- Chapter 2 -
Reading Richard Hooker as an ecclesial ethicist

The Big Picture: Hooker's Rhetorical Strategy

How do we discern the good? How do we know that the actions we propose are good? That our laws are right in the sense of corresponding to God's law? Hooker's fundamental response to these questions, as I shall argue in the remainder of this study, is that the answer is not as obvious as his interlocutors suggest. Our knowing of the right and good is a complex process for which there are no shortcuts that allow us to bypass the careful cultivation of virtue.

In this chapter, my historical argument will be that Hooker identified serious flaws in the foundation underlying certain positions of English presbyterians, Ramist realists,[47] and even his conformist allies. *Laws,* therefore*,* may be fruitfully read as an extended disputation with these mostly offstage interlocutors. In *Laws*, he attacks their proposals and defends his own brand of Reformed catholicism as the most prudent vision for the Church of England. My account of Hooker's purpose is therefore consistent with what I described in chapter one as the emerging school of historiography which describes Hooker as one who, in substantial continuity with the magisterial Reformers, polemically engaged colleagues with whom he was largely in agreement on doctrinal matters. On my reading, Hooker's most significant polemical engagement focused not on the matters of action - whether a woman can govern a national church, for example - but on the question of how we know what we know, a question that was central to the task of creating laws for the Church of England.

The key historical move in this chapter is to notice that Hooker's answer to that question closely matches the answers given by those whom Wells' and Quash's have classified as "ecclesial ethicists." Insights arise when we read Hooker as a "bridge

47. I describe this group in detail in the next chapter. See "The Ramist Realists" on page 85.

figure between universal and ecclesial ethicists,"[48] recognizing his turn to Aristotle, his emphasis on the centrality of Jesus, and his high valuation of the tradition and practices of the Church as efforts to inoculate the Church of England against his era's most problematic ideas. In what follows, I read Hooker as an ecclesial ethicist in order to excavate core principles he applies in his defense of ecclesial practices.

Such excavation is both necessary and fruitful. Given my objective of understanding how our practices contribute to virtue, one might infer that the most direct path is sufficient - all that is needed is a harvest of the many insights one finds in Book V of Hooker's *Laws*, which contains his defense of ecclesial practices. The challenge is more complex than that, however. Hooker rightly recognized that our thinking about ecclesial practices necessarily entails sub-surface philosophical, theological, anthropological, and christological commitments. More importantly, he recognized that the *decisive* differences separating Geneva-inspired advocates of Presbyterian reforms and Zurich-inspired defenders of the Elizabethan Settlement were at the level of these sub-surface commitments. Consequently, Hooker's rhetorical strategy primarily aimed beneath the surface of the decades-long debates about practices, bishops, and female headship of the national church. He built his arguments about those presenting issues on the foundation of a rich account of their philosophical, theological, anthropological, and christological presuppositions. In other words, he began his defense by turning to first principles.

For that reason, we cannot fully comprehend Hooker's treatment of ecclesial practices without attending to his philosophical, theological, anthropological, and christological commitments. Hooker intentionally set out to produce an "Aristotelian demonstration"[49] of his claims. Consequently, he begins with the doctrine of God and derives his claims about the ordering of the Church step-by-step, proposing an ontology, an account of the natural law, an anthropology, and an epistemology. Only

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48. Wells and Quash, *Introducing Christian Ethics,* 191. Wells and Quash apply this description to Oliver O'Donovan in differentiating him from other ecclesial ethicists, largely because he is "more sympathetic to natural law perspectives." Wells and Quash locate Hooker within their category of "universal ethics." One of the fruits of my project is the demonstration that Hooker rightly is categorized as an ecclesial ethicist.
49. *Laws*.I.6.3; 1:75, note w.

after laying this foundation does he turn to the presenting causes of his treatise - matters of action involving the proper self-ordering of the Church of England. Harvesting his ideas fruitfully will require excavation and, in a few cases, critique and repair. By attending closely to the shape of Hooker's Aristotelian demonstration, we receive a rich account of ecclesial practices that is derived from first principles.

What's at stake

Such excavation can become overwhelming given the extraordinary breadth of Hooker's thought. One could easily lose sight of how each thread contributes to the portrait of how the mind of Christ is formed in community. With that complexity in mind, I will foreshadow my exegetical account with a 'big picture' sketch of Hooker's project, explaining what I think he was trying to achieve, why he made certain moves, and how those moves are significant for the current constructive account. My exegetical demonstration will follow this section and take up the bulk of this chapter.

By my reading, the grand challenge shaping the intellectual discourse of the Church of England in Hooker's era was not about *whether* the Church would manifest a robust form of Reformed catholicism, but about its *content*.[50] What makes a church recognizable as a model of Reformed catholicism? Among the many participants in the discourse between 1580-1600, Geneva-inspired presbyterians presented one cluster of views, and Zurich-inspired conformists presented another.[51] Hooker, an intellectual leader of the latter cohort, dialectically engaged both his opponents and his allies, proposing a vision for an English Reformed catholicism that inherited the strengths of both sets of views while overcoming their weaknesses.

The salient presenting issues during this period concerned matters of action.

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50. Kirby argues this persuasively in W.J. Torrance Kirby, *Richard Hooker, Reformer and Platonist* (Aldershot, Hants, England ; Burlington, VT: Ashgate Pub., 2005). I intend my phrase, "Reformed catholicism" as a shorthand for the synthesis of Reformed dogma and Christian Platonism which Kirby documents. The key point is to recognize that, in Hooker's context, the choice was not between Rome and Geneva, but between competing accounts of how to be Reformed, all of which strived to distinguish the Church of England from the ways of the Radical Reformers and the Roman church.
51. For the case that Elizabethan divines and Elizabeth herself were influenced strongly by the Zurich over and against Geneva, see W.J. Torrance Kirby, *The Zurich Connection and Tudor Political Theology (Studies in the History of Christian Thought)*, 1st Edition ed. (Brill Academic Pub, 2007-08-30).

Controversy surrounded the royal supremacy, the designation of the queen as female governor of the church, and the extent to which the English church would be governed by ordained bishops and priests. For the purposes of this study, however, the presenting issue of greatest interest was that of ecclesial practices: to what extent should the Church of England prescribe sacramental and non-sacramental practices which are not ordained clearly in Scripture and which manifest continuity with the anathematized Roman Church? Hooker's Book V of *Laws,* the heart of his treatise, is an extended defense of a wide range of practices, ranging from the sign of the cross and commemoration of the saints to the Eucharist.

Underlying these presenting causes was a host of prior questions. How do we know what we know? How do we discern the good? How do we read Scripture in support of our ethical discourse? When can a church justifiably depart from its received traditions? What authority should we assign to human laws not derived from Scriptural mandates? Are sacramental practices merely formal rituals, or do they, in some mystical sense, edify?

These deeper questions transcend their presenting causes. They are asked by every generation. Even after the presenting causes ceased to be urgent as the conformists consolidated power and established facts on the ground, the deeper questions remained sources of tension.[52] The questions persist because competing answers lead inevitably to competing visions for the Church. So it was for the Church of England as it approached the seventeenth century. At stake for Richard Hooker were not just questions about whether Elizabeth could head the Church of England or whether psalm-singing would be allowed in worship, but, more importantly, fundamental claims about how the Holy Spirit creates and sustains the virtue of the English people.

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52. The presenting questions were already answered and enshrined in ecclesial or commonwealth law by the time Hooker's *Laws* was published, and open opposition to the Elizabethan Settlement was diminished. Nonetheless, skirmishes continued between the presbyterians, conformists, and other Elizabethan divines throughout the 1590s largely along the same philosophical lines. See Lake, *Moderate Puritans*. for a good account of these ongoing tensions, and especially the controversy over the Lambeth Articles.

The givens of the emerging Reformed orthodoxy

In this study, I read Hooker as an ecclesial ethicist and Hooker's *Laws* as a powerful and passionate apology for an ecclesial vision grounded in a particular account of virtue. In the next chapter, I will describe an opposing account promoted by Cambridge-based Ramist realists. Hooker's treatise presents a sustained argument for a mimetic account of virtue grounded in a eudaimonistic view of the created order. Why do we need the royal supremacy? Why do we need bishops? Why do we need long-cherished sacramental and non-sacramental practices? Threaded throughout Hooker's eight volumes is the resounding answer, "Because they are instrumental means of grace through which the Spirit creates and sustains us as a commonwealth of virtue." On my account, *Laws* is a carefully architected apology for a vision of Reformed catholicism which cherishes and cultivates these instrumental means in order to cooperate with the Spirit's sanctifying action.[53]

Hooker's apology, however, had to carry on in the same way as his Elizabethan intellectual circles in order to be comprehensible and persuasive. Hooker could not, for example, simply retrieve a Thomist account of virtue and argue as though its descriptions were coherent with the normative descriptions of his circles. He could not simply retrieve a Thomist ontology and argue that its worldview was continuous with Reformed descriptions of the world and humankind's location within it. He could not do these things because key concepts underlying his community's normative descriptions of the world had shifted as a result of the Reformation (which was already well into its third generation of leaders when Hooker wrote). In order to sustain his argument, he had to frame his account of virtue within a Reformation grammar and worldview.

The most important 'given' for Hooker's Reformed contemporaries was a

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53. As William Harrison notes, "In the *Lawes*, Hooker is concerned with sanctification and the place of the human person in the process; justification is a peripheral matter and rarely discussed." William H. Harrison, "Powers of Nature and Influences of Grace in Hooker's Lawes," in *Richard Hooker and the English Reformation,* ed. W.J. Torrance Kirby, (Dordrecht ; Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003), 15.

Protestant account of the doctrine of justification by grace through faith.[54] This, in turn, had associated commitments. The first of these is the anthropological premise that humans have no innate capacity to know the mind of God.[55] A second associated given is that humans know the good exclusively through God's contingent and gracious acts of revelation.[56] In addition to these givens were a pervasive skepticism towards reason as a means of discerning God's will and a pervasive anxiety about claims that humans contribute to our own salvation in any way.[57] All of these were

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54. The adjective, 'Protestant,' is key. The Roman Church embraced the doctrine of justification, too, of course. I refer here specifically to descriptions by the magisterial Reformers which diverged from those of Rome in the 16th century, particularly rejecting notions of grace as an infused substance and denying any role in justification to the ecclesial authority of the Pope.

55. Some may say Thomas held this position, too. By my reading, however, Aquinas describes a rationalist (and not an empiricist) anthropology including the human capacity to recognize the transcendentals through intellection. This seems to be a claim that humans have a capacity for *a priori* knowledge of the good. Occam apparently read Aquinas this way, too, and famously rejected that possibility with his razor. Thomist scholars Joseph P. Wawrykow and John L. Jenkins seem to agree, also. Wawrykow writes (commenting on ST I.78,82-83): "There is in each human both a passive and active intellect. The active is responsible for abstracting intelligible species from sense knowledge; these intelligible species are imprinted on the passive intellect, which retains these species." Joseph P. Wawrykow, *The Westminster Handbook to Thomas Aquinas*, Westminster Handbooks to Christian Theology (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005-07-20), 6; John L. Jenkins, *Knowledge and Faith in Thomas Aquinas*, Kindle for iPad ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2007), Kindle location 1384, Chap 4, para 1-5.; Ibid., Kindle location 1436, Chap 4, Sec 1, para 11-12.. See also *Thomas Aquinas, The Summa Theologica of ST. Thomas Aquinas (Five Volumes) (Christian Classics, 1981), I.85.6. Thomas Aquinas, An Annotated Translation (With Some Abridgement) of the Summa Contra Gentiles of Saint Thos Aquinas, trans. Joseph Rickaby (London: Burns and Oates, 1905), III.108.* Future citations of these classics of Thomas Aquinas will use the shortnames of *ST* and *SCG.*

56. Again, some may object that "we find this in Aquinas, too," and I agree. However, what's in view here is not a proper reading of Thomas, but a historical reaction to readings of Thomas by the magisterial Reformers, whether they were correct or not. Denis Janz argues persuasively that Luther read Thomas through the lens of his mentor, which was a misreading. John Bowlin argues persuasively - against Jean Porter *et al*, that "Aquinas considers the human good contingent, and it is this contingency, this difficulty, that the prudent and the just must address if they are to avoid moral failure and will true goods with constancy." The logic of my argument in "Hookerian prescription: The priority of the particular" (chapter three, beginning at page 96) is that Hooker agrees with Aquinas, if Bowlin is right about Aquinas. Denis R. Janz, *Luther and Late Medieval Thomism: A Study in Theological Anthropology*, Kindle ed. (Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2009-12-15). John R. Bowlin, *Contingency and Fortune in Aquinas's Ethics (Cambridge Studies in Religion and Critical Thought)*, Reissue ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2010-06-10), 55.

57. In asserting that hyper-Augustinian anxiety about pelagianism informed discourse in Hooker's context, I am not suggesting that such concerns were actually warranted with respect to Aquinas. Indeed, I don't believe Thomas argued that humans contribute to our own salvation in a Pelagian way. But I am suggesting that Luther's critique of Thomas sufficiently shaped Reformation discourse such that English Calvinists in the 1590s projected their anxieties about pelagianism onto Thomas. This anxiety resonates in the anonymous *A Christian Letter*, the only refutation of Hooker's *Laws* published during his lifetime. "*A Christian Letter* With Hooker's Notes," in *The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker, Volume Iv: Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity: Attack and Response, the Folger Library. The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity) (V. 4)*, ed. John E. Booty, (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1982-01-01). See also Egil Grislis, "Providence, Predestination, and Free Will in Richard Hooker's Theology," in *Richard Hooker and the English Reformation,* ed. W.J. Torrance Kirby, (Dordrecht ; Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003); W. David Neelands, "Richard Hooker and the Debates About Predestination, 1580-1600," in *Richard Hooker and the English Reformation,* ed. W.J. Torrance Kirby, (Dordrecht ; Boston: Kluwer Academic

constraints which shaped the grammar with which Hooker could describe his vision for the Church.[58]

Hooker's great achievement, in my view, is the construction of an account of virtue that is coherent within a Reformation grammar and worldview. His account of virtue addresses the givens of his time. For Hooker, such an account, and not the competing accounts of his interlocutors, is the hallmark of Reformed catholicism.

Key moves of interest in this study

It is with good reason that so many commentators have associated Hooker with Thomas Aquinas through the centuries. Though Hooker cites Thomas clearly only about eight times,[59] reading Hooker's Book I of *Laws* can feel like one is reading an English compilation of Aquinas' greatest hits. Allusions and echoes abound, and it may be that Hooker intentionally imitated the structure of *Summa Theologiae* in composing his doctrinal treatments.[60]

One should be cautious in identifying Hooker simply as "the English Thomas," however, for at least two reasons. First, such an identification underweights the fact that Hooker was a brilliant and wide-ranging scholar in his own right who drank deeply from the same wells as Thomas. Except when he quotes Thomas directly, similarities may well be due to his own synthesis of Plato, Aristotle, Pseudo-Dionysius, or early-church fathers like Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, Gregory of Nyssa, Cyril of Alexandria, or Augustine of Hippo. Indeed, one might just as reasonably be led to describe Hooker as "The English Aristotle" and "The English Augustine" given

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Publishers, 2003); Jennifer A. Herdt, *Putting on Virtue: The Legacy of the Splendid Vices*, Reprint ed. (University Of Chicago Press, 2012-05-09), Part III.

58. One could argue that each of these givens appear in medieval thinkers like Thomas Aquinas *et al*, too. But that's not the point I am making here. My point is that, at minimum, Hooker's historical location in late Elizabethan England required a redescription of these givens in a grammar intelligible to a community hostile to Rome for geopolitical, ecclesiological, and theological reasons and heavily influenced by the language and concepts of the late Reformers.
59. W. David Neelands, "The Theology of Grace of Richard Hooker" (PhD Dissertation, Trinity College and University of Toronto, 1988), 304.
60. Peter Munz identifies more than one hundred passages with obvious debts to Thomas, and John S. Marshall proposes "that Hooker deals with the principal doctrinal topics in the order. and in the spirit, of Thomas' *Summa Theologiae*." Ibid., 306-307.

his similarly heavy debts to each of them in other parts of his corpus.[61] In my view, such temptations inadequately capture how Hooker actually used the authorities he deploys.[62] The second, more important cause for caution is that such an identification could lead one to miss Hooker's creativity in imagining how one might describe an account of mimetic virtue within the constraints of the emerging Reformed orthodoxy.

Noticing Hooker's creativity is the task of this section. Since the similarities to Thomas are hard to miss,[63] my purpose here is to invite attention to certain Hooker adaptations while continuing to share my 'big picture' impressions of his rhetorical strategy. In anticipation of the detailed exegetical account which appears in the next section, this section provides the highlights of those adaptations with a focus on their role in Hooker's rhetorical strategy.

Hooker's first major adaptation is to propose his own version of the doctrine of *duplex cognitio Dei* using Thomas' conception of the eternal law. Hooker's re-conception describes the cosmos and its providential ordering in terms of the first and second forms of the eternal law. The first eternal law, opaque to humankind, is that which governs the inner life of the triune God. The second eternal law, in contrast, is known by all creatures through the light of reason, and expresses the divine will throughout the created order. Hooker derives the natural law and all human laws from

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61. This point is argued by A.S. McGrade in an essay analyzing Hooker's usage of medieval and patristics sources. See Arthur Stephen McGrade, "Classical, Patristic, and Medieval Sources," in *A Companion to Richard Hooker,* ed. W.J. Torrance Kirby, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition (Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2008).
62. In a penetrating polemical essay, "Thomas's Alleged Aristotelianism, or Aristotle Among the Authorities," Mark Jordan says of Thomas what I believe it true for Hooker, as well, with respect to the most prominently deployed authorities we find in Hooker: "For Thomas, Aristotle is not a unique or perennial authority. Aristotle is a pagan author whose texts can be brought into helpful constellation with other authorities. Thomas does not regard Aristotle as a block of doctrine to be carried in whole. He treats Aristotle instead as the teacher behind a set of pedagogical texts. The unity of the teaching is just the dialectical congruence that thoughtful reading can perform. For all of these reasons, Thomas is not tempted to misleading imitation of Aristotle." Hooker is neither merely the English Thomas, the English Augustinian, nor the English Aristotle precisely because he treats them as teachers, reads them thoughtfully, and deploys them discriminately in responding to specific theological or philosophical questions. Mark D. Jordan, *Rewritten Theology: Aquinas After His Readers*, 1 ed. (Wiley-Blackwell, 2005-12-23), 87.
63. I agree with Neelands' view that, on the subjects of law, nature, grace, and Christology, "Hooker's treatments so clearly follow Thomas on certain topics that dependence must be assumed." Neelands, "The Theology of Grace of Richard Hooker," 307.

the second eternal law. This adaptation enables him to claim that human laws - such as the ecclesiastical laws of England - have the same origin as Holy Scripture. The differences in authority we assign them are not due to different origins but due to different levels of vulnerability to probabilistic error.

Hooker's second major adaptation is to propose a psychology that carries on substantially in the same way as the magisterial Reformers, while adapting their anthropology by recovering a more optimistic account of human intellectual capacities after the Fall. Hooker's reparation generates two claims that are important in this study. First, for Hooker, human faculties remain apt in spite of the Fall, with both a will that desires the good and a light of reason which renders humans capable of comprehending the good. Our vision of the good is obscured *partially* by sin. Second, Hookerian psychology denies innate access to knowledge of the good. Unlike the angels, humans cannot participate in the mind of God through intellection of the transcendentals. For Hooker, the light of reason in humans is reduced to an innate capacity for discursive logic that enables us to deduce reliably the principles of the eternal law and the relations of things to each other. Our minds are blank slates at birth, but we grow in our knowledge of the good through our empirical experience of God's actions upon us.

Hooker's third key move arises from this psychology. On the basis of these adaptations, Hooker argued that humans have no possibility of engaging the Word objectively. He appropriates the Thomist description of the relative authorities of Scripture, doctors of the Church, and philosophy, and he adapts the Thomist distinction between revelation and reason.[64] The only objective element is God's *Logos* - the eternal law proclaimed through "the sacred books of Scripture... the glorious works of nature... by spiritual influence...[and] in some things...only by worldly experience and practice."[65] Yet we engage these always through the light of reason, which is inherently subjective. In our encounter with all of these we are vulnerable to

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64. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* 1.8.2. Subsequent citations of Aquinas will follow the standard convention of listing abbreviated for the book, the part number, the question, and article number. For example *ST* 1.8.2.
65. *Laws*.II.1.4; I:147.27-148.7.

probabilistic error in our comprehension of what is revealed due to the noetic effects of sin and the inherent limitations of human finitude.

So how do we recognize the good? Hooker answers that we flock to the signs and tokens by which humankind has historically marked their encounter with the good. The inherited wisdom is that we recognize the good most reliably when we subject ourselves to the communal process of discernment through which humans dialectically engage what previous generations have named as the signs and tokens marking the good. The chief of these is Scripture, which is reliable and sufficient with respect to the supernatural path to the good that is Christ. But all the world is a symphony singing the Word of God's revelation of the good. Additional signs and tokens by which we come to know the eternal law include human laws, customs, and sacramental practices of the Church (spiritual experiences).

Hooker's Aristotelian demonstration - that the eternal law is manifest in our laws and sacramental practices and that humans deductively recognize the good through God's actions upon us - provides a crucial starting point as we strive to understand how the mind of Christ is formed in community. Yet one further Hookerian distinction is needed. Hooker proposes that the proper distinction for ethical reasoning is not between reason and faith, but between knowledge and practical wisdom. In seeking the good, our communal discernment is about 'matters of action', which, in my view, is Hooker's invocation of the Aristotelian virtue of *phronesis*. Phronesis is an important concept throughout this study. I will be driving towards the claim that our ecclesial practices generate mimetic virtue, which, in turn, entails the capacity to make phronetic judgments which are good because they are patterned on the mind of Christ.[66]

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66. Kirby argues in Kirby, *Richard Hooker, Reformer and Platonist*. that Hooker's Aristotelianism is often overemphasized by scholars. He notes that Hooker balances the two great traditions of Christian Neoplatonism, the Augustinian and the Pseudo-Dionysian. Though Hooker rejects a Platonist epistemology in favor of a more Aristotelian empiricism, he does not drive a wedge between Aristotle and Plato. By my reading, Hooker had a strong Aristotelian bent in his epistemology and ethics, perhaps received from his tutor, Rainold, who lectured on Aristotle. He also relied extensively on Christian Platonism, particularly in his accounts of the law and in his description of participation in Christ. In both of these, it seems to me that he imitated Thomas.

The foregoing provides the highlights of the subterranean journey on which Hooker takes us before turning to his surface engagement in defense of Elizabethan ecclesial practices. With that preliminary sketch in view, I now turn to the task of excavating the concepts we will need in the remainder of the study.

Faith forms charity: some epistemological implications

The preceding section sketched the highlights which unfold exegetically in the rest of this chapter. My aim in what follows is to excavate key aspects of Hooker's ontology, psychology, and his account of our communal discernment of the good. The concepts presented here are logically prior to and presupposed by Hooker's critique of Ramist realism and his account of our participation in Christ which are my focus in chapters three and four.[67] My intent is to prepare the reader for concepts assumed later in this inquiry by providing a highly focused exegetical summary of Hooker's thought, expanding my discussion only where I feel more clarification is warranted in order to support the constructive freight that appears in the subsequent chapters.

My summary of Hooker's sub-surface commitments proceeds in three related but distinct sub-sections. The first two demonstrate key moves Hooker makes to appropriate a Thomist account of mimetic virtue, and the third demonstrates his deployment of five Aristotelian epistemological concepts. First, I turn to Hooker's account of the objective knowledge of God. I will sketch Hooker's version of the *duplex cognitio Dei*, a common Reformed doctrine he shaped for his rhetorical purpose of refuting key arguments of those advocating Genevan reforms. The key move is to recognize that, for Hooker, all creatures encounter Christ as Creator and Governor, which means that the natural law that all creatures encounter is Christ himself. Next, I sketch aspects of Hooker's psychology that are presupposed in my constructive chapters. The key move is to recognize that Hooker subtly adapts medieval

67. I consider Hooker's scriptural hermeneutic and his critique of Ramist realism in ""Special Equity" and the particular" on page 82. I examine Hooker's account of participation in Christ in "Participation as Fellowship" on page 119.

psychology to reflect the Reformation dogmatic claim that faith precedes charity, which thereby limits crucially how humans recognize the good. The third part follows from this, taking note of Hooker's re-imagining of how we recognize the good. I will claim that Hooker deploys the Aristotelian methods of *phenomena*, *endoxa*, *dialectic*, and the virtues of *episteme* and *phronesis* in order to make the point that our decisions about the good are necessarily local, particular, and mutable. The key move is to recognize that, for Hooker, the creation of godly laws is properly a question about the creation of a godly people precisely because all ethical reasoning is the subject matter of the virtue of *phronesis*.

The concepts mined in this section set up appropriation of his accounts of participation and practices that constitute the heart of this study, for reflection on how the Spirit creates a godly people leads Hooker to an extended defense of Elizabethan liturgical practices. These four introductory moves will therefore help the reader make sense of the constructive proposals I will offer in the remainder of this inquiry.

In this what follows, I agree with historical reconstructions of Hooker's account of reason by Neelands,[68] Kirby,[69] Lake,[70] and Shuger.[71] My emphasis on dialectic and contingency in describing our discourse regarding the natural law is consistent with Porter,[72] Jenkins,[73] and, most fully, Bowlin.[74]

My account of Hooker's epistemology comports with Wells' and Quash's description[75] of Hooker, but clarifies that more nuance is required in describing

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68. W. David Neelands, "Scripture, Reason, and 'Tradition'," in *Richard Hooker and the Construction of Christian Community (Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies),* ed. Arthur Stephen McGrade, (Binghamton: MRTS, 1997).
69. W.J. Torrance Kirby, "Reason and Law," in *A Companion to Richard Hooker,* ed. W.J. Torrance Kirby, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition (Brill Academic Publishers, 2008). See also W.J. Torrance Kirby, "Richard Hooker's Theory of Natural Law in the Context of Reformation Theology," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 30, no. 3 (Autumn 1999): 681-703.
70. Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans*. See chap."Reason and Scripture."
71. Debora K. Shuger, *Habits of Thought in the English Renaissance : Religion, Politics, and the Dominant Culture*, vol. 13 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).
72. Jean Porter, *Natural and Divine Law: Reclaiming the Tradition for Christian Ethics (Saint Paul University Series in Ethics)* (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999-12-14).
73. Jenkins, *Knowledge and Faith*.
74. Bowlin, *Contingency and Fortune in Aquinas's Ethics (Cambridge Studies in Religion and Critical Thought)*.
75. Wells and Quash, *Introducing Christian Ethics*, 104, 113, and 119.

Hooker's understanding of the natural law. Hooker's ethics are not universal in the sense that they are "ethics for everybody" but are more limited in scope in the sense of "ethics for our community." "The sources of Christian ethics are available to everybody and binding on everybody,"[76] but the historical manifestation of the natural law is necessarily local, contingent, and particular. By my reading, Hooker is properly read as an ecclesial ethicist. *Pace* Wells and Quash, Hooker is not a universal ethicist, but, like Oliver O'Donovan, "a kind of bridge figure between ecclesial ethics and universal ethics."[77]

Though my rational reconstruction of Hooker's hermeneutics is largely consistent with the readings of scholars cited above, my rendering of it in the Aristotelian grammar of *phenomena*, *endoxa*, and *dialectic* is uncommon among Hooker scholars. In describing Hooker's account in this way, I am not suggesting that Aristotle is exclusively or directly the source of his thinking, but rather that Aristotle's influence is evident. In terms of how this came to be, I note Torrance Kirby's suggestion that Hooker's "method is a somewhat eclectic blend of Renaissance (Erasmian) humanism (as is Calvin's) with certain scholastic (especially Neoplatonic and Aristotelian) elements (compare Peter Martyr Vermigli here)."[78]

In what follows, my most significant disagreement is with the popular attribution to Hooker of the memes, "Scripture, Tradition, and Reason" and "Three-Legged-Stool." I perceive my position to be largely in accord with the consensus of Hooker scholars over the past three decades in challenging these memes. I therefore disagree with those who suggest that Hooker treated reason as an *alternative* source of authority alongside Scripture and tradition, and also disagree with those who suggest that Hooker similarly commended the authority of 'tradition' - understood narrowly as the received dogma of the Church.[79] If there is a three-legged-stool to be found in Hooker, its legs are "Phenomena, Endoxa, and Dialectic."

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76. Ibid., 191.
77. Ibid.
78. Torrance Kirby, "E-Mail Message to Author," (July 10, 2012).
79. These readings have a long tradition, spanning at least two centuries. Diarmaid MacCulloch traces that reading in MacCulloch, "Richard Hooker's Reputation,"

As signaled in my synopsis, one could render a rough sketch of Hooker's account of the Christian life by pointing to Thomas Aquinas and then accounting for certain adaptations arising from the Reformation claim that faith forms charity. Three of these adaptations - the first having to do with emanation of the eternal law, the second with psychology, and the third with epistemology - will prove important in this study to the extent that they circumscribe the means by which humans discern the good. I introduce those adaptations here.

Hookerian ontology

Hooker's first major adaptation is to propose his own version of the doctrine of *duplex cognitio Dei* using Thomas' conception of the eternal law. The key move in this sub-section is to argue that, ultimately for Hooker, the law one meets in nature is Christ himself, the divine *Logos*, and Christ meets us uniquely in our particularity. These points emerge when one considers carefully his doctrine of the *duplex cognitio Dei*. This move allows him to argue subsequently that Scripture and human laws share the same origin.

In developing his version of this Reformed doctrine, Hooker shows that all humans encounter Christ the Creator and Governor, thus investing Christ's authority in both the natural and supernatural laws. Reasoning from first principles, he notes that, "from the Father, by the Son, through the Spirit, all things are."[80] The agency of the Son is clear.

Hooker's rhetorical strategy, in my view, is to defend the ecclesial laws constituting the Elizabethan settlement by demonstrating that they are derived from the same divine source as Scripture. To do this, he appropriates Thomas' notion of the eternal law. Hooker adapts Thomas by distinguishing between what he describes as first and second forms of the eternal law. These two forms enable Hooker to add more emphasis to the distinction between the inner life of the triune God and the communication of the triune God's will within the created order. By emphasizing this

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80. *Laws*.I.2.2; 1.59.29-30. Cf. *Laws*.I.2.3; I:60.18-20, where Hooker states, "To himself he is a law in all those things, whereof our Savior speaketh, saying, "my Father worketh as yet, so I" (John 5:17).

distinction, Hooker's re-description of the eternal law carefully coheres with the Reformation's emphasis on the concepts of the ontological and economic Trinity and its anthropological premise that humans have no innate capacity to know the mind of God.

The eternal law

As even the pagans know, God is the first cause and law of all things, "assign[ing] unto each thing the kind" and "moderat[ing] the force and power" that determine each thing's "form and measure of working."[81] The 'personal wisdom of God' is in all things; all things participate in God as an effect participates in its cause.[82] Because "only the works and operations of God have him both for their worker and author of the law whereby they are wrought,"[83] the first eternal law is "that order which God before all ages hath set down with himself, for himself to do all things by."[84] This first eternal law, which is "that law which as it is laid up in the bosom of God,"[85] includes "those natural, necessary, and internal operations of God, the generation of the Son, [and] the proceeding of the Spirit."[86] This law, however, is opaque to creatures, for "we are neither able nor worthy to open and look into [it]."[87]

While the first form of the eternal law governs the inner life of the triune God and manifests its creative power, Hooker's second form governs earthbound voluntary agents. From the divine perspective, the content of the first and second forms of the eternal law is identical, for they both express God's will; however, creatures encounter God's will only in the second form, which communicates the eternal Word to the created order.[88]

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81. *Laws*.I.2.1; 1.58.27-30.
82. *Laws*.V.56.5; 2.236.28-29. Cf. Aquinas: "When something receives particularly that which belongs to another universally (or totally), the former is said to participate in the latter." Thomas Aquinas in his *Commentary on Boethius's De hebdomadibus* in John Wippel, "Metaphysics," in *The Cambridge Companion to Aquinas (Cambridge Companions to Philosophy)*, ed. Norman Kretzmann and Eleonore Stump, (Cambridge University Press, 1993-05-28).. Loc. 1255. Sec. V, para 2.
83. *Laws*.I.2.2; 1.59.3-4.
84. *Laws*.I.2.6; 1.63.2-3. Cf. *ST* I-II.93.1
85. *Laws*.I.3.1; 1.63.15-16.
86. *Laws*.I.2.2; 1.59.6-8.
87. *Laws*.I.2.5; 1.62.11.
88. Kirby, "From 'Generall Meditations' to 'Particular Decisions': The Augustinian Coherence of

The second form of the eternal law encompasses all "that which with himself in all his works he hath set down as expedient to be kept by all his creatures."[89] For Hooker, the second form of the eternal law incorporates "any kind of rule or canon"[90] that determines the actions of things within time and space.

There are many such determinative rules and canons, so Hooker organizes his description of them into two primary categories - the natural and the divine law. Within the former genus, Hooker identifies species of law corresponding to distinctions among created beings. He interweaves his account of the law with his account of cosmological order.

The natural law

Natural law is that "which ordereth [all] natural agents,"[91] a category that, for Hooker, properly includes all created beings. Yet, for expedience, he further categorizes natural agents according to whether they are involuntary or voluntary agents. Involuntary agents, which Hooker sometimes calls necessary agents, are those things "void of life"[92] "which keep the law of their kind unwittingly, as the heavens and elements of the world, which can do no otherwise than they do,"[93] while voluntary agents are characterized by rational or "intellectual natures."[94] Voluntary agents share the trait of rationality but are also of two kinds - material and immaterial. Earthbound voluntary agents (animals) manifest rationality in material form, while celestial voluntary agents (e.g., angels) manifest rationality in immaterial form.[95] Humans are a special class of the former category, distinguished from other animals by the desire to imitate God through their pursuit of "knowledge of truth and by growing in the exercise of virtue."[96]

Various species of natural law correspond to this description of reality.

Richard Hooker's Political Theology," 51-52.

89. *Laws*.I.3.1; 1.63.8-9.
90. *Laws*.I.3.1; 1.63.14.
91. *Laws*.I.3.1; 1.63.18.
92. *Laws*.I.6.2; 1.75.2.
93. *Laws*.I.3.2; 1.64.6-8.
94. *Laws*.I.3.2; 1.64.9.
95. *Laws*.I.4.1; 1.69.20-71.3.
96. *Laws*.I.5.3; 1.74.1.

Involuntary natural agents are ruled by "the determination of the wisdom of God, known to God himself the principal director of them."[97] Hooker names as "celestial and heavenly law" "that which Angels do clearly behold and without any swerving observe."[98] For spirits and angels are ruled by "their intuitive intellectual judgment concerning the amiable beauty and high goodness of that object, which with unspeakable joy and delight doth set them on work."[99] Irrational living agents, such as "beasts," are ruled by their instinctive "judgment of common sense or fancy concerning the sensible goodness of those objects wherewith they are moved."[100] In contrast, "the rule of voluntary agents on earth is the sentence that reason giveth concerning the goodness of those things which they are to do."[101]

It is difficult to overemphasize this last claim. Hooker names the law that rules earthbound voluntary agents "the law of reason." For Hooker, the human *telos* is to participate in the rationality of God, and humans do that when they are ruled by the Word spoken which is comprehended exclusively via the light of reason. This foreshadows what we will see below: Hooker describes our noetic access to the good entirely in terms of our discursive capacity.

The key move here is to notice that the natural law is a subject which acts upon all created beings, drawing them toward fulfillment of their *telos*. By re-describing the eternal law in terms of its first and second forms, Hooker clarifies that the actuality of divine alterity is ever present to created beings.[102] In Book I of *Laws*, Hooker's speaks

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97. *Laws*.I.8.4; 1.84.20-21.
98. *Laws*.I.3.1; 1.63.18-20.
99. *Laws*.I.8.4; 1.84.26-85.2.
100. *Laws*.I.8.4; 1.84.24-25.
101. *Laws*.I.8.4; 1.85.2-4.
102. While he would express "serious reservations" about Hooker's eudaemonism, Barth agrees with Hooker's basic description of the law as alterior (Hooker's eternal law) and interior (Hooker's discursive judgments about the law made possible by the light of reason which commands the will). "An imperative to which I owe absolute obedience must necessarily come in the most radical sense from within, in order that it may claim me most radically within. A command which transcends our actions cannot in the last analysis be merely a command which I have given myself on the basis of what I myself have seen and experienced and felt and judged of the good and the true and the beautiful. It must come to me as something alien, as the command of another, demanding as such that I should make its content the law of my life. If there is an ought, it must not be the product of my own will, but touch from outside the whole area of what I can will of myself. It must lay upon me the obligation of unconditioned truth—truth which is not conditioned by myself." Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, trans. G.W. Bromilly and T.F. Torrance (Edinburgh: T&T Clark International, 1956), Part 2, vol. 2, 651. Subsequent citations of *Church Dogmatics* follow the

of this subject in an abstract grammar. I shall argue below that this subject whose Word orders all natural agents is the eternal *Logos*, the Christ himself. For Hooker, the natural law and human freedom are never separated from their christological ground.

The supernatural path in Christ

All of the species of natural law are derived from the second form of the eternal law; they govern all things so that God's purpose is fulfilled. As Hooker narrates it, these laws governing all things would have been sufficient to bring each created thing to its *telos* in God, were it not for the Fall. Because the natural way to our *telos* of eternal blessedness is blocked by the original and persistent reality of sin, God makes known "the supernatural way of salvation and law for them to live in that shall be saved."[103] Hooker alludes to Augustine's *de Trinitate* in describing how God causes healing of the will so that humans return to God:

> Whereas we now love the thing that is good, but especially in respect of benefit to us, we shall then love the thing that is good only or or principally for the goodness of beauty in itself. The soul being in this sort as it is active, perfected by love of that infinite good, shall, as it is receptive be also perfected with those supernatural passions of joy, peace, and delight.[104]

Since "the natural path to everlasting life" is the habit "of doing good" and "performing exactly the duties and works of righteousness,"[105] a way blocked by sin, "God hath revealed a way mystical and supernatural, a way directing unto the same end of life."[106] That supernatural way "that leadeth us from misery into bliss" is the way of virtue.[107]

Here Hooker follows Aquinas closely. God grants the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity that are the ground of all other virtues, where faith is trust in the

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standard convention of listing the Volume and Part-Volume. However, for the convenience of those accessing Barth online as I do, I've followed the additional convention of listing the Paragraph and Sub-Section followed by the page number. For example: *CD* II/2 §38.1.651. On Barth's correction of Kant on the question of the alterity and interiority of the divine command, see Woodard-Lehman, "Freedom and Authority," 162-164.

103. *Laws*.I.11.5; 1.117.10-12.
104. *Laws*.I.11.3; 1.113.18-23.
105. *Laws*.I.11.5;1.117.
106. *Laws*.I.11.6; 1.118.15-16.
107. *Laws*.I.11.6; 1.118.22.

"hidden wisdom in Christ,"[108] where hope's "highest object... is that everlasting goodness which in Christ doth quicken the dead," and where "the final object [of charity] is that incomprehensible beauty which shineth in the countenance of Christ the son of the living God...."[109]

For Hooker, God's laws concerning this deliverance of humankind from the consequences of sin:

> ... are supernatural, both in respect of the manner of delivering them which is divine, and also in regard of the things delivered which are such as have not in nature any cause from which they flow, but were by the voluntary appointment of God ordained....[110]

The key move here is to notice that, alongside the natural law that governs all things, Hooker describes a "supernatural" or "divine" law that God has revealed as the path by which sinful humankind is directed to eternal blessedness. That path is participation in the Christ. The second form of the eternal law is communicated to humans, therefore, through both the natural law and the supernatural path revealed in Scripture and the Sacraments.

Christ the Logos

We've seen that Hooker derives the natural law and all human laws from the second form of the eternal law. This adaptation sets up the rhetorically crucial claim that human laws - such as the ecclesiastical laws of England - have the same origin as Holy Scripture. As we shall see below, the difference in authority we assign them is due not to different origins but to different levels of vulnerability to probabilistic error. But Hooker's account of the eternal law suffers from its abstract grammar. In this sub-section, therefore, I propose a minor reparation that clarifies, for the purposes of this study, the identity of the subject who orders all created things.

In his introduction to the concept of law, Hooker leaves some ambiguity as to

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108. Hooker here associates Christ with Wisdom and *Logos,* and also speaks of its hiddenness. This corresponds with Barth's notion of an veiling and unveiling of the divine will; Hooker sees human comprehension of revelation as dialectic in a manner similar to Barth.
109. *Laws*.I.11.6;119.1-3.
110. *Laws*.I.11.6; 1.119.18-24. Note the echo of Scotus here. Hooker is at pains to clarify that this supernatural path is not necessary, but dependent entirely upon the will of God.

how the agency of the Son is made effective. It fit Hooker's rhetorical purposes to speak of the *Logos* in abstract terms in Book I of his treatise, but what he implies there, he makes explicit throughout Book V in his discussion of the real presence of the Son in our sacramental practices.[111] It seems to me that Hooker understands the eternal law to be the divine *Logos*, and the divine *Logos* to be the Son.[112] Even if it could be shown that Hooker did not intend to make such an identity, we are justified in explicitly identifying the One whom we encounter in the created order not just as the *Logos* but as Jesus Christ himself. That is, the following clarification is warranted and will be assumed throughout this study: the objective content we encounter in the wondrous works of nature and through the fruits of "worldly experience and practice," is not some abstract law or 'first cause' but none other than Jesus Christ himself.[113]

Given this reconstruction, I am in a position to summarize the first set of key Hookerian concepts upon which the rest of this study will rely. For Hooker, the objective basis of human knowledge of God is the divine *Logos* - the eternal law which both creates and governs that which is created so that the created order expresses the will of the triune God. Appropriating and adapting both Aquinas and Calvin in framing his defense of the Elizabethan settlement in terms of his own doctrine of the

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111. It is *possible* that Hooker means that the Logos is not identical to the Son, but is an abstract principle willed by and governing the inner life of the Triune God. This seems to be the argument of A.S. McGrade and Lee Gibbs. Their suggestion is that Hooker might intend to say that the Logos is the abstract principle of the divine will, that the first form of the eternal law corresponds to God's absolute power, and the second form corresponds to God's ordained power. I disagree with this view. If their proposal is correct, however, he seems to understand the distinction between the absolute and ordained power of God in the sense in which "there are many things that are in accordance with the right law that God can do but does not do." In my view, the distinction between the first and second form of the eternal law, then, would be the distinction between divine potentiality and what God actually causes, where only the latter is expressed within the created order. David Neelands attributes this position to McGrade and Gibbs, citing FLE 6.98, n. 30 in Neelands, "Scripture, Reason, and 'Tradition'," 77, n. 8.

112. Cf. John Calvin, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Acheron Press, 2012-12-15), I.5,II.14.. Torrance Kirby agrees. Kirby has argued widely that Hooker's presentation is consistent with many early church fathers in its reliance on the NeoPlatonic ideas of a first principle, idea of ideas, that is the source of all creation. On the other hand, Kirby holds that Hooker identifies the eternal law as the Logos and Son. See Kirby, "Reason and Law,"; Kirby, *Richard Hooker, Reformer and Platonist*.; Kirby, "Richard Hooker's Theory of Natural Law in the Context of Reformation Theology".;W.J. Torrance Kirby, "Creation and Government: Eternal Law as the Fountain of Laws in Richard Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity," in *Divine Creation in Ancient, Medieval, and Early Modern Thought, Essays Presented to Dr Robert D. Crouse*, ed. Willemien Otten, Walter Hannam, and Michael Treschow, Studies in Intellectual History (Leiden and Boston: E.J. Brill, 2007).

113. *Laws*.II.1.4; 1.148.3-4.

duplex cognitio Dei, Hooker distinguishes a second form of the eternal law, identical in content to the form governing the internal life of God but expressed in such a way that it irrupts into temporality and spatiality. All humans therefore encounter Christ historically and actually as Creator and Reconciler through our encounter with the *Logos ensarkos* within the created order. In addition, the elect know Christ as Deliverer or Redeemer especially through our encounter with the *Logos ensarkos* in Scripture and the sacraments.[114]

This second form of the eternal law - *the Logos ensarkos* - is manifest in the natural law known universally by humans through the faculty of reason. This natural law is itself manifest in unwritten form as 'common sense' and, for the providential governance of political societies, in the four kinds of positive law that order individuals, communities, nations, and the Church.[115] Yet, because the natural way to our *telos* of eternal blessedness is blocked by the original and persistent reality of sin, the Trinity delivers humans through the special revelation of God in Christ as encountered in Scripture and the sacraments (what Hooker describes as the 'divine law').[116] Thus, both the natural law and the divine law are derived from and express the eternal law; they collectively constitute God's creative and governing will within the created order.

Notice that, with the crucial exception of a personal relationship with the exalted Son, the human agent's encounter with the eternal law is neither absolute, material, nor immediate. Rather the human agent encounters the eternal law in the conditioned and mediated forms of Scripture, positive law, or custom, and always locally, temporally, and indirectly.[117] Here, even before we encounter Hooker's psychology, we

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114. *Laws*.V.56.6; 2:237.25-28.
115. *Laws*.I.15.3; 1.131.25-132.20.
116. *Laws*.I.11.6; 1.118.13-119.24.
117. Woodard-Lehman, in discussing Barth's discussion of the authority *of* the Word and *under* the Word, notes that Barth describes the authority of the Word as immediate, absolute, and material, and describes the divine command that the human agent experiences as "the heteronomy of mediate, relative, and formal authority." In my view, Hooker's eudaemonistic account of the natural law agrees in important ways with Barth's description of how the human agent experiences grace as command. Woodard-Lehman, "Freedom and Authority," 184.

see that that the eternal law can be known only in its immanent, sensible forms.[118] Hooker therefore would partially agree with Barth that, "Apart from its immanent heteronomous correlates, God's Word would be mute. God's command would be silent."[119] Hooker, however, is more ready than Barth to include the practices of the Church and the symphony of the created order in the set of immanent, sensible forms through which the eternal law is mediated.

The key finding here is that, for Hooker, all creatures encounter Christ as Creator and Governor, which means that *the natural law that all creatures encounter is Christ himself.* Christ is the concrete universal. As we shall see in chapter four, Hooker's doctrine of the *duplex cognitio Dei* provides a necessary foundation for his doctrine of our participation in Christ.

Hookerian anthropology

Eudaemonism encumbered by sin

The first thing that must be said about Hooker's theological anthropology is that it is teleological. Hooker's eudaemonism may be his most prominent resemblance to Thomas Aquinas. His anthropology begins with the observation that, at the beginning of life, we are most different from the angels in the fact that they have the full knowledge of God we seek and we have no understanding of God at all: "men if we view them in their spring, are at the first without understanding of knowledge at all. Nevertheless from this utter vacuity they grow by degrees, till they come at length to be even as the Angels themselves are."[120] However, humans potentially grow to possess the full knowledge of God that is always the mark of the angels. Humans naturally thirst for knowledge of God and therefore knowledge of the good, and this thirst drives the journey which leads to knowledge of the good.[121]

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118. My concern here is to describe Hooker's account of the natural law. I will return to this point, however, in responding to John Webster's complaint that the ecclesial ethicists' account of the Church is excessively immanentist.
119. Ibid., 187. This is Woodard-Lehman's summation of Barth's account of how theonomy becomes hetoronomy for the human agent.
120. *Laws*.I.6.1; 1.74.20-24.
121. *Laws*.I.5.2; 1.73.9-20.

An infinite gulf, however, separates the finite from knowledge of God so that knowledge of God depends on divine revelation.[122] While this is a standard premise of Reformation theology,[123] Hooker's subtle understanding of why this is so turns out to be important to our study. In what follows, I will briefly comment on Hooker's understanding of sin and its epistemological implications.

Like Calvin, Hooker described the noetic effects of sin with the metaphor of sight.[124] There is a distinction between that which is revealed and that which is known by the light of reason. While God does indeed reveal throughout creation that which ought to lead humans to recognize God rightly as Creator, the noetic effects of sin are such that humans misperceive that which is revealed. Human reason is *nearly* blinded by sin such that we see that which God reveals in creation wrongly.[125] Given the reality of faith, however, the study of creation has a fruitfulness like that of Scripture: both creation and Scripture have a common source in God and thus lead to reliable knowledge of God. A key premise for Hooker, as with Calvin, is that, given faith, humans can reliably know the law by which the Creator governs temporal existence.[126]

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122. *Laws*.I.11.5; 1.1.116.2-117.12.
123. Barth reminds us that this is not merely a philosophical limitation, but a theological implication of the alterity of God. Not merely "*finitum non capax infiniti*" but *"homo peccator non capax verbi Domini*." Barth, *CD*, 1/1 §6.3.220.. Neder amplifies: "Barth is not merely rejecting an unwarranted mixing of divine and human essences considered abstractly. He is rejecting a confusion of divine and human *decisions* - and the divine decision of election and the corresponding decision of faith and obedience - and *therefore* divine and human essences." Adam Neder, *Participation in Christ: An Entry Into Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009), 13. Emphasis original.
124. Hooker was distinctive in following Calvin closely in describing sin in terms of cognition rather than will. As with Calvin, for Hooker, "blindness is now an acute stigmatism that can be corrected by the light of faith and the spectacles of Scripture." As we shall see, Hooker's doctrine of participation, therefore, describes the means by which Christ heals our sight. David Steinmetz lists twenty-four 16th century theologians who embraced the claim that a natural knowledge of God is possible but disagreed with Calvin's account of it. Calvin, per Steinmetz, was 'singular' in claiming that the noetic effect of the Fall caused a misperception of revelation. Hooker, however, followed Calvin in this. These others saw the noetic effects in terms of sin's bondage of the will, David Curtis Steinmetz, *Calvin in Context*, 2nd ed. (Oxford University Press, USA, 2010-10-14), 30.
125. Just as knowledge of the good is an act of reason (caused first by a turning of the will), "there was never sin committed wherein a less good was not preferred before a greater, and that willfully." Our natural thirst for knowledge is frustrated by ignorance, for the good we seek "hath evidence enough for itself, if reason were diligent to search it out." But communal "neglect" of the good causes "a show of that which is not," and we choose that which is "less good." Sometimes, in our choices, we are deceived by Satan; "sometimes the hastiness of our wills prevent[ ] the more considerate advice of sound reason," and "sometimes the very custom of evil make[s] the heart obdurate against whatsoever instructions to the contrary." *Laws.I.7.7; I:80:24-29, 81:10-16.*
126. Hooker's treatment of the noetic effects of sin are developed in the *Dublin Fragments*, wherein he differentiates his view from his fellow English Calvinists, and closely conforms to

For Hooker, human faculties remain apt in spite of the Fall, for humans still have "a reasonable understanding, and a will thereby framable to good things, but [are] not thereunto now able to frame [themselves]."[127] The Trinity foreknew this, and predestined Christ's reconciling mission "to countervail this our imbecility, and to serve as his hand, that thereby we which cannot move ourselves, may be drawn, but amiably drawn."[128] God causes the doxastic restructuring[129] required in us that make possible our apprehension of cause and effect, so that we are able *in faith* to pursue the good boldly, while our knowledge of it nonetheless remains enshrouded in an unfolding mystery.

Hookerian psychology

This leads to a second key premise of Hooker's theological anthropology. When Hooker considers the doxastic restructuring that heals our relational capacities, he describes something similar to, yet subtly distinct from, a Thomist psychology. In what follows, the key move is to notice that Hookerian psychology denies innate access to knowledge of the good. For Hooker, the light of reason in humans is reduced to an innate capacity for discursive logic that enables us to deduce reliably the principles of the eternal law and the relations of things to each other. Our minds are blank slates at birth, but we grow in our knowledge of the good through our empirical experience of God's actions upon us. This distinction will prove crucial in his accounts of how we recognize the good, our participation in Christ, and are the reason practices are so important to the Church.

Calvin's metaphor of sight. See Richard Hooker, "The Dublin Fragments," in *The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker, Volume Iv: Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity: Attack and Response, the Folger Library. The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity),* (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1982-01-01). Subsequent citations to this documents will be cited with the short name, *Dublin*. For more on Hooker's treatment of sin, see Grislis, "Providence, Predestination, and Free Will in Richard Hooker's Theology," and Neelands, "Richard Hooker and the Debates About Predestination, 1580-1600,"

127. *Dublin*.2; 4:103.19-21.
128. *Dublin*.2; 4:103.21-24.
129. I've borrowed the phrase "doxastic causality " from John Jenkins in his account of Aquinas' *Posterior Analytics.* The doxastic causality condition is the state in which the principles of an Aristotelian demonstration "are 'better known' to us" and have become "the cause or epistemic ground of our assent to the conclusion" of the demonstration. I take this state to mark the moment of what is often called justifying grace.It is the moment in which we recognize Christ as our Reconciler. Jenkins, *Knowledge and Faith*, Kindle location 626, Chap. 1, Sect. 1.7, para 8.

According to Thomas, a property of the intellect is its indefectibility in recognizing the quiddity of at thing.[130] We apprehend a thing when we realize its essence, which is to say that to apprehend a thing is to perceive its inherent nature. Because both speculative and practical reasoning rely upon the natural light of one's participation in the divine, a human subject recognizes the goodness of an object through its participation in the divine Mind.[131] This natural light of reason is imprinted on all things "subject to Divine providence" whereby "they derive their respective inclinations to their proper acts and ends."[132] Thereby, human reason, unaided by grace, participates in the eternal law and is therefore able to reach conclusions in accord with it.[133]

From this summary, it seems that Thomist psychology supports a rationalist theory of knowledge.[134] To know a thing in its particularity is to participate in God's knowledge of its particularity. Knowledge of a thing begins with intellection of its essence through our participation in the divine Mind, triggering consciousness of our *innate* knowledge of its essence through our recognition of it. We have *a priori* knowledge which is not gained from experience but resulting from our rational nature (our *intellectus*). I shall argue below that Hooker subtly adapts this psychology by

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130. *Thomas Aquinas, ST, I.85.6.*; Thomas Aquinas, *SCG,* III.108.4.

131. "The name intellect is derived from the fact that it apprehends what is innermost and profound in the thing: for to understand (*intelligere*) is "to read what is within" (*intus legare*). Sense and imagination apprehend only superficial accidents; only the intellect goes to the interior and essence of a thing." Jenkins, *Knowledge and Faith,* Kindle location 1436, Sect. 4.1.

132. *Thomas Aquinas, SCG, I-II.91.2.* "Since all things subject to Divine providence are ruled and measured by the eternal law, as was stated above (Article [1]); it is evident that all things partake somewhat of the eternal law, in so far as, namely, from its being imprinted on them, they derive their respective inclinations to their proper acts and ends.

133. *Ibid., I-II.109.2.* Thomas states that "…in the state of integrity, as regards the sufficiency of the operative power, man by his natural endowments could wish and do the good proportionate to his nature, such as the good of acquired virtue; but not surpassing good, as the good of infused virtue."

134. By my reading, Thomas teaches a *rationalist* psychology because he assumes the innate capacity for intellection of transcendentals. By innate ability, I refer to the capacity for humans to apprehend the quiddity of a thing. Note that this recognition happens prior to any discursive operation on the idea of the object. That is, recognition of the essence of a thing happens prior to judgments about its relatedness to other beings or its diversity, and prior to judgments about its truth or falsehood. The natural light of reason is such that, following recognition of a thing's essence, though one's knowledge is imperfect and one may have substantively more to learn about the inherent nature of the thing, one has a reliable preliminary grasp of it. There is a reliable correspondence between the idea of the quiddity of the thing formed in the intellect and its reality. Wawrykow agrees. See note 55 on page 36. Jenkins, *Knowledge and Faith*, Kindle Loc. 1436, 1610, Sect 4.1, 4.5.; John Milbank and Catherine Pickstock, *Truth in Aquinas (Radical Orthodoxy)*, Kindle ed. (Routledge, 2000), Kindle location 706, Chap. 2, Sect. 2, para 5-6.

assuming we have no such innate capacity beyond the capacity to reason discursively, and that human knowledge of the good is *a posteriori*, accumulating as a result of discursive reasoning in response to phenomena. Hookerian psychology does not support a rationalist theory of knowledge.

In a brief description, Hooker describes the human as constituted by body and soul. The soul is further divided into a 'diviner' and a 'baser' part (these might correspond to Thomas' *intellectus* and *ratio,* respectively, though Hooker does not describe them with Thomist language). Hooker speaks of a 'spirit of our minds' that seems to correspond to the 'diviner part.' In our perfected state, the spirit of our minds directs the soul. Because, in our redeemed state, the light of reason enables the mind to comprehend the eternal law in our encounters with it, the eternal law is thereby hierarchically mediated from soul to body within the human person. That is, the soul is most excellent and directs our bodies "and the spirit of our minds the soul."[135] The "understanding faculty of the mind" (seemingly corresponding to Thomas' *ratio*) produces "mandates" experienced by the will as commands. The eternal law is thereby mediated, making known to us what our duties to God and our neighbor.[136]

This bears a strong resemblance to the Thomist psychology if one grants the correspondences I have suggested might be present between 'diviner part' and *intellectus*, and between the 'understanding faculty of the mind' and *ratio*. But Hooker continues, explaining that whatever the mind knows about 'the grand mandates' requiring obedience by the will and about the existence, "power, force, wisdom, and other properties" of God, it learns "by the same method" by which it learns of "our duty... towards man."[137] We discover that the apparent continuity with a Thomist psychology gives way to a significant discontinuity, for the exclusive method by which

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135. *Laws*.I.8.6; I:87.1-6.
136. While Hooker here acknowledges a natural law that governs the creature, I will argue in chapter five that the force of his logic is that Christian ethics focuses properly not on decisions, but rather on the cultivation of the virtue of the Christian. See "Knowing God and Recognizing the Good, Revisited" on page 191.
137. *Laws*.I.8.7; I:87.7-12. "This is therefore the first law whereby the highest power of the mind requireth general obedience at the hands of all the rest concurring with it unto action. Touching the several grand mandates which being imposed by the understanding faculty of the mind must be obeyed by the will of man, they are by the same method found out whether they import our duty towards God or towards man."

we learn of our duty to God and man is discursive reasoning.

Whereas Aquinas imagined an *intellectus* capable of accessing God's knowledge of the transcendentals because of human participation in Being and thereby enabling judgments about the relations of things,[138] Hooker imagines the mind of man as like a blank slate - with *no innate capacity to apprehend the quiddity of things*, and especially God. We don't have an innate knowledge of God: "We bring not the knowing of God with us into the world."[139] Hooker describes "the soul of man" [as] at the first like a book, wherein nothing is written, and yet all things may be imprinted."[140]

Furthermore, reality is constituted by particulars. Humans apprehend particulars directly and without mediation and have unconfused contact with reality: "We know things either as they are in themselves, or as they are in mutual relation one to another."[141] Humans intuit such relations between things by observing cause and effect empirically. Whereas the Thomist psychology assumes we innately have *a priori* knowledge residing in our *intellectus*, Hooker's psychology assumes we have no such innate capacity beyond the capacity to reason, and that human knowledge is *a posteriori*, accumulating as a result of discursive reasoning in response to phenomena.

Hooker restricts the Thomist psychology of intellection to the angels, and seems to collapse the human intellect to *ratio*, such that the light of reason is reduced to an innate capacity for discursive logic that enables humans to *deduce* reliably (yet probabilistically) the principles of the eternal law and the relations of things to each other. We are born with minds that are open slates, but we do indeed come to know the agency of God, an eternal law that we experience as a divine pressure, guiding things to their *telos* of participating in the divine rationality. Importantly, this knowledge is the *empirical* knowledge of an act upon us.[142] For Hooker, there is no natural intellection of transcendentals. Reason is reduced almost entirely to the

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138. Jenkins, *Knowledge and Faith*, Kindle loc. 1384, chapt. 4, para 3, chapt 4, sect 4.1, sect 4.5. See also Milbank and Pickstock, *Truth in Aquinas*, Kindle location 673-706, Chapt. 2, sec. 2.
139. *Laws*.V.21.3; II:85.25-26.
140. *Laws*.I.6.1; I:74.26-27.
141. *Laws*.I.8.6; I:86.23-25.
142. *Laws*.I.3.4; I: 67.17-20.

discursive function.

According to Hooker's psychology, therefore, either we recognize goodness through "knowledge of the causes whereby it is made such" or, lacking the philosopher-king's comprehension of the causes, we discover it through recursive attention to the "signs and tokens" whose presence corresponds to our experience of goodness.[143] The first seems to be an allusion to the Aristotelian maxim that we understand a thing only when we comprehend its causes,[144] for Hooker declares that it "is the most sure and infallible way."[145] Yet, because so few are willing to "tread so long intricate mazes for knowledge sake," the latter way of studying signs and tokens of goodness is most common.[146]

This psychology, which arises from the Reformation insight that faith precedes charity, is decisive for Hooker's account of our participation in Christ and helps us anticipate why, in his view, ecclesial practices are of such great importance to the formation of the mind of Christ in the community. How is it possible, given this psychology, for finite humans to know the eternal Christ as our Christ as Creator and Redeemer? If humans do not have an innate capacity to know the good through intellection of transcendentals, then how can we have confidence that our laws reflect the divine will at all? We can anticipate already that Hooker's ultimate answer, in keeping with Reformation dogma, will posit the irruption of the Christ into time and space, transcending those impermeable boundaries so that we might know the mind of Christ through successive encounters. That's the account I will develop over the next three chapters. In the next section, however, we will see that Hooker begins to answer these questions by adapting a recognizably Aristotelian epistemology which is once again evocative of Thomas, though adapted subtly for his Reformation context.

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143. *Laws*.I.8.2; I:82.29-30.
144. Aristotle, *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation, Vol. 1 (Bollingen Series Lxxi-2)*, ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984-09-01). *Phys*.194b18; *A Po*. 71 b 9–11, 94 a 20.
145. *Laws*.I.8.2; I.83.1-2.
146. *Laws*.I.8.2; I:83.3-4.

Hookerian epistemology

In the last section, I showed that Hooker adapts the medieval notion of the light of reason by rendering it in a decidedly more empiricist register. Reason is reduced almost entirely to the discursive function. There is no innate knowledge of the good. That move locates Hooker safely alongside the magisterial Reformers, who similarly constrained human knowledge of the good to revelation. As we have already seen, however, Hooker adapted two Thomist teachings which enable him to avoid a strict voluntarist perspective. First, he assigned the status of revelation to the phenomena Christians experience throughout the created order. He achieved this with his innovative appropriation of the Thomist notion of the eternal law within a Reformed account of the *duplex cognitio Dei*. The law Christians encounter in the created order has the same source as the supernatural law we encounter in the Scripture and the sacraments (Rom. 1:18-20).[147] Second, as we have already seen, he appropriated the Thomist doctrine that human faculties remain apt in spite of the Fall, "and a will thereby framable to good things,"[148] a move which enabled him to describe the human condition as primarily a cognitive rather than a voluntaristic problem.[149]

What emerges from these preliminary moves are eudaemonistic accounts of the created order as revelatory and of the human person as one who intrinsically desires the good but has no possibility of knowing the good apart from such revelation. Moreover, human psychology permits knowledge gains only through the discursive function of the innate light of reason as the person responds to encounters with other particulars within the created order. Given these accounts, it remains for Hooker to explain how humans recognize the good, and how, given the reality of sin and the

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147. "This is because what is known about God should be plain to them because God made it plain to them. Ever since the creation of the world, God's invisible qualities—God's eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, because they are understood through the things God has made. So humans are without excuse." (Rom 1:19–20 CEB)
148. Hooker, "Dublin," 103. Hereafter all references to this will be indicated with the short name, *Dublin*. Hereafter all references to this volume will be cited with the document short name, the abbreviation FLE, the volume number, page number, and line numbers, as in *Dublin*, FLE 4.103.19-21.
149. As noted above, Hooker and Calvin are notable among the Reformers in describing sin primarily in the grammar of cognition rather than will. See note 124 on page 53.

frailties of the human mind arising from our finitude, communities adjudicate competing descriptions of the good. With those questions in view, I turn now to summarize Hooker's re-imagining of how we communally recognize the good. The key move here is to notice how Hooker deploys the Aristotelian methods of *phenomena*, *endoxa*, and *dialectic* and the virtues of *episteme* and *phronesis*. I will argue that Hooker's claim is that we recognize the good most reliably when we subject ourselves to the communal process of discernment through which we dialectically engage what previous generations have named as the signs and tokens marking the good.

Phenomena

As we saw above, Hooker's well-known optimism about nature's efficacy as a pedagogue presupposes that nature has been redeemed, and that we encounter in nature the enfleshed Christ as he reigns both on his cross and his throne. Christ, through nature, teaches God's law in sundry ways.[150] Indeed, Christ engraves human hearts not exclusively through Scripture, but also through "the glorious works of nature," personal experience of the Spirit's direction, and the fruits of "worldly experience and practice:"

> Some things she [Wisdom] openeth by the sacred books of Scripture, some things by the glorious works of nature, with some things she inspireth them from above by spiritual influence, in some things she leadeth and traineth them only by worldly experience and practice. We may not so in any one special kind admire her that we disgrace her in any other, but let all her ways be according unto their place and degree adored.[151]

Hooker's pithy claim requires some unpacking. Wisdom is the subject, acting upon its object, humankind, and it acts by causing encounters with Scripture, nature, spiritual influences, and the practical world of organized society. Our encounters with Scripture, nature, "worldy experience and practice," here distinguished from "spiritual influence," are all products of the senses. "Spiritual influences" - which I will develop

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150. *Laws*.I.16.5; I.138.21-22; *Laws*.I.16.5; I.138.33-139.1-3; *Laws*.I.8.3; I:84.7-16; Richard Hooker, "A Learned Sermon of the Nature of Pride," in *The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker, Vol. 5: Tractates and Sermons,* (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1990-01-01). 312. Hereafter all references to this sermon will be indicated with the short name, *Pride*. Hereafter all references to this volume will be cited with the document short name, the abbreviation FLE, the volume number, page number, and line numbers, as in *Pride*, FLE 5.312.15-18.

151. *Laws*.II.1.4; I:147.27-148.7.

as our experience of the real presence over the course of the next three chapters - seemingly occupy for Hooker a special category to the extent that we struggle to describe them with the grammar of sensory experience. Yet spiritual influences are also *experiences* in the sense of encounters with that which is beyond the self. For Hooker, all of the means by which Wisdom engraves human hearts entail encounters with external agents.

In explaining how Christ teaches God's law, Hooker seems to have in mind Aristotle's method of "*phainomena*, the appearances, or, more fully, the things appearing to be the case."[152] Christ tutors us in the eternal law through our God-empowered reasoning about phenomena we encounter in daily life. We learn to recognize the 'signs and tokens' indicative of goodness through attention to phenomena and communal reflection on the mysteries they present.

The insight that Christ schools humans invariably through our experience of phenomena is fundamental to Hooker's account of our participation in Christ, which I will introduce in chapter four. This is a theology which holds that phenomena are the exclusive source of our knowledge of goodness and for the concepts we use in our discernment of goodness. We recognize the good through direct and particular experiences. Whether Wisdom teaches us through our hearing of Scripture proclaimed, or through our participation in "the glorious works of nature," or through our personal experience of the Spirit's direction, or through the fruits of "worldly experience and practice," the infallible knowledge that guides our ethical action is imprinted through our experience of phenomena. And we acquire such knowledge not in an instant but over a lifetime:

> For whatsoever we know, we have it by the hands and ministries of men, which lead us along like children from a letter to a syllable, from a syllable to a word, from a word to a line, from a line to a sentence, from a sentence to a side, and so turn over.[153]

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152. Christopher Shields, "Aristotle," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Summer 2012 Edition)*, ed. Edward Zalta, (Stanford: Center for the Study of Language and Information, 2013), 7.

153. Richard Hooker, "The First Sermon on Part of ST. Jude," in *The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker, Vol. 5: Tractates and Sermons*, (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1990-01-01). Hereafter all references to this sermon will be indicated with the short name, *Jude*. *FLE 5*.15.8-25.

As we shall see, for Hooker, Scripture and the sacraments are phenomena themselves. Phenomena like the Church lead us to them, helping us to recognize them as the most reliable signs and tokens of goodness. They themselves are phenomena directing our attention to the person of Jesus the Christ.

The claim that the Church and commonwealth are themselves phenomena through which Christ schools humankind is important to Hooker's account. They signal that Hooker's account, in spite of its insistence that all encounters with the Word are inherently subjective, does not slide down the self-centered slope which leads to relativism or an account of the Church governed by private judgment. As we shall see in the next section, Hooker's deep sense of the limits of human reason, brought about by our sin and finitude, lead him to a highly communitarian and christocentric account of our discernment of the good.

Endoxa

We saw above that Hooker holds that phenomena are the exclusive source of our knowledge of goodness and also for the concepts we use in our thinking about goodness. Christ's Spirit teaches us to recognize the good through particular experiences of phenomena. Hooker sees Scripture, the works of nature, worldly practice, and our personal experience of the Spirit's direction as distinct categories of phenomena through which Christ schools humankind. But if all knowledge arises from inherently subjective experiences of phenomena, how does the community avoid idolatry?[154] Hooker answers that "the most certain *token* of evident goodness is if the general persuasion of all men do so account it."[155] For Hooker, we mitigate the perils of subjectivity through attention to the 'signs and tokens' of goodness.

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154. Hooker served in an ecclesial context in which Calvinist anxiety about the perils of subjectivity in discerning God's will were a given. I will develop this further in discussion the Ramist realists in chapter five. Cf. Calvin, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, I:XI.8.. "The human mind, stuffed as it is with presumptuous rashness, dares to imagine a god suited to its own capacity; as it labours under dullness, nay, is sunk in the grossest ignorance, it substitutes vanity and an empty phantom in the place of God. To these evils another is added. The god whom man has thus conceived inwardly he attempts to embody outwardly. The mind, in this way, conceives the idol, and the hand gives it birth."
155. *Laws*.I.8.3; I:83.17-19. Emphasis added.

In this sub-section, I will develop a thick account of these signs and tokens by recalling the Aristotelian concept of *endoxon*. The key move is to recognize that, similarly to Aquinas,[156] Hooker rhetorically bundles the Church's accumulated knowledge, whether discerned through our encounters with Scripture, human laws, or the spiritual domain, into endoxa, and thereby shows that they share a common source in the eternal law. This strategy enables him subsequently to argue, over and against certain Puritan interlocutors, for the preservation of Elizabethan sacramental practices on the basis that our encounters in the spiritual domain also nourish virtue. Similarly to Scripture, they communicate the eternal law to the baptized.[157]

This task immediately brings into view a common fallacy in popular depictions of Hooker's legacy. It is a commonplace to attribute to Hooker a doctrine in which 'tradition' is placed alongside Scripture and reason as part of a three-fold set of authorities that legitimately guides Christian thought. The corrections needed to the contemporary commonplace are two-fold. First, Hooker does not posit Scripture, tradition, and reason as three *alternative* sources of authority we rightly use in our discernment of the good. Rather, in keeping with scholasticism, he sets *nature* and Scripture alongside each other as sources of all knowledge, both of which are derived from the eternal law and, therefore, both of which we 'jointly and not severally'[158] use in our discernment of the good. Second, Hooker's category of nature includes the aforementioned categories of nature's glorious works and our worldly experience and practice, with the accumulated knowledge from all sources passed down from generation to generation as the 'voices of men' and, in some cases, as localized human laws.

These two corrections lead to the following clarifications which will unfold below.

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156. Thomas Aquinas, *ST*, I.8.2..

157. Barth agrees partially with Hooker's recognition of the eternal law in human customs and positive law. I believe the Hookerian account is rightly qualified by (and that Hooker would agree with) Barth's distinction in describing the relation between the eternal and human law in Barth, *CD*, III/4 §53.1.66. As Woodard-Lehman observes, "Barth draws distinctions between human laws that obscure the divine law and those that witness to it. And, here, Barth insists that divine law not only can be mediated by human law. It must be. And though divinely given, we must also give this law to ourselves and to one another." Woodard-Lehman, "Freedom and Authority," 184, note 89.

158. *Laws*.I.14.5.I.129.11.

First, for Hooker, communities discern the good through attention to the eternal law as it is discerned jointly and not severally in nature and Scripture, mediated always through the light of reason. Second, communities accumulate the knowledge of the eternal law in the form of endoxa.

When Hooker suggests that "the general and perpetual voice of men is as the sentence of God himself,"[159] and when he speaks of that which nature teaches,[160] he speaks as one long-immersed in the Aristotelian scholastic tradition during his tenure at Corpus Christi college. By my reading, when Hooker refers to 'the voice of men' and more generally in terms of that which reason discerns in nature, his meaning in such references is nuanced, an allusion to *endoxa,* the Aristotelian method paired with Aristotle's method of *phainomena*.[161] Consideration of *endoxa* is not merely respect for those who go before us, but a reliable process of puzzle-solving by which we resolve mysteries arising from our study of phenomena. That process consists of gathering and testing 'the signs and tokens of goodness,' setting aside those which fail testing, moving forward by critical examination of the ways in which our most authoritative predecessors framed those puzzles.[162] I take Hooker's 'voices of men' to be broader and more complex than the Thomist "Doctors of the Church."[163] It incorporates accumulated wisdom in both ecclesial and non-ecclesial domains, and it includes both the expert discoveries derived from formal scholastic method and the informally derived wisdom we denote by "common sense." It encapsulates communal reflection in response to all kinds of phenomena, including Scripture and spiritual experience, shapes the concepts by which we describe them, and thereby articulates the norms

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159. *Laws*.I.8.3; I:83.3-84.1.
160. See, for example, *Laws*.1.14.5
161. Endoxa are "those opinions are reputable which are accepted by everyone, or by the majority, or by the wise - i.e., by all, or by the majority, or by the most notable and reputable of them." Aristotle, *Complete Works Vol 1. Top*. 100b21–23.
162. "We must, as in all other cases, set the phenomena before us and, after first discussing the difficulties, go on to prove, if possible, the truth of all the reputable opinions about these affections or, failing this, of the greater number and most authoritative; for if we both resolve the difficulties and leave the reputable opinions undisturbed, we shall have proved the case sufficiently." Aristotle, *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation, Vol. 2 (Bollingen Series Lxxi-2)*, ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984-09-01). *EN* 1145b1-7.
163. Thomas Aquinas, *ST*, 1.1.8 ob 2. Wawrykow, *Handbook for Thomas Aquinas*, 13-15.

that inform our experience of them.

This background illuminates Hooker's complaint about the philosophical method of his interlocutors. I will develop this contrast in detail in chapter three by comparing Hooker to his Ramist realist colleagues. I anticipate that argument now in order to illuminate Hooker's teaching about the role of *endoxa* in Hooker's account of reason.

Hooker appropriates and adapts the Thomist conception of authorities in our pursuit of sacred knowledge. Hooker adapts the Thomist distinction between revelation and the intrinsic and extrinsic authorities mediated through reason.[164] He retains the Thomist ranking of authorities according to their probabilistic character. In Hooker's appropriation *all* the sources are treated as revelatory in character because they reveal the eternal law, and all are mediated via the light of reason. In place of the distinction between revelation and reason, Hooker's domains consist of direct and indirect revelation. These Hookerian domains, however, are re-framed in ways supportive of Hooker's extended argument with presbyterians and Ramist realists.[165]

First, there is a domain within which only Scripture expresses the eternal law in a manner comprehensible to fallen humanity. That domain is the supernatural path to eternal beatitude that is the incarnate Christ.[166] Importantly, in Hooker's schema, not all things found in Scripture belong to this supernatural domain.

Many of the questions that arise in communal life belong to a second domain in which the eternal law is expressed both by divine law (Scripture) and the natural law of reason. There is a distinction here between Scripture's revelation of the supernatural law of God's deliverance of humankind in and through Christ and Scripture's recordation of the histories and practices of particular communities in biblical history. We shall see in chapter three that, in contrast with his interlocutors, Hooker assigned

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164. Thomas Aquinas, *ST*, 1.8.2.
165. In my view, this is motivated in part by the rhetorical challenge. Hooker is seeking to refute a view of *sola scriptura* that claims the only reliable source of our knowledge of the good is Scripture. Rhetorically, Hooker must demonstrate that positive laws derived from the accumulated wisdom of the ages also articulate the eternal law, even though it is more vulnerable to probabilistic error. I develop this claim below.
166. *Laws*.I.11.6; 1.118.15-16.

different levels of authority to different parts of the Scriptural narrative on the basis of this distinction. Simply put, the Hookerian account holds that Scripture contains both supernatural and natural law, where the former denotes the Gospel of the deliverance of humankind by Jesus Christ.

Within this latter domain, in which the eternal law is revealed to humans through Scripture, "the glorious works of nature," personal experience of the Spirit's direction, and through the fruits of "worldly experience and practice," the proper philosophical method by which the good is discovered begins with the particularities of the puzzle the community confronts.[167] The community then gathers and tests the *endoxa* which seem to be applicable, and thereby reaches conclusions which may or may not validate the received wisdom. Hooker's recurring complaint was that, within this second domain, his opponents failed to recognize the authority of these non-scriptural sources, and, when applying scriptural guidance, failed to assess adequately whether and how general principles from Scripture were applicable to the particularities of the presenting ethical questions.

I noted above the commonplace attribution to Hooker of a doctrine in which 'tradition' is placed alongside Scripture and reason as part of a three-fold set of authorities that legitimately guides Christian thought. That depiction is problematic for a number of reasons,[168] but for our present purpose it is sufficient to clarify that Hooker infrequently referred to 'tradition,' and when he did, he almost always used the term in a highly negative sense.[169] By my reading, Hooker distinguishes *endoxa* (or 'voice of men,' as Hooker referred to it) from 'tradition' in the sense of Roman Catholic sacred tradition having an authority like that of Scripture. 'Tradition,' for

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167. I discuss this point in the next section where I describe Hooker's emphasis on dialectical discourse. I develop this concept in great detail with respect to scriptural reasoning in chapter two. See "Hookerian prescription: The priority of the particular" on page 96.

168. Within reflections on the mutability of ecclesiastical laws, Hooker proposes not a three-legged stool, but a hierarchy of authorities. Those authorities are, ranked according to their ordering on a probabilistic spectrum, (1) that which Scripture plainly delivers regarding its subject matter, the supernatural path in Christ; (2) the general and perpetual voice of men; and (3) the judgments rendered by "the Church by her ecclesiastical authority" in the local and immediate sense. In context, Hooker is responding directly to claims by Thomas Cartwright that laws need not be obeyed if judged by individuals to be inconsistent with Scripture. Hooker, like Whitgift before him, is asserting the current authority of the Church headed by Queen Elizabeth to order the affairs of the national church.

169. Neelands, "Scripture, Reason, and 'Tradition'," 93.

Hooker, usually referred to Roman Catholic declarations pertaining to things necessary to salvation, the authority of which was forcefully rejected by the Reformers. Hooker rejected the addition of Roman 'traditions as a part of supernatural necessary truth,' noting that 'we do not reject them only because they are not in the Scripture but because they are neither in Scripture nor can otherwise sufficiently by any reason be proved to be of God."[170]

As we have seen, Hooker's doctrine of *duplex cognitio Dei* traces the genealogy of both human positive law and Scripture to the eternal law in order to demonstrate that both manifest God's law. In Hooker's schema, Scripture is the sole element in the category of 'divine law,' whereas various forms of law constitute the category of natural law. The importance of this schema is not solely in the distinction it protects between the natural and supernatural paths to eternal blessedness, nor in the clarity it provides about which sources of authorities govern in each domain. The schema also illuminates differences in the reliability we reasonably assign to those authorities. Elements in the category of divine law are reasonably assumed to be of the highest reliability because they, by definition, consist of direct revelation of God within history. The principles thereby revealed carry the authoritative rank of necessity. In contrast, elements in the category of natural law are derivative, consisting of socially mediated and historically experienced principles, and thus, though they have their origins in the eternal law, are subject to the compounded probabilistic errors of human receipt and transmission. The principles thereby revealed cannot be said to be necessary because they are only provisionally known.

Rome's error was categorical. Roman 'tradition' was not divine law, but human law. Rejection of Roman tradition properly was not a matter of naming all things Roman as false, but rather of naming as idolatrous the claim that Roman tradition has the same authority as scripture's account of the supernatural path in Christ.[171]

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170. *Laws*.I.14.5; 1.129.22-24. This is a significant example of Hooker's rejection of appeals to timeless absolutes. I describe Hooker's allergy to timeless absolutes in chapter two. See "Appeals to timeless absolutes" on page 103.

171. "Whether we do now stand bound in the sight of God to yield to traditions urged by the Church of Rome the same obedience and reverence we do to his written law, honoring equally and adoring both as divine; our answer is no. They that so earnestly plead for the

Rhetorically, Hooker's careful distinction between Roman 'tradition' and the 'voices of men' enabled him to distinguish Elizabethan ecclesial practices received from Rome from Roman dogma, and thereby argue for their retention.

In contrast with his negative view of Roman 'tradition,' Hooker held a high view of the authority of 'the voice of men.' As I have suggested above, however, the trajectory of credible opinions in resolving a question is not a source of authority separate from and alternative to reason, but rather is *itself* a phenomenon presented to and examined by reason. Consideration of *endoxa* is not consideration of some authority severable from reason, but rather is integral to proper philosophical reasoning. As I will show in the next sub-section, in each considered question, the voice of men properly is heard, examined critically, and either affirmed, rejected, or amended.

Hooker does not, therefore, posit a three-fold set of authorities by which the baptized discern the way to the good, but rather sets nature and Scripture alongside each other. After Scripture, the voices of men are most reliable, followed by local ecclesial laws and customs:

> It sufficeth therefore that nature and Scripture do serve in such full sort that they both jointly and not severally either of them be so complete that unto everlasting felicity we need not the knowledge of any thing more than these two may easily furnish our minds with on all sides, and therefore they which add traditions as a part of supernatural necessary truth have not the truth but are in error.[172]

For Hooker, Christ schools the Church in the eternal law through both nature and Scripture.[173] Though they differ in the reliability we reasonably assign them as

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authority of Tradition, as if nothing were more safely conveyed than that which spreadeth it self by report, and descendeth by relation of former generations unto the ages that succeed, are not all of them (surely a miracle it were if they should be) so simple, as thus to persuade themselves; however if the simple were so persuaded, they could be content perhaps very well to enjoy the benefit, as they account it, of that common error. What hazard the truth is in when it passeth through the hands of report, how maimed and deformed it becometh; they are not, they cannot possibly be ignorant. *Laws*.I.3.2; I:123.5-18.

172. *Laws*.I.14.5.I.129.10-16.

173. Hooker's account of the relation between nature and Scripture is consistent with the scholastic tradition. Porter notes that, though "theologians frequently equated nature and reason…," "the scholastics do distinguish between nature, understood specifically as pre-rational, and the characteristically human ability to reason." Hooker's 'voices of men" (*endoxa*) correspond to the scholastic school source called 'reason.' Given that identity, one can say that Hooker, with the scholastics, saw "nature, reason, and Scripture as three mutually interpreting sources for moral norms." Porter, *Natural and Divine Law*, 85,121.

sources of authority, the Church must attend to both in order to discern the good. Both sets of phenomena are mediated via the light of reason. The Church mitigates the perils of subjectivity through attention to the 'signs and tokens' of goodness discerned in response to encounters with both sets of phenomena, and such wisdom is gathered and passed on from generation to generation in the form of endoxa, and sometimes in the form of positive law.

Dialectic

Because the various sources of phenomena through which Christ schools the Church in the eternal law differ in the reliability we reasonably assign them as signs and tokens of the good, and because sin and creaturely finitude inevitably impede our comprehension of the good, communities must have a way of resolving contradictions and tensions in such discernment. The key move in this sub-section is to recognize that Hooker understood the process of creating such wisdom in the sense of the Aristotelian method of *dialectic*.

If nature's voice is "God's instrument," and "the general and perpetual voice of men is as the sentence of God himself," then God reveals Godself through both nature and the transmission of received wisdom from generation to generation. This is a christocentric natural theology, an optimistic view of the revelatory role of nature, but one that simultaneously is aware of the problems inherent in the methods of receipt and transmission. Hooker's observation that "the voice of men" is the "perfectest and strongest" "sign and token," is descriptive and not prescriptive. He is fully aware of the probabilistic nature of all signs and tokens. His phenomenological point is that the most important way that humans discern the good is through study of received wisdom about the good.

For Hooker, discourse is the primary means by which nature tutors. Whatever principle we choose as our subject, "it was at the very first found out by *discourse*, and drawn from out of the very bowels of heaven and earth."[174] "The law of reason or human nature is that which men by *discourse* of natural reasons have rightly found out

174. *Laws*.I.8.5; I:86.10-11. Emphasis added.

themselves to be all for ever bound unto in their actions."[175] Good laws are those "draw[n] from the laws of nature and God, by *discourse* of reason, aided with the influence of divine grace."[176] Whereas, the "mysteries of heavenly truth" are taught readily in Scripture, "... all kinds of knowledge else have that virtue in themselves whereby they are able to procure our assent unto such conclusions as the industry of right *discourse* doth gather from them."[177] That most reliable token of goodness, most commonly referred to by Hooker to as 'the voice of men,' is the trajectory of conclusions reached by men through the time-honored process of rational and communal discourse.

Hooker's emphasis on rational discourse arises from a commitment to logic as a means by which valid conclusions are reached in developing all forms of knowledge.[178] God presupposes human reason in God's self-revelation: "God hath not moved their hearts to think such things as he hath not enabled them to prove."[179] Indeed, the incarnated Christ relied on the tension of rational disputation to reveal the light:

> Our Lord and Savior himself did hope by disputation to do some good, yea by disputation not only of but against the truth, albeit with purpose for the truth....There is as yet no way known how to dispute or to determine of things disputed without use of natural reason.[180]

Disputation is the reliable and orderly means through which humans seek truth together and reach conclusions that contribute to knowledge and authorize communal actions. Via public discourse, we discover the eternal law and establish norms consistent with it to which all in the community are bound:

> ... of this we are right sure, that nature, Scripture, and experience itself have all taught the world to seek for the ending of contentions by submitting itself unto some judicial and definitive sentence, whereunto neither part that contendeth may under any pretense or color refuse to stand.[181]

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175. *Laws*.I.8.8; I:89.28-31. Emphasis added.
176. *Laws*.III.8.18;.I:235.14-16. Emphasis added.
177. *Laws*.V.21.3; II.85.18-21. Emphasis added.
178. As we shall in chapter five, Hooker's Cambridge-based interlocutors agreed. The dispute arose because many of them preferred the logic of Peter Ramus to that of Aristotle.
179. *Laws*.V.10.1
180. *Laws*.III.8.17; 1.234.2-9.
181. *Laws*.Preface.6.1; I.24-28.

Disputation is thus a means of knowledge, though fraught with a probability of error. Course correction is often necessary. Through discourse, we accept and reject the norms of the past as experience warrants. This dialectic pattern is how we discover laws consistent with the eternal law. Such humble, self-critical discourse is necessary if communities are to discern the good. For example, trial and error brought an evolution in the forms of government men prefer,[182] and is the means by which a community receives and tests the conclusions of those it recognizes as authoritative and thereby itself contributes to knowledge.[183] Through calm and patient logic, the community discerns the truth.[184]

For Hooker, the dialectical nature of principles derived from human experience of the eternal law arises from the probabilistic nature of human judgments and the contingency of the good.[185] As I will show in chapter three, Hooker's opponents erred in their opposition to certain ecclesiastical laws as a consequence of their habit of lifting general principles from Scripture and applying them without due regard to the particularities that rightfully determine whether and how such principles may be applied. Such generalities do not illuminate but instead are like "cloudy mists cast before the eye of common sense."[186]

We are right, therefore, to expect to encounter goodness near where "the universal consent of men" suggest it may be found, for the dialectical process of transmission of such wisdom from generation to generation clears the mists that cloud our eyes, giving us cause for confidence that we can in fact recognize the good we are to do:

> The light therefore which the star of natural reason and wisdom casteth is too bright to be obscured by the mist of a word or two uttered to diminish that opinion which justly hath been

182. *Laws*.I.10.5; 1. 100.16-101.11.
183. Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *ST*, I-II.94.2.
184. *Laws*.V.21.2;84.1-5. "Our desire is in this present controversy, as in the rest, not to be carried up and down with the waves of uncertain arguments, but rather positively to lead on the minds of the simpler sort by plain and easy degrees till the very nature of the thing itself do make manifest what is truth."
185. As John Bowlin argued with respect to Aquinas, so it was with Hooker: "the goodness of the will's object… can change as fortune does, haphazardly, unexpectedly, and independent of our bidding." Bowlin, *Contingency and Fortune in Aquinas's Ethics (Cambridge Studies in Religion and Critical Thought)*, 54.
186. *Laws*.V.9.2;1.43.29-30.

> received concerning the force and virtue thereof even in matters that touch most nearly the principle duties of men and the glory of the eternal God.[187]

Episteme and Phronesis

I conclude this introductory sketch of selected Hooker claims by turning to Hooker's distinction between "matters of faith" and "matters of action," which, on my account, are his deployment of the Aristotelian virtues of *episteme* and *phronesis.* The distinction between *episteme* and *phronesis* will be prominent in the remainder of this inquiry. In this section, I will argue that, for Hooker, our decisions about the good are mostly local, particular, contingent, and, therefore, mutable. The key move is to recognize that the cultivation of virtue necessarily precedes godly laws because our ethical choices flow from the virtue of *phronesis.* In what follows, I will first explain why this distinction was important to Hooker's rhetorical strategy, examine how he deployed it, and propose a qualification to his distinction which I believe enables us to appropriate it in our contemporary discourse.

Undergirding much of Hooker's rhetoric is a strong philosophical commitment to the idea that faith and reason are not disjunctive. Reason so dominates human psychology that faith presupposes reason. This insight draws attention to a position held by many of Hooker's colleagues that is not uncommon today. Many Puritans - both opponents and allies of Hooker's - were influenced by Ramist realism taught in the 1590's and onward at Cambridge by William Perkins and others.[188] Extending the logic of s*ola scriptura*, they argued for the exclusive authority of Scripture in ethical reasoning based on the assumption that faith and reason are disjunctive. On this view,

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187. *Laws*.III.8.17; 1.234.25-31.

188. See "The Ramist Realists" on page 85. My proposal in chapter two is that they were important interlocutors in the background of *Laws*. From his post at Cambridge. William Perkins, in particular, spawned generations of clergy schooled in his way of avoiding the error of subjectivity through a rejection of scholastic Aristotelian logic in favor of a method grounded in the work of Peter Ramus. At its heart, it was deeply anxious about how subjectivity impedes our discernment, so it created an exegetical method that serves like a technology which, they felt, enables us to mine the eternal law objectively from Scripture. This background helps to clarify why Hooker carefully carved out a space for the exclusive authority of Scripture, and then argued that the mere presence of a practice in Scripture is not axiomatic for us today, and, conversely, that the mere absence of a practice in Scripture is not warrant for eliminating it from our common life. Deployment of the categories of *episteme* and *phronesis* complicates the suggestion that we mine universal axioms from Scripture by denying the premise that the paths to the good are singular.

faithfulness entails obeying Scripture rather than one's subjective reason in all aspects of life. Hooker rejected this premise, insisting that the first question to consider is "whether the light of reason be so pernicious that in devising laws for the church men ought not by it to search what may be fit and convenient."[189] Hooker claimed that it is impossible to choose between Scripture and reason because reason precedes, is integral to, and follows our engagement of Scripture. Humans cannot choose between faith and reason. Humans cannot choose to avoid subjective engagement with Scripture precisely because human psychology is fundamentally rational.

Hooker claimed that his opponents' puzzlement was due to two category errors. The distinctions needed are not between faith and reason but, first, between the domain in which Scripture alone can direct us and the domain in which other sources of knowledge contribute helpfully. The second distinction is between matters of faith and matters of action. The first distinction sheds light on the need for the second.

The category, 'things necessary to salvation,' pertains to the first domain, which Hooker calls 'supernatural.' Only Scripture is authoritative with regard to the supernatural path to eternal bliss given in Jesus Christ. That said, those principles of salvation found in Scripture themselves are phenomena that humans encounter and gather dialectically into *endoxa* that we thereupon encounter embedded in human positive laws. In addition to the obvious prohibitions against murder and adultery, Hooker seems to have in mind here scriptural imperatives enshrined into positive ecclesiastical law, such as the requirements for baptism and eucharist. Discovered originally in Scripture, these divine laws are also manifest in natural law as ordinances of the Church. They include the bond Christ creates in all who participate in him and "the kind of worship" appropriate to him:

> ... unto the Church as it is a society supernatural this is peculiar, that part of the bond of their association which belong to the Church of God must be a law supernatural, which God himself hath revealed concerning that kind of worship which his people shall do unto him.[190]

189. *Laws*.III.8.18; 1:235.3-5.
190. *Laws*.1.15.2; 1:131.16-20.

Such divine laws are of the category of knowledge, and, being eternally true, are immutable. So the first category error has to do with things either necessary or unnecessary to salvation, and the recognition that exclusive scriptural authority and immutability pertain only to the former, for "they belong forever, yea, although they be positive laws, unless being positive God himself which made them alter them."[191]

From this arises the second distinction. We discover divine law originally in Scripture alone, but because we also encounter it in its endoxic manifestations as positive ecclesiastical laws, and because both Scripture and positive law therefore treat matters essential and non-essential to salvation, when evaluating our positive laws, we must further distinguish between the matters they treat. Hooker proposes accordingly that the proper distinction for ethical reasoning is not between reason and faith, *but between matters of faith and matters of practical action*:

> Touching matters belonging unto the Church of Christ the we conceive, that they are not of one suit. Some things are *merely* of faith, which things it doth suffice that we know and believe; some things not only to be known but done, because they concern the actions of men. Articles about the Trinity are matters of *mere* faith, and must be believed. Precepts concerning the works of charity are matters of action, which to know, unless they be practiced, is not enough. This being so clear to all men's understanding, I somewhat marvel that they especially should think it absurd to oppose *Church-government* a plain matter of action unto matters of faith, who that themselves divide the gospel into *Doctrine* and *Discipline*.[192]

Hooker's distinction between matters of '*mere* faith' and 'matters of action' is crucial to his larger argument against his opponents' method of ethical reasoning. I propose that this distinction can be most fruitfully understood in terms of the Aristotelian virtues of knowledge (*episteme*) and practical wisdom (*phronesis*). In contrast with the virtues of *episteme* and *techne*,[193] *phronesis* is an intellectual virtue consisting of excellence in action towards the end of producing the good, "a true and

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191. *Laws*.1.15.3; 1.131.32-132.1.

192. *Laws*.3.3.2; 1:210.1-13 Emphasis original

193. Aristotle, *Complete Works Vol 2*. *EN* 1139b.18-36, 1140a.1-23. For Aristotle, the intellectual virtue of knowledge is attained through study of a field's causes. One reasons inductively from first principles, proceeds through deduction to the particulars, and reaches demonstrable conclusions. In contrast with *episteme*, *techne* is not the understanding of an object through comprehension of its causes, but 'a seasoned state of capacity to make.' *Techne* is often translated into English as 'art' or 'craft.' But perhaps the most important aspect of *techne* for our purposes is that it is an intellectual excellence oriented towards production of a thing. In chapter two, I will argue that the Ramist realists strived to cultivate *techne* through their exegetical method rather than the *phronesis* they should have preferred.

reasoned statement of capacity to act with regard to the things that are good or bad for man."[194] Cultivation of the virtue of *phronesis* necessarily precedes godly laws because such laws are the fruit of a people skilled in deliberating about how "to act with regard to the things that are good and bad." Adopting that nomenclature for our analysis, we can substitute those Aristotelian concepts in my conclusion above, and declare that Hooker proposes that the proper distinction for ethical reasoning is not between reason and faith, but between the respective subject matters of knowledge (*episteme*) and practical wisdom (*phronesis*).

Recognizing Hooker's deployment of these Aristotelian virtues puts in perspective Hooker's distinction between 'matters of mere faith' and 'matters of action.' It is not that faith and reason are opposed, but that matters of faith, as the subject matter of *episteme,* involve knowledge of things that are necessary and eternal, and matters of action, as the subject matter of *phronesis,* have to do with deliberation 'about what is good and expedient.' The principles of that which *is good* cannot change precisely because they are necessary and eternal, while that which is *conducive to the good* cannot be demonstrated and must be chosen through deliberation, for, inherently, it can be otherwise than it currently is.

Hooker recognized the potential for puzzles in the subject matters of both faith and action. He ranked ecclesial sources of authority on a probabilistic spectrum

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194. *EN* 1140a.24 - 1140b.12. "Regarding practical wisdom [*phronesis*] we shall get at the truth by considering who are the persons we credit with it. Now it is thought to be a mark of a man of practical wisdom to be able to deliberate well about what is good and expedient for himself, not in some particular aspect, e.g., about what sorts of thing conduce to health or to strength, but about what sorts of things conduce to the good life in general. This is shown by the fact that we credit men with practical wisdom [phronesis] in some particular respect when they have calculated well with a view to some good end which is one of those not the object of any art. Thus in general the man who is capable of deliberating has practical wisdom. Now no one deliberates about things that cannot be otherwise nor about things that it is impossible for him to do. Therefore, since knowledge [*episteme*] involves demonstration, but there is no demonstration of things whose first principles can be otherwise (for all such things might actually be otherwise), and since it is impossible to deliberate about things that are of necessity, practical wisdom cannot be knowledge nor art; not knowledge because that which can be done is capable of being otherwise, not art because action and making are different kinds of thing. It remains, then, that it is a true and reasoned statement of capacity to act with regard to the things that are good or bad for man. For while making has an end other than itself, action cannot; for good action itself is its end. It is for this reason that we think Pericles and men like him have practical wisdom, viz. because they can see what is good for themselves and what is good for men in general; we consider that those who can do this are good at managing households or estates."

because there is a distinction between a principle and our comprehension of the principle that has to do with our method of knowing. Though the principles constituting matters of faith are eternal and immutable, they are to be distinguished from our comprehension of them. The methods by which we deduce these principles socially and historically - through our encounter of the Christ the Redeemer in Scripture, the phenomena constituting our encounter with the Christ the Governor in the created order, our creation and gathering of *endoxa*, and our dialectical discourse regarding these things - render our comprehension inherently uncertain. Therefore, though the principles themselves are eternal and therefore immutable, we might reasonably expect ongoing disputation regarding them, and expect a trajectory in meanings of the concepts we use to speak about them.

While Hooker acknowledges this potential need to correct the concepts we use in speaking of matters of faith (such as God's deliverance in Christ), the need for correction is clearer in matters requiring phronetic judgement. Refusing to make such corrections can be perilous. Hooker notes that "The end wherefore laws were made may be permanent, and those laws nevertheless require some alteration, if there be any unfitness in the means which they prescribe as tending unto that end and purpose."[195] The potential for error is greatest in matters of action wherein multiple options are possible. *Phronesis* is an intellectual virtue of a godly commonwealth, precisely because:

> Men's consultations are always perilous. And it falleth out many times that after long deliberation, those things are by their wit even resolved on, which by trial are found most opposite to public safety. It is no impossible thing for states, be they never so well established, yet by oversight in some one act or treaty between them and potent opposites, utterly to cast away themselves forever.[196]

Laws having to do with the practical action of ordering the state or church are among the subject matter of *phronesis*. Such laws are deliberative choices made in cases which may be otherwise than they are; those choices are not necessary, but provisional. Such laws are therefore mutable. This signals the importance of Hooker's objection to ahistorical thinking, and his insistence that such laws are contingent and

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195. *Laws*.III.10.3; 1.242.13-16.
196. *Laws*.III.11.9; 1:254.1-7.

mutable. The phronetic character of laws pertaining to matters of action means that the expedient chosen eventually becomes no longer expedient, requiring their amendment or abolition:

> Laws, as all other things human, are many times full of imperfection, and that which is supposed to be behooveful unto men, proveth often times most pernicious. The wisdom which is learned by tract of time findeth the laws that have been in former ages established needful in later to be abrogated. Besides that which sometime is expedient doth not always so continue, and the number of needless laws unabolished doth weaken the force of them that are necessary.[197]

Hooker's opponents argued that the doctrine encapsulated with the slogan, *sola scriptura*, means that universal axioms discovered in Scripture should exclusively determine matters of action, including questions about how the church is ordered. In response, Hooker insisted that there is much that Scripture does not plainly deliver, and there is much that Scripture leaves unsaid, leaving the Church of England to determine how best to order itself in each context:

> .... no more is by us maintained, than only that Scripture must needs teach the Church whatsoever is in such sort necessary, as hath been set down, and that it is no more disgrace for Scripture to have let a number of things free to be ordered at the discretion of the Church, than for nature to have left it unto the wit of man to devise his own attire, and not to look for it as the beasts of the field have theirs...."[198]

Reflecting on these general principles, Hooker presses his point that the Church is warranted in making ecclesiastical laws pursuant to the good with an eye to that which is expedient and convenient in its own historical context. Scripture provides only general guidance with regard to the ordering of the Church. Referring to the scriptural mandates cited by his opponents, he observes that:

> ... these rules are no such laws as require any one particular thing to be done, but serve rather to direct the Church in all things which she doth, so that free and lawful it is to devise any Ceremony, to receive any order, and to authorize any kind of regiment, not special commandment being thereby violated, and the same being thought such by them, to whom the judgment thereof appertaineth. as that is it not scandalous, but decent, tending unto edification, and setting forth the glory of God, that is to say, agreeable unto the general rules of holy Scripture....[199]

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197. *Laws*.IV.14.1;1:336.24-31.
198. *Laws*.III.4.1; 1:213.2-8.
199. *Laws*.III.7.4; 1:128.19-24.

Now that I've highlighted Hooker's deployment of the Aristotelian virtues of *episteme* and *phronesis*, we are in a position to notice how they function rhetorically in his treatise.[200]

On my account, the distinction between the subject matters of *episteme* and *phronesis* echoes the logic of Augustine's distinction between that which is worthy of our clinging and that which is a means to that which is so worthy.[201] They help us recognize the potential to create idols out of the signs and tokens of grace by confusing our practices and ordering of our common life with the eternal realities into which they draw us. The distinction is helpful because Hooker is engaged in a dispute about such signs and tokens of the good - questions, for example, about whether the Church of England should have bishops, whether a female queen can head the church, and whether certain ecclesial practices are warranted.

His deployment of *episteme* and *phronesis* enables him to clarify that such questions are not, with certain exceptions, of the category of things which are eternally given (that which is good and the only thing worthy of our clinging). Rather, they are of the category of questions about that which is conducive to the good. As we shall see in chapter six, this will enable Hooker to claim that multiple paths are consonant. The phronetic character of ecclesial laws means that they are not universally applicable, but particular to a concrete community such as the Church of England. Our decisions about that which is conducive to the good are offered with the humility which recognizes that such laws are necessarily mutable because of the vulnerability to probabilistic error that attends all practices derived from natural law. Rome can be Rome, Geneva can be Geneva, and England can be England. To those who argued that the Elizabethan Church should conform to the norms of the emerging Reformed

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200. In my discussion of criticism of the ecclesial ethicists and their emphasis on practices, I will connect phronesis with Jeffrey Stout's account of cognitive and practical commitments. In the Hookerian account, I understand ought-to-do judgments and practical commitments to be the subject matter of the virtue, phronesis. See page 199.

201. Augustine of Hippo, *Augustine: On Christian Doctrine*, trans. D.W Robertson (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1958).10. "The things which are to be enjoyed are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, a single Trinity…." By my reading, Augustine makes a sharp distinction intended to help us recognize our propensity for turning the means of grace into idols. Constituents of the temporal economy of salvation are unworthy of our clinging. They are not to be enjoyed; they are to lead us to the one thing that is to be enjoyed, which is the Trinity.

consensus which took its lead from Geneva, Hooker argued that it is right and proper for the Church of England to make decisions about its self-ordering which diverge from the paths of both Geneva and Rome.

The Big Picture Revisited

The ultimate destination of this inquiry is an account of how the mind of Christ is formed in Christian communities, with the secondary objective of explaining how ecclesial practices contribute to the creation of a virtuous community. Thus far, we've paid close attention to key moves Hooker made in order to adapt a recognizably Thomist account of mimetic virtue and deploy it such that it was intelligible within the conceptual norms of Reformed orthodoxy. The chief of these dogmatic claims was that, until we know Christ the Redeemer, humans do not have noetic access to the good due to sin and human finitude. We've seen that Hooker appropriated a recognizably Thomist ontology and anthropology, and, like Thomas and his immediate predecessors in the medieval scholastic tradition, deployed Aristotelian methods and epistemological concepts. We are now in a position to see how the concepts excavated in this chapter will be important in the ensuing chapters.

To sharpen my Hookerian account of virtue, in the next chapter I will contrast it with competing accounts which, in my view, were among Hooker's primary rhetorical targets. Hooker's ontology will play an important role, and his deployment of Aristotelean epistemological concepts will be foregrounded. By providing an account of the natural law grounded in the eternal law, these sub-surface commitments enable Hooker to criticize a deontological ethics based on his opponent's implementation of a *sola scriptura* hermeneutic, and to defend his own account in a grammar intelligible to them.

In chapter four, I will be considering Hooker's account of our participation in Christ and proposing a way to describe the real presence that prepares us for the subsequent account of mimetic virtue. Hooker's adaptation of the Thomist conception of eternal law will help us to describe how *all* humans naturally participate in Christ, while *many* are in communion with Christ. Also, we have now clarified that

the reformed catholic context presupposes that humans have no innate access to the good, and that all human learning about the good develops through our encounters with the signs and tokens of grace. Hooker's psychology will help us to recognize the need for and imagine a grammar to describe a personal relationship with Christ that is intelligible within a context of reformed catholicism.

I'll develop that account of virtue in chapter five, following reflection on Hooker's teaching about ecclesial practices. Once again, Hooker's ontology and psychology will help us to imagine an account of the real presence that is intelligible within a reformed catholic context while also helping us to think more robustly about the relationship between the real presence and virtue.

The Hookerian psychology and especially the concepts of *endoxa* and *phronesis* will figure prominently in my final chapter, in which I will consider how the Hookerian account might help us to frame contemporary ethical questions and think about a global communion ecclesiology.

The Christian life according to Richard Hooker: a preliminary sketch

The hope of the chapters that follow is to consider the aggregate effects of these Hookerian ontological, anthropological, and epistemological commitments and to contemplate how they might fruitfully inform our contemporary ethical discourse. My proposal will be that such consideration leads to a christodramatic ethics that vindicates Hauerwas and Wells' turn to ecclesial practices as a means of our discerning the good, and that have important implications for how we imagine a global Church in the 21st century.

For now, the significance of the christodramatic ethics developed in this study might be best anticipated through a preliminary glimpse of a metaphor to which I'll return in my final chapter.

For Hooker, life for all humans is like a journey to the summit of "the highest of the mountains" (Is 2:1). At the summit - indeed, in a certain sense identical to the

summit - is re-union with Jesus Christ, the cause of our journey. Christ summons all humans to the summit, but not all respond. Those who do respond do not reach the summit in a single ecstatic moment, but simply hear Christ's call, turn, and take the first step onto the trailhead. We pilgrims begin the journey, but, partially blinded as though in a fog, find ourselves at times in brambles, on dangerous precipices, and, often, simply lost in the wilderness. We have no way of orienteering on our own.

There are thus certain questions we ask as we try to make our way to the summit. Some of those have to do with the nature of our destination - its worthiness, its beauty, its goodness. These are questions about the summit itself. These first questions are of the category of *episteme*, and they do indeed have universal answers.

Other questions have to do with how to move toward the summit safely from wherever we find ourselves on the mountain. This second set of questions are of the category of *phronesis*. They have to do with our next steps toward the summit. Precisely because the mountain is itself alive, shaped by phenomena like wind, rain, quake, and fire, as well as by the pilgrims who precede us, we cannot always simply follow the well-trod trail. While the summit itself remains constant, the best way forward depends on our location on the mountain. The right path to the summit is inherently local, contingently known, and particular to our coordinates at our moment in time.

How then do we find our way to the summit given the fog through which we see only dimly? Thus far, only a partial answer has been given. Christ is not only our destination, but our sustainer. Christ alone guides us. But how? Given the fog and the great distance, how do we hear and recognize his voice? How do we rightly navigate?

Hooker answers with his doctrine of our participation in Christ and a defense of liturgical practices. But before turning to those (in chapters five and six), we need to consider why the facile account of *sola scriptura* proposed by certain Puritan leaders provides an insufficient answer.