ORTHODOXY: PROJECT, PROCESS AND PRODUCT

In the first part of this contribution we present the purpose and outline of the interdisciplinary research project *Orthodoxy: Process and Product*[1], as it was proposed in 2002, of which the current volume is one of the final outcomes. Along the lines of this presentation we will introduce in the second part the collection of articles contained in this volume.

I. Purpose and Research Avenues of 'Orthodoxy: Process and Product'

The question of the nature of truth and the way in which it is determined is as pertinent as ever. Indeed, in the light of developments in society, and the shifts in philosophical and scientific thinking, this question has been radicalized. There are those who inquire whether the question can ever be answered, or even if it can now be posed in a meaningful way. The advent of post-modernity – with its critique of modern thought – has meant that modern approaches to these issues are themselves under fire. The very horizon against which the question of truth is to be pursued is, therefore, in a state of flux. The result is a multiplicity of models for conceiving the truth, including such proposals as correspondence theories, coherence theories, pragmatism, phenomenological approaches, hermeneutical models, and deconstructionism.

This problematic encompasses, at the very least, implicitly, contemporary theological discussions. It is especially relevant to (but not confined to) the following three avenues of research. (a) There is, first, the matter of the 'borderline' questions between philosophy and theology, and the determination of the limits of both. (b) With respect to the matter of the development of tradition and hermeneutics, the question which must be posed is whether truth has a history, that is to say, whether there is development towards more truth or whether it is better to speak of 'other' truth. What is especially important here is a careful clarification of the relationship between tradition and context, between language and the

1. In this volume, the project will often be named after the type of funding on which it was based: GOA-project. For more information on the research groups involved, see: http://www.theo.kuleuven.be/goa/

salvific reality which is expressed therein. (c) Thirdly, there is the truth-question as this emerges in the dialogue between the world's religious traditions. In addition to the 'classical' positions, there are today those who advocate the view that all religions are (more or less) equally true, while others insist that the category of truth is simply not applicable when there is the possibility of more than one truth.

The problematic of theological truth (orthodoxy) can be said to involve two major issues, namely, the question of *the nature of theological truth*, and the question of *the determination of theological truth.*

The former question (the nature of truth) concerns the characteristics of (theological) truth, with particular attention being devoted to the issue of its normative character. This is the domain of theological epistemology, and involves such questions as the ground of truth, the relationship between human reason and divine revelation, the place of tradition and religious experience, the relationship between religious language and the object it seeks to evoke, etc.

The latter question (the determination of truth) concerns the criteria of theological truth, that is to say, the way in which theological truth is identified and legitimated (orthodoxy). At this level, theological epistemology intersects with ecclesiology – more specifically, with the question of how (religious) communities arrive at binding formulations of faith (e.g., in creeds, doctrines, dogmas, condemnations, but also in concrete religious and ritual practices), and how they can ensure the normative character of these formulations (e.g., the question of the legitimation of the teaching authority, the role accorded to tradition, etc.).

It is certainly the case that, in the Christian tradition, the question of the nature of theological truth is inextricably bound up with the process by which it has been determined at crucial moments in history. Exemplary instances of this fact are, among others, the development of christological and trinitarian thought up to and including the sixth century, the reception of Aristotle in the theology of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and the confrontation with modernity, especially in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (e.g. the cases 'Lamennais' and 'Loisy').

1. *Purpose of the Interdisciplinary Research Project*

The research questions which shape this project (which are both thematic and methodological in character), are rooted in the research undertaken by the authors of the present contribution. In what follows, the three groups involved in this research will be shortly presented. This will be followed by a presentation of the (methodological) problems that have

encouraged the groups to undertake this joint research, as well as of the opportunities for progress which the research groups have identified.

a) *Three Research Groups*

The research group associated with *Mathijs Lamberigts* is part of the Department of History of Church and Theology[2]. The research of the group concentrates on three areas: Augustine, Augustine's reception at the theological faculty of Louvain during the 16th and the 17th century, and Vatican II[3]. In its research, it pays exhaustive attention to themes dealing with the matter heterodoxy-orthodoxy (cf. Pelagian controversy), the difficult reception and interpretation of official determined position settings (cf. Augustine reception, Jansenism), or the abandoning of the anathema-theology because of choices for a "searching" renewal (Vatican II), in which Louvain theologians seem to have played a key role.

The theological-methodological question of the nature and determination of truth has been a recurrent theme in *Lieven Boeve*'s work, especially in his work on tradition and its development, and in his investigation of the concept of 'recontextualization'. The leitmotif of the research undertaken in his research group 'Theology in a Postmodern Context'[4] is the consideration of the status and method of theology in the contemporary, postmodern context, in the light of the acknowledgement of the radical particularity and historicity of Christian tradition. Important and recurrent questions in this connection are the relationship between truth, language, and time; the relationship between faith and reason, as well as between theology and philosophy. In short, what is at issue is the nature and determination of theological truth.

The research within the group associated with *Terrence Merrigan* is concentrated around two major themes, namely, the challenge to traditional Christian self-understanding posed by the emergence of the so-called pluralist theology of religions, and the attempt to respond to this challenge by a reconsideration of the nature and implications of the specificity of Christian faith, especially in the light of insights drawn from the work of John Henry Newman. An important question dealt with in this research is the challenge to Christianity's traditional understanding of its truth claims in the light of the contemporary experience of (religious) pluralism[5]. More succinctly, the issue is the question of the persistence of truth in history.

2. See: http://theo.kuleuven.be/page/profile_church
3. See: http://theo.kuleuven.be/page/centr_vatII
4. Cf. http://theo.kuleuven.be/page/rgtpc/
5. Cf. http://www.theo.kuleuven.be/page/csid/

b) *Methodological Differences and Opportunities*

Broadly speaking, church-historical research can be described as the study of the individual and communal expressions of Christians throughout history. The methodological approach employed by (Leuven's) church historians is *historical-critical*, that is to say, that its point of departure is rigorous analytical-critical investigation of the sources, which then serves as the foundation for dialogue and discussion with contemporary authors. The aim is to acquire insight into the views and positions adopted by authors and institutions. This research is primarily diachronic in character.

This largely diachronic research can be 'contrasted' with the more generalizing (synchronic) approach employed within systematic theology. The latter is concerned less with detailed studies of clearly circumscribed periods, and more with the detection of general currents and trends in history. A theological illustration of this fact is provided by the divergence between church-historical and systematic approaches to the Pelagian controversy[6].

The research conducted in the systematic-theological groups (in Leuven) is primarily *theological-hermeneutical* in character. This research aims to provide a historically-justified and systematically-coherent analysis of the experience and expression of Christian faith-communities in both the past and the present. Much attention is directed towards the hermeneutical issues that arise out of the realization that both religious experience and its expression are rooted in particular historical, cultural and social contexts. These issues include the tension between experience and tradition, doctrine and praxis, faith and reason, faith and science, faith and society, faith and culture/context, and so forth. This same perspective determines the approach to the fundamental themes of dogmatic theology, namely, creation, salvation, trinitarian theology, eschatology, etc.). Such a methodological approach requires familiarity, and dialogue, with philosophy, the human sciences (sociology, psychology, cultural anthropology, etc.), and, where necessary, with the natural sciences. Increasingly, this approach requires also dialogue with the world's major religious traditions.

6. See the survey of G. BONNER, *Augustine and Modern Research on Pelagianism* (The Saint Augustine Lectures), Villanova, PA, Villanova University Press, 1972; O. WERMELINGER, *Neuere Forschungskontroversen um Augustinus und Pelagius*, in C. MAYER – K.H. CHELIUS (eds.), *Internationales Symposion über den Stand der Augustinus-Forschung*, Würzburg, Augustinus-Verlag, 1989, 189-217; M. LAMBERIGTS, *Recent Research into Pelagianism with Particular Emphasis on the Role of Julian of Aeclanum*, in *Augustiniana* 52 (2002) 175-198.

The divergence in approaches between church historians and systematic theologians regularly leads to *conflicts*. While church historians claim that systematic theologians are too inclined to historical generalizations, the latter accuse church historians – who are nearly always associated with theological faculties – of making no 'real' contribution to theology proper. In this regard, it is sometimes claimed that the gulf between history and so-called 'salvation history' is becoming unbridgeable. The result is that church historians seem unable to make their presence felt in a discipline (systematic theology) where the relationship to the past and 'tradition' has always featured prominently. The only way to avoid that such conflicts become a stumbling block in theological research, is to be prepared to engage in the difficult process of dialogue and cooperation, on the basis of an explicit respect for the methodological differences between both, and a shared research hypothesis.

c) *A Twofold Research-Question*

In view of the question founding this research (i.e., the nature and determination of theological truth), a question which structures the research already being conducted in the three groups, and the divergent methodologies employed by church historians and systematic theologians, our research question reflects a twofold methodological concern.

In the first place, the project involves explicitly *church-historical and systematic-theological research into the process by which theological truth claims emerge*. The understanding of this process has varied throughout history. The project takes as its point of departure paradigmatic moments in the history of theology, including the contemporary scene. The aim here is to provide insight into the process by which theological truth has emerged in the past (church-historical component), and, using this research, to develop a responsible and intellectually-defensible position with respect to its emergence in the present and the future (systematic-theological component). The problematic addressed here has acquired new urgency in the light of the claim by many that the 'age of metaphysics' has passed. This problematic is taken up in the discussion of the *focus of this research*.

The inquiry into the problematic addressed by this project is always to be conducted against the background of the *methodological 'meta-question'* regarding the precise relationship between church-historical research and systematic-theological reflection on that research. Indeed, one of the main concerns of this project is to inquire into the feasibility of interdisciplinary cooperation between church-historical and systematic-theological research. The aim is not simply to reflect on the results of the particular

investigations undertaken, but also to examine the interaction between results achieved on the basis of divergent methodologies. Here, too, the real issue at stake is, finally, the quest for truth. This second question will be developed below, under the heading of the *concept of the research*. In fact, the same *research hypothesis* forms the basis for both the focus of the research and the concept of the research.

d) *Focus of the Research: the Discovery of Radical Particularity in the Determination of Theological Truth*

The contemporary quest for 'truth', especially the 'truth' about human existence, whether it is undertaken from a theological or other viewpoint, is characterized by renewed attention to the role played by the concrete context, by historicity and contingency. Moreover, the epistemological rediscovery of the particular constitutes the distinction between the contemporary quest for truth, and the quests of pre-modernity and modernity. In the case of the latter periods, the category of 'universality' was preeminent. In the pre-modern worldview, the particular was the place where the universal made itself known; in the modern worldview, the particular was the place where the universal achieved its fullest realization. In both cases, particularity was immediately linked to universality, or at least conceived in terms of universality.

In view of the rediscovery of particularity in the quest for truth, it seems fair to say that this structure has been inverted. Now, the issue is whether, and how, universality can be linked to the particular. Concretely, the questions to be asked are as follows: Are there moments, in the quest for truth, which transcend the 'purely' historical? Is there such a thing as 'transcendence' within radical historicity? As in the past, the tension at the heart of the theological quest for truth is the tension between universality and particularity. Now, however, the point of departure is the particular. What place, in the determination of truth, is to be accorded to historicism, particularism, contextualism, and relativism? Any attempt to 'recontextualize' the notion of truth must seek to relate its 'universality' to the particular and the contextual. The challenge is to clarify the way in which historical research into the particular and contextual circumstances surrounding the emergence of theological truth, is related to truths which, while being clearly rooted in history, are regarded as transcending particularity, that is to say, as involving a universal claim.

The shift to the particular has far-reaching consequences for theological epistemology. So, for example, there is now a demand to account for those historical, particular and contingent factors which, in the past, have

either gone unnoticed or have been ignored in the hermeneutics of tradition (and especially, perhaps, in handbooks of systematic theology). In other words, there is a growing recognition that truth emerges not in spite of, but in view of, the historical and the contingent. Theological truth is not simply disclosed in, but actually constituted by, history. Theological truth, then is radically incarnational. The upshot of this is that church-historical research acquires a greater input into systematic-theological reflection.

What all of this means is that the theology of tradition (its development and its hermeneutics) needs to be radically reconceived as 'recontextualization'. From a theological perspective, the transcendent is always mediated in and through the concrete and the historical. Transcendence cannot simply be equated with its historical mediation, but neither can it be 'thought' apart from it. This perspective provides a hermeneutical key for a re-reading of the history of the determination of theological truth, as well as a basic 'intuition', so to speak, for a contemporary theological epistemology. In fact, the crises with regard to 'tradition', i.e., shifts in focus, attempts at reformulations, and so on, which accompany contextual changes (including the way in which truth is understood), are best described as 'ruptures' which, paradoxically enough, can also allow the actual dimensions of truth to become manifest. It is precisely in the particular and the contingent that something is 'revealed' which cannot be (or could not have been) conceived of without the particular, but which is not reducible to it.

In any case, the quest for theological truth and its determination are not simply identical. When a determination is made, so to speak, then theological truth becomes 'orthodoxy'. At this point, the question of the authority of the one making the determination is of capital importance. In the course of time, there have been significant shifts in the way in which this authority comes to expression, as well as virulent discussions regarding the legitimacy of these shifts. This is no less the case in our day, such that the question of theological truth continues to be preeminent.

e) *Concept of the Research: the 'Surplus Value' of Methodological Interdisciplinarity*

The methodological option for recontextualization necessitates an interdisciplinary approach: systematic theology is indebted to philosophy and the other human sciences (sociology, economics, literary sciences, etc.) for its analysis of the particular context. This is clearly also the case as far as historical research is concerned. In terms of content, this project aims both to examine the historical evolution of the quest for,

and determination of, theological truth, and to engage in systematic-theological reflection on that evolution. The meta-question will be a constant feature of this research because it, too, is essentially a matter of the determination of theological truth. The goal of the research groups is to establish an interdisciplinary partnership in which the results of historical research and systematic-theological reflection will be related to one another. The relationship between these disciplines has been a matter of controversy since the nineteenth century. While some authors have argued for a continuity between both – and then proceeded to give priority to either history or systematic theology; others have advocated a complete discontinuity – and claimed that the disciplines are in fact too disparate to allow conflict or competition, let alone collaboration.

This discussion has led to a growing separation between the disciplines, to the frustration of both. The rediscovery of the importance, for theological truth, of concrete particularity and contextuality, can serve as an occasion for a renewed and fruitful encounter between them. On the one hand, the importance, for theological truth, of the role played by contingency and historicity must not be minimized. On the other hand, the refusal to move beyond radical historicism precludes the possibility of all systematic research.

This project takes as its point of departure the conviction that the undeniable differences between the disciplines need not be regarded simply as obstacles to cooperation, but may well be the occasion for the development of a new working relationship which serves the cause of both.

♦ Historical research would be well served by taking account of its own implicit and explicit (systematic-theological) presuppositions. History's own quest for truth is inevitably colored by the contemporary context, something which systematic theology has consistently insisted upon.

♦ Systematic theology must take account of church history's insistence on the irreducible significance of the particular and the contingent. There is a need for greater sensitivity to concrete facts, to the details and mechanisms which refuse to be glossed over. Contemporary theologies of revelation and tradition, of theological truth and hermeneutics, must make room for the insights of historical research.

An *illustration* of this discussion is provided by Jacques Le Brun's observations regarding the paradox involved in every statement about 'orthodoxy'[7]. On the one hand, it is impossible (or at least very difficult)

7. S. Elm – É. Rebillard – A. Romano (eds.), *Orthodoxie, christianisme, histoire – Orthodoxy, Christianity, History* (Collection de l'École française de Rome, 270), Paris, de Boccard, 2000, p. 367.

to provide a precise definition of either orthodoxy or heterodoxy. On the other hand, orthodoxy does in fact function as a criterion for the judgement of concrete positions. In other words, the notion of 'orthodoxy' appears to lead a life of its own, and to make its presence felt in judgements and evaluations, while remaining impervious to definition. The interdisciplinary character of this research meant that the research groups were confronted with the following challenges as they attempted to clarify the concept of this research: How does one proceed if one wishes to engage in a systematic comparison of case studies which date from very different periods in history? How does one do justice to the demands of one's own research, which is inevitably determined by the (un)availability of sources, etc., and the 'meta-demands' of interdisciplinary cooperation? In other words, how is one to accommodate the inevitable tension generated by research that is a matter of both diachronic investigation and systematic reflection thereon? In short, one issue continues to loom large, namely, the problem of the integration of case studies which first need to be contextualized (i.e., treated in terms of their historicity), into a systematic reflection which regards recontextualization as the key to the development of tradition.

f) *Research Hypothesis*

The rediscovery of the importance of particularity for understanding the nature of theological truth and the way in which it is determined, provides a key to re-conceptualize both the history of theological truth, and the contemporary quest for such truth. This rediscovery has implications for both theological methodology and for the meta-reflection on the relationship between church-historical research and systematic theology. Radical and irreducible particularity does not preclude theological truth, but may well be seen as a condition of possibility of its disclosure, both historically and theologically.

While the research groups are aware of the potential for methodological conflicts, they are convinced that the combination of the resources and expertise of the three groups would be most fruitful: the concept of truth which is operative among systematic theologians would be enriched by the insights flowing from the work of the church historians, who would, in turn, be enriched by the insights of systematic theologians regarding (postmodern) developments in theological hermeneutics. The three groups therefore aim to enter into close collaboration and, while respecting one another's methodological distinctiveness, to develop a common program of research.

2. *Three Avenues of Research as Occasions for Joint Research*

This project has neither the ambition, nor the pretension to provide a survey of the whole history of the church and theology. Neither does it take, as its point of departure, a specific definition of orthodoxy. Instead, it seeks to examine the way in which truth (orthodoxy) is defined, maintained, challenged, and applied in concrete, historical situations[8]. The project does aim, by means of carefully selected avenues of research, to come to an understanding of the processes which are involved in the continual reworking and reinterpretation of theological truth, the way in which what began as a local question acquires universal legitimacy, whether through negotiation, or the invocation of authority, or by means of coercion, competence or consensus. On the basis of this research, the research groups aim to reflect on the founding principles of the project as a whole, with a view to describing the processes by which theological truth is (or ought to be) identified and affirmed. The concern for the latter makes theology a normative science.

The focus, the concept and the hypothesis determining this research will be developed and measured by means of three avenues of research. These avenues, which will be investigated from a twofold perspective, issue from research in which the research groups are already engaged. However, by means of their inclusion in this project, and especially in view of its interdisciplinary character, they are carried further than would otherwise be the case. Each group will bring its research into dialogue with the fundamental problematic underlying this project (i.e., the nature and determination of theological truth), thereby assuring a common *focus*. Moreover, each group will reflect on the methodological 'meta-question', thereby guaranteeing attention to the project's basic *concept*. In doing this, the three groups will be able to test the project's *research hypothesis*, namely, that it is precisely the acceptance of radical particularity which constitutes a hermeneutical key that allows both the analysis of those processes by which theological truth is determined, and the re-conceptualization of contemporary practices in this regard[9].

8. See the very relevant remarks of ELM – REBILLARD – ROMANO (eds.), *Orthodoxie, christianisme, histoire* (n. 7), pp. I-XXV. The thesis that orthodoxy defines the novel as what contradicts it (i.e., orthodoxy) is no longer tenable, in the light of the existence of the shifts, evolutions, and moments of rupture in the process of doctrinal development. It is clear that *every* council's attempt to determine truth has issued in divisions within the church. The question which arises is: What effects divergence or convergence among those assembled?

9. For the sake of this publication, the original 20 page-long text, proposing the three research avenues, and accounting for these by making reference to a host of expertise and literature, has been summarized.

a) *Augustine and the Reception of Augustine*

This avenue of research is devoted to Augustine's attempts to determine theological truth, in confrontation with the challenges of his day. It then investigates the reception of Augustine's thought in this regard up to the present time. In both cases, i.e., with regard to both Augustine's own age and the contemporary reception of Augustine, the following questions are particularly relevant: Which version of Augustine's thought is evident at particular moments in history? How is his thought used, and to what end[10]?

The first research line of this avenue – *From Augustine to the Reformation* – first pertains the changed way in which Augustine's role in his own time (among others because of new insights in the Pelagian Controversy) is perceived in recent years. Secondly, significant changes in appreciation occurred as well regarding the way in which Augustine has functioned as a theological influence and authority in the discussions at the time of the Reformation between reformers (M. Luther), humanists (Erasmus) and Catholic theologians (Driedo and Latomus). We intend to discern which ideological and methodological presuppositions have contributed to the dramatic shift in the image of Augustine and his significance for theology? Is the Augustine of the church historian the same as the Augustine of the systematic theologian? What is the nature of the interaction between these disciplines? This will necessarily involve the consideration of 'which Augustine' is being 'received' in the theological tradition. Finally, it will be necessary to examine the way in which this Augustine is presented.

The second research line in this avenue concerns the contemporary *Postmodern Neo-Augustinianism*. Within contemporary theology, appeal is also made to Augustine in order to conceptualize theological truth and the way in which it is to be determined. This appeal is very characteristic of theologians, such as J. Ratzinger and J. Milbank's Radical Orthodoxy, who do not wish to engage in a dialogue with postmodernity. What makes Augustine especially attractive to these thinkers is Augustine's 'marriage' of Greek (neo-Platonic) thought, and Christian faith. Research into such perspective, which proposes a pre-modern solution for a postmodern problem, includes both a church-historical and systematic-theological critical evaluation of the way in which Augustine is invoked here, and to examine whether it can be historically and theologically legitimated. Subsequently, in the light of the confrontation with our research

10. This research takes its lead from the research conducted within the group Lamberigts and is resumed in the research pursued by the group Boeve.

hypothesis (radical particularity), it is also essential to ask in what way the premises employed by these thinkers are different from those of this project, and what are the consequences of this difference? Which position is best able to defend itself in the contemporary context?

b) *Theology in Confrontation with (Post)modernity*

This research avenue includes two lines of research, the first on the *Theology of Newman and its Reception*, the second on *Theological Truth and its Determination at Vatican II*[11].

It is sometimes asserted that the Catholic Church confronted modernity just as this period was drawing to a close. However, in *John Henry Newman*, we find a thinker whose oeuvre was determined by an attempt to come to terms with the two major features of modernity, the consciousness of the historical and contextual character of truth, and the turn to the subject and their experience. Moreover, Newman's work represents a masterly synthesis of historical research (attention to the particular and the contingent), and systematic theology (which attends to the universal truth claims of Christianity). As such, he combines in himself the dual methodological interest which is determinative for this project. Finally, Newman's significance for the historical and experiential turn, which has characterized Catholic theology in the twentieth century cannot be overestimated. In this project we intend to study Newman's view on the relationship between religious truth and history, the effective development of religious truth in history, and the guarantee of religious truth.

Vatican II (1962-1965) takes its place in a long line of councils. At the same time, this council is distinguished from previous councils in that it sought to develop a theological answer to the challenge confronting it (i.e., modernity) in an open and non-condemnatory fashion. Vatican II is the first council which did not pronounce an 'anathema'. The council confirmed the dialogue with modernity and refused to demonize the latter as unorthodox and 'modernistic' (in the theological sense of that term). As such it represented the end of the age of confrontation, and the advent of a new age in the quest for theological truth. However, where precisely are we to situate the methodological shift in the determination of truth? Are we compelled to regard councils as isolated, contingent, historical moments dictated by context, such that there is no longer any possibility of seeing their 'truth' as in some sense 'trans-historical'. Finally, are church history and systematic theology compatible, either with regard to their object or their methodology?

11. This research is conducted respectively within the groups Merrigan and Lamberigts.

c) *The Role of Particularity in Theological Epistemology*

Also this avenue of research is two-pronged[12]. In the first place, an analysis is made of the *significance of the renewed attention to particularity for theological epistemology*. This involves explicit attention to the fundamental epistemological hypothesis grounding this research. For, is it possible to conceive of truth without immediately thinking in terms of universality? For those who stand within a particular religious tradition: is it possible to conceive of truth without that truth being regarded as absolute? Is it not the case that the truth claim propounded by a particular tradition necessarily extends beyond that tradition? In sum, the questions raised here all concern the feasibility of the combination, 'truth, particularity, and salvation', and the implications of the answer given for concrete religious traditions and especially for Christianity.

In the second place, the implications of the shift in attention to the particular are investigated on the basis of a specific *case study*, namely, the *contemporary theology of (world) religions*. More concretely, this research line pertains the following two considerations. First: the pluralist appeal to historical research, as a means of discrediting the universalist pretensions of traditional Christian teaching. This involves at least a systematic attempt to examine the methodological presuppositions undergirding the pluralist use of history. Second: the significance, for the understanding of salvation, of the reference to the historical particularity of Jesus of Nazareth. In the first place, what is needed is an investigation of the way in which the appeal to the history (and humanity) of Jesus has colored Christian representations of salvation. This would then be followed by a consideration of whether the attention to concrete history, as a component of the vision of salvation, is a peculiarly Jewish-Christian phenomenon.

II. Presentation of This Volume

The first contribution of the introductory part approaches the themes of the project from the perspective of systematic theology. Boeve presents the problem of truth, orthodoxy and tradition as a problem of 'recontextualisation'. In traditional Roman Catholic views of tradition development, the tradition was seen as a timeless core that was expressed in different languages tied to different cultures and philosophical systems,

12. In this avenue, the groups of Boeve and Merrigan integrated their research efforts.

but still remained untouched by these contexts. Twentieth-century showed a change in this regard, as an increasing awareness of the role of context, prompted by developments in the historical sciences and philosophy, made it largely impossible to maintain a timeless core in between all changing ways of formulating it.

Boeve describes the new awareness of the decisive role of context in terms of the theologies of Edward Schillebeeckx and Hans Küng, both of whom developed ways in which the decisive role of context for the development of tradition could be taken into account. Schillebeeckx did so by accounting for the dynamics between faith and context as a proportionality between Jesus' message in its original context, and ever new ways of formulating the Christian message in their respective cultural contexts. The history of theology indeed bears witness to different tradition phases, but there is a common proportionality between the phases and a common hermeneutical process that happens through time. In Hans Küng's notion of paradigm change in theology, something similar happens. Küng distinguishes between different paradigms, sets of tacit presuppositions governing a certain way of doing theology in a certain context, ultimately proposing a new postmodern ecumenical paradigm for theology today.

On the basis of this analysis, Boeve presents his view of theology as recontextualisation. In both Schillebeeckx and Küng's proposals, a certain common core is presupposed behind all different recontextualisations and paradigm switches. Thus, the radical embeddedness of the Christian tradition in the particularity of a specific context is not taken into account. Following modern methods of correlation between theology and its context, both of them presuppose that there is a commonality between theology and the modern context that theology can positively pursue. These modern ideas of a common, universal core within changing contexts, and of a one-to-one correlation between theology and its context on the basis of this communality, moreover still very much belong to a time in which the Christian heritage of European culture was taken for granted. Boeve is now taking up a more radical hermeneutics in which not so much the harmony between different paradigms, or the harmony in the hermeneutical process is presupposed, but in which an interplay between continuity and discontinuity is the starting point for the hermeneutical analysis. How the interplay between continuity and discontinuity plays out in a concrete context, is to be decided within that context, as no common rule for the interaction between Christian faith and its context can be assumed. This leads to a recontextualisation thesis on two levels: at a theological and a historical level, tradition develop-

ment needs to be thought of as intrinsically determined by the context in which the Christian faith is brought to expression. At a normative theological level, however, recontextualisation is also the task of theology today. Theology is precisely the recontextualisation, that is, the interplay between the inherited tradition of Christianity and a new and changing context, reflecting on the continuity and discontinuity between the tradition and the contemporary context.

Subsequently, Joeri Schrijvers deals with the problem of theological truth from the perspective of the traditional set of philosophical theories of truth. Starting from the correspondence theory of truth, he applies the root of all modern reflection on the nature and determination of truth to the study of church history and systematic theology, imagining what it would mean to conceive of them according to a strict correspondence theory of truth. Subsequently, Schrijvers deals with the same problem in terms of a coherence theory of truth. According to this theory, truth resides primarily in the internal coherence between different statements. This idea of internal coherence raises the question of the inner coherence of an interdisciplinary endeavour such as the GOA project.

As a third possibility, Schrijvers describes a performance theory of truth, discussing it in the light of the notions of particularity and incarnation. He especially warns against an overly easy reconciliation between a philosophical and a theological account of the incarnation. The strong awareness of the utter particularity of discourses and the fact that significations only ever incarnate in this or that particular discourse implies that meanings might very well be incommensurable and therefore not reconcilable. The discussion of the particularity of truth finally leads Schrijvers to a discussion of Heidegger's concept of Jemeinigkeit, as the problem of particularity, for the idea that there might be universal and absolute truth arising out of particular contexts raises the question about our personal and ownmost relationship to this very context.

Schrijvers' uneasiness about the radical particularity of all access to truth is something one will encounter elsewhere in this collection. Such uneasiness has to do with the fact that the radical particularity of truth implies that the burden of justification shifts from the truth to the knower of the truth, and might thus reinforce a logic of arbitrariness and violence between opposing truth claims. It is for this reason that Schrijvers stresses Heidegger's notion of Jemeinigkeit. Indeed, the idea that every truth claim is particular perhaps does not suffice since such a statement still remains in the universal realm and does not take the implication of the knower in this or that particular truth seriously enough. For Schrijvers, then, the particular nature of truth requires the singularity of a concrete

and existential response on the part of the knower, which is what Heidegger means by Jemeinigkeit, a taking responsibility for one's stance over against the truth.

1. *Patristics, Augustine and Neo-Augustinianism*

In the first part of the collection, we arrive in another still very particular world of truth, the world of concrete historical determinations of truth, reconstructed from the perspective of historical theologians. The first contribution deals with the notion of orthodoxy and heresy in the sermons of Gregory of Nyssa. As is well known, the fourth century was the field of an intense search for the Christian doctrine of God. Little attention has been given to the role of sermons in these disputes. In his contribution, Johan Leemans fills this *lacuna* with an analysis, focussing on six sermons of Gregory.

Having shown that polemics plays a crucial role in Gregory's sermons, and pointing to the fact that these polemics usually take the form of a dichotomy between orthodox and heretics, Leemans analyses from this viewpoint three funeral orations (for Gregory's brother Basil, Meletius of Antioch, and the empress Flacilla) and three liturgical sermons (for Christmas, for Easter, and for Pentecost).

Leemans' conclusion is that the construction of orthodoxy and heresy is very much something that is not argued for, but which is implicitly construed and reinforced as something known by the audience. God will bless the upright and curse the godless. Of course the righteous are the orthodox, and the godless are the heretics. Those praised in the funeral orations are the righteous, because they did much to further the orthodox party. Thus, a picture emerges in which it is not so much important to engage into a determination of the boundaries of truth, but in which primarily a rigid boundary is drawn between those on the right and those on the left side of the spectrum, ignoring all sorts of nuances between heretics and orthodox. In sum: reading Gregory's sermons reveals that the determination of truth seems more intended to affirm the identity of an already established group, than to self-critically assess the truth of one's faith. Thus, the study of sermons offer complimentary information to the systematical-theological endeavours Gregory pursues in his other, so-called 'dogmatic' writings.

The next contribution by Wim François turns to the sixteenth century, providing an analysis of the Louvain theologian John Driedo. Driedo polemicized against Luther in his major work *De ecclesiasticis scripturis et dogmatibus*. In this work, Driedo extensively deals with the questions

of Scripture and tradition and their interrelationship. This exposition is based upon a theological epistemology that still rests on an Aristotelian idea of a harmony between the faculties of the soul and the reality known by it. This harmony turns out to be something that takes primacy over language, as the language in which the knowledge of the soul is expressed, changes over time and space. Based on this epistemology, Driedo defends an *evangelium in corde*, a gospel in the heart, i.e. the original Revelation Christ has been communicated to the Apostles and first believers, and is handed down from the apostolic times via an unbroken line of succession and in spite of changes and additions and defects in the history of the Church. Luther, on the other hand, worked with an epistemology which was much more influenced by the nominalism of his time, focussing on the role of language rather than relying on the harmony between the structure of the soul and reality.

The flexible relationship between the knowledge of the truth through the gospel in the heart and the way in which this gospel was formulated in different times and situations, provided Driedo with the tools to maintain the position of the Roman Catholic Church. The Church is actually the means through which the evangelical truth comes to the believer. As the Church existed before Scripture, a community such as the Church is needed to interpret Scripture and development in thinking through the evangelical truth is by no means doing harm to the stability of the Church's possession of the truth. Still, development is to be considered as revealing and unfolding what always has been present in the *evangelium in corde* or *depositum fidei*; real newness is not possible.

The relationship of Hans Geybels' contribution to this volume is slightly more complex than that of the previous. Geybels discusses the role of Duns Scotus in recent so-called neo-Augustinian theologies. The role of Scotus is intimately related to the project in the sense that contemporary neo-Augustinianism is an important voice in the discussion about orthodoxy and theological truth, both in Anglican and Roman Catholic circles. In Anglicanism and Anglo-Saxon theology in general, a new movement Radical Orthodoxy was introduced at the end of the nineties, a movement that claims to return to the pre-modern Christian tradition and restore its claim to 'orthodoxy'. In this movement, several figures take pride of place: Augustine, with in that context a certain reading of Neoplatonism, Aquinas and Duns Scotus and in the context of the latter, the turn to modernity, Descartes and Kant. In all this, Duns Scotus fulfils the role of a watershed between good and bad, pre-modernity and modernity. In Roman Catholic theology, especially more conservative trends would expose a similar negative approach to modernity, and a

specific interest in reconciling pre-modern Christianity and its Platonic heritage.

Geybels' contribution addresses the role of Scotus in two ways, taking up the interdisciplinary approach of the overall project. In terms of systematic theology, the neo-Augustinian thesis comes down to a specific way of integrating philosophy and theology, assigning both to a common timeless ontological structure. In this ontological framework, history is in the end secondary, and not constitutive for the concept of theological truth. Geybels' analysis of the history of the reception of Duns Scotus proves the opposite. The idea that with Scotus, everything went wrong due to an ontotheological view of the relationship between God and world is proven to be a particular and at least one-sided reading of Scotus, rooted in a specific philosophical and theological context. Thus, the historical analysis of the reception of Scotus contributes to the systematic-theological point, namely more emphasis on a distinction between theology and philosophy, between God and the world, and between universality and particularity.

Maarten Wisse's contribution is also to be read in the context of the discussion with contemporary neo-Augustinianism. Wisse addresses the question of the determination of truth from the perspective of Augustine. Neo-Augustinianism claims that Augustine's work can be the basis for an account of truth in terms of participation, and thus of unity and universality rather than diversity and particularity. The moment of truth is rooted in a prior ontological unity between the knower and the thing known. Thus, the only real access to truth, but also eventually the only ultimately really rational way of thinking about the world, is through an acknowledgement of its source in God, so that any act of free will by human beings, whereby they do not submit to God, is ultimately irrational and in fact impossible.

In his contribution, Wisse provides an in-depth reading of Augustine's *De Trinitate*, book 11, showing that in Augustine, truth is not about participation, but rather about respecting the nature of external things in their difference from the subject. The will plays a crucial role in this, as the will, if fallen, determines perception in such a way that it cannot perceive things as they are. Thus, in Augustine, there is a much more 'modern' relationship between the subject and object of knowledge than recent Neo-Augustinianism suggests. The background of this much less unity-oriented approach to truth in Augustine is his doctrine of creation. In creation, God created everything according to its own nature, a nature which is not grounded in God's nature, but in God's will. This results in a stronger God – world distinction, and thus in something that is much

closer to Radical Orthodoxy's arch enemy Duns Scotus than they want to admit.

2. *Theology in Confrontation with Modernity*

As we have seen from the discussion of Hans Geybels' contribution and becomes even more clear in the contributions that follow, the question of modernity plays a crucial role in the question of truth and orthodoxy. Much seems to have changed since what we now call modernity entered the scene. Two contributions, taken together in part II, engage the question of truth and modernity.

Dirk Claes' contribution on the history of the Leuven theological faculty in the struggle around modernism shows how truth is always contextual. In the context of re-establishing the Leuven university, an explicitly catholic university was needed to defend the truth of the Church. Defending the truth of the church to an increasingly secular and even anti-clerical world implied to struggle against modernism, but also to use the best that modernism had to offer to prove the truth of the church. This then, led to a double move. On the one hand, Leuven theologians went a long way to meet the demands of a defensive apology of the Christian faith, but on the other hand, they did so precisely by adopting many of the methodologies of modernity, especially the adoption of experimental methodologies in the sciences, and historical-critical methodologies in the humanities and theology. In spite of the apologetic intentions of the Leuven theologians, they met considerable resistance from Rome, as Rome saw in the use of historical-critical methodology an attack on the established truths and traditions of the Church. Claes shows how even this strong anti-modernist strategy from Rome did not fundamentally alter the Leuven stance towards historical-critical methodology. It was carried out more modestly, and accompanied by a focus on its pastoral application, but modernity was never entirely left aside. What is true, turns out to be true in a very particular context.

In the second contribution to the discussion of truth and modernity, Mathijs Lamberigts and Karim Schelkens discuss the concept of truth as it was used at the Second Vatican Council. Whereas the turn to modernity, as Claes' contribution has made clear, meant a turn from the modern world towards a rigid anti-modern scholasticism, an anti-modernity constantly under pressure of modern influences on the Church, culture and society, Vatican II represents in many respects the turn to the modern world. Still, the analysis of the documents of Vatican II shows that the turn to modernity did not occur without any resistance. Lamberigts and

Schelkens show that the way in which the concept of truth is dealt with differs considerably between the various documents under discussion, and can be traced back to the commissions and often even their individual members, responsible for composing the documents. It becomes also clear that there is a remarkable difference in the prominence of truth between those documents that deal with doctrines or regulations for the internal life of the church, and those who deal with the external relations of the Roman Catholic Church to other ecclesial communities, culture and society. The concept of truth is strikingly less prominent in the former, whereas it figures prominently in the latter. Truth, so it seems, is particularly at stake when it is challenged by the views of others. Otherwise, it is presupposed rather than argued for.

At the end of their contribution, Lamberigts and Schelkens touch upon the context of the project explicitly, feeling challenged by the exchange with systematic theologians, proposing an interesting set of theses relating to the conciliar concepts of truth. Some address the interpretation of truth directly or seem to be taken from the council fathers' propositions. Others seem like fresh and challenging contributions to the systematic-theological debate on truth: "7. Truth can manifest itself as a person", and "8. Truth is a performative and salvific verb, it is realised in love".

3. *Contemporary Theological Epistemology*

The third part of this collection approaches the question of truth and orthodoxy from a systematic-theological point of view. In the first contribution to this part, Joris Geldhof attempts to escape the contemporary impasse concerning the question of theological truth through the proposal of a 'method of concordance'. This method of concordance has as its central tenet that everything in reality hangs together. Therefore, truth can never be something that concerns propositions, facts, the sciences, or philosophy. Truth is always interconnected with other areas of life. The underlying ontology of unity in difference, which Geldhof takes from Franz von Baader, a contemporary of other great German idealists such as Hegel and Schelling, also means that no area of knowledge can claim the exclusive right for determining the criteria for truth or rationality. Every area of knowledge contributes to our understanding of reality. Hence every area needs all other areas and none of them is encompassing.

The ontology of a unity in difference as Baader advocated it, also states the porosity of being. Thus, truth cannot be found exclusively in the intellectual realm, but the intellectual realm must be permeated with other aspects of the subject. This is what Geldhof calls the 'concordance'

that is at stake. Truth is a matter of the heart as the center of human existence. The permeability of all areas of life and knowledge also means that due to the interconnectedness of everything, the God world distinction is not so absolute that it renders God completely incomprehensible. This leads Geldhof to a plea for the possibility of rational reflection in theology. He sees this possibility for rational reflection exemplified in the works of three contemporary theologians: Brian Hebblethwaite, Denys Turner, and Paul Valadier. In Hebblethwaite, Geldhof finds an argument for the compatibility and even mutual interdependence of faith and reason. This interdependence is then elaborated in terms of Turner's argument that there is no sharp distinction between natural and revealed theology. This then, accords with Valadier's argument in favour of a more open concept of reason.

With Christophe Brabant's contribution, we make a shift from German Romanticism, the high point of modernity, to French hermeneutics, one of the high points of postmodern philosophical reflection. The concern behind Brabant's argument, however, is not as different from Geldhof as the historical orientation might suggest. In fact, behind Brabant's reading of Ricœur's view of faith and reference is a similar interest in making sense of the way in which faith can be thought through in a rational way as we find in Geldhof's method of concordance. In order to make sense of the way in which faith accounts for theological truth, Brabant takes his point of departure in the act of faith as a relational act. Faith is a response to a Word spoken and preceding human beings. For this reason, theological truth cannot be taken as simply consisting of a set of propositions correctly representing a certain state of affairs. This would take theological truth out of its context in the act of faith.

Brabant elucidates the nature of truth and reference in faith through an analysis of Ricœur's concept of metaphor. In metaphorical language, something is expressed with words that are familiar to us, but things which gain a different referent. In the metaphorical use of language, the literal referent is denied and a surplus of meaning is generated, deferring the referent to another level. Thus, Brabant argues, the language of faith as metaphorical language rewrites reality from the way in which the believer experiences reality as a gift of God. This embeddedness of the language of faith in the experience of the believer means that the referent of the language is not available outside the particular context of the believer.

Brabant nuances the idea of the language of faith as metaphorical, however, as in the case of the language of faith, the discourse at hand is not seen – within that very language – as one of the many poetic ways

of seeing reality, but as a founding discourse that in its very particularity refers to the ultimate ground of the world and thus all discourses. This problem of the particularity and yet also ultimate character of the language of faith is then also related to the distinction between 'seeing as', and 'being as'. With Ricœur Brabant acknowledges that language has implications for ontology. The 'seeing as' refers primarily to the role of the subject in creating the discourse, wereas the 'being as' denotes the fact that in the act of faith, the discourse of faith ensures that the subject experiences itself not only as seeing reality as … but reality as primarily being created and thus as responsive, rather than as merely constructing its own discourse.

In a third move, Brabant applies the insight of the language of faith as metaphorical language to the question of God as the external referent of faith. The external referent *is* there, but it remains embedded in the narrative and metaphorical language because it cannot be referred to as something in reality without the discourse of faith, and thus always belongs to the poetic imagination of the speaker, in which the literal meaning of the discourse is deferred in favour of another meaning that is evoked in poetic discourse. Finally, the relationality of faith discourse is emphasized when Brabant stresses that dogmas are not expressions of first order meaning, but of a symbolic nature, pointing to a second order reference that depends on the relational character of faith.

In his contribution titled "Truth as performance", Yves De Maeseneer takes his lead from Marion's analysis of truth as performance in God without Being. If statements about God cannot have the status of truth that logical positivism required, how is theological truth to be conceived of? Marion's view builds on two shifts: one from the statement to the subject, a shift in which the subjectivity of the subject stating takes central stage. The problem is that from this perspective, a violence enters the scene, as the subject has no other option than to use its own subjectivity to justify the truth of the statement. Subsequently, a second shift is introduced, one from the subject to the statement again. This second shift involves the idea of a truth claim as a performative statement, a statement which does what it states, for example someone declaring a couple married. If statements of faith are seen as performatives (Marion follows Austin at this point), then the crucial question becomes who is entitled to speak. Marion's answer is: only God can speak performatively when it comes to the truths of faith.

However, as a term that stems from the world of theatre, the term 'performance' raises the question whether truth is not fatally bound up with acting 'as if'. Developing a suggestion of Joseph Ratzinger, De

Maeseneer puts forward the hypothesis that contemporary philosophies (e.g. Slavoj Žižek and Jacques Derrida), but also theological discourses like Radical Orthodoxy or contemporary theological hermeneutics in the end practice a theology of the 'as if'. Only Marion's performative view of theological truth seems to avoid this trap. However, De Maeseneer – pursuing a critique of Marion that is quite similar to Boeve's in his second essay – indicates that Marion's epistemological framework puts history and the subject as the receivers of truth or the playground where truth happens, in a merely negative position. But De Maeseneer asks: what if the subject is constitutive of the moment of truth? Drawing insights from Giorgio Agamben's reading of Paul, De Maeseneer proposes an account of the appearance of God as the ultimate guarantee for the veracity of theological truth as a transformation of history from within, rather than from an alien otherness.

In the next contribution, Terrence Merrigan addresses the question of the universality and particularity of the Christ event and the mediating role of the Church in the contemporary theology of religions. Christian theology of religions is in trouble, Merrigan suggests, and eventually this trouble is not about some minor aspect of the faith, but about its very center: the confession of Jesus Christ as God becoming human at a specific time and place. Merrigan sees all sorts of attempts to do away with the radical particularity of the incarnation, trying to make the incarnation of Jesus Christ one particular incarnation among others. This, he holds, is against the traditional teaching of the Church, which has always maintained the particularity of the incarnation, but also stressed its universal significance, mediated by the salvific role of the Church.

In a second move, Merrigan shows how the problem of universality and particularity plays an ambiguous role in the pluralist theology of religions. On the one hand, pluralist theologians claim to pay due attention to the particular historical religions. According to pluralists, truth in religion can no longer be perceived from the perspective of one particular tradition, because this implies that one ignores the insights of other religious traditions. This leads to an empirical thrust in pluralism, studying religious traditions in their own right rather than from a universal framework. At the same time, the denial of an exclusive access to truth in any of the traditions at hand, leads to an account of salvation in religion in a remarkably universalist way, as every particular concrete account of salvation in a particular religion is seen as a limited expression of the universal salvific function of religions.

In a final move, Merrigan discusses the problem of particularity and universality in terms of the theology of religions of Jacques Dupuis.

Dupuis made an attempt to maintain both the universal salvific role of the Church and the salvific role of other religions in their own right, leading to a 'notification' from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. The Congregation maintained that Dupuis did not take the role of the Church in mediating salvation to other religions properly into account, thus neglecting the particularity and universal significance of the incarnation and the role of the Church.

In Lieven Boeve's second contribution to this volume, he takes up the theme of the particularity of Christian truth claims in terms of a discussion of the thesis that "the incarnation of the truth *is* the truth of the incarnation" and the other way around. First, putting up questions that run parallel to the concerns expressed in Merrigan's essay, Boeve applies this thesis to the question of Christianity in the midst of an increasing religious pluralisation of society. After having introduced the common threefold typology of the theology of religions, Boeve argues that neither of the usual strategies in the theology of the religions is completely satisfying. All three models operate within the realm of a dichotomy between universality and particularity. Either the incarnation is universal, excluding competing truth claims, or the incarnation is one particular way of salvation besides others.

In order to avoid this pitfall, Boeve pursues the dynamics of inter-religious communication, arguing that one's position over against other religions is so much tied to one's particular context and upbringing, that an encompassing inter-religious discourse is rendered impossible. From one's own context, one cannot but be linked to one's own faith commitment, but one is confronted with religious others in such a way as being challenged by the particularity of others. Thus, a different type of inclusivism is called for than the usual one, namely one in which Christians indeed enter the inter-religious dialogue from their own perspective, and cannot but think about salvation for others from their own faith experience, though still recognize that this experience is related to the very particularity of their tradition, which in turn is based on the very particularity of God's revelation in Jesus Christ.

In the second part of his contribution, Boeve applies his thesis to the way in which religion appears in the work of contemporary philosophers, Marion, Derrida, Caputo, and Kearney. In all of these, language and particularity is seen as the particular over against of which the absolute appears, overturning particularity with the absoluteness of God. Again, Boeve argues that it is the very particularity of the incarnation that provides the key to a different view of the relationship of universality and particularity. If in the incarnation, God revealed Godself within the very

particularity of the historical life of Jesus, then theological truth is inextricably bound to the particularity of that event. This prevents one from neglecting or playing down the particularity of the Christian narrative, but it also avoids a particularist fundamentalism in which the particular claims the universal.

4. *The Question of Interdisciplinarity*

In the last part of this volume, the question of interdisciplinarity is explicitly raised. Maarten Wisse provides the critical starting point for the discussion by challenging the commonly held view of the relationship between church history and systematic theology. According to this common view, church history is a historical discipline that researches facts from the past, and delivers these to the systematic theologian to evaluate them in the context of the norms of theological truth. Church history is then a descriptive enterprise, whereas systematic theology is primarily a normative enterprise. Wisse argues that the common division of labour is not in accordance with developments in hermeneutics, as it suggests that church history could be ideologically and contextually neutral. In addition, Wisse sees serious consequences for the academic credibility of systematic theology.

Proposing an alternative way of conceptualizing the relationship between church history and systematic theology, Wisse takes his starting point in a theology that is consciously and intentionally situated *coram Deo*. Theology is understood as a response to divine revelation, but in such a way as to keep God's revelation always distantiated from human appropriations. Therefore, a critical attitude in which human appropriations of God are scrutinized is at the heart of the theological enterprise. Church history and systematic theology, like all the other theological disciplines, contribute to this critical enterprise in different ways. Church history confronts the ecclesial tradition with the otherness of history by critically examining the history of the church. Systematic theology fosters critical reflection in the church by confronting faith traditions with developments in Christian doctrine – thus coming quite close to the history of theology insofar as it studies the past of Christian doctrine – or by confronting faith traditions with developments in philosophy or contemporary culture.

Wisse's contribution did not remain unchallenged within the context of the GOA-project. First, church historian Wim François responds by drawing attention to church history's shared ground with the humanities, a common basis that is easily threatened if the study of the history of

Christianity is too strongly embedded in an explicitly theological framework. Finally, systematic theologian Yves De Maeseneer suggests that the difference between the old and the new model are not as big as Wisse suggests, and that both church history and systematic theology will benefit from a view of their interdisciplinarity in which their mutual differences rather than their similarities are emphasized.

Lieven.Boeve@theo.kuleuven.be L. BOEVE
Mathijs.Lamberigts@theo.kuleuven.be M. LAMBERIGTS
Terrence.Merrigan@theo.kuleuven.be T. MERRIGAN