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The Son of God Beyond the Flesh: a Historical and theological Study of the Extra Calvinisticum.

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THE SON OF GOD BEYOND THE FLESH:

A HISTORICAL AND THEOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE *EXTRA CALVINISTICUM*

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO

THE FACULTY OF CALVIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY

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GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

MAY 2013

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There are many people that I wish to thank for their support, assistance, and encouragement during the course of my studies. Thanks to my professors at Calvin Theological Seminary and particularly my advisor, Prof. Ronald Feenstra, for modeling academic excellence. I also wish to thank my church family at Harvest OPC, who are the main reason why I so quickly began to consider Grand Rapids my home. It was among these dear saints that I met my wife, Melisa. Thank you, honey, for making life so sweet. To my many colleagues in the doctoral program, I also owe a debt of gratitude, not only for scholarly camaraderie and discussions, but for genuine Christian fellowship. For this I especially thank Dariusz Bryćko, Albert Gootjes, James Joiner, Stefan Lindblad, Jon Marko, Laurence O'Donnell, Amos Oei, Todd Rester, and Ted Van Raalte. I am also grateful for my employment as research assistant at the H. Henry Meeter Center for Calvin Studies during my time in the doctoral program. Thanks to Paul Fields, Ryan Noppen, and Karin Maag for a fine academic work environment and good friendship as well. Lastly, I thank my brothers and their families, and particularly my parents, for their love and support, which was usually given by long distance, though it was not for that reason any less effective.

From my earliest years and up through high school, college, seminary, and now doctoral studies, the Lord has blessed me with the discipleship and instruction of home, church, and school. This discipleship and instruction has come from family members, mentors, teachers, pastors, and professors. With thanks to God, and in recognition that I have been trained and shaped by so many people, I dedicate this work to all of my teachers, beginning with my parents.

—AMM

NOTE ON TRANSLATIONS

In this study I have endeavored to use the original-language texts of pre-modern and Reformation-era works and not merely English translations. However, for both my readers' and my own ease of understanding, I quote these works in English translation (though occasionally I include original-language phrases and terms when I have thought them especially important). Sometimes I quote from a published English translation without altering the text, but often I have silently modified a translation based on comparison with the original. In either case, it is my practice to cite the published English translation in the footnote following the citation of the original title and/or its critical edition. For editions that contain both the original-language text and an English translation (like the Blackfriars edition of Aquinas's *Summa* or Wickham's collection of Cyril's letters), I have compared the original with the English and have sometimes modified the translation. Finally, in those places where I do not cite an English translation (usually because none is available) the translation is my own.

ABBREVIATIONS

ACO	*Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum*. Edited by E. Schwartz. 4 vols. Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1914–1940.
CPG	*Clavis Patrum Graecorum*. Edited by M. Geerard. 5 vols. Turnhout: Brepols, 1973–1998.
NA^{27}	*Novum Testamentum Graece*. Edited by E. Nestle, et al. 27th ed. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelstiftung, 1993.
NPNF(2)	*A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*. Edited by Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. 2nd series. 14 vols. New York: Christian Literature Co., 1890–1900. Reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952.
PG	*Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*. Edited by J.-P. Migne. 161 vols. Paris: Migne, 1857–1866.
PL	*Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina.* Edited by J.-P. Migne. 221 vols. Paris: Migne, 1844–65.
Schaff	*The Creeds of Christendom with a History and Critical Notes*. Edited by Philip Schaff. 6th ed. 3 vols. Reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007.

Works of Cyril of Alexandria

C. Nest.	*Libri V contra Nestorium*
Durand	*Deux dialogues christologiques*. Edited by G. M. de Durand. Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1964.
Ep.	*Epistula(e)*
Hom. Pasch.	*Homiliae paschales*
In Io.	*Commentarii in Iohannem*
In Luc.	*Commentarii in Lucam*
In XII proph.	*Commentarius in XII prophetas*
Is Is.	*Commentarius in Isaiam prophetam*

Payne Smith	*A Commentary upon the Gospel according to S. Luke, by S. Cyril Patriarch of Alexandria now first translated into English from an Ancient Syriac Version*. 2 vols. Translated by R. Payne Smith. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1859.
Pusey (1868)	*Sancti patris nostri Cyrilli archiepiscopi Alexandrini in XII prophetas*. 2 vols. Edited by P. E. Pusey. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1868.
Pusey (1872)	*Sancti patris nostri Cyrilli archiepiscopi Alexandrini in D. Joannis evangelium*. 3 vols. Edited by P. E. Pusey. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1872.
Pusey (1881)	*S. Cyril Archbishop of Alexandria: Five Tomes against Nestorius, Scholia on the Incarnation, Christ is One, and Fragments against Diodore of Tarsus, Theodore of Mopsuestia, the Synousiasts*. Edited by P. E. Pusey. Oxford: James Parker, 1881.
Quod Unus	*Quod unus sit Christus*
Resp. ad Tib.	*Responsiones ad Tiberium*
Scholia	*Scholia de incarnatione unigeniti*
Wickham	*Cyril of Alexandria, Select Letters*. Edited by Lionel R. Wickham. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983.

Works of Thomas Aquinas

Catena in Io.	*Catena in Ioannem*
In Sent.	*Scriptum super Sententiis*
CT	*Compendium theologiae*
O'Neil	*On the Truth of the Catholic Faith, Summa Contra Gentiles, Book Four: Salvation*. Translated by Charles J. O'Neil. Garden City, NY: Image Books, 1957.
Quodlibet.	*Quaestiones de quolibet*
Regan	*Compendium of Theology*. Translated by Richard J. Regan. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.
SCG	*Summa contra Gentiles*
ST	*Summa theologiae*. 61 vols. Cambridge: Blackfriars, 1964–1981.

Super I Cor.   *Super I ad Corinthios*

Super Io.   *Super Ioannem*

ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the doctrine that the incarnate Son of God was not limited to

fleshly, human existence but continued to exist *etiam extra carnem* ("even beyond the

flesh"), a doctrine that has come to be known as the *extra Calvinisticum*. The study argues

that the doctrine had a significant role in the thought of three important theologians of the

patristic, medieval, and Reformation eras—namely, Cyril of Alexandria (d. 444), Thomas

Aquinas (1225–1274), and Zacharias Ursinus (1534–1583)—and explains how each of these

theologians employed the doctrine. In general, however, the *extra* dropped from the

theological scene by the end of the nineteenth century due in part to shifts in metaphysics and

theological method and a growing weariness of theological divisions in the church. The

exposition of the doctrine's use in these three pre- and early-modern figures reveals the older

significance of the doctrine and sets the stage for a discussion of contemporary efforts at

reappropriation.

For Cyril of Alexandria the transcendence of the incarnate Son serves as a tool with

which to defend the complete deity of the Son and the Son's continued personal divine

activity beyond the flesh. Aquinas, however, employs the doctrine of the Son's existence

beyond the flesh to defend Christ's true humanity in the case of his incarnational descent and

descent into hell during the three days after his death. Aquinas also uses the traditional

totus/totum distinction to distinguish how Christ remains present even when he is not present

in a human way. In the context of post-Reformation polemics, Zacharias Ursinus employs the

extra for more than a polemical purpose and articulates the doctrine with an eye towards the

benefits and comfort that it holds out to believers.

The dissertation closes with an examination of twentieth-century and contemporary efforts at recovering the *extra*, beginning with Karl Barth and Helmut Thielicke. Here it is argued that the contemporary trend of making the *extra* a theological principle or extending the doctrine into areas beyond christology is a misuse of the doctrine. Other recent uses of the doctrine are also evaluated and, ultimately, it is argued that the *extra Calvinisticum* remains significant, though it ought to remain within the bounds of christology.

CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION

This study examines a significant, albeit somewhat obscure, aspect of Christian reflection on the person of Christ: the doctrine that has come to be known as the *extra Calvinisticum*. In brief, the *extra Calvinisticum* is the doctrine that the incarnate Son of God was not limited to fleshly, human existence but continued to exist *etiam extra carnem* ("even beyond the flesh"). In this dissertation I argue that this doctrine had a significant role in the thought of three important theologians of the patristic, medieval, and Reformation eras—namely, Cyril of Alexandria (d. 444), Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), and Zacharias Ursinus (1534–1583), and that the *extra Calvinisticum*, on the whole, passed from the theological scene by the end of the nineteenth century due in part to shifts in metaphysics and theological method and a growing weariness of theological divisions in the church. These historical arguments lead to an examination of contemporary efforts at recovering the *extra Calvinisticum* in which I suggest some ways forward for the use of the doctrine in Christian theology.

The doctrine of the *extra Calvinisticum* has received some scholarly attention in the modern era, but these studies have focused almost exclusively on the use of the doctrine by the sixteenth-century Reformer, John Calvin. Although it has been demonstrated that the *extra Calvinisticum* doctrine did not originate with Calvin but is present in ancient and medieval theology—a point we will return to below—there has been little attention given to other sources, particularly pre-modern sources, and the ways in which, and purposes for which, these writers utilized this doctrine. How did these theologians express and use this doctrine? What were their purposes for doing so? What biblical arguments did they use to

develop and defend this doctrine? As to contemporary work on the incarnation, a handful of

scholars have sought to reappropriate the *extra Calvinisticum*. Yet even in these studies the

investigation of sources other than Calvin has been sparse. Therefore there is a need for a

detailed analysis of the historical sources of the so-called *extra Calvinisticum* that is not

limited to or directed by Calvin studies and that will reveal how the ancient, medieval, and

other Reformation era expressions of the *extra Calvinisticum* might be of benefit to theology

and christology in the church today.

I. State of the Question

E. David Willis's monograph on Calvin's christology remains the most important study of

the *extra Calvinisticum*.[1] Although the bulk of Willis's study looks at the function of the

extra in Calvin's theology, his discussion of the origins of the term "extra Calvinisticum" and

his survey of the appearances of the *extra* in patristic, medieval, and early modern sources,

are major contributions. In addition to Willis, many other authors have examined the *extra* in

Calvin's theology. These studies have ranged from specific explorations of the *extra* in

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[1] *Calvin's Catholic Christology: The Function of the So-called extra Calvinisticum in Calvin's Theology* (Leiden: Brill, 1966).

Calvin's thought[2] to shorter discussions of the *extra* in service of larger treatments of

Calvin's theology or Reformed theology more generally.[3]

     Moving beyond the field of Calvin studies, aside from the one chapter in Willis's

book, and a short thesis that takes its cues from Willis's work,[4] there has been almost no

examination of the *extra* in theologians prior to Calvin.[5] As to the modern constructive

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[2] Heiko A. Oberman, "Infinitum capax finiti. Kanttekeningen bij de theologie van Calvijn," *VoxTh* 35 (1965): 165–74; idem, "The 'Extra' Dimension in the Theology of Calvin," *JEH* 21, no. 1 (1970): 43–64; T. Hoogsteen, "Vere Deus, Vere Homo: A Comparative Study Between Calvin and Barth on the Basis of the *extra Calvinisticum* and the *communicatio idiomatum*" (Th.D. diss., Theologische Hogeschool te Kampen, 1983); Christian Link, "Die Entscheidung der Christologie Calvins und ihre theologische Bedeutung: Das sogenannte Extra-Calvinisticum," *EvTh* 47, no. 2 (1987): 97–119; Peter Wyatt, *Jesus Christ and Creation in the Theology of John Calvin* (Allison Park, PA: Pickwick, 1996), 27–54; Paul Helm, "The *Extra*," in *John Calvin's Ideas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 58–92; Daniel Y. K. Lee, *The Holy Spirit as Bond in Calvin's Thought: Its Function in Connection with the* extra Calvinisticum (Bern: Peter Lang, 2011); Paolo Gamberini, "La questione cattolica del 'subsistit' e la dottrina dell''extra calvinisticum': Un approccio ecumenico," in *Alla riscoperta di Giovanni Calvino: e del suo messaggio a cinquecento anni dalla nascita*, ed. Michele Cassese (Venice: I.S.E. "San Bernardino", 2011), 133–77; Ernst van den Hemel, "Things That Matter: The *Extra Calvinisticum*, the Eucharist, and John Calvin's Unstable Materiality," in *Things: Religion and the Question of Materiality*, eds. Dick Houtman and Birgit Meyer (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012), 62–74.

[3] See, *e.g.*, Wilhelm Niesel, *The Theology of Calvin*, trans. Harold Knight (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1956), 118–19; Werner Krusche, *Das Wirken des Heiligen Geistes nach Calvin* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1957), 126–30; Niesel, *Reformed Symbolics: A Comparison of Catholicism, Orthodoxy, and Protestantism* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1962), 288–91; François Wendel, *Calvin: Origins and Development of His Religious Thought*, trans. Philip Mairet (repr., Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997), 223–25; Kilian McDonnell, *John Calvin, the Church, and the Eucharist* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1967), 212–23, 249–52, 368–69; Richard A. Muller, *Christ and the Decree: Christology and Predestination in Reformed Theology from Calvin to Perkins* (Durham, NC: The Labyrinth Press, 1986), 19–20; Jan Rohls, *Reformed Confessions: Theology from Zurich to Barmen* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998), 102–17; Stephen Edmondson, *Calvin's Christology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 213; Helm, *Calvin: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London: T&T Clark, 2008), 120–23; Charles Partee, *The Theology of John Calvin* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2008), 151–53; David Gibson, *Reading the Decree: Exegesis, Election and Christology in Calvin and Barth*, (London: T&T Clark, 2009), 34–41; idem, "A Mirror for God and for Us: Christology and Exegesis in Calvin's Doctrine of Election," *IJST* 11, no. 4 (2009): 461–63; Cornelis van der Kooi, *As in a Mirror: John Calvin and Karl Barth on Knowing God: A Diptych*, trans. Donald Mader (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 44–45, 215–16; idem, "Christology," trans. Gerrit W. Sheeres, in *The Calvin Handbook*, ed. Herman J. Selderhuis (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 257–67; idem, "Calvin's Christology from a Contemporary Systematic Perspective: A Few Remarks," in *Calvin—Saint or Sinner?*, ed. Herman J. Selderhuis (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 241–54; Helm, *Calvin at the Centre* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 114–31; Frank Ewerszumrode, *Mysterium Christi spiritualis praesentiae: Die Abendmahlslehre des Genfer Reformators Johannes Calvin aus römisch-katholischer Perspektive* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012), 257–63.

[4] H. I. Lederle, "Die leer van die 'extra Calvinisticum' vóór Calvyn: die weerlegging van 'n dogmahistoriese legende" (L.Th. thesis, University of Stellenbosch, 1975).

[5] One exception is the brief discussion in Heiko A. Oberman, *The Harvest of Medieval Theology: Gabriel Biel and Late Medieval Nominalism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963), 264–65. For a short

appropriation of the *extra*, Calvin figures most prominently, if not exclusively, in those places where pre-modern precedents are utilized.[6] The *extra* also appears briefly in several modern theology or christology texts, if not in name, at least in concept, particularly in the midst of discussions of the *communicatio idiomatum*.[7] Additionally, the doctrine has appeared in some theological dictionaries and encyclopedias.[8]

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discussion of the doctrine in one of Calvin's contemporaries, see William Klempa, "Classical Christology," in *A Companion to Peter Martyr Vermigli*, eds. Torrance Kirby, Emidio Campi, and Frank A. James, III (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 342–43.

[6] Thomas F. Torrance, *Space, Time and Incarnation* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), 30–51; Andre Gounelle, "Conjonction ou disjonction de Jesus et du Christ. Tillich entre l'extra calvinisticum et l'intra lutheranum," *Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses* 61 (1981): 249–57; Eleanor J. Stonebraker, "Heroes and beggars: A Lutheran look at the extra Calvinisticum, inside and out" (Master's thesis, Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, OH, 1991); Christina Aus der Au, "Das Extra Calvinisticum—mehr als ein reformiertes Extra?" *ThZ* 64, no. 4 (2008): 358–69; Helm, "The *Extra*," in *John Calvin's Ideas*, 58–92; Theodore Zachariades, "The *Extra Calvinisticum*: A Doctrinal Emphasis Needing Reaffirmation," unpublished paper, Evangelical Theological Society, Southeastern Region, 15 March 2002 (T.R.E.N., ETS-9051); Myk Habets, "Putting the 'extra' back into Calvinism," *SJTh* 62, no. 4 (2009): 441–56; Oliver D. Crisp, *God Incarnate: Explorations in Christology* (London: T&T Clark, 2009), 56–62; Darren O. Sumner, "The Twofold Life of the Word: Karl Barth's Critical Reception of the *Extra Calvinisticum*," *IJST* 15, no.1 (2013): 42–57; Cornelis van der Kooi, "The Identity of Israel's God: The Potential of the So-called *Extra-Calvinisticum*," in *Tradition and Innovation in Biblical Interpretation*, eds. W. Th. van Peursen and J. W. Dyk (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 209–22. A notable point in one of Crisp's works is his mention of Cyril of Alexandria as a source of the *extra*: *Divinity and Humanity: The Incarnation Reconsidered* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 142–43.

[7] Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, combined ed. (reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), II, 323–325, 334; Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, 4 vols., eds. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1956–1975), I/2, 168–71; IV/1, 180–181; F. W. A. Korff, *Christologie: de leer van het komen Gods*, 2 vols., 2nd ed. (Nijkerk: G. F. Callenbach, 1942), 1:236–37, 255–66, et passim; G. C. Berkouwer, *The Person of Christ*, trans. John Vriend (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1955), 93–95, 283–84, et passim; idem, *The Work of Christ*, trans. Cornelis Lambregste (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 235–41; Otto Weber, *Foundations of Dogmatics*, 2 vols., trans. Darrell L. Guder (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981–1983), 1:326; 2:124,132; Helmut Thielicke, *The Evangelical Faith*, 3 vols., trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974–1982), 1:292–96, et passim; Donald MacLeod, *The Person of Christ* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998), 199; Michael S. Horton, *Lord and Servant: A Covenant Christology* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2005), 162–65.

[8] Hermann Bauke, "Christologie: II. Dogmengeschichlich," in *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 2nd ed., vol. 1, edited by Hermann Gunkel et al. (Tübingen: Mohr, 1927), 1627–28; W. Kreck, "Extra Calvinisticum," in *Evangelisches Kirchenlexikon: Kirchlich-theologisches Handwörterbuch*, vol. 1, eds. Heinz Brunotte and Otto Weber (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1956), 1245–46; Richard A. Muller, *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms Drawn Principally from Protestant Scholastic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985), 111; Alasdair I. C. Heron, "Extra calvinisticum," in *Evangelisches Kirchenlexikon: Internationale theologische Enzyklopädie*, vol. 1, 3rd ed., eds. Erwin Fahlbusch et al. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986), 1247–48 [ET in *The Encyclopedia of Christianity*, vol. 2, eds. Erwin Fahlbusch et al., trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 258]; David Willis-Watkins [E. David Willis], "Extra Calvinisticum," in *Encyclopedia of the Reformed Faith*, ed. Donald K. McKim (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1992), 132–33.

Despite all of these contributions to our understanding of the *extra*, there has been no extended historical and constructive study of the *extra* that expounds and appropriates the doctrine as found in patristic, medieval, or Reformation sources other than Calvin. The dissertation by Theodore Zachariades comes closest to doing so,[9] but his focus is specifically on the divine attribute of omnipresence and how the incarnate Son can be said to be omnipresent. Zachariades looks in detail at the biblical case for Christ's omnipresence, which has bearing on the *extra* and which is one of his most valuable contributions to the scholarly discussion.[10] He also offers an historical survey of the christology of some relevant patristic and medieval figures, together with a review of Calvin's *extra*, although his sights are ultimately set on recent issues in American evangelical theology, particularly kenotic approaches to the incarnation and how an emphasis on the divine attribute of omnipresence—specifically Christ's omnipresence—can address these debates.

While there have been forays into the doctrine of the *extra*, there is still a need for a study of the historical sources of the *extra* that is not limited to or directed by Calvin studies and that both pursues an in-depth analysis of patristic, medieval, and Reformation articulations of the *extra* and examines the prospects of recovering the doctrine for contemporary christology. This dissertation is a step towards filling this gap in the scholarship on the *extra Calvinisticum*.

II. Method

A comprehensive treatment of both the history and contemporary relevance of the *extra Calvinisticum* would be a valuable contribution to Christian theology but would also run the

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[9] Theodore Zachariades, "The Omnipresence of Jesus Christ: A Neglected Aspect of Evangelical Christology" (Ph.D. diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2004).

[10] Zachariades, "Omnipresence of Jesus Christ," 154–217.

risk of being either superficial or voluminous. The present study therefore is selective both in the historical figures and the contemporary theological issues that are treated, and as such this study is not, and is not intended to be, a complete history of the *extra Calvinisticum*. This selective approach will, it is hoped, allow for the pursuit of what is often lacking in current scholarship—namely, a detailed analysis of this doctrine in some historical figures with attention to relevant secondary literature as well as a constructive approach to reappropriating the doctrine.

While the largest portion of this study will be historical in nature and thus will exhibit a method appropriate to historical investigation, I will pursue a constructive theological approach in the final two chapters. The historical chapters will focus on the writings of selected theologians who addressed christology in general and, more specifically, those places where these writers articulate something like the *extra Calvinisticum*. This approach, however, presents a significant methodological problem since the *extra Calvinisticum* doctrine is seldom, if ever, given a separate and extensive exposition by theologians prior to the Reformation era. The *extra Calvinisticum*, or something like it, is usually mentioned only in passing and in the context of larger christological discussions in patristic and medieval theologians. In cases like this, the temptation to which theologians often succumb is to begin with a later formulation of a doctrine and then comb the earlier sources in search of statements that sound like the later formulation. Not only is this method anachronistic, but it also promotes a decontextualized reading of the earlier sources through a method of wrenching texts from their original literary and historical settings. Additionally, the term "extra Calvinisticum," as we will discuss in more detail below, is of seventeenth-century origin and is anachronistic as applied to earlier figures. To avoid this kind of anachronistic

and decontextualizing method, I will not impose later definitions and concepts onto earlier works but will focus on expounding the views of each author in his context. Although for the purposes of beginning the inquiry we must have some basic idea of what the doctrine of the *extra* is, our investigation of the original sources must be allowed to shape, correct, or even depart from this initial formulation. Attention to the broader christological debates and discussions of the authors under consideration will go a long way toward promoting proper exposition of the sources and resisting the imposition of later categories and ideas onto earlier works.

The historical figures under consideration in this study were selected both for their significant treatment of christological issues and because they speak in some detail of the concept of the *extra*, the Son of God's existence beyond the flesh. Furthermore, the figures represent three major periods in the history of doctrine: patristic, medieval, and Reformation. I do not argue for any dependence or reliance of the later figures on the earlier ones, or any development of the doctrine from the earlier to the later figures, but I instead look at the way each figure individually presents and employs a christological idea that is common across the Christian tradition. The subjects of the historical part of this study are, from the patristic era, Cyril of Alexandria, from the medieval period, Thomas Aquinas, and from the Reformation era, Zacharias Ursinus.

Some may wonder why I have chosen specifically these three figures as the objects of my historical inquiry. The answer is, on the one hand, a pragmatic one. I simply cannot cover every theologian and work that has in some way articulated the *extra*. On the other hand, the answer is that these figures are from different eras in the history of the church and they are serious contributors to the theology of the church both in their own time and beyond. This is

particularly the case with Cyril and Aquinas, though Ursinus has exerted his enduring influence as well, albeit not in as wide a sphere of the church as Cyril and Aquinas. As the reader will note throughout my study, there are plenty of other theologians from various periods in the church's history that express something like the *extra* and are worthy of scholarly investigation. I heartily recommend these writers as subjects for future scholarly analysis of the *extra*. However, as any writer knows, one must delimit one's study somehow, and these are some of the why reasons I have chosen to delimit my study in the way I have.

Prior to launching into the exposition of our first figure, Cyril of Alexandria, some groundwork needs to be done. Some of this will be completed in the rest of the present chapter, but chapter 2 needs a bit of explanation. In chapter 2 I begin with the *extra Calvinisticum*'s, as it were, hottest point—the Reformation and post-Reformation debates over the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper and the christological disputes of that era. From these heated disputes, I then follow the shifts in theological and christological trends that led to the relative disappearance of the doctrine by the end of the nineteenth century. This survey leads us to wonder if there was an earlier life of the *extra* and sets up the return to earlier sources that begins with chapter 3, in which we take up the writings of Cyril. Chapter 4 then looks at one of the church's most influential theologians, Thomas Aquinas. In chapter 5 we return to the Reformation era, but go deeper into the thought of one significant figure on the issue of the *extra*, the Heidelberg theologian Zacharias Ursinus. Turning from these historical studies, in chapter 6 I look at recent efforts at recovering the *extra*, beginning with the twentieth-century theologians Karl Barth and Helmut Thielicke. I then move on to more recent contributions and issues and conclude with suggestions and cautions regarding how the *extra* ought to be utilized today.

III. The Terminology, Content, and Early History of the *extra Calvinisticum*

We begin with a few comments on terminology and an opening sketch of the doctrine of the *extra Calvinisticum* and its history. As emphasized above, in the chapters that follow every effort will be taken to expound the meaning of the doctrine from the historical sources rather than impose a definition or doctrine upon those sources. Nevertheless, to guide our study we must begin with at least some concept of the doctrine, and we must be clear on our terms. Lastly here we will briefly review the early history of the doctrine.

A. Terminology

Prior to the seventeenth century the doctrine commonly called the *extra Calvinisticum* did not have a name. Since the seventeenth century, however, scholars have suggested so many different names for the doctrine that it borders on the comical. The Lutherans of the seventeenth century polemicized against "*that* extra" (expletive implied!) and later ridiculed it as the "extra Calvinianum" or "extra Calvinisticum" (the "Calvinian extra" or "Calvinistic extra"),[11] which allowed for a fine polemical wordplay on the Latin word "extra" since "extra Calvinisticum" could mean something like, "the Calvinistic doctrine of Christ beyond (*extra*) the flesh" or "the Calvinistic addition (*extra*) (and, by implication, diabolical doctrinal innovation)." Still more obviously polemical was the Lutheran term "extra Nestorianum" ("Nestorian extra"),[12] which was leveled against the Reformed because the Lutherans believed that the doctrine divided Christ's person and so should be classed with the condemned teachings of Nestorius.

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[11] Willis, *Calvin's Catholic Christology*, 18–23.

[12] Johann Andreas Quenstedt, *Theologica Didactica-Polemica, siue Systema Theologicum in duas sectiones* (Leipzig: Fritsch, 1715), III.iii.q5.

In more recent studies, the names given to the doctrine are less polemical. Reflecting on the patristic and catholic roots of the doctrine, Willis suggested the names "extra Catholicum" or "extra Patristicum."[13] Noting both the medieval scholastic background and the general catholic background, Heiko Oberman suggested "extra scholasticum" or "extra Christianum."[14] Stemming from a recognition of the polemical origins of the name, scholars sometimes prefer to qualify it as the "so-called extra Calvinisticum."[15] What is more, one other author has even suggested that we call it the "Extra Vermiglianum," claiming that the sixteenth-century Reformed theologian Peter Martyr Vermigli first used the term "extra" in the context of Reformation debates over the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper.[16]

Each of the above names refers to the sources of the doctrine of Christ's existence beyond (*extra*) the flesh. That is, these are historical names highlighting that the doctrine of the *extra* was taught by the church fathers, the church catholic, the scholastics, or the Calvinists. Another way of naming the doctrine, however, is according to its meaning or content. Here, drawing on the terminology from the sources in which the doctrine appears, several Latin phrases may be used as names: *extra carnem* ("beyond the flesh"), *etiam extra carnem* ("even beyond the flesh"), or *extra humanum* ("beyond the human"). These names are in effect a summary of what the doctrine teaches—namely, that Christ exists beyond his

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[13] Willis, *Calvin's Catholic Christology*, 60.

[14] Oberman, "Infinitum capax finiti," 172, 174; "'Extra' Dimension," 59.

[15] Willis-Watkins [Willis], "Extra Calvinisticum," in *Encyclopedia of the Reformed Faith*, 132; Gibson, "A Mirror for God," 461; and see the full titles of Willis's book and Christian Link's article.

[16] Hans Christian Brandy, *Die späte Christologie des Johannes Brenz* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1991), 80. Thanks to Stefan Lindblad for giving me this reference.

flesh or human existence. Of course, the simplest approach might be to just use the shorthand (in italics), "*extra*."[17]

In this study I refer to the doctrine by several names. This variance in part depends on the sources under consideration. For example, it would be anachronistic to speak of the "*extra Calvinisticum*" in the chapters on Cyril, Aquinas, and even Ursinus, so there I prefer to use "*extra carnem*," "*extra humanum*" (in the case of Ursinus), or simply "*extra*." In other places I use the more commonly known moniker, *extra Calvinisticum*. Allowing for the individual nuances of the doctrine in the historical sources, the referent of all these terms is essentially the same. It is to that referent—the basic meaning of the doctrine—that we now turn.

B. Preliminary Sketch of the Doctrine

Anecdotal evidence and personal experience would suggest that ignorance of the *extra Calvinisticum* persists in the church even among the clergy. Although the doctrine is generally known, at least in name and basic concept, among theologians and specialists in christology, it is occasionally a source of confusion. For example, David Brown, in his recent book on kenotic christology describes the *extra* as the doctrine of the Son of God's "two centres of consciousness."[18] While the *extra* may be consistent with some kind of two consciousnesses or two minds account of the incarnation, it is odd to say that this is the meaning of the doctrine and it is, historically speaking, inaccurate. Brown's is a rather minor misunderstanding, however. If the reader will permit a baseball metaphor, the *extra*

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[17] So Helm, *John Calvin's Ideas*, 58–92; Gibson, "A Mirror for God," 462–63.

[18] David Brown, *Divine Humanity: Kenosis and the Construction of a Christian Theology* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2011), 90 and n45.

Calvinisticum is the infield fly rule of christology. Like the obscure baseball rule the *extra* is infrequently used and tends to be understood only among enthusiasts and specialists.

Although there is a general understanding among specialists as to what the *extra* is, a preliminary sketch of the basic contours of the doctrine will help guide this study. In this sketch I do not start, as it were, out of thin air, but by taking my cues from a major patristic theologian, Athanasius of Alexandria (d. 373). While the doctrine will certainly have varying emphases and nuances depending upon the purposes and contexts of the individuals who articulate it (a point that will be illustrated extensively in subsequent chapters), some basic elements of the doctrine that we find in Athanasius reappear throughout the history of the church and at least give us a point from which to begin. This is not to say that Athanasius is *the* authority for defining the doctrine, and it should go without saying that, being a preliminary sketch, what follows is not meant to be exhaustive.

First, the doctrine of the *extra carnem* maintains that, in the incarnation, the Word (the Son of God) was not "enclosed in" or "bound to" his body.[19] Hence the common summary of the doctrine by the phrase, "*etiam extra carnem*" ("even beyond the flesh"). That is, the Son of God was not restricted or limited to bodily, human existence while incarnate. Second, in the incarnation, the Word continued to sustain and uphold all things by his providence. Here we find the contrast and wordplay that he was not contained, but rather contained all things. He did not surrender his divine power over creation. He continued to be present in all things and controlled all things by his power even while incarnate.[20] By way of summary, we may say that the *extra carnem* states that the Son of God remains transcendent

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[19] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione*, in Contra Gentes *and* De Incarnatione, ed. Robert W. Thomson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), sec. 17.

[20] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione*, 17.

even while he is incarnate. The first point from Athanasius—that the Word is not enclosed in his body—is perhaps the keynote of the doctrine of the *extra carnem*. This is at the core of the doctrine and the further emphases on the divine attributes of the incarnate Son are closely related to the central point of his not being contained by the flesh.

We close this section with a note for the sake of clarification. The *extra carnem* is easily confused with, or absorbed into, the broader Christian doctrine of the incarnation codified in the Nicene Creed and thereafter that Jesus Christ is truly and fully divine. The *extra*, however, is not simply a duplication of the confession of Christ's true and complete deity. There is a specific emphasis in the *extra* that is closely related to that broader confession but not identical with it. Perhaps it would be better to say that the *extra carnem* is confessed as a function of, or a specific emphasis within, the larger doctrine of Christ's true and complete deity. Yet as we will see in this study, the *extra* emphasizes the continued transcendence of the Son of God even as incarnate—his existence beyond the humanity—for specific purposes related to the confession of Christ's deity *and* even his true humanity. Those theologians who give expression to the doctrine, typically intend to do more with the *extra* than merely repeat the doctrine of the deity of Christ.

C. The Early History of the Doctrine

It is almost universally acknowledged that the doctrine known as the *extra Calvinisticum* did not originate with Calvin or Reformed theologians. If this is not universally acknowledged, it ought to be. Friedrich Loofs noted this a century ago. About fifty years ago Heiko Oberman pointed it out, and soon afterward E. David Willis extensively demonstrated it. Subsequently, and drawing heavily on Willis's pioneering work, H. I. Lederle followed with a short study

that indexed many of the appearances of the doctrine among patristic authors.[21] Although the intensity of the intra-Protestant debates over the doctrine and related concepts has led scholars to focus on the sixteenth and seventeenth century, most modern treatments of the doctrine include at least a nod to the patristic and medieval background.[22] In pointing out the antiquity of the doctrine, I am not claiming that it is the same wherever it appears or that there are not unique emphases and uses of it in the history of the church. As one Roman Catholic scholar has suggested in response to Willis's work, calling the doctrine the "extra catholicum" may be an oversimplification that ignores significant differences in the doctrine as it appears in the sixteenth century.[23] Granting the existence of individual variations, however, it is nevertheless certain that we find the teaching that the incarnate Word is not limited to bodily existence, and related points about the Word's transcendence even as incarnate, throughout the history of Christian theology.

It is not necessary here to duplicate the findings of earlier research that has traced the ancient history and sources of the *extra*. For reference, however, I note that Willis and Lederle have found statements regarding the Son's existence beyond the flesh in a wide variety of patristic and medieval Christian authors, such as Origen, Eustathius of Caesarea, Athanasius, Eusebius of Caesarea, Ephrem the Syrian, Apollinaris of Laodicea, Gregory of Nyssa, Augustine, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Peter Chrysologus, Cyril of Alexandria,

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[21] Friedrich Loofs, "Kenosis," in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. 7, ed. James Hastings (New York: Scribner, 1915), 680–687 (esp. 684); Oberman, *Harvest of Medieval Theology*, 264–65; Willis, *Calvin's Catholic Christology*, 26–60 (esp. 49n2); Lederle, "Die leer van die 'extra Calvinisticum,'" 4–46, 62–77.

[22] See, *e.g.*, Korff, *Christologie*, 1:237; Barth, *CD*, I/2, 168–69; IV/1, 181; Weber, *Foundations*, 2:124n69; Muller, *Dictionary*, 111; Heron, "Extra calvinisticum," in *The Encyclopedia of Christianity*, 2:258; Aus der Au, "Das Extra," 360.

[23] Gamberini, "La questione cattolica," 146; cf. Korff, *Christologie*, 1:237, who claims that the Reformed give the doctrine a "peculiar accent."

Theodoret of Cyrus, Fulgentius of Ruspe, Pope Pelagius I, John of Damascus, Peter

Lombard, Thomas Aquinas, and Gabriel Biel.[24]

To this list I would submit two additions: Nestorius of Constantinople (c. 386–c. 451)

and Proclus of Constantinople (bishop of Cyzicus) (d. 446). Nestorius, if we can trust a

quotation of him by Cyril of Alexandria, apparently confessed that the infant Jesus, while

bound in swaddling clothes, continued to bind the whole creation.[25] Proclus, for his part, asks

rhetorically in a homily on the nativity, "Whoever saw, whoever heard that God dwelt in a

womb without being circumscribed? A womb did not confine him, whom heaven could not

contain."[26] What is striking is that Proclus was a vocal opponent of Nestorius's christology,

and so here are two men on opposite sides of a famous christological dispute who both

confess the *extra*. The appearance of the *extra* in Nestorius and Proclus not only adds to an

already long list of those who stated the idea, but also supports Willis's observation that the

theologians who stated the *extra* were theologically diverse and that the *extra* transcends

various christological positions, including the supposed divide between Antiochene and

Alexandrian christologies.[27]

On the antiquity and catholicity of the doctrine of the *extra*, I conclude with the words

of the 1977 report, "The Presence of Christ in Church and World," by representatives of the

Reformed-Roman Catholic ecumenical dialogues:

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[24] For references to the specific works, see Willis, *Calvin's Catholic Christology*, 26–60 (esp. 49n2); Lederle, "Die leer van die 'extra Calvinisticum,'" 4–46, 62–77. The main contribution of Lederle is that he includes the relevant passages from the original Latin and Greek texts from the PG and PL. His references, however, are mostly taken from Willis.

[25] As recounted by Cyril in *C. Nest.*, 1.4 (ACO I.i.6, p. 22.30–31); Pusey (1881), 17.

[26] Proclus of Constantinople, "Homily 1: Encomium on the All-Holy Mary, Birthgiver of God," trans. M. Wiles and M. Santer, in *Homilies on the Life of Christ*, ed. Jan Harm Barkhuizen (Brisbane: Centre for Early Christian Studies, Australian Catholic University, 2001), sec. 1 (*PG* 65:681B).

[27] Willis, *Calvin's Catholic Christology*, 49–60.

It is important to see that Calvin's Christology was mainly inspired by the theology of St. Cyril of Alexandria and of St. Athanasius. It would be easy to be misled by the term "extra Calvinisticum" which arose out of early 17th century polemics among Protestants; and even the Calvinist teaching then was that after the incarnation the eternal Word, fully joined to the humanity in the hypostatic union, was nevertheless not restricted to, or contained within the flesh, but existed "*etiam* extra carnem". This doctrine, that the logos is at the same time incarnate and present in the whole world, is not a Calvinist specialty, but is common to the Christology of pre-Chalcedonian as well as post-Chalcedonian orthodoxy, East and West.[28]

Having outlined the purposes and plan of this study and the basic features of the *extra Calvinisticum*, we now fast-forward to a flash-point in the history of the doctrine, the Protestant Reformation.

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[28] World Alliance of Reformed Churches and the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, "The Presence of Christ in Church and World: Final Report [1977]," in *Growth in Agreement: Reports and Agreed Statements of Ecumenical Conversations on a World Level*, ed. Harding Meyer and Lukas Vischer (New York: Paulist Press; Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1984), sec. 84 (p. 453). It is worth noting that E. David Willis was one of the Reformed members of this commission.

CHAPTER 2:

THE *EXTRA CALVINISTICUM* FROM THE REFORMATION

TO THE END OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

As noted in the introduction, research on the so-called *extra Calvinisticum* has shown that it

is an ancient doctrine with clear precedent in patristic and medieval theologians. Although

this doctrine had a noticeable place in Christian reflection on the person of Christ in the

patristic and medieval periods of the church, and although it had a place in Reformed and

Lutheran polemics in the Reformation and post-Reformation eras, nevertheless by the end of

the nineteenth century with few exceptions the *extra Calvinisticum* dropped out of the

theological discussion.

The argument of this chapter is descriptive and historical. I intend not only to show

that in general the *extra* slipped out of view by the end of the nineteenth century, but also to

suggest some reasons why this was the case. After a survey of the role of the *extra* in

sixteenth-century Reformed and Lutheran polemics, I will illustrate the movement away from

these kinds of christological controversies in modern theologians, and I will suggest that this

movement occurred for at least two reasons. First, on the whole there was a growing

weariness of the theological divisions in the church and a simultaneous push towards

discovering grounds for unity, particularly between the Reformed and Lutheran churches.

The *extra*, being an especially explosive point of contention, not surprisingly dropped out of

favor in such a context. Second, with the modern turn we will see that shifts in metaphysics

and theological method attended and perhaps contributed to changes in the kinds of

christological issues that were raised and questions that were asked. In the midst of such foundational changes in intellectual trends the *extra* fell into neglect.

Ultimately, it is hoped that the approach in this chapter will open the way for a recovery of the *extra Calvinisticum* in later chapters where I will explore various historical uses of this doctrine and conclude with theological explorations into possible paths of reappropriation of the *extra* for contemporary christology.

I. Christology, the Lord's Supper, and the *extra Calvinisticum* in Sixteenth-Century Reformed and Lutheran Thought

In one sense, one could say that the *extra Calvinisticum* in and of itself did not play a significant role in the Reformed and Lutheran polemics of the sixteenth century. That is, the doctrine of the Son's transcendence of his human nature was not a central point in Reformed and Lutheran debates over the Lord's Supper and christology. Rather, the *extra Calvinisticum* is best understood as one of several related points of dispute that developed out of the central matters of the manner of Christ's presence in the Lord's Supper and the relationship of the divine and human natures in Christ.[1] Given the fact that the *extra* was only a small part of the larger polemical picture, it is important to understand this larger picture so as to locate the *extra* in its proper historical and theological context. This approach will not only shed light on the meaning and purpose of the *extra*, but will also result in a general account of the state of christology in the sixteenth century. From this general account, we will then be able to identify more clearly the shifts in christological discussions that occurred in successive generations that in turn contributed to the widespread disappearance of the *extra* from the theological scene.

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[1] Heiko A. Oberman, "The 'Extra' Dimension in the Theology of Calvin," *JEH* 21/1 (1970): 54.

A. The Lord's Supper and Christology among Some Early Reformers

To begin, we take a brief look at a few of the first and second generation reformers—

particularly, those whose teaching on the Lord's Supper would inform sacramental and

christological discussions for succeeding generations of reformers. In this regard it is fitting

to highlight two prominent participants of the famous Colloquy of Marburg (1529), Martin

Luther and the Zurich reformer Huldrych Zwingli. Subsequently, I will look briefly at the

views of a later reformer, John Calvin and the *Consensus Tigurinus* between Calvin and the

pastors of Zurich. In each case, it will be evident that the Lord's Supper debates were not

merely exegetical or sacramental in scope, but deeply christological.

1. Luther, Zwingli, and the Colloquy of Marburg (1529)

With respect to the Lord's Supper, Luther and Zwingli were in total agreement on what they

did not want: the catholic mass and its doctrine of transubstantiation.[2] As to how Christ was

present in the sacrament, however, the two men were the headwaters of Reformation

trajectories that would divide even further over the answer to this question. Their

disagreement would be solidified through a series of pamphlets written by them and their

respective parties during the mid-1520s and hardened even further through their face-to-face

disagreement at the Colloquy of Marburg in 1529.[3]

As one historian has put it, the early eucharistic debate was over "only a few simple

words," namely, Christ's words: "this is my body" (Matt. 26:26; 1 Cor. 11:24).[4] Yet these

words were interpreted in radically different ways. Around 1524 Andreas Karlstadt, a former

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[2] Euan Cameron, *The European Reformation* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991), 161–62.

[3] Cameron, *European Reformation*, 164–65.

[4] Heiko A. Oberman, *Luther: Man between God and the Devil*, trans. Eileen Walliser-Schwarzbart (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 232.

colleague of Luther, incited Luther's ire by teaching that Christ, with the statement "this is

my body," was referring to his own body and not the bread. Neither Luther nor Zwingli

found this persuasive, but in opposition to Karlstadt Luther especially emphasized that Christ

was indeed referring to the bread when he said "this is my body." Zwingli, for his part,

agreed with Luther on the referent but disagreed on the interpretation of the verb "is": the

bread does not equal Christ's body, but signifies it. This meant that Christ, since he has

bodily ascended to the right hand of the Father, cannot be said to be bodily present in the

Supper.[5]

This fundamental disagreement between two major reformers had implications

beyond theology. In fact, the Colloquy of Marburg arose out of both the political and

theological context of the mid-1520s, particularly as the reformed Landgrave Philipp of

Hesse sought to strengthen the political position of the Protestant estates. In 1529, he found

that the eucharistic controversy was inhibiting his goal of building Protestant political

alliances among the estates in northern and southern Germany and Switzerland. In the hopes

of reaching confessional agreement and a corresponding political agreement, on October 1,

1529, Philipp brought representatives of the reform movement to Marburg from across

Europe, including the chief protagonists in the controversy, Luther and Zwingli.[6] Yet, despite

their personal encounter, Luther and Zwingli would not abandon their positions. Luther

continued to emphasize Christ's words of institution and insisted that Christ meant that his

body was present in the Supper, while Zwingli and his ally Johannes Oecolampadius found

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[5] Oberman, *Luther*, 232–33; Cameron, *European Reformation*, 163–64.

[6] Oberman, *Luther*, 236–37; Alois Schmid, "Marburg, Colloquy of," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*, 4 vols., ed. Hans J. Hillerbrand (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 3:3. Other notable figures present were Philipp Melanchthon, Andreas Osiander, Johannes Brenz, Johannes Oecolampadius, Jakob Sturm, Martin Bucer, and Heinrich Bullinger.

their key text in Christ's words in John 6:63: "the flesh profits nothing." For Zwingli and

Oecolampadius this meant that the eating in the Supper is by faith and that Christ's words

"this is my body" are a trope for "this signifies my body."[7]

Christological issues, not merely exegetical ones, were at the center of the debates at

Marburg. In his opening address, Luther stated that one of his purposes for agreeing to meet

was to determine whether the churches of Zurich, Basel, and Strasbourg were teaching error

concerning "the Trinity and the person of Christ." As an example of the error he had in mind,

he mentions their teaching on what it means to eat the body of Christ.[8] Later, the matter of

the location of Christ's body entered the discussion and Luther admitted that the words "this

is my body" lead him to confess both that Christ's body is in heaven and in the sacrament.[9]

To this Zwingli replied, based on texts that speak of Christ's true humanity, that Christ

"possesses a finite humanity" and so his body must be in only one place.[10] In the remainder

of the debate, the question of the nature of Christ's body was a central point of contention.

After four days of debate, despite agreement on several other matters of Christian

doctrine and Reformation distinctives, all parties admitted that the meeting did not produce

an agreement on "whether the true body and blood of Christ are bodily present in the bread

and wine."[11] The Colloquy of Marburg highlights the fact that the question of how Christ is

present in the Lord's Supper is a christological question. Such was the case in the eucharistic

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[7] "The Report of Hedio," in *Luther's Works*, eds. Martin E. Lehmann and Helmut T. Lehmann (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), 38:15–26; W. Peter Stephens, "The Theology of Zwingli," in *The Cambridge Companion to Reformation Theology*, ed. David Bagchi and David C. Steinmetz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 89–91.

[8] "The Report of Hedio," in *Luther's Works*, 38:15.

[9] "The Report of Hedio," in *Luther's Works*, 38:29.

[10] "The Report of Hedio," in *Luther's Works*, 38:31.

[11] "The Marburg Articles," in *Luther's Works*, 38:88.

debate between Luther and Zwingli. While it was certainly an exegetical debate over the interpretation of Christ's words of institution, this was not merely an exegetical matter. At every turn the discussion had christological import.

2. John Calvin and the *Consensus Tigurinus* (1549)

The Marburg Colloquy threw into sharp relief the divergent views on the Lord's Supper and the person of Christ that existed in early Protestant thought. After Marburg, the conflict over Christ's presence in the Lord's Supper would become even more complex as reformers on both sides continued to develop their respective positions and as new alliances formed between various theologians. An example of the growing complexity of the debate can be seen in the work of a second-generation Reformed theologian, John Calvin (1509–1564). In Calvin's era the debate over the Supper became more nuanced, as is apparent in both his own work and the efforts between him and the Zurich reformers to attain unity on the doctrine of the sacraments. Yet, in the end, the trajectory of the Lord's Supper debates continued to reflect the christological matters that had been debated at Marburg.

Calvin was too young and unknown at the time to attend the Marburg Colloquy, but later in his *Short Treatise on the Lord's Supper* (1541) he addressed the rift between Marburg's main protagonists, Luther and Zwingli. Calvin found both parties at fault for infelicities of speech, lack of clarity, and impatience and thus pointed them to what he believed to be the common confession concerning the Supper: "that on receiving the sacrament in faith, according to the ordinance of the Lord, we are truly made partakers of the proper substance of the body and blood of Jesus Christ."[12] However, Calvin would go on to

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[12] John Calvin, *Short Treatise on the Lord's Supper*, in *Selected Works of John Calvin: Tracts and Treatises*, vol. 2, ed. and trans. Henry Beveridge (repr., Grand Rapids: Baker, 1983), 197; Richard A. Muller, "Calvin on Sacramental Presence, in the Shadow of Marburg and Zurich," *Lutheran Quarterly* 23 (2009): 149.

explain this confession in terms that sound like an attempt to mediate between Luther and Zwingli:

> [O]n the one hand, in order to exclude all carnal fancies, we must raise our hearts upwards to heaven, not thinking that our Lord Jesus is so debased as to be enclosed under some corruptible elements; and, on the other hand, not to impair the efficacy of this holy ordinance, we must hold that it is made effectual by the secret and miraculous power of God, and that the Spirit of God is the bond of participation.[13]

Here we see a brief sketch of Calvin's emphasis, developed in detail elsewhere in his works, that it is the Holy Spirit who makes the Supper effectual by bringing the Christian into communion with Christ's true body and blood.[14] As he puts it succinctly in his *Institutes*, "the Spirit truly unites things separated in space."[15]

Although Calvin's view of Christ's presence in the Supper developed over time and was influenced by several reformers, including Philipp Melanchthon and Martin Bucer, Calvin's position was not well received by some within the Lutheran camp and was labeled "Zwinglian." Lutheran critics like Joachim Westphal latched onto the fact that Calvin had signed the *Consensus Tigurinus* (1549) with the pastors of Zurich, where Zwingli's views on the Lord's Supper continued to have strong influence. Although the prominent representative of the Zurichers, Heinrich Bullinger, who both corresponded with Calvin and signed the *Consensus Tigurinus*, was far from merely repeating Zwingli's views, the *Consensus* left Calvin open to the charge of guilt by association.[16]

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[13] Calvin, *Short Treatise*, 197–98.

[14] See Calvin's brief discussion in *The Best Method of Obtaining Concord*, in *Selected Works*, vol. 2, 577–78, and, more extensively, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. F. L. Battles (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1960), IV.xvii.

[15] Calvin, *Inst.*, IV.xvii.10.

[16] Richard A. Muller, "From Zürich or from Wittenberg? An Examination of Calvin's Early Eucharistic Thought," *CTJ* 45/2 (2010): 243–55; Muller, "Calvin on Sacramental Presence," 147–163.

Calvin was not entirely at ease with the doctrine of the Supper as expressed in the *Consensus*, but he defended it publicly and thought it was consistent with his own position.[17] Indeed, on certain christological points the *Consensus* is perfectly in accord with Calvin's own position—namely, that Christ's body is in heaven and that Christ should not be understood as contained "under the elements of this world."[18] Hence the *Consensus Tigurinus*, at the very least, reveals that certain christological presuppositions were shared between Calvin and the Zurichers over against the Lutherans. Whether or not this warrants the Lutheran accusation that Calvin's view was essentially "Zwinglian" is separate question, but it is clear that Calvin and the Zurichers were united in their understanding of the nature of Christ's body as "finite" and "contained in heaven."[19] Furthermore, the *Consensus* also reveals that certain exegetical disputes persisted. Calvin and the Zurichers continued to dispute the Lutheran literal interpretation of Christ's words of institution and argued, in a manner reflective of the Colloquy of Marburg, that the words "'this is my body' … are to be taken figuratively."[20]

Despite developments in the debate over Christ's presence in the Supper in the mid-sixteenth century in the work of Calvin and the Geneva-Zurich efforts at unity, the christological underpinnings of the debate over the Lord's Supper were still reflective of that

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[17] Timothy George, "John Calvin and the Agreement of Zurich (1549)," in *Calvin Studies IV*, ed. John H. Leith and W. Stacy Johnson (n.p., 1988), 36. On Calvin's unease, see also Paul Rorem, "The *Consensus Tigurinus* (1549): Did Calvin Compromise?," in *Calvinus Sacrae Scripturae Professor*, ed. Wilhelm H. Neuser (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 72–90.

[18] *Mutual Agreement Concerning Sacramental Substance, between the Ministers of the Church of Zurich and Master John Calvin, Minister of the Church of Geneva, Recently Edited by the Authors Themselves*, trans. Torrance Kirby, in *Consensus Tigurinus (1549): Die Einigung zwischen Heinrich Bullinger und Johannes Calvin über das Abendmahl*, ed. Emidio Campi and Ruedi Reich (Zurich: TVZ, 2009), 263 (art. 21), 264 (art. 25); George, "John Calvin and the Agreement of Zurich," 34–35.

[19] *Mutual Agreement*, 264 (art. 25).

[20] *Mutual Agreement*, 264 (art. 22).

earlier contest between Zwingli and Luther. Exegetical issues and christology, particularly questions about the properties of Christ's body and its location, still separated the Calvinian-Bullingerian position from that of the Lutherans. As the debates continued, further points of contention developed as both the Reformed and Lutheran positions became further entrenched.

B. Two Further Points of Contention: The *communicatio idiomatum* and *extra Calvinisticum*

In what follows, we will trace two specific points of contention that arose between the Reformed and Lutherans in the aftermath of the early debates over the Lord's Supper and christology. These two doctrines, the *communicatio idiomatum* and the so-called *extra Calvinisticum*, were closely related topics in the christological debates of the second half of the sixteenth century. Here my goal is to sketch the story of the *extra Calvinisticum* in these debates and, in order to set the context for understanding the place of the *extra*, we need to first consider the Lutheran and Reformed views of the *communicatio idiomatum*.

1. The *communicatio idiomatum*

The *communicatio idiomatum*, or, the communication of proper qualities, is an ancient doctrine in christology found in the Chalcedonian creed of 451, which states that "the distinction of [Christ's] natures" is preserved, but "the property of each nature … concurs (συντρεχούσης) in one Person and one Subsistence."[21] Hence the *communicatio idiomatum* is that doctrine by which "we attribute the properties of both the natures" to the person.[22] By the time of the post-Reformation period, the manner of this communication of the properties

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[21] "The Symbol of Chalcedon" (Schaff, 2:62).

[22] John of Damascus, *De fide orthodoxa*, 48 (bk. 3, ch. 4), in *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*, vol. 2, ed. P. Bonifatius Kotter (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1973).

had come to be understood in one of two ways: *in concreto* or *in abstracto*. The first view (*in concreto*) understands the properties of the nature to be communicated on account of the personal union and at the level of Christ's person; the second (*in abstracto*) understands the properties of the nature to be communicated between each other distinct from their union in the person.[23] The *communicatio* was a key point of dispute between the Reformed and Lutherans given that it is closely tied to the issue of Christ's presence in the Lord's Supper and the specific question of whether or not Christ is bodily present in the bread and wine. Here we will look at a few representative examples of how Reformed and Lutheran theologians of the sixteenth century articulated the *communicatio idiomatum*. Any number of examples could be cited, since the *communicatio idiomatum* was a standard topic in christology and thus appears in most Reformed and Lutheran systems of theology. Some selected examples will, it is hoped, pave the way to our subsequent discussion of the *extra Calvinisticum*.

In the first place, it is notable that the *communicatio idiomatum* is affirmed by name in at least one sixteenth-century Reformed confession, where it is accepted as a tool of the ancient church that is used to reconcile apparently contradictory statements in Scripture regarding the person of Christ.[24] In sixteenth-century Reformed theologians, we find the doctrine explained in further detail. For example, Theodore Beza (1519–1605) described it in this way: "the *communicatio idiomatum*, that is, a predication, in which the properties of one nature are attributed to the other nature in the concrete (*in concreto*), is real with respect to

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[23] Richard A. Muller, *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985), 72.

[24] *Second Helvetic Confession*, ch. 11, sec. 10 (Schaff, 3:256).

the person of Christ, but indeed is only verbal with respect to the natures."[25] Later, and more

clear, is Wilhelm Bucanus (d. 1603), the Lausanne theologian, who explains that the

communication of properties is when "that which is proper to one nature in Christ is

attributed, not to the other nature, but to the person named from the other nature, whether

divine or human."[26] Here he affirms that the *communicatio* is an attribution of properties to

the person, though this attribution or naming of the person may be from the perspective of

either Christ's divine or human nature. For instance, the Reformed commonly refer to texts

like Acts 20:28 and 1 Corinthians 2:8 as examples in which the incarnate Christ is referred to

from the perspective of his divine nature.[27] Consistent with the Reformed approach to this

doctrine, Bucanus goes on to clarify that this is not merely a "verbal" *communicatio* but also

a "real" *communicatio* because the person of Christ "contains in himself, truly and really, all

things that apply to true God and true humanity."[28] Hence, for the Reformed in general, the

communication of properties focuses on the "mutual interchange or reciprocation of names,

rather than a transfer or communication of properties," that is, "a communion of proper

qualities by synecdoche."[29]

By contrast, the Lutheran orthodox presented the *communicatio* as a real

communication of the divine and human natures in Christ. In their articulation of the effects

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[25] Theodore Beza, *De hypostatica duarum in Christo naturam unione & eius effectis* (Geneva: Vignon, 1579), 54.

[26] Wilhelm Bucanus, *Institutiones theologicae: seu locorum communium christianae religionis* (Bern: J. & I. le Preux, 1605), II.xx (pp. 20); cited in Heinrich Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics*, ed. Ernst Bizer, trans. G. T. Thomson (London: Allen & Unwin, 1950), 440, 442.

[27] *e.g.* Bucanus, *Institutiones*, II.xx (p. 20); Andreas Hyperius, *De theologo, seu de ratione studii theologici* (Basel: Oporinus, 1582), II.xv.4 (p. 205).

[28] Bucanus, *Institutiones*, II.xxi (p. 21).

[29] Muller, *Dictionary*, 74.

of the incarnation, they typically outline three *genera* or classes of the communication of attributes: the *genus idiomaticum*, the *genus maiestaticum*, and the *genus apotelesmaticum*.[30] This threefold distinction is suggested in content (though not explicitly stated) in the Formula of Concord where the debate over the *communicatio* is outlined and addressed.[31] The three *genera* can be summarized in the following way. First, the *genus idiomaticum* is that "the attributes, belonging essentially to only one nature, are always ascribed to the whole person," though with reference to their respective natures. Second, the *genus maiestaticum* is that "the human nature shares not merely nominally (*per modum loquendi*), but actually (*realiter*) in the divine power, knowledge, presence, glory, in short, in all the divine attributes of the Son of God." Third, the *genus apotelesmaticum* is that the works of Christ are common to both natures.[32]

From the Lutheran perspective, the Reformed understanding of the *communicatio* was incomplete. That is, in Lutheran orthodoxy the Reformed view was characterized as only expressing the first and third *genera* of the *communicatio*.[33] Thus, it was particularly the *genus maiestaticum* that was a source of significant dispute. According to Martin Chemnitz (1522–1586), this *genus* (which he lists third rather than second), includes the view that Christ's "human nature, when it is considered according to its natural principles … in itself,

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[30] Muller, *Dictionary*, 73. The order of the *genera*, however, varies among Lutheran theologians. See Francis Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, 3 vols. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1951), 2:133. Also, there were significant disputes among the Lutherans over the proper understanding of the *communicatio*. For an overview of these disputes, see Robert Kolb, "Confessional Lutheran Theology," in *The Cambridge Companion to Reformation Theology*, 76–79; E. David Willis, *Calvin's Catholic Christology: The Function of the So-called extra Calvinisticum in Calvin's Theology* (Leiden: Brill, 1966), 9–11.

[31] *Formula of Concord*, art. 8 (Schaff, 3:147–54).

[32] Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, 2:143, 219, 247–48.

[33] Martin Chemnitz, *The Two Natures in Christ*, trans. J. A. O. Preus (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1971), 171, 215, 242.

of itself, either outside or inside the union, possesses qualities above, beyond, or contrary to the natural conditions of human nature."[34] Furthermore, the Lutherans ascribe to the human nature the properties of the divine nature based on various biblical statements concerning Christ's exaltation (Eph. 1:21) and power over all things (Matt. 28:18; Eph. 1:22). In fact, the human nature is said to receive and possess "innumerable supernatural … gifts and qualities which are contrary to its nature" without impairing the human nature's essential properties.[35]

2. The *extra Calvinisticum* in Reformed and Lutheran Polemics

The Reformed and Lutheran distinctives on the *communicatio idiomatum* provide a background for understanding their divergence over the so-called *extra Calvinisticum*. The doctrine of the incarnate Son's transcendence of his human nature squares with the Reformed view of the *communicatio*, in which Christ's human nature does not participate in the divine attributes. Hence the Son is said to be ubiquitous because he is fully God even while he is incarnate and while his human body is bound to a particular place. This contradicted the orthodox Lutheran position that even Christ's body was, in a mysterious and ineffable way, everywhere present, and thus the Son did not exist beyond his flesh.

The appearance of the Heidelberg Catechism in 1563 aggravated the Reformed-Lutheran disagreement on the *extra* given its question and answer 48, which deals with Christ's ascension. Here it is confessed that the humanity of Christ is "by no means" everywhere that his divinity is and that the divinity "is indeed beyond the bounds of the humanity which it has assumed," but without destroying the personal union.[36] In 1571 the

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[34] Chemnitz, *Two Natures*, 242.

[35] Chemnitz, *Two Natures*, 242–43; cf. *Formula of Concord*, art. 8, neg. 15 (Schaff, 3:156–57).

[36] *Heidelberg Catechism*, Q&A 48; Willis, *Calvin's Catholic Christology,* 15. We will look at the Heidelberg Catechism and the thought of Zacharias Ursinus in more detail in chapter 5.

Swiss and French Reformed adopted the Second Helvetic Confession, and in 1580 the

Lutheran Book of Concord was published. In both of these confessions, the opposing

tradition on the presence of Christ in the Supper was explicitly excluded.[37]

In his thorough study of the *extra Calvinisticum* in Calvin's christology, E. David

Willis has expertly outlined the history of the *extra* in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century

Reformed and Lutheran polemics.[38] In explaining the seventeenth-century origin of the term

extra Calvinisticum, Willis states that it "crystallized the prevailing sentiment among

Lutherans that it was peculiarly Calvinist to teach that after the Incarnation the Eternal Son of

God had existence also beyond the flesh." This sentiment, even if not yet expressed by the

use of the term itself, had roots in the debate among the Lutherans in the sixteenth century

between three parties associated with the theologians Johannes Brenz (1499–1570), Martin

Chemnitz, and Philipp Melanchthon (1497–1560). Both Brenz and Chemnitz argued that it

was wrong to hold that the Son had existence beyond his human nature, though they differed

on the manner and mode of the ubiquity of Christ's body. Melanchthon and the Wittenberg

line, however, denied that there was a real communication of the divine attributes to Christ's

human nature and so they ran afoul of the Chemnitz trajectory that became the majority

position in Lutheran orthodoxy.[39]

As for arguments over the *extra*, we will turn to some examples from figures within

the Reformed and Lutheran camps. From the Reformed side, Calvin gave expression to the

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[37] *The Formula of Concord*, art. 7, neg. 5–21; art. 8, neg. 1–13; *The Second Helvetic Confession*, ch. 21, sec. 4–7 (Schaff, 3:142–46, 154–56, 291–95).

[38] Willis, *Calvin's Catholic Christology*, 8–25.

[39] Willis, *Calvin's Catholic Christology*, 9–11 (quote on p. 9).

so-called *extra Calvinisticum* in two famous passages of his *Institutes*.[40] Both passages

appear in polemical contexts, with the latter passage addressing the doctrine of the ubiquity

of Christ's body and having an earlier history, in part appearing already in the 1536 edition

of the *Institutes*.[41] Again we see that the *extra* receives attention not so much as a doctrinal

topic in its own right, but as a constituent of the broader debate over christology as related to

the Lord's Supper. As I noted in the previous chapter, much ink has been spilled on Calvin's

so-called *extra Calvinisticum*. Here I only wish to point out that Calvin provides us with one

example (and an early one at that) of the kind of argument that the Reformed used against the

Lutherans.

Like most of the Reformed, Calvin's argument proceeds not so much as a defense of

the *extra* per se, but as a refutation of the Lutheran notion of ubiquity, on account of which

Christ was said to be bodily present in the bread of the Supper. In response, Calvin refers his

readers to his discussion in prior sections in which he showed that Christ's body was like any

other human body in that it was circumscribed and limited to a particular place.[42]

Furthermore, he argues that the doctrine of ubiquity is as if to say that "because of the natures

joined in Christ, wherever Christ's divinity is, there also is his flesh." This, to Calvin's mind,

is to compound the two natures in a way akin to Eutyches or Michael Servetus. Such a move

is to deny the distinction between the natures and to "mingle heaven and earth."[43] Instead,

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[40] Calvin, *Inst.*, II.xiii.4; IV.xvii.30.

[41] John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1536 ed.), rev. ed., trans. F. L. Battles (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; H. Henry Meeter Center for Calvin Studies, 1986), ch. IV, sec. 28 (p. 105); Daniel Y. K. Lee, *The Holy Spirit as Bond in Calvin's Thought: Its Function in Connection with the* extra Calvinisticum (Bern: Peter Lang, 2011), 5–6. For more on the versions of this passage in the editions of the *Institutes*, see Willis, *Calvin's Catholic Christology*, 26–31.

[42] Calvin, *Inst.*, IV.xvii.30; cf. IV.xvii.26, 29.

[43] Calvin, *Inst.*, IV.xvii.30.

texts regarding the Son's incarnational descent (*e.g.* John 3:13) or indwelling (*e.g.* Col. 2:9)

should not be understood as if the Son departed heaven or was enclosed in a body:

> In this way he was also Son of man in heaven, for the very same Christ, who, according to the flesh, dwelt as Son of man on earth, was God in heaven. In this manner, he is said to have descended to that place according to his divinity, not because divinity left heaven to hide itself in the prison house of the body, but because even though it filled all things, still in Christ's very humanity it dwelt bodily, that is, by nature, and in a certain ineffable way.[44]

These arguments against ubiquity provide only one example of an extensive Reformed

polemic against the Lutherans that would continue to develop in subsequent years. Calvin

himself went to great lengths to respond to Lutherans such as Westphal and Tilemann

Hesshusen (1527–1588), and Beza would continue the polemic against the Lutherans after

Calvin.

It was Peter Martyr Vermigli (1499–1562), however, who wrote perhaps the most

thorough Reformed response to the Lutheran view of the two natures of Christ and the Lord's

Supper, particularly directed against Johannes Brenz.[45] Indeed, Vermigli's work was highly

influential among Reformed theologians including Beza, John Jewel (1522–1571) (to whom

the work was dedicated), and Lambert Daneau (c.1530–c.1595).[46] Vermigli's dialogue

specifically targeted the doctrine of ubiquity, but in the course of the argument the concept of

the so-called *extra* appears frequently. For instance, Orothetes, the Reformed character in the

dialogue, argues (appealing to Jer. 23:24) that "God fills all things but is contained by

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[44] Calvin, *Inst.*, IV.xvii.30.

[45] *Dialogus de utraque in Christo natura* (Tigurinus: C. Froschouerus, 1561). References are to the English translation: *Dialogue on the Two Natures in Christ*, trans. John Patrick Donnelly (Kirksville, MO: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1995).

[46] Donnelly, introduction to *Dialogue on the Two Natures in Christ*, xix–xx.

nothing" and so is "not limited by the human body."[47] Furthermore, he states that it is not the case that "the Word, that is, the second divine person, is so shut up in the humanity that when the humanity exists in some specific place the Word, which is infinite, is not everywhere." Such a view is impossible because Scripture "never claimed that the body of Christ was infinite" and because such a view contradicts "the principles of nature."[48] These two claims—that the ubiquity of Christ's humanity was not taught in Scripture and that it contradicts the very essence of what it means to be a human being—were standard planks in Reformed arguments against ubiquity.[49]

The Lutherans, for their part, argued that the Reformed were subverting the clear teaching of Scripture (not to mention the very words of Jesus in his institution of the Supper!) when the Reformed appealed to the principle *finitum non capax infiniti* ("the finite is incapable of the infinite," or "the finite is unable to grasp the infinite"[50]). Closely connected to the *extra Calvinisticum*, this principle was a feature of Reformed christology that indicated the finitude of Christ's humanity "and therefore its incapacity for receiving divine attributes, such as omnipresence, omnipotence, and omniscience."[51] For the Lutherans, however, the Reformed use of the principle was viewed as a philosophical or rationalistic overthrow of

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[47] Vermigli, *Dialogue*, 28.

[48] Vermigli, *Dialogue*, 30.

[49] For a brief discussion of Vermigli's use of the *extra*, see William Klempa, "Classical Christology," in *A Companion to Peter Martyr Vermigli*, eds. Torrance Kirby, Emidio Campi, and Frank A. James III (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 342–43.

[50] Cf. Muller, *Dictionary*, 119, with idem, *Christ and the Decree* (Durham, NC: Labyrinth Press, 1986), 20.

[51] Muller, *Dictionary*, 119. For an example of the Reformed use of the principle, see Vermigli, *Dialogue*, 37.

biblical truth,[52] and, though not using the precise terminology, the Formula of Concord clearly rejects the *finitum non capax infiniti*.[53]

Additionally, the Lutherans were quick to point out that the Reformed had misrepresented their view of the communication of attributes, and they rejected the term "ubiquity" as a Reformed polemical invention. The *genus maiestaticum*, so the Lutherans argued, did not result in a commingling, conversion, abolition, or equating of the two natures of Christ. Rather, the communication of the divine attributes to Christ's human nature was like the communication of the properties of fire to iron that causes the iron to glow and give off heat, but this does not therefore commingle or confuse the natures of either the fire or the iron.[54] Furthermore, the mode of the presence of Christ's human nature is not one of extension or limitation to a location in space, nor is it to be understood as if it were "spread out into all places of heaven and earth," for God has at his disposal modes of presence that are ineffable and not limited to a "local or circumscribed" mode of presence.[55]

The Lutherans also argued that their view had the support of Scripture and that the Reformed *extra* was explicitly excluded by biblical testimony. Not only does Scripture speak of the life-giving power of Christ's flesh and blood (John 6:54; Heb. 9:14), which implies that his human nature has received divine power and properties,[56] but Paul's statement in Colossians 2:9 makes it explicit that in Christ "the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily." For

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[52] See, *e.g.*, Johannes Brenz, *De personali unione duarum naturarum in Christo* (Tübingen: U. Morhardi, 1561), 14r–15r; idem, *De maiestate Domini nostri Iesu Christi ad dextram Dei patris* (Frankfurt: P. Brubach, 1562), 30–32.

[53] *Formula of Concord*, art. 7, neg. 12 (Schaff, 3:144).

[54] Chemnitz, *Two Natures*, 267–312.

[55] *Formula of Concord*, art. 7, neg. 5 (Schaff, 3:139); art. 8, neg. 10 (Schaff, 3:155–56); cf. Brenz, *De maiestate*, 27–28; idem, *Sententia de libello D. Henrici Bullingeri* (Tübingen: U. Morhardi, 1561), 9v.

[56] Chemnitz, *Two Natures*, 260–62, 287.

the Lutherans, this text was a sure foundation for the *genus maiestaticum* and refuted any notion that the Son of God has existence beyond his flesh.[57]

Both the Lutherans and Reformed presented analogies in defense of their respective positions. Above we noted one example, Chemnitz's analogy of the fire and iron, which he used to respond to the accusation that the Lutherans mixed or confused the two natures of Christ. The Reformed also had their analogies for the concept of the *extra*. Vermigli presented several physical analogies,[58] but one notable example is his analogy of a jewel and its ring. Admitting that the analogy is a corporeal one that breaks down at certain points, he argues that "when two things are joined with each other it is not necessary for the preservation of their union that one part extend as far as the other." So, in the case of the ascension and exaltation of Christ, "the divinity of Christ, although it is everywhere, by no means casts away or cuts off from it the humanity, which is in heaven."[59] This is to say that despite the fact that the two natures are not coextensive, the union of the two natures in Christ is preserved. In Chemnitz's and Vermigli's analogies, we see both sides appropriating ancient analogies of the incarnation for the purpose of their contemporary polemical context.

Perhaps the most famous analogies from the Reformed-Lutheran debates, however, were not so much analogies as syllogisms—namely, those concerning the ubiquity of the right hand and power of God. When the Palatine Reformed and Württemberg Lutheran theologians met at the Colloquy of Maulbronn in 1564, Jakob Andreae (1528–1590) argued for the Lutherans that the term "right hand of God," to which Christ ascended, indicates not a

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[57] Brenz, *De personali unione*, 5v; idem, *Sententia de libello D. Henrici Bullingeri*, 7v–9v; Chemnitz, *Two Natures*, 261, 313–14, *et passim*. For an initial Reformed response, see Vermigli, *Dialogue*, 37.

[58] See Vermigli, *Dialogue*, 24–26.

[59] Vermigli, *Dialogue*, 31.

local presence of Christ in heaven (as the Reformed taught), but rather indicates that Christ

has received divine power and majesty.[60] At one point, the Reformed representative Caspar

Olevianus (1536–1587), in restating the Lutheran view, suggested a syllogism to represent

the Lutheran position. Andreae adjusted Olevianus's syllogism slightly and agreed to it in the

following form:

> The right hand of God is everywhere, and yet the human nature is not destroyed; The
> man Christ is seated at the right hand of God; Therefore he [*i.e.*, the man Christ] is
> everywhere, without his human nature being destroyed.[61]

This syllogism was, as the Lutherans put it, "the hinge upon which the whole of the

controversy turned."[62] In his response Olevianus parodied the syllogism with the syllogisms

of Caesar and his power and Antwerp and the ocean. First, he said the Lutheran syllogism

was like the following: "Caesar's power is extended into every place in his empire; Caesar is

endowed with this power; Therefore he himself is in every place in his empire." The

syllogism does not follow unless a hidden fourth premise is true—namely, that "Caesar

himself is his power." In the same way the Lutheran syllogism fails unless "Christ himself is

the right hand of God," which is false.[63] Olevianus also added a further parody of Andreae's

syllogism: "The ocean goes around the whole earth; Antwerp is on the ocean; Therefore

Antwerp goes around the whole earth." Again, there is a hidden fourth premise: Antwerp is

the ocean. This premise is false, just as it is false to say that the right hand of God and to be

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[60] Robert Kolb, "Maulbronn, Colloquy of," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*, 4 vols., ed. Hans J. Hillerbrand (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 3:34–35.

[61] *Protocollum hoc est, Acta Colloquii inter Palatinos et Wirtebergicos Theologos, de Ubiquitate siue Omnipraesentia corporis Christi* (Heidelberg, 1566), 32; cf. the Württemberg Lutherans' account: *Epitome Colloquii inter Illustrissimorum Principum D. Friderici Palatini Electoris, & D. Christophori Ducis Wirtenbergensis Theologos* (Württemberg, 1564), 38–39.

[62] *Epitome Colloquii*, 38.

[63] *Protocollum*, 32.

seated at the right hand of God are the same.[64] In part, the Lutherans responded that this revealed that the Reformed had a crass understanding of God, as if he were spread out in the world like an ocean. Additionally, Andreae was willing to defend the hidden premises that God is in fact his right hand and that God is his power.[65] These arguments resulted in no unity between the parties but only served to solidify their mutual disdain for each other's position.

Therefore, by the late sixteenth century there appeared to be little chance that a union of the Reformed and Lutheran views on the person of Christ and the Supper would be achieved. Indeed, both traditions were firmly committed to their respective confessional statements on the Supper and christology. On the confessional context, Jill Raitt has noted that "[e]ach church considered its confessions to be drawn from Scripture and the correct interpretation of the Word of God. … Although no Protestant would admit that any of these secondary 'norms' had the unique authority of Scripture itself, in fact, the confessional positions of the churches were firmly entrenched."[66] Hence subsequent colloquies such as the one held between the Theodore Beza and Jakob Andreae at Montbéliard in 1586 held out little hope of resolution. Indeed, though the political authorities may have had hopes of compromise, the participants themselves saw the meeting as an opportunity not to compromise but to defeat their opponents. Andreae in particular "demanded no less than complete capitulation" to his view by Beza and the Reformed.[67]

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[64] *Protocollum*, 32; cf. Willis, *Calvin's Catholic Christology*, 15–16.

[65] *Epitome Colloquii*, 40–41; *Protocollum*, 35.

[66] Jill Raitt, *The Colloquy of Montbéliard: Religion and Politics in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 74.

[67] Raitt, *Colloquy of Montbéliard*, 9–10; cf. Willis, *Calvin's Catholic Christology*, 16–18.

Not surprisingly, Reformed and Lutheran polemics became more deeply entrenched at the turn of the century and into the seventeenth-century era of Protestant orthodoxy. By 1592, we find Lutherans already referring with disdain to "illud Extra" ("*that* extra") and, by the beginning of the seventeenth century, we find Lutherans like Theodore Thumm and Balthazar Mentzer attacking the "extra Calvinisticum" by name.[68] From the Reformed side, at the beginning of the seventeenth century we find them listing the "Error Ubiquitariorum" ("error of the ubiquitarians") along with the ancient christological heresies.[69] Little changed in subsequent theological discussions, except that refutations of the opposing position became a standard feature in both Lutheran and Reformed systems of theology and polemical works. For example, we note the work of Lutherans Johann Gerhard (1582–1637) and Johann Quenstedt (1617–1688),[70] with Quenstedt deriding the *extra Calvinisticum* as the "Extra … Nestorianum."[71] On the other side, examples of the seventeenth-century Reformed critique of the Lutherans can be found in the work of such notables as Francis Turretin (1623–1687) and Petrus van Mastricht (1630–1706).[72]

From the Reformed and Lutheran polemics of the Reformation era we see that the so-called *extra Calvinisticum* was situated within an intricately connected web of doctrinal

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[68] As documented in Willis, *Calvin's Catholic Christology*, 18–23.

[69] Bucanus, *Institutiones*, II.xxv (p. 23).

[70] Johann Gerhard, *Loci theologici cum pro adstruenda veritate tum pro destruenda quorumuis contradicentium falsitate*, 9 vols. (repr., Berolini: G. Schlawitz, 1863–1875), 1:517–18, 521–23 (IV.viii, ix) 5:72–75, 102–113 (XXI.x, xi); Johann Andreas Quenstedt, *Theologica Didactica-Polemica, siue Systema Theologicum in duas sectiones* (Leipzig: Fritsch, 1715), III.iii.q5.

[71] Quenstedt, *Theologica Didactica-Polemica*, III.iii.q5 (p. 199). The Lutherans saw Reformed christology as a form of Nestorianism because the Reformed *extra* supposedly divided Christ's natures in the way Nestorius did.

[72] Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, trans. George Musgrave Giger, ed. James T. Dennison Jr. (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 1994), 2:321–32, 366–69 (XIII.viii, xviii); Petrus van Mastricht, *Theoretico-Practica Theologia* (Utrecht and Amsterdam, 1715), II.ix.9 (p. 120), VII.v.21–22 (p. 837–38).

beliefs about the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper and the relationship of the two natures of Christ. Rather than functioning as a locus in its own right, in this era the *extra* was part of a wide-ranging debate. From this depiction of the sixteenth-century polemical picture, we can now turn to the christological discussions that occurred in successive eras and, ultimately, resulted in the near disappearance of the *extra* from christology.

II. The *extra Calvinisticum* in Modern Christology

In this second part of this chapter, I will sketch a kind of declension story with respect to the *extra Calvinisticum*. In the course of the story we will see that Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment theologians' exhaustion over theological polemics and a new pursuit of grounds for church unity between the Reformed and Lutheran churches contributed to the neglect of the *extra* in christology. Also, changing trends in metaphysics and theological method attended and perhaps contributed to changes in christology with the result that discussion of the *extra* and similar issues grinds to a halt by the end of the nineteenth century.

It should be noted that my argument here continues to be primarily historical, and for that reason characterizing this section as a declension story is perhaps infelicitous. By such a characterization I do not intend to make a judgment on whether or not the disappearance of the *extra* from modern theology was either good or bad, though the reader will note that the overall thrust of the dissertation indicates how I view this disappearance. Nevertheless, my intent in this section is to hold off evaluation for the moment and to simply sample some theological sources from this era, make observations with respect to the appearance of the *extra* (or lack thereof) and related concepts, and outline an accurate historical account.

A. Eighteenth Century

Having concluded the previous section with the hardened positions of Reformed and Lutheran orthodoxy at the close of the seventeenth century, we now look in more detail at the transitional period of the eighteenth century. One historian of modern theology, James Livingston, has suggested that the eighteenth century was marked by the concern for religious toleration. This sentiment, he says, was due to exhaustion from two centuries of religious wars, growing resentment and indifference towards dogmatic claims, and a rise in interest in civil liberties. To put it succinctly, "[f]or the writers of the Enlightenment, the great enemy was not religion, but dogmatism and intolerance."[73]

The shifts in intellectual trends during the eighteenth century, centering on the rise of the Enlightenment and the priority of human reason, have generated a hefty bibliography.[74] Here, however, we focus on the shifting intellectual trends as they impact theology and, specifically, christology. What we see in both Reformed and Lutheran theology in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries is a pattern of what has been called deconfessionalization or transitional theologies.[75] This period was marked by an increasing dissatisfaction with the exegetical and dogmatic conclusions of earlier orthodoxy as well as a rise in theologians' willingness to utilize the new philosophies and methods of the Enlightenment, including its elevation of human reason over divine revelation.[76] The result

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[73] James C. Livingston, *Modern Christian Thought*, vol. 1, *The Enlightenment and the Nineteenth Century*. 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006), 10.

[74] See the suggestions for further reading in Livingston, *Modern Christian Thought*, 1:12–13.

[75] Richard A. Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*, vol. 1, *Prolegomena to Theology*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 81; Bengt Hägglund, *History of Theology*, trans. Gene J. Lund (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1968), 343–44.

[76] Willem J. van Asselt, with T. Theo J. Pleizier, et al., *Introduction to Reformed Scholasticism*, trans. Albert Gootjes (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2011), 167–70; Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*, 1:81.

was a general loosening of Reformed and Lutheran theologies from their distinctive confessional moorings. To illustrate these shifts, and their impact on christology, we turn to a few examples.

1. Late Seventeenth-Century Voices

As is to be expected in any study of history, the reality of intellectual trends and movements resists the classification of labels and periodization. Though our focus here is on the eighteenth century, it is important to note some examples from the late seventeenth century that are early voices against the hardened confessional positions in an era known for its entrenched Protestant orthodoxy.

Regarding christology and the debate over ubiquity, we find one example of the turn away from Reformed and Lutheran distinctives in a work by the irenic Heidelberg theologian, Johann Ludwig Fabricius (1632–1697).[77] Fabricius's work on the controversy among Protestants over the person of Christ is written as a dialogue between two men named Eirenophilus ("lover of peace") and Philalethes ("lover of forgetting").[78] In his short introduction to the work, Fabricius unequivocally reveals where he stands: the dispute over the person of Christ, in which the two sides condemn each other as either Eutychians or Nestorians, "consists only in ways of speaking and the ambiguities of words."[79] With this introduction, it is not surprising that after the two characters discuss the controversy, utilizing much scholastic terminology and many references to prominent Lutheran and Reformed theologians, Eirenophilus has the last word and attributes the whole controversy to the

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[77] Not to be confused with Johann Fabricius (1644–1729), professor of theology at Helmstedt.

[78] Johann Ludwig Fabricius, *ΔΙΑΛΕΞΙΣ circa Controversiam de Persona Christi*, in *Joh. Ludovici Fabricii S.S. Theologiae D. et P.P. Opuscula varia*, 201–78 (Heidelberg: J. M. Rüdigeri, 1688).

[79] J. L. Fabricius, *ΔΙΑΛΕΞΙΣ*, in *Opuscula varia*, 202–203 (quote on p. 203).

"deceitful ambiguities of words and the worthless tricks of the Scholastics."[80] It is clear from this work that Fabricius surveys the ubiquity debates and concludes that they are an exercise in futility. In particular, it is the scholastic terminology and method that receives the harshest rebuke. In this way, Fabricius provides an example of what has been characterized as the "increasing pressure" in the late seventeenth-century theological academy on the long-standing "scholastic form of theology."[81]

At the turn of the eighteenth century we find an additional example of the softening of Reformed and Lutheran christological distinctives in the work of the German polymath, Gottfried W. Leibniz (1646–1716). Contrary to the way in which he has often been read, Leibniz was deeply indebted to and appreciative of the scholastic method such that he is best located in the context of Protestant scholasticism rather than Enlightenment rationalism.[82] This appreciation for scholastic method, however, did not prevent Leibniz from being a strong promoter of church unity between Catholics and Protestants and especially between the Reformed and Lutherans.[83] In these efforts Leibniz corresponded with Daniel Ernst Jablonski (1660–1741), who was a significant force toward resolving the doctrinal disputes among Protestants, including the matter of christology and the Lord's Supper.[84]

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[80] Fabricius, $\Delta IA\Lambda E\Xi I\Sigma$, in *Opuscula varia*, 277.

[81] Van Asselt, *Introduction to Reformed Scholasticism*, 167.

[82] Nathan Jacobs, "Protestant Scholasticism and the Philosophy of Gottfried Leibniz," in *Philosophie der Reformierten*, eds. Günter Frank and Herman J. Selderhuis (Stuttgart: Frommann-Holzboog, 2012), 391–92.

[83] G. J. Jordan, *The Reunion of the Churches: A Study of G. W. Leibnitz and His Great Attempt* (London: Constable, 1927), 177–213; Maria Rosa Antognazza, *Leibniz: An Intellectual Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 398–406; Michael J. Murray, introduction to *Dissertation on Predestination and Grace*, by G. W. Leibniz, trans. and ed. Michael J. Murray (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), xv–xxi.

[84] Daniel Ernst Jablonski, *Kurtze Vorstellung der Einigkeit und des Unterscheides* (1697), ed. Hartmut Rudolph, in *Labora Diligenter*, eds. Martin Fontius, Hartmut Rudolph, and Gary Smith (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1999), 131–36, 142–47; Antognazza, *Leibniz*, 398–401.

In Leibniz's *Theodicy* (1710), he examines the intra-Protestant dispute on the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper as an instance of the larger dispute regarding the use of philosophy in theology.[85] Leibniz sets up the dispute with the followers of Zwingli, on one side, employing the philosophical maxim that "a body can only be in one place at a time," and the "Evangelicals" (Lutherans), on the other side, who appeal to a "supernatural Mystery" and claim that the maxim restricting a body to one place at a time pertains only to "the ordinary course of Nature." Leibniz recognizes that the Lutherans reject the terms and concepts that arose in the course of Reformed-Lutheran polemics, such as "consubstantiation," "impanation," and "ubiquity." He further states that "many" believe Calvin's position and the several Reformed confessions to be rather close to the Augsburg Confession on this point.[86]

Leibniz suggests that the most likely solution to the division over this point is the philosophical concept of immediate operation, in which "a body may operate from a distance immediately on many remote bodies at the same time." This, he says, transcends the ordinary course of nature but is nevertheless possible given God's divine power and his ability to suspend natural laws. The idea of immediate operation, then, is not significantly different from the idea of presence as it is used in the Protestant debates over Christ's presence in the Lord's Supper.[87] In this section Leibniz does not claim to have resolved the dispute. He recognizes that even if all Protestants agree on the metaphysical possibility of immediate operation, they are disagreed on the circumstances in which such a concept can be applied.

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[85] G. W. Leibniz, *Theodicy: Essays on the Goodness of God, the Freedom of Man, and the Origin of Evil*, ed.Austin Farrer, trans. E. M. Huggard (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952), Prelim. Diss., §16–21.

[86] Leibniz, *Theodicy*, Prelim. Diss., §18. Leibniz does not specify which version of the Augsburg Confession he has in mind.

[87] Leibniz, *Theodicy*, Prelim. Diss., §19.

The problem that remains to be solved is one of interpretation—namely, whether Christ's words of institution should be understood literally such that an appeal to the idea of immediate operation is necessary, or whether Christ's words are metaphorical such that an appeal to the principle is not required.[88] Leibniz chooses not to proceed into such questions of interpretation, but what he does discuss represents just one part of his larger effort to mediate the Protestant dispute.[89] Leibniz therefore is a prominent example of a late seventeenth-century and early eighteenth-century scholar who, while appreciative of scholastic method and theological argumentation, sought to repair the rupture in the Protestant churches by appeal to a shared philosophical principle.

2. Reformed Transitions in Christology

When we move further into the eighteenth century we find more examples of the desire to soften, or even discard, the reigning confessional distinctives and theological paradigms in the interest of church union. One notable figure in the era of deconfessionalization is the Genevan Reformed theologian, Jean-Alphonse Turretin (1671–1737). Turretin was instrumental in leading the Swiss Reformed away from the *Formula Consensus Helvetica* (1675), a document that served to strengthen and defend the decisions of the Synod of Dort in response to the theology of the Saumur. Beyond this, as Martin Klauber has indicated, Turretin also sought the unification of the Reformed, Anglican, and Lutheran churches by

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[88] Leibniz, *Theodicy*, Prelim. Diss., §21.

[89] For further examples from Leibniz's corpus, see the references in Antognazza, *Leibniz*, 398–400.

means of the "abrogation of strict confessions of faith" and an emphasis on finding agreement upon the essential articles of the Christian faith.[90]

Regarding the issues that separated the Reformed and Lutherans, Turretin went well beyond any earlier efforts at union by simplifying the doctrines of both sides such that their positions were "virtually indistinguishable from one another."[91] On Christ's presence in the Supper, Turretin argued that both sides agreed that Christ was not present in a physical manner or through local inclusion in the elements, but in a "spiritual" or "sacramental way," which, according to Turretin, was the way both sides spoke.[92] On the related question of the *communicatio idiomatum* and whether or not the properties of the divine nature such as omnipresence and omnipotence are communicated to Christ's human nature, Turretin eschews attempts at explanation of such a mystery. Instead he alludes to the language of the Form of Chalcedon by stating that the hypostatic union is "without conversion, without division, and without mixture." He then outlines the incarnation as the "mystery of godliness" of "God manifested in the flesh" (1 Timothy 3:16). This mystery is the common confession that must be upheld by all Christians, and disputes about the incarnation that go beyond this are contrary to the law of Christian love and brotherhood.[93] Thus in Turretin we see an example of a theologian seeking to eliminate the confessional distinctives of Reformed and Lutheran christology even in those long-disputed points regarding the

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[90] Martin I. Klauber, *Between Reformed Scholasticism and Pan-Protestantism: Jean-Alphonse Turretin (1671–1737) and Enlightened Orthodoxy at the Academy of Geneva* (Selinsgrove, PA: Susquehanna University Press; London and Toronto: Associated University Press, 1994), 143, 165–87 (quote on p. 165).

[91] Klauber, *Between Reformed Scholasticism*, 179.

[92] Jean-Alphonse Turretin, *Nubes testium pro moderatio et pacifico de rebus theologicus judicio, et instituenda inter Protestantes concordia* (Geneva: Fabri & Barrillot, 1719), 48.

[93] J.-A. Turretin, *Nubes testium*, 49.

omnipresence of Christ's human nature. Such matters belonged to a set of "obscure ideas" of "Scholastic sophistry" that, in Turretin's view, were in no way part of true Christianity.[94]

In accounts of transitional figures in the intellectual milieu of the eighteenth century, the Lutheran philosopher Christian Wolff (1679–1754) is often given a prominent place. Indeed Wolff, a highly controversial professor with two stints at the University of Halle, was a significant force in the shift away from the earlier philosophical and theological paradigms and towards the Enlightenment.[95] Wolff, however, wrote little on christology or the Lord's Supper, but these questions are addressed by one of his students, Daniel Wyttenbach (1706–1779), a Reformed professor of theology at Bern and later Marburg. Wyttenbach's dogmatic works address the typical *loci* of theology, but in his system the Wolffian influence is seen in the way he builds revealed theology on the foundation of natural theology.[96]

In the case of christology, when Wyttenbach discusses the effects of the hypostatic union, he outlines the usual Reformed threefold analysis: the communication of gifts (*communicatio charismatum*), the communication of proper qualities (*communicatio idiomatum*), and the communication of operations (*communicatio apotelesmatum*).[97] In fact, Wyttenbach rejects the Lutheran view of the communication of divine attributes to the human nature of Christ. Yet, while firmly in the Reformed camp, he concludes his discussion with a rebuke of those who would stir up doctrinal controversy between the Protestants

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[94] J.-A. Turretin, *Nubes testium*, 55.

[95] Van Asselt, *Introduction to Reformed Scholasticism*, 177; Thomas P. Saine, *The Problem of Being Modern or The German Pursuit of Enlightenment from Leibniz to the French Revolution* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1997), 123–45.

[96] Van Asselt, *Introduction to Reformed Scholasticism*, 178; Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*, 1:83, 306.

[97] Daniel Wyttenbach, *Tentamen theologiae dogmaticae methodo scientifica pertractatae*, 3 vols. (Frankfurt am Main: J. B. Andreae and H. Hort, 1747), §896 (vol. 2, p. 712–13). On the Reformed view of the triple effects of the hypostatic union, see Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 434–47.

through "confused word-battles" and "meddlesome questions" and he goes on to praise J. L. Fabricius and J.-A. Turretin as promoters of peace in the churches.[98]

Wyttenbach, therefore, is an example of an eighteenth century theologian who, on the one hand, maintained Reformed distinctives but, on the other hand, softened these distinctives by closing off discussion at the point where it might perpetuate Protestant divisions. It is unclear exactly what "meddlesome questions" in christology that Wyttenbach seeks to eliminate, but it is clear that he desires to limit theological debate in the interest of unity. Whether or not his rejection of Lutheran views contradicts his desire for unity is a fair question, but his appreciation and promotion of the irenic work of men like Fabricius and Turretin would seem to indicate that he ultimately desires Protestant unity around common essentials of the faith.

3. Christology at the Close of the Eighteenth Century

By the close of the eighteenth century, the traditional confessional lines between the Reformed and Lutheran churches were increasingly blurred. The social and cultural movement in the churches was toward Protestant union, and political pressure to unite the Reformed and Lutherans had been increasing for nearly a century. In the academy, the older theological models and methods that had reigned in the schools for centuries were supplanted by a rationalistic approach to theology, which more and more resulted in the disappearance of the theology curriculum from European universities.[99] The influence of English rationalism, or deism, took hold on the Continent and fueled the development in Germany of

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[98] Wyttenbach, *Tentamen theologiae*, §896 (vol. 2, p. 713).

[99] Van Asselt, *Introduction to Reformed Scholasticism*, 167–68.

neology, a movement that promoted "the conscious critique of dogmas."[100] Neology, writes

Bengt Hägglund, rejected the traditional doctrines of sin, the Trinity, and christology;

"[t]hese dogmas were attacked by the use of the historical method" and "Christian dogma

was looked upon as a variable factor inserted into historical development." Ultimately,

human feeling, moral consciousness, and praxis were privileged over dogma, since dogma

was considered to have a stifling and harmful impact on piety and morality.[101]

It is little wonder that traditional christology suffered under the social and intellectual

shifts of this era. Setting aside such obviously radical critics of traditional christology like

Hermann Reimarus (1694–1768) and G. E. Lessing (1729–1781), we may still observe the

eclipse of christological distinctives in the work of more traditional-minded figures like the

Lutheran theologian and forerunner of biblical criticism, J. S. Semler (1725–1791). Semler

attempted to balance Enlightenment rationalism with the older theology through the

distinction between the spiritual essence of Christianity and its historically conditioned and

ever-fluctuating doctrinal externals.[102] When it came to matters of christology and the intra-

Protestant arguments, Semler was disgusted by the name-calling and bitter spirit of the

sixteenth-century theologians on both sides. What is more, in one place he described their

wrangling over Latin terms as obscuring the true spirit of Christianity.[103] In his *Apparatus* on

the Lutheran book of confessions, Semler took a similar tack and saw the post-Reformation

debates over the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper as an example of failing to

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[100] Hägglund, *History of Theology*, 346; Livingston, *Modern Christian Thought*, 1:29–30.

[101] Hägglund, *History of Theology*, 346.

[102] J. S. Semler, *Io. Sal. Semleri Institutio ad doctrinam christianam liberaliter discendam* (Halae Magdeburgicae: C. H. Hemmerde, 1774), b2ʳ–b6ᵛ; Hägglund, *History of Theology*, 348.

[103] J. S. Semler, *D. Io. Sal. Semleri Programmata academica selecta. Hic ibi auctiora* (Halae Magdeburgicae: C. H. Hemmerde, 1779), b3ʳ.

recognize the distinction between the "internal truth of Christianity" and the "external law of religion."[104] His point, it seems, is that the details of christology argued by Protestant theologians are the variable externals of religion and do not touch the core spirit of Christian faith, life, and experience. Hence the external doctrinal distinctives are relativized.

Similar to his Reformed counterpart Wyttenbach, at times we find Semler preserving the traditional Lutheran structures and distinctions, as when he outlines the traditional Lutheran view of the threefold effects of the hypostatic union.[105] Yet, on the whole, Semler softens confessional distinctives. For instance, he is uneasy with both the Lutheran concept of ubiquity and the Reformed *extra carnem*.[106] Furthermore, in his view there is in his time a new desire for union that was not as highly valued in the sixteenth century. This seems to open the way for him to seek to transcend the battles over theological concepts and terms.[107] Like J.-A. Turretin, Semler also appeals to the mystery of the incarnation as a higher plane for union in matters of christology. Regarding the question of whether or not Christ's body can be in many places at one time, Semler opts for articulating simply a "supernatural" presence of Christ "of such a kind that we are not able to comprehend." If this is all we are able to say, he muses, then why are the Reformed and Lutherans continuing to fight with each other?[108]

Further significant shifts would occur at beginning of the nineteenth century. In particular, Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), while not a theologian in the traditional sense,

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[104] J. S. Semler, *D. Io. Sal. Semleri Apparatus ad Libros Symbolicos Ecclesiae Lutheranae* (Halae Magdeburgicae: C. H. Hemmerde, 1775), §146 (p. 267); cf. a6^{r-v}; b3^v.

[105] Semler, *Apparatus*, §169–171.

[106] Semler, *Apparatus*, §163 (p. 339), §167 (p. 365).

[107] Semler, *Apparatus*, §172 (p. 384), §167 (p. 360).

[108] Semler, *Apparatus*, §172 (p. 384).

exerted significant influence on the methodology and content of Christian theology after him. Kant scholars, however, are divided on whether his work ultimately undercuts or undergirds religion and Christian theology.[109] As for the doctrine of the person of Christ, Kant does not provide us with a christology per se—at least not in a traditional form. In fact, in his *Conflict of the Faculties* (1798), Kant critiques the traditional doctrine of the incarnation for having no practical relevance,[110] though here again Kant scholars are divided as to whether or not Kant ultimately leaves the door open for an orthodox doctrine of the incarnation.[111] That question notwithstanding, Kant does present Jesus of Nazareth as a moral exemplar and a real, historical instantiation of the archetype of a morally upright human being, which is a view that matches Kant's overall focus on morality and practical reason.[112] Hence, in line with the movements and trends of theology in the eighteenth century before him, Kant brings morality and practice to the forefront while leaving behind the methodology and philosophical assumptions that marked the era of Protestant orthodoxy and the Reformed and Lutheran doctrinal debates over christology and the Lord's Supper.

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[109] For a lengthy treatment of the debate as it pertains to Kant's *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*, see Chris L. Firestone and Nathan Jacobs, *In Defense of Kant's* Religion (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2008), 1–100. With respect to Kant's work as a whole and its impact on Christian theology, see Chris L. Firestone, *Kant and Theology at the Boundaries of Reason* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2009).

[110] Immanuel Kant, *The Conflict of the Faculties*, trans. Mary J. Gregor and Robert Anchor, in *Religion and Rational Theology*, ed. Allen W. Wood and George di Giovanni (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 7:39 (pp. 264–65).

[111] Firestone, *Kant and Theology*, 145–50.

[112] Immanuel Kant, *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*, ed. Allen Wood and George di Giovanni (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 6:60–67 (pp. 79–84); John Macquarrie, *Jesus Christ in Modern Thought* (London: SCM Press, 1990), 181–82.

B. Nineteenth Century

If the eighteenth century saw an increasing movement away from the traditional christologies of Protestant orthodoxy in the interest of emphases on Christian life and church unity, the nineteenth century saw an extensive realization and solidification of these new emphases. Quite possibly the most significant indicator of this was the Prussian union of churches in 1817 that brought the Lutheran and Reformed churches of this region into one ecclesiastical body. With regards to the Reformed and Lutheran christological debates of previous generations, and in particular the doctrine of the *extra Calvinisticum*, nineteenth century theology leads away from these distinctives. This is not to say that no one ever mentioned the *extra* or that the traditional Reformed and Lutheran positions were extinct. We do find mention of these distinctives at times and even a few attempts at preserving them in a new way. My point is simply that the *extra* and related doctrines that fueled the fires of controversy in previous generations, on the whole, cease to be an item of significant debate. As we have noted in our survey of the eighteenth century, the philosophical and theological currents were moving away from such supposed doctrinal idiosyncrasies. Theologians in the nineteenth century for the most part continued this trend and pursued other concerns in christology by way of new philosophical and theological priorities.

1. Friedrich Schleiermacher and the Turn to the Historical Jesus

Among nineteenth-century theologians, Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834) exercised significant and enduring influence. In an early work, *On Religion* (1799), Schleiermacher defended religion, and particularly Christianity, against Enlightenment and Romantic criticisms. In a manner similar to J. S. Semler before him, Schleiermacher argued that religion is essentially the relation of the individual soul to the Infinite, and that there is a

limitless variety of external expressions of true religion. Hence particular, visible, and historical religious expression is an outworking of an internal religious core. Therefore the traditional fixation on doctrines and theories in religious communities has often corrupted religion.[113]

Regarding the incarnation, Schleiermacher emphasized that the uniqueness of Jesus is to be found in the original way he exhibited both the knowledge of God and the knowledge of the divine in himself. Jesus was unique in the way he mediated between the Infinite and the finite, thus awakening a similar religious consciousness in others. In this way Jesus was the most exalted religious mediator. One result of Jesus' work, then, has been the unlimited adaptability and progress of Christianity as it produces religious responses and experiences in diverse settings. Individuals throughout the ages, by Jesus' example, have been awakened to their own consciousness of the Infinite.[114]

Schleiermacher further developed this view of the person of Christ in his mature systematic theology text, *The Christian Faith* (1830).[115] Here he is keenly aware of the difficulties that the traditional christological terminology—specifically, the terms *person* and *nature*—bequeathed to theology.[116] He declares both the Lutheran and Reformed expressions of the *communicatio idiomatum* to be deficient, and thus defunct, because they both rely upon the term *nature*, which is riddled with problems when applied to God.[117] Instead of

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[113] Friedrich Schleiermacher, *On Religion: Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers*, trans. John Oman (repr., Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1994), 212–17.

[114] Schleiermacher, *On Religion*, 246–53.

[115] Friedrich Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, eds. H. R. Mackintosh and J. S. Stewart (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976).

[116] Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, §95–97.

[117] Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, §97.5. In part, Schleiermacher rejects the application of the term *nature* to God because the term is "always" used to speak of a "finite" or "limited existence" and hence should

getting caught in such ontological terms and debates Schleiermacher emphasizes the activity

of Christ who is presented to us as a human being, and he recasts traditional christology in

terms of Christ the man who entirely depends upon and gives expression to the divine.[118]

Schleiermacher, therefore, sought to articulate the doctrine of the person of Christ in a way

that did justice to Christ's full humanity without slipping into the problems of the ontology of

the incarnation. By this attention to Christ's human life and activity Schleiermacher also

sought to articulate a doctrine of Christ that is powerful for motivating Christians to faithful

living.

Schleiermacher's turn to the human life of Christ was not a unique move in the

christology of the nineteenth century, but represents an early and highly influential example

of what would become an explosion of explorations by nineteenth century theologians into

the historical Jesus, his humanity, and his human development. As Claude Welch has

sketched the scene, in the middle third of the nineteenth century, with few exceptions,

theologians were intensely focused on christology and how the historical figure of Jesus

could be an object of faith. This resulted in a flourishing of what have been perhaps

infelicitously called "christologies from below"—those christologies that were primarily

interested in the historical Jesus and his humanity.[119] Welch writes—granting other

significant features of theology in the period—that "the whole of the nineteenth century may

be seen as a struggle to affirm the humanity of Jesus."[120]

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not be applied to God. Schleiermacher, however, is more amenable to the use of the term *essence* (§96.1). For Schleiermacher's discussion of the divine attributes, see §50–56.

[118] Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, §96.3.

[119] Claude Welch, *Protestant Thought in the Nineteenth Century*, 2 vols. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1972–1985), 1:6, 145.

[120] Welch, *Protestant Thought*, 1:6.

2. Gottfried Thomasius

This is not to say that everyone in the nineteenth century was enamored with Schleiermacher and the pursuit of christology "from below." One influential exception is the Erlangen theologian, Gottfried Thomasius (1802–1875). Thomasius was in many ways reacting against Schleiermacher's critique of orthodox christology, and he pursued a neo-confessional Lutheran position that sought to affirm the tradition, but in modern terms.[121] Thomasius opposed the developmental christology of his contemporary, Isaak August Dorner (1809–1884), whom we will discuss below. Both men are worthy of our attention because of their influence on christology, but especially because of the bearing that their christology has on the doctrine of the *extra Calvinisticum* and related concepts.

Thomasius saw the orthodox christology as facing a devastating dilemma. On the one hand, if there is an actual entrance of the divine into humanity in the person of Christ, this must be in "in the fullest sense" and must result in a maximum identification of the Son of God with our human nature and experience such that the Son of God no longer "remains in his divine mode of being and action" after the incarnation. If the Son of God continued to exist beyond the human nature, then this would result in a kind of "duplication" of Christ beyond Christ that destroys the unity of the person.[122] On the other hand, if the "unlimited fullness" of the divine Son of God assumed human nature in the fullest sense as described above, this would elevate or separate Christ's humanity from its natural homogeneity with us, thus calling into question his true humanity, likeness with us, and his ability to be the

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[121] Claude Welch, general introduction to *God and Incarnation in Mid-Nineteenth Century German Theology*, by G. Thomasius, I. A. Dorner, and A. E. Biedermann, ed. and trans. by Claude Welch (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), 10–12.

[122] Gottfried Thomasius, *Christ's Person and Work*, in *God and Incarnation in Mid-Nineteenth Century German Theology*, ed. and trans. by Claude Welch (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), 46–47, 53–54.

needed mediator between human beings and God.[123] This dilemma between the loss of

Christ's personal unity and the loss of Christ's true humanity is in part what drives

Thomasius to develop his version of kenoticism, which he sees as the solution to the

dilemma. He argues that in the incarnation the Son of God divested himself of a set of

relative properties of divinity. In so doing, however, the Son did not divest himself of the

essential (or, immanent) properties of divinity, and so remained essentially God while

condescending to become a human being. Thomasius writes, "without this presupposition [of

kenotic self-limitation] either the unity of the person or the truth of the human life of Jesus is

always lost."[124]

Of interest for our historical overview is the first half of Thomasius's dilemma: his

contention that if "the eternal Son of God, remains in his divine mode of being and action in

the finite human nature assumed by him" then the divine "surpasses the human as a broader

circle does a smaller one," and therefore a complete and genuine incarnation has not

occurred.[125] While it would not be fair to attribute this assertion to merely the influence of

Lutheran christology, certainly Thomasius, who worked self-consciously within the Lutheran

tradition, carries the traditional Lutheran opposition to the *extra Calvinisticum* into the

nineteenth century. In fact, Thomasius opposes the *extra carnem* in no uncertain terms. In his

view, not only has the incarnate Son surrendered his "governing and ruling" of the world, but

after the incarnation the "essence of deity exists in the narrow bounds of an earthly human

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[123] Thomasius, *Christ's Person and Work*, 47–48; cf. Thomas R. Thompson, "Nineteenth-Century Kenotic Christology: The Waxing, Waning, and Weighing of a Quest for a Coherent Orthodoxy," in *Exploring Kenotic Christology: The Self-Emptying of God*, ed. C. Stephen Evans (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 79–81.

[124] Thomasius, *Christ's Person and Work*, 52–53.

[125] Thomasius, *Christ's Person and Work*, 46–47.

life." Thomasius, adding (in Latin) the phrase, "neither the Word outside the flesh nor the

flesh outside the Word," offers the following summary:

> The Son of God has not reserved a distinct being-for-himself outside the human
> nature assumed by him, a distinct consciousness, a distinct sphere of activity or
> possession of power; in no way and at no point does he exist outside the flesh (*nec
> Verbum extra carnem nec caro extra Verbum*).[126]

Thomasius, therefore, from within a neo-confessional Lutheran position, rejects the *extra

Calvinisticum* on the grounds that it overthrows the true unity of the incarnate Son and entails

a duplication of personality such that a complete and genuine incarnation—a genuine identity

of God with humanity—cannot occur.

3. Isaak A. Dorner

A major opponent of Thomasius, and a theologian of great influence in his time, was Isaak

Dorner. Dorner is most widely known today for his multi-volume *Entwicklungsgeschichte

der Lehre von der Person Christi* (*History of the Development of the Doctrine of the Person

of Christ*), which appeared in German in several editions from 1839 to 1856 and was

subsequently translated into English. A professor at several universities in the German-

speaking world, Dorner was also an active churchman, a powerful defender of the Prussian

Union Church, and a theologian with a special interest in christology.[127] Like Thomasius,

Dorner saw "the defects of the classical doctrine [of Christ], which led either to a doubling of

the personality of Christ or to a truncation of it."[128] Yet Dorner's solution to the problem was

far removed from Thomasius's kenoticism. Panned by some Lutherans as taking the

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[126] Thomasius, *Christ's Person and Work*, 58.

[127] For an overview of Dorner's life and thought, see Welch, *Protestant Thought*, 1:273–82.

[128] Welch, *Protestant Thought*, 1:280.

"Reformed path" and making a Calvinist error,[129] Dorner articulated a position that he believed would break through the impasse of past Lutheran and Reformed disputes and, indeed, would support the unified Evangelical church and promote further ecclesiastical union.

First, in his own dialectical terms Dorner asserts a version of both the Lutheran principle, *finitum capax infiniti* ("the finite is able to grasp the infinite") and the Reformed principle (in its positive form), *infinitum capax finiti* ("the infinite is able to grasp the finite"). That is, Dorner argues that there is a dialectical "two-sided attraction" between the divine and humanity by which the incarnation itself is made possible.[130] Humanity is by nature open and receptive of the divine and the divine is predisposed to communion with humanity. In this regard Dorner also emphasizes that Christ is the second Adam and the head of humanity, which is a doctrine that he sees as an important point in affirming the receptivity of human nature to the divine. As Dorner sees it, re-emphasizing Christ as the second Adam would help further the unity of the churches at least by pacifying the Reformed by making them not "so scandalized that humanity should be receptive of the fullness of the Divine Essence of the Logos."[131]

It is possible that Dorner's dialectical affirmation of both the Lutheran and Reformed sides failed to satisfy some in both camps, but it was particularly his second and more memorable approach to solving the problem of the incarnation that raised the ire of some Lutherans like Thomasius. One of Dorner's distinctive contributions to christology was his

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[129] Thomasius, *Christ's Person and Work*, 92n8 (citing M. Schneckenburger with approval); Welch, *Protestant Thought*, 1:281.

[130] I. A. Dorner, *A System of Christian Doctrine*, trans. Alfred Cave and J. S. Banks, new and rev. ed., 4 vols. (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1888–1890), 3:306–307.

[131] Dorner, *System*, 319–20 (§103).

concept of developmental incarnation—the view that the incarnation was not completed in an initial event, but included growth as an essential principle. On this view it is not merely the humanity of Christ that develops, but the "God-humanity" develops across the life of Christ as the Logos and the humanity mutually appropriate facets of each another.[132] This development is organic and not "arbitrary or magical" and does not interrupt the normal course of "creaturely being."[133]

Why would this attempt at resolving the christological problem infuriate Thomasius and some Lutherans? It did so because Dorner's position assumes that in some sense the Logos remains beyond or outside of his human nature during the process of development and mutual appropriation. In fact, Dorner explicitly says as much, and sounds Reformed when he does so:

> [T]he human side cannot be made immediately participant in the knowledge and will of God as Logos, who ever conserves and rules the world. So far at first the actuality of the Divine Logos-life necessarily extends beyond the humanity.[134]

For Dorner, the process of a developing incarnation necessitates a revision of the Lutheran version of the *communicatio idiomatum* and an affirmation of something like the Reformed *extra carnem* doctrine. Yet he sees his developmental view as the only way to preserve a doctrine of the incarnation that protects the true humanity of Jesus by not destroying the humanity via a communication of divine attributes, and that preserves the true union through a dialectical process of increasing unity of the Logos and humanity.

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[132] Dorner, *System*, 328–39 (§104).

[133] Welch, *Protestant Thought*, 1:280.

[134] Dorner, *System*, 333 (§104).

4. Traditional Christologies Defended

At this point, we turn briefly to a significant group of nineteenth-century theologians that were increasingly becoming the minority in the academy. These theologians, though from a variety of confessional and denominational traditions, nevertheless may be collectively characterized, in the words of James Livingston, as advocates of "recovery and conservation." Hailing from Lutheran, Reformed, Anglican, and Roman Catholic traditions these writers were "counterforces" to the prevailing trend toward subjective religion in the nineteenth century who all emphasized in some way the objective side of Christianity, whether Scripture, church confessions, church tradition, the teaching office of the church, or some combination of these.[135] Although the nineteenth-century movements of theological conservation, and the theologians that represent these movements, are not often the most original or exciting figures on the theological scene in this era, their contribution was certainly significant.

As it relates to christology and the issues under examination in our study, we will highlight a few examples where the *extra Calvinisticum* or the *communicatio idiomatum* in its older forms were preserved, and in some cases continued to be polemical issues, at least within the bounds of some conservative groups. We will look at German Lutherans F. A. Philippi (1809–1882) and August Vilmar (1800–1868), the American Presbyterian theologian Charles Hodge (1797–1878), and the Anglican, Henry P. Liddon (1829–1890). In the case of Philippi, Vilmar, and Hodge we find a preservation of some of the older Lutheran and Reformed polemics with regards to christology and the Lord's Supper. In the case of

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[135] Livingston, *Modern Christian Thought*, 1:299–300.

Liddon, we find a defender of orthodox christology who is in dialogue with both the patristic and modern sources.

F. A. Philippi was one of the most important theologians in the nineteenth-century Lutheran conservative movement. His multi-volume *Kirchliche Glaubenslehre* is a monument of the confessionalist and restorative impulse. Philippi, over against the human-centered theologies of his day, sought to return theology to the unshakable foundation of the person and work of Jesus Christ as revealed in Scripture.[136] In christology, Philippi takes on a host of notable nineteenth-century thinkers—including Kant, Schleiermacher, and Dorner—under the description, "the period of the destruction of churchly christology" (*die Periode der Destruction der kirchlichen Christologie*).[137] Despite the modern trend away from divisive inter-confessional debates, Philippi continues the Lutheran battle against the Reformed and presents the Lutheran position at length in much the same way as his sixteenth- and seventeenth-century forbears, with a critical eye towards the Reformed.[138] Characterizing the Reformed as Nestorians who divide Christ's natures and rupture the hypostatic union, he defends the Lutheran version of the *communicatio idiomatum*, and affirms the principle, "neither logos beyond the flesh, nor flesh beyond the logos."[139] Similar to Philippi, his contemporary August Vilmar, professor at Marburg, also promulgated a return to Lutheran confessional orthodoxy that opposed modern revisions of theology and preserved the old

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[136] F. A. Philippi, *Kirchliche Glaubenslehre*, 6 vols, ed. Ferdinand Philippi (Gutersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1870–1901), 1:19–22.

[137] Philippi, *Kirchliche Glaubenslehre*, 4/1:312.

[138] Philippi, *Kirchliche Glaubenslehre*, 4/1:283–312. It is therefore puzzling that Hägglund would say that in the repristination movement (in which he includes Philippi) "[t]he distinction between Lutheranism and Calvinism was considered unimportant" (*History of Theology*, 364).

[139] Philippi, *Kirchliche Glaubenslehre*, 4/1:304.

Lutheran opposition to Reformed christology. Here again the Lutheran *communicatio*
doctrine is expounded while the Reformed doctrine is dismissed as "clearly Nestorian."[140]

From the opposite side, we note the work of the American Presbyterian, Charles
Hodge, the greatest representative of the Princeton theology, a conservative confessional
theology spanning from roughly the beginning of the nineteenth century through the early
twentieth century. Hodge's *Systematic Theology* (1871–1872) became the standard theology
text of Presbyterian confessional theology in America, and of evangelical theology in
America, for decades. Hodge was never one to shy away from polemics, and this is evident
when we look at his discussion of christology, where the traditional Reformed critique of the
Lutherans is continued and in which the *extra carnem* doctrine is affirmed.

In his treatment of the person of Christ, Hodge briefly argues that there is no transfer
of the attributes of one of Christ's natures to the other. As he says, "the properties or
attributes of a substance constitute its essence, so that if they be removed or if others of a
different nature be added to them, the substance itself is changed. … If divine attributes be
conferred on man, he ceases to be man; and if human attributes be transferred to God, he
ceases to be God."[141] This, in effect, rules out the Lutheran position, which Hodge goes on to
explicitly address as distinct from the doctrine of the Reformed churches. He articulates the
features of the Lutheran doctrine as presented in the Formula of Concord, but he notes, and
then outlines, the variety of positions within Lutheranism on this point, even stating that
Lutheran theologians and their confessions are inconsistent.[142] It is important to note,

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[140] A. F. C. Vilmar, *Dogmatik: akademische Vorlesungen*, 2 vols, ed. K. W. Piderit (Gutersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1874), 2:50, 62–67 (quote on p. 50).

[141] Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 3 vols. (repr., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 2:390.

[142] Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 2:408–413.

however, that Hodge relies almost exclusively on Dorner's *History of the Development of the Doctrine of the Person of Christ* in this section, and does not appear to be working first-hand with any texts from the Lutheran theologians he cites, though he does cite the Formula of Concord directly.[143] Nevertheless, Hodge correctly notes that the majority of the Lutherans affirmed that "the λόγος no longer existed *extra carnem*, neither was the *caro extra λόγον*."[144] Interestingly, Hodge's initial salvo against the Lutherans appears to echo Dorner's emphasis on the importance of development in the incarnation, though Hodge does not cite Dorner and though he restricts the process of development to the human nature of Christ. That is, Hodge objects that the Lutheran view does not allow for the "growth or development of [Christ's] human nature" and so, because Christ possessed the divine attributes from the moment of conception, "the whole earthly life of Christ" was "an illusion."[145]

His further objections to the Lutheran doctrine follow several lines of critique. For example, he states that "the character of the [Lutheran] explanation was determined by the peculiar views of Luther as to the Lord's Supper."[146] Luther's appeal to ubiquity to explain Christ's presence in the Supper, Hodge alleges, has led to the Lutheran problems in understanding the incarnation. Additionally, he states that the Lutheran explanation is "utterly unsatisfactory" because it inconsistently posits the communication of the divine attributes to the human nature without also positing the communication of the attributes of the human nature to the divine nature. Here Hodge asserts that the Lutheran denial of the

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[143] However, later in his discussion of the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper, instead of using Dorner, Hodge cites several Lutheran theologians directly, such as contemporaries F. A. Philippi and the American Charles P. Krauth (1823–1883), and, from the seventeenth century, Johann Gerhard (Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 3:661–677).

[144] Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 2:412.

[145] Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 2:412.

[146] Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 2:414.

extra carnem logically requires them to posit a communication of the human attributes to the divine, but that they refuse to accept the logic of their position: "[t]he idea [of the Lutherans] is that after the incarnation the Logos is not *extra carnem*, that all his activity is with and through the activity of his humanity; and yet it is affirmed that the humanity did not exercise, while on earth, except occasionally, its divine perfections."[147] For this supposed inconsistency, and several other reasons, Hodge concludes that the Lutheran doctrines of the presence of Christ in the Supper and of the incarnation are "peculiar to that Church and form no part of Catholic Christianity."[148]

Lastly among nineteenth-century conservative theologians, we turn to a fascinating contribution in christology from a representative of the Oxford Movement in England, Henry P. Liddon. Working within the orthodox Anglican tradition, which might be characterized as having Reformed roots (though this is disputed within Anglicanism itself), Liddon was committed to a classical christology that resisted all modern modifications and was grounded in an unwavering biblicism and the patristic sources.[149] As a representative from outside the movements of Reformed and Lutheran confessional repristination, Liddon provides an interesting final example of the state of the christological debate and, in particular, the *extra carnem* in the nineteenth century. As Claude Welch has rightly observed, Liddon's Bampton Lectures of 1866, published as *The Divinity of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, are extremely erudite and reveal an impressive knowledge not only of the church fathers, but also of modern Continental theologians and philosophers.[150]

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[147] Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 2:415.

[148] Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 2:418.

[149] Welch, *Protestant Thought*, 1:204–205.

[150] Welch, *Protestant Thought*, 1:205.

Liddon's lectures are a thorough defense of Christ's deity against the period's so-called christologies from below. Here, however, we only note that in a section defending Christ's infallibility (particularly with reference to Christ's assumptions regarding the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch), Liddon wrestles with the biblical texts that indicate that Christ's knowledge and wisdom increased (Luke 2:52) and that Christ did not know the time of the last judgment (Mark 13:32) and arrives at the conclusion that the one person of Christ may simultaneously possess both "ignorance and knowledge."[151] To resolve this apparent contradiction, he appeals to what is, in effect (though not in name), a doctrine of the *extra carnem*. He states that Christ's "Single Personality has two spheres of existence: in the one It is all-blessed, undying, and omniscient; in the other It meets with pain of mind and body, with actual death, and with a correspondent liability to a limitation of knowledge."[152] He goes on to say that "our Lord's knowledge embraced two districts, each of which really lies open only to the Eye of the Most High."[153] In this way, Liddon affirms that there is a range of existence and knowledge that the Son of God possesses beyond the flesh. Liddon's use of a form of what we might label the *extra carnem* is especially intriguing because he does not articulate it in the context of Lutheran and Reformed polemics. He is in that regard an outsider of a different conservative movement who instead appeals to the doctrine as a way of confronting a contemporary (and traditional) problem in christology.

From these defenders of traditional christologies, we see that the *extra carnem* was not absolutely absent from theological discussion at the end of the nineteenth century.

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[151] Henry P. Liddon, *The Divinity of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, 4th ed. (London: Rivingtons, 1869), 453–72 (quote on p. 463).

[152] Liddon, *Divinity*, 464.

[153] Liddon, *Divinity*, 465.

However these examples, being from within minority conservative movements, represent an exception to the rule. While it is important to acknowledge the influence and significance of the theologians within these movements of recovery, particularly in their respective spheres of confessional and conservative thought, in the mainstream of modern thought there was little attention given to the *extra* and its older polemical and christological import. In fact, it bears mentioning that even in several other conservative theologians of the nineteenth century, including some who were staunchly confessional and polemical, we find no mention of the *extra carnem* or employment of it for inter-confessional polemics or otherwise.[154]

5. Albrecht Ritschl and the End of Metaphysics in Christology

Against the kenoticism of Thomasius, the developmental christology of Dorner, and the movements of conservative orthodoxy is the practical and ethical movement in late nineteenth-century christology represented by Albrecht Ritschl (1822–1889). Indeed, Ritschl's significance can be located in the fact that he represented a new movement away from metaphysics in theology (at least as previously employed) and towards a theology that was focused on ethics and the practical. In fact I. A. Dorner noted and lamented this rising movement even before he published his own *System* in 1879–81.[155] In many ways Ritschl brought Kantian insights to the theological task. This is especially noticeable in his critique of a theological metaphysics and epistemology that presumed to know "the thing in itself apart from its relation to the observer," which is a critique that Ritschl applies across the

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[154] Although, as the saying goes, "absence of evidence is not evidence of absence," I note that a search for the *extra* in the major works of the following nineteenth-century conservative theologians turned up empty: Nathaniel William Taylor (1786–1858), Ernst W. Hengstenberg (1802–1869), Friedrich Julius Stahl (1802–1861), Wilhelm Löhe (1808–1872), Theodor Kliefoth (1810–1895), J. H. Thornwell (1812–1862), R. L. Dabney (1820–1898). There is room for more investigation here, however, particularly in the works of nineteenth-century American Lutheran theologians.

[155] Welch, *Protestant Thought*, 2:1–2; 1:273.

board in theology, including the doctrine of God, the doctrine of the church, and the doctrine

of the person of Christ.[156] Theology for Ritschl ought to focus on the concrete actuality of

things and events in their relation to us and their power for practical Christian activity.

It is no wonder, then, that Ritschl's christology leads away from the traditional two-

natures formulation and earlier nineteenth-century attempts to reformulate it.[157] Although he

denies that Christ was a mere man or a mere teacher and founder of a school, Ritschl declares

that the classical, Chalcedonian doctrine of Christ is "unintelligible" and "worthless for the

faith."[158] Rather than approaching christology by this inaccessible metaphysical path, the

proper and only method is to access the person of Christ through his influence upon us and

through an analysis of his community, the church.[159] What then constitutes Christ's divinity?

It is the union of Christ's will with that of the Father. They both have the identical end of

bringing about the ethical Kingdom of God.[160] This is, in sum, what it means for Christ to be

divine. What of the traditional Lutheran and Reformed doctrines of the person of Christ?

Ritschl was no friend of orthodoxy or confessionalism, particularly Lutheran orthodoxy.[161]

With respect to christology, both the Lutherans and Reformed were driven off course by their

insistence on beginning with the divine attributes, specifically omniscience and omnipotence.

This starting point led them both in irreconcilable and ultimately debilitating directions: the

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[156] Welch, *Protestant Thought*, 2:6.

[157] Welch, *Protestant Thought*, 2:21.

[158] Albrecht Ritschl, *The Christian Doctrine of Justification and Reconciliation*, 3 vols., trans. H. R. Macintosh and A. B. Macaulay (1888; repr., Clifton, NJ: Reference Book Publishers, 1966), 3:386, 395.

[159] Ritschl, *Justification and Reconciliation*, 413, 416–17.

[160] Ritschl, *Justification and Reconciliation*, 454.

[161] On this, see Welch, *Protestant Theology*, 2:11–12.

Lutherans towards a human nature of Christ endowed with divine attributes, and the Reformed towards a divine Word who gives up his divine attributes.[162]

In the end, Ritschl exemplified the nineteenth-century movement toward so-called christologies "from below" and cut off both classical and recent methods of using metaphysics to articulate and defend a two-natures doctrine of Christ. Like many in his era, Ritschl insisted that any christology must deal only in the historical life of Jesus and his enduring influence in the world. In so doing, there was no place for the idiosyncrasies of Lutheran and Reformed christologies that had driven debates for so many years. Consequently there was no place for a doctrine of the *extra carnem*, not because of divergent views of the presence of Christ in the Supper or differences over the *communicatio idiomatum*, but because the earthly Jesus and his influence was seen as the only source for christology. In this way there was no *extra*. There was only *caro*.

III. Conclusion

At the very least, we may say that the debate over the *extra Calvinisticum* had cooled significantly by the end of the nineteenth century. In the Reformation and post-Reformation era it had been part and parcel of the conflict over the Lord's Supper and christology. Yet, as we have seen in this historical survey, beginning already in the eighteenth century certain shifts in the theological landscape contributed to the decline of the conflict that had engulfed earlier generations of Lutheran and Reformed theologians. The trends in theology were decidedly directed toward church unity and the resolution (or avoidance) of those heated points of dispute that had so divided the church in years past. Coordinate with this emphasis

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[162] Ritschl, *Justification and Reconciliation*, 407. Note that here Ritschl appears to be mistaken about the Reformed position. He depicts it in terms that make it sound like Thomasius's kenoticism.

on unity was a theological spirit that emphasized the essentials of Christian love, piety, and human experience to the reduction (or exclusion) of confessional doctrinal distinctives and doctrinal precision.

In christology, this theological spirit was visible in a turn to the man Jesus Christ as the starting point for theological reflection on his person and work and an emphasis not on resolving problems arising from the Chalcedonian two-natures doctrine, but on the enduring influence of Jesus on his followers in the church. By this method, supposedly speculative and impractical questions regarding Christ's deity were effectively cut off and, with them, much of the earlier concern over doctrines such as the *extra carnem* and the *communicatio idiomatum*. Certainly these doctrines were preserved in some circles, most notably in the confessional and conservative movements of theological recovery, where they were articulated in traditional ways with some of the polemical edge of earlier generations. Nevertheless, what is striking from the sources we have considered is that there is almost no positive use of the *extra carnem* in christology by the nineteenth century. Even among more conservative theologians the use of the doctrine is primarily negative in that it functions in the context of a repetition of the old inter-confessional polemics. Perhaps the only two exceptions are found in I. A. Dorner and Henry Liddon, who both, though in very different ways, use the concept of the *extra* in a positive way in their christology, albeit in a rather limited role.

Our survey of the decline of the *extra* by the end of the nineteenth century raises two further questions that will guide us for the remainder of this study. First, what was the function of the *extra Calvinisticum* in christology prior to the modern era? That is, how did theologians use it in their explanations of the incarnation and what import did it have for

earlier christology? To answer this question we will sample three major theologians from each of the following eras of the church: patristic, medieval, and Reformation. Second, after this examination of the function of the *extra* in earlier christology we ask, what is the potential payoff, if any, of the *extra* for christology today? To answer this we will look at the reappearance of the *extra* in twentieth century theology and its occasional appearances in the 21st century. Here we will seek to go beyond the polemics, although the polemics will likely never be wholly extracted from the doctrine, and attempt to recover positive uses of the *extra* in christology for our own time.

CHAPTER 3:

CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA ON THE TRANSCENDENCE

OF THE INCARNATE SON

Having seen the ways in which the *extra* functioned in the polemical context of the sixteenth century and the ways in which the doctrine largely fell out of favor by the end of the nineteenth century, we now begin the task of expounding some examples of the *extra* and its uses prior to the post-Reformation period. We begin with a representative from the patristic period, Cyril of Alexandria (c. 370–444). Cyril is one of the most revered fathers of the church, but this widespread reverence perhaps has been matched by an equal amount of scorn heaped upon him by his opponents both in his lifetime and ever since. It is no surprise that a man like Cyril—whose works are voluminous, who held one of the most prominent sees in the ancient church, and who vigorously defended his theological positions against his opponents—would be a divisive figure. Traditionally the church has viewed him as the theologian who clearly articulated and placed an authoritative stamp on ancient orthodox doctrine. Yet even in his own time, and especially since the Enlightenment, some have viewed Cyril as a theological bully who not only deliberately misread his opponents but was even willing to use violence to advance his agenda.[1] On the whole, however, recent

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[1] For an example of opposition to Cyril in his own time, see the disputed letter attributed to Theodoret of Cyrus that celebrates Cyril's death (*Ep.* 180, in PG 83:1489–1492; NPNF(2) 3:346–47). For examples of Enlightenment negative opinion of Cyril, see, *e.g.*, John Toland, *Tetradymus*, bk 3: *Hypatia: or, the History of a Most beautiful, most vertuous, most learned, and every way accomplished Lady; Who Was torn to Pieces by the Clergy of Alexandria, to gratify the Pride, Emulation, and Cruelty of their Archbishop, commonly but undeservedly stiled St. Cyril* (London: J. Brotherton and W. Meadows, 1720); Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, 12 vols., New ed. (Basil: J. J. Tourneisen, 1788), 8:229–36 (ch. 47); and, albeit more restrained, I. A. Dorner, *History of the Development of the Doctrine of the Person of Christ*, 5 vols., trans. W. L. Alexander and D. W. Simons (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1872–1882), 3:51, 57, 63.

scholarship has sought to understand Cyril in his social, cultural, and theological context and

has largely rescued him from the negative caricature that had long followed him.[2]

In Cyril's extensive corpus,[3] particularly in those works after the start of the

Nestorian controversy in 428, we find frequent references to the continuing transcendence of

the Son even as incarnate. Given the vast number of places where Cyril speaks in this way, it

is no wonder that scholars have noted Cyril's belief in the incarnate Son's continued

transcendence.[4] While significant work has been done on the logic of Cyril's christology and

how the Son of God can be said to suffer in the flesh and yet remain impassible as God,[5]

scant attention has been given to the way in which Cyril speaks of the Son's continued

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[2] *e.g.*, John A. McGuckin, *St. Cyril of Alexandria and the Christological Controversy* (Leiden: Brill, 1994; repr., Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2004); idem, "Cyril of Alexandria: Bishop and Pastor," in *The Theology of St Cyril of Alexandria*, eds. Thomas G. Weinandy and Daniel A. Keating (London: T&T Clark, 2003), 205–236; Susan Wessel, *Cyril of Alexandria and the Nestorian Controversy: The Making of a Saint and of a Heretic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Frances M. Young, with Andrew Teal, *From Nicaea to Chalcedon: A Guide to the Literature and its Background*, 2d ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 298–322.

[3] See CPG 3:1–57; Johannes Quasten, *Patrology* (Utrecht and Antwerp: Spectrum, 1960), 3:119–35.

[4] McGuckin, *St. Cyril*, 218, 220; Steven A. McKinion, *Words, Imagery, and the Mystery of Christ: A Reconstruction of Cyril of Alexandria's Christology* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 122; Thomas G. Weinandy, "Cyril and the Mystery of the Incarnation," in *The Theology of St Cyril of Alexandria*, 27–28, 41–43, 46–54.

[5] Jacques Liébaert, *La doctrine christologique de Saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie avant la querelle nestorienne* (Lille: Facultés Catholiques, 1951); R. V. Sellers, *Two Ancient Christologies* (London: SPCK, 1954), 80–106; G. Jouassard, "'Impassibilité' du Logos et 'impassibilité' de l'ame humaine chez Saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie," *RSR* 45 (1957): 209–24; Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 4 vols., 2d rev. ed., trans. John Bowden (London: Mowbrays, 1975), 1:473–83; R. A. Norris, "Christological Models in Cyril of Alexandria," *StPatr* 13/2 (1975): 255–68; Ruth M. Siddals, "Logic and Christology in Cyril of Alexandria" (Ph. D. diss., University of Cambridge, 1984); idem, "Oneness and Difference in the Christology of Cyril of Alexandria," *StPatr* 18/1 (1985): 207–11; Thomas G. Weinandy, *Does God Change? The Word's Becoming in the Incarnation* (Still River, MA: St. Bede's, 1985), 46–58; Siddals, "Logic and Christology in Cyril of Alexandria," *JThS* (NS) 38/2 (1987): 341–67; Lars Koen, *The Saving Passion: Incarnational and Soteriological Thought in Cyril of Alexandria's Commentary on the Gospel according to John* (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1991), 70–83, 95–105; Joseph M. Hallman, "The Seed of Fire: Divine Suffering in the Christology of Cyril of Alexandria and Nestorius of Constantinople," *JEarlyC* 5/3 (1997): 369–91; John J. O'Keefe, "Impassible Suffering? Divine Passion and Fifth-Century Christology," *TS* 58 (1997): 39–60; idem, "Kenosis or Impassibility: Cyril of Alexandria and Theodoret of Cyrus on the Problem of Divine Pathos," *StPatr* 32 (1997): 358–65; Bernard Meunier, *Le Christ de Cyrille d'Alexandrie: l'humanité, le salut et la question monophysite* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1997); Weinandy, "Cyril and the Mystery of the Incarnation," 23–54; Paul L. Gavrilyuk, *The Suffering of the Impassible God: The Dialectics of Patristic Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 135–71; Hans van Loon, *The Dyophysite Christology of Cyril of Alexandria* (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

transcendence and, more specifically, what Cyril means by speaking in this way and how this manner of speaking functions in his christology.

In this chapter, I will focus on the ways in which Cyril expresses the incarnate Son's continued transcendence and I will discuss the meaning and function of these ways of speaking. Ultimately, we will see that, for Cyril, the transcendence of the Son even while incarnate serves as a tool to defend the complete deity of the Son and the Son's continued personal divine activity even while incarnate. Additionally, the existence of the Son beyond his human nature complements Cyril's view of the Son's kenosis as an economic condescension and also allows Cyril to speak of the incarnate Son in dynamic and even developmental terms.

I. Situating Cyril's Christology: Background and Context

A. Cyril and His Context[6]

Cyril became bishop of Alexandria in 412, succeeding his uncle Theophilus to the throne. Controversy would surround him from the outset of his episcopacy. Rioting broke out among supporters of his rival candidate, Timothy, when Cyril was consecrated bishop. Holding one of the most powerful sees in the ancient world, and being adept at political maneuvers and theological debates, Cyril would solidify himself as one of the most influential bishops in the history of the church. As for influences upon Cyril himself, aside from the Bible, his greatest influence was his fourth-century predecessor in Alexandria, Athanasius. Indeed, Cyril's early

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[6] An important source on Cyril's life written by one of his contemporaries is Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History*, ed. A. C. Zenos, in NPNF(2) 2:1–178. Brief sketches of Cyril's life and work are available in several sources, most notably Wickham, xi–xliii, and Norman Russell, *Cyril of Alexandria* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 3–63. More extensive treatments include McGuckin, *St. Cyril*, 1–125, and esp. Wessel, *Cyril of Alexandria*, 15–180, 255–95.

work, the *Thesaurus*, is a digest of Athanasius's *Orations against the Arians*.[7] In conducting

his long theological battle against Nestorius and his supporters, Cyril viewed himself as

continuing the defense of orthodoxy that began with Athanasius.[8]

Prior to the beginning of the Nestorian controversy in 428, Cyril's rule in Alexandria

was by no means free from turmoil. Alexandrian Christians were in almost constant conflict

with both Jews and pagans in the city, and Cyril was never far removed from the conflicts.

While this has led many to villainize Cyril,[9] John McGuckin has been at the forefront of

recent attempts to overturn the modern scholarly bias. With respect to the social upheaval in

Cyril's Alexandria, McGuckin has shown that Alexandria was a "liturgical axis" in the

ancient world in which Christians were still defining their identity over against other

religious worldviews and systems. Cyril could not take Christian "cultic boundaries" for

granted. Rather, he sought to establish such Christian identity markers and boundaries in a

city with a long history of religious upheaval.[10]

In addition to these pastoral efforts to delineate Christian religious boundaries, Cyril's

scholarly endeavors prior to the Nestorian controversy were largely focused on writing

biblical commentaries. As Norman Russell has speculated, had it not been for the Nestorian

controversy, Cyril may have been remembered as a biblical commentator.[11]

[7] McGuckin, *St. Cyril*, 1; Liébaert, *La doctrine christologique*, 159–69; Wickham, xv.

[8] For more on the influences upon Cyril, see McKinion, *Words*, 16–19.

[9] See n1 above.

[10] McGuckin, "Cyril of Alexandria: Bishop and Pastor," 222–227; idem, "The Influence of the Isis Cult on St. Cyril of Alexandria's Christology," *StPatr* 24 (1993): 291–99.

[11] Russell, *Cyril of Alexandria*, 16. Cyril wrote commentaries (many extant only in fragments) on the Pentateuch, the Psalms, Isaiah, the Minor Prophets, Kings, Proverbs, Song of Songs, Job, Jeremiah, Baruch, Ezekiel, Daniel, Matthew, Luke, John, Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Hebrews, and Acts (CPG 3:1–9).

B. Nestorius and the Nestorian Controversy[12]

It is, however, the conflict with Nestorius of Constantinople (c. 386–c. 451) that has defined Cyril's theological legacy. This is not surprising since nearly all of his works after 428 are related to the christological issues that arose in the wake of the bishop of Constantinople's teaching.

At the outset, it is important to note that Nestorius did not develop his christology *ex nihilo*. Instead, he worked within a christological tradition that took as its methodological starting point the full humanity of Jesus Christ.[13] Back of this christology was an understanding of soteriology in terms of human progress from mortality to perfection that emphasized Jesus' human life as that which the Christian must emulate or imitate.[14] Nestorius's soteriological and christological tradition typically has been labeled "Antiochene" and set against the opposing "Alexandrian school" that Cyril represented. Since at least the work of Aloys Grillmeier in the mid-twentieth century, patristics scholars have grown increasingly suspicious of these "school" labels. It is now widely agreed that such labels are at best only shorthand references indicating general christological tendencies, especially given the diversity of views and overlapping positions of the individuals in each tradition.[15]

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[12] For introductory treatments of the controversy, see Young, *From Nicaea to Chalcedon*, 288–98, 313–15; McGuckin, *St. Cyril*, 20–125; Russell, *Cyril of Alexandria*, 31–58.

[13] Russell, *Cyril of Alexandria*, 39–40. For a more detailed discussion of this tradition, see Paul B. Clayton, Jr., *The Christology of Theodoret of Cyrus: Antiochene Christology from the Council of Ephesus (431) to the Council of Chalcedon (451)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 53–74.

[14] Donald Fairbairn, *Grace and Christology in the Early Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 17–21, 28; cf. Wessel, *Cyril of Alexandria*, 2–3.

[15] Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 1:357, 367; Norris, "Christological Models," 255–68; Young, *From Nicaea to Chalcedon*, 242; O'Keefe, "Impassible Suffering," 59; idem, "Kenosis or Impassibility?", 358–59, 364–65; Gavrilyuk, *Suffering*, 137–39; Daniel A. Keating, *The Appropriation of Divine Life in Cyril of*

Nestorius was consecrated bishop of Constantinople in 428 and almost immediately his fervent preaching and determination to destroy heresies in the church began to stir up controversy. In part arising from a conflict with the emperor's sister Pulcheria, Nestorius began to attack the use of the term *Theotokos* ("God-bearer"; or, "mother of God"), a title for the Virgin Mary. When asked to declare which title was proper, either *Theotokos* or *anthropotokos* ("Man-bearer"), Nestorius replied that neither was appropriate, and offered instead the title *Christotokos* ("Christ-bearer"). Proclus, bishop of Cyzicus, opposed Nestorius's position and insisted on the fact that since Mary gave birth to Christ, who is both God and man, the term *Theotokos* must be affirmed. Nestorius's reply came in a series of lectures in 429, in which he argued that the confession that Mary was *Theotokos* was heretical, since the term was not found in Scripture and since God could not be said to have been born from a human being.[16]

Nestorius's lectures against the *Theotokos* started an international doctrinal clash that would result in several rival councils including the Council of Ephesus (431), which officially denounced Nestorius and his teaching. In many ways, the *Theotokos* issue revealed divergent ways of conceptualizing the unity of the person of Christ as well as divergent ways of ascribing biblical terms to the person of Christ. Nestorius, despite his well-known lack of clarity, taught that the Christian perceives one Christ with the eyes of faith,[17] but, as Frances Young points out, he "could not avoid talk of a human *prosōpon* and a divine *prosōpon*." This left him open to the charge of teaching a "'double-Christ', two persons acting

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Alexandria (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 5–6; Donald Fairbairn, "Patristic Exegesis and Theology: The Cart and the Horse," *WThJ* 69/1 (2007): 1–19.

[16] Russell, *Cyril of Alexandria*, 31–34.

[17] McGuckin, *St. Cyril*, 160.

independently."[18] As for the biblical statements concerning Jesus Christ, Nestorius again left himself open to the charge of teaching two persons by strictly attributing some biblical titles and predicates to the man Jesus, others to the divine nature, while still others (such as the title "Christ") to the union.[19]

C. An Overview of Cyril's Christology

By 429 news of Nestorius's teaching had spread to Alexandria. Cyril first addressed the *Theotokos* issue and defended the use of this title in his paschal letter of that year, though not mentioning Nestorius by name.[20] Soon thereafter, Cyril entered into the fray openly by way of letter, including correspondence with Nestorius himself.[21] Thereafter the question of how to conceive of the person of Christ, God incarnate, would be the theme of Cyril's career. Overall, as Lionel Wickham has put it, the Nestorian controversy and Cyril's participation in it moved the church "to produce a decision" regarding precisely what it meant and how it was that Christ was "God in person humanly."[22]

As for Cyril's christology, I can only mention a few broad features here.[23] Cyril's contribution was, as Wickham has indicated, mostly negative, marking off what must not be said of Christ, and repeating the profound mystery that the incarnation is "the descent of the

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[18] Young, *From Nicaea to Chalcedon*, 294–95. For more on the terminological issues, see McGuckin, *St. Cyril*, 138–51.

[19] Young, *From Nicaea to Chalcedon*, 295. For further discussion with examples, see McGuckin, *St. Cyril*, 152–58.

[20] Russell, *Cyril of Alexandria*, 35.

[21] See *Ep.* 1 through 7.

[22] Wickham, xxxii.

[23] For brief introductions to Cyril's christology, see Young, *From Nicaea to Chalcedon*, 313–19; John A. McGuckin, introduction to *On the Unity of Christ*, by Cyril of Alexandria, trans. J. A. McGuckin (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1995), 32–47. For more extensive treatments, see the works cited in nn4–5 above.

eternal Word of God into human conditions and limitations in order radically to alter and restore them, without annihilating them."[24] Acknowledging the positive contribution of Cyril, we might add, drawing on the study of Steven McKinion, that Cyril's contribution was to provide terms, analogies, and images not as technical models of the incarnation, but as appropriate ways of clarifying and confirming the central and ultimately ineffable Christian confession that the Word became flesh.[25]

For a single-statement summary of Cyril's christology we could hardly do better than the Latin title of one of Cyril's most significant later works: *Quod unus sit Christus*, that Christ is one. Cyril's is what may be called a single-subject christology, and he presented this position over against what he saw as the two-subject christology of Nestorius and his Antiochene tradition. Hence Cyril insists upon the union (ἕνωσις) of the divine Logos with true human nature. As we saw in the case of Nestorius, in Cyril there were also soteriological assumptions undergirding his christology. McGuckin summarizes:

> [Cyril] points to the seamless union of God and man in the single divine person of Jesus, truly God and man at one and the same time, founded on the single subjectivity of Christ, as not merely a sacrament [that is, a sign] of the presence of God among us, but a sacrament of how our own human lives are destined to be drawn into his divine life, and transformed in a similar manner.[26]

For Cyril the union of God the Son with humanity is both the essence of the incarnation and the goal of the incarnation. To put it in terms of what was by Cyril's time already a

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[24] Wickham, xxxii–xxxiii.

[25] McKinion, *Words*, 23, 41, 44, 47.

[26] McGuckin, introduction to *On the Unity of Christ*, 35; cf. Frances M. Young, "A Reconsideration of Alexandrian Christology," *JEH* 22 (1971): 103–104.

traditional soteriological statement, the Word "was made man in order that we might be made god."[27]

II. The Transcendence of the Son Even as Incarnate

Having outlined Cyril's background, context, and christology, we can now look in more detail at the specific way in which he speaks of the Son's continued transcendence even as incarnate. In Cyril's writings we can identify two closely related ways of speaking of the incarnate Son's continued transcendence. First, the more explicit statements can be classified as *extra carnem* statements in which the incarnate Son's personal existence beyond his human nature is affirmed and in which he is said to continue to exercise his divine powers and prerogatives. These explicit *extra carnem* statements appear less frequently than the second class of statements, those which may be called qualification statements. In this second mode of speaking, Cyril affirms the Son's genuine humanity (such as his suffering or death) but then immediately qualifies this affirmation by asserting that the Son remains what he was—namely, that he remains fully divine and retains his divine attributes (such as impassibility or immortality).[28] These qualification statements sometimes feature spatial or locative terminology, such as those instances where Cyril says that the Son descends from heaven while yet remaining or abiding with his Father.

These two classes of speaking of the incarnate Son's transcendence are not airtight categories and, it should be noted, are not explicitly delineated by Cyril himself. In fact, this classification is neater than Cyril's thought in the sense that Cyril's work is not a

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[27] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione*, in Contra Gentes *and* De Incarnatione, ed. Robert W. Thomson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), sec. 54; cf. *C. Nest.*, 3.2 (ACO I.i.6, p. 59.10–14); Pusey (1881), 93.

[28] Gavrilyuk, *Suffering*, 159, 161, categorizes these kinds of pairings in Cyril's writings as "tandem statements."

systematized body of theology. At times it is difficult to distinguish the *extra carnem*

statements and the qualification statements from one another, but this fact does not undercut

the usefulness or the general accuracy of this way of classifying his statements. First, the

extra carnem statements have a certain specificity and explicitness regarding the Son's

personal activity beyond the flesh that are not found in the qualification statements, and,

second, this way of classification is helpful as a heuristic device to assist us in understanding

Cyril's christology, provided that we acknowledge it as such and are careful not to press

Cyril's writings into a procrustean bed of our own devising.

Statements regarding the continued transcendence of the incarnate Son are not limited

to Cyril's works written during the Nestorian controversy. While the frequency of such

statements increases in works after 428, the conflict with Nestorius does not cause Cyril to

begin speaking in this manner. Instead, it is Cyril's engagement with the biblical text, along

with his inheritance of earlier christology, that leads him to speak of the Son in this way. The

conflict with Nestorius, then, is an occasion in which the transcendence of the incarnate Son

requires stronger emphasis. In the examples that follow, I will attempt to draw out the

distinctive features of these statements in more detail. I will also expand on the context in

which these modes of speaking appear, which will assist us in identifying the function that

the concept of the incarnate Son's transcendence has in Cyril's christology. After examining

a few sources that are generally acknowledged to have been written prior to 428, I will

present some examples from selected later works.

A. Early Festal Letters and Commentaries

As shown in chapter one, the transcendence of the incarnate Son, or his *extra carnem*

existence, was not a concept that originated with Cyril. Particularly among Alexandrian

theologians—though certainly not limited to these writers—there was an established tradition of speaking of the Son in this manner. What is more, Cyril spoke in this way prior to the controversy over Nestorius's views. This is evident from a few examples that pre-date the Nestorian controversy.

Cyril's *Festal Letter* 8, written in 420, confronts an unnamed christological error with an extended discussion of the incarnation.[29] In the context of defending the unity of Jesus Christ and his possession of human and divine attributes, Cyril states that we must not "destroy" these "dissimilar" attributes by thinking that the Word was changed into flesh. Rather, we must affirm Jesus' two complete natures: "the existence (τὸ ὑπάρχειν) as the unique radiance of the Father (τὸ ἀπαύγασμα τοῦ Πατρὸς) on the one hand, while yet as something other, that which is carnal, from earth, or fully man."[30] Here Cyril echoes the present tense of Hebrews 1:3 where the Son is said to "be the radiance" (ὢν ἀπαύγασμα)[31] of the glory of God, and thus he indicates that the Son continues to sustain the same relationship to the Father even as incarnate. According to our taxonomy of Cyrilline transcendence statements, this example may be classified as a qualification statement, though in this case the affirmation of the Son's transcendence precedes the affirmation of the Son's true humanity.

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[29] On this letter, see John J. O'Keefe, introduction to *Festal Letters 1–12*, by Cyril of Alexandria, trans. Philip J. Amidon, ed. J. J. O'Keefe (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2009), 28–29.

[30] *Hom. Pasch.* 8.5 (PG 77:569C–D); *Festal Letters 1–12*, 149.

[31] Heb. 1:3 (NA[27])

Two additional examples from this early period are found in Cyril's *Commentary on the Twelve Prophets*[32] in his exposition of Habakkuk 3:3 ("his virtue covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise"). The juxtaposition of the heavens and the earth in this text leads Cyril to a christological exposition focusing on the heavenly Logos who appeared on earth as a human being:

> While the only-begotten Word of God became a mercy seat through faith to people on earth when he appeared like us even in the form of a slave, that is, a human being, he somehow seemed for this reason to be inferior to the holy angels themselves and to rank after them in importance, but as God he was Most High.[33]

Similarly, in a subsequent comment on the same verse, Cyril clarifies the Son's continued transcendence, this time using spatial terminology: "So even if he became a mercy seat by descending (κατηγμένος) to human nature on account of us and for us, he is no less God and above (ὑπὲρ) all creation."[34] Here we see a statement of descent paired with a qualifying statement of transcendence. Such a pairing is a typical form of Cyrilline expression that will be visible in later writings.

In his *Commentary on Isaiah*[35] we find similar assertions. Commenting on the name Emmanuel ("God with us") in Isaiah 7:14, he says that "when the only-begotten Word of God appeared like us, then also he became 'with us.' For the one above (ὑπὲρ) all creation became like us."[36] Additionally, a notable affirmation of the incarnate Son's transcendence that could be classified as an *extra carnem* statement is found in a comment on the same text.

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[32] On the date and context of Cyril's commentary, see Robert C. Hill, introduction to *Commentary on the Twelve Prophets*, by Cyril of Alexandria, 2 vols., trans. Robert C. Hill (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2007–2008), 1:3–5.

[33] *In XII proph.*, Hab. 3:3 (Pusey [1868], 2:128); *Commentary on the Twelve Prophets*, 2:374.

[34] *In XII proph.*, Hab. 3:3 (Pusey [1868], 2:129); *Commentary on the Twelve Prophets*, 2:374.

[35] On the date of this commentary, see Russell, *Cyril of Alexandria*, 70.

[36] *In Is.* 7:14–16 (PG 70:204D–205A); Russell, *Cyril of Alexandria*, 79.

Here we have an explicit affirmation that the Son retains his divine prerogatives even as

incarnate:

> For even though he was born according to the flesh through the Holy Virgin, being
> God by nature and the Word brought forth from God, he was holy as God both from
> the womb and before it, or rather before all ages, his own prerogatives not being lost
> on account of the humanity (τῶν ἰδίων πλεονεκτημάτων οὐκ ἀπολισθήσας διὰ τὸ
> ἀνθρώπινων).[37]

Cyril's use of the phrase τῶν ἰδίων πλεονεκτημάτων is significant since with it he highlights

the fact that it is not merely the case that the incarnate Logos continues to be fully God, but

that there are continued personal (ἴδιος) prerogatives or privileges (πλεονεκτήματα) of the

Logos that are not abandoned in his incarnation and so, by implication, transcend the

limitations of his human nature. Precisely what these privileges are is not specified here, but

we will see Cyril articulate some of the Son's personal privileges in later examples of *extra

carnem* statements.

We find two final examples in Cyril's *Commentary on John*.[38] One of the texts that

Cyril cites most often in his writings, John 1:14, is the occasion for a qualification statement.

Cyril writes: "even though the Evangelist says that 'the Word became flesh,' he strongly

affirms that he was not overcome by the infirmities of the flesh and that he did not fall from

his original strength and glory when he put on our weak and inglorious body."[39] Here again

Cyril qualifies a strong—and in this case explicitly biblical—assertion of the incarnate

Word's humanity with an affirmation of the Word's continued possession of his divine

power and glory. In this example we also see a spatial metaphor in the qualification. That is,

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[37] *In Is.* 7:14–16 (PG 70:205C); Russell, *Cyril of Alexandria*, 80.

[38] On the date of this commentary, see Lois M. Farag, *St. Cyril of Alexandria, A New Testament Exegete: His Commentary on the Gospel of John* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2007), 60–67.

[39] *In Io.*, 1:14 (Pusey [1872], 1:142).

the Word "did not fall" (οὐδὲ … ἀποπεσεῖν) from power and glory even though he took our "infirmities" (or, weaknesses) (ἀσθενείαις) upon himself.[40]

Cyril returns to an affirmation of the Son's divine operations in the *extra carnem* statement found in his comment on John 6:57. Confronting a subordinationist interpretation of Jesus' statement, "I live by the Father," Cyril reminds his readers that such statements should be ascribed to the Son's incarnation according to the economy of redemption, but that this in no way impinges on the Son's equality with the Father. Indeed, the Son "has humbled himself being made man" and "does not reject the limitation pertaining to slaves, but he will not be excluded (πλὴν οὐκ ἔξω κείσεται) from doing all things with his Father."[41] Cyril here asserts that the incarnate Son continues to do the works of the Father and that, although in the form of a servant, the Son is not excluded from full participation in the activity of the Godhead.

B. Cyril's Works after 428

Having introduced the ways in which Cyril speaks of the incarnate Son's transcendence by noting a few examples from his early works, we now turn to the post-428 period in which Cyril's life and work was dedicated almost entirely to confronting the views of Nestorius and his supporters. In this period, we see Cyril referring more frequently to the incarnate Son's transcendence.

1. *Epistulae*

In Cyril's letters from this period there are numerous occasions where he employs one of the two modes of speaking of the incarnate Son's transcendence. One representative example of

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[40] *In Io.*, 1:14 (Pusey [1872], 1:142); cf. Matt. 8:17 (NA[27]).

[41] *In Io.*, 6:57 (Pusey [1872], 1:538).

a qualification statement comes from his second letter to Nestorius (*Ep.* 4), dating from

January or February 430:

> Scripture, after all, has not asserted that the Word united the person (πρόσωπον) of a man to himself but that he has become flesh. But the Word's "becoming flesh" is just the fact that he shared flesh and blood like us, made our body his own and issued as man from woman without abandoning (ὀυκ ἀποβεβληκώς) his being God and his being begotten of God the Father but, in the assumption of flesh, remained what he was (μεμενηκὼς ὅπερ ἦν).[42]

Here we see a twofold qualification. After asserting that the Word "shared flesh and blood

like us, made our body his own and issued as man from woman," Cyril reminds us that this

was done "without abandoning" (or, "without having thrown aside"[43]) his deity. This is then

paralleled by the statement that even "in the assumption of flesh" the Word "remained what

he was."

As the year progressed, the conflict with Nestorius intensified and led to a council at

Rome in August that called for Nestorius to recant. In November, Cyril wrote to Nestorius

(*Ep.* 17) again. In this letter, in the midst of Cyril's affirmation of the human birth of Christ

we find a series of affirmations of the continued transcendence of the Word. For instance,

Cyril writes that although the Word "took flesh of the holy Virgin" he did so "not

abandoning what he was (οὐκ ὂπερ ἦν ἀποβεβληκώς), but even though he was born in the

assumption of flesh and blood, even so he remained what he was (μεμενηκὼς ὅπερ ἦν), God

manifestly in nature and truth."[44] This qualification statement, similar to the previous

example from *Ep.* 4, could be construed as merely an assertion of the complete deity of the

incarnate Word. In the phrases that immediately follow, however, Cyril employs an explicit

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[42] *Ep.* 4.7 (Wickham).

[43] So John I. McEnerney, trans. *St. Cyril of Alexandria: Letters 1–50* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1987), 41.

[44] *Ep.* 17.3 (Wickham); McEnerney, *Letters 1–50*, 83.

extra carnem statement that indicates there is more in view here—namely, the idea that the incarnate Word is not limited to human existence but continues to exercise his divine powers beyond his human nature:

> We declare that the flesh was not changed into the nature of Godhead and that neither was the inexpressible nature of God the Word converted into the nature of flesh. He is, indeed, utterly unchangeable and immutable ever remaining the same, according to the Scriptures (ἄτρεπτος γάρ ἐστι καὶ ἀναλλοίωτος παντελῶς ὁ αὐτὸς ἀεὶ μένων κατὰ τὰς γραφάς); even when a baby seen in swaddling clothes at the bosom of the Virgin who bore him, he still filled the whole creation as God and was co-regent with the one who begot him (πᾶσαν ἐπλήρου τὴν κτίσιν ὡς θεὸς καὶ σύνεδρος ἦν τῷ γεγεννηκότι)—for deity is measureless, sizeless and admits of no bounds.[45]

Using vivid imagery from the birth narratives of the gospels, Cyril emphasizes the persistent divine attributes of the Word, specifically his immutability and immensity. This is not a statement that the divine nature transcends the human nature but that it is specifically the person of the Logos who continues to fill "the whole creation" and is "co-regent" with his Father. That the Logos's personal activity is in view is further confirmed later in the same letter where Cyril writes that the "Word of God . . . personally (καθ' ὑπόστασιν) united with flesh is God over the whole world and rules over all."[46]

Regarding the biblical support for the Word's continued personal transcendence, it appears that Cyril has several texts in view. First, when he writes in *Ep.* 17.3 that "according to the Scriptures" God the Word remains "immutable" (ἀναλλοίωτος) it is likely that Cyril is borrowing this term from Malachi 3:6 (LXX), a *locus classicus* for divine immutability. This text perhaps supports Cyril's assertion of the immutability of the Word, but what about the personal transcendence of the Word while incarnate? On this point, Cyril appears to draw on at least four texts which speak of the Son as descending "from heaven" or being "from

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[45] *Ep.* 17.3 (Wickham); McEnerney, *Letters 1–50*, 83.

[46] *Ep.* 17.5 (Wickham); McEnerney, *Letters 1–50*, 84–85.

above": John 3:13, 3:31, 8:23, and 1 Corinthians 15:47–49. In another letter (*Ep*. 39),

citations of John 3:13 and 1 Corinthians 15:47 immediately precede Cyril's statement that

"the one who is from above and came down from heaven" (ὁ ἄνωθεν και ἐξ οὐρανοῦ

καταφοιτήσας) remains what he was.[47] It seems that Cyril understands something like "from-

above-ness" or "from-heaven-ness" to be a personal property of the Son that cannot be

relinquished even when he becomes incarnate. This is evident in *Ep.* 41 where Cyril quotes

John 8:23 and 3:13 and then draws on 1 Corinthians 15:47–49 when he writes that "even

after he [the Word] was made flesh, that is, perfect man, he was not of the earth or of dust as

we are, but heavenly and above the world."[48] Thus, according to Cyril, when Jesus says that

the Son of Man descended "from heaven" (John 3:13) and when Paul writes that the "second

man" is "from heaven" (1 Cor. 15:47) this heavenliness or from-above-ness is not a stage in

the Son's existence prior to his incarnation, but a personal property of the Son that he retains

even when he takes human nature upon himself. The Son adds to himself human nature and

all its physicality, infirmities, and sufferings (sin excepted), but the Son's personal

heavenliness and transcendence endures.

Lastly, Cyril's letter "On the Creed" (*Ep*. 55) highlights a few additional aspects of

his view of the incarnate Son's transcendence. This letter was written after Nestorius's views

had been condemned and peace with many of the Eastern bishops had been restored, and so

functioned as one of Cyril's efforts to consolidate the recent reunion.[49] While explaining the

statement in the Nicene creed that, for human salvation, the Son "came down"

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[47] *Ep*. 39.8 (ACO I.i.4, p. 18.21); McEnerney, *Letters 1–50*, 150. For ὁ ἄνωθεν, see John 3:31 (NA[27]).

[48] *Ep*. 41.16; McEnerney, *Letters 1–50*, 177.

[49] See *Ep*. 39, what is known as the "Formula of Reunion." On the historical context, see McGuckin, *St. Cyril*, 107–118.

(κατελθόντα),[50] Cyril discusses how it is that the divine Son can be said to come down or descend from heaven. Several biblical texts also use these descent terms[51] and Cyril notes the anthropomorphic nature of the biblical and creedal language at this point: "the holy Scriptures habitually use words suited to us to reveal what surpasses comprehension." So the descent of the Son from heaven should be understood not in terms of a movement from one location to another, but rather as the Son "who transcends all in nature and glory, who descended for us—meaning that he voluntarily took on our likeness and dawned with flesh upon the world."[52] Turning from the descent terminology to the matter of the Word's enduring transcendence, Cyril writes:

> There is therefore one Lord Jesus Christ, the very only-begotten Word of the Father, become man without departure from being what he was. For even in manhood he has remained God, even in slave's form master, even in human self-emptying possessor of full deity, even in fleshly weakness Lord of the powers, and even within the measure of manhood having as his own that which is above all creation. What he was before the flesh, he has, being incapable of losing it, for he was God, true Son, only-begotten, light, life and power.[53]

Here we see terms very similar to what we have observed in previous letters. The Word "remained" what he was, but, additionally, Cyril says that the Word "even within the measure of manhood" (καὶ ἐν τοῖς τῆς ἀνθρωπότητος μέτροις) possessed that which is "above all creation." Thus he affirms here in stark, paradoxical terms what he has stated in

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[50] "The Nicaeno-Constantinopolitan Creed," in Schaff, 2:57.

[51] *e.g.* John 16:28; 8:23, 42; 3:31.

[52] *Ep.* 55.13 (Wickham); John I. McEnerney, trans. *St. Cyril of Alexandria: Letters 51–110* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1987), 22–23.

[53] *Ep.* 55.14 (Wickham); McEnerney, *Letters 51–110*, 23; cf. *Ep.* 55.24.

previous letters: the Word even while existing as fully human continued to possess his personal (ἴδιος) transcendent powers and maintained his *extra carnem* existence.[54]

2. *Libri v contra Nestorium*

Composed in 430, Cyril's *Five Tomes Against Nestorius* was a response to several lectures that Nestorius had delivered about one year earlier. Cyril had received a copy of these lectures from his own supporters in Constantinople.[55] This work is particularly important because Cyril cites Nestorius and responds directly to his views. Thus *Against Nestorius* is a crucial testimony to Cyril's view of the incarnate Son's transcendence and the way in which this doctrine functions in Cyril's christology and polemics. Several examples of qualification statements and a few *extra carnem* statements appear in this work.

Against Nestorius reminds us that the concept of the Son's transcendence even as incarnate was not an idea unique to Cyril or even to those who shared his christological tradition. Indeed, Nestorius himself is willing at times to speak of the Son's transcendence using *extra carnem* statements. For example, note the exchange between Nestorius and Cyril regarding the infant Jesus, in which Cyril accuses Nestorius of inconsistency for, on the one hand, employing a kind of *extra carnem* statement about the infant Jesus upholding the universe and, on the other hand, refusing to confess that Mary is *Theotokos*. Cyril quotes Nestorius as affirming that the infant who was bound by swaddling clothes is the one who by his own "swaddling clothes … binds the instability of the creation."[56] Cyril agrees with this statement and presses the point that if Nestorius truly believes this, then he cannot at the

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[54] Additional qualification and *extra carnem* statements appear elsewhere Cyril's letters. In addition to those discussed here, see, *e.g.*, *Ep.* 1.35, 39; 45.5, 9; 46.2 (Wickham).

[55] Russell, *Cyril of Alexandria*, 130–31.

[56] Quoted in *C. Nest.*, 1.4 (ACO I.i.6, p. 22.30–31); Pusey (1881), 17.

same time reject the *Theotokos*: "Surely if the infant is the hidden Son and creator of all, and has been born of the holy Virgin, have you not confessed with us even against your will that she is Mother of God?"[57]

Anticipating Nestorius's reply that there is not a union, but a conjunction (συνάφεια) between the divine and human in Jesus, Cyril enters into an argument that such a view does not sufficiently distinguish Jesus from others who have the Spirit of God dwelling in them, such as Old Testament prophets and, in fact, all Christians.[58] Here Cyril appeals to Colossians 2:9, where it is said that in Jesus Christ "all the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily." While this text may at first seem to counter the affirmation that the Son continues to have existence beyond the flesh in the case of the incarnation, Cyril does not read the text in this manner. Rather, he focuses on the statement "dwells bodily" as indicating the "true and personal" (ἀληθινὴν τε και καθ᾽ ὑπόστασιν), and not "accidental" (σχετικὴν), union of the Son of God with human nature. As for the Godhead dwelling bodily, this cannot mean a corporeal restriction of the Word within the confines of physicality, since "the Word of God is incorporeal" and therefore physical limitations cannot be applied to him. Instead, Paul's statement must be understood as a way of speaking that is accommodated to our human "mind and tongue" so as to communicate to us that the Word was truly and personally united with our humanity.[59]

The issue of language about God arises again when Cyril answers Nestorius's charge that the concept of "sending" cannot properly be applied to God the Word who fills all things. Cyril responds that the terms "sending" and "descent" are applied to God in Scripture

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[57] *C. Nest.*, 1.4 (ACO I.i.6, p. 23.7–9); Pusey (1881), 18.

[58] *C. Nest.*, 1.4–10 (ACO I.i.6, p. 22–32); Pusey (1881), 18–37.

[59] *C. Nest.*, 1.8 (ACO I.i.6, p. 30.34–31.1); Pusey (1881), 35.

and so we are justified in using them, but they are not to be understood as "involving change of place." Instead, Cyril says, "our whole speech about God has been framed humanly (ἀνθρωπίνως), but is understood as befits Him alone."[60] Similarly, when Nestorius objects that it is not fitting to think of the Word of God as having been made "under law" (Gal. 4:4), Cyril responds in part with a characteristically Cyrilline qualification statement: "when he was made flesh then he was made under the law too, for he paid to the collectors the didrachma, although in his own nature he was free as God and Son even when he was made flesh."[61]

This response may indicate an important aspect of Cyril's way of speaking of the Son's transcendence. Specifically, here the context regarding language about God suggests that Cyril's qualification and *extra carnem* statements may be an application of the traditional Alexandrian interpretive method of partitive exegesis—the method of distinguishing between biblical texts that speak of the Word of God with respect to his eternal majesty and those that speak of that same Word of God with respect to the economy of redemption.[62] Thus when Cyril qualifies his statements of the Son's full humanity with a reference to the continued transcendence of the Son he is reiterating that one must remember this double account of Christ. The economy of redemption alone provides an incomplete

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[60] *C. Nest.*, 2.3 (ACO I.i.6, p. 38.20– 31); Pusey (1881), 52–53; cf. the similar statement in *C. Nest.*, 3.3 (ACO I.i.6, p. 67.8–22); Pusey (1881), 108.

[61] *C. Nest.*, 2.3 (ACO I.i.6, p. 38.40–41); Pusey (1881), 53. In addition to Gal. 4:4, here Cyril is referring to Jesus' payment of the temple tax in Matt. 17:24–27.

[62] For an early example of this method, see the "Letter of Alexander of Alexandria to Alexander of Thessalonica" (Urkunde 14), in H.-G. Opitz, ed., *Athanasius Werke* (Berlin and Leipzig: de Gruyter, 1934), 3.1.20 (sec. 4). For further discussion (focusing on Athanasius), see John Behr, *The Formation of Christian Theology*, vol. 2, *The Nicene Faith* (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2004), 208–31; James D. Ernest, *The Bible in Athanasius of Alexandria* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 131–51.

picture of the person of Christ, and Cyril regularly points to the complete picture by qualifying economic statements with statements about the Son's enduring glory.

Lastly, we turn to two final examples from *Against Nestorius*. These examples illustrate another principle that we find in Cyril: the Son who is *homoousios* with the Father remained what he is yet "grasped (ἐπελάβετο) in wisdom the likeness with us."[63] This idea of the divine Son grasping humanity (rather than humanity grasping divinity) functions as another background concept that permits Cyril to speak of the *extra carnem* existence of the Son. Because the divine Son is not grasped by the humanity, he continues to exercise his divine powers. For instance, the Son is not contained by his humanity but, even while being "encircled with the thorny crown" and crying out on the cross "my God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" he continues to exercise his divine power and "restrains as God the light of the sun and makes it night in midday" during his crucifixion.[64] In fact, Cyril openly disparages the thought that the Son could be restricted to fleshly existence. As he says, a person is to be "utterly repudiated who attempts to shut up (κατακλείειν) the might of the mystery within the limits of the human nature alone."[65]

3. *Scholia de incarnatione unigeniti*

Another post-428 work is Cyril's *Scholia on the Incarnation of the Only Begotten*, a text that was likely written after the Council of Ephesus of 431. In this treatise, while not directly responding to the works of the recently deposed Nestorius, Cyril supports his understanding of the union of the Logos with humanity through a consideration of some of the biblical titles

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[63] *C. Nest.*, 3.3 (ACO I.i.6, p. 65.29); Pusey (1881), 104–105.

[64] *C. Nest.*, 5.5 (ACO I.i.6, p. 101.31–32); Pusey (1881), 175.

[65] *C. Nest.*, 5.7 (ACO I.i.6, p. 106.2–4); Pusey (1881), 183.

for Jesus as well as several biblical images that Cyril finds helpful for conceptualizing the incarnation.[66] This treatise also provides several examples of *extra carnem* and qualification statements. Here I will discuss only the more explicit statements and will pass over in silence the many qualification statements that are similar to others we have observed elsewhere in Cyril's works.[67]

Early in this treatise, Cyril defends the continued transcendence of the Son by appealing to the same set of texts that we saw him use in his letters: 1 Corinthians 15:47, John 3:13, 3:31, and 8:23. After referring to Hebrews 2:14 and asserting that the Son of God was truly man and participated in flesh and blood like us, Cyril presents the full divinity and continued transcendence of the incarnate Son. Here he leads with the idea of "the man from heaven" (1 Cor. 15:47) and then turns to texts from John:

> Yet, he descended to us, and then was made man, while even so he was the one from on high. John bore witness to this when he said of him: "He who comes from above, is above all" [John 3:31]. And Christ himself said to the Jewish people: "You are from below. I am from on high" [John 8:23]. And again: "I am not of this world" [John 14:16]. Even though as man he is now designated part of this world, even so, as God, he was still above the world. We can recall him saying quite clearly: "No one has ascended into heaven except the one who came down from heaven, the Son of Man" [John 3:13]. And so we say that the Son of Man descended from heaven by means of an economic union whereby the Word endowed the flesh with the radiance of his own glory and divine majesty.[68]

Here Cyril again argues that the "descent" of the Son does not entail either a departure from a place or a relinquishing of his divine nature. Rather, even in his descent the Son remains

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[66] The whole text is extant only in Old Latin, Syriac, and Armenian versions, with fragments in Greek. On the date of the treatise and the extant versions, see Quasten, *Patrology*, 3:128; Marcel Richard, "Le Pape saint Léon le Grand et les 'Scholia de Incarnatione Vnigeniti' de saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie," reprinted in *Opera Minora*, vol. 2 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1977), art. 53, p. 116–28.

[67] See, *e.g.*, *Scholia*, 2 (PG 75:1372C); 4 (PG 75:1373D); 5 (PG 75:1374B–D); 9 (PG 75:1380B); 12 (PG 75:1382B); 17 (PG 75:1392A); 26 (PG 75:1399C); 35 (PG 75:1409D).

[68] *Scholia*, 4 (PG 75:1374A–B); John McGuckin, trans., *Scholia on the Incarnation of the Only Begotten*, in McGuckin, *St. Cyril*, 297–98.

"above all" (John 3:31) and retains the attribute of heavenliness or from-above-ness. To put it another way, instead of being grasped by the human nature (which would reduce his divine glory), the Logos "endows" (*tribuente*) the human nature with the radiance of his divine glory. By this Cyril means that in the economy of redemption the human nature of Christ reflects or partakes in Christ's proper divine majesty, not that the properties of the human nature are lost. As he goes on to explain, even though Christ is in himself the Lord of Glory, by virtue of the economy of redemption—that is, by virtue of his uniting himself with human nature—we may rightly say that he receives glory.[69] In this way the human nature is, in a sense, grasped by the divine Logos in the incarnation and partakes in the Logos's majesty.

Not surprisingly, elsewhere Cyril reiterates that the Son transcends the limits of his human nature. Although the Son partakes of our weaknesses, "in no way did he seem bound by our weaknesses (*nullo enim modo nostris videtur infirmitatibus contineri*) … for he committed no sin" and, while in one sense he did descend to us, "he did not descend from the height of divine majesty for he kept his lofty throne."[70] Thus there is a descent in the sense of a union of the Son with human nature, but no descent in the sense of relinquishing his divine nature and transcendence. Later Cyril expands in more detail on what the incarnate Son's transcendence means, though he confesses that ultimately this truth is ineffable:

> We do not say that the Word became flesh, that is perfect man, as if confined in the limits of the body (*mensura corporis comprehendi*), for that would indeed be the height of stupidity. No we believe that he still continued to fill heaven and earth and the underworld, for in God all things are fulfilled and to him all things are small.[71]

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[69] *Scholia*, 5 (PG 75:1374C); McGuckin, *Scholia*, 298.

[70] *Scholia*, 12 (PG 75:1381C, 1384A); McGuckin, *Scholia*, 303, 305.

[71] *Scholia*, 25 (PG 75:1398B–C); McGuckin, *Scholia*, 320.

From this treatise, then, we see that Cyril is led by reflection upon the biblical text to confess the reality of the incarnate Son's continued transcendence. The divine Son of God, who is personally above all creation and transcends physical limitations, nevertheless descends by uniting true human nature to himself.

4. *Responsiones ad Tiberium diaconum*

Cyril's *Answers to Tiberius the Deacon*, likely written between 431 and 434, is a letter in response to several questions by a Palestinian monk named Tiberius, who was an ally of Cyril during the Nestorian controversy. Tiberius was concerned about strange teachings that were disturbing his community. Though the specifics are not entirely clear, the teachings appear to have included some kind of belief that God had a human, physical form or nature.[72] Although treating similar themes as Cyril's other dogmatic letters, this letter does not directly address the teachings of Nestorius and his supporters. As we will see, Cyril nevertheless has ample reason to insist upon the incarnate Son's continued transcendence.

Since some of the strange teachings in Tiberius's community suggested that God had been transformed into a human being in the incarnation, we find Cyril strongly defending the Son's *extra carnem* existence. For instance, section two was written "against those who say that the Son was with the Father according to the rank (ἀξίαν) of the Godhead when he became man and was on earth, but was no longer with him according to the individual being (ὑπόστασιν)."[73] Cyril then explains that he understands these false teachers to be saying that the Son's "entire filial hypostasis was … emptied out of heaven and the paternal bosom itself." In reply, Cyril says that these teachers have erred, not only in conceiving of the nature

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[72] On the letter and its background, see Wickham, xxviii–xxix. On the text and extant versions, see CPG 3:17–18 (#5232). The extant Greek text is available in Wickham, 140–78.

[73] *Resp. ad Tib.*, 2 (Wickham).

of God in quantitative and spatial terms, but also, more specifically, because they have failed

to understand that the Father can never be without the Son, and vice versa. Thus, literally

speaking, there is no departure of the Son from heaven, for "wherever the Father is (and he is

everywhere) there the Son is, and wherever the Son is, there the Father is also."[74]

Cyril repeats the same insights later in the letter, but in addition calls attention to the

Son's continued omnipresence even while incarnate:

> If the Father fills all things but the Son does not possess this according to his own nature (κατὰ φύσιν ἰδίαν)—the filling all things, I mean, and being omnipresent and remote from nothing—then the Son must be of a different stock from him. … It follows that even when on earth he was visible according to the flesh as a man, heaven was full of his Godhead, for, as I said, as God the Word he fills all things.[75]

Here it bears mentioning that Cyril is not merely saying that the Godhead or divine nature is

omnipresent even in the incarnation, but, more specifically, that the Son himself has this

attribute "according to his own nature" and, being the transcendent divine Logos, he fills all

things.

These *extra carnem* statements in response to Tiberius's concerns are consistent with

Cyril's statements in response to the Nestorian challenge. Here, however, we see a more

detailed elucidation of the theological rationale for saying that the Son retained his personal

transcendence. With Nicene theology in the background, Cyril reminds Tiberius that the Son

is the Father's own Son such that the incarnation cannot rend the eternal relationship between

them. The incarnation must not be understood as an ontological "departure" of the Son or a

loss of what he was. Such a conception of the incarnation would impinge upon the Nicene

settlement. Rather, as Cyril has insisted throughout his works, the incarnation is the Son's

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[74] *Resp. ad Tib.*, 2 (Wickham).

[75] *Resp. ad Tib.*, 3 (Wickham).

addition of a human nature to himself rather than a loss, departure, or transformation of his transcendent divine nature.

5. *Quod unus sit Christus*

The last post-428 work that we will consider is one of Cyril's most famous treatises, *That Christ is One*. Likely written late in the Nestorian controversy, this work is in the form of a dialogue addressing key issues in the christological debates.[76]

In this treatise, Cyril employs several qualification statements in various contexts. For example, in response to the view that if the Word "became flesh" (John 1:14) he no longer remained the Word, Cyril responds by arguing the absurdity of insisting that the term "became" in Scripture indicates a change in nature. After citing instances in Scripture where "became" or "become" do not indicate a change of essence,[77] Cyril adds (through the voice of his interlocutor), "surely this approach [of insisting that 'became' indicates a change of essence] is incongruous and unfitting to one who is God by nature. Immutable by nature, he remains that which he was and is for ever."[78]

Later Cyril offers a few further statements drawing on biblical texts that we have seen him utilize elsewhere. After citing 1 Corinthians 15:49 a few lines earlier, Cyril cites John 3:31 in defense of the enduring heavenliness of the Word even as incarnate:

> [The Word] entered our likeness … while remaining what he was (μεμένηκεν ὅπερ ἦν), that is one from on high, from heaven, superior to all things as God even with the flesh (ἐπάνω πάντων ὡς Θεὸς καὶ μετὰ σαρκός). This is what the divine John says about him somewhere: 'He who comes from above is above all' [John 3:31]. He

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[76] On the date and extant versions, see Quasten, *Patrology*, 3:129; CPG 3:15 (#5228); John A. McGuckin, trans., *On the Unity of Christ*, 49n1. The best critical edition is G. M. de Durand, ed., *Deux dialogues christologiques* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1964), 714c–778b (p. 302–515).

[77] *e.g.* Ps 94:22.

[78] *Quod Unus*, 717e–718a (Durand); McGuckin, *On the Unity*, 54.

remained Lord of all things even when he came, for the economy, in the form of a slave, and this is why the mystery of Christ is truly wonderful.[79]

It is significant here that Cyril concludes with a reference to the mystery of the incarnation. The "mystery of Christ" is "truly wonderful" (παράδοξον ἀληθῶς) because of this very truth: the Son remained what he was and retained his transcendent superiority even as incarnate. In fact, Cyril goes on to remind us that it was not as if the human nature grasped and bound the divine Son, but rather that the divine Son grasped and, indeed, sustained the human nature in the incarnation. He writes, "the divine nature of the Word supported the limitations of the manhood (ἀποφαίνοντος τοῖς τῆς ἀνθρωπότητος μέτροις)." That is to say, like the burning bush that Moses witnessed in the wilderness, the human nature would have been consumed by the Word unless the Word chose to sustain the frailty of the human nature in his incarnation.[80]

To conclude, we note one final example of an *extra carnem* statement following close on the heels of a qualification statement. In the context of discussing the fact that Christ's suffering must be considered his own (since he suffered in his own flesh), Cyril reminds his reader that this does not impinge upon the Word's transcendence: "The Word remained what he was even when he became flesh, so that he who is over all, and yet came among all through his humanity, should keep for himself his being over all and remain above all the limitations of the creation (σωζόμενον ἔχοι τὸ εἶναι πέρα παντὸς καὶ τῶν τῆς κτίσεως ἐπέκεινα μέτρων)."[81] Again the Word's transcendence of the limits of humanity is stated explicitly, and even in the context of a discussion of Christ's true suffering in the flesh.

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[79] *Quod Unus*, 723c (Durand); McGuckin, *On the Unity*, 61.

[80] *Quod Unus*, 737b–c (Durand); McGuckin, *On the Unity*, 79.

[81] *Quod Unus*, 774e (Durand); McGuckin, *On the Unity*, 129.

III. The Function of the Doctrine of the Incarnate Son's Transcendence in Cyril's Christology

Having reviewed a number of examples of Cyril's way of speaking of the incarnate Son's transcendence, we now turn to examine why Cyril speaks in this way. What benefit does he gain by speaking of the incarnate Son's transcendence? What does he hope to accomplish by speaking in this way? In this section, I will draw on the previous examples from Cyril's works and argue that the incarnate Son's transcendence is an idea that assists Cyril in defending the complete deity of the Son. Also, the incarnate Son's transcendence is an idea that complements Cyril's understanding of the Son's kenosis and also allows Cyril to articulate a particular understanding of the development of the incarnate Son, even over against what he sees as Nestorian errors.

A. The Transcendence and Complete Deity of the Son versus Incarnation as Transformation

In the examples we have seen, frequently we find Cyril speaking of the Son's continued transcendence in the context of his opposition to a view that we might call incarnation as transformation. On this view, the incarnation consists in the divine Word being changed into a human being. By contrast, Cyril's position, and one which would later be codified at Chalcedon (451), was that the Word was not changed into a human being, but without changing his divine nature he added to himself a true human nature.[82] Because of Cyril's emphasis on a single subject in the incarnation, Nestorius accused Cyril of believing that the incarnation was either a transformation of the divine Word into a human being or some kind

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[82] cf. "The Symbol of Chalcedon," in Schaff, 2:62–63.

of mixture of the divine and human natures akin to the teaching of Apollinaris.[83] Yet even before the Nestorian controversy, Cyril was already opposing the idea of incarnation as transformation. As we saw above, in an early festal letter he confronted such a view by insisting on the Son's continued transcendence.[84] This would also be a major emphasis as Cyril dealt with a key text, John 1:14, which says that the "Word became flesh." Against the accusation by Nestorius that Cyril held to a transformational understanding of this text, and in response to unnamed teachers who did in fact teach such a view, Cyril argues that the "becoming" is not a change in essence but a union in which the Son continues to exercise his transcendence and divine powers even while incarnate.[85] Thus, Cyril's doctrine of the transcendence of the incarnate Son functions in some contexts as a guard against a view of the incarnation as transformation.

To put it another way, for Cyril the doctrine of the transcendence of the incarnate Son helps to protect the doctrine of the complete deity of the incarnate Son. In Cyril's writings we have seen that the qualification and *extra carnem* statements serve as a way of affirming the full and undiminished deity of the Word. The Word, even as incarnate, remains what he was—that is, fully God, heavenly, and the same substance as the Father. More specifically, the incarnate Word continues to exercise his divine powers even beyond his human nature. The Son transcends his human nature in that he rules over all things, fills all creation, controls the motions of the heavenly lights, does all things with his Father, and cannot be

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[83] For examples of Cyril's response with citations of Nestorius, see *C. Nest*, 1.prooem.; 1.2–3, 6–8. For further discussion of Nestorius's accusations, see Weinandy, *Does God Change?*, 47–48; McGuckin, *St. Cyril*, 130–38.

[84] See section II.A above.

[85] See, *e.g.*, *In. Io.*, 1:142, 538 (Pusey [1872]); *Ep.* 4.7; *Ep.* 17.3 (Wickham); *Resp. ad Tib.*, 2 (Wickham); *Quod Unus*, 717e–718a (Durand). On Cyril's understanding of the Word's "becoming," see Weinandy, *Does God Change?*, 46–58.

restricted to the limits of human nature. Such statements, however, are more than mere assertions that the Son retains his divine nature. Indeed, Cyril speaks strongly of the Son's personal activity beyond the flesh and the inability of the human nature to contain the divine Word. In the incarnation it is the divine Word that assumes and sustains the frail and finite human nature. To give expression to this mystery, Cyril uses spatial and even physical terms even though he clearly believes that such terms are functional analogues rather than univocal statements about the divine Word. The Word is said to be "above" the world, or to "fill" all things, or to remain "with" his Father, and cannot be said to be "within" the limits of human nature.

Therefore in Cyril's christology the transcendence of the incarnate Son has both a negative function—in guarding against a view of the incarnation as transformation—and a positive function—in articulating the complete deity and continued activity of the divine Word even as incarnate. While these emphases arise most clearly from the contexts in which Cyril employs qualification or *extra carnem* statements, there are additional christological emphases that closely relate to this manner of speaking. As we will see, the transcendence of the incarnate Son also sheds light on Cyril's view of the Son's kenosis and his view of how the incarnate Son can be said to develop or advance.

B. The Transcendence of the Son and Kenosis

Philippians 2:5–11 and the concept of Christ's kenosis are major themes in Cyril's christology, receiving significant attention in several of his works.[86] For Cyril the kenosis consists in the divine Word's taking human nature to himself, though not in a reduction,

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[86] As noted by Young, *From Nicaea to Chalcedon*, 317; McGuckin, *St. Cyril*, 189; O'Keefe, "Kenosis or Impassibility?", 359; idem, "Impassible Suffering," 48–49; Gavrilyuk, *Suffering*, 150–51.

transformation, or relinquishment of his divine nature. Cyril articulates his view of the

kenosis while citing the Nicene Creed in a letter to Nestorius: "we declare that the only-

begotten Word of God … who descended for our salvation, having descended to an emptying

of himself (καθεὶς ἑαυτὸν εἰς κένωσιν), he it is who was incarnate and made man."[87] Here we

see the kenosis concept used in parallel with the idea of the Word's descent in his becoming

man. It would seem, then, that Cyril sees the kenosis as another way of expressing the reality

that the divine Word took upon himself genuine human nature. As Paul Gavrilyuk has

pointed out, Cyril's view of the kenosis was that the Word made human life his very own:

"Kenosis, for Cyril, was ἰδιοποιήσις and οἰκείωσις, God's appropriation of human

characteristics."[88] Similarly McGuckin has said that in Cyril's writings "the earthly economy

of the Word made flesh is often simply referred to as the Kenosis."[89]

In Cyril's thought, it is not the case that the divine Word's kenosis entails a total

restriction of the Word to human limitations and experiences. Despite occasions where Cyril

says that the Word participated in the limits of humanity, or even, more starkly, that the

Word "allowed the limitations of the manhood to have dominion over himself," it is

nevertheless the case that Cyril affirms that the Word can in no way be bound by human

limitations.[90] When reading these kinds of statements in Cyril both sides of his qualification

statements must be held together, as he himself does. As noted above, in single passages we

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[87] *Ep.* 17.3 (Wickham); McEnerney, *Letters 1–50*, 82–83; cf. the discussion in Gavrilyuk, *Suffering*, 150–51.

[88] Gavrilyuk, *Suffering*, 161–62; cf. Norris, "Christological Models," 259; O'Keefe, "Kenosis or Impassibility," 359.

[89] McGuckin, *St. Cyril*, 189.

[90] *Quod Unus*, 760c (Durand); McGuckin, *On the Unity*, 110; cf. *Ep.* 55.14 (Wickham).

see Cyril affirm both the Word's appropriation of human limitations and the Word's continued transcendence of the bounds of human nature.

The question, then, is how can Cyril affirm both sides of these statements? Here the Alexandrian concept of economic appropriation is important in helping us to understand Cyril's position. His position is something of a development of what was already a common christological maxim, "what the Logos has not assumed, he has not healed."[91] For Cyril, in the Word's descent to human nature he appropriated for himself the limitations and sufferings of human nature for the purpose of transforming and elevating human nature from its fallen condition.[92] McGuckin summarizes:

> This is Cyril's constant stress, that the human limitations are genuinely assumed, but do not absolutely condition the life of the Saviour in the way they do the life of a normal human being who has no choice but to acquiesce in the limitations his nature imposes. The Word's transcendence of the limits of the human nature is not arbitrary, or magical, in such a way as to diminish the significance of his earthly experience so radically that is was not a real human life, but on the other hand the divine Word only experiences these very limitations in order to be able to transfigure them for the sake of the human race he desires to lift beyond the corruption of nature into which it has declined.[93]

That is to say that the Word's participation in human limitations is by an act of his will for the purpose of salvation and thus the limitation is not absolute. The Word's salvific appropriation of human suffering is by virtue of a divine initiative that transcends human nature. Had the Word been absolutely restricted to his human nature, he would have been unable to overcome fallen human nature and save humanity. For Cyril, therefore, the kenosis as condescension to the limitations of humanity does not nullify his emphasis on the

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[91] McGuckin, *St. Cyril*, 181–83.

[92] On Cyril's doctrine of the Word's appropriation of human nature and humans' appropriation of divine life, see Daniel A. Keating, *Appropriation*. See also McGuckin, *St. Cyril*, 201–207, 216–22; Gavrilyuk, *Suffering*, 161–71.

[93] McGuckin, *St. Cyril*, 220.

incarnate Son's continued transcendence. To the contrary, the Son's continued transcendence plays a crucial role in Cyril's doctrine of salvation.

C. The Transcendence and Development of the Incarnate Son

In his influential work on the history of christology, Aloys Grillmeier characterized Cyril as espousing an Alexandrian "Logos-sarx" (Word-flesh) model of the incarnation that does not give adequate expression to either the role of Christ's human soul or his genuine humanity.[94] This characterization of Cyril's christology—as well as Grillmeier's entire "Logos-man" versus "Logos-sarx" typology—has been subjected to withering criticism by subsequent patristic scholarship, which has shown Grillmeier's typology to be a generalization that does not square with a careful reading of the sources.[95]

What is less frequently noted in Grillmeier's typology, however, is his emphasis on the "dynamic relationship" between the Logos and flesh and the way in which he presents this "dynamism" as the "fruitful synthesis" toward which the christological controversy was heading.[96] Although his way of conceiving of the christological controversy reveals a questionable developmental model of the history of Christian doctrine, Grillmeier's attention to dynamism in the person of Christ is worthy of further consideration, particularly since modern theologians like Wolfhart Pannenberg have latched onto the ideas of dynamism and development in the person of Christ as essential to a robust doctrine of the incarnation. Pannenberg, in part building on Grillmeier's analysis, finds a static view of the incarnation in

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[94] Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 1:414–17, 473–78.

[95] See, *e.g.*, Norris, "Christological Models," 255–68; Lawrence J. Welch, "Logos-Sarx? Sarx and the Soul of Christ in the Early Thought of Cyril of Alexandria," *SVTQ* 38/3 (1994): 271–92; McGuckin, *St. Cyril*, 206–207; Meunier, *Le Christ*, 279–85; Weinandy, "Cyril and the Mystery," 28–30.

[96] Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 1:417, 476–77.

Cyril and other ancient christologies.[97] This supposedly static view takes Jesus' union with God as its starting point (rather than as a "retroactive" reality resulting from Jesus' resurrection) and therefore cannot fully account for Jesus' human development and genuine human personality.[98]

Scholars like Grillmeier and Pannenberg, in attributing a static view of the incarnation to Cyril, have not done justice to Cyril's own way of speaking of Christ's development. In fact, although he opposed Nestorius's portrait of the man Jesus and his human development, Cyril was able to affirm the incarnate Son's development. It was the concept of the transcendence of the incarnate Son that provided resources to support Cyril's affirmation of the incarnate Son's development. In *Against Nestorius*, Cyril's concept of Christ's development is apparent as he replies to Nestorius's interpretation of key biblical statements regarding Christ's learning and growth (Hebrews 5:7–9 and Luke 2:52). For Nestorius, such statements could not in any sense be applied to the divine Logos, who was incapable of development or change, and so Nestorius seemed to separate the Logos from the man Jesus.[99] Cyril, in line with his single-subject christology, would not permit such a division. Instead, he understood the texts that spoke of Christ's development as referring to the economy of redemption. The divine Logos appropriated human nature and human growth and (with respect to the context of Hebrews 5:7–9) assumed the office of high priest for the

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[97] Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Jesus—God and Man*, 2d ed., trans. Lewis L. Wilkins and Duane A. Priebe (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1977), 33, 287–93, 348–49; idem, *Systematic Theology*, 3 vols., trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991–1998), 2:300–301, 384–85.

[98] Pannenberg, *Jesus*, 135–38, 291–93, 322–23, 348–49; idem, *Systematic Theology*, 2:300–301, 303, 384–85.

[99] See the citation of Nestorius in *C. Nest.*, 3.4 (ACO I.i.6, p. 68.9–25); Pusey (1881), 110 (section 3.3 in Pusey's translation).

purpose of redemption.[100] Here it is important to note the nuance of Cyril's view. As he says

in his *Commentary on Luke*, the growth of Jesus should be ascribed to the human nature but

not as if it was separate from the person of the Logos.[101] Cyril's method of partitive exegesis

does not attribute the development to either the divine nature or the human nature considered

in themselves, but to the Son as incarnate for the purposes of redemption. Hence Cyril

affirms that the incarnate Son did, in fact, grow in wisdom and stature and learned obedience,

but, coordinate with Cyril's view of the kenosis, this is not to be attributed absolutely to the

Logos but economically to him in his taking on the form of a servant.

As Cyril continues in his response to Nestorius, we begin to see how it is that the

doctrine of the incarnate Son's transcendence informs Cyril's view of the incarnate Son's

development. Cyril recognizes that the admission of Christ's development or advancement

poses a problem since Scripture also says that Christ possesses "all the treasures of wisdom"

(Col. 2:3). So, "how then is he said to advance?"[102] Cyril answers that there is growth and

development in the incarnate Son insofar as the person of the Logos "measures out"

(συμμετροῦντος) the "manifestation" (ἔκφανσιν) of his abilities and knowledge in a way

suitable to his human nature and in a way suitable for the economy of redemption. As Cyril

illustrates, it would be strange for an infant to exercise divine wisdom, and so the incarnate

Son "extended" or "widened" (κατευρύνων) the expression of his knowledge in a manner

fitting for normal human development. Here we find the theme of the Logos's hiddenness.

Cyril points out that Christ often desired that his identity not be made known, and this

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[100] *C. Nest.*, 3.4 (ACO I.i.6, p. 69–70); Pusey (1881), 113.

[101] *In Luc.*, 2:40; R. Payne Smith, trans., *A Commentary upon the Gospel according to S. Luke, by S. Cyril Patriarch of Alexandria now first translated into English from an Ancient Syriac Version*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1859), 1:29.

[102] *C. Nest.*, 3.4 (ACO I.i.6, p. 70.12–13); Pusey (1881), 113.

emphasis in Christ's life is consistent with his desire to exhibit his divine abilities and knowledge only in a manner appropriate to the purposes of redemption.[103]

To sum up, first we see that Cyril's way of articulating the incarnate Son's development relies on a background belief in the continued transcendence of the Son even as incarnate. In order for there to be a progressive display of the wisdom of the Logos through his human nature the Logos must in some sense transcend the limitations of his human nature. Were this not the case, the Son could only be said to be merely human and there would be no transcendent knowledge or properties to display through the human nature. The Son's continued transcendence, then, is crucial to Cyril's ability to account for development in the incarnate Son. Second, against some modern interpretations of Cyril, it is not accurate to characterize Cyril as holding to a static view of the incarnation that fails to account for dynamism and development in the person of Christ. Clearly Cyril speaks of progress and development in the incarnate Son and argues that this occurred in a manner fitting to normal human development.

IV. Conclusion: Cyril and the Meaning of the Incarnate Son's Transcendence

In an otherwise very fine study of patristic views on divine impassibility, Paul Gavrilyuk makes some curious comments regarding Cyril's view of the activity of the Word incarnate. Drawing on texts from Cyril's sermons on Luke, Gavrilyuk writes:

> Having become incarnate, the Word did not perform any actions apart from or outside his flesh. Commenting on the healing of the paralytic in Luke, Cyril emphasized that Christ cured the sick by touching them with his hand, although he was perfectly capable of curing them by word, or even by mere inclination of his will. In Cyril's

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[103] *C. Nest.*, 3.4 (ACO I.i.6, p. 70.13, 25); Pusey (1881), 113–14; cf. *In Luc.*, 2:40; Payne Smith, 1:29.

view, Christ chose this particular method of healing in order to show us that the divine Word does nothing without his body.[104]

This summary of Cyril's view does not square with the evidence we have seen in Cyril's other works and, in fact, Gavrilyuk's statement that "the Word did not perform any actions apart from or outside his flesh" is not a necessary conclusion from what Cyril says in the texts that Gavrilyuk cites. To be fair, Gavrilyuk intends to emphasize, as Cyril does, that the incarnate Word performed his healing miracles as the Word in human nature and not by an act of disembodied divine power. This does not, however, warrant the conclusion that the incarnate Word does everything through the instrumentality of his flesh or, conversely, that he does nothing apart from his flesh. We have seen that Cyril repudiates such a view.

Gavrilyuk's summary, although wide of the mark, is helpful in that it presses us to consider just what Cyril means by his emphasis on the incarnate Son's continued transcendence. What does it mean that the Son has personal existence beyond his human nature? As Gavrilyuk seems to recognize, according to Cyril's single-subject christology the Son's continued transcendence cannot mean that there are two agents, one within and one without the human nature. Such a two-subject view was what Cyril found in Nestorius's writings and fought so hard to defeat. So how should we understand Cyril's view of the Son's continued transcendence? In this final section, I will make two suggestions toward answering this question.

Before attempting further explanation, it bears mentioning again Cyril's emphasis on the mystery of the incarnation.[105] As several scholars have pointed out, Cyril does not presume to explain the incarnation in a technically exhaustive way, but rather assumes the

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[104] Gavrilyuk, *Suffering*, 165, citing *In Luc.*, 4:31; 7:11–18; 8:49–56.

[105] See I.C above.

truth of the Word's union with human nature and then provides images and concepts to aid our human and finite minds in understanding what is beyond our ability to completely conceptualize or explain.[106] For our purposes here, the payoff of this emphasis on the mystery of the incarnation is that it reminds us that attempts to understand the incarnate Son's transcendence will, if we are following Cyril, always remain preliminary and incomplete. Hence while we can suggest Cyrilline ways of understanding the incarnate Son's transcendence, we must accept that such suggestions will not exhaust the reality and mystery of how the Son transcends the flesh.

According to Cyril, the incarnate Son's transcendence means that we must not think of the incarnation as if the Son united himself to human nature exhaustively and without qualification. In whatever way we might conceptualize it, the Son remains what he was: the fully divine Son of God who transcends his humanity. That is to say that despite being incarnate and located in space the Son is not bound to that location in space. In fact, he exists in such a way that the creaturely limits common to all human beings are added to the Son's person but yet do not condition him absolutely. Another Cyrilline way to understand this would be to think of the Son as continuing to dwell with his Father even while he dwells with human beings on earth. Again the terms are analogical, though they reflect the biblical way of speaking of the Son as the one who is "in the bosom of the Father" and "from heaven" (John 1:18; 3:31) and yet has descended and was made flesh (John 3:13; 1:14). The point, it seems, is that the incarnate Son's transcendence means that there is a sense in which the Son is said to be with us in fullness and yet not with us exhaustively.

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[106] See, *e.g.*, McKinion, *Words*, 23, 41, 44, 47; McGuckin, *St. Cyril*, 185–88, 193–201.

Lastly, and closely related to the preceding point, to speak only of the man Jesus

Christ is an incomplete and therefore inaccurate account of the incarnation. For Cyril,

although he affirms the genuine humanity of Jesus Christ he is insistent upon the

qualification that Christ is not only a man. There is more to Jesus Christ than his humanity,

and Cyril constantly reminds his readers of this fact. Interestingly, however, with all of

Cyril's emphasis on the incarnate Son's transcendence, and his statements of the Son's

transcendent activity, Cyril does not present it in such a way as to divide the person of the

Son. The Son remains one individual, though after the incarnation he has two natures.

Furthermore, Cyril does not invite human beings to attempt to circumvent the human nature

of Christ in order to access the transcendent Son or the Godhead. That is, Cyril sees the Son's

humanity as essential and indispensible to human salvation. Although the incarnate Son

remains transcendent, there is no restoration of humanity apart from the incarnate Son's

humanity, since it is only by the descent of the transcendent Son and his appropriation of

human nature that fallen human beings can be restored.

In the end, the emphasis on the incarnate Son's existence beyond the flesh points

back to Cyril's emphasis on the soteriological significance of the incarnation. The doctrine of

the incarnate Son's transcendence is not a theological appendage, but preserves, as it were,

the direction or location toward which redeemed humanity is heading—namely, the

transcendent reality of God himself. The Son of God adds human nature to himself but

remains what he was in order to bring human nature into communion with what he was and

continues to be, namely the Son of God who is equal to the Father. In Cyril's view, if the Son

had not remained transcendent, he would have been unqualifiedly and absolutely human, and

this would have meant humanity's ultimate loss since there would have been no possibility of

overcoming humanity's sin, sufferings, and death. The great wonder of the incarnation, however, is that the incarnate Son appropriated human nature, overcame its frailties, and carried it to its rightful destination: communion with his transcendent divine self.

CHAPTER 4:

THOMAS AQUINAS ON THE INCARNATIONAL DESCENT AND THE

PRESENCE OF THE WHOLE CHRIST

In the last chapter, we saw that Cyril's teaching concerning the Son's existence beyond the flesh was an aspect of his thought that served his christology, and even his soteriology, in significant ways. That the Son of God was not bound to his flesh or human limitations, but continued to exist beyond the flesh, helped to guard the doctrine of Christ's complete deity and reinforced Cyril's view of the redemptive economy in which Christ took on human nature in order to rescue fallen humanity. As we turn to a later period in theology, the medieval era, and one of its greatest thinkers, Thomas Aquinas (1224/1225–1274), we find that the doctrine of Christ's existence beyond the flesh also has an important—though easily overlooked—function in Aquinas's reflections on the person of Christ. As in the case of Cyril we also find that Aquinas's expression and use of the doctrine are shaped by his theological concerns and his historical and academic context.

The doctrine of the incarnate Son's existence beyond the flesh often appears in the context of Aquinas's discussions of Christ's descent—both his descent from heaven in becoming incarnate and his descent into hell during the three days (*triduum*) after his death. Aquinas's contribution in this area, which is rooted in the biblical text and church tradition, protects the true humanity of Christ and depicts Christ's incarnational descent not as a spatial movement but as an act of uniting human nature to himself. Furthermore, with respect to Christ's descent during the *triduum*, Aquinas uses a traditional way of speaking known as the *totus/totum* distinction to carefully distinguish how the person of Christ is still fully present

even when he is not present in a human manner. These contexts offer further examples of not only the appearance of the *extra carnem*, but also of its use and benefit in the history of the church's discussion of the incarnation.

In both introductory and general studies of Aquinas's thought, his christology often receives specific attention,[1] and besides these forays there have been several notable studies that have focused on Aquinas's christology or aspects thereof.[2] To these may be added a host of articles of an historical-theological nature that explore Aquinas's view of the incarnation.[3] Additionally, Aquinas's contributions to philosophy have attracted much attention, particularly from within the flourishing field of philosophical theology.[4] While this philosophical trend typically has majored on Aquinas's metaphysics, epistemology, theology proper, anthropology, and ethics,[5] his view of the incarnation—especially the question of

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[1] See Brian Davies, *The Thought of Thomas Aquinas* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992), 297–344; idem, *Aquinas* (London: Continuum, 2002), 140–49; Thomas F. O'Meara, *Thomas Aquinas Theologian* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997), 127–36; Eleonore Stump, *Aquinas* (London: Routledge, 2003), 407–26. Stump's chapter originally appeared as "Aquinas' Metaphysics of the Incarnation," in *The Incarnation*, ed. Stephen T. Davis, Daniel Kendall, and Gerald O'Collins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 197–218.

[2] Francis Ruello, *La christologie de Thomas d'Aquin* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1987); Henk J. M. Schoot, *Christ the 'Name' of God: Thomas Aquinas on Naming Christ* (Leuven: Peeters, 1993); Jean-Pierre Torrell, *Le Christ en ses mystères: La vie et l'oeuvre de Jésus selon saint Thomas d'Aquin*, 2 vols. (Paris: Desclée, 1999); Matthew Levering, *Christ's Fulfillment of Torah and Temple: Salvation According to Thomas Aquinas* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002).

[3] *e.g.*, M.-V. Leroy, "L'union selon l'hypostase d'après saint Thomas d'Aquin," *Revue thomiste* 74, no. 2 (1974): 205–41; Michael Gorman, "Christ as Composite according to Aquinas," *Traditio* 55 (2000): 143–57; idem, "Uses of the Person-Nature Distinction in Thomas's Christology," *Recherches de théologie et philosophie médiévales* 67, no. 1 (2000): 58–79; Michael B. Raschko, "Aquinas's Theology of the Incarnation in Light of Lombard's Subsistence Theory," *Thomist* 65, no. 3 (2001): 409–39; J. L. A. West, "Aquinas on Peter Lombard and the Metaphysical Status of Christ's Human Nature," *Gregorianum* 88, no. 3 (2007): 557–86.

[4] As noted in Davies, *Aquinas*, 7.

[5] Two older examples are representative of this philosophical focus: F. C. Copleston, *Aquinas* (1955; repr., London: Penguin Books, 1991) and Etienne Gilson's monumental work, published in various editions prior to its final 1964 French edition. The definitive English translation of Gilson is *Thomism: The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, trans. Laurence K. Shook and Armand Maurer (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2002).

whether or not it is philosophically defensible—has also been examined.[6] Despite this body of work on Aquinas's christology, the particular matter of the incarnate Son of God's transcendence is an area that has received little more than a mention[7] or a few tangentially related discussions.[8] Before turning to this particular aspect of Aquinas's thought, I will briefly sketch some of the contours of Aquinas's life and christology.

I. Aquinas's Context and Christology

Aquinas's life was a university life. From the time he began his university studies in 1239 until his death, he was committed to theological study and teaching. After joining the Order of Preachers, he went to the University of Paris in 1245 as a student of Albert the Great (c. 1200–1280). Completing his course of study by commenting on the Bible and the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard (c. 1100–1160), Aquinas was licensed to teach in 1256. He taught at the University of Paris, the University of Naples, and a handful of other Italian schools. The thirteenth century marked a significant shift as the city universities rose to prominence over

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[6] Allan Bäck, "Aquinas on the Incarnation," *New Scholasticism* 56, no. 2 (1982): 127–45; Thomas V. Morris, "St. Thomas on the Identity and Unity of the Person of Christ: A Problem of Reference in Christological Discourse," *SJT* 35 (1982): 419–30; Richard Cross, "Aquinas on Nature, Hypostasis, and the Metaphysics of the Incarnation," *Thomist* 60, no. 2 (1996): 171–202; Stump, *Aquinas*, 407–26; Richard Cross, *The Metaphysics of the Incarnation: Thomas Aquinas to Duns Scotus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Thomas G. Weinandy, "Aquinas: God *IS* Man: The Marvel of the Incarnation," in *Aquinas on Doctrine: A Critical Introduction*, ed. Thomas Weinandy, Daniel Keating, and John Yocum (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 67–89; Victor Salas Jr., "Thomas Aquinas on Christ's *Esse*: A Metaphysics of the Incarnation," *Thomist* 70, no. 4 (2006): 577–603.

[7] O'Meara, *Thomas Aquinas Theologian*, 131–32, writes, "God is not contained, that is, not localized or physically enclosed in the man Jesus …. Jesus is a mission, an extension of the Word into terrestrial history, but not its temporary enclosure." Additionally, we find mention of this aspect of Aquinas's thought in a work that does not deal principally with Aquinas: E. David Willis, *Calvin's Catholic Christology: The Function of the So-called extra Calvinisticum in Calvin's Theology* (Leiden: Brill, 1966), 36–40.

[8] *e.g.*, Torrell, *Le Christ*, 2:506–509.

the older monastic schools, and the University of Paris was a model among these new universities.[9]

Not only was Aquinas's life bound up with this development of the city universities, but he found himself in the midst of the church's rediscovery of significant works of antiquity, most notably the works of Aristotle.[10] As Joseph Owens has noted, for good or for ill (usually for ill in the popular view of Aquinas), Aquinas's name is often linked with Aristotle's.[11] Certainly Aquinas utilized the new learning for the purposes of theology, but the Aquinas-Aristotle bond is often overplayed. Not only do significant cultural and contextual differences separate the two men (not to mention a time span of some 1600 years!), but Aquinas's habituation was Christian through and through, and his goal was to expound the Scriptures and articulate the theology of the church. Although he utilized philosophy and Aristotelian thought, Aquinas was a theologian of the church, chose to write as a theologian of the church, and, what is more, he himself only applied the term "philosopher" to non-Christians.[12]

Given the breadth of Aquinas's theology and his extensive work on the incarnation, I can only hope to give a short sketch here in order to provide context for the discussion of his view of Christ's existence beyond the flesh. To begin, we note that Aquinas locates himself firmly in the tradition of Chalcedon's two natures, one person account of the person of

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[9] M.-D. Chenu, *Toward Understanding Saint Thomas*, trans. A.-M. Landry and D. Hugues (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1964), 12–14, 22.

[10] Chenu, *Toward Understanding*, 31–33.

[11] Joseph Owens, "Aristotle and Aquinas," in *The Cambridge Companion to Aquinas*, ed. Norman Kretzmann and Eleonore Stump (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 38.

[12] Owens, "Aristotle and Aquinas," 44; Mark D. Jordan, "Theology and Philosophy," in *The Cambridge Companion to Aquinas*, 232–35; Davies, *Aquinas*, 12.

Christ.[13] In addition to this traditional background, we find Aquinas also working within the context of a medieval discussion about the person of Christ that is outlined by Peter Lombard. In his *Sentences*, Lombard outlines three theories of the incarnation, all of which have roots in the history and controversies of Christian thought on the incarnation. These three theories have been labeled the *assumptus-homo* theory, the subsistence theory, and the *habitus* theory.[14]

The views can be summarized as follows. First, the *assumptus-homo* theory is the view that, at the conception, a complete man was created body and soul and the Word united himself to that man. God therefore became man, or began to be man, by union with an individual substance consisting of body and soul. The union is thus a union of two complete things, a view by which proponents sought to protect the full humanity of Christ.[15] The second view, the subsistence theory, is the one defended by Aquinas. This theory is that the Word subsists in the human nature such that the person of the Word, who is simple before the incarnation, is composite in the incarnation. The Word is man in that he subsists now in body and soul (while continuing to subsist in divinity), and it is not the case that a complete man composed of body and soul became God.[16] Third, the *habitus* theory received its name from Philippians 2:7, which says that Christ was found in "habit" (*habitus*) as a man. From this it was argued that the Word put on humanity like a garment, or that his humanity was like a

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[13] Stump, *Aquinas*, 407.

[14] Peter Lombard, *Sententiae in IV libris distinctae*, 2 vols. (Grottaferrata: Collegii S. Bonaventurae Ad Claras Aquas, 1971); ET: *The Sentences*, 4 vols, trans. Giulio Silano (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2007–2010), III.d6–7; Aquinas, *In Sent.*, III.6–7; West, "Aquinas on Peter Lombard," 557; Weinandy, "God *IS* Man," 71–73.

[15] Lombard, *Sent.*, III.d6.c2; West, "Aquinas on Peter Lombard," 560–61.

[16] Lombard, *Sent.*, III.d6.c3; Raschko, "Aquinas's Theology of the Incarnation," 416; West, "Aquinas on Peter Lombard," 561.

jewel held in a crown, and thus Christ's humanity is an accident of the divine person. Here the human body and soul are united to the Word without body and soul forming a substance or a person.[17]

J. L. A. West indicates that by the time of Aquinas, the subsistence theory was virtually the unanimous opinion in the church.[18] Indeed, Aquinas says that the subsistence theory is not an "opinion" but "an article of the Catholic faith," and so he goes to great lengths to defend and explain it.[19] As Aquinas articulates it, the Son of God "does not acquire a new personal existence (*esse personale*)" when he unites human nature to himself, but rather "a new relation of his already existing personal existence (*esse personale*) to the human nature." The result is that "this person is now said to subsist not only in the divine nature but also in the human nature."[20]

Aquinas's fundamental commitment to the subsistence view of the incarnation is important to remember as we look in more detail at his view of Christ's descent and presence. For Aquinas, Christ's existence and presence beyond his humanity is consistent with the subsistence view that the human nature of Christ is not accidental to Christ's person and that the human nature, while being a complete human nature, is not a new personal being. Thus, as we will see in what follows, even though the incarnate Son of God may be present in a way other than merely human, the personal union must be affirmed and it must be said that the Son continues to subsist in both the divine and human natures.

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[17] Lombard, *Sent.*, III.d6.c4–6; West, "Aquinas on Peter Lombard," 562; Raschko, "Aquinas's Theology of the Incarnation," 418.

[18] West, "Aquinas on Peter Lombard," 562.

[19] *ST* III.2.6; Weinandy, "God *IS* Man," 73.

[20] *ST* III.17.2; Weinandy, "God *IS* Man," 59.

II. Christ's Incarnational Descent

In Aquinas's writings, Christ's existence and presence beyond his human nature often comes into view in the context of discussions about Christ's descent from heaven or incarnational descent. In this section I will trace this theme through a few of Aquinas's works, beginning with his commentary on the Gospel of John. Contrary to the way in which Aquinas is sometimes portrayed (namely, as a philosopher or philosophical theologian), he was in fact a *Magister in sacra Pagina*—a master of the holy page of Scripture—and so it is fitting to begin with one of Aquinas's biblical commentaries, particularly one in which he encounters several texts that treat of the Son's descent from heaven.[21] After this we will turn to two of his theological works.

A. *Lectura super Ioannem*

In Aquinas's lectures on the Gospel of John, perhaps delivered near the end of his life in 1270 and 1272,[22] we find a couple of places where the concept of the incarnate Son's existence beyond the flesh appears. The early chapters of John, of course, which speak of the Word becoming flesh and the Word's heavenly origins, lend themselves to discussions of the nature of the incarnation.

In Aquinas's commentary on John 1:14, we note two themes related to our inquiry: the Word did not change in his becoming flesh and the Word's dwelling in human nature implies a continued distinction (without separation) between the Word and his human nature. First, Aquinas argues that the statement "the Word was made flesh" cannot mean that the

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[21] Wilhelmus G. B. M. Valkenberg, *Words of the Living God: Place and Function of Holy Scripture in the Theology of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Leuven: Peeters, 2000), 1.

[22] Jean-Pierre Torrell, *Saint Thomas Aquinas*, vol. 1: *The Person and His Work*, rev. ed., trans. Robert Royal (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2005), 1:198.

Word was "turned into flesh" or "turned into another nature." Such an interpretation is impossible not merely because "God is immutable" (here Aquinas appeals to Malachi 3:6), but also because by such a change in nature the Word would no longer be the Word, but something else. Rather "the Word was made flesh" must be understood to mean that "[the Word] is man in the way that anyone is man, namely, as having human nature. Not that the Word is human nature itself, but he is a divine *suppositum* united to a human nature." That is to say that the Word is a complete divine person who has assumed human nature into the unity of his person.[23] Second, when Aquinas moves to the next part of John 1:14 ("and made his dwelling among us"), he draws out the further point that the Word remains in some sense "distinct" (*distinctum*) in his divine nature from the human nature assumed. This follows from the previous point that the incarnational union is a relation, not a change in the substance of the Word. The idea of dwelling (*habito*) is important for Aquinas here. He writes, "something which is not distinct from another does not dwell in it, because to dwell implies a distinction between the dweller and that in which it dwells. But the Word dwelt in our nature; therefore, by nature (*naturaliter*) he is distinct from it." Through this Aquinas emphasizes the point that in Christ there is a distinction in nature, but not in person.[24]

That the Word does not undergo substantial change in the incarnation and remains distinct from his human nature implies that the Word is not limited to his human nature. This is suggested by Aquinas's use of the temple idea. The human nature of the Word is the "dwelling place and temple of the divinity" as is indicated by the Apostle John's statement

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[23] *Super Io.*, ch. 1, lec. 7; *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 3 vols., trans. Fabian Larcher and James A. Weisheipl (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2010), 1:67.

[24] *Super Io.*, ch. 1, lec. 7; *Commentary on John*, 1:71–72.

that Jesus' "spoke of the temple of his body" (John 2:21).[25] By implication the indwelling is

not a confinement or enclosure of the Word, just as God indwelt but was not confined to the

Jewish temple.

John 3:13 is perhaps the *locus classicus* for the idea that the Son is not limited to

human existence or a human mode of presence. This is due particularly to the last phrase of

the verse, "who is in heaven," that is found in some New Testament manuscripts and was

retained in the Vulgate, and thus appears in Aquinas.[26] The Vulgate reads, "And no one has

ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man, who is in

heaven" (*et nemo ascendit in caelum nisi qui descendit de caelo Filius hominis qui est in

caelo*).[27] In his comments on this passage Aquinas discusses the nature of Christ's descent in

the incarnation and emphasizes that the additional phrase, "who is in heaven," is meant to

prevent us from viewing Christ's descent as one of "local motion" or movement from one

place to another:

> And so to exclude local motion, he adds, "who is in heaven" (*qui est in caelo*). As if
> to say: He descended from heaven in such a way as yet to be in heaven (*sic descendit
> de caelo, quod tamen est in caelo*). For he came down from heaven without ceasing to
> be above, yet assuming a nature which is from below. And because he is not enclosed
> or held fast by his body which exists on earth (*quia non includitur, vel
> comprehenditur, corpore eius existente in terra*), he was, according to his divinity, in
> heaven and everywhere.[28]

So Aquinas clearly and explicitly states that the incarnation was neither a movement from

place to place nor an enclosure of the Son within his humanity. Aquinas does not explain

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[25] *Super Io.*, ch. 1, lec. 7; *Commentary on John*, 1:71.

[26] On the text-critical issue, see David Alan Black, "The Text of John 3:13," *GTJ* 6, no. 1 (1985): 49–66. Note also Aquinas, *Catena in Io.*, ch. 3, lec. 4, where it is clear that several patristic authors also had the additional phrase of John 3:13.

[27] *Biblia Sacra iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, 4th ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994).

[28] *Super Io.*, ch. 3, lec. 2; *Commentary on John*, 1:177–78.

what it means for the Son to continue to be "in heaven" other than that the phrase indicates that the Son is not enclosed in his body. Aquinas, however, rules out any spatial conception of the phrase "in heaven" by rejecting the concept of local (place-to-place) movement in the incarnational descent and by saying that the "Son of Man came down" means that he assumed a human nature.[29] Furthermore, it bears mentioning that the incarnational descent was an assumption of human nature for soteriological purposes. As Aquinas adds, "the Son of God came down from heaven in order that, by making us his members, he might prepare us to ascend into heaven: now, indeed, in hope, but later in reality."[30]

In another instance, Aquinas deals with texts pertaining to Christ's origins—namely, those passages where Christ is said to be "from above" (John 3:31; 8:23). In Aquinas's exposition of John 3:31 he distinguishes the various ways in which we may say that Christ is "from above" or "above all things." Christ is "above all things" because of his glorious person and true teaching.[31] However, when he comments on John 8:23 ("You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world"), Aquinas presents Christ's transcendence not merely in terms of his origin, but also in terms of his continuing status. Christ's statement that he is "from above" and "not of this world" is, Aquinas paraphrases, to say "I am from above, but in such a way that I am entirely above the entire world." Here Aquinas means that spatial categories do not apply to the person of Christ. He is "above" in a sense other than spatial. He is above the world because he is the "supreme Wisdom" by which the world was created, and so is of a different order altogether.[32] While

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[29] *Super Io.*, ch. 3, lec. 2; *Commentary on John*, 1:178.

[30] *Super Io.*, ch. 3, lec. 2; *Commentary on John*, 1:178.

[31] *Super Io.*, ch. 3, lec. 5; *Commentary on John*, 1:195–97.

[32] *Super Io.*, ch. 8, lec. 3; *Commentary on John*, 2:117.

this is not an explicit statement of Christ's existence beyond his human body like we found in Aquinas's comment on John 3:13, it does seem to imply that there is something properly and persistently transcendent or heavenly about the Son of God even as incarnate.[33]

B. *Summa contra Gentiles*

Scholars still debate Aquinas's exact purpose in writing the *Summa contra Gentiles*—"a book concerning the truth of the catholic faith against the errors of infidels" (as some manuscripts begin), which he completed by 1265.[34] Whatever his specific purpose and intended audience, Aquinas described the work as a personal endeavor to set forth "the truth the Catholic faith professes" and an attempt to set aside "the errors that are opposed to it."[35] Hence, when we arrive at the discussion of the incarnation, we encounter extensive refutation of christological errors. Where errors pertaining to the incarnational descent of the Son are addressed, we find several statements of the Son's existence beyond the flesh.

A particular target of Aquinas's apologetic is the error of Valentinianism, which directly pertained to the nature of the Son's descent from heaven in the act of the incarnation. According to Aquinas, Valentinus (a 2nd-century Gnostic) taught that "Christ did not have an earthly body, but brought one from heaven." This teaching arose from certain "descent" texts such as John 3:13, 31, 6:38 and 1 Corinthians 15:47.[36] Here Aquinas seeks to refute Valentinus by explaining the proper concept of Christ's descent from heaven. In his response to Valentinus, the text of John 3:13 is crucial:

[33] cf. Aquinas on 1 Cor. 15:47, *Super I Cor.*, cap. 15, lec. 7.

[34] Torrell, *Saint Thomas Aquinas*, 101–107.

[35] *SCG* I.9.2; Torrell, *Saint Thomas Aquinas*, 108.

[36] *SCG* IV.30.1; O'Neil, 154; cf. *CT* I.208; Regan, 157; *Super Io.*, ch. 3, lec. 2; *Commentary on John*, 1:177.

> The points on which [the Valentinians] rely are clearly frivolous. For Christ did not descend from heaven according to body or soul, but inasmuch as he was God. And this can be gathered from the very words of our Lord. For, when he was saying: "No man has ascended into heaven, but he that descended from heaven," he added: "the Son of Man who is in heaven," in which he is pointing out that he has so descended from heaven that he has not, for all that, ceased to be in heaven.[37]

Consistent with Jeremiah 23:24 ("I fill heaven and earth"), the Son of God continued to fill heaven and earth even as incarnate. Yet, if the Son descended from heaven without ceasing to be in heaven, then what kind of descent occurred in the incarnation? Similar to what we observed in his commentary on John, Aquinas reminds us that this descent is not one of "local motion" as if the Son "approaches one place" and "withdraws from another." Rather, the Son of God descended in that he united human nature to himself. We are to understand this in the same way as Christ's "emptying" (*exinanitum*) (Philippians 2:7), in which "he took the form of a servant" but "did not lose the nature of divinity."[38]

Aquinas's exclusion of the idea of descent as "local motion" is significant and, as we will see in examples of his discussions of the descent into hell, is a regular refrain in discussions of Christ's descents. The subject of the descent is the divine person, the Word of God, and although he takes on a localized presence when he takes on human nature, this does not imply a movement from heaven to earth conceived of as locations, just as it does not imply a restriction to merely localized presence.[39] In another text, as he turns his sights on the errors of Nestorius, Aquinas says that the incarnation is the Word of God "made small, not by the loss of his own greatness, but by the assumption of human smallness."[40] Here again

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[37] *SCG* IV.30.9; O'Neil, 156.

[38] *SCG* IV.30.9; O'Neil, 156.

[39] *SCG* IV.34.7; O'Neil, 166.

[40] *SCG* IV.34.22; O'Neil, 171.

spatial language is used to depict the union of the Word of God with human nature and not a movement from place to place or a restriction to a location in space. In fact, he later expressly states that since the Word of God draws the human nature into his subsistence or personality, "nothing prevents the Word of God from being everywhere, although the human nature assumed by the Word of God is not everywhere."[41]

C. *Summa theologiae*

Aquinas's most famous work, the *Summa theologiae*, was likely composed between 1268 and 1273.[42] This monumental text gives extensive attention to the doctrine of the incarnation, and in it Aquinas's views on the incarnational descent and transcendence of the Son square well with what we have observed in his other works. A few examples will suffice.

First, in the question on divine mission, Aquinas asks whether it is right to speak of any of the divine persons as being sent. This seems impossible since sending appears to entail separation or a movement from place to place, and these seem unthinkable in the case of the persons of the Trinity.[43] In response, Aquinas says that the idea of divine sending is not to be considered in the above ways, but as either "procession" (as in the Spirit's procession from the Father and Son) or, more relevant to our topic, as "a new way of being in something" (*novum modum existendi in alio*). In the latter sense, "the Son is said to have been sent by the Father into the world because he began to be in the world by taking flesh, and yet 'he was in the world' already, as it is said in John."[44] Here and in his answers to the objections, Aquinas excludes separation or local motion from the concept of the Son's incarnational descent.

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[41] *SCG* IV.49.4; O'Neil, 208–209.

[42] Torrell, *Saint Thomas Aquinas*, 146–48.

[43] *ST* I.43.1 obj. 2 and 3.

[44] *ST* I.43.1.

Furthermore, the incarnation was not the beginning of the Son's presence in the world, but rather a new mode of presence according to his human nature. Regarding the Son's presence in the world prior to his incarnational descent, Aquinas appeals to the doctrine of divine omnipresence, but also appears to have John 1:10 in mind as well. This text reads (in the Vulgate): "He was in the world and the world was made through him and the world did not know him" (*in mundo erat et mundus per ipsum factus est et mundus eum non cognovit*). Aquinas, following a traditional line of interpretation, reads the imperfect tense verb *erat* in connection with the reference to the creation of the world as referring to Christ's work prior to the incarnation, and so Christ was in the world, and enlightening everyone in the world (as 1:9 states), according to his divine omnipresence prior to the incarnation.[45] This mode of presence, therefore, did not cease in the incarnation, but to it was added the mode of presence according to the flesh when Christ took upon himself human nature.

Second, the connection between the Son's descent and his transcendence appears in two further places in the *Summa theologiae*. In a discussion of Christ's true humanity, Aquinas again has the Valentinians in view when he responds to those who would interpret 1 Corinthians 15:47 ("the second man is from heaven") as saying that Christ brought his body down from heaven. On the contrary, the Son's existence beyond his flesh is stressed to show that the descent cannot be a movement from one place to another because the Son does not cease to be in heaven. Again it is John 3:13 which clinches the argument for Aquinas: the Son of Man remains in heaven even while incarnate.[46]

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[45] cf. *Super Io.*, ch. 1, lec. 5 (*Commentary on John*, 1:56–58) where Aquinas coordinates this text with Acts 17:28 and the doctrine of God's omnipresence, and *Catena in Io.*, ch. 1, lec. 12 for precedents in patristic interpretation.

[46] *ST* III.5.2 obj. 1 and ad. 1; cf. *CT* I.208; Regan, 157.

Lastly, questions on the nature of Christ's ascension also provide an opportunity for further reflection on the nature of Christ's incarnational descent. At this point Aquinas responds to the claim that Christ's ascension must have been only according to his divinity and not his human nature. An objection is raised that since Christ's incarnational descent was according to his divinity as he united himself to human nature, then the ascension must also be the ascension of Christ according to his divinity, not his humanity. Aquinas in reply distinguishes two kinds of descent (which is paralleled by two kinds of ascent): the incarnational descent according to Christ's divinity and the local descent of Christ into hell according to his human condition. The incarnational descent, as he has said in many other places, is not a local motion but a union. And so Christ "is said to have descended from heaven, not that he deserted heaven, but because he assumed human nature in unity of person."[47]

As we conclude this section, we should also briefly note that Aquinas's view of the incarnational descent is consistent with his overall understanding of God's relationship to space. As Brian Davies has explained, Aquinas saw God's presence as a causal idea in that God is present in everything because he is "the cause of the existence of everything other than himself." That is, "God is present to everything as an agent is present to that upon which it works."[48] Aquinas's picture of the incarnational descent as a union, rather than a local movement or enclosure of the Word of God, calls into question certain claims that the theologians of the medieval West adopted a pagan "container" notion of space and so

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[47] *ST* III.57.2 obj. 2 and ad. 2.

[48] Davies, *Thought of Thomas Aquinas*, 98–99.

departed from the church fathers' "relational" notion of space.[49] If anything, we have seen Aquinas reject the use of spatial and container concepts in describing the incarnation. To the contrary, he asserts that there is no containing the Word of God. In fact, the concept of containment is not applicable to the Word of God who is present to all things as the one who gives being to all created reality and sustains it in existence as its creative agent. In the incarnation, the Word of God brings human nature into union with his person, and he subsists in it without being restricted to it.

For Aquinas Christ's existence and presence beyond his humanity often comes into view in the context of discussions about Christ's incarnational descent. It appears that part of the reason for this is that the Son's not being limited to a human mode of existence helps to protect against the claim that the descent from heaven was one of local motion or a movement from place to place. On Aquinas's presentation, if the Son is not limited to his flesh, continues to remain in heaven, and continues to be present to all things, then his incarnational descent was not a movement to a new place, but a union of the Son with human nature and a new mode of presence by virtue of his human nature. We now consider further Aquinas's account of Christ's presence.

III. The Presence of the Whole Christ

The creedal statement that Christ "descended into hell" was the impetus for extensive reflection "on the ontology of Christ and the irreversible indivisibility of the Logos and his human nature" even in the case of the separation of his body and soul in death. The implications for christology of the *triduum* (the space of three days after Christ's death) were

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[49] T. F. Torrance, *Space, Time and Incarnation* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), vi–vii, 7–11, 25; idem, *Incarnation: The Person and Work of Christ*, ed. Robert T. Walker (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2008), 216–21.

a regular point of discussion for the scholastics including Peter Lombard and Aquinas.[50] In

handling christological questions pertaining to the descent and *triduum*, Aquinas employed

the *totus/totum* distinction. As we will see, Aquinas employs this distinction in several places

in his writings. In what follows, I will trace some of the background and earlier sources for

this distinction, outline Aquinas's use of it, and seek to explain its benefits for his

christology. In the end, we will see that with the *totus/totum* distinction Aquinas is able to

defend both Christ's presence beyond his humanity and his human location in space.

In brief, the *totus/totum* distinction is a way of distinguishing between the different

ways in which Christ can be said to be present. That is, we may say that Christ is present

totus in those cases where he is personally present, and *totum* in those cases where he is also

personally present by virtue of his human nature. The distinction functions by way of the

gender of the Latin adjective. The word *totus* means "whole" or "entire," or, as a substantive,

"the whole," but the gender of the term in a particular usage is what is most important here.

Totus is the masculine gender and *totum* is the neuter. Therefore, *totus* refers to a person, a

someone, while *totum* refers to a nature, a something. The distinction, while a technical one

to be sure, has notable implications for christology. According to this distinction, Christ is

always personally present because he is a whole and complete (*totus*) divine person, and a

divine person is both unbounded by space and present to all things as a cause is present to its

effects.[51] However, Christ, having both a divine and human nature, is not always present by

virtue of his body since his body is restricted by spatial limitations and cannot be present to

all things. At first glance, the *totus/totum* distinction may appear to be a contrived bit of

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[50] Torrell, *Le Christ*, 2:506; cf. Ruello, *La christologie*, 234, 358–60.

[51] On Aquinas's view of divine presence, see Davies, *Thought of Thomas Aquinas*, 98–101.

scholastic subtlety, but it is in fact consistent with Aquinas's entire system of theological and christological language—a system that has deep roots in medieval philosophy and theology.

A. Aquinas on Terminology and Reality: An Overview

Aquinas's use of the *totus/totum* distinction as a specifically christological tool has precedents dating back to theologians in the fourth century. These precedents will be discussed in some detail below. Here, however, I will provide a general overview of medieval semantic theories and the way in which such medieval insights are expressed by Aquinas. The scholarship on medieval logic and language is extensive and highly technical, and a detailed account would quickly take us beyond the scope of this study. Nevertheless, a few words of introduction are necessary in order to facilitate a better understanding of Aquinas.[52]

Medieval grammarians and logicians saw language, thought, and reality as having a natural coherence, and thus they were concerned to articulate the ways in which a term or utterance "signifies or makes known an entity, whether conceptual or real, universal or particular."[53] The medievals produced a variety of approaches to explaining the relationship between language and reality. Yet, at the risk of oversimplification, it is fair to say that two main approaches—signification theory and supposition theory—gained prominence by the late twelfth century. Signification theory had a much longer history while supposition theory

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[52] For a beginning bibliography on medieval language and logic, see A. S. McGrade, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 387–88.

[53] E. J. Ashworth, "Language and Logic," in *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Philosophy*, 81; cf. L. M. de Rijk, "The Origins of the Theory of the Properties of Terms," in *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy*, eds. Norman Kretzmann, Anthony Kenny, and Jan Pinborg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 161.

was a new development of the twelfth century.[54] The difference between the theories was centered on a change in the way medieval grammarians and logicians used the term *suppositio*. In earlier signification theory *suppositio* was chiefly used as a grammatical term indicating the subject of a sentence or proposition, and so semantic theories focused on the function of terms within propositions. Due to certain philosophical and theological influences, however, by the twelfth century "a new notion of *suppositio pro* or standing for" was added to the term *suppositio* in discussions of language and logic. Thus medieval semantics became increasingly concerned with terms not so much as they functioned grammatically, but as they referred to or stood for things. In sum, the newer supposition theory was a theory of reference or denotation, and the older signification theory was a theory of meaning or connotation.[55]

These trends in semantic theory were part of the scholastic milieu in which Aquinas worked. Although Aquinas did not develop a grammatical or semantic theory, he shared certain convictions with the grammarians of his era, especially that "a fundamental parallel exists between modes of signification, modes of understanding and modes of being."[56] This parallel between language, understanding, and reality had ramifications for Aquinas's view of theological language, particularly in regard to the incarnation. As Henk Schoot has shown, Aquinas worked carefully with the ideas of supposition and signification and believed that our way of "signifying created reality reflects the fundamental mode of created things." This means that a *suppositio*, a real-world referent, will have an impact on the way we speak of it

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[54] Ashworth, "Language and Logic," 76, 90; De Rijk, "Origins," 163–64, 166.

[55] De Rijk, "Origins," 165–66; Ashworth, "Language and Logic," 90; Paul Vincent Spade, "The Semantics of Terms," in *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy*, 192; Schoot, *Christ the 'Name' of God*, 41–42.

[56] Schoot, *Christ the 'Name' of God*, 43.

or how we signify it with predicate-terms.[57] The goal, then, is to "determine a way of speaking that conforms to the things spoken about,"[58] and one of the payoffs for Aquinas is that, by carefully attending to our way of speaking, he is able to analyze christological statements and determine whether they are true or false, proper or improper.

We see Aquinas putting these insights to work in the first part of the *Summa theologiae* in the question regarding terms for the unity and plurality in God.[59] This text is particularly helpful for illustrating Aquinas's method, a method that we will see him carry through into his discussions of the incarnation and Christ's descent. In article two, an objection is raised against the unity of the Son and the Father based on the Latin word *alius* ("other"): "the terms *alius* and *aliud* have the same meaning, differing only in gender. So if the Son is another person from the Father, it follows that the Son is a thing apart from the Father."[60] On the surface, it is difficult for an English speaker to grasp the force of the objection since it turns on a point of Latin grammar that is foreign to English. The one Latin term, *alius, -a, -ud,* means "another, other" regardless of whether the word is in the masculine gender (*alius*) or the neuter gender (*aliud*). Because the term has the same meaning regardless of gender, so the argument goes, to use the term *alius, -a, -ud* in reference to the Son's relationship to the Father means that the Son is different from, or other than, the Father. Hence any reference to the Son as "other" destroys the unity of the divine essence.

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[57] Schoot, *Christ the 'Name' of God*, 42.

[58] Schoot, *Christ the 'Name' of God*, 53.

[59] *ST* I.31.2.

[60] *ST* I.31.2 obj. 4.

Aquinas's response illustrates his close attention to modes of signification and supposition as well as the way reality ought to shape how we refer to subjects. Aquinas concedes that *alius* and *aliud* have the same meaning (or signification), but he insists that the real-world subject (the Son) requires a parallel distinction in our mode of supposition, and that the grammatical gender of the term is an appropriate way to do so. So, he says, "this word *alius*, however, in the masculine gender, means only a distinction of subject (*suppositum*); and hence we can properly say that 'the Son is other than the Father,' because He is another subject (*suppositum*) of the divine nature, as He is another person and another hypostasis."[61] Additionally, Aquinas highlights the fact that grammatically the neuter gender is "unformed" (*informe*), by virtue of being neither masculine nor feminine, while the masculine gender is "formed" (*formatum*). Those familiar with Aquinas's metaphysics will likely recognize the significance of this formed/unformed distinction since it is crucial to the way he views an individual subject in relation to its essence.[62] The parallel between the grammatical point and the real-world reference is not lost on Aquinas, so he argues that the grammatical distinction is a proper reflection of the reality of the Son as personally distinct from the Father, but not essentially distinct: "it is fitting to refer to the common essence by means of the neuter gender, but to a formed subject in the common nature by means of the masculine."[63]

While the subtlety of Aquinas's argument cannot be denied, it should also be clear that this is not an ad-hoc method of escaping a problem. Rather, from what we have seen, this subtle distinction is reflective of Aquinas's overall understanding of the parallel between

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[61] *ST* I.31.2.

[62] On this distinction, and related matters, see Davies, *Aquinas*, 15–26, and Stump, *Aquinas*, 191–216.

[63] *ST* I.31.2 ad. 4.

language and reality and the importance of properly relating subjects to predicates. The discovery that this understanding of language is part and parcel to Aquinas's methodology will assist us in our understanding of his view of Christ's descent, especially the *totus/totum* distinction.

B. Aquinas's Sources and Use of the *totus/totum* Distinction

Aquinas's fine distinctions in grammar and language were not merely a part of the larger medieval philosophical milieu. In making such distinctions, and specifically applying them to christology, Aquinas was following the precedents of patristic and medieval theologians who articulated the *totus/totum* distinction and developed the kind of christological terminology that we find at work in Aquinas's writings. Given Aquinas's extensive use of the earlier theological tradition, even in the area of christology alone, we can here only occupy ourselves with a few select figures that Aquinas references regarding the *totus/totum* distinction and closely related matters.[64] The goal here is not to argue for the relative weight of influence of one source or another on Aquinas, nor to present Aquinas's method of using earlier sources, but merely to provide a few points on the line of christological reflection upon which Aquinas places himself with respect to the *totus/totum* distinction. In doing so, I hope to show that Aquinas was not doing anything profoundly new in using this distinction, nor did he see himself as an innovator in this. More importantly, a look at Aquinas's sources will help us better understand Aquinas's use of the *totus/totum* distinction in connection with his view of Christ's presence beyond the human nature.

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[64] On Aquinas's use of the church fathers, see Ignaz Backes, *Die Christologie des hl. Thomas v. Aquin und die griechischen Kirchenväter* (Paderborn: F. Schöningh, 1931); Leo J. Elders, "Thomas Aquinas and the Fathers of the Church," in *The Reception of the Church Fathers in the West*, 2 vols., ed. Irena Backus (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 1:337–66.

1. The Church Fathers

As M.-D. Chenu has pointed out, despite an influx of interest in the Greek tradition in the twelfth-century West, the doctrine of the medieval Latin theologians "was dominated in its principles, spirit, and structure by the theology of St. Augustine—the Doctor par excellence of the Latin Church."[65] So, although Aquinas himself was indebted to a rediscovery of the Greek fathers, we begin with Augustine (354–430). Augustine's thought became foundational in the medieval schools in large part through Lombard's extensive use of Augustine in his textbook, the *Sentences*.[66] For his part, Aquinas, through Lombard, other sources like the *Glossa ordinaria*, and likely through his own personal reading of Augustine, was "reared in Augustine." In fact, as Chenu puts it, outside of Augustine "it is impossible to conceive [of] a Saint Thomas."[67]

Here, however, we focus on a very specific point in Aquinas and its roots in Augustine, namely the *totus/totum* distinction. Aquinas, like hundreds of other late medieval theology students, wrote a commentary on Lombard's *Sentences*. In the process, Aquinas encountered Lombard's use of at least one Augustinian text that articulated something like the *totus/totum* distinction, the anti-Arian dialogue *Contra Felicianum*, which, while thought to be the work of Augustine, was actually the work of Vigilius of Thapse (d. c. 520).[68] The passage in the *Contra Felicianum* revolves around questions related to Christ's death and what happened to the Son of God during his three days under the power of death. In the

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[65] Chenu, *Toward Understanding*, 51.

[66] Although, it should be noted that Lombard's knowledge of Augustine was almost entirely second-hand through the *Glossa ordinaria* and Florus of Lyons's *Expositio*. See Jacques-Guy Bougerol, "The Church Fathers and the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard," in *The Reception of the Church Fathers in the West*, 1:115.

[67] Chenu, *Toward Understanding*, 59, 54; Elders, "Thomas Aquinas and the Fathers," in *The Reception of the Church Fathers in the West*, 1:343.

[68] Lombard, *Sent.*, III.d22.c3.

course of his response, "Augustine" emphasizes that the Son's descent, whether it is in his incarnation or in his descent into hell, is not by a "local motion" since he is "everywhere whole" and "everywhere complete." Here employing the *totus* language, "Augustine" says that "[Christ] was at one and the same time whole (*totus*) even in hell, whole in heaven" and that in his suffering in the flesh he "did not relinquish the glory of deity."[69] Fittingly then, Lombard cites this text in support of the *totus/totum* distinction in his own discussion of Christ's death and descent into hell. In Aquinas's commentary on Lombard, he does not repeat the reference to the *Contra Felicianum*, but he refers to the *totus/totum* distinction without objection as if it is an unquestioned tool of theologians.[70]

In Aquinas's *Summa theologiae* we find a reference to a more likely genuinely Augustinian text on this distinction that is not filtered through Lombard. In the *Tertia Pars* in the question on Christ's descent into hell, Aquinas makes two references to one section of a sermon by Augustine on the Apostles' Creed.[71] In this section, Augustine uses the *totus* terminology in expounding the phrase of the creed that says Christ is "seated at the right hand of the Father." Augustine affirms that "to be God is to be whole everywhere" (*Hoc est enim esse Deum, ubique esse totum*), and so the Son is whole everywhere: "Therefore the whole Son is with the Father, the whole is in heaven, the whole on earth, the whole in the womb of the Virgin, the whole on the cross, the whole in hell, the whole in the paradise into which he led the thief." Overall, in this section Augustine's point seems to be that the ascension of

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[69] Augustine (*i.e.*, Vigilius of Thapse), *Contra Felicianum*, 14 (PL 42:1170).

[70] *In Sent.*, III.22.1 prooem.; III.22.1.2 ad. 6.

[71] *ST* III.52.3 s.c. and ad. 3; Augustine, *De symbolo ad catechumenos*, 3.7 (PL 40:658). The authenticity of this sermon, the third of four, is disputed. On this point, see the introduction to the translation of the first of the four sermons in Augustine, *Treatises on Marriage and Other Subjects*, ed. Roy J. Deferrari (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1955; repr., 1969), 285.

Christ is not to be conceived of as a local or spatial movement of the Son of God considered in his divinity. Rather, it is the "man Christ" (*homo Christus*) who is "seated at the right hand of the Father," because "insofar as he is God, he is always with the Father and from the Father." For Augustine, the "going forth" (*processit*) of the Son to us in his incarnation does not mean a retreat (*recessit*) of the Son from his Father.[72] Aquinas appeals to this section of Augustine in support of his argument that the whole person of Christ is in every place and is not circumscribed by any place.

Though Augustine exerted likely the strongest influence upon him, Aquinas's use of the Greek fathers was exceptional in his era. In a fine overview of Aquinas's use of the fathers, Leo Elders reveals that Aquinas quoted Greek authors previously unknown to the West and was the first Latin theologian to quote verbatim from the *Acts* of the first five ecumenical councils. Though Aquinas did not know enough Greek to read these sources in the original, he apparently studied several important Latin translations that he discovered in the papal archives of Monte Cassino. An influential source in itself, John of Damascus's *De fide orthodoxa*, part of which was translated into Latin in the twelfth century, also provided access to quotations from earlier Greek fathers.[73]

In his appropriation of the Greek fathers, Aquinas was also unique in his citation of the Cappadocians, though he cited these sources less frequently than many other Greek sources.[74] As it pertains to the specific issue of the *totus/totum* distinction, we find Aquinas appealing to Gregory of Nazianzus (c. 330–90) on a related grammatical and theological

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[72] Augustine, *De symbolo ad catechumenos*, 3.7 (PL 40:658).

[73] Elders, "Thomas Aquinas and the Fathers," in *The Reception of the Church Fathers in the West*, 1:344–45.

[74] Backes, *Christologie*, 35–37; cf. the table of references in Elders, "Thomas Aquinas and the Fathers," in *The Reception of the Church Fathers in the West*, 1:347.

point, the *alius/aliud* distinction.[75] In a question on the hypostatic union in the *Summa theologiae*, an objection is raised that since there are two things or realities in Christ (namely, divinity and humanity), this must mean that there is a difference in the suppositum or hypostasis. Thus, on this argument, the union of the incarnate Word could not have occurred in one hypostasis or supposit.[76] In reply, Aquinas argues that not every kind of difference entails a difference of hypostases. In the case of the incarnation, "when Christ is said to be one and the other (*aliud et aliud*), it does not introduce a diversity of supposit or hypostasis, but a diversity of natures." Here Aquinas appeals to Gregory's first letter to Cledonius (*Ep.*101), an anti-Apollinarian letter. Responding to the teaching that there are two sons (one from the Father and one from the Virgin Mary) Gregory argues, using a grammatical distinction in Greek that is paralleled in Latin, that in Christ there is one and another thing (ἄλλο; Lat., *aliud*), but not one and another person (ἄλλος; Lat., *alius*). Hence there are indeed two natures, but one person. This, Gregory argues, is the opposite of what is said about the Trinity, in which we number other persons, but not another nature.[77] The *alius/aliud* distinction, being a grammatical distinction that reflects a distinction in reality, is similar to what we find in the *totus/totum* distinction. Both distinctions turn upon a grammatical distinction that assists in distinguishing between person and nature.

2. John of Damascus

The influential work *De fide orthodoxa*, by the Greek theologian John of Damascus (c. 676–749), entered the twelfth-century West by way of Burgundio of Pisa's Latin translation,

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[75] On this distinction, see section III.A above.

[76] *ST* III.2.3 obj. 1.

[77] *ST* III.2.3 ad.1; Gregory of Nazianzus, *Ep.* 101.5 (PG 37:180).

which Peter Lombard incorporated into his *Sentences*.[78] In Aquinas's christology,

particularly the *Summa theologiae*, the Damascene is a commonly cited authority. However,

on the *totus/totum* concept, Aquinas does not appeal to him in the *Summa*, but does so in his

earlier commentary on Lombard's *Sentences*. This is not surprising since Lombard himself

cites the Damascene as a source for the distinction.[79]

John of Damascus's statement appears in book three of his *De fide*, which treats of

christology. In the preceding context, we find John rejecting, like Gregory of Nazianzus, the

view that Christ is "one and another" (ἄλλον καὶ ἄλλον) in the sense of being a divided

person. Furthermore, John even cites Cyril of Alexandria on the fact that the Son of God

transcends spatial boundaries while incarnate. This leads him to articulate a familiar

distinction:

> Therefore the whole person (ὅλος) is complete God, but the whole thing (ὅλον) is not God—for he is not only God, but also man—and the whole person (ὅλος) is complete man, but the whole thing (ὅλον) is not man—for he is not only man, but also God. For ὅλον is indicative of nature, and ὅλος is indicative of the hypostasis, just as ἄλλο is indicative of nature, and ἄλλος of the hypostasis.[80]

Aquinas, commenting on Lombard in which the Latin translation of this citation appears,

clearly agrees with this distinction, and puts it to use in handling objections.[81]

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[78] Backes, *Christologie*, 44; Marcia L. Colish, *Medieval Foundations of the Western Intellectual Tradition, 400–1400* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 274; Philipp W. Rosemann, *Peter Lombard* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 55.

[79] Lombard, *Sent.*, III.d22.c3; *In Sent.*, III.22.1.2 obj. 6.

[80] John of Damascus, *De fide orthodoxa*, 51 (bk. 3, ch. 7), in *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*, vol. 2, ed. P. Bonifatius Kotter (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1973).

[81] *In Sent.*, III.22.1.2 obj. 6 and ad. 6.

3. Aquinas's Use (via Lombard) of the *totus/totum* Distinction

Shortly after completing his baccalaureate course in 1252–54, Aquinas began his

commentary on the standard textbook of medieval theology, the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard.

Aquinas's commentary, however, was not a mere recapitulation of Lombard's work, for in it

Aquinas moves well beyond the level of literary exposition into the method of disputed

questions that characterizes much of Aquinas's theological work and he also integrates

Aristotelian thought throughout the commentary.[82]

In the case of the *totus/totum* distinction, particularly as it relates to Christ's descent

into hell, Aquinas is never far from the doctrine we find in distinction 22 of Lombard's

Sentences. Although Aquinas eventually parts ways with Lombard on whether, given the

separation of body and soul in death, it is proper to call Christ a man during the three days of

his death (Lombard says "yes;" Aquinas says "no"),[83] on the question of whether the whole

Christ was in hell Aquinas continues to use the *totus/totum* distinction in a way that varies

little from Lombard.[84] When we look at Lombard's own view as a precedent for Aquinas, the

most significant feature is the obvious fact that Lombard uses this distinction in his

discussion of Christ's descent into hell. Lombard, however, also used the distinction in at

least one other work to show that the incarnation was not by local motion.[85] For the most

part, it seems that Aquinas follows Lombard's use in the *Sentences* by applying this

distinction to the descent, though certainly Aquinas's distinction between the grammatical

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[82] Chenu, *Toward Understanding*, 97, 264, 269–72; Torrell, *Saint Thomas Aquinas*, 1:41.

[83] *ST* III.50.4; *Quodlibet.*, II.1.1; cf. Lombard, *Sent.*, III.d22.c1.

[84] *CT* I.229; Regan, 188; *ST* III.52.3; cf. Lombard, *Sent.*, III.d22.c2 and 3.

[85] Lombard, *In Omnes D. Pauli Apostoli Epistolas*, 1 Cor. 2:8 (PL 191:1550).

gender of terms and their relationship to reality is applied beyond the theological locus of the descent into hell.

In keeping with theological precedent, Aquinas expounds this distinction most extensively in those places where he deals with questions pertaining to Christ's descent into hell. Aquinas echoes Lombard in his basic distinction concerning the presence of Christ during the *triduum*: Christ was in the grave and in hell according to the humanity, and everywhere according to the divinity.[86] A few further distinctions are also important here. Aquinas views death as a separation of the soul from the body, and thus Christ, being truly human, undergoes the separation of his human soul from his body in his death. Hence during the *triduum* there is simultaneously a physical location for his human body (the tomb) and a spiritual "location" for his human soul (hell). Christ's body rests in the grave or tomb while his soul is in hell, and so in order to preserve the hypostatic union even in death, Aquinas states that Christ remains united to his human nature even as it is divided in death. That is, Christ remains united to both his body while it is in the grave and his soul while it is in hell.[87] As Aquinas summarizes in his *Compendium theologiae*, "the person … was united both to the flesh lying in the tomb and to the soul despoiling hell."[88]

The additional point that Christ is everywhere according to his divine nature is not to be viewed in contrast to his presence according to the human nature, but as a kind of overlay that additionally affirms that Christ is personally present to all things and in all places even as he is present humanly in the grave and in hell. Some confusion could arise here since it seems as if Aquinas, in distinguishing between Christ's presence according to his humanity

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[86] Lombard, *Sent.*, III.d22.c2; *In Sent.*, III.22.1 prooem.

[87] *In Sent.*, III.22.1.1.

[88] *CT* I.229; Regan, 188; cf. *ST* III.52.3.

and according to his divinity, is speaking of the presence of natures or essences. However, his point is clearly that Christ is personally present, and that his whole person is present.[89] At this point the *totus/totum* distinction comes into play by allowing Aquinas to distinguish between the mode of Christ's presence according to his natures without dividing the person.

According to the *totus/totum* distinction, the whole person of Christ is present even though he may not be present by virtue of his human nature. The semantic analysis that assigns the masculine form (*totus*) to the person of Christ and the neuter form (*totum*) to Christ subsisting in the human nature is a move consistent with Aquinas's understanding of how language reflects reality. Similar to what we noted above in the case of the adjective *alius*, the fact that *totus, -a, -um*, means "whole" regardless of gender is an incomplete account of the matter. The critical additional facet is that the "informing" of the term into masculine (or feminine) forms says something about how the terms ought to be used in reference to their objects—namely, that it is proper to use the informed (gendered) form to refer to a suppositum or person. Aquinas is quite clear on this point, saying that "the masculine gender of words refers to the hypostasis or person, while neuter words refer to the nature," and he refers his readers back to his earlier discussion of the matter in the first part of the *Summa theologiae*.[90]

How then does the *totus/totum* distinction allow Aquinas to distinguish the mode of Christ's presence while maintaining the unity of his person? The key here is that, according to Aquinas, the Son of God is complete in his hypostasis considered apart from the nature he assumed.[91] Thus the person of Christ is not restricted to a human mode of presence. To look

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[89] *ST* III.52.3 s.c.

[90] *ST* III.52.3; cf. I.31.2.

[91] *ST* III.2.6 ad. 2; III.52.3. ad. 2.

at it from another perspective, Aquinas says that no place can contain the immensity of

Christ's person. To the contrary, Christ "contains all things."[92] This, he says, cannot be

according to his human mode of presence since human nature is limited to a place.[93] The

divine Word of God, however, being complete in and of himself is personally present even

where he is not present according to his human nature.

Clearly, then, the *totus/totum* distinction is critical to Aquinas's ability to handle

questions arising from the *triduum*, but we can also see from this discussion a larger picture

of Aquinas's understanding of the presence of Christ: the Word of God subsists in human

nature but is not thereby restricted to being present only in a human manner.

IV. Conclusion

It ought to be clear from Aquinas's interaction with both the biblical text and the church

tradition that his understanding of Christ's existence beyond the flesh is not substantially

new. This, however, does not mean that Aquinas's contribution is insignificant. In truth,

Aquinas's use of the doctrine of the *extra* is a key piece of his explanation of the Son's

incarnational descent and the Son's presence in the case of the *triduum*. What is more, our

examination of Aquinas's writings has indicated some of the theological payoffs of this view

of Christ's transcendence. Here it only remains to summarize a couple of these theological

benefits.

The doctrine of Christ's existence beyond the flesh serves to protect the true

humanity of Christ. This may at first seem counterintuitive since the doctrine of the incarnate

Word's transcendence highlights the fact that the Word surpasses the boundaries of

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[92] *ST* III.52.3 ad. 3.

[93] *In Sent.* III.22.1.2 s.c. 2.

humanity, which might appear to endanger the incarnate Word's true humanity. However, this is not the way that Aquinas sees it. As we noted in our discussion of Aquinas's view of incarnational descent, he insists that the descent of the Son of God must be viewed as an act of uniting human nature to himself and not as a movement from one place to another. This specifically rules out any notion that Christ brought his body down from heaven. The teaching that the Son of God remained in heaven even in the incarnation thus protects the true humanity of Christ. Thus the doctrine of Christ's existence beyond the flesh specifically guards against the christological error of the Valentinians. Note that in this way Aquinas's use of the doctrine of the Son's *extra carnem* existence serves an opposite, though complementary, function to that of Cyril of Alexandria. Earlier we saw that Cyril stressed the Son's existence beyond the flesh as a way to guard the Son's complete deity, which is central to the Son's work of redemption of assuming humanity in order to take humanity to its ultimate goal of communion with God. Aquinas, while not denying what Cyril teaches, appeals to the *extra carnem* idea as a way of preventing a Valentinian spiritualization and dehumanization of the incarnate Son. Because the Son remains what he was and descends not by local motion, but by union with the human nature, his genuine humanity is protected. Christ is like us and beyond us, united to our nature and not limited to it, incarnate and transcendent.

Lastly, in Aquinas's use of the *totus/totum* distinction we observe another way in which Aquinas seeks to preserve the true humanity of Christ. Christ's personal presence as distinguished from his human presence protects against attributing the properties of deity to the body of Christ. Aquinas views the human nature of Christ as "an authentic substance in its own right" that does not stand in an accidental relation to the Son of God but also does not

then lose its authenticity as human nature.[94] Since Christ's human nature is an authentic

substance, it cannot be the case that Christ's human nature has omnipresence or other

properties of deity. We may still affirm Christ's transcendence and presence while preventing

the humanity of Christ from being absorbed or distorted through the union with the divine

Son of God. Aquinas therefore distinguishes between the modes of Christ's presence. Christ

is said to be present personally even when he is not present bodily—a distinction that has a

particular payoff in discussions of Christ's presence during the three days after his death.

And so Aquinas serves as another example in the long history of the doctrine of

Christ's existence beyond the flesh. As we turn to our final pre-modern figure, Zacharias

Ursinus, we will find not only further reflection on the concept of Christ's modes of

presence—an idea present already in Aquinas—but additional nuances and emphases arising

from Ursinus's unique historical and theological setting.

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[94] Weinandy, "God *IS* Man," 82.

CHAPTER 5:

ZACHARIAS URSINUS ON THE *EXTRA HUMANUM* AND ITS BENEFITS

In our examination of the writings of Cyril of Alexandria and Thomas Aquinas, we noted the ways in which these authors used the doctrine of the incarnate Son's existence beyond the flesh to address particular doctrinal questions in their respective contexts. This chapter presents an example from the Reformation era, the Heidelberg theologian Zacharias Ursinus (1534–1583). Ursinus's contribution occurs in the midst of the Reformation disputes over the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper that I outlined in chapter two, and so, unlike Cyril and Aquinas, he is not a representative of the pre-Reformation use of the *extra*. Yet a look at Ursinus's work in our study is appropriate for at least two reasons. First, his use of the *extra* is explicit, clear, and influential given its appearance in the Heidelberg Catechism and his other works, and, second, his use of the *extra* provides another example of a theologian other than Calvin who employs the *extra*, which helps fill out the picture of the broader Christian significance of the doctrine.

In his catechetical works, Ursinus locates the doctrine of the Son's existence beyond his human nature (what is better termed, using the language of the Heidelberg Catechism, the *extra humanum*)[1] in the context of Christ's exaltation, specifically the ascension and session at the right hand of the Father. Contrary to the way in which some scholars have presented this aspect of Ursinus's thought, Ursinus has more than a polemical purpose in mind in his emphasis on the *extra humanum*. Consistent with a major emphasis in the Heidelberg Catechism (HC), Ursinus expounds the *extra humanum* not only with reference to the

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[1] Fred H. Klooster, *Our Only Comfort: A Comprehensive Commentary on the Heidelberg Catechism*, 2 vols. (Grand Rapids: Faith Alive/CRC Publications, 2001), 1:620–22.

theological debates of his day, but also with an eye towards the benefits and comfort that it holds out to believers. For Ursinus the departure of Christ is neither an absolute departure nor a retreat from believers, but a bodily departure that opens up the way for profound blessings for the Christian. In this chapter I will expound Ursinus's use of the *extra* and what he means by this doctrine and then look at what Ursinus sees as the benefits that this doctrine offers to the believer.

Ursinus is most widely known for his authorship of the HC (1563), which became one of the most influential catechisms of the Reformed church, particularly in continental Europe.[2] The case could be made, however, that in the history of scholarship Ursinus the catechist has overshadowed Ursinus the theologian. That is to say that Ursinus's thought is almost always examined through, or even with exclusive reference to, the HC and Ursinus's commentary on the HC,[3] and seldom are Ursinus's other theological works examined in any detail.[4] With few exceptions, scholars have largely neglected Ursinus's impressive corpus of

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[2] On the historical context surrounding the production of the Heidelberg Catechism, see Fred H. Klooster, *The Heidelberg Catechism: Origin and History* (Grand Rapids: Calvin Theological Seminary, 1981); Charles D. Gunnoe Jr., "The Reformation of the Palatinate and the Origins of the Heidelberg Catechism, 1500–1562," in *An Introduction to the Heidelberg Catechism*, by Lyle D. Bierma et al. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 15–47. On the authorship of the Heidelberg Catechism and the relevant literature on this question, see Lyle D. Bierma, "The Purpose and Authorship of the Heidelberg Catechism," in *An Introduction to the Heidelberg Catechism*, 49–74.

[3] Ursinus's commentary on the HC has been issued in numerous editions. *Doctrinae Christianae Compendium* (Geneva, Leiden, 1584; Cambridge, 1585; London, 1586) and *Explicationum catecheticarum* (Neustadt, 1585; Cambridge, 1587) are the earliest, though not necessarily the most reliable. The commonly used English translation, which scholars almost always see as needing correcting, is *The Commentary of Dr. Zacharias Ursinus, on the Heidelberg Catechism*, trans. G. W. Williard (1851; repr. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1954). Bierma has described the various editions in a very useful footnote and has recommended the 1634 and 1651 editions as the most reliable: "Remembering the Sabbath Day: Ursinus's Exposition of Exodus 20:8–11," in *Biblical Interpretation in the Era of the Reformation*, eds. Richard A. Muller and John L. Thompson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 283n38.

[4] Paul Fields's bibliography in *An Introduction to the Heidelberg Catechism*, 119–33, is entitled "Bibliography of Research on the Heidelberg Catechism since 1900," but could also be characterized as a bibliography of research on Ursinus.

theological, polemical, and exegetical works.[5] Not surprisingly, while granting that there are many commentaries on the HC that expound the Catechism's questions relating to the person of Christ, there is a dearth of scholarship on Ursinus's christology that utilizes his extensive writings on christological and sacramental issues.[6]

Because the *extra humanum*—the doctrine that the Son of God, even as incarnate, exists beyond his human nature—is explicitly taught in HC question and answer 48, and since it functions within the Reformed-Lutheran debates of Ursinus's day, the *extra* has received some attention in works on the HC and its theology. The reception of the *extra* has been mixed. Given the polemical background of the *extra*, it is no wonder that conservative Lutherans have dismissed the HC at this point.[7] Among more Reformed-leaning readers, Karl Barth, although his views of the *extra* would shift throughout his career, once memorably termed HC 47–48 and the *extra humanum* a "theological accident" or, perhaps, "theological disaster" (*theologischen Betriebsunfall*). Hendrikus Berkhof expressed similar discomfort.[8]

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[5] Notable exceptions include: Wulf Metz, *Necessitas satisfactionis? Eine systematische Studie zu den Fragen 12–18 des Heidelberger Katechismus und zur Theologie des Zacharias Ursinus* (Zurich: Zwingli Verlag, 1970); Richard A. Muller, *Christ and the Decree* (Durham, NC: Labyrinth Press, 1986), 97–125; Bierma, "Remembering the Sabbath Day." Ursinus's works were collected in *Zachariae Vrsini Vratislaviensis, theologi svmmi, sacrarvmqve literarum in Heidelbergensi & Neustadiana schola Professoris celeberrimi ... Volumen tractationum theologicarum* (Neustadii Palatinorum, 1584) [hereafter, *Volumen tractationum*] and *D. Zachariae Ursini Theologi Celeberrimi, Sacrarum literarum olim in Academia Heidelbergensi ... Opera Theologica*, 3 vols. (Heidelberg: J. Lancelloti, 1612) [hereafter, *Opera*]. On Ursinus's publications, see Klooster, *Heidelberg Catechism*, 324–27.

[6] Again, note two exceptions: Metz, *Necessitas satisfactionis?*, which focuses on atonement but touches here and there on christology, and Muller, *Christ and the Decree*, 97–125.

[7] Ulrich Asendorf, "Luther's Small Cathechism and the Heidelberg Catechism—The Continuing Struggle: The Catechism's Role as a Confessional Document in Lutheranism," in *Luther's Catechisms—450 Years: Essays Commemorating the Small and Large Catechisms of Dr. Martin Luther*, eds. David P. Scaer and Robert D. Preus (Fort Wayne, IN: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, 1979), 3.

[8] Karl Barth, *Die christliche Lehre nach dem Heidelberger Katechismus* (Zollikon-Zurich: Evangelischer Verlag, 1948), 70; ET: *Learning Jesus Through The Heidelberg Catechism*, trans. Shirley C. Guthrie Jr. (repr., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981), 77; Hendrikus Berkhof, "The Catechism as an Expression of Our Faith," in *Essays on the Heidelberg Catechism*, by Bard Thompson et al. (Philadelphia: United Church Press, 1963), 106–108. On the development of Barth's view of the *extra*, see Darren O. Sumner, "The Twofold Life of the Word: Karl Barth's Critical Reception of the *Extra Calvinisticum*," *IJST* 15, no. 1 (2013): 42–57.

Less dismissive, yet still suspicious, is Paul Jacobs, who worries about the Platonic "spatial language" and Platonic and Aristotelian ontologies underlying the *extra*, but who is nevertheless willing to interpret the doctrine anew for his modern theological and ecumenical context.[9] There are also positive assessments of this doctrine in the HC by authors like G. C. Berkouwer, J. F. G. Goeters, and Fred Klooster.[10] Goeters and Klooster in particular are unwilling to dismiss the *extra* as a merely polemical obscurity. Rather, they argue that the *extra* fits well in the theological and interrogative flow of the HC.

Certainly, then, the *extra humanum* as expressed by Ursinus has attracted significant attention, but again we see that this has occurred almost entirely with reference to the HC to the neglect of Ursinus's other works on christology and related topics. The scarcity of scholarship on Ursinus's christology opens the way for a fresh and fruitful exploration of Ursinus's works with respect to the *extra humanum*—an exploration that will elucidate Ursinus's use of the *extra*, its meaning in his thought, and also his view of the doctrine's practical benefits.

In chapter two, I sketched the history of the *extra Calvinisticum* since the Reformation and outlined the sixteenth-century Reformed-Lutheran debates over christology and the Lord's Supper. There I also briefly mentioned the explosive role that the HC played in that controversy. On this point, Klooster's account is not an overstatement: "The strict-Lutherans generally regarded the appearance of the Heidelberg Catechism in the Palatinate as

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[9] Paul Jacobs, *Theologie Reformierter Bekenntnisschriften in Grundzügen* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1959), 66–67, 114. Still more ambivalent on the point is W. E. Korn, "Die Lehre von Christi Person und Werk," in *Handbuch zum Heidelberger Katechismus*, ed. Lothar Coenen (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1963), 101–102.

[10] G. C. Berkouwer, *The Work of Christ*, trans. C. Lambregtse (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 235–36; J. F. Gerhard Goeters, "Christologie und Rechtfertigung nach dem Heidelberger Katechismus," in *Das Kreuz Jesu Christi als Grund des Heils*, by Ernst Bizer et al. (Gütersloh: Mohn, 1967), 41–42, 44; Klooster, *Our Only Comfort*, 1:610–12.

'heresy in religion' and 'treason in politics.'"[11] Indeed, the HC was a lightning rod of conflict in the late sixteenth century, but what was Ursinus's role in that controversy beyond his role as an author of the HC? In short, Ursinus was the chief defender of the HC but, more simply, he saw himself as an expositor and defender of biblical doctrine.

Ursinus accepted the call as professor of theology at the University of Heidelberg in 1561 in the midst of an already complex political and religious situation in the Palatinate. The details of this multifaceted situation have been discussed at length elsewhere.[12] It bears mentioning, however, that at the time of Ursinus's arrival in Heidelberg, the ruler of the Palatinate, Elector Frederick III, was seeking to form a broadly Melanchthonian, Calvinist, and Zwinglian consensus. This occurred in the midst of the intra-Lutheran debates (which involved the Reformed as well) over the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper and the Melanchthonian alteration of the Augsburg Confession.[13] That Ursinus's theological works, both before and after his arrival at Heidelberg, would address these controversial christological and sacramental issues is consistent with his context.

I. The *extra humanum* and Related Themes in Ursinus's Works

In this section I will examine Ursinus's elucidation of the *extra humanum* and related ideas through several of his works. This exposition will serve to give us a deeper understanding of Ursinus's view of the *extra* and its function in his thought. Furthermore, this analysis will

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[11] Klooster, *Heidelberg Catechism*, 205.

[12] Gunnoe, "The Reformation of the Palatinate"; Klooster, *Heidelberg Catechism*, 1–143; Derk Visser, *Zacharias Ursinus: The Reluctant Reformer: His Life and Times* (New York: United Church Press, 1983), 99–143.

[13] Lyle D. Bierma, "The Sources and Theological Orientation of the Heidelberg Catechism," in *An Introduction to the Heidelberg Catechism*, 102.

pave the way for our later consideration of Ursinus's view of the practical payoff of the doctrine.

At the outset, there is an important matter of Ursinus's terminology that needs to be addressed before we expound particular passages related to the *extra humanum*. As will soon become clear, in Ursinus's discussions of Christ's ascension, Christ's session at God's right hand, and various polemical points related to Christ's presence, Ursinus frequently refers to Christ's "human nature" or "humanity" as being located in a place. While he also sometimes refers to Christ's "body," he more often refers to Christ's "human nature" (*natura humana*). This choice of terminology is potentially confusing since a modern reader might understand human nature to be an abstraction, a collection of properties, which does not have a location in time and space. Thus from this perspective it would seem better to speak of Christ's human body, which is not an abstraction, than to speak of Christ's human nature.

Since the purpose of this chapter is primarily historical, I do not intend to adjudicate a philosophical debate regarding the definition of the terms "nature" or "essence." However, in order to understand Ursinus better, I offer a few points of explanation. Whatever the propriety or impropriety of his choice of terms, it is obvious that Ursinus does not mean the phrase "human nature" as an abstraction in contexts where he speaks of Christ's human nature. He regularly makes it clear that he is speaking of the instantiated, real human nature of Christ, which consists of a body and a soul, and not speaking of human nature in the abstract. Behind Ursinus's usage lay the post-Chalcedon Greek concepts of anhypostasis and enhypostasis. That is, Christ's human nature does not have subsistence in and of itself (it is anhypostatic), but only subsists in the person of the Mediator (it is enhypostatic).[14] So

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[14] Muller, *Christ and the Decree*, 102.

Ursinus intends references to Christ's human nature as references to the human nature as subsisting in the person and in that way existing in particular. Additionally, we should remember that for Ursinus, as for the broader catholic tradition of the church, Christ is seen as having both a true human body and a true human soul. In this regard, Ursinus's use of the phrase "human nature" might also be interpreted as a general way of referring to the entirety of Christ's humanity, both body and soul.

A. Catechisms and Ursinus's Commentary on the Heidelberg Catechism

Having discussed this terminological issue, we can now turn to Ursinus's works and matters related to the *extra humanum*. Although I am seeking here to avoid an exclusive fixation on the HC and Ursinus's commentary to the neglect of the rest of Ursinus's works, it would be irresponsible to ignore the clear statements of the *extra humanum* in the catechisms that Ursinus authored (or assisted in authoring) and his elucidation of this doctrine in his commentary on the HC. The catechisms in particular provide concise statements of the doctrine and serve well as entry points into Ursinus's more extensive discussions. Here we will briefly look at the *Catechesis minor* (SC) (1561/62), *Catechesis maior* (LC) (1562), and the HC.[15] We will then turn to Ursinus's explanation of the *extra humanum* in his commentary on the HC.[16] The SC and LC were likely written by Ursinus, with the SC

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[15] *The Smaller Catechism* [*Catechesis minor* (1561/62)], trans. Lyle D. Bierma, in *An Introduction to the Heidelberg Catechism*, 141–62; *The Larger Catechism* [*Catechesis maior* (1562)], trans. Lyle D. Bierma, in *An Introduction to the Heidelberg Catechism*, 163–223; *Catechesis religionis christianae, quae traditur in ecclesiis et scholis Palatinatus* [Heidelberg Catechism] (Heidelberg: Michael Schirat and Johann Mayer, 1563). For the HC, I have also consulted the German text of 1563: *Catechismus oder Christlicher Unterricht, wie der in Kirchen und Schulen der Churfürstlichen Pfaltz getrieben wirdt* (Heidelberg: Johann Mayer, 1563).

[16] Citations are to Ursinus, *Corpvs Doctrinae Christianae Ecclesiarum à Papatv Romano reformatarum…* ([Frankfurt am Main]: Rosa; Hanoviae: Aubrius, 1634), hereafter *Corp. Doct.*, and to the pages in the English translation by Williard. Translations are modifications of Williard based on comparison with the Latin text. On the editions of Ursinus's commentary, see n3 above.

intended as a teaching tool for families and children and the LC intended for theological students.[17]

 The SC does not include the kind of explicit statement of the *extra humanum* that we find in the LC and HC. Nevertheless, the flow of thought is similar in that the SC raises the question about the location of Christ's body, and the concerns about his being departed from us and his natures being divided, all in the discussion of the creedal articles concerning Christ's ascension and session at the right hand of the Father.[18] Like the other two catechisms, the SC affirms that Christ's "human nature" was "exalted above all the visible heavens" and is no longer on earth, yet Christ is still present with us in his "divinity, majesty, grace, and Spirit."[19] Despite the fact that there is no explicit statement of Christ's existence beyond the flesh in the SC, the doctrine is implied. That Christ is still present with his church when his "human nature" is "not now on earth" requires that Christ, in some sense, transcends his flesh.[20]

 The LC and HC, while very similar in content and logical flow to the SC, add clear statements of the *extra humanum*. LC 95 and HC 48 ask the same question as SC 36 regarding whether there is a separation of the natures of Christ if his humanity is not present wherever his divinity is. In all three catechisms, it is affirmed that the infinity of the divine nature allows for continued union of the two natures even though the human nature is not

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[17] Lyle D. Bierma, introduction to translations of Ursinus's catechisms, in *An Introduction to the Heidelberg Catechism*, 137–38.

[18] SC 34–37.

[19] SC 34, 35; cf. LC 93, 94; HC 46, 47. Though note that the LC wording differs slightly on the way Christ is now present: "divinity, Spirit, power, and grace" (LC 94).

[20] SC 35.

everywhere. The LC adds that the divinity "exists and remains the same way inside and outside of his body simultaneously,"[21] and the HC says:

> Since the divinity is not limited and is present in every place, it follows as a logical consequence that it is surely beyond the human nature that it assumed (*necessario consequitur, esse eam quidem extra naturam humanam quam assumsit*), but nevertheless at the same time it is in and remains personally united to it [the human nature]."[22]

Hence both the LC and HC express the *extra humanum*—that Christ's divinity is beyond his body or human nature. What exactly this means will be explored below as we look at Ursinus's other works. Here we simply point out the clear statement of the *extra humanum* in the catechisms.

In the commentary on the HC, we see that the debate with the Gnesio-Lutherans (the "Ubiquitarians" in Ursinus's terminology) over the ubiquity of Christ's body is a central focus of Ursinus's exposition. Ursinus responds to them directly and extensively in the exposition of HC 46–50—the questions that cover Christ's ascension and session at the Father's right hand. That being said, it is not merely a polemical exposition, because Ursinus also gives significant attention to the practical benefits of the doctrine of Christ's ascension for the believer, but we will look at the practical aspects in a later section.

Ursinus's insistence on Christ's bodily and local ascension into heaven, argued from a host of biblical texts, forms the foundation for his response to the doctrine of ubiquity.[23] As he says, Christ's ascension shows that "the human nature of Christ is finite, changing places, and therefore is not everywhere, for to be everywhere and to change places are contradictory.

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[21] LC 95.

[22] HC 48. Regarding the subject and pronouns in HC 48, it is clear from the 1563 German text that "the divinity" (*die Gottheit*) is the subject of the sentence and "it" (*sie*) is beyond the bounds "of its assumed humanity" (*irer angenommenen mensch*).

[23] *Corp. Doct.*, 255–58; Williard, 242–44.

For this reason the divinity, which alone is infinite and everywhere, is not said to change places."[24] From the foundation of the bodily ascension, Ursinus goes on to attack the Ubiquitarian distinction that Christ's body can be everywhere present in the mode majesty yet change place in the mode of a physical body. This, he says, does not solve the contradiction since these modes of presence (majesty and physical) are the same as the modes of immensity (or infinity) and finiteness. Hence the Ubiquitarians try to avoid the contradiction by changing the terms, when in fact they are still, in effect, saying what is contradictory: that "the same body of Christ is at the same time immense and not immense; infinite and finite; everywhere and not anywhere."[25]

If Ursinus's critique of the Ubiquitarians on this point is valid, then there appears to be a problem for Ursinus's own position (and the position of the broader church tradition before him). That is, Ursinus and much of the earlier church tradition makes a distinction with respect to Christ's presence between his presence according to his human nature and his presence according to his divine nature. This common distinction appears in two propositions as follows:

> Christ according to his human nature is not everywhere.
> Christ according to his divine nature is everywhere.[26]

In the Ubiquitarian position, at least according to Ursinus's account, they divide the first proposition about Christ's human nature into two by adding an additional layer of qualification:

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[24] *Corp. Doct.*, 259; Williard, 245.

[25] *Corp. Doct.*, 259; Williard, 246.

[26] In contemporary parlance this way of predicating properties of Christ is called the reduplicative strategy or the logic of reduplication. See section I.F.3 below.

> Christ according to his human nature (according to the physical mode) is not
>   everywhere.
> Christ according to his human nature (according to the majesty mode) is everywhere.

So how is it that in Ursinus's view the Ubiquitarian position is contradictory but his own position—the Reformed and broader church position—is not? Do not both positions ascribe contradictory properties to the same thing at the same time?

Ursinus does not tell us whether or not he recognizes this potential problem, but it is clear from what follows in his commentary that he has some resources from which he could construct a response. First, Ursinus's point against the Ubiquitarians regards only the body of Christ, which, on his view of the *communicatio idiomatum*, retains the properties of a human physical body. As he says in his explication of HC 48, "the properties of each [nature] still remain distinct."[27] Hence the human body is still only a human body and thus to say that Christ's human body has the divine properties of immensity or infinity would mean the obliteration of his true humanity.

Second, Ursinus uses the language of modes of presence (as do the Ubiquitarians), but he ties the modes of presence to the natures with their distinct properties. Thus Christ, by the divine nature, can be present in ways uniquely divine and spiritual, whereas by the human nature he is present in ways appropriate to the properties of a human nature. Ursinus's easily overlooked phrase is therefore crucial: "the divinity … alone is infinite and everywhere."[28] It would seem, then, that Christ the divine-human person would have both divine and human modes of presence, but that the natures considered in themselves would not have modes of presence that contradict their natural properties. In this way, Ursinus emphasizes that the two

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[27] *Corp. Doct.*, 262; Williard, 248.

[28] *Corp. Doct.*, 259; Williard, 245.

natures in Christ are "unequal," which is revealed all the more clearly in the doctrine of the *extra humanum* in HC 48.[29] The traditional strategy of applying two apparently contradictory modes of presence to the person of Christ is not in fact a contradiction because the divine nature is infinite and "the infinite is able to be whole (*tota*) in the finite, and at the same time whole outside of it (*tota extra eam*)."[30] The *extra humanum*, then, is a way to highlight Christ's unique mode of presence by virtue of his divine nature and its inequality, or asymmetry, in relation to his finite human nature. For these reasons, it appears that Ursinus has resources in his christology by which he could respond to the charge that his critique of the Ubiquitarian position also applies to his own position.

Another feature of Ursinus's explanation of HC 48 and the *extra humanum* is his use of temple and dwelling imagery. One way of defending the union of the natures in the midst of confessing the *extra humanum* is to appeal to the idea of the temple and divine indwelling. Ursinus here quotes Gregory of Nazianzus to the effect that although the Word is everywhere, he "is in his own temple"—the temple of his body—"in a unique way."[31] It is interesting that at this point Ursinus appeals to Colossians 2:9 ("in Christ dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily"), which is a text universally used by the Ubiquitarians against the *extra humanum* and in defense of the ubiquity of Christ's body. Ursinus, however, emphasizes the divine indwelling, not as if the divine is encompassed by the body,

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[29] *Corp. Doct.*, 262; Williard, 248.

[30] *Corp. Doct.*, 262; Williard, 248; cf. Ursinus's use of the *totus/totum* distinction (*Corp. Doct.*, 265; Williard, 251).

[31] *Corp. Doct.*, 263; Williard, 249. I have been unable to locate this quotation or any similar wording in the works of Gregory of Nazianzus, whether in the original Greek or in Latin translation. It is possible that Ursinus has misidentified the source.

but as an expression of the unique union of natures in the person of Christ.[32] This unique

indwelling distinguishes Christ from Christians who also are in a sense indwelt by God but

do not have two natures.[33] Thus, using the temple and indwelling imagery, Ursinus says that

the Logos indwells the temple of his body in the sense of uniting human nature to himself,

and yet the Logos does so without being enclosed within the bounds his human nature.

B. Defenses of the Heidelberg Catechism

As a professor at Heidelberg and as one of the authors, if not the chief author, of the HC,

Ursinus became an important defender of the HC against Lutheran attacks. The Gnesio-

Lutherans saw the HC as a divisive assault on the German churches' confessional consensus,

namely, the Augsburg Confession.[34] The Lutheran critiques were specifically directed against

the doctrines of the sacraments and christology—those places where the Lutherans differed

not only from the Reformed, but also among themselves, as evident in the intra-Lutheran

crypto-kenoticist controversy that was still raging at the time of the HC's appearance. In

volume two of Ursinus's *Opera*, we find a collection of his apologetic and polemical works.

In most of these works Ursinus defends what we could characterize as the broadly Reformed

doctrines of the Lord's Supper and christology against many different critics, both named and

unnamed. While these explosive topics are almost always in view in these works, a couple of

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[32] Note that Ursinus's interpretation of Col. 2:9 in terms of the ideas of the temple and divine indwelling is consistent with the explanation of this text in the *Glossa ordinaria* (PL 114:612B).

[33] *Corp. Doct.*, 263; Williard, 249. The distinction between divine indwelling in the case of the incarnation and God's indwelling of believers was already raised in connection with Col. 2:9 by Cyril of Alexandria (see ch. 3 above) and is also found in the influential late-medieval commentary of Nicholas of Lyra, *Postillae perpetuae in Vetus et Novum Testamentum*, 5 vols. (Rome: C. Sweynheym and A. Pannartz, 1471–72), vol. 5, fol. cvii.

[34] Klooster, *Heidelberg Catechism*, 204–209.

works were written for the specific purpose of defending the HC.[35] Since we have just

highlighted some aspects Ursinus's catechisms and his commentary on the HC, we will now

look at his works in defense of the HC on points in connection with the *extra humanum*.

Ursinus's *Apologia Catechismi Ecclesiarum Et Scholarum Electoralis Palatinus*

appeared in 1564 in response to a short pamphlet by the Lutheran theologian Matthias

Flacius Illyricus.[36] Flacius's *Widerlegung* (*Refutation*) charged the HC with several errors,

beginning with the doctrine of Christ's ascension and session at the right hand of the Father.

In the context of defending HC 46, 50, 51, and 47 (in that order) against Flacius's first

charge, Ursinus also defends the *extra humanum*. Regarding HC 47 Ursinus insists that

Christ "according to his flesh or humanity indeed is not now on earth." This, he says, is the

orthodox confession of the church, and it is the adversaries who pervert the orthodox faith by

denying the bodily ascension through their doctrine of ubiquity. In support of the bodily

ascension, Ursinus sketches the doctrine of Christ's existence beyond the flesh and appeals to

both Scripture and the ancient church for support.[37] Here he appeals to John 3:13—a text he

cites regularly in defense of this doctrine—where Jesus says that the Son of Man "is in

heaven" even as he speaks to Nicodemus.[38] Ursinus understands this to mean that the Logos

remains in heaven even while incarnate and bodily located on earth. For example, he says

that "the *logos* is always in heaven, even if the body is corporally located in the virgin." This

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[35] *Apologia Catechismi Ecclesiarum Et Scholarum Electoralis Palatinus* (1564), in *Opera*, 2:1–54; *D. Zachariae Ursini Ad Theologorvm Qvorvndam In Vicinia, De Catechesi Palatina, Et Testimoniis Sacrae Scripturae, ... Responsio* (1564), in *Opera Theologica*, 2:59–76 [hereafter, *Responsio*].

[36] Matthias Flacius Illyricus, *Widerlegung, Eines Kleinen Deutschen, Caluinischen Catechismi, so in disem M.D.Lxiij Jar, sampt etlichen andern jrrigen Tractetlin ausgangen* (Regenspurg, 1563).

[37] *Apologia Catechismi*, in *Opera*, 2:4C–5A.

[38] On the longer reading of John 3:13 and the text-critical question, see ch. 4 where this is mentioned in the discussion of Thomas Aquinas's commentary on John.

is confirmed by references to patristic sources like Cyprian, Rufinus of Aquileia, Athanasius, and Augustine, and a citation of the medieval master Peter Lombard's distinction that Christ "is everywhere *totus*, but not *totum*."[39] Ultimately, Ursinus is willing to admit with the Ubiquitarian Lutherans that, yes, "the majesty, power, [and] reign of God is everywhere," but he holds, against the Ubiquitarians, that it does not follow that such is true of Christ's human nature. Rather it is true of the person: "Christ, who is true God and true man, exists everywhere present according to [his] eternal and incomprehensible Deity. But according to the assumption of flesh from Mary, or the human nature, he is not in more than one place and now not elsewhere than in heaven."[40]

Similarly, Ursinus takes up the cause of the HC in his *Responsio* to the *Censura Theologorvm Qvorvndam Vicinorum*—an anonymous work that was in fact written by Lutherans Johannes Brenz and Jakob Andreae shortly after the appearance of the HC and reprinted in Latin in Ursinus's *Opera*.[41] Here again HC 47 and 48 and the *extra humanum* are disputed. The *Censura* charges the HC with error for asserting that Christ is located in heaven but present on earth by his deity. Issuing a key Lutheran charge, this idea of Christ's presence according to his deity falsely portrays deity as something extended through space and liable to expansion or division.[42] Additionally, we find the authors of the *Censura* making common Lutheran arguments against the *extra humanum* from texts like Matthew

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[39] *Apologia Catechismi*, in *Opera*, 2:5B–D. On Lombard's distinction, see discussion in ch. 4 above.

[40] *Apologia Catechismi*, in *Opera*, 2:8A–B.

[41] [Johannes Brenz and Jakob Andreae], *Censura Theologorvm Qvorvndam Vicinorum, De Catechesi Electorali Palatina, Germanicae Tantum Scripta, Et Electori Friderico III. Pio Missa*, in *Opera Theologica*, 2:55–58. On the authorship of this work, see Klooster, *Heidelberg Catechism*, 207.

[42] Brenz and Andreae, *Censura*, in *Opera*, 2:56B. This argument was repeated by Jakob Andreae at the Colloquy of Maulbronn (1564). See the Lutheran account of the debate: *Epitome Colloquii inter Illustrissimorum Principum D. Friderici Palatini Electoris, & D. Christophori Ducis Wirtenbergensis Theologos* (Württemberg, 1564), 40–41.

28:18 ("all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me") and Colossians 2:9. For

their part, the Lutherans say that these texts confirm that Christ's humanity, having been

"given all the divine majesty fully" is therefore "with all creatures in an indescribable

way."[43]

In response, Ursinus emphasizes the many biblical texts that speak of Christ's

departure, such as Matthew 26:11 ("you will not always have me"), John 16:7 ("when I go

away"), and John 16:28 ("I am leaving the world and going to the Father"). Such texts,

Ursinus argues, indicate that Christ's promise of continued presence (Matt. 28:20) must be

"completed and fulfilled not humanly, but divinely, and by his Spirit."[44] Furthermore, when

it comes to the Lutheran charge that this view of the ascension and the *extra humanum*

divides the two natures of Christ and results in two Christs,[45] Ursinus responds in several

ways. First, he notes the key Lutheran text of Colossians 2:9, but responds with John 3:13

and the post-resurrection angelic testimony of Matthew 28:6 ("He is not here, for he has

risen"). These texts show that the Son is not contained or limited to his human nature and

again emphasize Christ's bodily ascension and departure. Drawing on Matthew 28:6, he says:

> After the resurrection, the Angels say he is not in the grave not concerning the divinity, which is present in every place, but it must and ought to be understood concerning the humanity, which moves from one place to another and at all times exists in only one place, just as the entire Holy Scripture demonstrates.[46]

Second, he reemphasizes the *extra humanum* and that "divinity is equally within and beyond

the assumed human nature" (*divinitas pariter intra & extra assumtam humanum naturam*

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[43] Brenz and Andreae, *Censura*, in *Opera*, 2:56C–57A.

[44] *Responsio*, in *Opera*, 2:65A (column misnumbered as 61).

[45] Brenz and Andreae, *Censura*, in *Opera*, 2:57A–C.

[46] *Responsio*, in *Opera*, 2:65C.

sit). On this view, the divinity is not separated from the human nature because it "is wholly beyond the assumed body and soul (*extra assumptum corpus & animam tota est*) and is indivisible, existing in that same body and soul, and remains so."[47] Finally, not content to answer the Lutheran reference to Colossians 2:9 by merely citing another text (John 3:13), Ursinus returns to the Lutheran challenge. In his view, Colossians 2:9 must not be understood in a Ubiquitarian sense because to do so contradicts the many other places in Scripture that teach that Christ's human nature is not everywhere. Neither is the Ubiquitarian interpretation of this text required, since, on the one hand, it can be understood of the Logos dwelling in his own "temple," which would not require him to be contained in it.[48] On the other hand, one can affirm that the same deity that is beyond the humanity also dwells in the humanity, and thus "being united and joined personally with his humanity, he may be in whatever place, either beyond or within the humanity."[49] In sum, according to Ursinus, the divine Logos, not being bound to creaturely categories of space, exists whole and entire in every place, and so remains united to his human nature even while he transcends it.

C. Exposition of Isaiah

Given the heated debate with the Gnesio-Lutherans over these issues, it is no wonder that we find such topics appearing in Ursinus's exegetical works as well. Yet, it may come as a surprise to find Ursinus addressing these matters in, of all places, his commentary on Isaiah

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[47] *Responsio*, in *Opera*, 2:65D.

[48] *Responsio*, in *Opera*, 2:65D–E. On the idea of Christ dwelling in the temple of his body, Ursinus cites Justin Martyr, which is actually Pseudo-Justin Martyr, *Expositio rectae fidei*, 15, in J. K. T. von Otto, ed., *Corpus apologetarum Christianorum saeculi secundi*, 3rd ed., vol. 4 (t. 3, par. 1), *Opera Iustini subditicia, Fragmenta pseudo-Iustini* (Jena: Fischer, 1880), 387B (p. 54–57). Thanks to Steve Perisho of Seattle Pacific University for locating the original source.

[49] *Responsio*, in *Opera*, 2:66A (column misnumbered as 62).

(1578).[50] Ursinus's exposition of Isaiah takes a passage and proceeds from text to explication, then questions, and then concludes with a series of theses. The question (*quaestio*) section serves as the venue for developing theological *loci* and debating controversial matters in relation to the exposition of the passage.

In his discussion of the famous messianic text of Isaiah 11:1–9, Ursinus raises questions about the person of Christ, and here we find material related to the topic at hand. In his *quaestio* section, he develops arguments against the "Eutychiani, both old and new" and the Ubiquitarians.[51] In both cases he has the Gnesio-Lutherans in view. Why do such questions arise in connection with this passage in Isaiah? Ursinus is not imposing idiosyncratic christological questions on the text, but rather is responding to questions that arise from Christian theological exegesis. In the case of Isaiah 11:2, the text states that the messianic figure, the "shoot from the stump of Jesse," will have the Spirit of the Lord upon him—the Spirit of wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, and knowledge. Such grand statements of the Messiah's gifting could be read as affirming that infinite and measureless power and wisdom were given to Christ's human nature, resulting in Christ's body and soul possessing the attributes of omniscience, omnipotence, infinity, and omnipresence.[52]

Against this interpretation of Isaiah 11:2, Ursinus emphasizes what we would call the Creator/creature distinction. He maintains the "infinite distinction" (*infinitum discrimen*) by which God remains exalted above the creatures. This is the case even in the incarnation when the divine Son of God assumes "the whole mass of human nature" and bears it "forever … in

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[50] *Iesaiae Prophetae Divinissimi Explicatio solida D. Zachariae Vrsini S. Theol. Professoris in Academia Neustadiana*, in *Opera*, 3:1–706.

[51] *Iesaiae*, in *Opera*, 3:443C–446A.

[52] *Iesaiae*, in *Opera*, 3:443C–D.

the unity of his person." The incarnation does not result in the transformation of Christ's

human nature into divinity, and so Christ, despite having in his humanity gifts exalted far

above all creatures, remains according to his divine nature "above the [human] nature

assumed."[53] Without using the phrase, we can see that Ursinus is operating with the principle

finitum non capax infiniti ("the finite is incapable of the infinite," or "the finite is unable to

grasp the infinite").[54] He retains the distinction between the infinite God and the finite

creature while affirming that the divine Son of God does in fact bring the finite into the unity

of his person. In this way Ursinus affirms a corollary principle, what Heiko Oberman has

identified as the principle of *infinitum capax finiti* ("the infinite is able to grasp the finite").[55]

Additionally, in line with the Reformed view of the *communicatio idiomatum*,

Ursinus affirms that on account of the unity of Christ's person we can say, referring to the

person, "*that* man is eternal, immense, omniscient, omnipotent, Creator and preserver of all,

giver of the Holy Spirit, and plainly greater than all of the creatures." However, such things

are not true of Christ's human nature because these attributes are not communicated from the

deity to humanity.[56] Hence Ursinus states that the ascension does not apply to the deity

considered in itself:

> The human nature ascended locally into heaven, where first it was not, leaving earth,
> where first it was, but the divine [nature] never ascended, always existing and

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[53] *Iesaiae*, in *Opera*, 3:444A; cf. 3:445A. The language of the "mass of humanity" or "lump of humanity" may have roots in the potter and clay motif of Romans 9:19–21 and additional implications regarding Christ and the elect. Thanks to Todd Rester for pointing out this verbal similarity.

[54] On this principle, see Heiko A. Oberman, "Infinitum capax finiti. Kanttekeningen bij de theologie van Calvijn," *VoxTh* 35 (1965): 165–74; Muller, *Christ and the Decree*, 20.

[55] Oberman, "Infinitum capax finiti," 173–74.

[56] *Iesaiae*, in *Opera*, 3:445A. On the *communicatio idiomatum*, see ch. 2 above.

remaining in heaven and on earth and, accordingly, neither only then entering heaven, nor departing from the earth.[57]

Strangely, it seems here that Ursinus believes the natures are subjects or agents. Indeed, sometimes his discussions of Christ's two natures leaves him open to this interpretation. Yet, even here, these statements follow an affirmation that such appellations "extend to the whole person."[58] Furthermore, in this passage on the ascension, while not explicitly using the language of the *extra humanum*, the doctrine is implied. Christ according to his divine nature is always present on earth and in heaven despite the local movement of his human nature. Ursinus's explanation here squares with his explanations of the ascension and *extra humanum* that we have seen elsewhere in his works.

D. Theses on the Office and Person of the One Mediator

Among Ursinus's works related to the person and work of Christ is a short set of theses entitled *Theses De Officio Et Persona Vnici Mediatoris inter Deum & homines, Domini nostri Iesu Christi*.[59] Here Ursinus presents a dozen theses related to the person of Christ and defends each of them from Scripture and church tradition. Several theses pertain to the incarnation and the relationship between the two natures. In theses 9 and 10, he presents the *communicatio idiomatum* and argues that each nature retains its distinct properties. In the incarnation one nature is not changed into another.[60] This discussion sets up thesis 11, which reads as follows: "Therefore the whole Christ is everywhere, although the human nature itself

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[57] *Iesaiae*, in *Opera*, 3:445E.

[58] *Iesaiae*, in *Opera*, 3:445D.

[59] In *Volumen tractationum*, 652–63 (also published in *Opera*, 1:744–65).

[60] *Theses De Officio*, in *Volumen tractationum*, 659–61.

after the ascension until the day of the last judgment is not anywhere else than in heaven."[61]

In his explanation, Ursinus spends most of his efforts defending the negative side of this thesis (that Christ's human nature is not anywhere else than in heaven) but here and there he affirms that Christ is nevertheless everywhere whole and entire. He defends the thesis from the testimony of Scripture, the articles of faith, a theological principle, and the church fathers.

As for Scripture, Ursinus alludes to a host of incidents in the Gospel accounts that indicate the finiteness of Christ's body, including the fact that Christ was wrapped in strips of cloth as a baby, walked from place to place, and was not present when Lazarus died. Additionally he highlights many of the same texts that we saw referenced in his defenses of the HC.[62] Here, however, in the context of listing passages that speak of Christ's ascension into heaven, Ursinus develops an argument from Acts 3:21, which speaks of "Christ … whom heaven must keep until the time of the restoration of all things." Ursinus emphasizes two features of this text in conjunction with the biblical testimony of Christ's visible return (cf. Acts 1:11). First, Christ is not now visible. If he were currently visible, then what would be the point of Scripture stressing his visible return? Second, Ursinus keys in on the word *contineo* in Acts 3:21 ("whom heaven must keep [*contineri*]") and suggests that this term affirms that Christ's human body is currently, like all human bodies, "circumscribed (*circumscriptus*)" in one place, and will continue to be so.[63]

The argument from the articles of faith is, perhaps surprisingly, not focused on the article regarding the ascension per se, but rather on the whole string of articles in the Apostles' Creed that trace Christ's life from birth to death to resurrection and ultimately to

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[61] *Theses De Officio*, in *Volumen tractationum*, 661.

[62] Such as texts in Matt. chs. 26 and 28 and John ch. 16. See section I.B above.

[63] *Theses De Officio*, in *Volumen tractationum*, 661.

his return to judge the living and the dead. In Ursinus's view all of these articles overturn the notion that Christ's human nature is simultaneously in different places, in heaven and on earth. That is, all of these articles affirm Christ's true humanity and that he is, like any true human being, "able to be seen and touched" and is "circumscribed by certain limits and a certain form." In this Christ "show[s] himself to be a true man" and if such properties were removed it "would take away his true human nature."[64] In the end, the whole creedal confession about the person of Christ is "reduced to nothing" by the doctrine of ubiquity since it would mean that Christ's human nature was inside and outside both the womb and the tomb, and thus not truly born, buried, or raised from the dead. By the same token, there would be no true ascension if Christ bodily remained on earth and was "everywhere extended," and there would be no truly visible and bodily return, for Christ's human nature would now still be on earth.[65]

Ursinus's third and fourth arguments fit closely together, as he appeals to the theological rule that the divine nature is not communicated to any creature and supports this principle, along with the affirmation of Christ's continued personal (though not bodily) presence, by reference to the church fathers. "To be everywhere in different places at the same time is only proper to divinity," for God fills heaven and earth, and Christ said that he was in heaven even while he was on earth (Jeremiah 23:24; John 3:13). This is confirmed by the testimony of the church fathers, particularly Augustine's epistle to Dardanus on the

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[64] *Theses De Officio*, in *Volumen tractationum*, 661. Regarding the possible objection that Christ passed through closed doors after his resurrection (see John 20:19, 26), and thus did not have these human limitations after his resurrection, Ursinus elsewhere argues that these texts do not actually say that Jesus passed through the doors, but only that the doors were locked and that Jesus stood among his disciples (*Theses Complectentes breuiter & perspicue summam vere doctrinae de Sacramentis tam veteris quam noui Testamenti in genere, speciatim vero de baptismo & sacra caena* [sic] *Domini*, in *Volumen tractationum*, 377 [this treatise is also found in *Opera*, 1:766–802]).

[65] *Theses De Officio*, in *Volumen tractationum*, 662.

presence of God, which was a standard weapon in Ursinus's attack on the doctrine of ubiquity.[66] Despite his rejection of the omnipresence of Christ's human nature, Ursinus concludes by emphasizing the positive side of his thesis: "Christ nevertheless is everywhere whole and entire (*ubique totus & integer*)." He continues:

> For wherever the *logos* is, there the *logos* is a man, that is, united to his body, and existing at the same time one and the same whole both within and outside that [body]. Thus while he is infinite as he exists beyond the body, he does not on that account separate from the body nor is he estranged [from it], although that [body] is not dragged with him into every place.[67]

Here we find Ursinus concluding with a clear statement of the *extra humanum* as a counterpart to the rejection of the ubiquity of Christ's human nature. Christ remains infinite even as he is united to finite human nature.

E. Other Works on Christ and the Sacraments

As we conclude this exploration of Ursinus's works, we turn to a few remaining works that address the person of Christ and the sacraments. One such work that appeared in 1574 in response to the Lutheran Jakob Andreae was *Confessio Fidei Theologorum et Ministrorvm Heidelbergensium*, a text that would eventually be included among the confessional documents of the Palatinate Church.[68] In this defense of the Palatinate theology, Ursinus addresses three main topics: the doctrine of God, the person of Christ, and the sacraments. The document is explicitly aimed at the Ubiquitarians,[69] and so we find attention given to the

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[66] *Theses De Officio*, in *Volumen tractationum*, 662.

[67] *Theses De Officio*, in *Volumen tractationum*, 662.

[68] *Confessio Fidei Theologorum et Ministrorvm Heidelbergensium. De uno vero Deo, & tribus in eodem personis. De duabus in una persona Christi naturis. Deq; sacra Domini nostri Iesu Christi coena*, in *Opera*, 2:380–438; Derk Visser, "Ursinus, Zacharias," in *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*, 4 vols., ed. Hans J. Hillebrand (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 4:202.

[69] *Confessio Fidei*, in *Opera*, 2:381A–C (column misnumbered as 681).

two natures of Christ, the manner of Christ's presence, and a response to the doctrine of

ubiquity. Arguments similar to those we have observed above appear here as well. For

instance, Ursinus again develops the temple theme with respect to Christ's dwelling in his

human nature and with reference to the interpretation of Colossians 2:9.[70] Also, again the

importance of the bodily ascension of Christ figures prominently in Ursinus's arguments. He

reiterates that the divine nature of Christ does not ascend or descend, but only the human

nature.[71]

Given these repeated points, however, there are a few further points that are worth

noting where Ursinus develops some different themes and arguments. For example, we find

an explicit statement of the principle of *infinitum capax finiti* ("the infinite is able to grasp the

finite"):

> In Christ truly is the twofold nature and essence, divine and human, and the same
> twofold power, knowledge and activity, divine and human. From this it follows that
> just as the divine in itself is essentially infinite, so the human is finite, able to be
> grasped and circumscribed (*humana autem finita, comprehensibilis & circumscripta
> est*).[72]

Here Ursinus highlights the fact that human nature, in contrast with the divine nature, is "able

to be grasped" or "able to be comprehended" (*comprehensibilis*). Paired with *circumscripta*,

it is clear that Ursinus wants to emphasize the boundedness of Christ's human nature with

respect to space, but especially, as the context indicates, with respect to attributes of power,

knowledge, and action. Christ's human nature does not receive the divine attributes and is not

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[70] *Confessio Fidei*, in *Opera*, 2:403C.

[71] *Confessio Fidei*, in *Opera*, 2:403E–404A.

[72] *Confessio Fidei*, in *Opera*, 2:404C.

transformed into a different nature, but remains limited and is "sustained by the divine nature."[73]

Another point of interest appears in a list of familiar texts that Ursinus deploys against the doctrine of ubiquity. Among typical passages we have seen Ursinus reference elsewhere, he here cites Matthew 28:20, where Jesus says to his disciples, "I am with you always." This text is then brought together with texts like John 3:13 to support the view that Christ is indeed "everywhere present, not only after the resurrection and ascension into heaven" but "even in the time of his humiliation." That is, Matthew 28:20, by indicating that Christ is *always* with his disciples (including during the time of his earthly ministry), militates against the Ubiquitarian view that tied the ubiquity of Christ to his ascension and session at God's right hand. Ursinus's point is that there is no time in which Christ, the divine Son of God, is not everywhere present, although we may distinguish between different modes of Christ's presence. We could say that his presence bodily with his disciples before his ascension is one mode of presence, but at the same time Christ "was in heaven and in the bosom of the Father" (cf. John 3:13; John 1:18) and with his disciples at all times and in all places, and so was everywhere in another divine mode of presence. So it seems that Ursinus would have us distinguish between different ways in which Christ is present and so avoid two errors: viewing the modes of presence as mutually exclusive and limiting Christ's ubiquity to his state of exaltation.[74]

In another much earlier work on the sacraments, *Theses Complectentes breuiter & perspicue summam vere doctrinae de Sacramentis* (published in 1559), Ursinus uses

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[73] *Confessio Fidei*, in *Opera*, 2:404C; cf. 405A and 406B.

[74] *Confessio Fidei*, in *Opera*, 2:405B–C.

Matthew 28:20 in a similar way, though with what appears to be a slightly different

emphasis. Again the text is paired with John 3:13 to affirm that Christ is everywhere present,

though rejecting the Ubiquitarian view that Christ's human nature is everywhere present:

> According to that [the divine nature], Christ is everywhere, at the same time in
> heaven and on earth, in the bosom of the Father, in his own body, and in us, as he
> himself says in John 3: "the Son of Man, who is in heaven." Likewise Matt. 28: "I
> am with you always to the end of the age." But no finite or created nature is at the
> same time in many places. For to be finite is to be in one particular place.[75]

In this case, Matthew 28:20 functions in tandem with John 3:13 to affirm that the person of

Christ is everywhere present. It seems that Ursinus uses the text here not to highlight

different modes of presence, but to show that for Christ to fulfill his promise to always be

with his disciples, he must be everywhere present at all times. Given that Christ's human

nature is created and finite, Christ's ubiquity can only be affirmed of his divine nature. This

use of Matthew 28:20 is also in the background of HC 47 and 48, which address the question

of how it is possible that Christ, having ascended, can fulfill his promise to be present until

the end of the world.[76] It is clear that, on Ursinus's reading, Christ's promise is kept

according to his divine nature, since only divinity is capable of being present always and

everywhere.

Lastly, we turn to a passage in a small work, Ursinus's oration on the person of Christ

delivered at Heidelberg in December of 1574.[77] In this lecture, Ursinus points out that Christ

remained in the bosom of the Father even after the incarnation.[78] That is, Christ's descent

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[75] *Theses Complectentes*, in *Volumen tractationum*, 373.

[76] Matt. 28 is listed as a supporting text for HC 47 and 48 in the earliest editions.

[77] *De persona, duabus naturis & officio Christi Oratio, Quarecentes Ariani & Eutychiani refutantur, Habita Heidelberae, 24. Decembris, Anno MDLXXIV*, in *Opera*, 3:784–96.

[78] *De persona*, in *Opera*, 3:788C–789A; cf. *Confessio Fidei*, in *Opera*, 2:403B and 405B.

from heaven is not to be understood as a local movement from one place to another, but as a new mode of presence. A guiding principle for Ursinus here is the fact that "God, who is everywhere, neither descends nor ascends" in the sense of moving from place to place. Indeed, Ursinus says that Christ, being the divine Son of God, is "always … omnipresent, unmoved, and invisible (*semper ubique …, immotus & inconspicuus*)" even when he becomes visible in the incarnation. The overall point seems to be that the categories of space and motion do not apply to God, as is indicated by Ursinus's understanding of the descent in terms of manifestation and in his use of the term *immotus*. God is unmoved because he is not located in space. Nevertheless, Ursinus is careful to assert that this view of God does not impinge on the confession of Christ's deity, descent, and ascension. Christ manifests himself, and thus manifests the Godhead, in a new mode of presence when he assumes a human nature into the unity of his person. Yet the deity is not now restricted to bodily presence, or transferred from one place to another, or now only visible and no longer invisible. Rather, God shows himself to be present in some new way (*novo aliquo modo*).[79]

F. Understanding Ursinus's *extra*: A Few Conclusions

The point I have made throughout this dissertation holds true for Ursinus as well: the *extra humanum* usually does not receive a distinct *locus* in Christian theology, but rather is bound up with several other major points regarding the person of Christ. This makes identifying and understanding the *extra* more challenging since the doctrine is rarely considered in and of itself and at times is, as it were, swallowed up in the discussion of major points like the incarnation, ascension, and presence of Christ in the Supper. This is especially true in Ursinus. He wrote no treatise on the *extra*. This does not mean, however, that we cannot

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[79] *De persona*, in *Opera*, 3:789A.

examine what Ursinus means by the *extra humanum* or that we cannot seek to understand this doctrine in his thought. Without wanting to rend the garment of themes in which the *extra* is located, I will close this section with some conclusions aimed at understanding Ursinus on this point.

1. Christ Whole and Unbounded

If forced to identify precisely what the *extra humanum* is according to Ursinus, we could say that it is the doctrine that the divine Son of God, even as incarnate, is not limited to a place and therefore exists beyond his human nature. To this basic statement are joined two other affirmations: first, that Christ remains united to his human nature despite his existence beyond it, and, second, that Christ remains whole and undivided both within and outside the human nature.[80] With regard to the basic definition, it is not always clear whether Ursinus means that it is the divine essence or the person of the Son that is not limited to a place. For example, HC 48 seems to suggest that only the divine essence is in view, yet elsewhere Ursinus indicates that it is the person of the Son who is not limited to a place.[81] Granting, of course, the possibility that Ursinus is simply inconsistent, it is more likely that he is operating with the orthodox Christian commitment that the Son of God is a divine person. True, Ursinus does speak in abstract terms of divinity as alone properly infinite and ubiquitous, but this is almost always in the context of the specific discussion of the person of Christ and the implications of the divine Logos becoming man.[82] That is to say that Ursinus, in speaking of

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[80] LC 95; HC 48; *Responsio*, in *Opera*, 2:65D, 62A (*i.e.* 66A). In LC 95 Ursinus says that the divinity is beyond the "body," but in HC 48 he says the divinity is beyond the "humanity." On Ursinus's use of these terms, see the introduction to sec. I above.

[81] Cf. HC 48 with *Theses De Officio*, in *Volumen tractationum*, 661–662. On HC 48, see n22 above.

[82] *Theses De Officio*, in *Volumen tractationum*, 662.

the *extra humanum*, is not interested in divinity abstractly considered, but rather in the divine Son of God, his incarnation, and the matters raised by the incarnation.

As for the first additional affirmation, Ursinus states that Christ's existence beyond his human nature does not disrupt the hypostatic union.[83] Certainly he must affirm this in order to remain within the bounds of Chalcedonian orthodoxy and in order to respond to Lutheran critics of the *extra humanum* who charged that the *extra* did in fact result in a division of Christ's two natures. Ursinus, however, counters that one need not—and indeed must not—think of the union in terms of enclosure, but rather in terms of indwelling. It is clear that Ursinus understands Christ's indwelling of his human nature to be unique, though not without analogy to the way in which God dwelled in the Old Testament temple and the way in which God indwells the Christian.[84] Ursinus does not seek to explain in detail the mystery of Christ's indwelling of and union with human nature, but since it is presented in contrast with the physical idea of enclosure or containment, the indwelling must be understood as a spiritual reality rather than physical or material.

The spiritual nature of the indwelling is perhaps illuminated by the second additional emphasis in Ursinus's doctrine of the *extra humanum*: that Christ remains whole and undivided both within and without (or, outside) the human nature. While using the physical and locative terms "within" and "without," Ursinus does not conceive of the divine Son of God as divisible and able to be, as it were, parceled out into various places or containers.[85] In fact, he asserts the opposite: Christ is always whole and undivided even in his incarnational union with and indwelling of his human nature. This means that the union with and

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[83] HC 48.

[84] *Corp. Doct.*, 263; *Responsio*, in *Opera*, 2:65D–66A.

[85] LC 95; *Responsio*, in *Opera*, 2:65D–E; *Theses De Officio*, in *Volumen tractationum*, 662.

indwelling of his human nature, despite having its terminus in a physical human body and finite human soul, is a union and indwelling of a different order than what we experience in the creaturely realm. The union is therefore, to use a somewhat unsatisfactory term, spiritual.

Furthermore, Ursinus's emphasis on Christ existing whole and entire both within and outside of his human nature leads back to the Reformed point that the infinite is able to grasp the finite (*infinitum capax finiti*). Rather than viewing the incarnation as the divine Son of God being contained or enclosed within a finite nature, it is instead the finite nature that is, as it were, enclosed or contained by the divine Son of God.[86] Recognizing the limits of human language at this point, we might risk a physical analogy: if the finite nature is like a box, the incarnation must not be viewed like the placing of an object inside the box. Neither must it be viewed like breaking part of an object off from the whole and placing that part inside the box. Instead, the incarnation is more like the box being brought entirely inside of an immense object. The finite is grasped by the infinite. Yet—and this is one place where a physical analogy breaks down—that immense object, in this case a person, the divine Son of God, somehow remains whole both within and outside of the box. The Son remains whole both within and outside the finite nature even as he unites to himself a human nature. In Ursinus's words Christ brings "the whole mass of human nature" into "the unity of his person."[87]

2. Preservation of Natures

The emphasis on the divine Son's grasping of human nature could result in a view of the incarnation as the divine Son absorbing human nature into himself resulting in some kind of divine-human mixture—what has traditionally been labeled as Eutychianism—or an absolute

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[86] *Confessio Fidei*, in *Opera*, 2:404C; *Iesaiae*, in *Opera*, 3:444A.

[87] *Iesaiae*, in *Opera*, 3:444A.

obliteration of the human nature in the infinite abyss of the divine nature. Ursinus guards

against such ideas through another facet of the *extra humanum*: the preservation of natures.

In one sense, the *extra humanum* could be seen as a conclusion drawn from the principle that

the divine and human natures must retain their respective essential properties or else they

cease to be divine and human natures. That is, one could say that the *extra humanum* stems

from the definition of the divine nature as infinite and everywhere present and the definition

of human nature as finite and located in a place. This is not to say that the *extra* is a

deduction from philosophical definitions. To the contrary, as we have seen, Ursinus is

constantly building a biblical case that the Son of God is everywhere present and yet that his

human body is circumscribed and spatially located.

Although the principles of *finitum non capax infiniti* and *infinitum capax finiti* are

important ones to note in connection with the *extra humanum*, we would do well to pay

attention to another principle that we find in Ursinus by which he articulates the preservation

of the two natures. In the context of discussing Christ's glorification, specifically his

ascension and session at the right hand of the Father, Ursinus states that "glory does not take

away nature" (*gloria non tollit naturam*).[88] In glorification Christ's human nature retains all

of its essential properties. Given what we have seen in Ursinus's works and in his emphasis

on the preservation of natures, we could say that he also affirms *humilitas non tollit naturam*,

humility does not take away nature. In Christ's condescension to become human his divine

nature is not taken away. He retains his essential properties of divinity, and for Ursinus this

includes the properties of infinity and omnipresence.

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[88] *Defensio Argvmentorvm Aliqvot, Ab Orthodoxis Contra Vbiquitatem corporis Christi & realem idiomatum in ipsis naturis communicationem allatorum*, in *Opera*, 2:1585A.

3. Modes of Presence and the Reduplicative Strategy

In the above exposition of Ursinus's commentary on the HC, we encountered his use of what appears to be (using contemporary labels) the reduplicative strategy or the logic of reduplication.[89] This traditional method of making affirmations about the incarnation follows the form: "Jesus Christ according to his divine nature is *x*" and "Jesus Christ according to his human nature is *y*" (where *x* and *y* are properties). In many instances, this strategy is used to address the problem of opposite or even contradictory properties inhering in the one person of Christ. In such instances, rather than predicating properties *x* and *y,* one would predicate the properties *x* and not-*x*.

In Ursinus we find several examples of this way of speaking. For instance, in one place while referring to the incarnate "*logos*," Ursinus says, "according to the human nature he is on earth, according to the divine [nature] he is in heaven."[90] Similarly, in another work he writes that "Christ … exists everywhere present according to eternal and incomprehensible Deity. But according to the assumption of flesh …, or the human nature, he is not in more than one place."[91] In the above discussion of these matters as they appear in the commentary on the HC, I argued that Ursinus understands the incarnate Christ to have two modes of presence: divine and human. The *extra humanum* highlights an asymmetry or inequality between the divine nature and the human nature in Christ because the human nature retains its human limitations without these limitations being transferred to the divine nature. The result is that the one person of Christ is present simultaneously in different ways. He is present bodily in heaven but not on earth, but he is present divinely or spiritually both

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[89] Section I.A above.

[90] *Theses Complectentes*, in *Volumen tractationum*, 377.

[91] *Apologia Catechismi*, in *Opera*, 2:8B.

in heaven and on earth as he has always been. For this reason, in Ursinus's reduplicative statements regarding Christ's presence he is not predicating contradictory properties of the one person. Christ's two modes of presence are compatible and compossible.

Again, I risk a physical analogy. Perhaps Christ's two modes of presence, divine and human, are like two ways in which a CEO can be present at a board meeting. At the Monday meeting, the CEO is physically present at the meeting because he is in the board room where the meeting takes place, but at the Wednesday meeting the CEO is out of town and is at the meeting by video conference call. In both cases we would say that the CEO is present at the board meeting, though in different modes. In the first case he is physically present; in the second case he is, so to speak, technologically present. Furthermore, we could imagine a scenario in which, for the Friday meeting, the CEO is present physically in the board room but, due to someone setting up the video conference equipment inside the board room and leaving it on, the CEO is also present by video conference call. The CEO is then present in a twofold or double way at the Friday meeting. He is present physically and technologically. This analogy illustrates that one person may indeed have two modes of presence and that it is possible that these modes may occur simultaneously. Ursinus's reduplicative statements regarding Christ's two modes of presence can be conceptualized in this way, such that the one person of Christ is, in a far more mysterious way, wholly personally present in one place simultaneously according to both his divine and human natures despite the human nature retaining its natural limitations.

II. The Benefits of the *extra humanum*

Granting the polemical context of Ursinus's works, the *extra humanum* is not a mere idiosyncrasy of a sixteenth-century theological skirmish. In the case of Ursinus, and

consistent with his concern in the HC that the doctrines of the Christian faith should be a source of comfort to the believer,[92] the *extra humanum* is meant to have a practical payoff. It does this in conjunction with the closely related doctrine of Christ's bodily ascension and the doctrine of the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper.[93] Of course, Ursinus never asks the question, "how does the *extra humanum* benefit us?", although he does ask that question about the ascension. Nevertheless the benefits of the *extra humanum* are discernible in contexts where the ascension and Lord's Supper are discussed, as we will see below. In sum, the doctrine of the *extra humanum*—the doctrine that divine Son of God, even as incarnate, exists beyond his human nature—is a source of comfort for the believer in the following way: although Christ is physically absent, he is always personally present with his people. Ursinus unfolds several facets of this basic affirmation.

A. "Never Absent from Us"

At first glance the doctrine of Christ's ascension may seem far from comforting. How could it possibly be of benefit or comfort to believers for Jesus to depart from them? This very question is prominent in John's gospel in Jesus' discourse with his disciples about his impending departure from them.[94] It is no wonder, then, that a similar question would arise in the HC's explanation of the ascension since the fact of Christ's ascension seems to contradict his promise to always be with his disciples.[95] The answer given by Ursinus in the HC, and explained in more detail in his commentary, rests on the fact that Christ exists beyond his

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[92] HC 1, 22, 53, 57, 58; *Responsio*, in *Opera*, 2:62. For an introduction to the HC's theme of comfort (German, *trost*; Latin, *consolatio*), see Klooster, *Our Only Comfort*, 1:22–57.

[93] HC 46–49, 76; SC 65; LC 300, 301.

[94] See John 13:36; 14:1–7, 18–19, 27–28; 16:4–7.

[95] HC 47; cf. Matt. 28:20.

human nature: "according to his human nature [Christ] is not now on earth; but according to his divinity, majesty, grace, and Spirit he is at no time absent from us."[96] The primary benefit, then, of the doctrine of the *extra humanum* is that the departed Christ never leaves us, but continues to be with us even though he is not with us physically or locally according to his human nature.

In his commentary, it is interesting to note that Ursinus begins by saying that HC 47 is meant to "anticipate an objection of the Ubiquitarians."[97] The Ubiquitarians would argue that affirming the local and bodily ascension of Christ without affirming Christ's bodily presence everywhere he wills to be (particularly in the Lord's Supper) results in the absence of Christ from his people. However, the objection raised in HC 47 need not be seen as unique to the Lutherans. One can easily see how this question could be raised by anyone who thinks deeply about the ascension and the departure of Christ.[98] Though beginning his exposition of HC 47 with a refutation of the Ubiquitarians, Ursinus goes on to offer a positive account of the ways in which Christ continues to be with his people after the ascension. While the HC lists four ways, "his divinity, majesty, grace, and Spirit," in which Christ is present, Ursinus in his commentary offers a different list of five ways:

> Therefore Christ remains with us after the ascension and comes to us, 1. By his Spirit and deity. 2. By our faith and trust beholding him. 3. By mutual delight (*dilectione*), because he delights in us, and we in him, in such a way that he will not forget us. 4. By union with his human nature, because it is the same Spirit in us and in him who unites us to him. [5.] By the hope of consummation, that is, the sure hope of coming to him.[99]

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[96] HC 47.

[97] *Corp. Doct.*, 260; Williard, 247.

[98] Klooster, *Our Only Comfort*, 1:610–11.

[99] *Corp. Doct.*, 261; Williard, 248; cf. *Apologia Catechismi*, in *Opera*, 2:4C.

The differences between the HC's fourfold account of Christ's presence and Ursinus's

variant list and explanation in his commentary are perplexing. The commentary seems to

move from the divine and Spiritual aspects of presence to an elaboration of several aspects of

the believer's experience of Christ's presence. Klooster has noted the puzzling differences

between the HC and the commentary, but given that Klooster's work is an exposition of the

HC itself, he says little about the list in Ursinus's commentary and focuses on the list in HC

47, namely the meaning of the terms "majesty", "grace," and "Spirit." Klooster concludes

that "the heart of answer 47 is found in the two words 'divinity, majesty." The ascended

Christ is present with us by his "majestic divinity."[100]

This basic affirmation is not contradicted by Ursinus in the variant list he presents in

his commentary. Rather, the commentary brings out additional ways that we may affirm

Christ's presence in light of the basic affirmation that Christ is present by his Spirit and

majestic deity. One intriguing aspect of Ursinus's explanation in his commentary is the

discussion of Christ's presence in terms of faith, love (or, delight, enjoyment), and hope.

These are anchored, as it were, in Christ's presence by his deity and the Spirit whose task it is

to unite believers to the resurrected and ascended Lord. This presence is thus apprehended by

the believer's faith and trust, their love for Christ and the assurance of his love for them, and

the sure hope that believers will be present with him in a new way at the end of the age. It is

no doubt difficult to comprehend how our faith, love, and hope are ways in which Christ is

present with us. Contemporary thought on faith, love, and hope often relegates them to the

realm of mere subjective and internal feelings. Ursinus, however, sees these as means by

which Christ comes to us and by which we experience Christ's presence, not in a physical

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[100] Klooster, *Our Only Comfort*, 1:615–20 (quotation on p. 620).

way and not in a merely subjective way, but in a real spiritual way that provides deep assurance that we are united to Christ and, hence, that he is never separated from us.

B. Communion and Assurance through the Lord's Supper

In Ursinus's description of the ways in which Christ is present, he highlights that it is by the Holy Spirit that believers are in union with Christ and therefore are also in "union with [Christ's] human nature," and this is the case even though Christ is no longer physically and locally present with believers.[101] This emphasis on the believer's communion with Christ's human nature is brought out further in places where Ursinus discusses the function and benefits of the Lord's Supper. Again, while not explicitly depicting the benefits of the *extra humanum* itself, we can see that personal communion with the physically absent Christ implies an understanding of Christ's existence beyond the flesh. Even though Ursinus usually emphasizes that it is the Holy Spirit through whom we are united to the ascended Christ, he also affirms that Christ himself is communicated to his people.[102]

In the LC, for example, Ursinus does not present the believer's communion with Christ in the Lord's Supper as the work of the Holy Spirit alone, but clearly states that the "person and substance of Christ himself" are communicated to believers because "[Christ's] divinity dwells in us."[103] This being the case, Ursinus does not picture Christ as contained within his human nature. Christ himself exists beyond his human nature, dwells in his people, and communicates his "person and substance" to them. The result is that Ursinus can say that Christ's "body is joined to our bodies in such a way that we are one with him." This

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[101] *Corp. Doct.*, 261; Williard, 248.

[102] HC 70; SC 65; LC 301.

[103] LC 300.

mysterious union of things "separated by a very great distance" is effected by Holy Spirit, who is the "bond" between believers on earth and "the soul and body of Christ in heaven."[104] Drawing on John 16:7, which speaks of the Spirit being sent as the Comforter of Christ's disciples, Ursinus elsewhere adds that it is Christ who sends the Holy Spirit to "gather, comfort, and defend his church even to the end of the world."[105] Certainly the believer's union with Christ is mysterious. Since Christ's body is in heaven, this union cannot be a physical union except in a qualified sense. It is physical only in the sense that Christ has a true human body as do believers, but these are joined spiritually by the Holy Spirit and Christ himself by virtue of his divine nature.

The benefits of the Lord's Supper center on the believer's recognition and reception of Christ himself and his work and the resulting assurance the believer gains from this reality. Hence HC 75 addresses the question, "How does the Lord's Supper remind you and assure you that you share in Christ's one sacrifice on the cross and in all his gifts?"[106] Furthermore, the design of the Supper is that it would be "a most sure proof of our union and communion with Christ, who feeds us by his body and blood unto everlasting life."[107] Through the Supper, therefore, believers are assured that Christ is present with his people and that his salvific work is applied to them. Ursinus expresses Christ's presence in various terms and phrases: "union," "communion," "dwelling," "joining," "partaking" (or, "participation"), and that believers are "flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone."[108] Beyond the mere presence of

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[104] LC 301.

[105] *Corp. Doct.*, 265; Williard, 250.

[106] HC 75.

[107] *Corp. Doct.*, 407; Williard, 379.

[108] *Corp. Doct.*, 407, 411; Williard, 379, 382; LC 300; HC 76.

Christ, believers are additionally assured that Christ's work is applied to them just as surely as they taste the bread and the cup of the Lord in the Supper.[109] In Ursinus's thought, given Christ's bodily ascension, this kind of communion and assurance is only possible on the supposition that Christ exists and acts beyond his human nature, transcending time and space, and by the bond of the Holy Spirit.

III. Conclusion

With the so-called Ubiquitarians or Gnesio-Lutherans in his sights, Ursinus emphasizes that Christ's human nature is ascended into heaven and is therefore no longer on earth. Thus the biblical texts that speak of Christ's continued presence must refer not to Christ's humanity, but to his presence according to his divinity. In light of this basic commitment, Ursinus also emphasizes the unity and wholeness of Christ's person and presence, the principle that glorification and humiliation do not change a nature, and he speaks in terms of Christ's modes of presence. In each case Ursinus is rather unoriginal, and we have noted similar emphases in the works of Cyril of Alexandria and Thomas Aquinas. All of these aspects of the doctrine of the *extra humanum*, while not unique to Ursinus, are applied and developed within the unique historical and theological context of the Palatinate Reformation.

Lastly, the doctrine of Christ's existence beyond his human nature is not a theological and polemical idiosyncrasy in Ursinus's thought, but is a doctrine closely tied to his emphasis on the benefits of Christ's ascension and believers' participation in the Lord's Supper. From what we have seen, it would be fair to say that according to Ursinus it is actually of more benefit to believers that Christ bodily departed than if Christ had remained bodily on earth. Christ's personal ministry beyond his flesh and by the sending of his Holy

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[109] HC 75.

Spirit results in abundant blessings to the believer that transcend time and space. Indeed, on account of the *extra humanum* Ursinus is able to simultaneously affirm the promise of Christ to always be with his disciples and Christ's statement that it was for his disciples' good that he go away (Matthew 28:20; John 16:7).

CHAPTER 6:

PATHS OF RECOVERY: CONTEMPORARY APPROACHES TO

THE *EXTRA CALVINISTICUM*

Our sampling of historical uses of the *extra Calvinisticum* has shown some of the variety of ways in which the doctrine was employed in different theologians and that, although the *extra* did not receive its own locus in theology, it played a significant role in certain christological contexts. Since the *extra* had such an important function in earlier christology, and given that it suffered neglect by the end of the nineteenth century, there is therefore a place for recovering the *extra* and exploring in what ways it might be utilized today. In this chapter I will critically examine recent constructive appropriations of the *extra*—what I am calling paths of recovery—with a view toward understanding and articulating the continuing relevance of the *extra*. In the end I argue that some of these contemporary appropriations are problematic, while others hold more promise. In this way this chapter sets up the next and final chapter in which I draw some conclusions from the entire study and make some recommendations for how the *extra* ought to be used in theology.

As a way of opening the discussion of the doctrine's ongoing significance, we first consider the use of *extra* in the work of Karl Barth (1886–1968) and Helmut Thielicke (1908–1986)—two influential twentieth-century theologians whose appropriations of the *extra* have had a continuing impact. Second, we analyze and critique several contemporary attempts to recover the *extra*. Indeed, in recent years there has been a growing number of constructive efforts, as well as some brief suggestions, toward a recovery of the *extra Calvinisticum*. The efforts of Christian Link and Theodore Zachariades are perhaps the most

significant attempts to draw insights from the *extra* and related issues, though more recently

a few essays have also debated the viability of the *extra*.[1] As for other sources, it would be

extremely difficult to catalog every place where the *extra* is simply mentioned, but we may

note a few places where it has appeared in more substantial and constructive—as opposed to

merely historical or descriptive—contexts or where the authors have hinted at the benefits of

further study of the *extra*.[2] All of these scholarly forays into the doctrine probably do not

constitute a resurgence of the *extra Calvinisticum*, but they do at least suggest that the

doctrine and its potential usefulness is a thread in the fabric of theology today.

I. Twentieth-Century Paths of Recovery: Barth and Thielicke

Our exploration of contemporary paths of recovery begins with the work of Karl Barth on the

extra and his critique of it. In addition to Barth, I will examine the work of his younger

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[1] Christian Link, "Die Entscheidung der Christologie Calvins und ihre theologische Bedeutung: Das sogenannte Extra-Calvinisticum" *EvTh* 47, no. 2 (1987): 97–119; Theodore Zachariades, "The *Extra Calvinisticum*: A Doctrinal Emphasis Needing Reaffirmation," unpublished paper, Evangelical Theological Society, Southeastern Region, 15 March 2002 (T.R.E.N., ETS-9051); idem, "The Omnipresence of Jesus Christ: A Neglected Aspect of Evangelical Christology" (Ph.D. diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2004); Christina Aus der Au, "Das Extra Calvinisticum—mehr als ein reformiertes Extra?" *ThZ* 64, no. 4 (2008): 358–69; Myk Habets, "Putting the 'extra' back into Calvinism," *SJTh* 62, no. 4 (2009): 441–56; Paulo Gamberini, "La questione cattolica del 'subsistit' e la dottrina dell''extra calvinisticum': Un approccio ecumenico," in *Alla riscoperta di Giovanni Calvino: e del suo messaggio a cinquecento anni dalla nascita*, ed. Michele Cassese (Venice: I.S.E. "San Bernardino", 2011), 133–77; Cornelis van der Kooi, "The Identity of Israel's God: The Potential of the So-called *Extra-Calvinisticum*," in *Tradition and Innovation in Biblical Interpretation*, eds. W. Th. van Peursen and J. W. Dyk (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 209–22; Darren O. Sumner, "The Twofold Life of the Word: Karl Barth's Critical Reception of the *Extra Calvinisticum*," *IJST* 15, no. 1 (2013): 42–57.

[2] Helmut Thielicke, *The Evangelical Faith*, 3 vols., trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974–1982), 1:292–96, et passim; Donald MacLeod, *The Person of Christ* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998), 199; Bruce L. McCormack, "Grace and Being: The Role of God's Gracious Election in Karl Barth's Theological Ontology," in *The Cambridge Companion to Karl Barth*, ed. John Webster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 95–101; idem, "Seek God Where He May Be Found: A Response to Edwin Chr. van Driel," in *Orthodox and Modern: Studies in the Theology of Karl Barth* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 265–77; Paul Helm, *John Calvin's Ideas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 58–92; Michael S. Horton, *Lord and Servant: A Covenant Christology* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2005), 162–65; Oliver Crisp, *Divinity and Humanity: The Incarnation Reconsidered* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 142–43; idem, *God Incarnate: Explorations in Christology* (London: T&T Clark, 2009), 56–62; David VanDrunen, *Natural Law and the Two Kingdoms: A Study in the Development of Reformed Social Thought* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 429–30.

contemporary, Helmut Thielicke, who offers a different way of appropriating the *extra*. In both cases, my purpose is not merely to understand the work of these theologians on the *extra*, but to identify some trends in modern uses and applications of the doctrine.

A. Karl Barth

In a word, we could say that Barth was unsettled about the *extra Calvinisticum*. As noted in the previous chapter, he gave a negative assessment of the doctrine as it appears in the Heidelberg Catechism.[3] This, though, is not the whole picture. For instance, in the *Church Dogmatics* he affirms something like the *extra* when he says that "the Word of God descended from the freedom, majesty and glory of his divinity," but "without becoming unlike Himself He assumed His likeness to us."[4] Later, however, Barth states that he is unsatisfied with the doctrine.[5] Recognizing Barth's unease and varying assessments, a recent article has called attention to the fact that Barth's views on the *extra* developed throughout his career from initial approval of it, to suspicion, and ultimately to revision.[6] This confirms what T. Hoogsteen already showed several years ago, namely that Barth did not reject the doctrine completely, but gave it a unique meaning. For Barth, the older Reformed version of the *extra Calvinisticum* tended toward "dualism and a knowledge of God other than in Jesus Christ." So in his reworking of the doctrine, he emphasized the unity of the person Jesus

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[3] Karl Barth, *Die christliche Lehre nach dem Heidelberger Katechismus* (Zollikon-Zurich: Evangelischer Verlag, 1948), 70; ET: *Learning Jesus Through The Heidelberg Catechism*, trans. Shirley C. Guthrie Jr. (repr., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981), 77.

[4] Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, 4 vols., eds. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1956–1975), I/2, 165.

[5] Barth, *CD*, IV/1, 181.

[6] Sumner, "Twofold Life," 49.

Christ and that the incarnation is itself the expression of the divine nature.[7] Yet as Bruce

McCormack shows, contrary to a misconception of Barth's view,[8] Barth does not ultimately

deny the distinction between the *Logos asarkos* (the Word without the flesh) and the *Logos*

ensarkos (the Word enfleshed), since, for example, the human flesh of Jesus was not eternal

but had a beginning in time. Rather, Barth's concern with the *Logos asarkos* and *ensarkos*

distinction is that we not view the Logos as having any being or existence apart from the

determination to become incarnate.[9] Jesus Christ *is* the *Logos asarkos* and *ensarkos*.

McCormack gives an explanation of how this can be the case by locating the *extra* within

Barth's distinction between the *Logos incarnandus* (the Word who will become incarnate)

and the *Logos incarnatus* (the Word incarnate):

> The *Logos incarnandus* is both *asarkos* (because not yet embodied) and *ensarkos* (by way of anticipation, on the basis of God's Self-determination in the act of electing); the *Logos incarnatus* is both *asarkos* (the so-called *extra Calvinisticum*) and *ensarkos* (having become embodied). Thus the identity of both the *Logos incarnandus* and the *Logos incarnatus* is the same.[10]

So, for Barth, Jesus Christ is both wholly in the flesh and wholly outside it because from

eternity God has determined him to be so. The incarnation is the expression of the divine

fullness and majesty, not its limitation or containment.

Thus, on McCormack's reading of Barth, we must maintain the identity of the one

Logos as Jesus Christ without thinking that "the identity of the eternal Logos is something

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[7] T. Hoogsteen, "Vere Deus, Vere Homo: A Comparative Study Between Calvin and Barth on the Basis of the *extra Calvinisticum* and the *communicatio idiomatum*" (Th.D. diss., Theologische Hogeschool te Kampen, 1983), 84–89 (quote on p. 84); cf. Barth, *CD*, IV/1, 187.

[8] As expressed by Hoogsteen, "Vere Deus, Vere Homo," 87, who says that Barth denied the distinciton "vehemently." Hoogsteen's citation of *CD*, IV/2, 33 does not support his statement.

[9] McCormack, "Grace and Being," 95–97; "Seek God," 265–67.

[10] McCormack, "Seek God," 266.

more or other than the identity of the Word made flesh."[11] Similarly, Darren Sumner

emphasizes that in Barth's view there is one Logos who cannot be accessed other than in

Jesus Christ. Yet Sumner stresses the additional point that it is specifically by way of his

unique account of Christ's two states of humiliation and exaltation that Barth rehabilitates the

extra. Because Barth unites the two states of Christ and makes them simultaneous and

mutually interpretive, rather than successive stages or periods, it "allows us to affirm both

that the Son is never limited to human form, never abandons the throne or ceases to sustain

the universe, and *also* that he is one, undivided Subject who cannot be sought other than in

Jesus Christ."[12] Barth himself does not explicitly draw out this connection between the

simultaneity of the two states and his rehabilitation of the doctrine of the *extra Calvinisticum*,

so Sumner's analysis is more of a description of one plausible explanation for why Barth is

able to preserve the *extra*. Nevertheless, what is clear in Barth, and what Hoogsteen,

McCormack, and Sumner each call our attention to, is that the identity of the Logos is Jesus

Christ and we must never seek the Logos, or God's essence for that matter, apart from or

beyond the incarnate Christ.

Barth's warning against seeking the Logos beyond the incarnate Christ is

commendable. It seems clearly Chalcedonian and orthodox to insist upon the hypostatic

union—the one Mediator and Lord, Jesus Christ. One puzzling feature, however, is this

accusation leveled by Barth: the *extra Calvinisticum* "has led to fatal speculation about the

being and work of the λόγος ἄσαρκος, or a God whom we think we can know elsewhere, and

whose divine being we can define from elsewhere than in and from the contemplation of His

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[11] McCormack, "Seek God," 267.

[12] Sumner, "Twofold Life," 56 (original emphasis).

presence and activity as the Word made flesh."[13] On the one hand, Barth goes on to accuse

Calvin of falling into the trap of speculation at this point, but, on the other hand, he seems to

absolve Calvin a few lines later when he says that Calvin was not pursuing an "abstract

Extra" that would separate "the Son of God and the man Jesus."[14] One question for Barth,

then, is this: Who has used the *extra Calvinisticum* for the purpose of speculation and

defining the divine being apart from the incarnate Christ? It is doubtful if anyone in the

history of the church's use of the *extra* prior to the modern era has used it as a principle from

which to develop a doctrine of God or has been caused by the *extra* to develop a particular

doctrine of God. As we have seen in our historical survey, the *extra* had rather limited

application to christological questions and Eucharistic questions closely related to

christology. The *extra* does not appear to be a *principium* or starting point in any theological

system before the twentieth century. More likely, what Barth's critique here reveals is his

own doctrine of revelation and his insistence upon a particular form of christocentrism in

which Jesus Christ is the "cognitive foundation of theology."[15] Hence, to his mind, any

theology that does not share this kind of christocentrism founders at its foundational point

and constitutes a speculative circumvention of God's revelation in Jesus. Since the traditional

form of the *extra Calvinisticum* in some sense affirms a being and activity of Christ beyond

the flesh, Barth sees it as opening the door to speculation and that great Barthian boogey

man, natural theology.

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[13] Barth, *CD*, IV/1, 181.

[14] Barth, *CD*, IV/1, 181. Barth's accusation of Calvin's speculation here and elsewhere has generated some significant scholarly debate, particularly as it pertains to christology and the doctrine of election. For example, see the studies of McCormack cited above; Helm, *John Calvin's Ideas*, 63; David Gibson, *Reading the Decree: Exegesis, Election and Christology in Calvin and Barth*, (London: T&T Clark, 2009); idem, "A Mirror for God and for Us: Christology and Exegesis in Calvin's Doctrine of Election," *IJST* 11, no. 4 (2009): 448–65; Helm, *Calvin at the Centre* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 114–31.

[15] Gibson, "A Mirror for God," 464.

An additional contribution by Barth in regards to the *extra Calvinisticum* has been overlooked in the contemporary discussion of Barth's view of the *extra*. Barth offers an approach to resolving the Lutheran and Reformed disputes over the presence of Christ in his discussion of the divine perfection of omnipresence.[16] Barth's position is an affirmation and critique of both the Lutheran and Reformed doctrines of Christ's presence and an attempt to dialectically synthesize them by moving beyond them. Behind Barth's reassessment of the Lutheran and Reformed positions is his view that the hypostatic union ought to shape how we understand the doctrine of God's presence. To begin, he highlights that there is a "proper presence of God in His creation," which is "His presence in His Word … in Jesus Christ."[17] Further, he argues that the reality of the human nature in union with the divine in the incarnation leads us to revise our understanding of God such that we no longer speak of God's "non-spatiality" but rather his "spatiality ... in the whole width of his revelation … and in His ubiquity in the world." Thus, on account of the revelation of God in Christ, we must reckon with the reality of a "divine space" that defines and sustains all other spaces.[18] From this point, Barth reassesses the sixteenth-century positions.

First, Barth is convinced by the Lutheran arguments from Scripture (specifically Matt. 18:20; 28:20; Eph. 4:10; and Col. 1:18) that by virtue of the hypostatic union there must continue to be a bodily presence of Christ in the world. But he says that the Lutherans failed when they argued that Christ at the right hand of God meant that Christ was present everywhere, by which they, without biblical warrant, conflated the unique presence of God in Christ with God's general presence. This was, Barth comments, because of the "fatal"

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[16] *CD*, II/1, 487–90.

[17] *CD*, II/1, 483.

[18] *CD*, II/1, 486.

assumptions of the "older theology" that claimed that "the essence of God is the non-spatial infinite."[19] Second, the Reformed fare little better. Although he notes that they were correct in their local understanding of the right hand of God, he finds the Reformed interpretations of the Lutherans' key texts to be "evasive," citing the explanations given in Heidelberg Catechism 47 and 48 as examples of this kind of evasion. Additionally, Barth dismisses the Reformed explanation of the spiritual eating and drinking of Christ's body and blood in the Lord's Supper. Thus whereas the Lutherans failed because they conflated God's unique presence in Christ with God's general presence, the Reformed failed because they did not recognize the "divinity" of the place of Christ's human nature and "Christ's omnipresence even in His human nature."[20]

On this analysis, without a new theological paradigm to rescue Lutherans and Reformed the problems of the two positions will never be resolved. Enter Barth. He argues that the solution is in his account of God's proper presence in Jesus Christ. That is, "in Jesus Christ the space of God Himself (in the strictest original sense of the concept, the throne of God) has become identical with creaturely human space" and so we must say that Christ is omnipresent not merely in his divinity, but also bodily.[21] It is as if there has been such a union of the divine reality with the human reality in the person of Christ that it results in a new relationship of God in Christ to the physical world. Christ exalted to the throne of God in a sense brings humanity and all creation into the throne room with him so that all things are in the very bodily presence of the man Jesus Christ.

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[19] *CD*, II/1, 488.

[20] *CD*, II/1, 488, 489; cf. *CD* I/2, 170.

[21] *CD*, II/1, 489–90.

Barth's approach to the *extra Calvinisticum* is one of recovery, not outright rejection. His recasting of it with reference only to the incarnate Word seeks to protect against the supposed dualism of earlier formations of the doctrine. Barth's critique and reformulation of the *extra* has, so to speak, put the doctrine back on the map in modern theology. In contemporary discussions of the *extra*, it is fair to say that Barth's view is second only to Calvin's in the amount of attention it receives, and indeed the two theologians' views are frequently discussed and debated together.[22] Barth's influence, visible in how often he is referenced in modern discussions of the *extra*, leads us to suggest that—subsequent to him—we may offer yet one more name for the doctrine under consideration here: the *extra Barthianum*.

B. Helmut Thielicke

Several years ago in an article on the *extra*, Christian Link commented that the German Lutheran preacher and theologian, Helmut Thielicke offers one of the most interesting modern interpretations of the *extra Calvinisticum*.[23] This is a fair assessment of Thielicke's contribution. It is noteworthy, however, that Thielicke's use of the *extra* has received little attention apart from Link's comments and an article by Christina Aus der Au.[24] Even more intriguing is the fact that Thielicke was a Lutheran, and so his advocacy of the *extra* is particularly striking given his tradition's animosity towards the doctrine. In sum, his work deserves our attention not only because he uses the *extra* in a unique way, but also because his approach has impacted Link's contribution, which itself has figured prominently in the

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[22] As is clear in the works of Hoogsteen, McCormack, Helm, and Gibson cited above.

[23] Link, "Das sogenannte Extra-Calvinisticum," 110n42.

[24] Aus der Au, "Das Extra Calvinisticum," 363.

recent literature on the *extra*. Even beyond that, Thielicke's appropriation of the *extra* offers an alternative to Barth's, and so represents another twentieth-century path of recovery.

In order to understand Thielicke's use of the *extra*, we first need to orient ourselves to some of the basics of his theology. In his system of doctrine, *Der Evangelische Glaube* (1968–1973),[25] Thielicke strives to develop a theology that accounts for both the objective, transcendent dimensions of God's existence and the ineradicably immanent way that God is revealed in the world. In Thielicke's account, theology focuses on the "relation between God and man"—the "correlation between lost man and the redeeming God." In this way, to speak about God is always to speak at the same time about humanity and the human consciousness. Where Thielicke departs from many modern approaches is in his steadfast resistance to reducing theology to merely speech about humanity and its religious experience and in his parallel resistance to reducing God's being to the mere being of the world. Throughout his system, in fact, Thielicke works with what we might call a fundamental extra dimension that describes the God-world relation. Thielicke writes, "[a]lthough in virtue of his self-disclosure God cannot in fact be discussed without this reference to the human consciousness, this does not entail his enclosure within it."[26] This is no doubt a crucial point of Thielicke's entire theological system and it has a significant connection to the doctrine of the *extra Calvinisticum*.

Thielicke uses the *extra Calvinisticum* most extensively to oppose the idea of the death of God, which was a 1960s theological fad that stressed the radical and entire immanence of God in humanity, and was propounded by theologians William Hamilton and

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[25] ET: *The Evangelical Faith*, 3 vols., trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974–1982).

[26] Thielicke, *Evangelical Faith*, 1:14–15 (quotes on p. 15).

Thomas Altizer. Thielicke, citing Hamilton, summarizes the movement as declaring that

"transcendence as a whole is lost and not just the God of theism. A transcendence distinct

from the immanence of secular experience cannot be upheld."[27] For Thielicke the death-of-

God theology represents the most radical form of an Enlightenment approach that reduces

God to merely an immanent reality and reduces theology to merely a dealing with human

consciousness and experience. In response, Thielicke says that the proper expression of the

God-world relation is to affirm God's immanence but to also maintain the distinction

between God and the world. This way of construing the God-world relation, he argues, has

its "ultimate basis" in the incarnation which declares "the secularity of God"—God's

existence in the secular—but without God becoming "identical with the world," and it is here

that Thielicke finds the *extra Calvinisticum* so instructive.[28]

On Thielicke's view, the *extra* gives expression not only to a central christological

truth but, by virtue of the incarnation's paradigmatic display of the God-world relation, the

extra also functions as a broader principle in conceptualizing the God-world relation and the

theological task as a whole. This expansion of the role of the *extra* from christology to

theology, and ontology more broadly, is Thielicke's unique contribution to the modern

discussion of the *extra Calvinisticum*. He further explains that the *extra* reminds us that we

must not confuse epistemology and ontology. That is, we must not confuse God's

"knowability with his being" by wrongly believing that since God is only known in and

through the world and human consciousness that he therefore does not exist beyond the

world and human consciousness. Thielicke astutely points out that to make such a move is to

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[27] Thielicke, *Evangelical Faith*, 1:292.

[28] Thielicke, *Evangelical Faith*, 1:292.

confuse a "noetic" statement with an "ontic" one.[29] The *extra*, then, is a guardian in the

theological task that he later calls a "safety valve" that checks the tendency to reduce God to

mere finitude. Because the incarnation is the "exemplary union" of God and the world, the

extra is the doctrine that guards against those reductionist systems that would seek to

eliminate the transcendence of God.[30]

Thielicke makes another significant contribution in connection with the *extra* when

he applies its insights to Christian ethics. This relationship to ethics is significant because it

reveals the extent to which this extra-dimension conceptualization of the God-world relation

impacts Thielicke's thought. Also, Thielicke was well-known for his contribution to

theological ethics, so it is fitting to highlight the appropriation of the *extra* in this sphere. To

summarize, in Thielicke's view of Christian ethics the extra-dimension conceptualization of

the God-world relation is a paradigm or analogy for the Christian's existence and action in

this world. More simply, the extra dimension of God's existence is reflected in the lives of

God's people. Thielicke explains this in a short discussion of the Sermon on the Mount and

the Decalogue. These ethical standards represent the Christian's "freedom for and from the

world," and by living according to these ethical distinctives the Christian is not absorbed into

"the clutches of this passing aeon."[31] Rather, the Christian who lives by these standards

exhibits a secularity and presence within the world yet—and here is the extra dimension—a

distance and distinctiveness from the world that transcends secularity. This way of God's

people being in the world reflects God's being in the world. Thielicke says, "[w]hat applies

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[29] Thielicke, *Evangelical Faith*, 1:293.

[30] Thielicke, *Evangelical Faith*, 1:374–75.

[31] Thielicke, *Evangelical Faith*, 1:341.

to [God's] people, namely, that they come into the world only by the way of exodus and

distance, so that they do not conform to the world, is even more applicable to him."[32]

He likewise articulates this emphasis in his multi-volume text on theological ethics.

Here Thielicke says that Christian ethics is an "impossible possibility" because of the

paradox of living in two aeons.[33] He further explains:

> [T]he mystery of Christian ethics is a christological mystery. It rests on an
> irresolvable tension between deity and humanity in Christ. Just as I cannot represent
> logically the togetherness of the divine and the human natures in Christ, co-ordinating
> them with one another in a static and time-less way in terms of logic, so I cannot find
> a formula for the unity of the Christian's existence, which on the one hand is lived out
> in this aeon and yet at the same time participates in the heavenly commonwealth.[34]

While not explicitly invoking the *extra* in this section, this discussion clearly echoes the

emphasis in *The Evangelical Faith*, where the *extra* is invoked as a way of conceptualizing

not only God's relationship to the world, but also, in an analogous way, the Christian's

relationship to the world as one who lives in it and affirms secularity while simultaneously

transcending it.[35]

Thielicke indeed presents a fascinating modern appropriation of the *extra*

Calvinisticum. His principializing move, or the extension of the *extra*, into broader spheres

than christology, is a unique though largely overlooked contribution. This way of extending

the *extra* does, however, become a feature of later uses of the doctrine even though Thielicke

is seldom referenced as a source. This way of extending the *extra* will be examined in more

detail in the next section as we look at some contemporary paths of recovery.

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[32] Thielicke, *Evangelical Faith*, 1:345.

[33] Helmut Thielicke, *Theological Ethics*, 2 vols., ed. William H. Lazareth (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1966–1969), 1:44.

[34] Thielicke, *Theological Ethics*, 1:45.

[35] Thielicke, *Evangelical Faith*, 1:345.

II. Contemporary Paths of Recovery

Barth and Thielicke reveal diverse outworkings of the *extra* in the twentieth century, and their engagement with the doctrine is instructive for seeing the ongoing trends of recovery in more recent work on the *extra*. Now we turn to examine several of those trends. I frame the discussion below according to some observable approaches and trajectories in recent work on the *extra*. This is not to say that these are the only noticeable themes or that there is not some overlap among them. First is what I am calling the extra-dimensions approach, which includes several recent attempts that, in a way similar to Thielicke, extend or expand the use of the *extra* beyond its traditional christological uses. Second, I review some attempts to bring the *extra* into dialogue with modern versions of kenotic christology. Third, I comment briefly on a very recent debate concerning the use of the *extra* to critique modern theologies of a suffering God.

A. Extra Dimensions: Appropriating the *extra* by Extension or Expansion

Among recent paths of recovering the *extra Calvinisticum* perhaps the most prominent is to take the extra concept—the concept of the beyond-ness or unlimitedness of Christ's existence even as incarnate—and extend or expand that concept into other areas of theology, including ecclesiology and even biblical interpretation. This approach is exemplified by Thielicke, who may have been the first to take this approach, and it has become increasingly popular. In this approach, an author borrows the extra dimension from the doctrine of the *extra Calvinisticum* and uses it as a principle with much broader applications. This is a recovery of the *extra* by extension or expansion.

We have already seen that Thielicke's approach caught the attention of Link and Aus der Au, and has influenced their work. Another source or catalyst, however, is a bit

surprising—namely, an article on the extra dimension in John Calvin's thought by the eminent historian, Heiko Oberman. The influence of Oberman's article on constructive theological proposals about the *extra* is surprising because his essay is a distinctly historical study of a cluster of emphases in Calvin's thought and their medieval and Reformation roots. Only in the last paragraph of the essay does Oberman suggest any implications of the historical findings for contemporary theology, and even this suggestion has more to do with interpreting Calvin than application to theology.[36]

Link clearly takes some cues from Oberman's piece and shows some affinity to Thielicke. Still more recently Christina Aus der Au and Cornelis van der Kooi build on Link's work, and a Jesuit theologian, Paolo Gamberini, takes a related approach.[37] Granted, each of these three authors offers a unique perspective on recovering or reappropriating the *extra*, but they all share the common theme of extending or expanding the doctrine beyond christological applications. As we will see presently, this method of extension is exemplified by Link.

1. Christian Link

The procedure of extending the *extra* beyond christology finds perhaps its most programmatic contemporary expression in a 1987 article by Christian Link. Whereas Oberman's work is historical—focusing on the interpretation of Calvin—Link utilizes Oberman's essay to legitimize his own use of the *extra* to open up new horizons in theology and his use of the *extra* as a principle in these new horizons. Crucial to Link's project is Oberman's statement that, for Calvin, the *extra Calvinisticum* was not an "isolated

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[36] Heiko A. Oberman, "The 'Extra' Dimension in the Theology of Calvin," *JEH* 21, no. 1 (1970): 43–64.

[37] Link, "Das sogenannte Extra-Calvinisticum"; Aus der Au, "Das Extra Calvinisticum"; Van der Kooi, "Identity of Israel's God"; Gamberini, "La questione cattolica."

phenomenon but rather, like the top of an iceberg, only the most controversial aspect of a whole 'extra' dimension in Calvin's theology."[38] Link takes this observation about Calvin's thought as license, or support, for using the *extra* as a key for new theological directions. As he says, the *extra* is not a "Specialissimum of Calvinist christology, but opens the horizon to engage in almost all doctrinal themes and … to obtain a new sense of direction."[39] Two observations are warranted here. First, Oberman's work suggests no such role for the *extra Calvinisticum* in theology and, in fact, he does not even suggest that it plays this kind of key role in Calvin's theology. Rather, Oberman says that the *extra Calvinisticum* is merely the "most controversial" of a whole cluster of "extra dimensions" in Calvin's theology that all reflect Calvin's inheritance of the medieval distinction between God's *potentia absoluta* (absolute power) and *potentia ordinata* (ordained power).[40] Second, this is not to suggest that Link is wrong about the ability of the *extra* to function in such a key and expansive theological role. He may be right on the theological extension of the doctrine, but if he believes that this is what Oberman recommends, Link is in error.

Link is clearly interested in the broader implications and applications of the *extra* and not merely its historical sources and uses. At the outset he asks if the *extra* is "perhaps more than merely a logical requirement and … a seemingly abstract consequence from the old two-natures doctrine?"[41] He undoubtedly thinks that the *extra* is more than this. He sees it as something like a theological key. So, what exactly does this look like for Link? While he

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[38] Oberman, "'Extra' Dimension," 62; cf. Link, "Das sogenannte Extra-Calvinisticum," 99.

[39] Link, "Das sogenannte Extra-Calvinisticum," 99.

[40] Oberman, "The 'Extra' Dimension," 62–63; cf. Paulo Gamberini, "La questione cattolica," 141–42.

[41] Link, "Das sogenannte Extra-Calvinisticum," 98.

offers several perspectives, we focus on two of his main themes in the article: the implications of the *extra* for a doctrine of revelation and for human action in the world.

First, for Link the *extra* means that Jesus of Nazareth is the "authentic likeness of God" and that "God's self has entered into human history, *without* being enclosed in it."[42] He sees the *extra*, therefore, as not just a statement about the incarnation of the Word and his relationship to his human body. More that that, on the assumption that the incarnation is God's revelation proper, the *extra* is a statement about God's revelation of himself and God's relationship to human history and the created order. Here the similarity to Thielicke is palpable. Link, however, appeals to the Lord's Supper as grounds for extending the *extra*, which is a move that Thielicke does not make. Link presents the Lord's Supper as the original "Sitz im Leben" of the *extra* and as not only the point of the church's union with Christ but, more broadly, the "intersection" (*Schnittpunkt*) of the entire "God-world reality" (*Gottes- und Weltwirklichkeit*). Hence the *extra*, being part and parcel of this Eucharistic intersection point, is also indicative of God's revelation and presence in the world more generally.[43] Link concludes that the *extra*, therefore, "implies a certain, in no way uncontroversial understanding of *revelation*." Specifically, it implies that God's revelation of himself in the world is such that a permanent difference remains between God and world.[44] The *extra* allows for the "*theological* difference between God's self" and his "concrete manifestation" in the world. In turn, this provides a kind of hermeneutical benefit because it allows for the differences in God's revelation in history between the Old Testament and the New Testament without thereby implying that God himself is different in each historical act

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[42] Link, "Das sogenannte Extra-Calvinisticum," 101 (original emphasis).

[43] Link, "Das sogenannte Extra-Calvinisticum," 105.

[44] Link, "Das sogenannte Extra-Calvinisticum," 110 (original emphasis).

of revelation. This further confirms for Link that we ought to focus on the various forms and historical features of revelation as we encounter them throughout Scripture and in the world.[45]

Link's second extension of the *extra* is into the realm of human action in the world. In a sense this is the main point of the article and forms the central point of his conclusion. Link connects the benefits that the *extra* has for the doctrine of revelation to a proposal for human action. Although Link is sympathetic to Barth's fear that the *extra* would open up the dreaded possibility of natural theology, Link is not as cautious since he believes that the *extra* affirms a power of God in creation universally that is the essential foundation for expecting God to work in and through human beings.[46] Thus he suggests that the *extra* must be interpreted, in its widest sense, "forward." That is, it must be pressed into service for making the reality of Christ's invisible reign visible in the here and now. We should be, Link argues, God's hands and feet in the world who draw on the power of the Logos that "does not cease to fill heaven and earth." This is the "comprehensive message" of the *extra Calvinisticum*. We are to be like parables in the world—"this-worldly repetitions of revelation."[47]

Link's appropriation and extension of the *extra* expands the christological doctrine. His method is to move from the *extra* as a statement of Christ's existence beyond the flesh to a theological sense of the doctrine as a statement of God's ways of revealing himself in the world and God's relationship to the world. Rather than a christological *etiam extra carnem*, Link offers a theological *etiam extra revelationem* ("even beyond revelation") and a confession of God's power and action *intra mundum* ("within the world"). In this way, a

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[45] Link, "Das sogenannte Extra-Calvinisticum," 112.

[46] Link, "Das sogenannte Extra-Calvinisticum," 116–18.

[47] Link, "Das sogenannte Extra-Calvinisticum," 119.

doctrine that had been unique to the articulation of the doctrine of the incarnation and the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper has been transformed into a broader theological principle.

Before leaving Link's work, we close by noting that his approach—and, indeed, Thielicke's before him—is developed in a recent contribution by Christina Aus der Au. She explicitly appropriates both Thielicke and Link and discusses the contemporary relevance of the *extra* in terms of its expression of the Creator-creature distinction and the relation between God's transcendence and immanence. We find her echoing the method of extending the *extra* in, for example, her statement that "the Extra Calvinisticum has not only a christological, but also a creational-theological payoff."[48] Additionally, she looks at the payoff of the *extra* for understanding a doctrine of revelation and argues that the *extra* is indicative of God's transcendence of his historical revelation. This is similar to Link's approach, but here she emphasizes, drawing on insights from Dietrich Bonhoeffer, that God is in fact beheld and grasped in his word in the church. There is thus a sense in which the infinite is grasped in revelation, though not exhaustively.[49] Aus der Au's unique contribution is her addition of Bonhoeffer to the discussion, but in the end her work confirms what we have already suggested: Link's approach has exerted great influence in contemporary explorations of the *extra Calvinisticum*.

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[48] Aus der Au, "Das Extra Calvinisticum," 363–64, 367 (quote on p. 367).

[49] Aus der Au, "Das Extra Calvinisticum," 365–66.

2. Cornelis van der Kooi

A similar method of expanding and extending the doctrine of the *extra* was recently

employed by Cornelis van der Kooi, who explicitly builds on Link's proposal.[50] Suffice it to

say that for van der Kooi the *extra Calvinisticum* is called on to do quite a lot of theological

work. Van der Kooi presents the *extra* as a theological concept that articulates the drama of

God's interaction with humankind and humankind's position as a recipient in this drama. To

that end, the *extra* stands in stark contrast to a "classical theology that often threatened to

hollow out the drama of God's fellowship with man" through its doctrine of divine decrees

and ideas of primary and secondary causality.[51] Building on the expansion of the doctrine in

Link, van der Kooi views the *extra* as, in essence, a "summary of the asymmetrical

relationship between God and men," and as such it is a fundamental structural principle of

theology. He sees this structural principle as "determin[ing] all of Calvin's theology and

spirituality" and, following his reading of Calvin, he seeks to press the principle into an

architectonic role in the theological task. Indeed, for van der Kooi the *extra* has wide-ranging

implications for theology and biblical interpretation.[52]

  With respect to theology, van der Kooi uses the *extra Calvinisticum* as a trope for

several other emphases related to both the incarnation and God's relationship to the created

order. The tropological quality of the *extra* is clear at the outset where he refers to the *extra*

Calvinisticum as a "*theologoumenon*," by which he seems to emphasize the term itself rather

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[50] Van der Kooi, "Identity of Israel's God," 211, 217.

[51] Van der Kooi, "Identity of Israel's God," 211, 215 (quote on p. 211).

[52] cf. Cornelis van der Kooi, "Calvin's Christology from a Contemporary Systematic Perspective: A Few Remarks," in *Calvin—Saint or Sinner?*, ed. Herman J. Selderhuis (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 247; idem, *As in a Mirror: John Calvin and Karl Barth on Knowing God: A Diptych*, trans. Donald Mader (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 44–45. Ironically, despite van der Kooi's appeal to the *extra* as a structural theological principle in his article, the *extra* has no such role in—and appears to be completely absent from—his and G. Van den Brink's textbook on dogmatics, *Christelijke dogmatiek* (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 2012).

than the doctrine to which it refers. This tropological move is further evident as we find van der Kooi using the *extra* in a wide variety of unusual ways. Not only is it made to be a statement of the structural principle of the asymmetry between God and humanity, but it is even said to have a "soteriological function" for the way it "draws attention to an important aspect of the incarnation, namely, that the life of Jesus is part of God's movement and pathway toward mankind." This is followed by a quotation of the Nicene Creed's confession of the incarnation and Christ's virgin birth.[53] It seems that here the *extra Calvinisticum* is conflated with, or absorbed into, the doctrine of the incarnation in such a way that it is no longer clear what exactly the *extra Calvinisticum* specifically is or what it specifically highlights in the doctrine of the incarnation. Additional examples could be mentioned, but here we note van der Kooi's conclusion, which echoes Link's theological extension of the *extra*. For van der Kooi, the *extra* is a statement of God's proximity and nearness, and yet humanity's inability to possess God. God comes near and yet remains distant and inexhaustible.[54]

As for the *extra* and biblical interpretation, van der Kooi sees the *extra* as an interpretive or hermeneutical key. In fact, he claims that use of the *extra* leads us to a "consistent redemptive-historical theology in which older and newer readers of the biblical story are taken seriously as addressees or recipients of salvation." How does the *extra* do this? It is not entirely clear. Van der Kooi seems to think that the *extra Calvinisticum* is like the principle of *sensus plenior* whereby an earlier biblical text contains meanings beyond the original literal sense and beyond the original recorded events. Apparently the *extra* allows for

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[53] Van der Kooi, "Identity of Israel's God," 218.

[54] Van der Kooi, "Identity of Israel's God," 222.

a fullness of meaning that is continuous with the original meaning but transcends it and is established only in retrospect in light of the newer readers' experiences of Christ.[55] Thus there is an extra dimension to the meaning of biblical texts.

With these diverse and unusual extensions of the *extra Calvinisticum*, van der Kooi moves far beyond the christological context of the doctrine of the *extra* and makes it a principle with seemingly limitless application to theology. For van der Kooi the *extra* is no longer merely the doctrine of Christ's existence beyond the flesh, the *extra* is a principle or even a trope with a host of diverse theological applications. In short, van der Kooi stretches the term *extra Calvinisticum* far beyond its traditional doctrinal meaning.

3. Paolo Gamberini

The *extra Calvinisticum* has appeared in some unusual places. A good example of this is the use of the *extra* by a Jesuit theologian, Paolo Gamberini. Typically those who seek to recover the *extra* are Reformed or have had strong affinity to the Reformed tradition.[56] Gamberini's article is a fascinating study because of the way he critically engages Reformation christologies and seeks to mine the doctrine of the *extra* in support of a Roman Catholic view of the church. Hence Gamberini's work is another example of the method of extending the *extra* beyond the merely christological context and into new theological settings and applications.

Gamberini acknowledges that the *extra* is an ancient doctrine, but he is dubious of labeling it an "extra catholicum" because, on his view, Protestants have given the doctrine a unique (and, by implication, faulty) expression based upon Reformation assumptions.

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[55] Van der Kooi, "Identity of Israel's God," 220–21.

[56] The Lutheran Helmut Thielicke is another exception.

Specifically, he believes that behind the Protestant version of the *extra* is a Protestant concept of God's work in salvation—namely, a thoroughgoing monergism—that colors their interpretation of the *extra*.[57] The contrasting views of salvation between Protestants and Roman Catholics is a theme developed throughout the article. Gamberini argues that the Reformed principle of *finitum non capax infiniti* ("the finite is incapable of grasping the infinite") reflects a false view of humanity and God's work of salvation because it assumes that humanity is so corrupt that it is not in a position to return to God. Hence the Reformed make redemption out to be an "exclusively … downward movement."[58]

Gamberini is onto something here. The *extra* does receive a particularly Reformed and Protestant accent, but Gamberini does not develop an argument as to how or why this accent contradicts the ancient articulations of the doctrine. What Gamberini does highlight is the difference between this Reformed emphasis and his own Roman Catholic soteriology and anthropology. On his view, the Reformed principle of *finitum non capax infiniti*, and thus the doctrine of the *extra Calvinisticum*, is in conflict with the witness of the New Testament and the church to the remaining spiritual ability of fallen humanity and the corresponding synergistic aspects of salvation. Hence he criticizes the Reformed *extra* for its monergistic presuppositions and concludes that the Lutherans are closer to the truth because they emphasize that the finite is indeed, in some sense, capable of the infinite (*finitum capax infiniti*).

Moving on to his ultimate focus, Gamberini finds the chief benefit of the *extra* in its application to ecclesiology. This is where the method of extending the *extra* is most

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[57] Gamberini, "La questione cattolica," 146.

[58] Gamberini, "La questione cattolica," 150, 154–55, 158–60 (quote on p. 160).

prominent. Gamberini, drawing on his interpretation of Calvin, argues that, despite the Protestant slant on the *extra*, "there is a *particular truth*" in the doctrine—namely, that "in christology so also in ecclesiology Calvin wants to guarantee and ensure the universality of the kingdom and dominion of the Word of God."[59] Gamberini thus focuses on the "ecclesiological dimension" of the *extra*, the concept of the *etiam extra ecclesiam* ("even beyond the church"), as a way of articulating the nature of the Roman Catholic Church as the body of Christ even in the midst of a plurality of churches and denominations outside the Roman Catholic Church. Gamberini says that the church's existence is not tied to confessional boundaries (the phenomenal realm), but to the communication of the gospel. Thus, even beyond the body of Christ (which is, in his view, the Roman Catholic Church), there is still an extra dimension or aspect of the church where Christ may be said to be present "formally" in other individual and distinct churches. This is possible because, as in the incarnation, so in the church, Christ transcends his body.[60]

Gamberini's extension of the *extra* is a creative Roman Catholic application of the ancient doctrine in dialogue with Protestant thought. What is further intriguing is that Oberman's article appears in Gamberini's work and seems to influence not just Gamberini's interpretation of Calvin, but even provides the terminology (*e.g.* "extra dimension" and "*etiam extra ecclesiam*") that Gamberini uses to develop his extension of the *extra* into ecclesiology.[61] This is simply additional evidence of the significance that Oberman's historical article has had in contemporary theological approaches to the *extra Calvinisticum*. Setting aside this point in the history of scholarship, our examination of the work of Link,

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[59] Gamberini, "La questione cattolica," 162 (original emphasis).

[60] Gamberini, "La questione cattolica," 176–77.

[61] Gamberini, "La questione cattolica," 141–42.

van der Kooi, and Gamberini reveals that there has been significant use of the *extra* in theology beyond the bounds of christology. At the risk of proliferating Latin neologisms, this approach is one of *etiam extra Christologiam*—emphasizing the extra dimension "even beyond christology."

4. Overextending the *extra*?

The modern method of extending the *extra* into areas beyond christology, which can be traced at least as far back as Thielicke, leads us to wonder if here the *extra* has in fact been overextended and, thus, misused. In making the christological doctrine of the *extra Calvinisticum* a principle or *principium* for theology and theological method in general, has the *extra* been wrongly stretched beyond its legitimate use? In short, I believe the answer is yes, and this for two reasons.

First, the method of extension outlined above fails to clearly distinguish between the christological doctrine and the more general concept of God's transcendence of the created order, and therefore obscures the meaning and purpose of the christological doctrine of the *extra*. While the *extra Calvinisticum* may be related in some way to the general concept of God's transcendence, the two are not the same. The *extra Calvinisticum* specifically has to do with the Son's transcendence of his flesh, not the Son's (or God's) relationship to the created order, humanity in general, the church, or biblical revelation. It is first and foremost a doctrine about the person of Jesus Christ. For this reason it is confusing to single out the *extra Calvinisticum* (a christological doctrine) as paradigmatic or programmatic for understanding the God-world relationship, God-humanity relationship, God-church relationship, or God-Scripture relationship. When the *extra Calvinisticum* is used in this way, the original content of the doctrine is obscured, or even completely lost, and we risk being

left with—as is most obvious in van der Kooi's work—a theological term without any clear definition that is at the mercy of the author. If a theologian wishes to emphasize and expound the extra dimensions of God's relationship to the world and to the various orders of creaturely life, perhaps it would be better to present a traditional version of a doctrine such as the Creator-creature distinction, God's transcendence, or divine accommodation rather than to turn the *extra Calvinisticum* into something it has never been. It seems, however, that in many cases theologians have not been able to resist the temptation to employ the term *extra* for a wide variety of purposes. This in and of itself is not a problem provided that theologians carefully bear in mind that, as Oberman has pointed out with respect to in Calvin's thought, there are a variety of extra dimensions to be explored in theology, and the christological doctrine of the *extra Calvinisticum* is only one such extra, and one that has traditionally never been primary or programmatic for theology. The confusion arises when, as Link and van der Kooi illustrate, the christological *extra Calvinisticum* becomes a cipher for various kinds of extra dimensions and the relation between God and the world.

Second, and most important, the fact that the *extra Calvinisticum* is a doctrine regarding the incarnation of the Son of God should lead theologians to be extremely cautious in making it paradigmatic or programmatic for theology. This caution is warranted because of the fact that the incarnation is a unique event and relation. This is not to say that the incarnation has no bearing on other areas of theology such as a doctrine of revelation or God's involvement with the world. This is only to say that one should be wary of extrapolating or extending statements about the incarnate Son of God into other areas of theology as if the incarnation is a theological principle rather than a *sui generis* event and relation. The hypostatic union is not a principle. The hypostatic union is unique to the living

and exalted Son of God. Similarly the *extra Calvinisticum*, which is a traditional way of expressing one aspect of the hypostatic union and the incarnate Son of God's existence, is not a theological principle. It expresses the relation of the Son of God to the flesh he has assumed. We ought to resist, therefore, the desire to extend the *extra* into additional theological contexts.

B. The *extra* and Kenotic Christologies

The recovery of the *extra* by way of extension is likely the most prominent of the contemporary paths of recovery. Another path of recovery is the use of the *extra* in dialogue with forms of kenotic christology. In some ways, this approach has a long pedigree. Already in nineteenth-century theology, an emphasis upon the *extra Calvinisticum* or something like it appeared as an alternative to kenotic accounts of the incarnation.[62] In what follows, we will look at some recent approaches that continue this path of emphasizing the Son of God's existence even beyond the flesh as an alternative to kenotic christology.

"Kenotic christology" is an ambiguous theological term. That is, there are so many historical and contemporary varieties of kenotic christology that the term needs careful explanation and definition. Yet the basic shape of kenotic christology in both its earlier and contemporary forms is, as C. Stephen Evans has put it, that "God the Son chose to 'empty himself' of some of his divine prerogatives and fully enter into the life of a human being" such that God incarnate in some sense "experiences" finitude and human limitations.[63] Kenotic christology in its classic form was an effort among nineteenth-century Continental theologians (and later British theologians) to understand the incarnation in a way that both

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[62] For example, see the discussion of Isaak Dorner and H. P. Liddon in chapter 2 above.

[63] C. Stephen Evans, "Kenotic Christology and the Nature of God," in *Exploring Kenotic Christology: The Self-Emptying of God*, ed. C. Stephen Evans (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 196.

preserved the historical, human Jesus and was palatable as a mediating position for both Reformed and Lutheran theologians who were agreeable to the Chalcedonian formula.[64] While this classic form vanished from the theological scene in the early twentieth century, recently there has been a renewal effort known as Modified Kenotic Christology (MKC) that has taken up the project again in ways both continuous and discontinuous with the classic view.[65]

MKC proponents, like many earlier kenoticists, affirm the Chalcedonian definition of two natures in one person, which includes the deity of Christ, his personal pre-existence, and his true humanity. Contrary to some older expressions, however, MKC affirms that the incarnate Son in no way empties himself of divinity or divests himself of the divine mode of being.[66] Yet perhaps the most important difference between the modified view and earlier kenotic christologies is that MKC proponents qualify or redefine certain divine attributes in light of the biblical presentation of the incarnation. This is exhibited most clearly in the attribute of omniscience where, rather than conceiving of the divine attribute as omniscience *simpliciter*, God is said to be omniscient-unless-kenotically-incarnate (where kenotically incarnate is understood to be for the purpose of reconciliation).[67] This move, MKC defenders argue, is demanded by the fact that the incarnate Son is truly God but in some cases, as

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[64] Classic kenoticists include Gottfried Thomasius (1802–1875), Johannes H. A. Ebrard (1818–1888), and H. R. Mackintosh (1870–1936). On the history of classic kenoticism, see Thomas R. Thompson, "Nineteenth-Century Kenotic Christology: The Waxing, Waning, and Weighing of a Quest for a Coherent Orthodoxy," in *Exploring Kenotic Christology*, 79–81.

[65] For an introduction to MKC and its proponents, see the essays in Evans, ed., *Exploring Kenotic Christology*, and the dissertation by Thomas H. McCall, "Modified Kenotic Christology, the Trinity and Christian Orthodoxy" (Ph. D. diss., Calvin Theological Seminary, 2004).

[66] McCall, "Modified Kenotic Christology," 45.

[67] Ronald J. Feenstra, "A Kenotic Christological Method for Understanding the Divine Attributes," in *Exploring Kenotic Christology*, 151–153. Feenstra is here drawing on his own earlier work and the work of Stephen T. Davis.

Scripture indicates, is not omniscient (*e.g.*, Mark 13:32; Luke 2:52; John 11:34). If the divine attribute of omniscience is qualified in this way, then one can affirm that Jesus Christ continues to possess the divine attribute, and so retains his complete deity, even if he is nescient (at least at certain points) during his earthly sojourn. To put it another way, the incarnate Son continues to possess the divine attributes, but, in the case of some attributes like omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence, he temporarily "employs" them differently than the Father and the Spirit.[68]

What, then, does the *extra Calvinisticum* have to do with kenotic christology? Recently, two scholars, apparently independent of one another, have argued that the *extra* holds potential for developing non-kenotic accounts[69] of the incarnation that preserve the unmodified (*simpliciter*) divine attributes in the case of the incarnation. To the work of these authors, Theodore Zachariades and Oliver Crisp, we now turn.

1. Theodore Zachariades

In a conference paper and in his dissertation, Zachariades argues that the *extra Calvinisticum* ought to be re-emphasized because of the way it challenges kenotic models of the incarnation by providing a way to affirm the traditional *simpliciter* divine attributes and Christ's full exercise of them, and thus rendering kenotic limitations or modifications of Christ's divine attributes unnecessary. In his dissertation, however, Zachariades's focus is not so much on the *extra Calvinisticum* per se as it is on a doctrine closely connected to the *extra*, the

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[68] McCall, "Modified Kenotic Christology," 89, 101.

[69] By "non-kenotic accounts" I mean those accounts that oppose the modern and contemporary kenotic accounts. I recognize that, in the broadest sense of the term, all orthodox views of the incarnation are "kenotic" in that they affirm the Son's condescension to become a human being.

omnipresence of Jesus Christ even as incarnate.[70] Zachariades believes that Christ's

omnipresence even as incarnate cannot be adequately accounted for in what he classifies as

sub-kenotic explanations of the incarnation, namely those that distinguish between Christ's

possession of the divine attributes and his use of those attributes.[71] Possessing omnipresence

but not using omnipresence is, he argues, an incoherent statement.[72] As for a "fully kenotic"

explanation (which includes MKC) that takes the different tack of qualifying the divine

attributes in light of the biblical picture of Christ, Zachariades is also uncomfortable with this

approach and thinks that it does not take into account all the biblical data, namely those texts

that suggest Christ's full exercise of the attribute of omnipresence.[73] If during his earthly

sojourn the incarnate Son in fact possesses and exercises omnipresence *simpliciter*, so

Zachariades's argument goes, then this suggests that the other divine attributes need not be

qualified (as in MKC) or said to be restrained or not used (as in sub-kenotic accounts).[74]

Ultimately, however, it is not clear why an MKC proponent could not merely respond

that the attribute of omniscience poses a unique problem in christology and that the biblical

evidence concerning Christ's knowledge does in fact call for a qualification of this divine

attribute even if the biblical evidence does not require a qualification of other divine

attributes. That is, Zachariades seems to assume that there is a symmetrical relationship

between the "omni" divine attributes such that if one (or more) attribute(s) is a *simpliciter*

attribute, then necessarily the other "omni" attribute(s) ought also to be conceived of as

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[70] Zachariades, "The *Extra Calvinisticum*," 7; "Omnipresence of Jesus Christ," 17–20.

[71] He identifies Millard Erickson as an important proponent of this kind of sub-kenotic view.

[72] Zachariades, "Omnipresence of Jesus Christ," 50–54, 217; "The *Extra Calvinisticum*," 7n20.

[73] Zachariades devotes several pages to an examination of biblical texts that he believes support Christ's omnipresence ("Omnipresence of Jesus Christ," 172–91).

[74] Zachariades, "Omnipresence of Jesus Christ," 46–51, 239–41.

simpliciter. Granted, perhaps based on the doctrine of divine simplicity we may rightly

conceive of such a symmetrical relationship between the "omni" attributes,[75] but many MKC

proponents, whether or not one agrees with their exegesis and conclusions, seek to develop

their conception of the divine attributes from the biblical testimony about Jesus Christ, as

Zachariades himself seeks to do with the attribute of omnipresence.

2. Oliver Crisp

A different, though not unrelated, approach is found in the work of Oliver Crisp. Crisp's

work on the incarnation ranges widely over topics in historical, systematic, and philosophical

theology. His use of the *extra Calvinisticum*, albeit limited, is significant for the way it

functions in his formulation of a krypsis ("hiding") account of the incarnation over against a

kenosis account. Crisp's krypsis view is a way of preserving Chalcedonian christology that

seeks to account for the fact that the incarnate Son of God retains his divine attributes and

remains fully divine despite the fact that Scripture indicates that the incarnate Son had certain

limitations.[76] With respect to kenosis accounts, Crisp argues that there are several problems

inherent in the various types of kenotic christologies. He presents a typology of kenotic

positions and several criticisms of these views, but a summary of these would take us too far

afield.[77] Instead, we focus on Crisp's use of the *extra Calvinisticum* as an aspect of his

krypsis account over against kenotic accounts.

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[75] According to a classical view of divine simplicity the divine attributes are not really distinct from one another or the divine essence. The attributes are rather distinctions arrived at by consideration of God's revelation and his other works *ad extra*.

[76] Crisp, *Divinity and Humanity*, 147–53. As Crisp notes, the kenotic accounts usually have the same goal. He believes, however, that his krypsis account is better than the kenotic accounts at accomplishing this goal.

[77] Crisp, *Divinity and Humanity*, 118–147.

The *extra* in Crisp's analysis is a "safeguard" that challenges those kenotic christologies (what he calls "functionalist" kenotic accounts) that present the incarnate Son as possessing but not exercising all of his divine attributes during the time of the incarnation.[78] That is, the *extra* affirms that the Son of God did in fact continue to exercise all of his divine attributes even as incarnate because the person continued to exist beyond the flesh. Hence those kenotic christologies that suggest that Christ possessed but did not exercise attributes such as omniscience or omnipotence must reckon with the ancient doctrine of the *extra*, which sought to preserve the incarnate Son's continued exercise of these attributes in order to protect the Son's complete and unchanging divinity. Crisp suggests, therefore, that a functionalist kenotic account is inconsistent with the classical doctrine of the *extra* and, as such, differs in this respect from an important aspect of classical christology.[79]

The Son's continued exercise of the *simpliciter* divine attributes even while incarnate is the distinguishing feature of Crisp's krypsis account as opposed to kenotic accounts of the incarnation. He explains the krypsis account in this way: "in the Incarnation, the Word assumes human nature. He does not in any way abdicate or relinquish any of his divine prerogatives or properties, either temporarily or permanently, in this action." In sum, "[a]t every moment at which the Word is incarnate, he is also exercising his divine attributes to the full, as he was before the Incarnation."[80] Crisp sees his krypsis account, then, as non-kenotic in that it does not either qualify the divine attributes (as in MKC) or restrict the full expression of the divine attributes (as in functionalist kenoticism). The *extra* therefore has a

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[78] Crisp does not identify who holds this kind of functionalist kenotic model, though he says that C. Stephen Evans and Thomas Morris have offered accounts that have functionalist aspects (*Divinity and Humanity*, 144–45). Note that what Crisp calls "functionalist" accounts Zachariades called "sub-kenotic."

[79] Crisp, *Divinity and Humanity*, 142–43.

[80] Crisp, *Divinity and Humanity*, 149.

crucial place in Crisp's proposal because it provides him with a way of conceiving of how the incarnate Son could continue to exercise all of his divine attributes even in the face of biblical statements about the incarnate Son's limitations. Crisp thus says that "as per the *extra calvinisticum*" there is "no restriction on the exercise of the divine attributes of the Word in abstraction from the Incarnation."[81] It is not clear what Crisp means here by the phrase "in abstraction from the Incarnation," but context and an understanding of what the *extra* teaches would lead us to believe that he means something like "beyond Christ's human mode of existence." That is, to put it positively, the *extra* means that Christ exercises his divine powers and prerogatives even beyond his human mode of existence and, as Crisp stresses in his krypsis account, this occurs even in light of the restriction of the exercise of Christ's powers with respect to his human mode of existence. In this way, Crisp's krypsis account is compatible with what has been termed a two-minds christology, such as that presented in Thomas Morris's influential book, *The Logic of God Incarnate*, in which Christ is said to have a human mind and divine mind, with the divine mind containing and having access to the human mind but without the human mind having exhaustive access to the divine mind. Similarly, Crisp's krypsis account states that the human nature of Christ is not "privy to all that the divine nature is."[82]

In his krypsis account Crisp offers an intriguing alternative to kenotic views. This is not to say, however, that Crisp's position is without its own difficulties. For one, Crisp's explanation of Christ's exercise (or non-exercise) of the divine attributes according to Christ's human and divine natures at times depicts the human and divine natures as subjects.

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[81] Crisp, *Divinity and Humanity*, 150.

[82] Crisp, *Divinity and Humanity*, 150 and n54; Thomas V. Morris, *The Logic of God Incarnate* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986), 102–107.

For example, he says at one point that the "divine properties are not accessible to the human nature of Christ." Later, he comments that "the human nature does not exercise these properties."[83] Strictly speaking, at least in the classical Christian understanding, a nature does not exercise or do anything. So it is not proper to say that a nature (whether human or divine) has access to something or exercises something. Rather, it is the person or individual subsistence, namely the Son of God, who acts. Though it may not solve the problem completely, Crisp is on better footing when he speaks in terms of Christ exercising (or not exercising) the divine attributes "through the human nature."[84]

3. A kenotic *extra Calvinisticum*?

Crisp's and Zachariades's uses of the *extra* in their interactions with versions of kenotic christology call attention to the continuing relevance and importance of the *extra* for contemporary christologies that seek to preserve Chalcedonian orthodoxy. At the very least, their work suggests that kenotic christologies ought to seek to incorporate the *extra* into their accounts of the incarnation. As we have seen throughout this study, the *extra* has had a place in a variety of christologies across the Christian theological tradition. Therefore, insofar as proponents of kenotic christology seek to work within traditional christology, and specifically Chalcedonian christology, the *extra* ought to have a place in such kenotic accounts.

At first glance, however, the *extra* appears to fit more naturally with some traditional non-kenotic christologies than with kenotic forms. For instance, the *extra*, with its insistence on the Son's transcendence of his earthly limitations, may be better suited to a traditional

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[83] Crisp, *Divinity and Humanity*, 150, 151.

[84] Crisp, *Divinity and Humanity*, 150.

Dyothelite (two wills) account of Christ like that adopted by the Sixth Ecumenical Council in 681, which declared that Christ has two wills and "two natural operations," human and divine.[85] Many advocates of MKC, on the contrary, work from the assumption that the unity of Christ's person requires that he have only one mind or range of consciousness, which seems to imply only one will and operation.[86] In fact, as noted in the introduction, at least one proponent of kenotic christology has stated (albeit incorrectly) that the *extra is* the two minds doctrine.[87] However, we have seen that prior to the Dyothelite controversy and the articulation of the two minds (or two natural operations) doctrine the *extra* was affirmed throughout the church, specifically in Cyril of Alexandria, but also earlier in Athanasius and many others.[88]

In fact, perhaps an MKC proponent could consistently affirm that even during the time of the kenosis, when the Son had limited knowledge, he still in some way filled or was present to the entire creation. Yet MKC proponents have typically focused attention on the fact that the person of the Son is non-omniscient during his earthly sojourn, and thus there has not been much, if any, discussion among MKC proponents of how (or whether or not) the *extra* fits in their accounts. This is a lacuna that ought to be filled. As the writings of Crisp and Zachariades illustrate, advocates of non-kenotic accounts of the incarnation have been more apt to include the *extra* explicitly and positively in their christologies. MKC proponents, although seeking to work within the two-natures doctrine, have not however

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[85] "The Statement of Faith of the Third Council of Constantinople (Sixth Ecumenical)," in *Christology of the Later Fathers*, ed. and trans. Edward R. Hardy (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1954), 383–384.

[86] For example, see the one-mind types of statements by McCall, "Modified Kenotic Christology," 211–213, and Evans, "Kenotic Christology and the Nature of God," 199.

[87] David Brown, *Divine Humanity: Kenosis and the Construction of a Christian Theology* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2011), 90 and n45.

[88] See chapter 1, sections III.B and C above.

accounted for the *extra* in a positive and meaningful way. If MKC agrees with the broad tradition of Christian reflection on the incarnation that the Son is not restricted or reduced to human existence during his earthly sojourn, then MKC should account for the person of the Son beyond the flesh during the time of the kenosis. Such an endeavor would serve to strengthen MKC and likely work towards rapprochement between MKC and some of its opponents.

C. The *extra* and Theopaschism

The final path of recovery is itself a minor one that has not yet developed into a larger trend, but has merely been sketched in a 2009 article by Myk Habets. In sum, Habets argues that the *extra Calvinisticum* is a "necessary component" in a theology of the atonement and, more specifically, has an important function in responding to theologies of a suffering God (or, theopaschism).[89] Similar to the way the *extra* is used in dialogue with kenotic christologies, the use of the *extra* in response to theopaschism is an area open to further scholarly work. Habets's piece is something of a first step in this direction in the contemporary literature on the *extra*.

To begin, there is some methodological confusion in Habets's article in that he veers off into a long discussion of Calvin's trinitarian theology that appears to be disconnected from his thesis.[90] He eventually returns to his thesis that the *extra* ought to be used as an argument against theologians like Jürgen Moltmann, Alan Lewis, and Paul Fiddes, each of whom in some way affirm that God suffers on the cross. The *extra*, Habets argues, serves to

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[89] Habets, "Putting the 'extra' back into Calvinism," 441.

[90] Habets, "Putting the 'extra' back into Calvinism," 443–50.

guard the truth "that God suffers only *in Christ* the incarnate Word."[91] Specifically writing

against Alan Lewis, Habets points out that the *extra* preserves the unity of the person of

Christ while maintaining the distinction between Christ's two natures and their respective

properties, and so, while we rightly affirm that the "Son of God suffered and died," the *extra*

ought to prevent theologians from attributing Christ's sufferings to the divine nature, or God,

simpliciter.[92]

Habets's use of the *extra* in this manner appears to rest on solid historical ground. Our

earlier discussion of Cyril of Alexandria revealed a similar emphasis on the place of the *extra*

carnem in protecting divine impassibility while affirming the suffering of the incarnate

Word. Unfortunately Habets does not mention that there may be such historical precedent for

his stance. Granted, he says that the *extra Calvinisticum* has roots in the church fathers and

he provides a discussion of Calvin, but he nevertheless makes the strange and apparently

contradictory statement that the doctrine of the *extra* "first appeared" in a "eucharistic

context," by which he seems to mean the context of sixteenth-century debates over the

presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper. He therefore seeks to remove the doctrine from its

supposedly original eucharistic context and apply it to the passion of Christ.[93] The *extra*,

however, has always been a christological doctrine and had its origins in christology, and

Cyril is just one example of how the doctrine traditionally has been applied to questions

about Christ's suffering. What is new, therefore, is not Habets's use of the doctrine in the

realm of christology and atonement, but his application of it in dialogue with modern forms

of theopaschism. Habets's main contribution, then, is to recall an ancient use of the *extra* and

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[91] Habets, "Putting the 'extra' back into Calvinism," 443 (original emphasis).

[92] Habets, "Putting the 'extra' back into Calvinism," 453–54.

[93] Habets, "Putting the 'extra' back into Calvinism," 443.

apply it to a contemporary issue, and in so doing he calls attention to a possible appropriation of the *extra*.

Darren Sumner responds to Habets in an article advocating Barth's appropriation of the *extra*. Sumner is wary of those who would present the mere utility of the *extra* as justification for its use in dogmatics. That is, Sumner wishes to check the eagerness of those who, like Habets, are ready to rehabilitate the *extra* without taking into account the reasons why theologians like Barth have had serious concerns about the doctrine. Yet Sumner, despite his fine exposition of Barth's position and its development, inexplicably perpetuates Habets's misstep by wrongly assuming that the *extra* had its origins in a sacramental context and, compounding the error, that its use in discussions of the hypostatic union constitutes a relocation of the doctrine and an innovation.[94] To the contrary, the *extra*—the doctrine of the Son's transcendence of his flesh—did not originate in a sacramental context. It has always been christological, even when it appeared in sixteenth-century debates over the presence of the person of Christ in the Supper. What is more, given its close connection to the ancient doctrine of the *communicatio idiomatum*, the *extra* has always been closely tied to discussions of the hypostatic union. Ultimately it is not so much Habets's use of the *extra* in dialogue with contemporary theopaschism that drives Sumner's critique. Sumner's main concern is that any non-Barthian form of the *extra*, and Habets's view appears to be one such example, results in a "problematic division of the Word of God from Jesus Christ."[95]

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[94] Sumner, "Twofold Life," 43–44, 57. Sumner appears to misunderstand Willis's statement about the Reformed "innovation." It is not the *extra* as an "explanation of the relationship between the two natures" that Willis calls an innovation. It was the Reformed "similitudes" about Antwerp and the ocean, etc., that were the innovation. Cf. Sumner, "Twofold Life," 43–44 with E. David Willis, *Calvin's Catholic Christology* (Leiden: Brill, 1966), 23–24.

[95] Sumner, "Twofold Life," 45.

Habets's proposal and Sumner's response shed considerable light on contemporary paths of recovering the *extra Calvinisticum*. Habets offers a more or less traditional version of the *extra* in the hopes of addressing a particular contemporary theological issue and has opened the door to further development and dialogue. Also significant is what Sumner's article reveals—and this brings us back to where we began this chapter, with Karl Barth. Sumner's defense of Barth over against a traditional use of the *extra* highlights the ongoing prominence of Barth in the literature on the *extra*. More broadly, Sumner's advocacy of Barth's conception of the incarnation and the *extra* is a small scene in the continued conflict of the Barthian christological trajectory with advocates of classical christologies. At the very least it highlights the fact that Barth's *extra* is not the same as the *extra* before him—a point that is clear from Barth's own discussions of the doctrine. Barth's argument for a dialectical synthesis that transcends the older form and flaws of the *extra* is an explicit challenge to the older model of the *extra* and its ontology and remains a live issue in today's discussion of the *extra*.

III. Conclusion

Our review of the paths of recovery beginning with the twentieth century reveals, first and foremost, that contemporary appropriations of the *extra Calvinisticum* have been shaped powerfully by the contributions of Karl Barth and Helmut Thielicke. In fact, one could make a case that, while not as well-known in the broader theological world as Barth's view, Thielicke's use of the *extra* has had almost as much influence on recent work on the *extra*. His use of the concept of the *extra* as something like a fundamental principle for theology has had far-reaching effects, particularly through the development of his idea in the work of Christian Link. The use of the *extra* by expansion or extension into various areas of theology

other than christology is a noticeable contemporary trend. However, as I have suggested, this way of stretching the *extra* is problematic and runs the risk of running roughshod over the *extra*'s original christological meaning and function. This is not to say that there are no promising paths of recovering the *extra* in theology today. I have also pointed out recent ways that the *extra* has been brought into dialogue with kenotic christologies. Lastly, at least one recent article has sought to reappropriate the *extra* for the purpose of challenging modern versions of theopaschism. This path of recovery, still more of a preliminary step than a trend, nevertheless seems to reflect traditional uses of the *extra* and may stand on good historical foundations.

These paths of recovery may not bring the *extra Calvinisticum* out of its relative obscurity in Christian theology, but I question whether it would even be right to elevate the *extra* to a greater status than it has held historically. As we have seen throughout this study, the *extra* has traditionally had a significant function and role, but only in very specific christological contexts and for specific christological purposes, including the nature of Christ's presence in the Lord's Supper. Only in the twentieth century has the *extra* been elevated to greater prominence and given a more expansive function in theology. Perhaps the contemporary paths of recovery highlight for us the fact that the *extra* ought to remain relatively obscure and should be permitted to function in its limited capacity, to continue to do what it has done well, and that we ought not to ask it to do more than it is able. I explore this question in more detail in the final chapter.

CHAPTER 7:

THE *EXTRA CALVINISTICUM*: SIGNIFICANT AND OBSCURE

In his article on Barth's use of the *extra Calvinisticum*, Darren Sumner closes with a warning about the use of the *extra* in theology: "theologians attuned to the history and function of this doctrine will exercise caution—not in affirming it, but in how it is deployed." Sumner, drawing on Barth's critique of the doctrine, sees the *extra* as something that should be affirmed yet "handled with care."[1] Regardless of whether or not one agrees with Sumner's Barthian reappropriation of the *extra*, his caution regarding the proper use, or deployment, of the *extra* is worth considering, particularly in light of the contemporary paths of recovery that we outlined in the previous chapter. Given the long history of the *extra* in the theology of the church, what is the proper place and function of the doctrine in theology? At the end of the previous chapter I began to hint at a possible answer. Now, as I bring this study to a close, after reviewing the historical use and function of the *extra*, I conclude that the *extra* belongs in christology and ought to remain within the bounds of that sub-field of theology, and thus the *extra* ought to remain relatively obscure.

I. The Historical Place and Function of the *extra*

No doubt the *extra* received the most attention in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, particularly as the Lutherans and Reformed solidified their confessional boundaries over issues related to the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper. As a result this flashpoint in the doctrine's history has attracted the most attention in modern scholarly work, and Calvin,

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[1] Darren O. Sumner, "The Twofold Life of the Word: Karl Barth's Critical Reception of the *Extra Calvinisticum*," *IJST* 15, no. 1 (2013): 57.

being so prominent in the minds of many nineteenth- and twentieth-century church historians and theologians, has been the most common focal point. As noted in the previous chapter, the intensity of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century debate has even led some recent scholars to incorrectly locate the origin of the *extra* in Eucharistic thought or sacramentology.[2] Yet, even when we consider the use of the *extra* in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the doctrine did not have its origins in a discussion of the Lord's Supper or the sacraments in general, but was specifically connected to questions about the person of Christ, the properties of his human nature, and how it is that the risen and ascended Christ is present in the Lord's Supper. The original situation of the *extra*, as the pre-Reformation history of the doctrine and even Ursinus's use of the doctrine in the time of the Reformation reveals, was christological. Indeed, the doctrine that the Son of God transcended his flesh even while incarnate was employed for a variety of christological purposes in the history of the church prior to the modern era. We have reviewed only a few examples of this in this study, though, as noted in the introduction, there are a vast number of ancient and medieval theologians who have used this doctrine and whose uses of the *extra* warrant further study.

In the case of Cyril of Alexandria, the *extra* is expressed or implied in affirmations about the Son of God becoming human yet remaining what he was, and in some cases the doctrine appears in explicit statements of the Son's existence beyond the flesh. For Cyril the doctrine has several payoffs. It functions as a way of preserving the deity of the Son even as incarnate by stressing that the Son was not transformed into a human being, but remained what he was, abiding with the Father, even though he united himself to human nature. Furthermore, the Son continues to exercise his divine powers beyond the flesh and so is not

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[2] Myk Habets, "Putting the 'extra' back into Calvinism," *SJTh* 62, no. 4 (2009): 443; Sumner, "Twofold Life," 44, 57.

restricted to merely human existence and limitations. He has personal existence and activity beyond his human nature. This has additional ramifications in Cyril's thought. For instance, the transcendence of the Son even as incarnate provides Cyril with a way of articulating the human development of Jesus Christ. Because the Son exists beyond his human nature, and is not limited or bound within it, during his earthly sojourn the Son is able to manifest or express his knowledge and power progressively in a way that is appropriate to normal human development. Similarly, the *extra* has great benefit for understanding the work of Christ in redemption. Since the Son of God is not bound to his human nature, but transcends it, he is able to rescue humanity from its bondage to suffering, sin, and death by carrying humanity beyond its bondage and into communion with his transcendent divine self. In Cyril's thought, a Christ who was fully bound within his humanity and reduced to mere human existence would not be able to save humanity.

In the medieval period, Thomas Aquinas applied the *extra carnem* in a way that fit within the context of medieval uses of language, questions about the nature of Christ's incarnational descent, and Christ's presence during the three days after his death. Aquinas speaks of Son's incarnational descent not as a local movement from a physical place in heaven to the earth, but as the Son's union with human nature, a new relation bringing human nature into the unity of his person. When it comes to Christ's death and the separation of Christ's body and soul in the state of death, Aquinas employs the traditional *totus/totum* distinction to show that the whole Christ is present personally everywhere even while his body is spatially located in the tomb. Thus Aquinas utilizes the concept of modes of presence. Christ, being a divine person, is always and everywhere present in a divine way, though, being human, he is not always present in a bodily way. Nevertheless, Christ remains

whole and one person even though he may be present in different modes. In a way that complements Cyril's emphasis, Aquinas appeals to the *extra carnem* as a way of preserving Christ's full humanity. He does this in the context of responding to certain heresies that claimed that in the incarnational descent Christ brought his body down from heaven. The incarnation was not a local movement. Rather, Christ descended in that he added a true human nature to himself. Also, Christ's true humanity is preserved because Christ as a divine person is everywhere present beyond his human nature, and so the human nature is not omnipresent and thus remains truly human.

The concept of modes of presence appears again in Zacharias Ursinus, who uses the *extra* not only in debates with certain Lutherans in his Reformation context, but also explores the benefits of Christ's existence *extra humanum* for the Christian believer. Because Christ exists beyond his human nature, he remains personally present with his people after his ascension and his bodily departure results in great blessing. As for the polemical use of the doctrine, Ursinus is steadfast in his insistence against Lutheran Ubiquitarians that Christ's body is not omnipresent, but that this does not therefore mean that Christ is not personally present. Similar to Aquinas, Ursinus articulates the concept of modes of presence, whereby Christ may be personally present even though his body has a location and is spatially limited. Although the *extra* has a distinct polemical edge in Ursinus's thought, it may not be dismissed as an idiosyncratic doctrine of a unique polemical situation. Rather, the *extra* is an integral part of Ursinus's christology, as is revealed in his explanation of the benefits of the *extra humanum*.

Our examination of the writings of Cyril, Aquinas, and Ursinus reveals that the *extra* served significant purposes in a variety of historical periods and theological debates, though

in each case the *extra* was deployed in the context of discussions of the person of Christ, particularly the relationship of the transcendent Son of God to his finite humanity. With the turn to the modern period, certain shifts in theological method, philosophical commitments, and approaches to christology resulted in an eclipse of the *extra* in modern theology. This relative disappearance of the *extra* was fueled in part by modern desires to overcome the older divisions and disputes of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century confessionalism and to unite the Protestant world around a set of core Christian doctrines and an emphasis on Christian piety. In short, for modern theology the *extra*, being part and parcel of one of the most divisive conflicts of earlier Protestantism, was a doctrine worth forgetting. The twentieth century, however, saw the beginning of critical recovery efforts and reappropriations of the *extra*. Karl Barth and Helmut Thielicke were particularly influential in their reappropriations of the *extra* and their work has led the way for additional recovery efforts in more recent years.

The history of the *extra* that we have examined in this study calls attention to a major shift in the place and function of the doctrine in the modern era of recovery. Whereas in earlier sources, the *extra* was located in discussions of the person of Christ and applied to particular questions or problems pertaining to Christ's humanity and presence, some recent recovery efforts, particularly those in the Thielicke vein of reappropriation, have indeed relocated the *extra*. However, this relocation has been an act of applying the *extra* not merely in christology but in a variety of other areas of theology. To look at it another way, those who have sought to extend or expand the use of the *extra* have typically located christology, specifically the doctrine of the incarnation, at the center or foundation of their theological method and, as a result, the christological doctrine of the *extra* has received an extensive new

application across the theological landscape. In this way, it was not so much the *extra* that

was relocated, but christology itself was relocated. In cases where the incarnation is a

theological *principium*—where a methodological christocentrism operates—there is an

opening for an expansive use of the *extra* that goes far beyond its traditional limited use in

pre-modern theology.

To say that a shift in the use of the *extra* has sometimes occurred in the modern era,

however, is not to say that such a shift, wherever it occurs, is necessarily wrong. We must

admit that it is possible that such a shift is an improvement on the older use of the *extra*. Yet,

as I argued in the previous chapter, there are good reasons to doubt that the relocation or

expansion of the *extra* is an improvement. In particular, it appears to distort the meaning of

the *extra* as traditionally understood and takes the questionable step of using an aspect of the

incarnation of the Son of God—a unique event—for whatever theological purposes a

particular theologian desires. At the very least, those authors who wish to extend the *extra* in

this manner should justify their decision to do so by giving reasons why a doctrine about the

incarnate Son ought to be extended to, for example, theological method, the God-world

relation, or biblical interpretation.

II. Significant and Obscure

This study further reveals that the *extra* is both significant and obscure. Significant because

of the several important functions that it has had in reflection on the incarnation, specifically

in the pre-modern authors whose writings we have expounded here. Obscure because the

extra has never had a locus of its own in theology and has not been the subject of dogmatic

and historical treatises until recently. The doctrine was at its least obscure—that is to say,

most famous (or infamous)—in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when it was at the

heart of intense disagreements and when it received its memorable polemical names. Prior to that, however, it was a significant feature of christology but was employed on something of an as-needed basis and without fanfare. If the *extra* has been both significant and obscure, what, if any, is the ongoing significance of the *extra*? And why, if at all, should it remain relatively obscure?

A. Maxims on the Significance of the *extra*

The *extra Calvinisticum* has a continuing significance not merely as a historical artifact, though the history of the doctrine remains an open field of study. The *extra* has an ongoing significance in christology that reflects the historical uses we have seen in this study. The ongoing significance of the *extra* may be articulated in a few maxims.

1. The *extra* is a guard in our understanding of the incarnation.

Despite the differences in historical and theological context between the figures we have examined in this study, there is a recurring use of the *extra* as a way of guarding or protecting some important aspect of the reality of the Son of God's incarnation, specifically either (or both) his true divinity and humanity. For Cyril, the Son's transcendence of his flesh protects the incarnate Son's continued true divinity and guards against the Son being depicted as contained in or limited to the flesh while incarnate. Aquinas, on the other hand, applies the *extra* as an apologetic against heresies that would suggest that the Son of God brought down his body from heaven—as if the Son moved from one place to another. Confessing the *extra* guards the incarnate Son's true humanity by insisting that he took upon himself a true human nature like ours and did not bring with him from heaven some other kind of body. Ursinus, for his part, emphasizes against some Lutheran views that the properties of divinity are not communicated to the human nature for, if they were, Christ would no longer be truly human.

The Son's transcendence of his human nature, according to Ursinus, protects against collapsing the distinction between the two natures. Even Helmut Thielicke, who uses the *extra* in a different and fundamental way in his theology, states that the *extra* is something like a safety valve that preserves God's transcendence in the midst of God's interaction with the world. Although this moves beyond previous christological uses of the *extra*, calling the *extra* a safety valve highlights the fact that it functions as a guard in theology—a thread that can be seen throughout the history of the doctrine.

All of these examples suggest that the *extra* functions as a guard in theology, and specifically within articulations of the incarnation. The *extra* has value in that it guards against statements that would present the incarnation in a way that erases the distinction between Christ's two complete and whole natures, divine and human. Because the Son transcends his flesh, he is not merely human but exists beyond the bounds of his humanity. Thus, as Cyril points out, the Son is not transformed into a human being when he becomes human. As Aquinas would affirm, the Son's becoming in the incarnation is a union, not a transformation of the Son from one kind of thing into another kind of thing. The Son of God remains what he was even as he enters into a new relation and mode of presence by adding human nature into the unity of his person.

The use of the *extra* as a guard continues to be a relevant and promising use of the doctrine. As we saw in the review of recent recovery efforts, some have seen the *extra* as profitable for guarding a doctrine of Christ's full, unqualified expression of the divine attributes against kenotic accounts of the incarnation that either suggest that Christ retains but does not exercise his divine attributes while incarnate, or those that qualify the divine attributes as in Modified Kenotic Christology. Similarly, we noted that very recently there

has been a suggestion that the *extra* guards against modern views of Christ that advocate a form of theopaschism in the event of his suffering on the cross. In this case, so it seems, the *extra* functions as a way of confessing the suffering of the incarnate Son of God without saying that the divine nature suffered. Whether or not these are ultimately successful applications of the *extra* is not something that I seek to demonstrate here. What is apparent, however, is that the *extra Calvinisticum* continues to function as a guard in christological contexts today even as it has for centuries in the church's reflection on the person of Christ.

2. The *extra* is relevant to questions regarding the incarnate Son's possession and exercise of the divine attributes.

The mention of the *extra*'s relation to kenotic christologies and theologies of a suffering God calls to mind another aspect of the *extra*'s ongoing significance: its relevance to questions about the Son of God's possession and exercise of the divine attributes even as incarnate. As Oliver Crisp has hinted at in his discussion of kenotic christologies, the *extra* may offer perspective on how it is that the Son of God can, for example, simultaneously be personally omniscient (or omnipresent or impassible) and yet in his human mode of existence be ignorant of some things (or located in one place or able to suffer). Among earlier writers, Cyril, for instance, pointed out the significance of the statement that Christ suffered in the flesh—and this even while Christ transcended his flesh.[3] Similarly, the *extra* allows for an articulation of Christ's two "natural operations," as expressed by the Sixth Ecumenical Council, because the one Christ continues to exercise his divine attributes beyond the flesh even while he is a true human being.[4]

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[3] *Quod Unus*, 774d–e (Durand); McGuckin, *On the Unity*, 128–29.

[4] "The Statement of Faith of the Third Council of Constantinople (Sixth Ecumenical)," in *Christology of the Later Fathers*, ed. and trans. Edward R. Hardy (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1954), 383.

3. The *extra* holds promise for articulating a concept of Christ's modes of presence.

In both Aquinas and Ursinus, we saw the use of the *extra* in connection with the concept of Christ's modes of presence. Because Christ, the divine Son of God, transcends his human nature even as incarnate, there is an asymmetry between his two natures. The Son of God is not circumscribed by his flesh and so is not restricted to a place. There is, as it were, a larger circle (indeed, an infinite one, if such a thing can be conceived) that contains the circle of Christ's humanity. The one person of Christ, therefore, can be present simultaneously in different ways or modes. Christ can be, as Cyril would put it, bound in swaddling clothes even as he fills the whole creation.[5] In the case of the three days during Christ's death and in the case of the ascension, we may confess similar statements regarding Christ's bodily, local presence and his simultaneous omnipresence. In whatever case, the concept of modes of presence permits the confession that Christ is personally and wholly present regardless of whether or not he is physically present.

B. Maxims on the Obscurity of the *extra*

Granting the *extra*'s significance for christology, I wish to balance this with the recommendation that the *extra* maintain its relative obscurity. That is, there are limits to the *extra*'s use in theology. By relative obscurity I have in mind something other than the common neglect of the *extra* in much of modern theology by the end of the nineteenth century. As I noted in my discussion of the near-disappearance of the *extra*, there was a concerted turn away from not only the *extra Calvinisticum*, but away from the kind of christological and theological assumptions that had shaped earlier eras of theology in which

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[5] *Ep.* 17.3 (Wickham).

the *extra* had significant functions. Against this turn away from the *extra*, I maintain that the doctrine remains significant and ought to be affirmed. My recommendation for it to remain relatively obscure is only to say that there ought to be certain restrictions on our use of the *extra* in light of the doctrine's traditional functions in christology and the potential pitfalls of its misuse. Again, a few maxims will help to give shape to this point.

1. The *extra* is not a fundamental principle of theology.

Beginning in the twentieth century there was a noticeable appropriation of the *extra*, or a principialization of the *extra*, that used the doctrine as something of a methodological starting point for theology as a whole. As sketched in the discussion of contemporary recovery efforts, this trend has also found support in some more recent work on the doctrine. The doctrine of Christ's transcendence of his flesh, however, was never a *principium* for theology prior to the twentieth century, and it is my contention that the doctrine functions rather poorly as such. In this regard, we recall Barth's concern that the *extra* has led to "fatal speculation" about Christ's work beyond the flesh and about the essence of God. Though his critique appears to be wrongly directed at pre-modern theologians (who in reality did not employ the *extra* in this way), the warning is probably more applicable to contemporary theologians— those who have actually begun to use the *extra* as a methodological principle for theology.[6] The problem of using the *extra* in a fundamental way for theology is not only due to the fact that it was not so used historically, and neither is the problem limited to the fact that the uniqueness of the incarnation calls such extension of the *extra* into question. Beyond these problems, there is the perhaps simpler point that it is an arbitrary move to elevate the *extra*

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[6] Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, 4 vols., eds. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1956–1975), IV/1, 181.

Calvinisticum to such a principial status. That is to say, why is it necessary to use the *extra* in this manner and not some other significant but relatively obscure doctrine from Christian theology? For example, the doctrine of the virgin birth (*i.e.* virgin conception) of Christ is similarly significant and similarly obscure. In fact, like the *extra*, as Barth has memorably put it, the doctrine of the virgin birth functions as a guard in Christian theology.[7] Why not instead of the *extra* choose the doctrine of the virgin birth, remove it from christology, and make it a methodological principle for theology? Would it not be just as valid to use the virgin birth in this manner as it is to use the *extra Calvinisticum*? The use of the *extra*, therefore, as a fundamental principle of theology is arbitrary. At the very least, those who have sought to use the *extra* in this way have not provided an adequate justification for why the *extra* must function in such a principial and fundamental role.

2. The *extra* is not a tool for explaining the God-world relation, revelation, biblical interpretation, or the church.

Similarly, the *extra* ought not to be employed as a tool for explaining all manner of Christian doctrines. At least since Thielicke, theologians have found the *extra* to be attractive as an instrument for conceptualizing the God-world relation. Others have extended it to the doctrine of revelation, biblical interpretation, and ecclesiology. In this move it is the extra dimension, the fact that there is transcendence or beyond-ness of the divine Son in the incarnation, that is so attractive as a way of describing these other areas of theology. Here again, however, the use of the *extra* in this way is dubious. This is demonstrated not merely from the uniqueness of the incarnation, but from the fact that, at least according to the broad theological tradition of the church, God is not incarnate in the creation and neither is God

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[7] Barth, *CD*, I/2, 181.

incarnate in Scripture or the church. In none of these relations has God united a new nature to himself. The *extra* therefore cannot be used to describe the God-world relation or the relation of God to Scripture or to the church. If anything, an analogy may be possible between the Son's incarnation and God's relation to the world, his revelation, and his relationship to the church, but the uniqueness of the incarnation calls into question the propriety of promoting such incarnational analogies.

3. The *extra* is a part of christology.

To conclude on a positive note, we can say that the *extra* is a part of christology. It has traditionally had a place, function, and important contribution in christology. Yet it has only been one small part of christology. The confession of Christ's existence beyond the flesh is not an explanation of the incarnation as a whole and does not provide us with a complete account of the incarnation. In several ways, as we have outlined in this study, this doctrine supports and guards the traditional orthodox statement solidified at Chalcedon that the one Christ has two complete and whole natures in the unity of his person, and yet the properties of each nature are preserved.[8] In short, the *extra* finds both its significance and obscurity within the theological reflection upon the person of Christ.

This study has sought to give historical and theological depth to our understanding of a significant but relatively obscure doctrine and to articulate some of the ways that this doctrine has functioned historically and has been utilized today. The *extra Calvinisticum* has indeed had a profound place and function in reflection on the person of Christ throughout the

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[8] "The Symbol of Chalcedon," Schaff, 2:62.

history of the church, and so the doctrine deserves to be studied across the whole history of theology and not with reference to only one theologian's use of it. More than that, the doctrine of the incarnate Son's transcendence of his flesh has been the subject of modern neglect and contemporary recovery, which includes present day efforts at reappropriating the doctrine. In some cases, the contemporary paths of recovering the *extra* ought to give us pause, while other paths hold promise. In the end, the *extra* should perhaps remain relatively obscure—or at least continue to do what it has always been called upon to do in theology—to stand guard in the doctrine of the incarnation by affirming that the Son of God became incarnate but continued to exist even beyond the flesh.

APPENDIX:

THESES FOR PUBLIC DEFENSE

Theses Pertaining to the Ph.D. Dissertation

1. Scholarship on the *extra Calvinisticum* should examine not merely one theologian's (*e.g.*, John Calvin's) use of the doctrine, but should expand its inquiry to include a variety of theologians from various eras of church history.

2. The doctrine that has come to be known as the *extra Calvinisticum* had a significant role in the thought of three important theologians of the patristic, medieval, and Reformation eras—namely, Cyril of Alexandria (d. 444), Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), and Zacharias Ursinus (1534–1583).

3. In general, the *extra Calvinisticum* disappears from the theological scene by the end of the nineteenth century for at least two reasons. First, there was a growing weariness of the theological divisions in the church and a simultaneous push towards discovering grounds for unity, particularly between the Reformed and Lutheran churches. The *extra*, being a point of dispute between the Reformed and Lutherans, dropped out of favor in such a context. Second, shifts in metaphysics and theological method attended and perhaps contributed to changes in the kinds of christological issues that were raised and questions that were asked. In the midst of such foundational changes in intellectual trends the *extra* fell into neglect.

4. For Cyril of Alexandria the transcendence of the Son even while incarnate serves as a tool to defend the complete deity of the Son and the Son's continued personal divine activity even while incarnate. The existence of the Son beyond his human nature complements Cyril's view of the Son's kenosis as an economic condescension and also allows Cyril to speak of the incarnate Son in dynamic and even developmental terms.

5. Thomas Aquinas often employs the doctrine of the incarnate Son's existence beyond the flesh in discussions of Christ's descent—both his descent from heaven in becoming incarnate and his descent into hell during the three days (*triduum*) after his death. With this doctrine, Aquinas seeks to protect the true humanity of Christ and depicts Christ's incarnational descent not as a spatial movement but as an act of uniting human nature to himself. With respect to Christ's descent during the *triduum*, Aquinas uses a traditional way of speaking known as the *totus/totum* distinction to carefully distinguish how the person of Christ is still fully present even when he is not present in a human manner.

6. Zacharias Ursinus employs the *extra humanum* for more than a polemical purpose. Consistent with a major emphasis in the Heidelberg Catechism, Ursinus articulates the *extra humanum* with an eye towards the benefits and comfort that the doctrine holds out to believers. For Ursinus the departure of Christ is neither an absolute

departure nor a retreat from believers, but a bodily departure that opens up the way for profound blessings for the Christian.

7. Karl Barth's approach to the *extra Calvinisticum* is one of recovery, not outright rejection.

8. For Helmut Thielicke the *extra Calvinisticum* is not only a christological doctrine but, by virtue of the incarnation's paradigmatic display of the God-world relation, the *extra* also functions as a broader principle in conceptualizing the God-world relation and the theological task as a whole.

9. The contemporary trend of making the *extra* a theological principle and extending the doctrine into areas beyond christology, which can be traced at least as far back as Thielicke, is a misuse of the doctrine.

10. The *extra Calvinisticum* belongs within the bounds of christology and ought to remain relatively obscure.

Theses Pertaining to Ph.D. Coursework

11. The Kentucky Presbyterian minister David Rice (1733–1816) was not, as he has often been depicted, an opponent of revival. He was in fact a proponent of what may be called "moderate revivalism"—a restrained, churchly form of revival that has had a significant and enduring legacy in American Christianity.

12. A common line of scholarship, stemming from Reinhold Niebuhr himself, argues that Niebuhr made an almost total break with theological liberalism in the 1920s. Key liberal elements, however, persisted in his thought in the form of his repudiation of metaphysical and epistemological dogmatism, emphasis on religious traditions as the sources of religious reflection, rejection of any absolutizing of Scripture or divine revelation, and optimism about the potential of individual human beings. Thus his theological liberalism continued until at least 1932, and was likely never abandoned.

13. James K. A. Smith has appealed to the Christian doctrine of the incarnation as the key to solving the postmodernist problem of speech about God because of the way that it affirms creaturely finitude. Although his appreciation for written revelation has grown in recent years, Smith has not yet articulated a detailed view of the nature and authority of Scripture. An Augustinian account of Scripture as God's authorized and authoritative signs is one promising way in which Smith could articulate such a view of Scripture that fits with his "logic of incarnation."

14. Richard Baxter (1615–1691) advocated a minimalist Christian confessional statement consisting of the Lord's Prayer, Ten Commandments, and Nicene Creed. While Baxter's own theological writings were incredibly voluminous and highly technical, he insisted that the church should not impose on its members expanded confessions that contained secondary and ultimately unnecessary doctrines.

15. The governmental theory of the atonement propounded by Edwardsian theologians of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries received its distinct shape from a particular view of God as the benevolent Moral Governor of the universe who exercises absolute freedom in salvation, cannot be obligated to grant forgiveness even by the death of Christ, and whose justice is subsumed under his general benevolence.

Thesis of Personal Interest

16. American Presbyterians in the period of westward expansion recognized the problem that geographical distance posed to Presbyterian polity and ministry. At the national and regional levels, this problem was addressed by the 1789 restructuring of the church and various attempts to encourage better attendance at national and regional assemblies. At the local level, for example, Transylvania Presbytery in Kentucky addressed the problem of distance by instituting a pulpit-supply ministry that had the effect of turning settled ministers into *de facto* itinerant ministers.

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