

trine *apokatastasis*, the universal restoration of creation includes the restoration of rational humans to the participation in the eternal Logos which characterised pre-existent souls. Thus, for Origen, universal salvation is ultimately the soteriological process of universal return. Bringing these two theologians together, Greggs argues that both present a *Christian* universalism because for both universal salvation is 'in Christ'. This particularity is stronger in Origen for whom rationality is the participatory link between the Logos and the *logika*, but for both (and for Greggs) the *particularity* of the Son establishes salvation *for all*.

Part Two argues that Barth and Origen agree that the universally effective work of the Son retains its temporal particularity as the Holy Spirit works to 'allow this objective reality to reach the community and the individual' in the present (124). Thus, for Barth, the economic and temporal remit of the Holy Spirit is the Church in the present. Consequently, the anthropological dividing line is not between redeemed and unredeemed, but between Christian and non-Christian – a difference that has more to do with epistemology (knowing one has been redeemed and being empowered to witness to that object fact) than with soteriology (whether or not one is redeemed).

Like Origen before him, Barth cited the activity of the Holy Spirit in establishing the recognition and confession of revelation, together with the transformative process of intensifying the anticipatory and representative correspondence between Christian and creator, as the defining characteristic of the Christian. For Origen, this transformation was a process enabled by the Holy Spirit who both brought the worthy to Jesus and cooperated with the Christian to produce growth toward God in the present. According to Greggs' synthetic reading, it is the economic activity of the Holy Spirit which creates space for Christian particularity and identity without requiring an exclusivist soteriology. The Church, and each Christian in the Church, relate to the world not as the saved to the damned, but as aware witnesses testifying to God's universal work of salvation in the Son. The conclusion to Part Two, as well as a conclusion proper, imagines some of the positive implications of redefining the church as a witness to this redefined gospel.

This book helpfully avoids the trendy act of locating universalism within pluralism by arguing for the universal significance of the saving work of the particular Son which is particularised in the present by the universal Spirit. In this sense, and to Greggs' credit, this is what the book intended to be: an account of *Christian* universalism. But precisely as such it is open to critique from within. Initial questions arise in relation to Greggs' somewhat cliché claim that separatist soteriologies depend on overly literal readings of the Bible's apocalyptic texts (would the non-literal 'meaning' be any less exclusivist?) and his rhetorically highhanded theodicy question about a loving God creating in full

awareness of the eternal torture awaiting most of creation (Ivan's Karamazov's laments about the horrors of history require more than a 'happily ever after'). Yet this reviewer's fundamental critique is that of Greggs' own theological resource, Karl Barth. Divine grace is characteristically free. This, as Greggs rightly notes, prevents us from limiting the scope of God's grace; but it also prevents us from dogmatic assertions about the universal extent of that grace. Thus, in his nobly motivated and argumentatively rigorous attempt to extend the trajectories of two theological giants, Greggs ultimately transgresses the trajectories he transcends (at least in the case of Barth). With von Balthasar, Barth hoped 'that all might be saved'; but against Greggs' dogmatic universalism Barth's final word, which admittedly stands in some tension with (the implications of) the wider context of his theology, has to be ours as well, '*Apokatastasis Pantos?* No...' (*God Here and Now*, 41-42).

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### *Newman and the Alexandrian Fathers: Shaping Doctrine in Nineteenth-Century England*

Benjamin John King

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009, xvii + 289 pp,  
£50, hb, ISBN 978-0-19-954813-2

#### ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

King analysiert hier John Henry Newmans Schriften über die frühen Kirchenväter, besonders jene aus Alexandria, sowie die Art und Weise, wie Newmans Werk spätere patristische Theologen geprägt hat. Jeder, der theologisch belesen und wissbegierig ist, mehr über Newmans wechselnde Haltung gegenüber Origenes, Athanasius und anderen frühen Kirchenvätern zu erfahren, wird an diesem Beitrag zur laufenden Debatte über Newman interessiert sein. King zeigt ein umfassendes Verständnis seiner Thematik, und die relevanten Fragen werden gründlich und klar erforscht. Seine ausführlichen Argumente überzeugen. King fördert unser Verständnis Newmans, indem er klar und deutlich dessen Beitrag zu der Entwicklung der Dogmengeschichte aufzeigt.

#### SUMMARY

John Henry Newman's writings about the early church Fathers, especially those of Alexandria, and the way this work shaped later patristic scholarship, are ably analysed by King. This contribution to the on-going debate about Newman's scholarship is of interest to anyone who is theologically literate and curious about Newman's changing attitudes to Origen, Athanasius and other early Fathers. King has a comprehensive grasp of his subject and the issues are examined thoroughly and clearly. His arguments are detailed and convincing. King furthers our understanding of Newman, clearly demonstrating his contribution to the development of the history of doctrine.



## RÉSUMÉ

Les écrits de John Henry Newman sur les Pères de l'Eglise primitive, surtout ceux d'Alexandrie, et la manière dont ce travail a forgé la recherche ultérieure, sont analysés avec compétence par King. Cette contribution au débat concernant les études de Newman est intéressante pour tous ceux qui sont théologiquement avertis et curieux de l'évolution de la pensée de Newman à l'égard d'Origène, d'Athanase et d'autres Pères de l'Eglise primitive. King possède une excellente maîtrise de son sujet et il examine chaque question en profondeur et avec clarté. Ses arguments sont détaillés et convaincants. King fait avancer notre connaissance de Newman, en démontrant avec précision sa contribution au développement de l'histoire de la doctrine.

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The writings of John Henry Newman (1801-1890) about the early church Fathers, especially those of Alexandria, and the ways in which this work shaped later patristic scholarship, are ably analysed here by King. This contribution to the on-going debate about Newman's scholarship is of interest to anyone who is theologically literate and curious about Newman's changing attitudes to Origen, Athanasius and other early Fathers. When thinking or writing on any subject, Newman's practice was to use the lens of the Fathers through which to consider the issues and to shed light on the contemporary situation. However, his understanding of the Fathers, as well as the beliefs he brought to that study, and the context within which he was working, changed over time. This book traces these developments.

King has a comprehensive grasp of his subject, ranging from a detailed knowledge of Newman's life and writings, through the theology of various early church Fathers and scholastics to that of Newman's contemporaries and beyond. The issues are examined thoroughly and clearly. His arguments are detailed and convincing. Whilst the breadth of this material and its related discussion may perhaps be slightly bewildering for a reader new to some aspects of the debate, this fascinating work nonetheless repays thoughtful consideration.

The book is divided into logical sections: following an introductory chapter, King outlines the chronological approach taken in the rest of the study, with an overview of three different periods of Newman's life and the approach to the church Fathers taken during each period. Subsequent chapters (which do not always correlate with these three stages) trace and explore in detail these developments in his understanding, the influences on his thinking, especially his engagement with Athanasius during the different stages of his life and thought. The relationship between the development of his own spiritual understanding and his reading both in patristics and later scholars, and the interactions between those different writings, is teased out. Useful introductions and conclusions to the chapters sum up the core aspects of each one.

In the early stages of his thinking, when writing *Arians of the Fourth Century* in the 1830s, Newman believed in a pre-Nicene 'golden age', and in a secret unwritten creed, the 'Rule of Faith', passed on by tradition, and following the direction of Scripture. However, he came to realise that this view was inaccurate. (His early view that the pre-Nicene church was purer than the post-Nicene chimes with many protestant groups who have (usually naively) used the early church as a model.) The second stage, where he developed his idea of doctrinal development, is located in the years 1840-1859, spanning the time of his conversion to Catholicism. (Newman was received into the Catholic church on 8 October 1845.) The post-Nicene Fathers became more significant for him and the inadequate understanding of some of the pre-Nicene Christology was recognised. In the final stage, located in the years 1860-1881, theology was understood as a science and his approach became less historical and more determined by his Catholic beliefs.

As always, there are interesting points of connection between contemporary discussions and the nineteenth century. So Newman sheds light on the inerrancy/inspiration debate following the publication of the liberal volume *Essays and Reviews* (1860) by commenting that the Fathers believed in inspiration but not inerrancy. And who could disagree with his early comment that 'to understand (the scriptures) we must feed upon them, and live in them, as if by little and little growing into their meaning'? The aim of the book, however, as King states in the conclusion is 'to challenge the view that in his patristic writings Newman was primarily an Athanasian scholar'. Whilst a lot of the work does deal with Athanasius, the discussion of contemporary influences and stages of development, and the discussion of other church Fathers such as Origen, does temper that focus, supporting King's claim. We are reminded by this study that no scholar works immune from the culture in which they also live and worship. King also suggests that the common view of the Antiochene and Alexandrian schools as mutually opposed (the former tending to heresy, especially Arianism, and the latter to orthodoxy embodied by Athanasius), is a flawed understanding. Indeed, he credits Newman with this development.

It is hard to do justice to King's subtle and complex arguments in this short review, but this reader was largely convinced by his analysis. However, although this study furthers our understanding of Newman, I would not advise it as a first stop for understanding him. Whilst it has a useful glossary, it does assume a certain knowledge of both Newman's life and the theology of the Alexandrian Fathers. Having said that, it clearly demonstrates Newman's contribution to the development of the history of doctrine and of our understanding of Origen and Athanasius, although tempered by the Catholic influence of his later years.

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