

Notes on the Tübingen Edition of Gregory of Rimini

III

The critical edition of Gregory of Rimini († 1358)
promoted by the SFB 8
of the University of Tübingen advances steadily*.

The title-page is slightly changed, a change I am happy about; in the interest of guaranteeing continuity Dr. Venicio Marcolino has consented to appear from now on as co-editor.

In the preface H.A. Oberman rates the present volume «als theologischen Höhepunkt... zur Gnaden- und Sündenlehre». Whether Gregory with his Pelagianism, Semi-Pelagianism, or Super-Pelagianism has become a scandal or a challenge to present-day theology is a question Oberman leaves open.

In the authentic nominalism of the Authenticus Gregorius intuition can never be separated from the existential present because we live in a triadic world where being is at the same time, inseparably, existentially founded, and at the same time, inseparably, intellectually structured, and at the same time, inseparably, gravitationally interwoven. Gregory had a triadic master in Augustine De trin 1b 8-15 (and James of Viterbo?). One can postulate that Gregory with James of Viterbo kept away from the pitfalls of Aegidius Romanus, and never lost sight of the formula $1 \times 1 \times 1 = 1$.

In the authentic theology of the Authenticus Gregory *christian* theology, after Christ's gracious creation of a divinized world, can never abstract from a divine symbiosis when there is talk about divine life graciously given through the sacraments, never abstract from a divine

* Gregorii Ariminensis OESA Lectura super Primum et Secundum Sententiarum ediderunt A. Damasus Trapp OSA, Venicio Marcolino Tomus VI Super Secundum (Dist. 24-44), elaboraverunt Venicio Marcolino, Walter Simon, Volker Wendland, in: Spätmittelalter und Reformation Texte und Untersuchungen herausgegeben von Heiko A. Oberman Bd 11 (Walter De Gruyter Berlin New York 1980) pages i-viii (Vorwort) 1-337 (Text). Cf. *Augustiniana* 29 (1979) 238-241; 30 (1980) 46-57.

intervention when there is talk about faith, never abstract from divine cooperation when there is talk about rising into divine gravitation. But a humanistic fanciful theology, not to say theology fiction, still dreams about Prometheus storming heaven.

Only in science fiction was there ever a walk in space outside of all gravitation, only in theology fiction can there be a corner of the material or spiritual universe outside the pale of Jesus Christ who by his cross opened for us the universal fountain of divine being, the universal source of divine light, and inserted us into the divine gravitation of the power of the Holy Spirit, a love stronger than death and cross. In a trinitarian world, God's Light became the light of the world, God's Son the brother of man, man was offered the chance of becoming a child divine, a chance to be rejected only with irresponsibility and offensive ingratitude.

If this christian premiss is accepted, all answers thereupon become tautological *secundum definitionem*. If after the incarnation there be a *pagan* outside the pale of all grace in a freehold, a land absolutely free of Christ's conditions and Christ's impositions, with absolute achristian free-living and absolute achristian free-thinking, such a *pagan*, could not only be called *achristian* but had to be considered *antichristian* if neutrality in regard to Christ could only be illicit, and such a *pagan's* work could only be classified as immoral.

God being sovereign in regard to his church, in regard to his sacraments, in regard to the good works of his creature, and God being entitled to make any exceptions He pleases, who can then say that there be a child, I mean after the incarnation, completely outside the universal gravitation of the grace of Christ? But supposing there could be, all answers in regard to that child would necessarily be tautological *secundum definitionem*.

To the logical mind of days bygone man's power outside the pale of grace was not less outside the pale of grace, whether man happened to be very young or very old, whether man happened to be very close by or very far away, whether this man was called upon to perform feats very gigantic or insignificant puny gestures.

To the modern mind God's fairness or injustice seem to be called into question: to the traditional mind not God's power is under discussion, only man's is. Whether God might make exceptions no one questions; only one thing is rejected, namely that man unaided by God would yet be able to scale God's exclusive heights, that alone is flatly denied.

Our modern complexes of anti-paternalism, of egalitarianism, keep us from realizing that strictly speaking only God is gracious in his Grace, man has to be grateful, ingratitude being sinful; all gravitation is God's grace and cannot be anybody else's; man can only joyfully cooperate, opposition, refusal to cooperate, betrayal of one's talents being equally sinful; all holiness being God's, man has to admit his sinfulness without much ado, hypocrisy being pharisaical and wrong. Even Voltaire was still catholic enough to talk about God's forgiving way as *son métier*. Luther's often misunderstood word *pecca fortiter sed crede fortius* is also an echo of God's to man's sinfulness or an echo of man's to God's never never-failing pardon. Sin is not the end of the world where there is spontaneous joyful confession on the one side, and divine joyful pardon on the other. Christ's cross is the seal of that joy.

This present volume, enormously important for theological history, is at the same time a personal challenge to the reader as Gregory dares to ask the personal question: What do you think of Christ?

Gregory apologizes for any upsetting reaction a reader might experience: Quia tamen huius quaestionis non vidi partem aliquam expresse determinatam ab ecclesia et tremendum mihi videtur negare auctoritatem sanctorum, econtra etiam non est tutum contraire communi opinioni et consensioni magistrorum nostrorum, idcirco neutri partem alteram praeferens diiudicationem earum lectori relinquo (In 2 Sent dist 30-33 q 3 page 218, 16-20). Gregory does not apologize for having raised the challenge.

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