areas which he pioneered: the study of patristic exegesis, the rehabilitation of heretics such as Arius, and the development of the notion of doctrinal criticism.

In the context of the Sixteenth International Conference on Patristic Studies, priority must surely be given to the massive contribution to the subject that Maurice Wiles made through facilitating others. I say, ‘in this context’, of course, because it was his involvement in the triumvirate behind Elizabeth Livingstone which kept this Oxford conference going for so many years, and enabled its growth in numbers and range of interest to become what it is now. This was one way in which he facilitated the development of the subject, namely through ongoing participation in scholarly interaction and the publication of research in the volumes of *Studia Patristica*. Another was through all those years of editing the *Journal of Theological Studies*, an activity which continued after his retirement. Acres of time must have been devoted to reading the work of others, and making sensible judgements about quality and significance, not to mention his extensive reviewing for a journal that gives a lot of space to the critical assessment of books and monographs. But there is a third facilitating contribution to celebrate before turning to his own published work. As his first ever graduate student, during his time in Cambridge (1959-67), I represent a cohort that increased substantially during his tenure of the Regius Chair here in Oxford (1970-91). Considerable numbers among the regular attendees at this conference, not least among the contingent from North America, claim him as Doktorvater. If I myself suffered the loneliness of the solitary student, many of them benefited from the graduate seminar over which he presided here, often focusing on the close study of particular textual material. All of us, I’m sure, would acknowledge his profound influence, despite

¹ Some paragraphs in this presentation are re-presented from the author’s contribution to the Memoir by Rowan Williams and Frances Young published in the *Proceedings of British Academy* 153, *Biographical Memoirs of Fellows VII* (2008), 350-70 (used with permission).

his encouragement to find our own intellectual pathway, and his remarkable humility and gentleness in guiding us. No one was ever put down, and in all these contexts respect was always accorded to views opposed to his own. In a way, for Maurice, debate or questioning was what it was all about, and conclusions were always tentative.

Which makes it the more ironic that his theological work became, for a time, quite controversial. It is scarcely the common fate of patristic scholars to hit the headlines, and I guess we were both taken aback by the impact of *The Myth of God Incarnate*² in the 70s. But it was characteristic of Maurice Wiles quietly to respond by continuing to ponder the implications of his overall position, with the utmost integrity and faithful attention to the historical contexts of theological debate, both ancient and modern.

For what engaged him intellectually is properly summed up in the title of the Festschrift offered to him in 1993 as *The Making and Remaking of Christian Doctrine*,³ or 'doctrinal criticism' defined as 'the critical study of the truth and adequacy of doctrinal statements'. The 1967 move from Cambridge to the Chair in Christian Doctrine at King's College London meant that he now had to engage, not just with early Christian doctrine, but also with contemporary doctrinal issues. This undoubtedly reinforced for him the questions about how, or indeed whether, traditional doctrines were to be appropriated in the modern world. In *The Making of Christian Doctrine*⁴ Wiles had affirmed that

the great doctrinal definitions of the early Church were the outcome of a closely contested process of reasoning. My aim in this study has been to give a critical review of some of the main aspects of that reasoning process; (p. 159)

and then went on to say

true continuity with the age of the Fathers is to be sought not so much in repetition of their doctrinal conclusions, or even in building upon them, but rather in the continuation of their doctrinal aims. (p. 173)

He suggested that radical shifts, something like the Copernican revolution, were likely to be required, and having identified three strands in early doctrinal argument, namely, appeal to the record of scripture, the activity of worship and the experience of salvation, asks

should not true development be seen in the continuation of the attempt to do justice to those three strands of Christian life in the contemporary world?

² *The Myth of God Incarnate*, John Hick (ed.) (London, 1977).

³ *The Making and Remaking of Christian Doctrine. Essays in honour of Maurice Wiles*, Sarah Coakley and David Pailin (eds) (Oxford, 1993).

⁴ *The Making of Christian Doctrine* (Cambridge, 1967).

*The Remaking of Christian Doctrine*⁵ was an outline of that project, and it was the publication of *Remaking* which provoked the collection of his 'working papers' to explain the detailed reasoning behind that 'small work'.

Indeed, the evolution of Wiles' thinking is perhaps best observed in that collection, published as *Working Papers in Doctrine*.⁶ This demonstrates that it was in his critical engagement with the Fathers that his radicalism was born. The book brought together fourteen previously published essays. In those concerning the Fathers, Wiles is constantly aware of the complexity of the process whereby doctrinal affirmations came to be accepted – there can rarely be found a single line of development or a straightforward linear process of evolution. To this extent he anticipated the emerging issue as to whether 'development of doctrine' is the right heuristic model for studying the Fathers – should we not rather speak of a characteristically Christian discourse, forged in the complex interactions of faith and worship with the intellectual questions and challenges of the period? An important insight that emerges repeatedly is that certain doctrinal propositions, which were crucial to developing Christian doctrine, in fact carried rather different meanings and motivations in different situations: thus 'eternal generation' within the context of Origen's overall theological scheme has a very different force and function from that which it acquired when used by Athanasius in a different theological system; and the presence of a soul in Christ is affirmed for quite different reasons by Origen, on the one hand, and on the other hand, by others later in the Christological controversies. If doctrinal propositions had different meanings at different points in the patristic period, then there naturally emerges the question what about the continuing affirmation of such statements in the modern context? An invited paper with a pre-imposed and, for Maurice Wiles, uncharacteristically cumbersome title, 'The Consequences of Modern Understanding of Reality for the Relevance and Authority of the Tradition of the Early Church in our Time', provides a kind of turning point in the collection, as focus shifts to the issue, whatever might we make of the tradition in the modern world. Here it becomes explicit that appeal to conciliar dogmas cannot provide a way of escape from the uncertainties generated by acceptance of historico-critical analyses of scripture, because historical consciousness means that those statements themselves face the fires of historical criticism. Characteristically the discussion of the consequences admits to perplexity, and the conclusions are tentative.

Indeed Wiles distances himself in this essay from radical theologies which set out 'to tackle the age-old problems of theology as if they were being raised for the first time today'. He has earlier, in an essay on 'The Doctrine of Christ in the Patristic Age' insisted that 'the Fathers' debates about Christology must be seen to have been concerned with issues of central importance which mattered and which still matter'. However, that does not mean 'we can simply

⁵ *The Remaking of Christian Doctrine* (London, 1974).

⁶ *Working Papers in Doctrine* (London, 1976).

carry on and treat their conclusions as our axioms – differences of world-view, of philosophical and anthropological outlook, preclude any such approach'. Already in 1967 he was suggesting that 'we cannot usefully play the fashionable game of restating Chalcedon in modern terms unless we are prepared to play with equal seriousness the less fashionable game of an equally radical restatement of Nicaea'. Two years later he was asking 'Does Christology rest on a mistake?' In the essay with this title he outlines the way in which the idea of the incarnation in its inception was closely interwoven with the doctrines of creation and fall; then describes the way in which the latter two doctrines have changed, no longer being understood in terms of specific actions in history; and so raises the question whether redemption needs to be tied to a particular historical event. Increasingly the problems of Christology and of Divine Action will become the twin focuses of Maurice's theological concern.

But the collection of 'working papers' also unveils other important ingredients in his thinking. He was one of those twentieth century scholars who pioneered the rehabilitation of heretics, certain that they raised serious issues for Christian theology rather than being the perverse and immoral servants of the devil their opponents so often depicted: a student essay title he set as early as 1962 was 'The Original Teaching and Intention of Arius', and Arianism would remain a particular interest. *Working papers* shows how Wiles opened his batting on Arianism – in that same year of 1962, he had published an article 'In Defence of Arius' in which he argued that Arius should not be charged with being illogical and unspiritual, suggesting indeed that he had soteriological motivations for the position he took. Years later he would be a central figure in the debates about Arius and Arianism at the Oxford Patristic Conference of 1983, which resulted in the book, *Arianism: Historical and Theological Assessments* (ed. R.C. Gregg);⁷ and his last big research project focussed on Arianism through the centuries, published under the title *Archetypal Heresy*.⁸ But a significant point here is the emphasis on soteriology. In other essays, too, he finds the thrust of patristic argument grounded in their understanding of what salvation is. Furthermore he noted that 'the work of the Fathers embodies to a peculiar degree an integration of devotion and of reason'. 'Both are essential ingredients of a living theology', he insists, adding that '[i]t is not easy to hold them together in the modern world'.

Perhaps most interesting is his inaugural lecture at King's, where for the first time he speaks of 'doctrinal criticism'. The metaphor of his title, 'Looking into the Sun', often informs his discourse. Noting how controversial was biblical criticism a hundred years before, he comments that the church 'for the most part (whether rightly or wrongly) has come to accept [critical study of the Gospels] as an activity which can be carried on without undue damage to the eyes'. He suggests that the most important factor 'enabling the church

⁷ *Arianism: Historical and Theological Assessments*, R.C. Gregg (ed.) (Philadelphia, 1985).

⁸ *Archetypal Heresy. Arianism through the centuries* (Oxford, 1996).

to come to terms with a thoroughgoing critical treatment of the Scriptures' has been 'the existence of a basic outline of doctrine' – in Nicaea and Chalcedon,

the substance of the church's faith seemed to dwell secure and unscathed, whatever the scholars might discover in the course of their critical investigations of the Bible. But to bring to that framework of Christian belief the same rigorous spirit of critical assessment, that would indeed be to look very directly into the sun with all its attendant dangers and difficulties. Yet what other proper task could there be for a Professor of Christian doctrine in an open, secular university? (pp. 150-1)

This endeavour he calls 'doctrinal criticism', attributing the phrase to his predecessor in the Chair, George Woods, who had left a paper, posthumously published, with that title.

How then is the doctrinal critic to proceed? The rest of the lecture attempts to show what this discipline might involve, taking as a worked example the notion of the 'finality of Christ'. The first task, Wiles suggests, is to examine the particular conviction he is engaging with within the historical setting in which it first arose. In relation to Christ's finality, New Testament scholarship provides clear evidence for the idea arising within the eschatological framework of early Christian thinking. But that context did not remain static – particularly with the transition from a Semitic to a Greek setting. The ultimacy of Christ came to be expressed in terms of divine and human natures, and in this Chalcedonian form has been passed down to future ages. But in our age, the Platonism of the fourth century is as alien as the eschatology of the first. 'Historical relativism' makes it 'very difficult to give to any historical events, however superlative their degree of importance, the kind of radical ultimacy that Christianity appears to ascribe to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus'.

So the typical tactic of taking Chalcedon as given and trying to make it compatible with modern thought is barred to the doctrinal critic – no position can be given absolute privilege. Defence of the faith must be defence of the truth, and the doctrinal critic

would be saying: "People have made these kinds of affirmation in the past within the context of a world-view which it is no longer possible for me to share. Their affirmations were intimately bound up with that world-view of a by-gone age. They are therefore for me no longer live options; I am not in a position either to affirm them or to deny them; I cannot give any satisfactory sense to them *in that form*".

The doctrinal critic who is also a Christian, Wiles suggests, will probably regard it as 'worthwhile worrying away at what lies at the heart of, underneath, or at the back of, traditional doctrinal statements'. But

every Christian theologian must expect the charge of being unfaithful either to the historical tradition of the Christian faith or to the realities of the modern world. But that is no argument against the propriety of the task. (p. 162)

Here we see most clearly what Wiles thought he was doing, and also the price he knew he would pay.

So far, then, we have observed how Wiles' acute mind, trained in Moral Sciences, discerned the flaws in doctrinal argumentation at the time when orthodoxy was developing, as well as the difficulties in maintaining in the modern world doctrines based on arguments conducted in a very different cultural milieu. The latter was the focus of his later published work, and will not be pursued further on this occasion. It was always pursued, however, against the backcloth of those continuing patristic studies noted at the start – the training of graduate students, the reviewing, the four-yearly patristic conferences; and we should never underestimate the importance of his earliest patristic work in shaping his mature theological approach. So let me return to work published earlier than anything considered so far.

At the start of his career Maurice Wiles focussed on exegesis. His first article, published in *Theology* in 1954, was concerned with the parables.⁹ Very quickly this interest was taken up into an examination of patristic exegesis; so we find 'Early Exegesis of the Parables' published in the *Scottish Journal of Theology* in 1958.¹⁰ His first book was *The Spiritual Gospel. The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel in the Early Church* (1960).¹¹ The next project performed the same task for Paul, and was published as *The Divine Apostle* in 1967.¹² With this record it is hardly surprising that he was asked to provide essays on the exegesis of Origen and Theodore of Mopsuestia for the first volume of the *Cambridge History of the Bible*.¹³

This stage of Wiles' thinking can be exemplified by examining *The Spiritual Gospel*. The initial chapter headings are an indication of how his examination of patristic exegesis was shaped by questions raised by the historico-critical method: the authorship and purpose of the Gospel; the Fourth Gospel and the Synoptic Gospels; Historicity and Symbolism; the signs; even his exploration of the leading ideas of the Gospel reflect a then recent book by C.H. Dodd. By taking these topics he shows by implication both the continuities and the discontinuities between early and modern interpretation, as well as the divergences between ancient commentators. There is little discussion of method as such. Occasional remarks that one commentator or another seemed to grasp what the Gospel was about better than another do appear, but it is implicit

⁹ 'More about Parables', *Theology* 57 (1954), 339-42.

¹⁰ 'Early Exegesis of the Parables', *Scottish Journal of Theology* 11 (1958), 287-301.

¹¹ *The Spiritual Gospel. The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel in the Early Church* (Cambridge, 1960).

¹² *The Divine Apostle* (Cambridge, 1967).

¹³ 'Origen as Biblical Scholar' and 'Theodore of Mopsuestia as Representative of the Antiochene School' in *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, vol. 1: From the beginnings to Jerome, P.R. Ackroyd and C.F. Evans (eds.) (Cambridge, 1970).

rather than explicit that the standard of assessment is provided by modern reading of the text.

By chapters VI-IX the focus shifts to the doctrinal concern of the Fathers in interpreting this Gospel. Here again the approach is shaped by existing scholarly models, the framework being provided by the then classic account of the history of doctrine. Thus, the way in which 'orthodox' interpreters understood the features of the Gospel that might be regarded as close to Gnosticism is explored, topics such as dualism, docetism, and determinism. Tertullian's exegesis of those Johannine texts which figured in the Monarchian controversies demonstrates his Christological exegesis of the Gospel; while the Christological exegesis of Theodore and Cyril in their Commentaries on John is prefaced by their approach to classifying texts as about the Manhood or Godhead of the Christ. In other words the dogmatic viewpoint of the exegete under discussion provides the starting-point, which is secondarily illustrated by reference to their approach to the Gospel texts. Almost inevitably the judgement is made that 'both exegetes are attempting to interpret the Gospel from within a straitjacket of presuppositions to which the message of the Gospel will not succumb' (p. 136). Nevertheless Cyril is judged 'to do more justice to the Gospel of divine condescension' if only because he 'declares himself aware of the inadequacy of human language for describing the wholeness of divine truth'. This 'gives to his interpretation a greater theological potency than that of Theodore'. One interesting feature of the book is the fact that Wiles expresses a preference for the work of Cyril on a number of occasions, yet later will state that the Alexandrian Christology is hardly one that can be sustained in the context of modern thought.

The brief Epilogue assesses which of the ancient commentators came nearest to appreciating what the Fourth Gospel was about. Again it must be said that the criteria of judgement come from viewing these commentaries from a modern perspective. Furthermore, the very shape of the book anticipates the issues that will dominate Wiles' later thinking. Accepting biblical criticism as fundamental to the modern theological enterprise, he will engage, as we have seen, in a parallel historico-critical analysis of patristic doctrinal debate and then enquire about the continuing validity of the results of that process.

From current perspectives, then, we might view Maurice Wiles' approach to the Fathers as informed by a kind of 'hermeneutic of suspicion'. Yet his radical espousal of the historical critical approach gave his work two important features. One was concern to grapple with the original texts, constantly turning to them and examining them afresh. The second was to treat them with respect and sympathy by exploring with the utmost care not only the intellectual context within which the arguments were conducted, but also the ecclesial context in which the experience of salvation informed their theological discourse. He in fact retained a profound respect for tradition, and like the Fathers constantly measured his doctrinal critique against the experience of believers in life and worship, regarding theology as second-order discourse – secondary reflection

on what is primary for Christianity, such as worship and the sense of salvation. He exemplified 'faith seeking understanding'. He was a man of deep personal integrity, gentleness and humility, dedicated to working out the consequences of historical criticism for Christian theology, but always with a manner that was tentative and suggestive, never claiming too much.

Maybe his legacy will lie not so much in published work – after all, intellectual fashions shift – but will rather live on in that attitude of mind, passed on to students who will themselves pass it on to future generations of scholars. Be that as it may, let me in conclusion, highlight the three points for Wiles' legacy in the field of patristics, from which I have benefited most in my own scholarly work:

- He pioneered the sympathetic study of patristic exegesis, drawing out the significance of the interaction between doctrine and Scripture, so paving the way for further work setting the exegetical methods of the Fathers in the appropriate intellectual context.
- He was at the forefront of the 20th-century movement to rehabilitate heretics, so enabling a move from the evolutionary or developmental model of early church doctrine to a more satisfactory exploration of the theological argumentation through which characteristic features of Christian discourse came to be formulated.
- While seriously engaging at a philosophical and theological level with both the adequacy of the arguments employed and the positions adopted, he recognised the depths of the soteriological and experiential drivers at work in patristic thought, so preparing the ground for the possibility of moving from a hermeneutic of suspicion to one of appropriation, both critical and sensitive.

Christopher Stead (1913-2008): His Work on Patristics

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ABSTRACT

Professor Christopher Stead was Ely Professor of Divinity from 1971 until his retirement in 1980 and one of the great contributors to the Oxford Patristic Conferences for many years. In this article I reflect on his work in Patristics, and I attempt to understand how his interests diverged from the other major contributors in the same period, and how they were formed by his milieu and the spirit of the age. As a case study to illustrate and diagnose his approach, I shall focus on a debate between Stead and Rowan Williams about the significance of the word *idios* in Arius' theology (in the course of which I also make some suggestions of my own about the issue).

Patristic Scholars come in a number of varieties. There are those who come to Patristics from a classical training, those who come with an interest in the history of religions in late antiquity, and those who come with an interest in philosophy. Like Maurice Wiles, and unlike Henry Chadwick, Christopher Stead was a philosopher by training, although he had originally started with Classics before changing to the Moral Sciences Tripos for the second part of his degree in Cambridge.

But even within the philosophical approach, there are a number of different outlooks one might take towards the work of the Fathers. The most common approach in the twentieth century seems to have been what I would call an 'Oxford Approach', which takes contemporary analytic philosophy ('Oxford Philosophy') as a model of excellence, and tries to diagnose confusions and faults in what the Fathers were trying to do – mistakes that would not have seduced them had they been able to call upon the logical tools developed in the early 20th Century by Frege, Russell, Austin, Gilbert Ryle and so on. A second variant of the philosophical approach, which adds further opportunity for critical deconstruction of the Patristic doctrines, and for diagnosis of their philosophically suspect underpinnings, is one which starts by assuming that the Fathers were intellectually rather weak, and less good at philosophy than the great classical thinkers such as Plato, Aristotle or the best of the Stoics. It follows that much of what the Fathers wrote would struggle to get a 2.1 in an exam on Platonic metaphysics or on Aristotle's theory of substance, or indeed an exam in the Theology Tripos. The Patristic Scholar sees himself as a tutor, writing in the margin where the essay is confused and adding 'Could do better; read more Aristotle!' at the end.

By contrast, a more charitable approach to the Fathers, which seeks to find in their work genuine philosophical progress and insights that might still be valuable (or, better still, could wake us from our self-satisfied slumbers) – this seems to be almost entirely lacking in the mid-twentieth century, emerging only a generation later, in scholars trained from the 1970s on. The origins of that newer and more generous outlook would be another research topic and is not for us to examine now. Suffice it to say that Stead was, at least in his early to middle periods, a product of the old school, having learnt his philosophy in Cambridge and Oxford in the first half of the century, and having done almost no theological study at all.

I say ‘early to middle periods’ as though Stead had an ‘early period’. In fact he was a remarkably late developer, at least as far as publication goes. He published his first and most important book, *Divine Substance*,¹ when he was 64, six years after taking up the Ely chair in Cambridge, so the ‘early period’ will be the work he published between the ages of 48 and 64.² From the ensuing steady stream of articles, Christopher helpfully compiled two volumes of papers on Patristic topics, one published in 1985 and the second in 2000 (covering work he had published right up to 1998 and some further items not previously published).³ He became my doctoral supervisor when he was already 66, and by the time I finished my thesis he was 70.⁴ It seems that the twenty years from age 65 to 85 were among his most productive, with contributions on Augustine, Gregory of Nyssa, Athanasius and a range of work on philosophical aspects of the doctrinal debates in the Early Church. All this alongside the important research he was conducting in his spare time towards a book on the birth of the Steam Locomotive, which came out just before he was 90.⁵

But I suspect that the publishing pattern is just a little distorted. Clearly years of ongoing research from the early period underpins *Divine Substance* (research which must have been undertaken at Oxford during the years when Stead was tutoring undergraduates and serving as chaplain at Keble College). Some of it

¹ Christopher Stead, *Divine Substance* (Oxford, 1977).

² Christopher Stead, ‘The Significance of the Homousios’, *SP* 3 (1961), 397–412 (Reprinted in G.C. Stead, *Substance and Illusion in the Christian Fathers* [London, 1985], Chapter I) appeared more or less exactly half way through his life, at the age of 48. About nine further articles preceded *Divine Substance*, including Christopher Stead, ‘The Platonism of Arius’, *JTS* 15 (1964), 16–31 (Reprinted in G.C. Stead, *Substance and Illusion in the Christian Fathers* [1985], Chapter III) at the age of 51, and Christopher Stead, ‘The Origins of the Doctrine of the Trinity (Parts 1 & 2)’, *Theology* 77 (1974), 508–17, 582–8 (Reprinted in G.C. Stead, *Substance and Illusion in the Christian Fathers* [1985], Chapter VI) ten years later.

³ Christopher Stead, *Substance and Illusion in the Christian Fathers*, Collected Studies (1985); *id.*, *Doctrine and Philosophy in Early Christianity*, Variorum Collected Studies (Aldershot, 2000).

⁴ My doctoral thesis was later published as Catherine Osborne, *Rethinking Early Greek Philosophy* (London, 1987). (I continued to publish under my married name, Catherine Osborne, until 2011). My undergraduate tutor in Patristics was Rowan Williams.

⁵ Christopher Stead, *The Birth of the Steam Locomotive: A New History* (Haddenham, 2002).

was indeed already appearing as articles.⁶ But we should not be surprised by a relative sparsity of published papers in that period, given the expectation (which Christopher Stead surely shared) that teaching came first, and research would be published only after one stopped teaching those topics to undergraduates. Besides, it was less common then to bring things out first as articles and then assemble the argument for a book, although it does seem that Stead did some of that. Publishing habits have changed. There is also an interesting question about the role of the Patristic Conference itself in assisting the process of dissemination of work in progress, and in stimulating exchanges of ideas and responses without the need to go through a formal written publication at that stage. In Stead's later years many of these free-standing Patristic Conference papers did appear in print, often in *Studia Patristica*. But arguably the print publications were not the primary mode for disseminating ideas. Although it is the print versions that are more obvious to us now, they are just the dead relics of a live debate. The regular Patristic Conferences during the second half of the century ensured that the debate started, issues were aired, and papers received their most influential outing, while the Patristic Conference itself was in session.

For a short time during his undergraduate years, Christopher had attended lectures by Ludwig Wittgenstein in 1934-5. This was in the period that we know as the early Wittgenstein. Christopher Stead's approach to philosophy was very much of that age, although he was not an enthusiast for Wittgenstein, of any period, and Wittgenstein was very far from being the main influence on him. There is only one reference to Wittgenstein by name in *Divine Substance*. That is no more than there are references to Heidegger, Kierkegaard, Quine and Russell. But Stead's detailed work on diagnosing ambiguities and difficulties that arise from careless use of words like 'being' and 'existence', explaining the risks, dissolving puzzles and misunderstandings that (in his view) beset the early development of doctrine – all this belongs to the philosophy of that period, the philosophical world which formed him at Cambridge, and, even more so, the one into which he had moved, when he went to Oxford for post-graduate research in the 1930s, and to which he returned as Chaplain and Fellow at Keble, during the 1950s and 60s.

In *Divine Substance*, Stead engages in an extended discussion of Plato's notion of *ousia* and of the various senses of 'being' and 'to be' that can be intended by the term. It is striking that he was evidently writing this book, on the Greek words for 'being', during the very same years when Charles Kahn,

⁶ In addition to those mentioned in note 2, see, for instance, Christopher Stead, 'Divine Substance in Tertullian', *JTS* 14 (1963), 46-66 (Reprinted in G.C. Stead, *Substance and Illusion in the Christian Fathers* [1985], Chapter II), *id.*, 'The Concept of Divine Substance', *VC* 29 (1975), 1-14 (Reprinted in G.C. Stead, *Substance and Illusion in the Christian Fathers* [1985], Chapter VII), *id.*, 'Ontology and Terminology in Gregory of Nyssa', in H. Dörrie, M. Altenburger and U. Schramm (eds), *Gregor von Nyssa und die Philosophie* (Leiden, 1976), 107-27.

well known to those working in ancient philosophy, was also investigating the Greek verb 'to be', as an enquiry into issues in ancient philosophy including Plato, first in a widely cited article of 1966, followed by a book length study in 1973, and further articles in 1972, 1976, 1981, 1988 and 2004.⁷ Of these works by Kahn, four were published before *Divine Substance* appeared, and three after. So it is clear that Kahn was working on the same topic in the same period. But they are talking quite past each other. Stead does cite Kahn's 1973 book, just once, in his first footnote in the Plato chapter. But he cites it only for a tiny scholarly point concerning certain dialect forms of *ousia* in Philolaus. He makes no mention of its more general views on the very topic that Stead was discussing. Meanwhile on the other side Kahn apparently knows nothing of Stead's treatment of the subject, and never cites it. It seems that Kahn and Stead were ploughing parallel furrows in silence, for a decade, and it seems that what Stead has to say about the meaning of the verb *einai* is at least as wise as what Kahn says, and often more sensitive. Yet Stead's treatment is completely unknown in classical discussions, all of whom cite Kahn assiduously.

Interesting and important as Stead's work on Plato, Aristotle and the post-Aristotelian philosophers is – or could have been, had the right people read it – that is not immediately to the point for our purpose. We should turn to his work on issues in Early Christian thought.

Much of Christopher's work revolved round Arius, Arianism and the work of Athanasius. This evidently arose out of (or perhaps also inspired) his interest in terms for substance and what is meant by 'sameness of substance'. It was also an area in which it is sensible to ask about the philosophical underpinnings of both sides of the dispute, since both Arius and the Athanasian party were seeking a way to express their understanding of the relation between the first and second person of the Trinity that respected logic and employed philosophical terminology in a way that was recognisable and complied with the recognised usage outside theological circles. For this reason I have selected a

⁷ Charles H. Kahn, 'The Greek Verb 'To Be' and the Concept of Being', *Foundations of Language* 2 (1966), 245-65 (Reprinted in Charles H. Kahn, *Essays on Being* [Oxford, 2009], 16-40), *id.*, *The Verb 'be' in Ancient Greek* (Dordrecht, 1973), *id.*, 'On the Terminology for *Copula* and *Existence*', in S.M. Stern, A. Houvani and V. Brown (eds), *Islamic Philosophy and the Classical Tradition* (Oxford, 1972), 141-58, *id.*, 'Why existence does not emerge as a distinct concept in Greek philosophy', *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 58 (1976), 323-34 (Reprinted in Charles H. Kahn, *Essays on Being* [2009], 62-74), *id.*, 'Some philosophical uses of 'To Be' in Plato', *Phronesis* 26 (1981), 105-34 (Reprinted in Charles H. Kahn, *Essays on Being* [2009], 75-108), *id.*, 'Being in Parmenides and Plato', *La Parola del Passato* 43 (1988), 237-61 (Reprinted in Charles H. Kahn, *Essays on Being* [2009], 167-91), *id.*, 'Parmenides and Plato Once More', in Victor Caston and Daniel W. Graham (eds), *Presocratic Philosophy: Essays in Honour of Alexander Mourelatos* (Aldershot, 2002), 81-93, *id.*, 'A Return to the Theory of the Verb *Be* and the Concept of Being', *Ancient Philosophy* 24 (2004), 381-405 (Reprinted in Charles H. Kahn, *Essays on Being* [2009], 109-42).

case study to illustrate Stead's detailed work from his middle and later productive years, taking his views on Arius' philosophical background as an example, and particularly a debate in print with Rowan Williams.

In 1987 Rowan Williams' *Arius: Heresy and Tradition* appeared. Williams dedicated it to Christopher Stead.⁸ By the time it came out, Williams was in Oxford, but it was clearly the fruit of his Cambridge years, where Stead too had been working on some of his best contributions in this field. Stead was generally impressed with Williams' Arius book, but he was not happy with Part III, in which Williams tried to show that Neoplatonism figured in Arius' intellectual formation, particularly grounding his reflections on creation, intellect and the notion of participation (*methexis*). Stead was not convinced. In the early 1990s, for the Twelfth International Patristic Conference in 1995, Stead wrote a response disputing Williams' reading of the evidence.⁹ The paper is not one of his best, which is understandable in the circumstances, particularly since he missed the discussion of it at the Patristic Conference. It remains badly written in places, and it sometimes drops its points before explaining why they matter. For these reasons I shall not nitpick through it in detail. But I think it is interesting to reflect on his objections to Williams' ideas, not just in terms of whether he is right or wrong about what the evidence can support, but also in terms of Stead's implicit intellectual and theological values. What, if anything, made Stead dislike Williams' hypothesis about the Neoplatonism of Arius?

Let me explain the question. In the first chapter of *Arius*, Rowan Williams does some anthropology on the history of scholarship about Arianism.¹⁰ He unpacks the way in which scholars have repeatedly read the Arian crisis through contemporary spectacles, demonising Arius, or rehabilitating him, as they find in him features that they love or hate in the church of their own time or in its perceived enemies. The best examples are from the nineteenth century (Newman and Harnack, for instance) – a period sufficiently distant for us to stand back and see their prejudices, which are not exactly our own, and find them amazing. By contrast, it seems – at least to us – that post-war patristic scholarship was better at more open-minded and detached assessment, doing justice to the ambitions and virtues of both sides, as far as the evidence allows.

⁸ Rowan Williams, *Arius: Heresy and Tradition* (London, 1987).

⁹ Christopher Stead, 'Was Arius a Neoplatonist?', *SP* 32 (1997), 39-52 (Reprinted in G.C. Stead, *Doctrine and Philosophy in Early Christianity* [2000], Chapter V). Stead was expecting to deliver it at the conference himself but in the event, due to being taken ill on the way to the conference, he was in the John Radcliffe hospital in Oxford, and was unable to take part in the Arius seminar. It is an indication of the charitable nature of the dispute that, on that occasion, Christopher Stead entrusted Rowan Williams with the task of oral delivery and defence of a paper designed to refute Williams' own position.

¹⁰ R. Williams, *Arius* (1987), 'Introduction: Images of a heresy', 1-28.

One of the heroes of Williams' chapter is Christopher Stead, particularly Stead's 1978 paper on the *Thalia* of Arius.¹¹ In that paper, and in the one on the Platonism of Arius,¹² Stead had avoided treating Arius as someone with no religious sense or spirituality, but had sought instead to understand his motives, looking out for explanations in terms of Arius' serious commitments to things that he cared about, for reasons other than a sterile adherence to rules of logic. This approach had already been anticipated in Maurice Wiles' 'In Defence of Arius', in 1962.¹³

In his discussion of the history of treatments of Arius, Williams suggested that the later 20th century had stopped reading the Arian crisis as a mirror of its own angst. But from our current distance we might think again about that. Was it not that the 20th-century writers, including Wiles, Stead and even Williams himself were doing just the same thing as their predecessors of the nineteenth century, only that the earlier obsession with demonising the other is now replaced by a post-war obsession with taking the part of the maligned and dispossessed, seeing the other as all too human, and seeking to redress damage done in times of hatred and apartheid. The age of ecumenism and interfaith dialogue, the age of building bridges not bombing them, is reflected in the willingness to look at Arius from Arius' point of view, which is there in Stead and in Wiles, and of course in Williams himself.

So here too, the assessment of Arius is of its time. Williams is right that twentieth century scholars were trying to be fair, and to countenance the idea that the Nicene party might not have all the moral high ground; but this was not just because scholarly detachment had improved, but also because rehabilitating the other side was the new orthodoxy. It was perhaps just another prejudice, though a more humane and attractive one, certainly.

What, then, of the dispute between Williams and Stead? The essence of it seems to be that Williams had suggested, both in his 1983 article called 'The Logic of Arianism',¹⁴ and then in the 1987 book,¹⁵ that some features of Arius' thinking, and some of his vocabulary, plausibly belonged to a Neoplatonic tradition, and he proposed (on the basis of echoes in the vocabulary and ideas) that Arius might have encountered Neoplatonic philosophy directly, particularly through Porphyry and Iamblichus.

It was not the old complaint, that Arius was a logician with no nose for theological or spiritual nuances. Williams did not want to say that Arius was

¹¹ Christopher Stead, 'The *Thalia* of Arius and the Testimony of Athanasius', *JTS* 29 (1978), 20-52 (Reprinted in G.C. Stead, *Substance and Illusion in the Christian Fathers* [1985], Chapter X).

¹² G.C. Stead, 'The Platonism of Arius' (1964). See R. Williams, *Arius* (1987), 17.

¹³ Maurice Wiles, 'In Defence of Arius', *JTS* 13 (1962), 339-47 (Reprinted in Maurice Wiles, *Working Papers in Doctrine* [London, 1976], 28-37).

¹⁴ Rowan Williams, 'The Logic of Arianism', *JTS* 34 (1983), 56-81.

¹⁵ R. Williams, *Arius* (1987).

too much a philosopher or too little a theologian,¹⁶ but he suspected that his cosmos was more Neoplatonic, and less Middle Platonic, than that of Eusebius of Caesarea or Athanasius and so on.

Stead was not convinced. Why not? One possibility is that he just didn't think that the texts yield the results that Williams tries to get out of them. Stead's response contains plenty of scholarly quibbles,¹⁷ and he plainly intends us to see that he is motivated by nothing other than a concern to stick to the evidence, and not over-interpret it. Clearly there is some truth in that. But we should surely also do some of that cultural anthropology on the relation between Stead and Williams in the last decades of the last century.

Stead's 1997 response to Williams includes a discussion of the claim that Arius believed that the son was not proper (ἵδιος) to the Father's substance. Stead argues, rather confusingly, that Williams has confused the neuter ἵδιον with the adjective ἵδιος, and that his comparison of Arius with Porphyry, and his claims about the divine properties depend upon muddling the neuter substantive (ἵδιον meaning 'property') with the adjective (ἵδιος meaning 'proper'). Stead's explanation is far from clear, but I think he means that Williams' conclusions would require the neuter substantive ἵδιον, meaning a 'property', but cannot be got from the adjective ἵδιος, whether masculine or neuter, when it means 'one's own', as in 'God's own Son', which is a description perfectly acceptable to all parties, and is so used of the Son in scripture. Since ἵδιος in this sense can evidently be used of something that is a substance and an individual in its own right, it does not reduce the Son to a mere property of the Father, as Williams had implied.

Fair enough, but is this relevant? Although this point is developed at some length, it is not where the meat of Stead's objection lies, as becomes clear on page 42 of his paper.¹⁸ Stead wants to show that Arius objected to the term ἵδιος (or the phrase in which it occurs) not because it demotes the Son to a mere impersonal property (as Williams had suggested), but because it unduly promotes him to equality with the Father. This point is not properly developed in the 1997 paper, for it depends *only partly* on the claim which Stead tries to develop there – mistakenly as I shall suggest –, namely that Arius *supports his objection to the Nicene position with arguments based on asserting the Son's inequality*. That is, Stead takes [Text 1] a pair of lines from the *Thalia*, quoted by Athanasius in *De synodis* 15, to be the lines that Athanasius has in mind when he claims that Arius denied that the Son was ἵδιον or ἵδιος of the Father. And then he points out that in the second line, where Arius offers the *reason* for refusing the term ἵδιον, the reason is that the Son is not equal to the Father, nor consubstantial with him.

¹⁶ R. Williams, *Arius* (1987), 230.

¹⁷ G.C. Stead, 'Was Arius a Neoplatonist?' (1997).

¹⁸ *Ibid.* 42.

Text 1

ἴδιον οὐδὲν ἔχει τοῦ θεοῦ καθ' ὑπόστασιν ιδιότητος
οὐδὲ γὰρ ἔστιν ἴσος, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ ὁμοούσιος αὐτῷ

Arius apud Athanasius, *De synodis* 15

So, as Stead reads this couplet, the status indicated but rejected in the first line would evidently be one that made the Son too equal and too similar to the Father; the argument is given in the second line: because he is less than equal, we must not say those things of him, Arius thinks. This is, he says, the opposite of what Williams was suggesting, which was that the expression wrongly demoted the Son to a mere impersonal property, something too lowly, not too exalted.

This point has nothing really to do with a distinction between the substantive ἴδιον meaning a property, and the adjective ἴδιος meaning 'proper'. For the first line is not talking about whether the Son is proper (ἴδιος) to the Father, nor about whether the Son is a property (ἴδιον) of the Father. In fact, it is not really talking about any of the things that Williams was talking about, and is probably not the right text to consider at all.

Stead was actually recapitulating some work that he did earlier in *Divine Substance*, where he also discussed this couplet [Text 1].¹⁹ But there seem to me to be several things wrong with what he tries to do with it in both places. First, and most obviously, as I've just suggested, the text is not the one he needs in order to address the claims that Williams was making. Nor is it plausible that this was the text that Athanasius had in mind, when he claimed that Arius refused to accept that the Son was (as Athanasius held that he was), ἴδιος (in a sense that I will explain in a minute). For this text does not consider whether the Son *is* one of the Father's essential properties, but rather whether he *has* the essential attributes of God. We might translate as follows:

[Text 1]

Nor does he have even one of the proper hallmarks of god, as regards what marks out God as a distinct entity.

For he is neither another thing equal to God (*isos theoi*), nor the very same being as God (*homoousios theoi*).

Arius apud Athanasius, *De synodis* 15

It's not clear that Stead has seen that there are two premises in the second line of Text 1: the two things denied there are not two alternative ways of expressing the same claim (as Stead seems to suppose). Surely they are the two alternative results that Arius thinks would follow if you allowed the Son to have any of the proper and essential attributes of [a] God. One of two things would then be true: either he would be a second thing equal to the original God, so

¹⁹ G.C. Stead, *Divine Substance* (1977), 244-5

there would be two equal gods,²⁰ or he would be the very same thing as the original God, so there'd be one God, and the Father and the Son would be one and the same entity. Neither of these is orthodoxy *for either party*, so Arius concludes that the Son cannot *have* any of the divine attributes that are exclusive to God, without appealing to any disputed premise.

So this text tells us nothing about whether the term ἰδιος can be applied to the Son. It is not talking about the Son being himself an essential property of God, nor about whether the Son belongs or is proper to God, but only about whether the Son shares any of God's proper attributes. It seems to be the wrong text to invoke if we want to know whether the term ἰδιος can be applied to the Son himself.

Stead had already given us a much more relevant analysis, that does bear on this issue, in his 1964 paper called 'The Platonism of Arius'.²¹ If we go back to that paper, we shall find some material relevant to the issue that Williams was addressing.

In 'The Platonism of Arius' Stead explains how Arius insists that the *logos* or Son obtains his various titles by having them conferred upon him by the Father, rather than actually *being* himself the defining properties of the Father.²² For instance, when the Son is described as God's wisdom (*sophia*), word (*logos*), truth (*aletheia*) or might (*dunamis*), it would be a mistake (Arius thinks) to take these to be naming the essential properties of God himself. For God is essentially possessed of wisdom, truth, might and so on: without these features he would not be God, or would not be the God he is. But when these descriptions are used of the Son, they do not refer to God's properties. Taking them as the names of God's essential properties leads into a terrible dilemma. For either the Son is not a distinct hypostasis from the Father but merely his attributes (in which case nothing external to the Father has been generated and the second person is not a second person at all). Or alternatively, and equally unacceptably if not worse, the Father has detached his Logos and his wisdom and so on from himself and made them into a separate freestanding hypostasis, thereby losing all his essential attributes. So God would no longer be wise, true *etc.* This cannot be sound, since those are his inalienable attributes (they are what is proper, *idion*, to him, and he cannot alienate them without losing his identity).²³

²⁰ Equality is a relation between at least two things, so to say that the Son is another God equal to the first is ditheism.

²¹ G.C. Stead, 'The Platonism of Arius' (1964).

²² *Ibid.* 19-21. As Stead explains, these moves exclude various heretical positions that both parties would agree are unacceptable (on which more below), and also conform to a Platonist tradition.

²³ See the list of choices offered by Athanasius in the second half of *Contra Ar.* I 9. These are surely the choices that Arius thinks impossible.

It is this dilemma that motivates Arius to choose the third way, which he expresses in the famous statements quoted from the *Thalia* by Athanasius,²⁴ and also in Arius' credal letter to Alexander.²⁵ Arius says

[Text 2]

οὐκ ἔστιν ὁ ἀληθινὸς καὶ μόνος αὐτὸς τοῦ Πατρὸς λόγος ἀλλ' ὀνόματι μόνον λέγεται λόγος καὶ σοφία, καὶ χάριτι λέγεται υἱὸς καὶ δύναμις

Arius apud Athanasius, *Contra Arianos* I 9

He is not really the very word itself, the one and only word of the Father. He is just called 'word' and 'wisdom' merely nominally, and is called 'son' and 'might' as grace and favour titles.²⁶

The point of saying that the Son is not the one true Logos and so on, is to ensure that when we insist, as we should, that he is a separate hypostasis, we have not deprived the Father of his Logos, wisdom, might and so on. Hence also, when Arius says that he is not the one proper and eternal *dunamis* of God, but is one of many things called *dunamis*,²⁷ the word *idia* designates the one that is the essential attribute of God, the Father's *own* power, as opposed to the many other powers distributed to others, and external things that are called powers. So when he says, rather strangely, that the Son is not *idios* of the Father's *ousia* because he is a creature and an artefact,²⁸ [Text 3] we must presume that he is still talking in the same terms about the same problem.

[Text 3]

Οὐκ ἔστιν ἴδιος τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ Πατρὸς· κτίσμα γάρ ἐστι καὶ ποίημα.

Arius apud Athanasius, *Contra Arianos* I 9

That is, whatever titular and honorific descriptors we use of the Son, in each case he is not the one that is proper and exclusive to the essence of God, but only a metaphorical one.²⁹ Arius is trying to ensure that the Son is neither numerically identical with one of the Father's own defining properties, nor is

²⁴ Athanasius, *De syn* 15; *Contra Ar.* I 9.

²⁵ Athanasius, *De syn* 16.

²⁶ Note the emphatic placement of ἔστιν, which is more than just the copula, but rather is a claim about what the Son really is in essence. I've tried to capture this with 'really'. There is no exact English equivalent for λέγεται, which does not really mean named or called, but rather spoken of (here by contrast with having the name that he is called by right, it being his own proper descriptor).

²⁷ ὅτι πολλαὶ δυνάμεις εἰσὶ καὶ ἡ μὲν μία τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐστὶν ἰδία φύσει καὶ αἰδῖος· ὁ δὲ Χριστὸς πάλιν οὐκ ἔστιν ἀληθινὴ δύναμις τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἀλλὰ μία τῶν λεγομένων δυνάμεων ἐστὶ καὶ αὐτός (Arius apud *Contra Arianos* I 9.)

²⁸ PG 26, 29.18.

²⁹ Probably the positive – and rather obscure if not nonsensical claim – that the Son is *idios* of the Father's *substance* is first made by Athanasius in order to distance himself from the more specific and comprehensible Arian suggestion of another Logos, and another Wisdom *etc.*, in each case one that is *not* God's own. And then in that general and meaningless form, it is denied again by Arius.

he part of the Father's essence. The Son may have attributes in common with the Father, but they are not the Father's own properties, and he is not any one or more of the Father's properties.

This leads Arius on to the idea that *methexis* or μετοχή has some use in explaining the relationship of a derivative example of a property to the authentic exemplar.³⁰ If it is important to deny that the Son is the Father's very own wisdom (as Arius feels he must), or that he *has* the Father's very own wisdom (which would also be absurd unless the Son is the Father), then we need some other account of how the Son can be called the Wisdom of the Father. Here the relationship can either be of two lateral equals (both the Father and the Son have wisdom in the same sense, two individual examples of the same kind, like Christopher Stead's wisdom and Henry Chadwick's wisdom for instance). Or it can be a relationship of dependence, whereby one is the archetype of wisdom, and the other is a derived example. It looks as though Arius opted for the latter relation because of the problems he could see in the former one. He imagines the Father hypostasising what is normally a property of some substance, and making it into an independent entity, which then bears the name of one of his own properties,³¹ and also bears the name 'Son'. Since the Father does this by an act of will (that is, it is not an automatic or random effect of his nature or his other activities) the resulting hypostasis is a κτίσμα or ποίημα produced at will, having, in virtue of this procedure, a nature and essence that is not the Father's own but a kind of second instance with similar properties.

On this account (which I've developed from one or two hints in Stead's 1964 article)³² the claims in Arius' documents that struck Athanasius as so objectionable can be re-read as an attempt to avoid identifying the Son with an essential property of the Father. This is roughly what Williams was saying. Hence his suggestion that Arius was trying to avoid that, because it would lead to a kind of Sabellianism, by failing to make the Son a separate hypostasis from the Father.³³ Williams diagnosed the worry as a concern with the status of the Son. But is that really where the problem lay for Arius? What Stead saw and disliked in Williams was the idea that Arius was bothered by how low the status of the Son would be if he were 'merely' an essential property of the Father, if he were 'a mere impersonal property', not a decent respectable hypostasis in his own right. And Stead thought that Williams was wrong there, because that was not the worry, but rather the reverse: as he observed, Arius was surely quite keen to demote the Son, and seemed more worried by the risk of over-promoting him. That was what led Stead to discuss text 1.

³⁰ E.g. Athanasius, *Contra Arianos* I 9: οὐκ ἔστιν ἀληθινὸς θεὸς ὁ χριστὸς ἀλλὰ μετοχῇ καὶ αὐτὸς ἐθεοποιήθη.

³¹ *Letter to Alexander* (in Athanasius, *De synodis* 16).

³² G.C. Stead, 'The Platonism of Arius' (1964), 20.

³³ R. Williams, 'The Logic of Arianism' (1983), 60.

By contrast, if we consider the potential threat to the Father's essence, the risk is quite different. It is that, in hypostatising the Son, God has alienated some of his inalienable properties. This has nothing whatever to do with either upgrading or downgrading the Son. It is about a perceived threat to the integrity of *the Father*, and to his eternal possession of his own proper attributes. When Athanasius insists that the Son *is* the one and only Wisdom and the True Logos and so on, *his* worry (like that of Williams and Stead) is about the loss of status to the Son, if anyone says he is not the real Logos of the Father but a second one named after the Father's Logos. But surely Arius was worried about something else entirely, when he insisted that the Logos was not the Father's genuine logos. He did not mean either to demote the Son as Stead suggests,³⁴ nor to resist demoting him (as Williams had implied).³⁵ He meant above all to preserve the essential attributes of the Father as inalienable, so that (a) God could not be said to lose his best qualities in generating the Son as a separate being, while also (b) preserving the idea that the Son is indeed a second hypostasis (as Williams notes), not just some one or all of the Father's attributes nor part of his substance. Yet at the same time, in an ecumenical spirit, he wanted to insist on the Son's right to those precious titles ('Word', 'Wisdom', 'Might' and so on) in no merely adoptionist or docetic manner. The Son, he thought, was directly hypostasised as such, by the Father's will, not by adoption of some other more ordinary creature, and he was given the right to those titles by divine will, not by human convention.

Perhaps I am mistaken in finding these points at least adumbrated in Stead's 1964 article. Perhaps Stead wasn't clear at that stage about how it would make sense of Arius's worries. At that stage he seems unable to see why Athanasius would attribute to Arius the idea that there were two Words and two Wisdoms and so on, one of which is proper to God and the other of which is hypostasised as a second person.³⁶ He thought this was an 'absurd' idea invented by Athanasius. Williams also follows Stead in this, considering it most improbable that Arius held it.³⁷ Yet later, in his spoof Arian document (on which see below) Stead does seem to present the view that I have just offered.³⁸ And surely it makes good sense both of Arius' worries and of Athanasius' testimony. The claim that the Son is not the one and only Logos proper to the Father, and his claim that the Son obtains the titles by the Father's own deliberate favour, all fall into place, without needing to invoke any commitment to philosophical theories about what the term *idios* can mean, or about the nature of properties

³⁴ G.C. Stead, 'Was Arius a Neoplatonist?' (1997), 42.

³⁵ R. Williams, 'The Logic of Arianism' (1983), 59.

³⁶ G.C. Stead, 'The *Thalia* of Arius and the testimony of Athanasius' (1978), 33.

³⁷ R. Williams, 'The Logic of Arianism' (1983), 59.

³⁸ Christopher Stead, 'The Arian Controversy: A New Perspective', in H. Eisenberger (ed.), *Ἑρμηνεύματα: Festschrift in honour of Hadwig Hörner* (Heidelberg, 1990), 51-9, 56.

or even (I think) of participation and the other technical terms that Arius employs to try to express the points. The serious work is not really being done by those terms, or by the Platonism to which they might seem to allude, but simply by the unsophisticated notion that if God has a certain attribute that is part of what makes him awesome and divine, it would be damaging to his awesome divinity if he lost that attribute by letting it become something outside himself – and even if you say that the result is another person of the Trinity, nevertheless the Father must not lose his own personal attributes in the begetting of that second person. So the worry was surely about the Father's dignity – not the Son's, as Stead and Williams had supposed, perhaps intuitively acquiring that worry from Athanasius and the Nicene party.

But aside from the truth, or otherwise, of that suggestion, my point was really to ask whether Christopher Stead's approach to Arianism betrays his own theological concerns and interests. Stead was keen to reinstate Arius as a serious thinker, and to see him as a bit of a philosopher, trying to be faithful to both logic and revealed truths. He was happy to trace in Arius' ideas an innocuous Platonism such as we find in many of the early Fathers. I see in Stead's Arius someone a bit like Christopher Stead himself.

So perhaps it is no wonder that Stead was rather less happy to have Arius dabbling with Iamblichus and Porphyry in the way that Williams was suggesting, than with the Middle Platonists as he had earlier imagined. My guess is that while a mild and rational Platonism was palatable to Stead, the excesses of mature Neoplatonism were anathema. An Arius like that, reading degenerate thinkers in the late Neoplatonic tradition such as Iamblichus, would not have seemed to him such a good role model for a fine upstanding Anglican divine of Christopher Stead's mould, renowned more for his finely turned sermons than for his willingness to tolerate anything like fancy ritual.

It seems that whereas earlier thinkers had demonised Arius, making him into all that they most feared, Christopher Stead not only avoided that, but rather found in Arius something closer to a congenial and like-minded thinker, though perhaps not exactly a role model. In a mischievous piece that he published in 1990,³⁹ in which he pretends to have discovered a new document written in the name of Arius, he writes (of his spoof discovery, actually a composition of his own): 'It is indeed written in the name of Arius, and is presumably the work of an Arian writer, or at least of one who had some measure of sympathy with the Arian cause. But it cannot have been written by Arius himself, nor indeed during his lifetime, since it clearly shows knowledge of Athanasian theology, not simply from oral tradition but as it is presented in his writings.' With tongue in cheek, Stead is describing himself. For sure he is not 'an Arian

³⁹ *Ibid.*

writer' but he must mean that he has enough sympathy with the Arian cause to be able to attempt to get inside the skin of someone in that position.⁴⁰

That part-joke part-serious publication illustrates Stead's high-brow sense of humour. A fitting tribute to that side of his character would require me to construct something similar – perhaps a newly discovered fragment, from the Egyptian desert, of a technical treatise by Arius, in which Arius used the Ball of Aeolus to illustrate some finer points of doctrine, such as the emission of power to the Son from the Father? The Ball of Aeolus (or Aeolipile) is explained in chapter 1 of Stead's book on the birth of the Steam Locomotive.⁴¹ It is the earliest precursor of the modern steam locomotive. Invented by Hero of Alexandria in around the first century AD, such an engine could, in principle, have been known to Arius and Athanasius. So they could, in principle, have seen its potential as an analogy for crucial theological motifs such as the divine power and wisdom and begetting. So I could, in principle, have written a spoof Arian text that realised that potential. But how plausible would that have been? For the ancient Alexandrians never did see what was wonderful about steam engines.⁴²

⁴⁰ The piece is very entertaining and well imagined: 'The prophet of old instructed his disciple saying "My son, if thou comest to serve the Lord, prepare thy soul for trials..."' the spoof document begins, in 'the English version which I have prepared', as Stead put it, *ibid.*, 51. He even inserts the Greek term where he imagines that there is a kind of joke or pun in the 'original Greek'. Evidently the irreverence misfired among some German Scholars (see Stead's commentary at G.C. Stead, *Doctrine and Philosophy in Early Christianity* [2000], xii-xiii).

⁴¹ C. Stead, *The Birth of the Steam Locomotive* (2002), 1-2.

⁴² This paper has benefited greatly from the discussions at the workshop at the Patristic Conference in 2011, particularly the question raised there by Sarah Coakley who asked us to reflect on the ways in which the various thinkers under discussion differed in their approach to their subject and why. In addition I have profited from several useful discussions with Rowan Williams who read an earlier draft and raised some useful questions.

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ABSTRACT

Henry Chadwick's scholarly work ranged widely, and it is not a simple task to discern unifying motifs or threads of argument; he was not an 'architectonic' writer whose work manifests the elaboration of a particular thesis from diverse points of view and creates a radically new reading of a whole world of evidence. He was a scholar who devoted his enormous skills to the patient resolution of specific issues, to the broad framing of questions about intellectual development and to the elucidation of texts. He was also, of course, an historian in the broad literary sense, someone capable of sustaining a large narrative with energy and clarity.

To read Henry Chadwick, and indeed the other great scholars of his generation who steered the fortunes of the Oxford Patristic Conference for so much of its history fairly and intelligently, we need to sketch out something of the context in which they worked and in which the Conference developed. The second half of the twentieth century witnessed major changes in the discipline we still refer to (despite some wincing at the patriarchal coding) as patristics. When the first Oxford Patristic Conferences were held in the fifties, the field was divided internationally between a (broadly) German-dominated tradition of philological scholarship and a (broadly) French-based interest in a more directly theological process of *ressourcement*, allied to the *nouvelle théologie* that was gaining importance in the European Catholic world. Both styles were capable of producing major achievements in terms of the editing of texts (*Sources Chrétiennes* owed its beginnings to the Catholic theological renewal); but both were liable to operate within a somewhat narrow horizon, not much in contact or conversation with the disciplines of broader social and intellectual history. In Britain, the scene reflected something of a mixture of the two worlds. The most important British contribution to something like the German end of the market was, of course, the continuing work on the *Patristic Greek Lexicon*, still a model of traditional lexicographical precision, but with a succession of keen theological eyes helping to shape the entries and to make them an abidingly helpful resource for the tracking of developments in ideas. The French approach did not find strong echoes in Britain, on the whole, partly because of a historic suspicion of the scholarly credentials of Roman Catholic writers, rooted in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: at that period, when early Christian texts

were the site of bitter interpretative contest between Catholic and Reformed apologists, it was largely taken for granted that Catholic scholarship was ideologically driven. Assumptions died hard in this area; and at best European Catholic work on the Fathers was liable to be seen as an ingenious interweaving of theological and devotional tropes. The work of Daniélou on Gregory of Nyssa or de Lubac on the history of exegesis was largely ignored in the textbooks. And at a time when research on Augustine was flourishing in France (and not only among Catholic scholars), the British contribution was meagre, up to the sixties. With the noble exception of Gerald Bonner, there was little attempt to tackle the great themes of Augustine's theology in a really systematic way; nor was there much consideration of the various socio-historical issues connected with Augustine's work, or much treatment of the complexities of his philosophical hinterland. Paradoxically, many of the textbooks I have mentioned, not least the impeccably lucid work of J.N.D. Kelly, were deeply marked by Catholic scholarship of an earlier generation, by the dogmatic histories which were produced late in the nineteenth or early in the twentieth centuries (Tixeront is perhaps the most familiar example). Full of efficiently digested material, these were dominated by a particular view of the history of doctrinal formulation, and a tendency to treat every theological controversy as a neatly-chartable confrontation between two sets of convictions, almost totally isolated from the secular and religious history of the times, let alone any considerations relating to liturgy or popular religion, and notoriously indifferent to the material record, in art and archaeology. The astonishing influence of G.L. Prestige's Bampton Lectures on Fathers and Heretics continued to mould discussion well into the sixties, and represents the most elegant, economical version of this kind of *Dogmengeschichte*. It would be an intriguing research project to look at the relative impact in Britain of German and French styles of doctrinal history; and I would venture the impression that the French mode had more influence. Yet despite this, later and more creative French scholarship took time to percolate. In their way, the Oxford Conferences played a very important role in this, allowing more varied and direct contact between Catholic (and indeed Orthodox) patristologists and their Anglophone counterparts than ever before. Some of the stories of these encounters illustrate almost comically the divergence of worlds: Anglo-American savants shooting down the flights of fancy (as they saw it) indulged by Jesuits and archimandrites, Continental scholars exposing the woodenness of narrowly academic readings. But overall, it was good for everyone. If patristics these days is not characterised by the same kinds of standoff, it is partly due to the tacit recognition in the Oxford Conferences that there was more than one way of approaching early Christian literature with scholarly professionalism.

In what follows, I have not tried to offer a general overview of Henry Chadwick's scholarly production; those looking for such an overview and a biographical sketch may be referred to the recent British Academy memoir.

I shall take a narrower focus, suggesting that a reader of Chadwick's work who looked beyond the translations, monographs and surveys would in fact, despite the 'occasional' quality of much of the work, find at least one set of distinctive ideas that help to shape a good deal of the whole oeuvre; and it is this that I intend to explore briefly in this paper, with reference to a number of shorter works, mostly lectures and Festschrift essays, especially those collected in *Heresy and Orthodoxy in the Early Church* (1991). It might be summarised in a phrase that he uses in an essay on 'The Domestication of Gnosis' published in 1980, where he defines 'hellenism' as 'a *koine* that was expressed in far more than language' (p. 4). Many of his most important discussions encourage us to question any over-confident location of the intellectual frontier between Christianity and its cultural environment in late antiquity. And while this may seem obvious to some contemporary scholars, it is fair to say that in the middle of the last century, especially in the UK, it was not entirely received wisdom. There was, of course, learned discussion of non-Christian philosophical *influence* on patristic writers – not yet in quite the detail that Christopher Stead, another of those we gratefully commemorate this week, was to bring to the subject, but not negligible. Chadwick, however, is interested not only in this and not only in the wider material that formed the subject matter of his Cochrane lectures on *Christianity and Classical Culture*, but in the more elusive influence of habits of thought and behaviour taken for granted and not very clearly systematized. His magisterial work Origen's *Contra Celsum* traced the genealogies of particular clusters of ideas in both Celsus and his opponent, but – as his correspondence shows – he knew that he had also to explore in his reading of Origen the half-beliefs, the magic as much as the ethics, of the second and third century Mediterranean. He had to become familiar with the *koine* of a philosophy which assumes from the start a doctrine that is both metaphysical and ethical: the doctrine that what holds the universe together is 'spirit' properly adjusted or attuned. Such proper adjustment involves the recognition both that spirit subordinate to the instincts or desires of the body is out of tune, and that full attunement requires a bridging of the gulf between divine and human spirit. As Chadwick makes plain in his earliest article ('Origen, Celsus and the Stoa'), this mixture of Stoic and Platonic elements was common ground for a wide range of Mediterranean intellectuals of this era; it seems to have been a good deal less ideological variety as regards these fundamentals during the early centuries of the Christian era than there had been two or three centuries earlier when the boundaries between philosophical schools were more severely patrolled. And one implication of this is that both the gaps and the convergences between Christian and non-Christian intellectuals were not always primarily 'doctrinal' in the way that some might expect – despite the important doctrinal differences over matters such as the eternity of the world or the divine nature of the stars. They did not necessarily disagree about conceptual terminology, any more than they necessarily derived technical vocabulary from

one another. Chadwick's relatively untechnical Robert Waley Cohen lecture of 1968 on the subject of conscience, a foretaste of later and fuller treatment, insists that the word *suneidesis* establishes itself in antiquity as essentially a popular, non-philosophical term for uncomfortable self-awareness; when picked up by St Paul, it is not a sign of dependence on any specific pre-Christian system but simply the expression of a sort of folk-philosophy or folk-psychology. The specific point here is of much wider application.

One of the areas in which this 'non-doctrinal' aspect of the intellectual history of the age is most significant is in teachings around the body and its sexual impulses. The textbook cliché that early Christianity borrowed with a negative attitude to the body from 'Platonism' or 'Platonic dualism' is massively unhelpful; as is the picture of a Christianity uniquely obsessed with chastity and purity. With all the work of Peter Brown, Caroline Walker Bynum, Margaret Miles and many others behind us, this again may seem hardly to need saying; but it was Chadwick who cleared the ground by helping to map the 'encratite' tradition more adequately, inside and outside the Church. In the paper on gnosis already quoted, he observes the use of Platonic and Stoic material in the Nag Hammadi collection and points out how it reflects a general, 'non-partisan' concern for self-control, the subordination of body and *psyche* to *nous*, so as to activate the dimensions of human nature that are more directly related to the divine; whatever uncomplimentary gossip heresiologists had circulated about Gnostics, it seems that the Nag Hammadi texts represented the kind of ascetical consensus that could have been studied without too much anxiety by a not-too-critically minded Egyptian monk of the fourth century. The 'intellectual' life itself, the very idea of the independent life of the mind, implied for the generality of those who thought of themselves as philosophers in this period a set of disciplines and renunciations: Christians were not uniquely hostile to the body, non-Christians had no 'doctrinal' reason either for celebrating the body as such or for regarding matter as intrinsically bad, and the influence is not that of a school or a system but of a cluster of habits of thought. Plotinus' arguments against the Gnostics are directed not against the basic pattern of a disabled intellect struggling to establish supremacy over bodily instinct but against the cosmic drama or melodrama beloved of Gnostic systems and the unequivocally negative view of matter taught in these circles. Both his convergence with and his divergence from Gnostic teachings are not – so far as they go – particularly different from what Christians might argue. And all parties would broadly agree about the priority of self-control and so on, despite the hostile caricatures of Gnostics beloved of Plotinus as well as the Christians.

Another area of interest here is that discussed by Chadwick in his British Academy Schweich Lectures of 1992, eventually published with additional material in 2009. The subject is 'Ancient Interpretation of Sacred Books'; much of the material is perhaps not all that original, but there are some striking pages towards the end (29ff.) on what non-Christian and Christian hermeneutics

had in common. Touching on the Hellenistic and late antique enthusiasm for finding allegory in Homer, even to the extent of arguing that Homer possessed inspired knowledge of cosmological and geographical truths. Chadwick suggests that we should read in parallel the apologia for myth and poetic narrative offered by someone like Maximus of Tyre in the second century and Julian the Apostate in the fourth and the Christian adoption of allegorical reading. Symbolic texts are like 'modest' clothing for the divinity whose naked form we cannot and should not expect to view. Thus inspired narrative like that of Homer is a fitting vehicle for the oblique but appropriate communication of theological truth, and the rituals of worship serve the same purpose of concealing truth from those who have no appetite for the humbling work of approaching the divine in its true mysteriousness. Once again, what is to be noted is the fundamental identity of the *koine*: Christianity did not introduce into the ancient world an arbitrary or superstitious attitude to holy texts, but utilised one aspect of a common coinage of piety to defend texts that (like Homer) could appear grotesque or immoral as a vehicle deliberately devised by God to deter the impatient or arrogant. Even the point familiar from Origen – that Scripture relates impossible things so as to alert us to the fact that deeper truths are being concealed – is paralleled in pseudo-Heraclitus, Cronius and Porphyry. The anxiety that allegory is essentially an arbitrary eisegesis is voiced already by Seneca, and is partly – though only partly – answered by the principle that Homer is his own best exegete (*i.e.* presumably that he is not to be interpreted, even allegorically, in ways that make him contradict himself). There is something of a theological problem, Chadwick notes, in that an allegorical reading of the Bible must assume that it is in effect *one* text, so that the human particularity of different authors is obscured; but (though he does not himself say this) the same problem occurs in regard to other kinds of reading which ascribe to a scriptural author more in terms of factual knowledge than they could humanly know as individuals. However the main point is that there is a control on arbitrary readings in terms of coherence with what the community of faith and practice reads as the general and clear import of the text as a whole. Allegory dissolves difficulties at the point where a literal reading would be dissonant with this overall import; it does not introduce something radically new and different.

Thus it was not in the least odd for a late antique intellectual to identify a text as one that had been constructed by divine inspiration to communicate truth in a way that required spiritual maturity to discern and that warned off or simply repelled the superficial reader or the one who sought instant understanding. As Chadwick points out in his book on Boethius (p. 248), we find this stated pretty plainly in Proclus, in terms, indeed, of a distinction between reason and revelation that looks quite mediaeval to an unwary reader. But the really significant common belief is that revelatory texts require intense scrutiny and care not to stop with surface meanings. Just as the very fact of independent

intellectual endeavour prescribed self-knowledge and self-control, so the very practice of allegorical reading required disciplines of patience and meditative time-taking. What Chadwick is sketching in these studies is a unity of belief and habit, a style of mental engagement, that defined the intellectual or philosophical life for Christian and non-Christian alike. And before moving on to look at an issue that would be an equal challenge to Christian and non-Christian intellectual, it is worth mentioning briefly one more question brought into focus in yet another brief essay of Chadwick's from the memorial volume for Festugière published in 1984, on 'Oracles of the End in the Conflict of Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century'. We have become habituated to thinking that Christianity alone brings into the Western intellectual repertoire a unidirectional concept of time and history, that it overcame a static or cyclic picture of earthly reality. But the truth is a little more complex. Porphyry's interest in oracles, as well as reminding us of the routine significance of the 'occult' in the intellectual life of late antiquity, shows us something of how, in at least one respect, a non-Christian could work with a unilinear view of time. He clearly had a keen interest in oracles that foretold the demise of Christianity. If the oracle to which Augustine refers in *civ.* 18.53-4 is from Porphyry's collection, Porphyry entertained the idea that Christianity would flourish only for the duration of a 'Great Year', a period of 365 years. The periodisation of history, so marked a feature of the historiography of Augustine and Orosius and those who followed them, was once again not a Christian eccentricity but something recognizably part of a common framework: the question was not whether history fell into clearly demarcated periods but what those periods were, which events were significant as marking them and what major changes might be expected. Despite Chadwick's title, he does not establish that any non-Christian of this era expected the end of the world in the way that so many Christians did. But the expectation of a radical turnaround in the fortunes of a historical community seems by no means alien to 'pagan' intellectuals.

Behind the shared assumptions of Christians and non-Christians lies, as we have seen, a loosely defined metaphysic with fairly clear ethical implications: all human beings are by nature rational and spiritual, but their true nature has been overlaid by the non-rational passions triggered by distraction from the simplicity of truth – especially the distraction produced by gendered embodiment, itself commonly seen as an unhappy effect of spiritual decline. This is very emphatically a universalist picture, making claims about what is true for every person. It is therefore seriously challenged by anything that looks like relativism. Chadwick's 1979 study of 'The Relativity of Moral Codes: Rome and Persia in Late Antiquity' is one of his most unusual and original shorter pieces and helps us see how the common wisdom of the intellectual world we have been considering recognized the radical variety of moralities among the peoples of the world and responded to the challenge. The essay also makes clear the distinctive political background to the debate in relation to one spe-

cially significant period of Diocletian's reign. At a time when military conflict with the Persians was a major preoccupation, it is reasonable to think that certain imperial edicts reflect hostility to 'Persian' practices. Diocletian's proscription of incestuous marriage in 295 is likely to be fuelled by the famous or notorious tolerance of incest among the Persians; and it may be that the eastern imperial campaigns of 290 had given the emperor 'opportunity to discover that Mesopotamian marriage customs were strikingly different from those of the rigidly exogamous Roman empire' (p. 146). If Diocletian's edict against the Manichees belongs to the same period (and Chadwick presents the case for and against this conclusion in detail without coming down firmly on either side), it is another sign of resistance to the spread of alien customs and teachings from Persia into the Roman empire: the Manichees are depicted in the edict as corrupting Romans by introducing 'the execrable customs and savage laws of the Persians' (p. 138).

In the background to this is a longstanding Roman (and Greek) recognition that moral codes differ from nation to nation. Yet the universalism we have noted as a presupposition of the philosophical *koine* of the age is clearly in tension with this recognition. If no-one really disagrees about a hard core of moral fundamentals, there should be no such serious divergence as the tolerance of incest suggests; either that, or some things do not, after all, belong in the list of fundamentals. But then, who is to say what is and is not fundamental? Relativism threatens. It may be music to the ears of 'radical sophists', those who argue that all morality is a matter of human convention, and thus imposed solely by human power, but it sits badly with the assumption that the life of the mind is one and the same across cultures and eras. Moral scepticism is bound to go with a more general epistemological scepticism; and though Chadwick does not specifically make the point, an acceptance of the relativity of moral codes, the sheer positivity of moral law, would make the metaphysical consensus of late antiquity unsustainable. Moral relativism is not a problem for Christians alone.

The responses to the problem mentioned by Chadwick are varied. You can argue that there is, in spite of everything, a single law written in the human heart – though this is hard to maintain in the face of actual divergence. You can see moral eccentricities such as Persian incest as an aberration caused by false teachers (thus, in the sixth century CE, Agathias on Zoroaster, p. 151). Or you can abandon universalism without abandoning the divine origin of laws by supposing that there is a plurality of gods, one for each nation, 'allowed as much individual freedom as provincial governors under the empire' (p. 148); though this presupposes a rigid distinction between races or at least regimes which is hard to sustain in its purity in a mobile and cosmopolitan society. In this framework, the only solution to diversity is the enforcement of uniformity by the dominant political power (p. 149). Or, finally, you can do what some Christian thinkers – notably Bardaisan – did and argue from the facts of moral

diversity that a fully coherent ethics can be derived only from the universal revelation of the gospel. Rather like contemporary Radical Orthodox theologians, such writers allow the fires of scepticism to burn right up to the walls of the City of God: outside the universal, non-racial community of Christ's Body, there is naturally going to be error and chaos.

What is significant for the present argument is that concern over moral diversity was not confined to Christians; on the contrary, it was felt very acutely by non-Christians, indeed, most acutely by some of those most hostile to Christianity, Julian the Apostate as well as Diocletian. Chadwick quotes Themistius' oration to Jovian in 364 which seems to reflect a change in Roman policy towards the 'execrable customs' of the Persians: religious diversity is something willed by God to show his transcendence, and so it is not necessary to seek to suppress alien custom. Uniformity imposed by war is a bad idea (and, in the wake of Rome's humiliating defeat in the conflict with Persia, a singularly difficult one to realise). Following through Chadwick's argument, what we are witnessing, in fact, is the emergence of a rather different kind of common speech among non-Christians, of which the best-known example is Symmachus' famous oration in the controversy over the Altar of Victories. Here is a sophisticated non-Christian essentially arguing for religious pluralism on the grounds of divine transcendence; he wants to see the traditional Roman cult preserved because it is distinct to Rome and Rome's history, and he argues passionately against the Christian urge to destroy the old religious landmarks on the basis that no-one has a monopoly of religious truth.

The picture that emerges is an interesting one. Up to the mid-fourth century, Christians and others were fighting not about the basic metaphysical shape of the world or even the broad definition of human destiny (as reconciliation with true or pure intellect) but about the best vehicles of knowledge about this, and the agency by which human beings could be restored to their native dignity. Christians did not have to establish that humanity was alienated from its destiny, or that there was a residue of transcendent intellect buried under the distracting weight of the flesh; they did not even have to argue that the supreme God revealed his nature through an outpouring of divine power through the various levels of being and through inspired and often obscure oracles – though they did have to develop a new precision about where the boundary between finite and infinite was located and to affirm new and difficult refinements about what in God could and could not be 'participated'. And they had to overcome – with the help of allegory and a sophisticated doctrine of providence – the disdain of fastidious non-Christian readers faced with the literary oddity of Scripture and the social oddity of an artisan saviour who was publicly executed. That there were certain 'givens' about how a credible intellectual would approach the world, including the world of ethics, was not really in doubt. Chadwick's essay on Rome and Persia helps us see, first, that (as we noted earlier) the first three Christian centuries saw rather less active diversity in intellectual life than had been the case

earlier, so that some themes of classical thought had virtually disappeared; the pattern is one of (from the modern viewpoint, unevenly successful) synthesis between Platonism, Aristoteleanism and the Stoa. But, secondly, there are changes in the fourth century which begin to fragment what we have been calling the *koine* of the earlier period; and these are not only to do with the new doctrinal definitions of the Church – which themselves are in part, I would argue, responses to a move away from a too comfortable philosophical consensus – but are also shaped by the ways in which ‘paganism’ responds to a successful and aggressive Christianity. Against the exclusive claims of the Church, non-Christians retrieve some earlier sceptical arguments about the unavoidable diversity of religious forms and customs in order to defend ancestral usage. But in so doing, they abandon what was once the common coin of philosophical discourse and tacitly yield the pass to the acceptance of moral relativity, despite the political sensitivity of this in the third/fourth century context of intermittent armed conflict with Persia; Themistius evidently does not support the idea that military supremacy could or should settle the question. Perhaps more to the point, when Augustine in the *De civitate* mounts his most sustained critique of Roman religion, he turns to the much earlier Varro as an apologist for a religious diversity based on civic and ethnic difference, as if he recognizes that this, variously dusted down, is now the real alternative to Christianity (and on this Chadwick has some useful things to say in his essay on ‘Augustine on pagans and Christian: reflections on religious and social change’, pp. 21-3).

Chadwick’s work in these areas, then, while it may appear ‘occasional’, actually sketches out a coherent strand in the broad intellectual history of late antiquity. It is one that has a fair bit of contemporary resonance: as I have hinted already, there are parallels between the way in which some theologians accept wholeheartedly the radical pluralism of intellectual postmodernity as a ‘protreptic’ to the comprehensive claims of Christian orthodoxy and the account given by someone like Bardaisan of moral diversity in non-Christian cultures. Outside the Church there is no *pou sto*: revelation alone offers epistemological as well as moral clarity. Put in another way, the story Chadwick outlines could be seen as one in which apologetic loses the intellectual initiative in theology. As he himself notes in an early paper on St Paul (“‘All Things to All Men’”, 1955), ‘The apologist must minimize the gap between himself and his potential converts. Very different is the psychological attitude of the defender of orthodoxy; he must make as wide as possible the distance between authentic Christianity and deviationist sects’ (p. 275) – or, we might supply, between Christianity and the common currency of non-Christian thought. But this should not simply be attributed to Christian bigotry. Apart from the internal shifts in late antique philosophy, the new turns in logic as well as metaphysics associated with the second and third generations of Neoplatonism, traditional Mediterranean religion had some difficult tactical decisions to make in the face of ascendant Christianity. In resisting the claims of Christian doctrine, traditional

religion's apologists seem to have colluded with Christians in distancing themselves from a *koine* of what I have been calling universalism, the assumption that there is one pattern of reconciliation with our true intellectual nature, a pattern associated with particular styles of contemplation of the eternal forms and discipline of the bodily instincts. Intelligent traditionalism found its best spokesmen in faintly agnostic pluralists like Themistius and Symmachus.

Earlier in this paper, I suggested in passing that a close study of some of Henry Chadwick's essays might help us understand some of the features of his work as a whole. This is illustrated by the connection of the themes we have been looking at with the two major monographs of Chadwick's maturity, the studies of Priscillian and Boethius. The work on Priscillian is, of course, deeply informed by Chadwick's long interest in encratism – and in the way that encratite themes could act as a potentially dangerous bridge between unequivocally mainstream Christianity and what was seen as irregular doctrine and practice. The charges of erotic indulgence, magical rituals and the dissolution of ordinary hierarchical authority are familiar from the anti-Gnostic polemic of the second century; the reactions to Priscillian show how the same repertoire could be transferred to another target and associated now with Manichaeism. Just as, in the case of what Chadwick considers the likely use of the Nag Hammadi literature by Pachomian monks (still a contested question), a clear advocacy of ascetical ideals can cloud issues of doctrinal probity for some readers of the texts, so in Priscillian's case the suspicion that ascetical rhetoric was obscuring both theological and political risks was one result of an initial 'charismatic' blurring of some boundaries that others wished to see policed. We are beyond the era of *koine* here, of course: but part of the interest of Chadwick's work on Priscillian is to direct our attention back to the question of why and how such a teacher might be able to draw on reserves of unspoken habits, practical and intellectual, among Christian and semi-Christian communities. The monograph is a good example of challenging what might now be called elite-dominated accounts of early Christianity. And the roots of this analysis undoubtedly lie in Chadwick's early decision to immerse himself in the *demi-monde* of late antique thought as background for his work on Origen and Celsus.

Turning to his book on Boethius, for many readers his single most impressive work, the focus is rather different. One of the abidingly challenging things about Boethius is that his best-known work contains not a word of distinctively Christian teaching; it is a lucid and moving statement of a metaphysic and an ethic that could be recognized without difficulty by a late antique Platonist (and indeed many other sorts of Platonist as well). Chadwick has done sterling work in tracing echoes of Scripture and even of theological language here and there in Boethius' *Consolation*, and others have argued for liturgical resonances. Certainly the idea that the work is somehow consciously *non-Christian* overstates the question considerably. But there is no denying that what we read is precisely a *koine* philosophy – undoubtedly the greatest and most systematic as

well as the most moving and beautifully-composed statement of such a world-view. It advances, as Chadwick puts it, 'from a Stoic moralism to a Platonic metaphysical vision of the divine ordering of an apparently chaotic world' (p. 228), thus connecting, in just the way we have noted earlier, a practice of self-control and dispassion with the hope of a vision of unchanging truth and light, a vision wonderfully summed up in the *O qui perpetua* poem in the third book. Here is the familiar 'phenomenology of spirit' that has been traced in both ascetical and speculative works of an earlier generation: a 'doctrine' that is not instantly bound in with Christian dogma yet sits comfortably with (most of) it. As we have just observed, there was a great deal in the fourth century and afterwards working to dismantle what was left of this metaphysical consensus. But Boethius offers a striking demonstration of what was still possible: neither apologetics nor dogmatics, the *Consolation* simply states what are the possibilities of a rightly oriented spirit/intellect within the limits not only of finitude but of literal imprisonment and suffering. It is a striking climax to the long tradition Chadwick has helped to chart.

In other words, Boethius' *Consolation* ought not to come as a surprise to anyone who has followed the record of this ethical and metaphysical *koine* through from Justin onwards. It is a mistake to look for the 'uniquely' Christian elements of any writer in this succession; but that is very different from saying that they are incapable of being *distinctively* Christian, in the sense that they occupy a world defined ultimately by trinitarian and Christological dogma. To allow that revelation does not have to do all the work of mapping the human spirit is not quite the same as saying that we can either fully know ourselves or lastingly change ourselves without the intervention of grace; and, as we have seen more than once in this survey, Chadwick points out that this too is a point shared between Christians and others. To echo what was said earlier on, debates are not necessarily about competing doctrine as regards divine or human nature; they are more likely to be about who or what secures the liberation identified by all as the goal of the intellect's life.

As I said at the beginning of this paper, the recognition of points such as this will no longer seem particularly fresh to students of the present generation. But it is important to remember just how deep the gulf often seemed between patristics and the academic study of ancient history, including intellectual history, in the first half of the last century. One might illustrate the point by noting how little discussion there was among patrologists of E.R. Dodds' famous essay on *The Greeks and the Irrational*; and conversely, how little a scholar like Dodds used current British patristic scholarship to elucidate his readings of late antiquity. Patristics was largely seen as an 'in-house' theological, even clerical interest. It is interesting that, when the *Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Mediaeval Philosophy* first appeared in 1967 – itself something of a landmark in the wider scholarly acceptance of late antique thought as a serious field of study – the long chapter on 'The Greek Christian Platonist Tradition' was

written not by a professional patrologist but by I.P. Sheldon-Williams, an independent scholar, who produced a learned and rather idiosyncratic survey that approached the subject from an angle very different from that of most academic students of the Early Church (and thus, it should be added, gave some of its readers a certain sense of liberation in approaching Greek patristics...). Just as significant, though, is the fact that the chapter on Philo and his legacy was written by Henry Chadwick, evidently recognized as a theologian who would be a credible co-worker in a book on the broader intellectual history of the late classical world (just as Robert Markus, in the same volume, is trusted to produce a respectable discussion of Augustine, as, needless to say, he does). Chadwick, so Peter Brown has claimed in an obituary notice, was one of those who most effectively laid the foundations for the flowering of studies in late antiquity in the Oxford of the 1970s and elsewhere, by bringing to his own patristic scholarship a sophisticated awareness of the world that early Christian intellectuals inhabited. Scholars in the mainstream of classical studies could both recognize this world as the one they were interested in and see that patristic material had more to offer in understanding its complexities than they had generally thought; and Momigliano's invitation to Chadwick to address the Classical Conference in 1961 marked, as Brown observes, the beginning of a serious rapprochement between classics and patristics. Chadwick's familiarity with just that world which Dodds had laid open to classicists, as well as with the mainstream texts of philosophical study and, at least as significantly, his willingness to engage with papyrological research (one can see the importance of this, for example, in his discussion of datings in the essay on Rome and Persia) all combined to make possible a new respect for and interest in the early Christian thought-world outside the boundaries of 'historical theology'. In this paper, I have not sought to examine Chadwick's conclusions on specific questions in any detail, simply to draw out what appears to be a unifying set of preoccupations. The great synthetic works of narrative history are evidence enough of Chadwick's total mastery of the field – though the range of references in even the briefest essay would show much the same. But it would, I believe, be very wrong to see him as no more than a general practitioner in patristics who lacked any unifying theses; and I hope that this discussion may have helped to locate him more fully within the continuing and sometimes surprising development of patristics as a discipline, and thus to give a bit more specificity to the undoubted veneration which has for so long attached itself to his name within the scholarly profession.

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John Norman Davidson Kelly, born in Perthshire, Scotland, in 1909, was a graduate of both Glasgow University and the Queen's College Oxford, obtaining first-class honours at the latter both in Theology and in *Literae Humaniores*.¹ He then trained for the priesthood, though at the time of his ordination in 1935 he was already employed as tutor in theology and philosophy at St Edmund Hall in Oxford. From 1937 he held the office of Vice-Principal at the Hall, and in 1951 succeeded C.B. Emden as Principal. This appointment coincided with the Hall's acquisition of independent status as a college of Oxford University; after 1976 he combined the post with a university lectureship in patristics, an arrangement now unimaginable in Oxford or at any comparable university. After his retirement in 1979 – the year which also saw the admission of women to the Hall – he remained an active scholar, and his magisterial *Golden Mouth: The Story of John Chrysostom* was published by Duckworth in 1995, two years before his death. Yet, notwithstanding his eminence and fecundity as a student of the early Church – and notwithstanding the fact that his institution was separated only by the width of the High Street from the Examination Schools – it was only in 1971 that he served as a director of the International Conference in Patristic Studies which Oxford has hosted every four years since 1951.²

Yet, even had he never held such a post, his omission would leave a hiatus in a volume devoted to an illustrious generation of patristic scholarship. With the exception of Henry Chadwick, no-one of this generation produced more books that are indispensable even to a modest library of early Christian studies. Kelly's monographs *Jerome* and *Golden Mouth: The Story of John Chrysostom*³ are unrivalled in English, while *Early Christian Creeds* is an indispensable point of reference for students of this topic in any language. More bought, more thumbed, more often associated with his name than any of these three is *Early Christian Doctrines*, though it has not been such a seminal work in academic

¹ Popularly known as 'Greats', this is a four-year degree, which at that time commenced with five terms' study of classical literature, while the last seven terms were divided between philosophy and ancient history.

² I take this summary from the entry by H.E. Cowdrey in Colin Matthews and Brian Harrison (eds), *Dictionary of National Biography* 31, 122-4.

³ *Jerome* (London, 1975); *Golden Mouth* (Ithaca, 1995).

circles. A full estimate of Kelly would require an appreciation of the content and influence of all four works; since, however, that would require this essay to blend the talents of four specialists, the discussion will be limited to the two encyclopaedic works, on the plea that these are the ones which were most frequently republished, and the ones which both defined and refined the contours of the discipline in his day.

Early Christian Creeds

Few books have been as influential for entire generations of students and, as some of them have been appointed to academic posts, of teachers of Patristics for the study of Christian creedal development. Despite a revival of research in early Christian creeds, the unearthing of primary material, text critical editions of liturgical texts, epigraphic monuments and papyri, resulting in serious re-writings of the field by scholars like Pieter Smulders, Hans von Campenhausen, Adolf Martin Ritter, Wolfram Kinzig and others, Kelly's monograph both in its original English version (of 1950) and in its German translation (of 1972) still represents the benchmark of what is being taught and examined around the globe. R.P.C. Hanson in his *Dogma and Formula in the Fathers* (1975) was right when he divined that Kelly would become the replacement of Wilhelm Kattenbusch who for over 50 years had been the towering figure in the field. Hanson believed that Kelly's book would set the new benchmark of creedal studies for a very long time.

Kelly built his observations on the *Traditio Apostolica* with its baptismal interrogations, a scholarly reconstruction of the early 20th century which for decades was accepted as the single witness of the Apostles' Creed attributed to Hippolytus of Rome (early 3rd c.). Kelly observed that the declaratory creed, however, derived from entirely different needs and therefore reflected something very different than baptismal questions. It was not part of the liturgy, but found its place in various Christian communities during the fourth and fifth century, because in preparing for baptism people, catechists, teachers and bishops longed for a short and graspable summary of the core Christian preaching of the apostles and of the rule of faith. In contrast to Kattenbusch, Kelly rejected the idea that the Apostles' Creed was already present in the first Christian communities of Apostolic times or that it could be retraced from the writings of the New Testament or the Apostolic Fathers, but he strongly believed – based on the baptismal interrogations of the *Traditio Apostolica* – that the Church of Rome was the exception to the rule. As in Rome, according to Kelly, the reorganisation of teaching and catechism had begun earlier than elsewhere, the capital also was the place of origin for the Apostles' Creed, of course, in a slightly more primitive form than the one known from the fourth and fifth centuries. Kelly reinforced Kattenbusch's argument that the older

Roman form of this creed was, indeed, the mother creed of all other later developing local creeds, itself going back to a triadic form of questions, modelled on *Matth.* 28:19.

As indicated above, scholarship has superseded many of Kelly's assumptions, for example, the most important one, namely the witness of the *Traditio Apostolica*. Christoph Marksches has been able to show that the baptismal interrogations of the *Traditio Apostolica* do not go back to the 2nd c., but reflect a late 4th, or early 5th c. theology and that the link to Hippolytus of Rome was likewise a later contribution to the apostolizing of the *Traditio*.⁴ And yet, Kelly continues to be the one reference book for the study of the history of the creeds today,⁵ and more recently found a strong supporter in Liuwe Westra, who against strong opposition to Kelly defends the opinion that 'the existence of R [the old Roman creed] has sufficiently been proven by Kelly' who 'maintained a second-century origin for R, but limited its range of influence to the Latin-speaking part of the Church. In such a way, R could still be considered as the original form of the Apostles' Creed'. Westra correctly adds: 'Kelly's position has grown into a virtual *communis opinio*'.⁶

Early Christian Doctrines: the book

Early Christian Doctrines was published by A. and C. Black in 1958, ten years after the first edition of *Early Christian Creeds*, and six years after a book entitled *What is Catholicism?*, which is now of interest only to his biographers.⁷ His purpose in writing it, as he says in the preface, is to replace the manual of Bethune-Baker,⁸ which had been published half a century before and had been overtaken by 'important advances in our knowledge of early Christian thought' (p. v). In view of the 'limited purpose' of his volume, he does not propose to 'define the intrinsic nature of orthodoxy', let alone to investigate 'the influence of Hellenism on the original gospel'. His notes, he explains, will

⁴ See Christoph Marksches, 'Wer schrieb die sogenannte *Traditio Apostolica*?', in W. Kinzig, C. Marksches and M. Vinzent, *Tauffragen und Bekenntnis. Studien zur sogenannten Traditio Apostolica, zu den Interrogationes de fide und zum Römischen Glaubensbekenntnis*, Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte 74 (Berlin, 1999), 1-74.

⁵ See M. Vinzent, *Der Ursprung des Apostolikums im Urteil der kritischen Forschung*, Forschungen zur Kirche- und Dogmengeschichte 89 (Göttingen, 2006).

⁶ L. Westra, 'Enigma Variations in Latin Patristics: Fourteen Anonymous Sermons *de symbolo* and the Original Form of the Apostles' Creed', *SP* 29 (1997), 414-20, 418¹³. See also his *The Apostles' Creed: Origin, History, and Some Early Commentaries*, Instrumenta Patristica et Mediaevalia 43 (Turnhout, 2002).

⁷ *Early Christian Creeds* (London, 1950); *What is Catholicism?* (Saffron Walden, Essex, 1952).

⁸ J.F. Bethune-Baker, *An Introduction to the Early History of Christian Doctrine to the Council of Chalcedon* (London, 1923).

consist primarily of citations from original sources, and students are advised to ‘follow these up wherever they have the opportunity’, as ‘the only way to understand the mind of the early church is to soak oneself in the patristic writings’ (p. vi). He alludes to a handful of celebrated authorities, of whom more will be said below, but the only living scholar to whom he records a personal debt is F.L. Cross, the founder of the International Conference on Patristic Studies. If Kelly had taken little part in the management of the conference, he shared with Cross a desire for ecclesiastical reunion through academic dialogue. This priest of the Church of England approached the writing of a history of doctrine in the same oecumenical spirit that would lead him in his retirement to compile *The Oxford Dictionary of Popes*.⁹

James Bethune-Baker had commenced with a short preamble on the nature of development, which was purposely eschewed by his successor.¹⁰ A true notion of development, says, Bethune-Baker, may be distinguished from the antiquated doctrine of reserve, according to which the apostles imparted the entire content of the creed to their disciples, on the understanding that it would not be published to the world without necessity. He cites John Henry Newman,¹¹ aptly enough, as his representative of the developmental theory, but in fact such theories admit of further division into at least three kinds. One, which is signified by the proper meaning of the term ‘evolution’, imagines the creedal doctrine as a blossom which was waiting to unfold from the bud in which its form was already limned imperceptibly to the last petal. A second, that of Newman himself, might be characterized as Lamarckian, since it allows for accretion and modification but only in order to preserve the ‘type’. In the writings of Catholic Modernists, the primitive content of the gospel is permitted to vanish – ‘Jesus preached the kingdom; what came was the church’ – but even here, the process is not entirely taken out of the hands of providence. The reins are handed to chance and circumstance in the third, and as we might say Darwinian, species of development, which follow no prescriptive course, but leaves the church and its doctrine at the mercy of every change in the ambient culture or political revolution. The plan of Kelly’s book makes it plain enough that, like most Catholics and conservative Anglicans in the wake of Newman, he had espoused the second theory of development.

Three prefatory chapters are entitled ‘The Background’, ‘Tradition and Scripture’ and ‘The Holy Scriptures’. The epithet ‘holy’ and the singular form of the noun ‘tradition’ remind us that an Oxford theologian of this period (if he was not at a permanent private hall – *i.e.* a non-Anglican foundation) was

⁹ *The Oxford Dictionary of Popes* (Oxford, 1986).

¹⁰ J. Bethune-Baker, *An Introduction to the Early History of Christian Doctrine to the Council of Chalcedon* (1923), xiii.

¹¹ J.H. Newman, *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* (1845) and (1878). In contrast to Kelly, Newman revised his volume cap-à-pie for the second edition.

almost always an Anglican divine. The 'background' shelters all that Kelly found it needful to say of 'Jews' and 'Gnostics'. There is no room in his narrative for the 'Jewish Christianity' which spans the interval between Christ's death and the first apologists in histories penned by more adventurous scholars; and although it is acknowledged that there was such a thing as 'Christian Gnosticism',¹² Marcion and Valentinus are not permitted to share a chapter with their unproscribed contemporaries. Such a chapter, indeed, could not be written, as Justin, Athenagoras and Theophilus are of interest to Kelly only insofar as they parenthetically bear witness to the dogmas embodied in later formulations; it was not to his purpose to study Justin's doctrine of revelation for its own sake, to ask why the defenders of Christianity in this epoch assigned a capital place to the doctrine of creation, or to meditate on the conception of the theologian's task that is implied by their selective pilferings from the philosopher's armoury. We pass from the antechamber to the main edifice in chapters 4 and 5, where 'Trinitarianism' supervenes, with almost teleological rigour, on occasional attestations of a 'divine triad' in the second century. The path to orthodoxy is now blazed in rapid stages by Tertullian, Hippolytus and Origen. Kelly observes that the latter, though a Platonist, sought all his proofs in scripture, and denies that his doctrine of three hypostases compromises the unity of God (pp. 131-2). He is half inclined, none the less, to lay at Origen's door the 'unfortunate' language of Bishop Dionysius of Alexandria (pp. 134-6), who (unlike Origen) spoke of the Son as an artefact of the Father. The canon of felicity, in this as in other cases, is approximation to the Nicene Creed, and it is assumed that a bishop, thinking for himself and free of influence, would not have strayed so far from the future norm.

Debate concerning the person of the incarnate Christ was the logical and chronological epilogue to the formulation of Trinitarian doctrine. Kelly's chapter on the 'Beginnings of Christology' is his sixth, but its shape and content are determined by the 'settlement' which he attributes in the twelfth chapter to the Council of Chalcedon. Since Chalcedon proclaimed two natures, the characteristic defect of the first Christologies was 'one-sidedness' (p. 138), which was partly ameliorated by Tertullian, the first to affirm at the same time that it was God who suffered and that the seat of suffering was a created human soul. By contrast, Origen's notion of the Word as an eternal mediator between the Father and his creatures renders a physical incarnation almost otiose (p. 157), and we are scarcely surprised that his putative disciples in the third century do not follow him in teaching that the Word assumed full humanity in body, soul and spirit. The corollaries of belief in the incarnation are elucidated in chapters on redemption and 'the Christian community', in which Kelly achieves a lucid and elegant synthesis of his gleanings from the whole corpus of Christian writing before Nicaea. In chapter 9 a new sequence is initiated by the 'Nicene crisis'.

¹² See p. 20 of first edition, p. 25 of fifth.

Arius, a Middle Platonist who made Christ a demigod (pp. 230-1), is routed by the Nicene Creed, which in chapter 10 is embellished by the Athanasian teaching on the Spirit, the ‘definitive’ statements of the Cappadocians and the perceptive ‘contribution’ of Augustine. His endeavours put the capstone on the doctrine of the Trinity, but in chapter 11 a new schism is precipitated by the unresolved question of the human soul in Christ. The Antiochene assertion of two natures is a ‘healthy’ reaction to the Apollinarian view which diminished Christ’s humanity (p. 308); the extravagance of Nestorius is corrected in turn by Cyril, but his ‘Alexandrian’ dogma is too lopsided to win an uncontested victory. Unity is effected, therefore, not by the reconciliation of Cyril with John of Antioch in 433, but by Leo’s ‘balanced’ fusion of Antiochene and Alexandrian premises at the Council of Chalcedon in 451. This was already the established narrative in Anglican writing on the controversy, though, like the ‘Branch theory’ of catholicity cherished by Anglo-catholics, it offers peace where none was sought, as the Council itself was unaware of having effected any compromise.

The last four chapters of the first edition, which are concerned with the redeeming work of Christ and the fellowship of the redeemed in the present world, complete the narratives that had been carried up to 325 in chapters 9 and 10. Chapter 13 is entitled ‘Fallen Man and God’s Grace’, chapter 14 ‘Christ’s Saving Work’, chapter 15 ‘Christ’s Mystical Body’ and chapter 16 ‘The Later Doctrine of the Sacraments’. Kelly’s predecessor Bethune-Baker had addressed the same topics in five concluding chapters, each one spanning the interval from the origins of the Church to 451. His titles were ‘The Doctrine of Man-Sin and Grace-Pelagianism’, ‘The Doctrine of the Atonement’, ‘The Church’, ‘The Sacraments-Baptism’ and ‘The Sacraments-the Eucharist’. This nomenclature echoes the language that had been employed to isolate points of controversy between the western churches since the Reformation; the first three of Kelly’s titles hint, by contrast, at a more intimate relation between the casuistry of redemption and the creedal proclamations of the Church. Anglican scholarship, one might say, had at last caught up with the principles that Anglican theologians had enunciated, with explicit reference to the Fathers, in the collection of essays brought together by Charles Gore under the name *Lux Mundi* in 1889. But now another lifetime had elapsed since the publication of that volume, and it must have seemed to many of Kelly’s academic readers that his seamless approach to the history of doctrine could produce nothing but a pious anachronism.

While Kelly’s choice of subjects indicates that Christian doctrine and orthodoxy were coextensive in his eyes, he offers at best a threadbare account of the circumstances in which an orthodox doctrine was defined, and assumes throughout his work that the motives for imposing a definition are transparent. His intellectual beacons, as he says in his preface (p. vi), were Harnack, Tixeront and Loofs – every one an intrepid mover of landmarks in his generation,

but all at least a generation older than Kelly, and none so intrepid as Walter Bauer, whose *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity* professed to expose the adventitious character of the process which we commonly call the 'development of doctrine'.¹³ Bauer maintained that the doctrines which prevailed were in many cases not the most primitive, nor the most popular until they won the day by *force majeure*. The apostolic deposit, the episcopal successions, the consensus of the faithful before Nicaea were in his views myths devised by the victors to give the semblance of inevitability to their triumph. This thesis, crudely distilled into the maxim 'heresy came before orthodoxy', is more seditious than Loofs' argument that Nestorius was not, after all, a heretic, which presupposes that it is good to be orthodox;¹⁴ even Harnack's *History of Dogma*, a saturnine chronicle of decay and infidelity to the apostolic teaching, holds out the possibility of a return to the simplicity of the gospel that the first Christians held in common. For Bauer it is not an axiom that the more primitive is always the more authentic, and the ascendancy of one view over another is more typically the result of strenuous intrigue than of intellectual receptivity. Another strong challenge to faith in the infallibility of the historical process was Edward Schwartz's portrait of Cyril of Alexandria as a treacherous opportunist whose theology was dictated only by his calculations of political advantage.¹⁵ Neither Bauer nor Schwartz is immune to academic criticism, but Kelly's omission of both from his bibliographies – not attributable to any want of facility in German – could be cited as evidence of a deliberate closing of the mind.

Early Christian Doctrines: Reception

All critics praised the lucidity of Kelly, his erudition and his freedom from confessional prejudice; at the same time, a sympathetic critic spoke for many when he pronounced his method too 'analytical'.¹⁶ Dennis Nineham, somewhat perversely, turned his confession of 'limited purpose' against him, yet praised him for denying himself the appendices that had enabled Bethune-Baker to

¹³ Walter Bauer, *Rechtgläubigkeit und Ketzerei im ältesten Christentum* (Tübingen, 1934), translated as *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity* (Philadelphia, 1971). Kelly cites neither the German nor the English edition, even in the fifth edition of *Early Christian Doctrines*.

¹⁴ Friedrich Loofs, *Nestorius and his Place in the History of Christian Doctrine* (Cambridge, 1914). Kelly is charged by Nineham (*JEH* 1959) with failing to take the sufficient account of Loofs.

¹⁵ Eduard Schwartz, *Cyrl und der Mönch Victor* (Vienna, 1928). For criticism of Schwartz see Henry Chadwick, 'Eucharist and Christology in the Nestorian Controversy', *JTS* 2 (1951), 145-64.

¹⁶ P.Th. Camelot, in *Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques* 43 (1959), 476-8.

widen the content of his narrative.¹⁷ William Telfer, reviewing the first edition for the *Journal of Theological Studies*, offered some velvet-handed criticisms.¹⁸ Some works of distinction, he noted, had been omitted in the bibliographies, while Kelly's decision to base his narrative only on the sources had left him no opportunity of discussing matters, such as the evolution of the canon, which had not been amply treated in those sources. He does not seem to have doubted that Kelly had achieved his object of letting texts speak for themselves. It was left to the Spanish (or rather Basque) Jesuit Antonio Orbe, in his review of the second edition (1960), to make the obvious rejoinder that a text cannot speak until it is summoned to witness.¹⁹ Orbe was almost the only scholar of his generation who combined the traditional study of patristics with a sympathetic examination of Gnostic and apocryphal literature. Conscious of his own singularity, he observes without complaint the 'customary' exclusion of the Gnostics from the main narrative, but seems more disposed to censure Kelly's omission of any reference to the Gospels of the Egyptians and the Hebrews in his genealogy of adoptionism. His allusion to the work of Bethune-Baker implies, more strongly than Kelly's introduction, that this acknowledged precursor to the new enterprise had also served it as a paradigm.

Kelly was one of a number of authors collected under one rubric in the *Recherches de Science Religieuse*²⁰ by the French patrologist and theologian, Jean Daniélou, who was working at that time on a far more innovative *History of Early Christian Doctrine*.²¹ As a cardinal of the Roman Church and protagonist of the *nouvelle théologie*, Daniélou was hoping to bring about a renovation of Christian life and thought which lay beyond the ambition of Kelly. With De Lubac, he was one of the first to claim patristic exegesis as a science deserving scholarly analysis and reflection;²² since he also cherished a peculiar fondness for Origen, he could hardly fail to chide Kelly for his perfunctory ridicule of Origen's observations on the Good Samaritan.²³ An Anglophone reviewer might have observed that Kelly, like many scholars of his generation, had fallen under the shadow of C.H. Dodd, who on the first page of his *Parables of the Kingdom* had held up Augustine's treatment of the same parable as a specimen of licentious exegesis.²⁴ Even Daniélou was apt to separate the

¹⁷ *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 10 (1959), 92-3.

¹⁸ *Journal of Theological Studies* 10 (1959), 380-2.

¹⁹ *Gregorianum* 47 (1966), 551.

²⁰ *Recherches de Science Religieuse* 51 (1963), 114-6.

²¹ *Histoire des doctrines chrétiennes avant Nicée*, 3 vols (Paris, 1958-1978). English translation by John Austin Baker and others (Philadelphia and London, 1964-1977).

²² H. de Lubac, *L'exégèse médiévale. Les quatre sens de l'Écriture* (Paris, 1959-1962); J. Daniélou, *Sacramentum futuri* (Paris, 1950); *Bible et liturgie* (Paris, 1951).

²³ *Doctrines*, 70, though Daniélou is making much of a passing reference. Kelly cites the English translation of *Histoire*, v. 1 (*The Theology of Jewish Christianity*) on p. 162 of the fifth edition.

²⁴ C.H. Dodd, *Parables of the Kingdom* (London, 1935), 1-2.

history of doctrine from the history of exegesis, regarding biblical texts in the hands of a dogmatician as little more than a varnish to speculations hammered out in the workshop of philosophy. He ends his brief review by endorsing a paragraph in which Kelly opines that Eunomius the neo-Arian derived his theology from Aristotle;²⁵ it is, however, Daniélou rather than Kelly who adds that had he borrowed the notion of participation from the Neoplatonists of his time he might have framed a more adequate doctrine of the Trinity. This judgment is neither well-informed nor candid, since participation and consubstantiality are mutually exclusive (as Athanasius perceived²⁶), while an unprejudiced reading of Arius' citations from the scriptures would suggest that he was closer in temperament to C.H. Dodd than to Aristotle. Daniélou's comment is rescued from inanity by his fertile observation that Platonic thought has frequently enabled theologians to pierce the boundaries which are apt to be solidified, in the most orthodox as in the most heretical systems, by the rigidity of Aristotelian nomenclature.

A cardinal has duties to the Curia, and Daniélou could not forbear to remark that, in his collation of testimonies to the pre-eminence of the Roman see in antiquity, Kelly had failed to ask whether the primacy of esteem which every fair historian grants to Rome had already become a juridical primacy. More critical is Ortiz de Urbina, who points out, in reviewing the book for *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* that Kelly records the correspondence of the two Dionysii without dwelling on the fact that the Alexandrian Dionysius had accepted his Roman namesake as the arbiter in a theological disputation with his own subordinates in Egypt.²⁷ Both Roman and Anglican students of this question – and in the nineteenth century, it was almost the only question for an Anglican – have been apt to forget that Roman litigants frequently appointed an arbiter at their own discretion, accepting the finality of his verdict without according to him an indefeasible, let alone an infallible, right of judgment. Nevertheless, it is not historical ignorance but a simple waning of interest that accounts for the cursory handling of the evidence by Kelly and for the silence of his English interlocutors. Younger English contemporaries of Kelly, had they deigned to take any notice of his textbook, would have blamed it, not for shirking this traditional passage of arms, but for allowing a sclerotic tradition to govern so much of its content and design.

As new editions, or rather new facsimiles, of *Early Christian Doctrines* appeared in the 1960s,²⁸ none of them made reference to the articles in which Christopher Stead was trying to ensure that no-one would speak again so glibly

²⁵ *Early Christian Doctrines*, 268; see *ibid.* 274.

²⁶ *Against the Arians* 1.15 *etc.*

²⁷ *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 25 (1989), 187. See Kelly, *Doctrines*, 133-6 on the Dionysii.

²⁸ The second edition appeared in 1960, the third in 1965, the fourth in 1968.

of the relation between Greek thought and Christian doctrine.²⁹ Stead reciprocated Kelly's silence,³⁰ as did Maurice Wiles in his *The Making of Christian Doctrine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), where his criticism of the teleological approach is too generic to admit of any descent to controversy with individuals. In his collection, *Working Papers in Christian Doctrine*, Wiles cites Kelly's book on the creeds more often than his *Early Christian Doctrines*; 'Dr Kelly' is always named with respect, but never with deference,³¹ not for any pregnant or decisive judgment, but as a patron of conventional views which were open to contestation.³²

In his preface to the fifth edition of 1977, Kelly contrasts his previous inactivity with the 'extensive revisions and modifications' of this new undertaking. The incredulous reader, scanning the list of contents, will find little to justify this asseveration. The chapters not only bear the same names as in the first edition, but agree to the very page in length and sequence. A cursory examination shows that the majority of pages begin and end with the words that occupied the same positions eighteen years before. Ten pages on 'Mary and Saints' have been appended as an eighteenth chapter, but to preserve the pagination, this becomes the second chapter of the epilogue. Nevertheless, the original peroration – 'Be still and know that I am God' – remains intact on p. 489. The index too is of precisely equal length, every page beginning and terminating with the names that appeared in the first edition; the addition of a few references was necessitated by the writing of the final chapter, but only in a handful of cases is an existing number replaced by a new one. These substitutions represent not the insertion of new matter but the translation of half a dozen pages on Judaism to an earlier part of the introduction.³³ What Kelly had to say of Judaism remains unaltered, with the incongruous result that the reader is told of Philo's debt to the 'later Platonists' before he learns anything of Greek philosophy. The bibliographies are only modestly enlarged, and cannot be said to offer a conspectus of the best scholarship in the nineteen years that had passed since the first publication.

Kelly's impartiality had always been praised by Catholics, and it was wholly in character that he should take up his pen to write a Mariological coda to his volume, not to align himself with any of the more innovative trends in patristic

²⁹ Collected in G.C. Stead, *Substance and Illusion in the Christian Fathers* (Aldershot, 1985).

³⁰ Or almost: in *Divine Substance* (Oxford, 1977), *Doctrines* appears only once (*ibid.* 256), though there are four references to *Creeds*.

³¹ *Working Papers in Christian Doctrine* (London, 1976), 54, 203, citing Kelly on the Apollinarian Controversy. 'Canon' rather than 'Dr' was the title used by reviewers of an older generation.

³² Wiles is more critical of Kelly's estimate of Eunomius in 'Eunomius: Hair-splitting Dialectician or Defender of the Accessibility of Salvation?', in R.D. Williams (ed.), *The Making of Orthodoxy. Essays in Honour of Henry Chadwick* (Cambridge, 1989), 157-72, 160.

³³ That is, 'Judaism' occupies pp. 17-22 of the first edition and pp. 5-11 of the fifth; Neoplatonism occupies pp. 6-8 of the first and pp. 20-2 of the fifth.

scholarship. The innovators, however, were now settling into university chairs. If the first edition left little trace in the works of academic specialists, the fifth barely found its way into reviews and bibliographies. Citations of *Early Christian Creeds* abound in modern studies of the same topic and even in the most recent histories of doctrine; readers of these same histories, however, might be forgiven for imagining that Kelly wrote only one book. In *Christ and Christian Tradition*,³⁴ Alois Grillmeier directs his readers to *Early Christian Doctrines* for information on p. 33, but every subsequent reference is to *Early Christian Creeds*. Basil Studer is more generous, citing *Early Christian Doctrines* as an authority on Christology and the concept of inspiration.³⁵ John Behr's *The Nicene Faith* (New York: St Vladimir's Seminary, 2004) cites *Creeds* four times and *Doctrines* once; Lewis Ayres in *Nicaea and its Legacy* (Oxford: OUP, 2006) cites only *Creeds*, though *Doctrines* finds a place in the bibliography; the same is true of Richard Hanson's *Search for the Christian Doctrine of God* (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1988), though a passage from *Early Christian Doctrines* served as a whetstone in 1972 for his article, 'Did Origen Apply the Word *Homoousios* to the Son?'.³⁶ In the *Oxford Handbook to Early Christian Studies*, Everett Ferguson devotes four pages to the 'synthesis' which Kelly achieved in his work on the creeds;³⁷ neither book is mentioned in three preliminary articles on the transformation of early Christian studies by Elizabeth Clark, Mark Vessey and Karen King. Lewis Ayres and Andrew Radde-Gallwitz warn their readers in an epilogue to an article on the 'doctrine of God', that Kelly neglects the philosophical milieu in which doctrines were formulated;³⁸ Brian Daley quotes his verdict on the 'Chalcedonian' settlement as a choice example of history in the old, Panglossian style.³⁹

Yet *Early Christian Doctrines* has continued to hold its own in undergraduate circles: no book, to this day, is more often cited in the Oxford finals paper on the development of doctrine to 451, and no new work on patrology is likely to be acquired, as Kelly's fifth edition was, by over twenty Oxford libraries. The librarians know, for one thing – and some students have divined – that all modern scholarship is ephemeral, since monographs will not be read unless they defend a thesis and will not be read again once the thesis has gone out of

³⁴ English version (Philadelphia, 1975).

³⁵ Basil Studer, *Trinity and Incarnation* (London, 1993), 121 and 207; *Schola Christiana. Die Theologie zwischen Nizäa und Chalcedon* (Paderborn, 1998), 237.

³⁶ Initially in *Epektasis. Mélanges Patristiques offerts au Cardinal Daniélou*, reprinted in his *Studies in Christian Antiquity* (Edinburgh, 1983), 53-70.

³⁷ Everett Ferguson, 'Councils, Creeds and Canon', in Susan Ashbrook Harvey and David Hunter (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies* (Oxford, 2008), 427-30.

³⁸ Lewis Ayres and Andrew Radde-Gallwitz, 'Doctrine of God', in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies* (2008), 864-85, 881.

³⁹ Brian E. Daley, 'Christ and Christology', in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies* (2008), 886-905, 889.

fashion. Our well-honed talents, we think, would only be blunted by the production of compendia which have no claim to originality but their erudition. The truth is that we lack the means, for few of us have Kelly's facility in the ancient tongues, and few have been trained to use the English tongue with such economy. It is also true that Kelly had oases of uninterrupted leisure which are denied to us, as we see our vacations eaten away by graduate supervision, examination and the importunities of external or internal monitors. May it not be, however, that all these truths are pretexts rather than explanations? Surely the great truth is that we no longer ascribe a providential history of development to doctrines, even in the first Christian centuries; we do not believe that of two opinions one is always culpable, that certain minds in antiquity were endowed with a charm against error, or that the dubious machinery of ecclesiastical synods can provide a diet sufficient for the intellect, let alone the soul, of the modern Christian.

William Hugh Clifford Frend (1916-2005): The Legacy of *The Donatist Church*

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ABSTRACT

After a short survey of the reception of *The Donatist Church* and of Frend's own inflexions in his position, the paper proposes a review of the developments and findings that have transformed our understanding of the topic. Finally, it emphasizes that the legacy of *The Donatist Church* is to be found in the questions that Frend posed, not in the responses he offered at the time, and suggests that recent scholarship is picking up on some of these long neglected questions.

W.H.C. Frend stands apart from the other figures commemorated as an historian and an archaeologist who rendered non-theological and non-ecclesiastical considerations integral to the study of ancient Christianity.¹ As we will see, Frend's approach was, and in some ways still is, received with resistance and deemed overly neglectful of religious factors. Frend himself often stressed that the discovery of the archaeology of the High Plains of Algeria was crucial to the writing of *The Donatist Church*. He frequently referenced his own archaeological experience, in particular how in 1938-39 he had accompanied André Berthier in his survey of central Numidia,² and he footnotes his own observations in support of several of Berthier's conclusions.³ In 1982, he published results that had 'escaped publication owing to circumstances of the time': observations and pictures about a Numidian 'basilica storehouse' that he had excavated in June 1939.⁴ Additionally, in each of the prefaces to his *Variorum*

¹ Frend studied in Oxford, earning a first class in Modern History in 1937 and receiving his D. Phil. in 1940. During WW II, Frend worked in the War Office and the Cabinet Office. He then worked for a few years in the Foreign Office before starting his academic career at Cambridge in 1953. He left Cambridge in 1969 for Glasgow where he was professor of ecclesiastical history until he retired in 1984. For a short biography, see W. Ian P. Hazlett, 'Frend, William Hugh Clifford (1916-2005)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Jan 2009 (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/95984>, accessed 19 Jan 2012); see also the obituary by Wolfgang Liebeschuetz, 'William Hugh Clifford Frend 1916-2005', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 150 (2007), 37-54.

² W.H.C. Frend, *Donatist Church* (Oxford, 1985), xi (Preface to the first impression).

³ See, for instance, *ibid.* 45, 53.

⁴ W.H.C. Frend, 'A note on religion and life in a Numidian village in the later Roman empire', *BCH 17B* (1982), 261-71, 261; repr. in his *Archaeology and History in the Study of Early Christianity* (London, 1988).

Reprints volumes, Frend affirms the importance of field archaeology to his approach to ecclesiastical history. After his early experience in Algeria, Frend continued to be engaged in field archaeology, participating in the excavation of a Christian church at Knossos in 1956-60⁵ and in the Qasr Ibrim expedition in Nubia, first in 1963-4 and then in both 1972 and 1974.⁶ His experience of field archaeology was remarkable for a church historian of this period and it lends no small weight to his claim that he approached the history of the early Church from a different perspective. Unlike most scholars discussed at this workshop, he was definitively not a theologian.

I will focus here on Frend's first book, *The Donatist Church*, as it provided the framework for his other scholarly books.⁷ Indeed, Frend's later work, *Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church* (Oxford, 1965) is in many regards a 'historical introduction to Donatism', as Fergus Millar has noted in a review.⁸ It is also quite obvious that *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement* (Cambridge, 1972) is based on models Frend developed in his work on the Donatists, and he compared the two schisms repeatedly, most notably in his Presidential Address to the meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society on Schism, Heresy, and Religious Protest.⁹ There are also numerous papers related to Donatism, or more broadly the North African Church, in the four volumes of collected articles that Frend published in the Variorum Reprints Series,¹⁰ which fact confirms that the North African schism remained at the center of his scholarly activity throughout his career.

⁵ W.H.C. Frend, 'The byzantine basilica church at Knossos', *Annual of the British School at Athens* 57 (1962), 186-238.

⁶ Numerous publications, which cannot be listed here, resulted from his involvement in Nubia, from papers on a variety of papyri to a catalog of coins, which appears to be his last publication (W.H.C. Frend, 'Qasr Ibrim 1974: the coins', *JEA* 90 [2004], 167-92). Frend also conducted a rescue excavation of a Romano-British settlement at Arbury road, Cambridge in 1953-4.

⁷ One should mention Frend's textbooks, which were quite popular and still are judging from their continuous reprints: *The Early Church* (1965, 2nd ed. 1982, continuously reprinted in paperback and now even available in a Kindle edition) and *The Rise of Christianity* (1984, available as a paperback since 1985). Frend also published on the discipline of ecclesiastical history: *Archaeology of Early Christianity: A History* (1996, paperback 1998) and *From Dogma to History: How Our Understanding of the Early Church Developed* (2003).

⁸ *JRS* 56 (1966), 231-6, 232; see also W. Liebeschuetz, 'William Hugh Clifford Frend 1916-2005' (2007), 45.

⁹ W.H.C. Frend, 'Heresy and schism as social and national movements', in Derek Baker (ed.), *Schism, Heresy and Religious Protest: Papers Read at the Tenth Summer Meeting and the Eleventh Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society*, Studies in Church history 9 (Cambridge, 1972), 37-56, repr. in his *Religion Popular and Unpopular in the Early Christian Centuries* (London, 1976).

¹⁰ 7 of the 25 papers collected in *Religion Popular and Unpopular in the Early Christian Centuries* (London, 1976), 10 of 24 in *Town and Country in the Early Christian Centuries* (London, 1980), 8 of 21 in *Archaeology and History in the Study of Early Christianity* (London, 1988), and 8 of 17 in *Orthodoxy, Paganism, and Dissent in the Early Christian Centuries* (Aldershot, 2002).

The Donatist Church: A Movement of Protest in Roman North Africa was first published in 1952 by Clarendon Press, reissued in 1971 with a new two-page preface, and again reissued in 1985 with a new preface (bibliographical *addenda* are published in both new editions). It originated as an Oxford thesis co-supervised by Hugh Last and Norman Baynes and submitted in May 1940 with the title: 'The social and economic background of North African Christianity down to the death of St. Augustine, A.D. 430 with special reference to the Donatist schism.' Despite the controversy it immediately sparked and the numerous criticisms of some of his key arguments, Frend claims, in both new prefaces as well as in a longer assessment of his work also published in 1985, that the main lines of the book 'stand'.¹¹ A little more than a quarter of a century later, it is clear that this claim is no longer tenable. I will review the developments and findings that compel our reassessment after a survey of the book's reception and of Frend's own inflexions in his position.

The book is very often described as a 'classic', and in some respects this is appropriate, but it is a classic that needs to be used with great caution. The book would be more aptly described as 'seminal', as it certainly played a key role in the formation of some important ideas about early Christianity, albeit often in a negative way. In the final part of this paper, I will suggest that the legacy of Frend's works on Donatism is to be found in the questions he posed, and that we should not neglect these questions simply because Frend himself answered them inadequately.¹²

The Donatist Church, 1952-1985

The initial reception of *The Donatist Church* was by and large negative. Given that ecclesiastical history was, as yet, mainly in the hands of theologians, it is not surprising that the book created quite a disturbance.

Henry Chadwick published a rather cursory overview of the book in the *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*. He singled out only a few specific points pertaining to literary sources and all relevant to the book's second part. His opening statement that the book is 'an outstanding contribution to ancient

¹¹ W.H.C. Frend, *Donatist Church* (31985), v (Preface to the third impression), x (Preface to the second impression); *id.*, 'The Donatist Church – forty years on', in C. Landman and D.P. Whitelaw (eds), *Windows on Origins: Essays on the Early Church in Honour of J.A.A. Stoop on his Sixtieth Birthday* (Pretoria, 1985), repr. in his *Archaeology and History in the Study of Early Christianity* (London, 1988). As noted by W. Liebeschuetz, 'William Hugh Clifford Frend 1916-2005' (2007), 43: 'Frend never retracted his ethnic, social and political interpretation of Donatism.'

¹² I want to insist that I am only concerned here with the legacy of Frend's published work on Donatism. For a broader assessment of his legacy as a teacher and a scholar, see W. Liebeschuetz, 'William Hugh Clifford Frend 1916-2005' (2007), 37-54.

history' was probably meant to imply subtly that he did not consider it especially relevant to the theologian.¹³ Indeed, in the *Early Church*, while *The Donatist Church* figures among further readings on Donatism, alongside S.L. Greenslade's *Schism in the Early Church* (London, 1953), Chadwick explicitly rejects Frend's thesis, writing: 'The tensions between the two communities were all the sharper because class and economic factors had not been prime causes of the division'.¹⁴

G.W.H. Lampe's review of the book in the *Journal of Theological Studies* comprises a more substantial and generally rather negative critique. He acknowledges that the originality of Frend's contribution lies in its thorough study of the non-religious aspects of Donatism: 'Donatism is treated not merely as an ecclesiastical schism...'; 'no previous writer has investigated the non-ecclesiastical factors in Donatism and its background of secular history with such thoroughness'.¹⁵ However, he points out that 'the evidence are not strong enough to support the expressed or implied generalizations [of the first part of the book]' and concludes that the non-religious factors are 'sometimes exaggerated'.¹⁶

S.L. Greenslade in the *Classical Review* uses even sharper language. He ventures that Frend's standpoint is 'sociological'¹⁷ and gives him credit for it. However, the overall judgment is strongly negative: 'Frend's book is a mass of half-truths', 'the new ideas contain so much that is precarious and injudicious', and he concludes by warning students not to 'regard it as a standard account of what is, or ought to be, generally accepted'.¹⁸

The *Journal of Roman Studies* also asked a theologian, the Italian scholar Alberto Pincherle, to review the book. Pincherle's review is more sympathetic to Frend's project and acknowledges that he 'knows how to make use of both literary and archeological evidence to a really historical purpose'.¹⁹ He presents a very balanced view of the debate about the relative importance of political and social factors versus religious and ecclesiastical concerns, but he regrets that 'the social and the religious aspects of Donatism seem here to have been juxtaposed rather than joined together in a really unifying synthesis'.²⁰ Pincherle also points out that the main body of *The Donatist Church* does not prepare the reader for the statement in the conclusion, according to which 'Donatism and Catholicism represented opposite tendencies in early Christian thought', as if

¹³ *JEH* 5 (1954), 103-5, 103.

¹⁴ H. Chadwick, *The early Church* (London, 1967), 220.

¹⁵ *JTS* 4 (1953), 255-8, 255 and 256.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* 256 and 257.

¹⁷ W. Liebeschuetz, 'William Hugh Clifford Frend 1916-2005' (2007), 43 talks about 'Frend's sociological model'.

¹⁸ *CR* 4 (1954), 154-6, 155 and 156.

¹⁹ *JRS* 44 (1954), 138-9, 138.

²⁰ *Ibid.* 139.

Frend had somewhat changed his mind about the importance of the theological aspect.²¹ It must be noted that Frend concedes in the preface to the 1971 edition that 'a new book would pay more attention to the ecclesiastical and doctrinal aspects of the schism'.²²

The last review of the 1952 impression that I will mention is that of Charles Courtois in the *Revue africaine*,²³ as it illustrates well how Frend's book was received in France. According to Courtois, there is nothing for the specialist of North Africa to learn in the book.²⁴ Frend has merely exaggerated the well established hypothesis of Donatism's social aspect to the point of weakening it.²⁵ Here Courtois recalls not only Martroye's memoir on the social revolution of Donatism,²⁶ as had Pincherle,²⁷ but also Saumagne's paper on the circumcellions.²⁸ Courtois also contests that the schism was essentially a Numidian affair: 'Si le schisme est originellement numide, il n'est pas exact qu'il le soit essentiellement'.²⁹ When Frend wrote a review of Courtois's book, *Les Vandales et l'Afrique* (Paris, 1955), his own tone was no more charitable,³⁰ and he does not even mention it in 'The Donatist Church – forty years on' or in the bibliographical addenda of the second and third impressions of *The Donatist Church*.

The history of the reception of Frend's *Donatist Church* after the first reviews will necessarily be selective. I will focus on important works that engaged with Frend's claims, whilst also touching on Frend's own responses to these works.

The first such work is Jean-Paul Brisson's *Autonomisme et christianisme dans l'Afrique romaine de Septime Sévère à l'invasion vandale* (Paris, 1958). Though he explains in his 'avertissement' that he is not able to discuss Frend's book fully, Brisson positions himself very explicitly vis-à-vis Frend's approach in his 'avant-propos'. Frend, says Brisson, certainly wrote the best history of Donatism so far available,³¹ but he then proceeds to distance himself from Frend's interpretation of Donatism as a specifically Berber ethnic phenomenon, though he agrees as to the importance of the local. Similarly, he congratulates

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² W.H.C. Frend, *Donatist Church* (31985), x.

²³ *RAf* 99 (1955), 424-6.

²⁴ *Ibid.* 425.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ François Martroye, 'Une tentative de révolution sociale en Afrique: donatistes et circoncellions', *Revue des questions historiques* 38/76 (1904), 353-416 and 39/77 (1905), 5-53.

²⁷ *JRS* 44 (1954), 138.

²⁸ Charles Saumagne, 'Ouvriers agricoles ou rôdeurs de celliers: les circoncellions d'Afrique', *Annales d'histoire économique et sociale* 6 (1934), 351-64.

²⁹ *Ibid.* 424.

³⁰ *JRS* 46 (1956), 161-6 repr. in his *Archaeology and History in the Study of Early Christianity* (1988).

³¹ J.-P. Brisson, *Autonomisme et christianisme* (1958), 5.

Frend for having shown that Donatism's followers were recruited from the poorest groups of North Africa, but regrets that Frend's study subordinated social and economic considerations to ethnic and nationalistic ones.³² Frend wrote a very positive review of the book in the *Journal of Roman Studies*, where he underlined their common conclusion that Donatism was an expression of 'popular impatience' as well as Brisson's original contribution on the continuity of Donatist theology with that of Cyprian, in particular its rejection of any compromise with the secular world.³³ In the 1971 preface to *The Donatist Church*, Frend writes that 'a new book would follow Brisson's lead and pay more attention to the ecclesiastical and doctrinal aspect of the schism'.³⁴ This sentiment approaches the quasi *retractatio* Frend offered in 1972 at the Society of Ecclesiastical History.³⁵

A.H.M. Jones' 1959 paper 'Were ancient heresies national or social movements in disguise?' has certainly been read as a criticism of Frend's positions.³⁶ However, Jones offers no explicit critique and, when he refers to Frend for evidence on the cooperation of the Donatists with the native pretenders Firmus and Gildo, he states in a footnote that he differs from him 'only in some points of emphasis and interpretation'.³⁷ Jones seems, instead, to target more general and older books such as Woodward's *Christianity and Nationalism in the later Roman empire* (London, 1916). Similarly, when he looks at evidence for interpreting Donatism as a social movement, he refers only to Martroye's aforementioned 1904 paper. Frend, for his part, makes no comment on Jones's paper in his 1985 review of scholarship, but lists the paper in the bibliographical *addenda* of the 1971 impression of *The Donatist Church*.

Frend barely mentions Peter Brown's papers from the early 1960's: 'Religious Dissent in the Later Roman Empire: The Case of North Africa'³⁸ and 'Religious Coercion in the Later Roman Empire: The Case of North Africa'³⁹, and he only briefly comments on 'Christianity and Local Culture in Late Roman Africa'⁴⁰. Brown however, in 'Religious Dissent', had taken quite a negative stance against Frend's book, the only work on which he comments extensively, though he does also mention Courtois and Brisson. Brown insists throughout that the emphasis on the local and the search for a local model of explanation

³² *Ibid.* 7-8.

³³ *JRS* 49 (1959), 172-3.

³⁴ W.H.C. Frend, *Donatist Church* (31985), x.

³⁵ W.H.C. Frend, 'Heresy and schism' (1972), on which see below.

³⁶ *JTS* 10 (1959), 280-98.

³⁷ *Ibid.* 282¹.

³⁸ *History* 46 (1961), 83-101; repr. in his *Religion and Society in the Age of Augustine* (1972), 237-59 (version quoted here).

³⁹ *History* 48 (1963), 283-305; repr. in his *Religion and Society in the Age of Augustine* (1972), 301-31 (version quoted here).

⁴⁰ *JRS* 58 (1968), 85-95.

for Donatism 'obscured its links with the Christian Church as a whole'.⁴¹ In 'Religious Coercion', Brown reiterates this position, urging scholars 'to go outside the immediate problem of the Donatist schism'⁴² in order to understand the use of coercion. Similarly, he rejects the 'modern opinion' that interprets the laws against heretics as measures against nationalist tendencies.⁴³ But Brown went much further in eroding Frend's thesis by suggesting that what needed to be explained was the success of Catholicism, and that there was no Donatist 'movement', since Donatism represented, in fact, the African tradition of Christianity.

The publication of the thesis of the Danish scholar, Emin Tengström, in 1964,⁴⁴ was, as Frend remarks, 'received with relief in many quarters'.⁴⁵ A good illustration of this positive response is the review article of Paul-Albert Février, 'Toujours le Donatisme. À quand l'Afrique?'⁴⁶ Février's profound antipathy for the thesis of the British scholar is clear – to the point that he claims that Tengström's book has restored the study of Donatism to the position it had occupied before *The Donatist Church* was written.⁴⁷ Tengström's work is, however, based solely on textual evidence, even if not limited to literary texts. He establishes the highly polemical nature of the allegations of Optatus and Augustine regarding the alliance of the Donatists with Firmus and Gildo and regarding the revolutionary aims of the circumcellions, and he concludes that these allegations are not, therefore, acceptable as evidence. Regarding the importance of Donatism in the countryside, Tengström proposes an alternative to Frend's thesis that the Donatists were allied with the Berber peasantry: he asserts that it was easier to reduce Donatism in the cities, whereas in the countryside landowners were reluctant to coerce their workers for fear of alienating them. He also makes some corrections to the mapping of Donatist and Catholic bishoprics in Numidia, but not to the point of altering Frend's picture.⁴⁸ There is no doubt that Tengström's was an important contribution, bringing necessary corrections to some excessive affirmations in Frend's book. However, it was not without its own shortcomings, such as Tengström's hypothesis that the circumcellions harvested exclusively olive crops,⁴⁹ and it falls short of reversing the influence of *The Donatist Church*. As Peter Brown says in a balanced review

⁴¹ P. Brown, 'Religious Dissent', 246.

⁴² P. Brown, 'Religious Coercion', 303.

⁴³ *Ibid.* 318.

⁴⁴ Emin Tengström, *Donatisten und Katholiken: Soziale, wirtschaftliche und politische Aspekte einer nordafrikanischen Kirchenspaltung* (Göteborg, 1964).

⁴⁵ W.H.C. Frend, 'The Donatist Church – forty years on' (1985), 76.

⁴⁶ *Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa* 2 (1966), 228-40; repr. in *La Méditerranée de Paul-Albert Février* (Rome, 1996), 699-711.

⁴⁷ P.-A. Février, 'Toujours le donatisme' (1966), 233; noted by W.H.C. Frend, 'The Donatist Church – forty years on' (1985), 78 with the comment: 'it is difficult to agree'.

⁴⁸ See below.

⁴⁹ See a lengthy refutation in P.-A. Février, 'Toujours le donatisme' (1966), 236-8.

of the book, it is insufficient to consider only literary evidence, and this led Tengström to 'miss the center of gravity of Frend's thesis, i.e. the genesis of Donatism in the religious and social changes of Numidia in the third century'.⁵⁰

Robert Markus agrees with Peter Brown regarding the value of Tengström's work in his communication to the meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society dedicated to Schism, Heresy, and Religious Protest, where he offers a review of Frend's work and its reception, from Jones through to Tengström.⁵¹ In this paper, Markus also restates Brown's suggestion that it was not Donatism that needed to be explained, but Catholicism, as it was Catholicism which broke off from the tradition of African Christianity. He suggests, in closing, that both Augustine and the Donatists are inscribed in a North African tradition of dissent, which he relates to 'an abiding Berber presence behind the religious history of North Africa'.⁵² Markus finds traces of this tradition, for instance, in incidents as late as the affair of the Three Chapters.⁵³

This search for a 'Berber presence' is somewhat surprising, since Frend himself does not even mention the Berbers in his Presidential Address at the same meeting on 'Heresy and Schism as Social and National Movements'. This was for him the occasion of what I would call an implicit *retractatio*. Whereas the title refers to 'Social and National Movements', Frend has little to say about 'national' considerations and focuses on 'social and political dissent'. The paper mainly follows the direction taken by Brisson, and its thesis was already outlined in the penultimate chapter of *The Donatist Church*: the continuity of Donatism within African Christianity. It is a theme Frend had also developed in a 1961 paper 'The Roman Empire in the Eyes of Western Schismatics during the Fourth Century',⁵⁴ and it formed the background of his book *Martyrdom and Persecution*.

In 1972, Markus, as both Février and Frend himself, saw the future of scholarship on the Donatist controversy in interdisciplinary studies, and in its better integration with other areas in the history of North Africa in the fourth century.⁵⁵ Not much has been written in this vein since the end of the 1980's with

⁵⁰ *JRS* 55 (1965), 281-3, 282.

⁵¹ R. Markus, 'Christianity and dissent in Roman North Africa: changing perspectives in recent work', in Derek Baker (ed.), *Schism, Heresy and Religious Protest* (1972), 21-36 (repr. in his *From Augustine to Gregory the Great* [1983]), 26-7 on Tengström.

⁵² *Ibid.* 32.

⁵³ *Ibid.* 33.

⁵⁴ In *Miscellanea Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, Bibliothèque de la Revue d'Histoire ecclésiastique 38 (Louvain, 1961), 1-22; repr. in his *Religion Popular and Unpopular in the Early Christian Centuries* (1976).

⁵⁵ R. Markus, 'Christianity and dissent in Roman North Africa' (1972), 35-6; P.-A. Février, 'Toujours le donatisme' (1966), 240 whose call is accompanied by a serious caveat; W.H.C. Frend, 'The Donatist Church – forty years on' (1985), 80.

the notable exception of Brent Shaw's works.⁵⁶ The question of the circumcellions notwithstanding,⁵⁷ it seems that scholarship has largely ignored the issues raised by Frend and recent works on the religious context of the schism have tended to adopt Frend's conceptual framework with its divisions between political, social, and religious factors, even while rejecting his project. Maureen Tilley's work is significant in this respect: she claims that 'the one factor most important to the participants' was religion,⁵⁸ and similarly she explicitly contrasts her approach to that of Frend by saying that the 'religious character' was 'the construction both sides gave it at the time'.⁵⁹

The Donatist Church and recent research on North Africa

In the second part of my paper, I will analyze the book's first eight chapters, where Frend lays out the framework of his interpretation,⁶⁰ while I simultaneously point out particular developments that have since transformed our understanding.

The main thesis of *The Donatist Church* is that Donatism was a 'Numidian and agrarian movement',⁶¹ in other words, a 'national' and 'social' movement,⁶² though we should note that Frend did not use any of these or other qualifiers in his subtitle, but simply wrote: 'A movement of protest in North Africa'. The first ten chapters provide an affirmative answer to the question posed in his introduction: 'Is Donatism part of a continuous native religious tradition, as fundamentally unchanging as the Berbers themselves in the routine of their daily life?'⁶³

⁵⁶ Most of the relevant papers are published in *Environment and Society in Roman North Africa: Studies in History and Archaeology* (Aldershot, 1995) and *Rulers, Nomads, and Christians in Roman North Africa* (Aldershot, 1995).

⁵⁷ I leave it aside as Brent D. Shaw offers a thorough treatment in his *Sacred violence: African Christians and religious hatred in the age of Augustine* (Cambridge, 2011), 630-74 ('Bad boys') and 828-39 ('Appendix F: Historical fictions: interpreting the circumcellions').

⁵⁸ Maureen Tilley, *The Bible in Christian North Africa: The Donatist World* (Minneapolis, 1997), 11.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* 3.

⁶⁰ Thus I leave aside chapters 9 to 19; chapters 9 and 10 offer respectively a brief description of African Christianity at the time of Tertullian and Cyprian respectively. Frend called chapters 11 to 19 the 'narrative' chapters (W.H.C. Frend, *Donatist Church* [1985], xii). These chapters have been thoroughly criticized by E. Tengström, *Donatisten und Katholiken* (1964). For a recent narrative, see Charles Pietri, 'L'échec de l'unité impériale en Afrique: la résistance donatiste (jusqu'en 361)', in *Histoire du christianisme des origines à nos jours* (Paris, 1995), II 229-48 and 'Les difficultés du nouveau système en Occident: la querelle donatiste (363-420)', *ibid.* II 435-51; also, though he does not provide a continuous narrative, B.D. Shaw, *Sacred violence* (2011).

⁶¹ W.H.C. Frend, *Donatist Church* (1985), 50.

⁶² See A.H.M. Jones, 'Were ancient heresies national or social movements in disguise?' (1959).

⁶³ W.H.C. Frend, *Donatist Church* (1985), xvi.

Chapter 1 looks to the origin of the schism: the Diocletianic persecution and its aftermath.⁶⁴ Frend aims to establish that persecution was particularly severe in Numidia because of the intransigence of Numidian Christians, while it was less severe in Carthage where the clergy offered little resistance and even discouraged it. For the situation in Carthage, he relies heavily on the Acts of the Abitinian Martyrs or *Passio Saturnini* (BHL 7492), where Mensurius and Caecilian are portrayed as preventing the Carthaginian faithful from helping the imprisoned martyrs. However, it cannot be taken for granted that the text was written in the early fourth century or that it contains even a kernel of truth. Thanks to François Dolbeau's study of the history of its transmission⁶⁵ and to Alan Dearn's paper on the historical value of the text,⁶⁶ we can now be sure that there is only one version of the *Passio*: a Donatist one, and that it was written at a time when the schism was already well developed.

Nor is the intensity of persecution in Numidia well established. Frend thought that the fourth edict of Diocletian was enforced in Africa, and he did not accept Ste Croix's arguments to the contrary⁶⁷ in his following publications.⁶⁸ A posthumous paper by Ste Croix settles the issue definitively.⁶⁹ Furthermore Yvette Duval has shown that many of Berthier's 'martyr inscriptions', which Frend mentions as evidence of intense persecution,⁷⁰ were merely the epitaphs of ordinary Christians.⁷¹ Consequently, the evidence for persecution in Numidia should be reexamined more closely.

The next two chapters aim to confirm that there was a strong contrast between the churches of Numidia and Carthage. Chapter 2 comprises a brief analysis of physical geography, and Frend finds confirmation of this contrast in considering the relief and climate of the two areas, the Tell of Carthage and the High Plains of Numidia. Chapter 3 continues with a study of the types of society that characterize the two areas: cities and villas on the Tell, well

⁶⁴ For a review of the discussion between W.H.C. Frend and Timothy D. Barnes about the chronology of the beginning of the schism, see Anthony R. Birley, 'Some notes on the Donatist schism', *Libyan Studies* 18 (1987), 29-41, 31-2.

⁶⁵ François Dolbeau, 'La Passion des martyrs d'Abitina: remarques sur l'établissement du texte', *Analecta Bollandiana* 121 (2003), 273-96.

⁶⁶ Alan Dearn, 'The Abitinian martyrs and the outbreak of the Donatist schism', *JEH* 55 (2004), 1-18.

⁶⁷ See G.E.M. de Ste. Croix, 'Aspects of the "Great" Persecution', *HTR* 47 (1954), 75-113, repr. in *Christian Persecution, Martyrdom, and Orthodoxy* (Oxford, 2006), 35-68.

⁶⁸ W.H.C. Frend, *Martyrdom and Persecution* (1965), 502-3; *id.*, 'A Note on the Great Persecution in the West', in *Papers read at the second winter and summer meetings of the Ecclesiastical History Society*, *Studies in Church History* 2 (London, 1965), 141-8, repr. in his *Religion Popular and Unpopular in the Early Christian Centuries* (1976).

⁶⁹ G.E.M. de Ste Croix, 'The Fourth Edict in the West and the Date of the Council of Elvira', in *Christian Persecution, Martyrdom, and Orthodoxy* (2006), 79-98.

⁷⁰ W.H.C. Frend, *Donatist Church* (31985), 8.

⁷¹ Yvette Duval, *Loca sanctorum Africae. Le culte des martyrs en Afrique du IV^e au VII^e siècle* (Rome, 1982), 716.

Romanized, as opposed to villages and farms on the High Plains, scarcely affected by Romanization.

The opposition between town and countryside, so central to Frend's work, has been eroded by numerous criticisms. As mentioned above, Emin Tengström had suggested that the stronger presence of Donatist bishoprics in the countryside could be explained more simply as a result of their systematic expulsion from the cities.⁷² Through a new examination of the bishoprics represented at the Conference of Carthage in 411 Serge Lancel concludes that, though Donatists had a slightly greater presence in the countryside, the urban representation of Catholics and Donatists was equivalent and, therefore, that the basis of the Donatist church was not essentially rural.⁷³ He also points out that the distinction between town and countryside was a very delicate one,⁷⁴ thus echoing Paul-Albert Février who asked in his 1966 review of Tengström, 'Qu'est-ce qu'une ville? Qu'est-ce que la campagne aux IV^e et V^e siècles? Quelle différence y a-t-il entre ces réalités?'⁷⁵ Jean-Marie Lassère has shown that the onomastics of the rural population demands a nuanced appreciation of the opposition between Romanized towns and non-Romanized countryside.⁷⁶ Building on the results of the Christian prosopography of North Africa,⁷⁷ André Mandouze has established that Donatists and Catholics were intermixed in both urban and rural areas and that there was no solid basis for the thesis of a rural Donatism.⁷⁸

In Chapter 4, Frend maps the Catholic and Donatist churches, concluding, 'divergence of religious belief thus coincided with divergence of environment and economic interest'.⁷⁹ Maps of bishoprics mentioned at the Conference of 411 are compared to the results of excavations.⁸⁰ Here, Frend depends heavily on André Berthier, *Vestiges du Christianisme antique dans la Numidie centrale* (Algiers, 1942). He accepts without any discussion Berthier's conclusions on

⁷² E. Tengström, *Donatisten und Katholiken* (1964), 125-41.

⁷³ Serge Lancel, *Actes de la Conférence de Carthage en 411*, t. 1, *Introduction générale*, SC 194 (Paris, 1972), 131-42, 141-2. Leslie Dossey, *Peasant and empire in Christian North Africa*, *Transformation of the classical heritage* 47 (Berkeley, 2010), 128-9, arrives at very similar conclusions.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.* 131-2.

⁷⁵ P.-A. Février, 'Toujours le donatisme' (1966), 235. See, however, a very careful study of the countryside in late antiquity in Cam Grey, *Constructing communities in the late Roman countryside* (Cambridge, 2011).

⁷⁶ Jean-Marie Lassère, *Ubique populus: peuplement et mouvements de population dans l'Afrique romaine de la chute de Carthage à la fin de la dynastie des Sévères (146 a.C. – 235 p.C.)* (Paris, 1977), 295-363.

⁷⁷ André Mandouze, *Prosopographie de l'Afrique chrétienne (303-533)* (Paris, 1982).

⁷⁸ A. Mandouze, 'Les Donatistes entre ville et campagne', in *Histoire et archéologie de l'Afrique du Nord: actes du III^e colloque international réuni dans le cadre du 110^e Congrès national des sociétés savantes, Montpellier, 1-15 avril 1985* (Paris, 1986), 193-218.

⁷⁹ W.H.C. Frend, *Donatist Church* (31985), 56.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.* 52-5.

the Donatist character of most of the excavated churches. The weaknesses of Berthier's conclusions have been pointed out many times, whether for the many difficulties attached to the dating of the churches or for the unsatisfactory nature of his criteria for identifying them as belonging to the Donatists.⁸¹ According to a recent survey, only 22 churches of the ecclesiastical province of Numidia can be securely dated to the time of Augustine.⁸² Two of these are still considered as *possibly* Donatist: Timgad 7 and Ksar el Kelb.⁸³ The other churches are not necessarily Catholic, but the question is impossible to decide from the archaeological evidence. This is not to say, however, that there was not a strong Donatist presence in Numidia: Serge Lancel had confirmed this beyond any doubt, and even the Catholics conceded this point to their opponents.⁸⁴

Frend next turns his attention to linguistic evidence, and I will linger a little longer on this delicate issue. First, let us specify Frend's position,⁸⁵ already presented in a 1942 paper.⁸⁶ He juxtaposes two maps, one with the areas where Berber was spoken in 1938, the other with the finds of Libyan inscriptions. From this evidence he deduces the linguistic continuity of Berber from pre-Roman times to the contemporary period. In passing, he disposes of Augustine's testimony that 'Punic' was spoken in the countryside around Hippo. 'Punic', according to Frend, would be a mere catchword for all non-Roman languages. Frend's position was further developed in 1950 by Courtois, who tried to prove that, while some texts of Augustine attested to the use of Punic in the countryside of Hippo, in others 'Punic' meant more broadly 'African', and hence Berber or Libyan.⁸⁷ The Augustinian dossier of texts has since received a lot of attention, and it seems that there is no longer much room for doubt: when Augustine speaks of the *lingua punica*, he refers to a Semitic language, Punic, as attested by numerous words he mentions.⁸⁸ This does not

⁸¹ See, for instance, S. Lancel, *Actes de la Conférence de Carthage en 411*, t. 1 (1972), 156².

⁸² Anne Michel, 'Aspects du culte dans les églises de Numidie au temps d'Augustin: état de la question', in Serge Lancel (ed.), *Saint Augustin, la Numidie et la société de son temps*, Scripta Antiqua 14 (Bordeaux, 2005), 67-108, list of churches at 105-6.

⁸³ See A. Michel, 'Aspects du culte' (2005), 104 with the bibliography: an inscription from Timgad 7 mentions a *sacerdos Dei Optatus*, tentatively identified with the Donatist bishop; at Ksar el Kelb, a *memoria* names Marculus, possibly the Donatist martyr from 347.

⁸⁴ S. Lancel, *Actes de la Conférence de Carthage en 411*, t. 1 (1972), 155-6.

⁸⁵ W.H.C. Frend, *Donatist Church* (31985), 56-8.

⁸⁶ W.H.C. Frend, 'A note on the Berber background in the life of Augustine', *JTS* 43 (1942), 179-81, repr. in his *Religion Popular and Unpopular in the Early Christian Centuries* (1976).

⁸⁷ Charles Courtois, 'Saint Augustin et le problème de la survivance du punique', *RAf* 94 (1950), 259-82.

⁸⁸ All concur: W.M. Green, 'Augustine's use of punic', in *Semitic and oriental papers: a volume presented to William Popper*, University of California publications in semitic philology 11 (Berkeley, 1951), 179-90; Charles Saumagne, 'La survivance du punique en Afrique aux Ve et VIe siècles', *Karthago* 4 (1953), 171-8; Marcel Simon, 'Punique ou berbère? Note sur la situation linguistique dans l'Afrique romaine', in *Mélanges Isidore Lévy* (Bruxelles, 1955), 613-29 (repr. in his

mean, however, that Libyan was not spoken in the same area, at the same period, and by the same people, as Gabriel Camps forcefully reminds us in a paper published in 1994.⁸⁹ The main evidence for this are the numerous Libyan inscriptions found in Numidia. The written language attested on these inscriptions is still partly mysterious, but its kinship with modern Berber is generally accepted if not definitively proven.⁹⁰ As all the datable inscriptions are from the first and second century AD, continuity with the modern Berber language is the strongest argument offered by those scholars who maintain that Berber was spoken in North Africa alongside Latin and Punic.

While a lot of energy has been devoted to identifying the *lingua punica* of Augustine, much less thought has been given to the question of what it meant for these populations to speak a different language, regardless of whether or not they were bilingual.⁹¹ This is a first example of the sort of question that has long been occulted by the incorrect answers Frend (and others) supplied. However, as Yves Modéran has recently suggested, there is some evidence that, whether they spoke Berber and/or Punic, instead of Latin or in addition to Latin, the population had a sense that this (other) language was a component of their identity.⁹²

In Chapter 5, Frend proposes a survey of the economic conditions in fourth-century North-Africa. It need not be described at length how profoundly our understanding of this matter has been transformed: the body of epigraphic and other textual evidence relating to towns surveyed by Claude Lepelley has shown that there was no decline of city institutions during the fourth century,⁹³ and numerous surveys of rural regions have also proven that Africa was prospering in the fourth and fifth centuries.⁹⁴ Brent Shaw eloquently talks of ‘a new paradigm for the interpretation of social movements in Africa of the fourth and

Recherches d'histoire judéo-chrétienne [Paris, 1962], 88-100); and now with an updated dossier of texts including the Dolbeau sermons, Claude Lepelley, ‘Témoignages de saint Augustin sur l'ampleur et les limites de l'usage de la langue punique dans l'Afrique de son temps’, in Claude Briand-Ponsart ed., *Identités et cultures dans l'Algérie antique* (Rouen, 2005), 117-41.

⁸⁹ Gabriel Camps, ‘Punica lingua et épigraphie lybique dans la Numidie d'Hippone’, *BCTH, Afrique du Nord* n.s. 23 (1990-92), 33-49.

⁹⁰ The very conservative positions of Fergus Millar, ‘Local Cultures in the Roman Empire: Libyan, Punic and Latin in Roman Africa’, *JRS* 58 (1968), 126-34, need to be revised in light of recent linguistic research; see a very cautious assessment in Lionel Galand, ‘Du berbère au libyque: une remontée difficile’, *Lalies* 16 (1996), 77-98 and Robert M. Kerr, *Latino-Punic epigraphy: a descriptive study of the inscriptions* (Tübingen, 2010), 13-24.

⁹¹ On bilingualism in North Africa, see J.N. Adams, *Bilingualism and the Latin Language* (Cambridge, 2003), 213-35, 245-7.

⁹² Yves Modéran, *Les Maures et l'Afrique romaine: IV^e-VII^e siècle*, Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome 314 (Rome, 2003), 526-30.

⁹³ Claude Lepelley, *Les cités de l'Afrique romaine au Bas-Empire*, t. 1, *La permanence d'une civilisation municipale*, Collection des études augustiniennes (Paris, 1979).

⁹⁴ See the review by David J. Mattingly and R. Bruce Hitchner, ‘Roman Africa: an archaeological review’, *JRS* 85 (1995), 165-213, 189-96; L. Dossey, *Peasant and empire* (2010), 62-97.

fifth centuries' that brings 'a fundamental alteration, almost a total reversal of perspective'.⁹⁵

After Chapter 5, Frend turns to the 'religious background' of Donatism, first the decline of paganism (Chapter 6), then the expansion of Christianity (Chapter 7), and an analysis of the causes of conversion (Chapter 8).

Concerning the decline of paganism, Frend's main interest is to emphasize how quickly and easily Christianity replaced the cult of Saturn before being replaced, in turn, by Islam.⁹⁶ He offers the explanation that all these cults were a good fit for the religion of the Berbers and, in particular, their tendency towards monotheism.⁹⁷ Accordingly, Saturn in North Africa drew worshippers mainly from the less Romanized lower-class and rural population, tended to be revered as the greatest of the gods, and the cult of Saturn displayed pre-Roman features. Frend's picture depends heavily on Jules Toutain's, *Les cultes païens dans l'empire Romain* (Paris, 1920),⁹⁸ and it would not have been significantly altered by the 1966 monograph of Marcel Leglay.⁹⁹ Decolonization brought a more nuanced understanding of the cult of Saturn, in particular as an expression of Berber native religion.¹⁰⁰ The rural character of the cult has been contested¹⁰¹ and its common association with henotheism or even monotheism has been severely criticized.¹⁰² Broadly speaking, the search for a native Berber religiosity in the material available for the Roman period has now been abandoned.¹⁰³

⁹⁵ B.D. Shaw, *Sacred Violence* (2011), 831.

⁹⁶ W.H.C. Frend, *Donatist Church* (31985), 77.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.* 78.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.* 78³.

⁹⁹ Marcel Leglay, *Saturne africain*, t. 1, *Histoire*, Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome 105 (Paris, 1966), very positive on Frend at 491-2.

¹⁰⁰ See, in particular, Marcel Benabou, *La résistance africaine à la romanisation* (Paris, 1976), 370-5; also James Boykin Rives, *Religion and Authority in Roman Carthage from Augustus to Constantine* (Oxford, 1995), 142-50 who emphasized élite patronage and integration into Roman culture. Alain Cadotte, *La romanisation des dieux: l'interpretatio Romana en Afrique du Nord sous le Haut-Empire*, Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 158 (Leiden, 2007), quite uncritically adopts Leglay's position on Saturn.

¹⁰¹ See Meriem Sebaï, 'Les sanctuaires méridionaux du Cap Bon: une "frontière religieuse". Premières observations', in *L'Africa romana*, vol. 15 (Cagliari, 2004), 395-406.

¹⁰² See Christophe J. Goddard, 'Un principe de différenciation au cœur des processus de romanisation et de christianisation: quelques réflexions autour du culte de Saturne en Afrique romaine', in Hervé Inglebert, Sylvain Destephen and Bruno Dumézil (eds), *Le problème de la christianisation du monde antique*, Textes, images et monuments de l'antiquité au haut moyen âge 10 (Paris, 2010), 115-45, 122-30.

¹⁰³ See Meriem Sebaï, 'La vie religieuse en Afrique proconsulaire sous le Haut-Empire: l'exemple de la cité de Thugga. Premières observations', in Christophe Batsch, Ulrike Egelhaaf-Gaiser, and Ruth Stepper (eds), *Zwischen Krise und Alltag: antike Religionen im Mittelmeerraum*, Potsdamer altertumswissenschaftliche Beiträge 1 (Stuttgart, 1999), 81-94; also *ead.*, 'La romanisation en Afrique, retour sur un débat. La résistance africaine: une approche libératrice?', *Afrique & histoire* 3 (2005), 39-56.

Frend's narrative of the beginnings of Christianity in North Africa (chapter 7) deals with very scanty evidence, and, excepting his overemphasis of the importance of martyrdom, it remains relevant.¹⁰⁴ I will not comment at any length on Chapter 8, which treats the 'factors relating to the conversion of North Africa to Christianity', as it would be facile to point out the ways in which Frend's understanding of conversion(s) now appears unsophisticated.

Obviously, no scholar today would describe Donatism as 'a Numidian and agrarian movement'. The agendas of research on North Africa have considerably changed since Frend conceived his project and even more since the last impression of his book. Does this mean that we should altogether renounce study the non-religious factors at work through the history of the schism? I would like to recall Peter Brown's warning in 'Christianity and Local Culture in Late Roman Africa': 'The questions posed by Dr. Frend and by other advocates of the role of a resurgence of local culture in the religious life of Late Roman Africa are more important than the highly debatable answers they have given to such questions. It is myopic to answer these answers. For the questions raised have wider implications'.¹⁰⁵ Although this warning went unheeded for a regrettably long time, I will, in conclusion, call attention to recent scholarship that shows rekindled interest in Frend's lines of inquiry.

A welcome reopening of Frend's questions about North Africa

Two recent books have, in a new and welcome way, reopened questions raised by Frend in *The Donatist Church*.

In the introduction to a major study of the Berbers in Late Antique North Africa, Yves Modéran notes that, consequent to negative responses to the work of Frend and Courtois, scholars have literally ignored the existence of the Berber tribes in Eastern Maghreb: 'In these conditions [Modéran had briefly sketched the historiographical trends on the topic], and, though they were not the object of any specific study, the fourth-century Berbers, omnipresent in the visions of Courtois and Frend, quickly became mere shadows to the point of completely disappearing from the works of a number of scholars'.¹⁰⁶ While sixth-century sources attest to the existence of what Modéran calls 'inside Berbers' (as opposed to those who were settled outside of the Roman frontiers), no one had even tried to compile an inventory of the evidence on the existence

¹⁰⁴ See more recent narratives in Timothy D. Barnes, *Tertullian: a historical and literary study* (Oxford, 1985); Maureen A. Tilley, 'North Africa', in Margaret M. Mitchell, Frances M. Young and K. Scott Bowie (eds), *Cambridge History of Christianity, t. 1, Origins to Constantine* (Cambridge, 2006), 311-96.

¹⁰⁵ P. Brown, 'Christianity and local culture' (1968), 87.

¹⁰⁶ Y. Modéran, *Les Maures et l'Afrique romaine* (2003), 32.

of these inside Berbers in the fourth century. Modéran provides exactly such a study in his tenth chapter, and the result is a list of about a dozen tribal communities attested within the provinces of Numidia and Byzacena.¹⁰⁷ Modéran also offers a very fine analysis of the Christianization of the Berbers and suggests that Donatists, far from claiming Berber roots, might instead have sought to provide the umbrella of a unique religious identity under which the diverse cultural communities to which their faithful belonged might be united.¹⁰⁸ He bases his hypothesis on the frequent use of provincial ethnonyms such as *Numidii* or *Byzaceni* in the ecclesiastical documents, as if the clergy (particularly the Donatists, but not exclusively) were trying to group together peoples of widely diverse ethnic backgrounds under a common religion. This suggests that more work needs to be done, despite the poor evidence, on the interaction between integration within the Empire and Christianization, thus reopening a question that was quite important to Frend's thesis on the end of Christianity in North Africa.

In a comparable manner, Leslie Dossey distances herself from the 'recent trend' in scholarship that is inclined 'to deny their [the circumcellions] existence as a "peasant" movement altogether – to emphasize that [...] what tied groups like the circumcellions together was religion, not class'.¹⁰⁹ She agrees that the circumcellions' violence was the invention of polemical sources who hoped to motivate imperial intervention against Donatists,¹¹⁰ but notes that the audience of these sources must have thought that circumcellions 'could have existed' and that therefore the historian should investigate why the topos of a rural rebellion was 'an effective tool' at this time.¹¹¹ Dossey's proposal, in other words, reopens the question of the economic and social aspects of what was presented by the participants as a religious conflict. Her answers are rather different from those of Frend: Dossey claims that what created social tensions was the increased prosperity of the rural population and hence its new involvement in the Roman way of life, that is to say, a blurring of the traditional boundaries between *rustici* and *urbani*. Because these local populations could not find recognition within the empire, they turned to the Christian church; instead of receiving municipal status they became bishoprics, hence the huge number of rural bishops in North Africa. Dossey also investigates how the arrival of Christian clerics in the countryside provoked what has been interpreted as peasant rebellion. She uses the notion of textual communities, as developed by Brian Stock,¹¹² in order to suggest that their 'heresy' was in fact their newly found

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.* 480 and map 15.

¹⁰⁸ Y. Modéran, *Les Maures et l'Afrique romaine* (2003), 525³⁰⁰.

¹⁰⁹ L. Dossey, *Peasant and Empire* (2010), 3.

¹¹⁰ A theme magisterially developed by B.D. Shaw, *Sacred Violence* (2011).

¹¹¹ L. Dossey, *Peasant and Empire* (2010), 4.

¹¹² Brian Stock, *The Implications of Literacy: Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Princeton, 1987).

ability to employ Christian ideas in their own interest. She also collects evidence that Donatist and Catholic clerics played the same role in the formation of textual communities. I cannot here do full justice to the complexity of Dossey's argument. However, my point is only to suggest that we are now in a better position to respond to some of the questions Frend raised, and that the debatable character of his own answers some sixty years ago should not lead us to assume that the questions themselves were unimportant or ill-conceived.

Theology and History in the Thought of Robert Austin Markus

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ABSTRACT

The legacy of Robert Markus includes, among his many other contributions to patristic scholarship, a theology of history he first articulated in the mid-1960s and consistently maintained – sometimes explicitly, more often implicitly – over the next 40 years. This grand narrative valorized the polycentric and ‘secular’ Christianity of the age of Augustine, and lamented its transformation into medieval Christendom, a Christian culture of the church’s own making. Recognizing the pervasiveness and importance of this interpretation of Christian culture is essential for a full understanding of his historical thought.

In an article on ‘Church Reform and Society in Late Antiquity’, published in 2005, Robert Markus recalled the excitement he and his fellow Roman Catholics had experienced over 50 years earlier at the publication of Yves Congar’s *Vraie et fausse réforme dans l’Église* (Paris, 1950). Acknowledging that the work ‘was a theological, not a historical study’, Robert nonetheless observed that Congar was ‘more than any great theologian I can easily think of, a man of a deeply historical turn of mind, and his theological thinking was utterly penetrated by historical insight...’¹

In assessing Robert’s own cast of mind, I am tempted to reverse the terms he used of Congar, and to describe *him* as a *historian* of a deeply *theological* turn of mind, whose *historical* thinking was penetrated by *theological* insight. But of course he did not start out as a historian or a theologian. He was trained as a philosopher in the late 1940s at Manchester, and although he was already a keen reader of Augustine before that, his earliest writings, appearing between 1948 and 1952, show no particular interest in theology or the early church.²

¹ ‘Church Reform and Society in Late Antiquity’, in Christopher M. Bellitto and Louis I. Hamilton (eds), *Reforming the Church before Modernity: Patterns, Problems and Approaches* (Burlington, Vt. and Aldershot, 2005), 3–19, 3.

² For Robert Markus’s publications to 1998, see W.E. Klingshirn and M. Vessey (eds), *The Limits of Ancient Christianity: Essays on Late Antique Thought and Culture in Honor of R.A. Markus* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1999), xv–xxv. His graduate theses are indexed in *Retrospective Index to Theses of Great Britain and Ireland 1716–1950*, vol. 1, ed. Roger R. Bilboul (Santa Barbara, Calif., 1975), 327: R.I. Markus, ‘The relation between the theory of knowledge and metaphysics in the philosophical system of Samuel Alexander’ (M.A. thesis, Manchester, 1948)

Indeed, they can be clearly distinguished from his later publications, both by the topics they treated – problems in metaphysics and Renaissance philosophy – and by the name under which they were written – R.I. Markus, the I. standing for the Hungarian personal name Imre.³

After four years in the Dominican order (1950-54) and his adoption of the name Austin, Robert signaled a new orientation by a change of initials and shift of focus. Henceforth, as R.A. Markus, he devoted his philosophical training to theological and historical problems, mostly in the early Christian centuries. In 1954 he published a long article in *Vigiliae Christianae* on Irenaeus's use of history in the refutation of Valentinian gnosticism, and in 1958 a related piece in the *Journal of Theological Studies* on Tertullian's use of the term *oikonomia* in his understanding of the Trinity. Augustine first appears in an article in the *Downside Review* in 1955 on *erōs* in Plato's *Symposium*, a direct reaction to the recent appearance in English of Anders Nygren's *Agape and Eros* (Chicago, 1953). The most enduringly influential piece from these years was the groundbreaking 'Saint Augustine on Signs', originally published in *Phronesis* in 1957 and reprinted several times over the years, most recently in *Signs and Meanings: World and Text in Ancient Christianity* (Liverpool, 1996.)

While there was some consideration of history in Robert's papers in the middle and later 1950s, it served mostly to explain theological ideas, as he had earlier used history in his philosophical articles. Gradually then, it seems that salvation history began to draw his attention. This is of course a central concern of *Saeculum* (Cambridge, 1970), and with the benefit of hindsight, we can see some of the elements of that book already in play in the 1950s. An essay published in the *Hibbert Journal* in 1957, for instance, calls attention to Dietrich Bonhoeffer's 'penultimate' as the proper sphere of Christian activity in the world.⁴ The endorsement recalls for us now Robert's observation in *Saeculum* that 'Bonhoeffer's "penultimate" is the almost exact equivalent of Augustine's *saeculum*'.⁵ Another article published in 1957 studies the 'biblical time-scheme' and its interpretation in typological approaches to Scripture.⁶ Robert's chapter on 'Time, History, Eternity' in *Christian Faith and Greek Philosophy* (London, 1960), published with his Liverpool colleague A.H. Armstrong, recapitulates these concerns and points straight to the origins of *Saeculum*: 'On this topic [Augustine's two cities], see also the distinguished paper read at the Second

and *id.*, 'The origins of the Cartesian view of rational explanation and certain aspects of its influence on later philosophy' (Ph.D. thesis, Manchester, 1950).

³ Stephen Markus, personal communication, July 25, 2011.

⁴ 'A Relevant Pattern of Holiness: Dietrich Bonhoeffer's "Ethics"', *Hibbert Journal* 55 (1957), 387-92, 390.

⁵ *Saeculum* (1970), 172.

⁶ 'Presuppositions of the Typological Approach to Scripture', *Church Quarterly Review* 158, no. 329 (Oct.-Dec. 1957), 442-51, 449.

International Conference on Patristic Studies (Oxford, 1955) by H.-I. Marrou.⁷ Robert's chapter signals a growing interest not only in Augustine's historical ideas and the work of a scholar he would later term 'that greatest of historians of Late Antiquity',⁸ but also in his own developing vocation as a historian. 'In Augustine's deepest insight', he writes, 'history is set free from its bondage to philosophy. The historian's autonomy is vindicated against the claims of the philosophical weavers of patterns; and yet, the setting and ultimate significance of all human action is ever-present. Christianity has made it possible to reject a philosophy of history and to substitute for it a theology.'⁹

To understand this seemingly paradoxical statement – how autonomous can the historian be if the claims of theology are substituted for those of philosophy? – we might consider a paper Robert delivered in April 1959 and published in the *Downside Review* the following year. Entitled 'The Study of Theology and the Framework of Secular Disciplines', the article surveys the divisions of Greek philosophy in order to explain how Augustine conceived of the relationship between theology and philosophy, and beyond that the other intellectual disciplines. Robert was especially concerned at this time with Augustine's exposition of Varro's three-fold division of theology in the *City of God*. His first paper at an Oxford Patristic Conference was delivered on this topic,¹⁰ and in the conclusion to his article in the *Downside Review*, Robert proposed an answer to the paradox of the historian's autonomy based on Augustine's formulation. He argued that, at least in patristic terms, the enterprise we would call theology 'is not an intellectual discipline among others, but includes all intellectual disciplines in so far as they are relevant to man's understanding of himself, of the world and of God in the light of God's revelation'.¹¹ Thus, he continues, 'although to be a historian, for instance, is to be something different from being a philosopher, or a linguist, or whatever, it is not true to say that to be a theologian is to be something different from being a historian or a linguist

⁷ A.H. Armstrong and R.A. Markus, *Christian Faith and Greek Philosophy* (London, 1960), 133¹. Marrou's paper, 'Civitas Dei, Civitas Terrena: Num Tertium Quid?', *SP* 2 (1957), 342-50, is cited at *Saeculum* (1970), 62³. For Robert's later acknowledgement of its importance, see *Christianity and the Secular* (Notre Dame, 2006), 39²⁰. On the significance of this paper for Peter Brown and Robert Markus alike, see M. Vessey's introduction to part 4 of W.E. Klingshirn and M. Vessey (eds), *Limits of Ancient Christianity* (1999), 210. On Marrou's importance more generally, see *id.*, 'The Demise of the Christian Writer and the Remaking of "Late Antiquity": From H.-I. Marrou's Saint Augustine (1938) to Peter Brown's Holy Man (1983)', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 6.3 (1998), 377-411.

⁸ *The End of Ancient Christianity* (Cambridge, 1990), 16.

⁹ A.H. Armstrong and R.A. Markus, *Christian Faith* (1960), 133-4.

¹⁰ 'Saint Augustine and *Theologia Naturalis*', *SP* 6 (1962), 476-9.

¹¹ 'The Study of Theology and the Framework of Secular Disciplines', *Downside Review* 78 (1960), 192-202, 198.

or even a philosopher. The way in which one is a theologian is precisely through being a practitioner of at least one of these other disciplines as well.¹²

It is not clear to what extent Robert would have agreed with this way of putting things later in his career or even whether he meant it to apply to himself at the time, but it does help to explain the frame of mind in which he was beginning to conceive of *Saeculum*. The historian he felt himself becoming need not forsake the theological problems he was moved to ponder, and the theological enterprise need not compromise his autonomy as a historian. He could do both, as the great run of articles preceding *Saeculum* demonstrates. And in doing both, he could aspire to make connections between fields not always prepared to make those connections themselves. It is certainly at least in part such academic boundaries that help to explain the puzzlement some distinguished reviewers expressed at the book's inclusion of a final chapter on the contemporary relevance of Augustine's political theology.¹³ We shall return to this subject toward the end of the paper in a discussion of *Christianity and the Secular* (2006). For the moment let us focus on the shape given to *Saeculum* by Robert's concerns of the 1960s.

In addition to the work that went into supporting the main arguments of *Saeculum* – on early Christian views of the Roman empire, the phases of Donatism, and Augustine's ideas about scripture, prophecy, eschatology, and political authority – Robert also began writing in the 1960s about Gregory the Great, a subject he had begun to teach at Liverpool, and about problems of church reform and papal authority, not only those directly raised by the second Vatican council, but also those raised by his interest in medieval political thought. Popes were on his mind in the 1960s in ways they had not previously been. In addition to writing a biography of Gregory the Great for Eric John's biographical history of the papacy in 1964 – something we might have expected – he also wrote one on Peter, a figure in whom he had shown no previous scholarly interest.¹⁴ He also devoted signal attention to Gregory VII, and in an important article in *New Blackfriars* in 1965 contrasted what he saw as that pope's field of action for church reform – an isolated and culturally reduced western Europe – with the political, cultural, and ecclesiastical 'catholicity' of the Mediterranean world under Gregory the Great.¹⁵

¹² *Ibid.* 198-9.

¹³ 'The chapter is hardly of interest to Classicists *qua* Classicists, and *pace* Markus, comes somewhat strangely into a book on the history of philosophy', J. Dillon, *Classical Journal* 69 (1974), 265-7, 266. 'After six chapters of careful, if sometimes disputable, historical criticism, the seventh chapter suddenly shifts into a realm too broad to be called history of ideas and too simplistic to be called theology', B. McGinn, *Journal of Religion* 52 (1972), 102-3, 102. 'Je n'ai rien à dire du dernier chapitre qui envisage l'avenir de l'Église d'aujourd'hui', P. Langlois, *Latomus* 32 (1973), 415-6, 416.

¹⁴ 'Peter', in E. John (ed.), *The Popes: A Concise Biographical History* (London, 1964), 29-32, and 'Gregory I', *ibid.* 108-11.

¹⁵ 'The Tradition of Christendom and the Second Vatican Council', *New Blackfriars* 46 (1965), 322-9.

The point concluded with a memorable sentence about the efforts of Gregory VII and other reformers, which Robert was fond of repeating, with slight variations.¹⁶ Here is the version from *New Blackfriars*:

Catholic historians, such as Christopher Dawson, have quite rightly seen in this the creation of a Western civilisation, but they have rarely stopped to count the cost to the church, in terms of catholicity, of thus becoming identified with a culture of her own making.¹⁷

What is important about this sentence and the ideas that stood behind it is that the article in which it first appeared was explicitly about a comparison, not just of Gregory I with Gregory VII, but ultimately with John XXIII. His pontificate, Robert predicted, 'will seem, to future historians, as epoch-making as that of Gregory VII'.¹⁸ This is not just to say that *Saeculum* was a product of its age, or that the explicitly theological approach taken in the final chapter was in some ways implicit in the project from the very start. It is also to say that the problems that drove Robert to write *Saeculum* were already part of a larger set of problems that he believed needed solving: how the church of Augustine, or at least of Augustine's mind, had become the church of the western middle ages, or of Christendom, in the first place, and how that phase could last as long as it did, in some respects to the time of the Second Vatican Council itself.¹⁹ If in this periodization it was impractical to take that account all the way to Gregory VII, or Aquinas,²⁰ or John XXIII, then at least Robert could work out the implications for the rest of late antiquity, up to Gregory the Great, significantly for him not the first medieval pope, but the 'last Late Antique man'.²¹

And so in the aftermath of *Saeculum*, Robert turned to a new set of questions that arose directly from the old. As he phrased it in the introduction to his first volume of collected essays:

¹⁶ *Saeculum* (1970), 163; R. Markus and E. John, *Papacy and Hierarchy* (London, 1969), 25; and 'Church Reform' (2005), 17.

¹⁷ 'Tradition of Christendom' (1965), 325.

¹⁸ *Ibid.* 329.

¹⁹ 'Church Reform' (2005), 18.

²⁰ In his early writings Robert frequently invoked differences between Augustine and Aquinas. For his assessment of the crucial role played by Aquinas in developing 'a theory of secular society ... a theory of a *civitas terrena* which did not depend on a contrast with a *civitas Dei*', see 'The Impact of Aristotle on Medieval Thought', *Blackfriars* 42 (1961), 96-102, 102. See also at further length, 'Two Conceptions of Political Authority, Augustine, *De Civitate Dei* XIX.14-15, and Some Thirteenth Century Interpretations', *JTS* n.s. 16 (1965), 68-100, reprinted as appendices B and C in *Saeculum*. The validity of the contrast is critically evaluated by P.J. Weithman, 'Augustine and Aquinas on Original Sin and the Function of Political Authority', *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 30 (1992), 353-76.

²¹ 'Church Reform' (2005), 16. For the larger ambit of the term 'late-antique man' and its connection to Augustine, see M. Vessey, 'Demise of the Christian Writer' (1998), 383-91.

My long sustained dialogue with Augustine of Hippo had gradually revealed to me the central thrust of my enquiries: to try to understand what is involved in the ways in which a social and religious group, in this case that of the Christians of Late Antiquity, have seen themselves in relation to their fellow men and to other groups in their society; how they have tried to define what set them apart from their contemporaries in belief, in their religious practice, or in the subtler ways we tend to lump together as their 'culture'.²²

Having begun to think of the problem in more 'sociological' terms, although still as a church historian, Robert was then ready to enlarge the scope of his inquiries beyond the age of Theodosius I and Augustine. His *Christianity in the Roman World*, published in 1974 in Christopher Brooke's series *Currents in the History of Culture and Ideas*, was conceived as nothing less than a 'history of Christian self-awareness in the Roman world, the ways in which Christians saw themselves as a distinct group in society, the ways in which they identified themselves with it ... and the ways in which they opposed themselves to or differentiated themselves from it'.²³

Although it does not match in influence any of the books in the great trilogy that runs from *Saeculum* through *End of Ancient Christianity* to *Gregory the Great*, *Christianity in the Roman World* plays an essential role in the continuity of Robert's ideas from one work to the next. On the most general level, as we can now see in hindsight, the book situates specialized works which cover only a portion of early Christian history into a larger framework that runs from the death of Jesus through the end of antiquity. But it also does a great deal more, particularly for an author who looked so often to the implications of his own earlier writings for the later working out of his thoughts. First, by sketching out the problem of Christian self-identity in the centuries *before* Constantine, Robert could make a stronger case for the continuity Christians sought with their past in the centuries that followed. Second, by highlighting what he saw as key differences between the Latin West and Greek East, especially 'the absence of a clear line of demarcation between sacred and secular in the Greek Christian tradition',²⁴ he could justify his concentration on western Christianity, a focus of attention that would otherwise make little sense in a survey of ancient Christianity. Third, by widening his scope beyond a history of ideas to include written and material culture, Robert could illustrate the tangible face of the classical world with which Christians had to contend. This cultural turn is all the more interesting in view of the book's 74 splendid photographs (14 credited to the author himself), a rare feature of Robert's work.

In various ways, as a survey of the first six centuries of Christian history, *Christianity in the Roman World* was well positioned as an introduction to the

²² *From Augustine to Gregory the Great: History and Christianity in Late Antiquity* (London, 1983), i.

²³ *Christianity in the Roman World* (London and New York, 1974), 9.

²⁴ *Ibid.* 169; see also 164, 168.

life and thought of Gregory the Great, which as Robert tells us himself in the preface to *The End of Ancient Christianity*, he had intended to write next. He had already written on Gregory's missionary strategy (1963, 1970) and now staked out the political ground with articles on Justinian's church politics (1979), Ravenna and Rome (1981) and Gregory the Great's Europe (1981).²⁵ At the same time, however, he was also beginning to work out how to track the changes that transformed Christian culture between Augustine's time and Gregory's. His key insight, to measure cultural change by its quotient of 'secularity', is first evident in published form in 'The Sacred and the Secular', which appeared in the *Journal of Theological Studies* in 1985. This article contrasts the world of Augustine, which abounded in secular institutions and cultural practices, with the world of Gregory the Great, 'a world which was being drained of secularity' [where] 'Augustinian distinctions between sacred, secular, and profane had little foothold'.²⁶

The first time I met Robert, in February 1984, it was to hear an earlier version of this paper. The occasion was a graduate student symposium at Stanford to which Sabine MacCormack had invited Henry Chadwick and Robert Markus as keynote speakers. Prof. Chadwick spoke on 'The Originality of Christian Ethics' and Prof. Markus on 'The End of Secularity'. Robert's longer visits to the United States in the later 1980s, including two terms at the Institute for Advanced Study and one semester at the Catholic University of America, provided further opportunities to discuss the book he was writing – in many ways, his most American book²⁷ – whose subject was the end, not simply of secularity, but of ancient Christianity itself, for which he wanted secularity to be taken as a kind of proxy.

What seems to have been little understood at the time of the book's publication in 1990, however, was the degree to which his line of thinking was derived not just from *Saeculum* itself, but from long-standing theological and political concerns – the same ones that had animated *Saeculum* – which now remained largely under the surface. To be sure, Robert gave certain hints of a larger project: a definition of culture in the first chapter that seeks to maintain the transcendence of religion, strategically placed quotations from Alasdair

²⁵ 'The Chronology of the Gregorian Mission to England: Bede's Narrative and Gregory's Correspondence', *JEH* 14 (1963), 16-30; 'Gregory the Great and the Origins of a Papal Missionary Strategy', in G.J. Cuming (ed.), *The Mission of the Church and the Propagation of Faith* (Cambridge, 1970), 29-38; 'Carthage – Prima Justiniana – Ravenna: Aspects of Justinian's Kirchenpolitik', *Byzantion* 49 (1979), 277-306; 'Ravenna and Rome, 554-604', *Byzantion* 51 (1981), 566-78; and 'Gregory the Great's Europe', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th ser. 31 (1981), 21-36.

²⁶ 'The Sacred and the Secular: From Augustine to Gregory the Great', *JTS* n.s. 36 (1985), 84-96, 96.

²⁷ One observes at p. 152, for instance, the impression made upon him by 'the "hub and spoke" network of connecting airline routes in North America'.

MacIntyre²⁸ and Herbert McCabe,²⁹ and, most significantly, a programmatic reference to Henri Marrou's description of the early middle ages as a 'sacral' (Robert called it a 'wholly sacral') society whose Christian culture had lost its autonomy and was dominated by the Church.³⁰ Yet despite these hints of a larger theological framework, the implicit connection between the loss of secularity in the fifth and sixth centuries and the entire subsequent course of Christian history seems to have gone largely unnoticed by reviewers.

One of the reasons the underlying presuppositions remained opaque in *The End of Ancient Christianity* was the relatively loose connection made, at least in contrast with *Saeculum*, between the overall argument and the detailed treatment of subjects: ascetic perfection, Christian self-definition, bishops and monks, the cult of martyrs, festivals, pilgrimage, and holy places. Jacques Fontaine explained this as a division in Robert's own intellectual makeup, between what he called 'the ambition for a certain philosophy of religious history' (*l'ambition d'une certaine philosophie de l'histoire religieuse*) and a firm 'attachment to a direct and sensitive reading of the late antique texts' (*l'attachement à une lecture directe et sensible des textes antiques tardifs*).³¹ The construction of the book in this manner allowed readers to look for their own meanings in Robert's grand narrative without having to concern themselves with his framing of the problem or agree with all the explanations he proposed. It is largely due to Robert's skill as a close reader of texts, especially those of Augustine and his interlocutors, that his book is full of penetrating and broadly accessible insights. Many scholars of late antique religion and culture have made use of it, whether to cite some aspect of the discussion as definitive, to expand upon or take issue with one or another conclusion, to apply Robert's questions and methods to problems he did not treat, or simply to insert their own more specialized work into a larger frame of reference. Relatively fewer readers on the other hand have taken on, either to accept or reject, the book's underlying narrative of cultural and political decline, from the culturally robust and polycentric Christianity of the fourth and early fifth centuries to a conceptually impoverished and ascetically constrained world of the later fifth and sixth centuries and beyond that, of the early middle ages.

²⁸ *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (Notre Dame, 1988), cited in *End* (1990), 50 and 224, and *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (Notre Dame, 1981), cited in *End* (1990), 197.

²⁹ *God Matters* (London, 1987), cited in *End* (1990), 163.

³⁰ *End* (1990), 16. The reference is to H.-I. Marrou, 'La place du haut moyen âge dans l'histoire du christianisme', in *Il passaggio dall'Antichità al Medioevo in Occidente, 6-12 aprile 1961*, Settimane di studio del centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo 9 (Spoleto, 1962), 595-630, 608. For a further acknowledgement of Marrou's influence on the argument of *The End of Ancient Christianity*, see now *Christianity and the Secular* (2006), 78-80, and 'Between Marrou and Brown: Transformations of Late Ancient Christianity', in P. Rousseau and M. Papoutsakis (eds), *Transformations of Late Antiquity: Essays for Peter Brown* (Farnham, UK and Burlington, Vt., 2009), 11-2.

³¹ J. Fontaine, *Revue des études anciennes* 94 (1992), 501-3, 503.

A selective reading of *The End of Ancient Christianity* is perhaps most evident in the book's positive reception by early medievalists. Mayke de Jong's assessment offers a good example:

Would all this lively early medieval scholarship have been possible without the achievements in the field of late antiquity? I rather doubt it, and I do not only have Peter Brown's work in mind, but also that of Robert A. Markus. Here is yet another unconventional British scholar to whom we continentals owe so much. Markus's *End of Ancient Christianity* (1990) traced the change from a Christianity flourishing in any given community, regardless of location, to a deeply territorialized religion bound to an infinite number of sacred places.³²

Nothing about secularity, desecularization, or the incipient creation of a wholly sacral society is necessary for these ideas to take hold or stimulate further research. Indeed, one could almost forget that Robert expended no small effort in the book's final pages lamenting the cultural loss he saw at the end of the sixth century: 'A constriction in what was comprised within the sphere of Christian discourse, a self-limitation to one of the constituents of what had been a richer variety ... To explore this development', he concluded, 'would be to enter the spiritual and intellectual world of early medieval Christianity.'³³

That was something that Robert never did. He came as close as he ever would in his writings about Gregory the Great, especially in *Gregory the Great and his World*, (Cambridge, 1997), and in the lectures and papers published between the mid-1960s and mid-1990s that prepared for it. His purpose was not, however, to provide a comprehensive survey of the transition from the ancient to the medieval Church, but mainly to study Gregory on his own terms, and to identify those features of Gregory's world that were most conducive to the flourishing of the early middle ages and to its radical distinction in culture and catholicity from Augustine's world. Describing the century after Gregory in the book's epilogue – Robert loved epilogues in his books, almost as much as he loved additional notes – he restated the case he had first made in 1965. In his words, the 'loosening of relations between Rome and Constantinople' left Rome 'increasingly isolated from the Greek East'; the loss of Carthage cut it off 'from the one great Latin see which could be a focus of fruitful tension'. The result, he concluded, left Rome 'radically simplified' ... 'the single, isolated, religious centre of the barbarian West. No longer enriched by the creative tensions between a number of great sees ringing the Mediterranean, cut off from Africa and, gradually, from the Eastern churches, the Roman Church became the unchallenged mistress and teacher of the Western Germanic nations. And they were only too ready to learn.'³⁴

³² M. de Jong, 'Rethinking Early Medieval Christianity: A View from the Netherlands', *Early Medieval Europe* 7 (1998), 261-76, 269-70.

³³ *End* (1990), 225.

³⁴ *Gregory the Great* (1997), 203-4.

Peter Brown has provocatively stated that ‘*Saeculum* was a book written against the future of Catholic Western Europe’.³⁵ Its sequels clearly carry the story further in that direction. But one could also say, more positively, that these books and much of Robert’s other work, were written *for* another future, a future beyond Christendom, a future that for Robert began with the second Vatican council. The clearest statement of this comes, appropriately for someone so concerned with the *eschaton*, in the last paragraph of his last book, delivered as a series of lectures at the University of Notre Dame in 2004.

It is fitting to conclude with a tribute to Pope John XXIII, in whose honour these lectures have been instituted. For it was he, together with the council he called and over which his genius presided, if somewhat fitfully, that reversed sixteen and a half centuries in which the spell of Constantinianism, or if you prefer, of Christendom, held the Catholic Church in its thrall. Pope John had the courage and the vision to put an end to the Church’s aspiration to determine a world in which it could be safe. On the contrary: it was no longer to be comfortable in the world but to be open to it, to learn from its ways, to engage in unending dialogue, sharing all that is truly human, the joys, hopes, fears, and anxieties of this age. With the Blessed Pope John XXIII the Church has come to embrace the secular and to acknowledge its value, its autonomy, and even, if I may add what may seem paradoxical, its sacredness or holiness.³⁶

It was this grand narrative of church history that Robert first articulated in 1965 and still held in all its essentials 40 years later. He maintained it without compromise to his principles, either as a philosophically minded historian or as an ecumenically minded Christian. His work in many branches of patristics, on Augustine, Gregory, and much between, can be evaluated on its own merits and has in one way or another influenced a great many students of the early church. Beyond that, though, his interest in the currency of Augustine’s ideas in today’s *saeculum*, the place of the Christian citizen in the present, has appealed to an audience beyond the world of patristic scholarship. Consideration of his last book and its reception – in some ways, the key to everything he wrote – provides a fitting conclusion to this assessment.

For our purposes, what is most worth noting about *Christianity and the Secular* is the way in which it engages the three most important elements in Robert’s interpretation of Augustine: first, his narrative of secularity and its end, second; the centrality of his *historical* scholarship at every stage;³⁷ and third, the world of possibilities opened up by what we might call the end of the end of secularity, the world described in the final chapter of *Saeculum*. That chapter, supported by all those preceding it, initiated a series of debates about

³⁵ P. Brown, ‘Introducing Robert Markus’, *Augustinian Studies* 32 (2001) 181-7, 184.

³⁶ *Christianity and the Secular* (2006), 91.

³⁷ Eric Gregory puts this well when he calls *Saeculum* ‘the scholarly lodestar for Augustinian liberalism’ (emphasis added), *Politics and the Order of Love: An Augustinian Ethic of Democratic Citizenship* (Chicago and London, 2008), 77.

Augustinian secularity that continues to the present.³⁸ The lectures he delivered in his 80th year and published two years later take account of the intervening discussions, and both revise and reaffirm his past positions. But because Augustine was *so* central for everything Robert wrote – even *The End of Ancient Christianity* and *Gregory the Great and his World* are as much about Augustine as about their own ostensible subjects – and because Robert's work is so highly integrated, *Christianity and the Secular* also offers a framework for reconsidering his other writings beyond *Saeculum*. This includes not only books, but other influential scholarship as well: his widely-cited paper on holy places,³⁹ studies of Augustine on signs (1993), communication (1995), transcendence (2000), and magic (1994),⁴⁰ and politically engaged papers on nuclear weapons (1961), the just war tradition (1983), and Christian perspectives on war and peace (1998),⁴¹ to mention just a few.

Whatever themes we choose to pursue, whatever writings we choose to re-read, whatever sources we choose to examine afresh, reconsideration of Robert's career and writings will go on for a long time. There is abundant material for discovery and debate, confirmation and refutation. But in whatever ways we come to terms with Robert's legacy, we should remain alert for the links between the historical and theological dimensions of his thought. Early, middle, and late, every phase of his career was marked by a determination to keep these from moving too far apart, even if one or the other was more in evidence at a particular time. In reading an author with so fine an appreciation of the scholar's responsibility to the past *and* the present, it seems fitting that we remember this vital connection.

³⁸ Summaries of the relevant bibliography can be found in *Christianity and the Secular* (2006), chapters 2 and 3, and R. Gascoigne, *The Church and Secularity: Two Stories of Liberal Society* (Washington, D.C., 2009), especially chapter 1.

³⁹ 'How on Earth Could Places Become Holy?', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 2 (1994), 257-71.

⁴⁰ 'Interiorità e orizzonte dei segni', in L. Alici, R. Piccolomini and A. Perretti (eds), *Ripensare Agostino: Interiorità e intenzionalità: Atti del IV Seminario del Centro di Studi agostiniani di Perugia* (Rome, 1993), 13-24; 'Signs, Communication and Communities in Augustine's *De Doctrina Christiana*', in D.W.H. Arnold and P. Bright (eds), 'De doctrina Christiana': *A Classic of Western Culture* (Notre Dame, 1995), 97-108; 'Communication and Transcendence in Augustine's *De Trinitate*', in J. Brachtendorf (ed.), *Gott und sein Bild: Augustins De Trinitate im Spiegel gegenwärtiger Forschung* (Paderborn, 2000), 173-81; and 'Augustine on Magic: A Neglected Semiotic Theory', *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 40 (1994), 375-88.

⁴¹ 'Conscience and Deterrence', in W. Stein (ed.), *Nuclear Weapons and the Christian Conscience* (London, 1961), 65-90; 'Saint Augustine's Views on the Just War', in W.J. Sheils (ed.), *The Church and War* (Oxford, 1983), 1-13; and 'Christian Perspectives on War and Peace', in H.A. Haleem et al. (eds), *The Crescent and the Cross: Muslim and Christian Approaches to War and Peace* (London and New York, 1998), 32-6.

