

Corneliu C. Simuț

The Doctrine of Salvation in the Sermons of Richard Hooker



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*To my children,
Ezra and Lara*

Foreword

Richard Hooker (1554-1600) has been an unquestioned authority in Anglican ecclesiastical theology for centuries. In the present book, the young Baptist scholar Dr. Corneliu Simuț, lecturer in historical and dogmatic theology at Emanuel University of Oradea (Romania), examines a wide range of contemporary studies in which the assessment of Hooker's theology has become ambivalent. Some authors even think that Hooker is more Catholic than Reformed in his theology. Dr. Simuț wants to show quite the opposite. According to him, Hooker follows in the steps of his Protestant predecessors, especially as far as the doctrine of salvation is concerned. A detailed study of some of the most important English reformers under the reign of Henry VIII, Edward VI and Mary I is followed by an even more profound research of Hooker's early sermons. This line of inquiry differs from the usual Hooker-research, which is almost exclusively concentrated on the five or eight books of the *Lawes of the Ecclesiasticall Politie*. It also differs from the earlier book written by Dr. Simuț, *Richard Hooker and his Early Doctrine of Justification. A Study of his Discourse of Justification* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), in which the connection between Hooker and the great Continental reformers was at the centre of his attention.

Hooker's sermons turn out to be a lively testimony of careful theological reflections on faith, righteousness, justification, forgiveness of sins, election and perseverance, all of which are essential elements of the key concern of the Reformation: how do I acquire lasting salvation? Dr. Simuț points to the genuinely Reformed stress on the sovereignty of God, on faith alone, on the imputation of the merits of Christ, on the sanctification by the Holy Spirit which is found in all of Hooker's sermons. He also discovers a logical sequence in Hooker's successive sermons, in which not only the doctrine of justification – considered to be the *articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae* in the Protestant tradition – is presented but also the broader doctrine of salvation. Firstly, there is the necessity of faith, then the epistemology of faith, namely the certainty and doubt that go with faith. In the next sermon, which – compared to Hooker's other sermons – is evidently an elaborate theological discourse rather than an address from the pulpit, the foundation of faith is

dealt with. In this particular sermon, Hooker comes to his most fundamental distinctions and to his most sympathetic presentation of Catholic doctrines, referring to the *Decretum de justificatione* of the Council of Trent. With the help of these insights, the controversy between Hooker and his Puritan fellow-preacher, Walter Travers, can be explained and reproduced more easily. Finally, the sermon on the nature of pride gives Dr. Simuț the opportunity to reconstruct Hooker's anthropology of faith, with its main elements such as the relation of grace and nature, the lasting impact of sin, the spiritual life of the believer and the presence of Christ, and eventually, the concept of justice.

Dr. Simuț's main purpose in analysing and evaluating these sermons is to show the links which connect Hooker's rich theological insights with the martyrs of the Protestant faith in England, such as William Tyndale, John Frith, Robert Barnes, Thomas Cranmer, John Bradford and John Foxe. I think that Dr. Simuț is very convincing when he points to the many parallels existing between the theological views which Hooker carefully elaborates and the passionate insights of his predecessors. Thus, I must say that I am impressed by Dr. Simuț's analytical power, which gives the reader a comprehensive entrance into Hooker's world. I am equally certain that his analysis will give rise to a broader perspective on Hooker's theology within the wider reception of his thought in contemporary religious culture. For the same reason, however, I doubt that Hooker's significance can or should be restricted to the Reformed tradition, as generally claimed nowadays. Being a Catholic theologian, I can easily recognise and appreciate many Catholic starting-points and trains of thought in Hooker's doctrine of salvation. A careful study of the Council of Trent and the recent *Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, issued by the Vatican and the Lutheran World Federation (1999), will show that the differences are not insurmountable. Dr. Simuț's rich study has only strengthened this conviction.

Prof. Dr. Nico Schreurs
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is always rewarded by spending my time with my children, Ezra and Lara. I dedicate this book to both of them in full admittance that it would have been infinitely more difficult for me to write this book without their neverending smile, joy, and love.

Corneliu Simuț
Oradea, July 2005

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1. Reading Richard Hooker Today: A Historical Study

Richard Hooker (1554-1600) is best known for his *Lawes of the Ecclesiasticall Politie* which were written towards the end of his life.¹ In the four hundred years since his death, the vast majority of books about Hooker focused on his *Lawes* to the detriment of other works which he penned during his early career. Hooker's early works are not so elaborate as his later *Lawes* and they are considerably shorter. Unlike his *Lawes*, which is made up of eight separate books, most of Hooker's early writings are in fact sermons which he delivered as part of his pastoral ministry. Generally known as "Tractates and Sermons", they include *The Two Sermons Upon Part of S. Iudes Epistle* (1582-1583), *A Learned and Comfortable Sermon of the Certaintie and Perpetuitie of Faith in the Elect* (1585), *A Learned Discourse of Justification, Workes and How the Foundation of Faith is Overthrown* (1586), *Master Hooker's Answer to the Supplication that Master Travers Made to the [Privy] Counsell* (1586),² and *A Learned Sermon of the Nature of Pride* (1586).³

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- 1 In his last years, Hooker also wrote some responses to various attacks on the *Lawes*. For instance, he wrote a response to *A Christian Letter*, published anonymously in 1599 (allegedly by a group of Puritan opponents who accused him of disseminating teachings which are contrary to the *Thirty-Nine Articles*). Later on, Hooker decided he should write a thorough defence of his *Lawes*. This work, now called *The Dubling Fragments*, was left unfinished as he died after a short illness in 1600. For details, see Nigel Voak, *Richard Hooker and Reformed Theology: A Study of Reason, Will, and Grace* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 10.
 - 2 This is not a sermon but it helps us understand how Hooker clarified Travers's accusations. In his *Answer*, Hooker explains what he meant by some teachings from previous works.
 - 3 The Folger edition also includes the following writings within Hooker's "Tractates and Sermons": *A Remedy Against Sorrow and Feare, delivered in a funeral Sermon, John 14:27*, *A Sermon of Richard Hooker Found in the Study of the late Learned Bishop Andrews* (which seems not to have been written by Hooker), and three sermon fragments on *Matthew 27:46*, *Hebrews 2:14-15*, and *Proverbs 3:9-10*. These will not be treated in this book because they cannot be dated accurately and they are not essentially relevant to Hooker's doctrine of salvation. See W. Speed Hill (ed.), *The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker*, vol. V ("Tractates and Sermons"), hereafter referred to as *Works V*.

The purpose of this book is twofold: firstly, to investigate Hooker's sermons with a critical eye on his doctrine of salvation, which is a recurrent theme throughout his early theology, and secondly, to identify the connections between Hooker's doctrine of salvation and the most important theologians of the early Reformation in England. Thus, it will be argued that Hooker continues the soteriological tradition of the early English Reformation represented by William Tyndale, John Frith, Robert Barnes, Thomas Cranmer, John Bradford and John Foxe. My interest in the connection between Hooker's understanding of salvation and the writings of the first English reformers was triggered after reading an article by Arthur P. Monahan published in 1997.⁴ In this article, Monahan attempts to prove Hooker was a Counter-Reformation (namely Catholic) political thinker. This could mean that while Hooker's theology may still be Protestant, his political ideas are Catholic. Monahan, however, is not saying this. What he does say is that Anglicanism, of which Hooker is a respected representative, "retained the greatest resemblance in theology, ecclesiology and institutional structure to the medieval Church of Rome from which it was separating."⁵ By affirming this, Monahan is trying to argue that Hooker's entire theology, which evidently encompasses his soteriology, is more Catholic than Protestant. This would imply that Hooker's doctrine of salvation is not in line with the teachings of the early English reformers. To counter Monahan's argument, I will identify the most important dogmatic connections between the soteriology of the early English reformers and Hooker's doctrine of salvation as reflected in his sermons.

Before doing this, however, it is necessary to understand how Hooker has been perceived and how his works have been read since he died in 1600.⁶ To begin with, it should be highlighted that in recent years the scholarly interest in the theology of Hooker increased significantly after the completion and publication of the Folger Library Edition of his works almost a decade ago, under the general super-

4 Monahan, "Richard Hooker: Counter-Reformation Political Thinker", in A. S. McGrade (ed.), *Richard Hooker and the Construction of Christian Community*, 203-218.

5 Monahan, "Richard Hooker: Counter-Reformation Political Thinker", 218.

6 It should be said here that this introductory chapter contains some information from my previous work on Hooker. For details, see Corneliu C. Simuț, "Continuing the Protestant Tradition in the Church of England: The Influence of the Continental Magisterial Reformation on the Doctrine of Justification in the Early Theology of Richard Hooker as Reflected in his *A Learned Discourse of Justification, Workes, and How the Foundation of Faith is Overthrown* (1586)", PhD thesis, Aberdeen (2003), 4-35, or Corneliu C. Simuț, *Richard Hooker and his Early Doctrine of Justification. A Study of his Discourse of Justification* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 1-12.

vision of Professor W. Speed Hill.⁷ This excellent critical edition was preceded by another voluminous publication also edited by Professor Speed Hill, which marked the beginning of academic investigation of Hooker scholarship in the early 1970s.⁸ Since then, some very important and well-informed studies in Hooker scholarship have been written by W. Cargill Thompson,⁹ Egil Grislis,¹⁰ Robert Eccleshall,¹¹ Nigel Atkinson,¹² Bruce Kaye,¹³ Damian Grace,¹⁴ John Gascoigne,¹⁵ and Nigel Voak.¹⁶ Within the last four hundred years, however, investigations focused on major interpretations of Hooker, and the pattern of research was either historical or philosophical. The various attempts to offer a clear picture of what has been written in Hooker scholarship have scanned the whole history of research in this field, and finally tried to come up with a special image of Hooker and his place within the history of human thought. Accordingly, Hooker has been generally viewed as either a distinguished theologian or a reputed philosopher. What kind of theologian Hooker is, and to which particular theological tradition he belongs, is still a debated issue. Likewise, the attempts to classify him as philosopher or theologian and to incorporate him within a specific philosophical or theological movement are equally uncertain.

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- 7 W. S. Hill (ed.), *The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker* (1977-1993).
 - 8 W. Speed Hill (ed.), *Studies in Richard Hooker. Essays Preliminary to an Edition of His Works* (Cleveland: The Press of Case Western Reserve University, 1972).
 - 9 W. D. J. Cargill Thompson, "The Philosopher of the 'Politie Society'. Richard Hooker as a Political Thinker", in W. Speed Hill, *Studies in Richard Hooker: Essays Preliminary to an Edition of His Works* (Cleveland: The Press of Case Western Reserve University, 1972), 3-76.
 - 10 Egil Grislis, "The Hermeneutical Problem in Richard Hooker", in W. Speed Hill, *Studies in Richard Hooker: Essays Preliminary to an Edition of His Works* (Cleveland: The Press of Case Western Reserve University, 1972).
 - 11 Robert Eccleshall, "Richard Hooker and the Peculiarities of the English: The Reception of the *Ecclesiastical Polity* in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries", *History of Political Thought* II/1 (1981), 63-117.
 - 12 Nigel Atkinson, *Richard Hooker and the Authority of Scripture, Tradition, and Reason: Reformed Theologian of the Church of England?* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1997).
 - 13 Bruce Kaye, "Authority and the Shaping of Tradition: New Essays on Richard Hooker", *The Journal of Religious History* 21/1 (1997), 3-9.
 - 14 Damian Grace, "Natural Law in Hooker's *Of the Laws of the Ecclesiastical Polity*", *The Journal of Religious History* 21/1 (1997), 10-22.
 - 15 John Gascoigne, "The Unity of Church and State Challenged: Responses to Hooker from the Restoration to the Nineteenth-Century Age of Reform", *The Journal of Religious History*, 21/1 (1997), 60-79.
 - 16 Nigel Voak, *Richard Hooker and Reformed Theology. A Study of Reason, Will, and Grace* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 1-21.

It is not within the goal of this chapter to produce a strictly final classification of Hooker according to the general categories of theology or philosophy. This chapter is a historical approach to Hooker scholarship, which also intends to foster critical insights on what has been produced regarding Hooker's life and work. It should be mentioned, however, that its investigation is highly selective. The finality of this historical survey is to investigate the most pre-eminent works that saliently emerge as decisive within Hooker scholarship. Accordingly, Hooker scholarship has been divided into three major views on Hooker's life and work. Firstly, the traditional view of Hooker's thought fosters the classical, non-critical image of Hooker, and it might be historically settled between Hooker's death and the first two decades of the twentieth century. Secondly, the modern view of Hooker's thought is fundamentally analytical and partially corrects the traditional view of Hooker, especially in historical and biographical matters. This ranges historically until the 1970s, when a particular interest in Hooker suddenly developed.¹⁷ Thirdly, the contemporary view of Hooker's thought is mainly critical of Hooker's works and even of his motivation for writing, and it is probably the most prolific in divergent interpretations of Hooker, not necessarily in academic research. Nevertheless, all these three views of Hooker offer a diverse and comprehensive image of the most important works that investigated Hooker's life and thought.

1.1 The Traditional View

The traditional view of Hooker's thought is primarily a reference to all the works that appeared immediately after his death at the end of the sixteenth century until the first two decades of the twentieth century. Even though the analysis encompasses a long period of time of over three centuries, it should be taken into account as a whole because the works that were published within these historical boundaries share at least two common characteristics. Firstly, the works are essentially neither analytical, nor critical regarding Hooker's thought but rather descriptive. Secondly, there is a bias towards a certain degree of appre-

17 This interest in Hooker is obvious, especially with the appearance of Speed Hill's *Studies in Richard Hooker: Essays Preliminary to an Edition of His Works* (Cleveland: The Press of Case Western Reserve University, 1972).

ciation of Hooker, despite the controversial aspects of his theology, and the diverse theological positions of the writers that tackled it.

There are mainly four different perspectives on Hooker's thought in the traditional view. Each of them corresponds to the specific interest of the writer approaching Hooker's thought, and displays a large variety of themes that the English reformer diligently analysed in his work.

1.1.1 The Historical Perspective

The historical perspective within the traditional view of Hooker's thought is concerned mainly with the person and the work of the reformer. Biography and bibliography were the very first interests of the writers who tried to portray an image of Hooker. This traditional portrait of Hooker lasted for more than three centuries without being seriously challenged.¹⁸ On the other hand, this particular traditional historical perspective generally produced a rather sympathetic and non-critical image of Hooker, which seems to be the feature of the whole traditional view.

Thomas Fuller was the first historian who wrote about Hooker.¹⁹ His story is characterised by imprecision and a very simplistic description of Hooker's life and work. In his *Church History*, Fuller argues that Hooker was a bachelor, but he changes his mind a few years later, when he wrote in his *Worthies* that Hooker's wife and children "were neither to his comfort when living, nor credit when dead."²⁰ He offers the classical image of Hooker, a "stone-still" theologian, "unmovable in his thoughts and opinions."²¹ His style of preaching was long and complicated, and it had "many closes till the end of the statement."²² Fuller discloses an obvious preference for Travers, Hooker's puritan opponent, who is described in a much more

18 The first serious attempts to question and solve the uncertainties and the erroneous information regarding Hooker's life and work were written only in the first half of the twentieth centuries. For more detailed information, cf. C. J. Sisson, *The Judicious Marriage of Mr. Hooker and the Birth of "The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity"* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940), and David Novarr, *The Making of Walton's "Lives"* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1958).

19 Thomas Fuller, *The Church History of Britain, from the Birth of Jesus Christ until the Year MDCXLVIII*, vol. I-III (London: William Tegg, 1868). The first edition, however, was published in 1655.

20 Thomas Fuller, *Worthies*, vol. I, 1662.

21 Thomas Fuller, *The Church History of Britain*, vol. I, 141.

22 *ibid.* 141.

vivid imagery. Accordingly, Travers had a “graceful utterance, harmonious gestures, and a clear methodology of preaching.”²³ Nevertheless, it seems that Fuller’s description of Travers proved to be another classical image that other historians and theologians later confirmed.²⁴

John Gauden’s *Life of Hooker* is a rather misleading piece of historiography than a plain narrative of his thought. There are some things that must be mentioned about Gauden, as they help a better understanding of his work. John Gauden was a strange prelate, who had an ambiguous ecclesiastical career.²⁵ He apparently was unscrupulous and ambitious. He claimed a bishopric, then wanted to move to Exeter, and eventually complained of his stay at Exeter.²⁶ Accordingly, it is not very difficult to believe Shirley’s description of Gauden as being completely untrustworthy and a blackmailer.²⁷ Gauden had Low Church positions, but he was appointed bishop in the High Church. Thus, he published Hooker’s *Book VII* to show that he was in favour of the High Church doctrine.²⁸ Gauden’s *Life* is a historiographical work, which contains literary defects, historical inadequacy, and a vulgar manner of writing.²⁹ The need for a better informed and a more urbane historical work became apparent soon after Gauden published his book.

Shortly after the appearance of Gauden’s work, Gilbert Sheldon, Archbishop of Canterbury, commissioned another historical work that was supposed to correct Gauden’s misleading attempt. This task was undertaken by Izaak Walton, who provided an idealistic and romantic

23 *ibid.* 142.

24 Fuller is interested in the debate between Hooker and Travers. After Hooker was appointed Master of the Temple, it normally happened that Travers would confute in the afternoon what Hooker preached in the morning. Fuller explains the reasons that triggered the controversy between Hooker and Travers. Firstly, Hooker held that the Church of Rome was a true Church, even though not perfect and pure. Secondly, he said that those who lived and died in it, i.e. the Church of Rome, might be saved if they repented of all their sins committed out of ignorance. Travers’ answer did not cease to appear, and he determinedly stated that the Church of Rome was not the true Church, and those who live and die in it cannot be saved if they think they should earn justification by works.

25 F. J. Shirley, *Richard Hooker and Contemporary Political Ideas* (London: SPCK, 1949), 45.

26 *ibid.* 47.

27 *ibid.* 48.

28 David Novarr, *The Making of Walton’s “Lives”* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1958), 222.

29 C. J. Sisson, *The Judicious Marriage of Mr. Hooker and the Birth of “The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity”* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940), x-xi.

picture of Hooker.³⁰ Walton is exceedingly preoccupied to portray Hooker as a child-like English divine, a sort of an abstract-minded and gentle-hearted human being, who elegantly dismisses any controversy, and blissfully confutes his opponents. Walton's *Life* is prone to a boastful description of the High Church, and an obvious negativistic understanding of Puritan theology and practice.³¹ In spite of his lack of objectivity, Walton made some useful corrections to Gauden's *Life of Hooker*. Even if these corrections seem theologically insignificant, they are historically vital for a proper understanding of Hooker. Accordingly, Walton corrected Gauden's picture of Hooker's mediocrity in college, he strongly defended Hooker's last three books (he actually attempted to provide a reasonable High Church perspective over the theological ambiguity of these books), and he lastly stated Hooker's position from a High Church standpoint.³² Even if Walton's *Lives* had been the standard historical description of Hooker's life and work for over three centuries, it was becoming increasingly criticised by the beginning of the twentieth century,³³ until it was definitively replaced by David Novarr's book, which became the authorized *Life* of Hooker.³⁴

J. H. Parker describes the historical conflict of late sixteenth century England and tries to place Hooker within it, by explicitly stressing the

30 Izaak Walton, *The Lives of Dr. John Donne, Sir Henry Wotton, Mr. Richard Hooker, Mr. George Herbert, and Dr. Robert Sanderson* (London: 1825). The first edition was published in 1664.

31 Even if Walton himself admits that among the Puritans, whom he calls nonconformists, there might be some people of good intentions, the rest are "possessed with a high degree of spiritual wickedness" or "with an innate restless pride and malice." Walton, *The Lives*, 192.

32 Novarr, *The Making of Walton's "Lives"*, 226. For a totally different view, I am indebted to Professor Diarmaid MacCulloch, who strongly disagrees with Novarr. For instance, in a discussion we had on the 5th February 2001, Professor MacCulloch said that Gauden, for all his faults, had a more accurate vision of Hooker than Walton. As far as Walton is concerned, in Professor MacCulloch's opinion, it is a mistake to say that Walton strongly defended the last three books of Hooker's, because, on the contrary, Walton made every effort to cast doubt on their reliability in their existing form.

33 Cf. Richard Hooker, *Of the Laws of the Ecclesiastical Polity*, vol. I-II (Books I-IV), Introduction by Christopher Morris (London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd, 1907). Christopher Morris is not particularly enthusiastic about Walton's work, which he describes as "unreliable gossip" that "generally moulded his subjects to fit a ready-made pattern" (vi). Neither is Douglas Bush very sympathetic to Walton. He considers that Hooker's life described by Walton is the result of error and prejudice. Walton is also charged "with excessive idealization and with recreating five different men", among whom one is Hooker. Cf. Douglas Bush, *English Literature in the Early Seventeenth Century 1600-1660* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), 223-224.

34 Novarr, *The Making of Walton's "Lives"*.

divine working in having Hooker as protector of Anglican theology. Parker's preface to some *Selections from the Fifth Book of Hooker's "Ecclesiastical Polity"* is very simplistic in description and it offers a devotional argument rather than a historical one for Hooker's theological activity. Parker also provides us with a firm Anglican position that evidently reflects a certain fear of Calvinism. Actually, Parker writes of the danger of a turning towards Calvinism. According to Parker, if it were not for Hooker, "we might have been where Geneva and Holland are now."³⁵ Another important statement of Parker will be taken over and used as a theological foundation for the essential interpretation of Hooker. This position infers the fact that Hooker took the "good and middle way", obviously in response to the so-called "extreme" positions of both Calvinism and Roman-Catholicism.

1.1.2 The Political Perspective

The political perspective within the traditional view of Hooker's thought is primarily focused on a specifically political reading of Hooker's entire theology. This political reading is either applied to the whole of Hooker's system or it depicts certain areas of it, mainly his view of the Church and of Church government, the relation between Church and state, and the theory of a Christian society. Again, the perspective is neither analytical nor critical, but rather descriptive or even apologetic. The theologians that upheld this political reading wanted to justify Hooker's views within their original historical context and advance them as prescriptive for the contemporary religious settlement.

The Whig interpretation of Hooker promotes both a radical and a moderate Erastian position. Bishop Benjamin Hoadley, a supporter of the radical Erastian interpretation, suggests that, according to Hooker, the Church is entirely a human institution which should be organised by the state. The moderate Erastian interpretation, promoted by Bishop William Warburton, is based on the presupposition that Church and state are fundamentally separate. However, an alliance is permitted between the Church and the state, although the state is not allowed to control the temporal affairs of the Church. Warburton criticised Hooker, who says that the Church and the state are one and the same society. Warburton was convinced that the state is an entirely secular

35 J. H. Parker, *Selections from the Fifth Book of Hooker's "Ecclesiastical Polity"* (Oxford: 1839), vii.

institution, and criticises Hooker who claimed that the state, like the Church, is an instrument of the divine will, and the goal of the state is identical to the goal of the Church. The Whigs strongly opposed the Tory party, which upheld a hierarchical conception of society, within which the king was appointed by divine right. Such an interpretation makes the Church subordinate to the state and to the decision of the king. Thus, royal supremacy is the authority which coordinates even the life of the Church.³⁶

W. E. H. Lecky's stated intention is to talk about Hooker as a political thinker.³⁷ According to Lecky, Hooker is "the ablest [divine] that Protestantism has ever produced." Moreover, Hooker's works are featured by a "splendid eloquence", "a tendency to elevate the principles of natural light", and a "desire to make the Church independent from the state."³⁸ Lecky briefly describes Hooker's *Lawes* as having two main aspects. Firstly, the *Lawes* examine the origins and functions of government, and secondly, they explain the way government normally functions. As far as the first aspect is concerned, Lecky notices that Hooker hardly ever appeals to the Church Fathers or Scripture, and uses his own reason to elaborate his argument. Regarding the second aspect, Lecky enumerates briefly some basic ideas, which Hooker displayed in his argument, and which form his fundamental view of civil government.³⁹ According to Lecky, Hooker is an exponent of modern liberalism (politically, not theologically). It was Hooker who came up with the idea that the power of the government should be greatly restricted. The government he points to should be constitutional

36 For details about the Whig and Tory interpretation of Hooker, see John Gascoigne, "The Unity of Church and State Challenged: Responses to Hooker from the Restauration to the Nineteenth-Century Age of Reform", *The Journal of Religious History* 21/1 (1997), 63-66, and Robert Eccleshall, "Richard Hooker and the Peculiarities of English: The Reception of the *Ecclesiastical Polity* in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries", in *History of Political Thought* II/1 (1981), 95-101.

37 W. E. H. Lecky, *History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe*, vol. II (London: 1865), 198.

38 *ibid.* 198.

39 Lecky starts by noticing that, according to Hooker, individuals in a society created kings to govern them. In the beginning, royal power was absolute, which caused misery for all people. Individuals then created laws so that everybody should observe his own duty. The king receives his authority from people, but this does not mean that the office of the king is less sacred; on the contrary, it is sacred because everything men do, they do according to the divine right. At the same time, the king is subject to the law, and must conform to it, as the power of enacting laws belong to the people. Finally, tyranny appears when the king tries to enact all laws for his own purposes; thus invalidating all laws. See *ibid.* 199.

(and this is a direct reference to the king's office), as this political system is superior to despotism.⁴⁰

Though primarily concerned with examining Hooker as the first great systematic English theologian, Alfred Barry nevertheless extensively describes the principles of the Elizabethan settlement, which places him within the political perspective to Hooker, rather than within the theological perspective.⁴¹ According to Barry, Hooker's political thinking has three main goals. Firstly, Hooker's goal is to criticise Presbyterian government, even if the attack is directed more against Rome, not against Geneva. In this context, Hooker writes about Church discipline, confession, and absolution. The auricular confession and private absolution are not a sacrament of penance. Secondly, Hooker's goal is to defend Episcopalian government. The promises and blessings of the Church belong to it as a whole. No rule of Church polity is described in the Holy Scripture. Accordingly, the Church has the power to determine its own polity of government. From the very beginning, the polity of Church government has been Episcopalian. Episcopalian government is divinely instituted, as bishops are invested with power from above. Thirdly, Hooker's goal is to define the right function of royal supremacy. The Church and state are not two separate bodies, they are coextensive. The member of the commonwealth is necessarily a member of the Church and vice-versa. Both in Church and state, royal supremacy is a constitutional authority. All laws of the Church must be passed by the whole society (the clergy in the Convocation, and the laity in the Parliament). The crown must express its assent to both clergy and laity.⁴²

Christopher Morris has a manifold interest in Hooker, but for the time being it is his political considerations regarding Hooker's thought that should be at issue.⁴³ Morris primarily notices that Hooker "had a strong sense of historical development",⁴⁴ an idea that is crucially

40 *ibid.* 200-201.

41 See Alfred Barry, *Masters of English Theology* (London: 1877), 22-46. However, Barry is also interested in Hooker's theology. Main theological themes tackled by Barry: the doctrine of laws in the Church, the doctrine of the harmony of the natural and of the supernatural in truth and grace, the epistemology (the doctrine of the knowledge of God), the theological distinction between transitory and permanent in the Holy Scripture, worship in the Church of England, and the doctrine of the sacraments.

42 *ibid.* 47-57.

43 One can easily notice that, beside his political interest, Christopher Morris discusses Hooker both theologically and literally. See Richard Hooker, *Of the Laws of the Ecclesiastical Polity*, vol. I-II (Books I-IV), Introduction by Christopher Morris (London: J. M. Dent & Sons LTD, 1907), vii-ix.

44 *ibid.* ix.

important for his political system. This means that Hooker respected the past and tried to establish a way to reform the changeable things in the Church, the so-called "things indifferent." Morris remarks that there is a need of a Sovereign in Hooker's theology. This necessity of a Sovereign derives out of the possible rise of anarchy in any given society. Hooker supported and developed the idea of a constitutional monarchy that must accept the rule of law. This proves to be utterly important, because the king or the queen has his or her power by law.⁴⁵ In his attempt to counter the ecclesiology of the Puritans, Hooker opposed their vision of the Church as a "gathered Church" of the elect. This is definitely an important ecclesiological view, because such a definition of the Church separates Church and state in two different directions, but for Hooker, it was vital that the Church and state should be the same. According to Hooker, the membership in the commonwealth is the same as the membership in the Church. Then king and Parliament are representative for both state and Church.⁴⁶ Morris remarked that Hooker had tried to reconcile Protestant theology with the tradition of natural law (this can be traced back to the Catholic scholasticism and to the Stoic philosophy). According to Morris, Hooker accepted the Reformation and retained some Renaissance beliefs, such as the confidence in human reason.⁴⁷

Francis Paget is another theologian whose interest in Hooker is manifold, but his political view of Hooker is representative for the whole scholarship in this field.⁴⁸ According to Paget, Hooker investigates the political and religious situation in England, namely that many people accepted the Puritan religion, together with its system of discipline. Hooker sketches two main reasons for this situation. Firstly, the understanding of the controversy between the Anglican and the Puritan Churches requires a special training and knowledge, so many uninformed people fell prey to the Puritan position. Secondly, the method used by the Puritans to convince the multitudes does not give credit to their final conviction. Hooker's opinion is that the Puritans informed the people of the mistakes and faults existing in England, and all these mistakes and faults were attributed to political and Church government. Accordingly, the

45 *ibid.* x.

46 *ibid.* xi.

47 Richard Hooker, *Of the Laws of the Ecclesiastical Polity*, vol. I-II (Books I-IV), Introduction by Christopher Morris (London: J. M. Dent & Sons LTD, 1907), xii.

48 Beside the political theory of Hooker, Paget's concern also encompasses the theology of the English reformer. See Francis Paget, *An Introduction to the Fifth Book of Hooker's Treatise of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907), 119-122.

Puritans held that Church discipline was thought to be the only help against these evils. Ultimately, from the Puritan perspective, English men and women were deeply persuaded that resisting the Puritan system of Church discipline meant resisting the will of God.⁴⁹ At a political level and from the Anglican perspective, resisting the Puritan system of Church discipline would have meant adherence to the specifically Anglican Church government and to the English political settlement. Again, politically the fundamental principle of Hooker's treatise is that societies have the right to impose and enforce laws on the individual (by means of the Convocation and the Parliament, and with the approval of the king or queen). Nevertheless, Paget draws attention to the fact that this right is limited and cannot overcome express revelation and demonstrative proof.⁵⁰

1.1.3 The Theological Perspective

The theological perspective within the traditional view of Hooker's thought is probably the most important. Although evidently biased and appreciative of Hooker, the theological perspective nonetheless offers important insights into Hooker's entire system of thought. The most important issues of the theological perspective are the doctrine of episcopacy, the doctrine of Scripture, the doctrine of salvation (with special reference to justification and sanctification), the doctrine of authority, and the doctrine of the sacraments (especially the Eucharist). As all perspectives within the traditional view, the theological one is not highly critical or analytical, but its main feature is the description of Hooker's theology so that it might be easier to be read and understood. A basic characteristic of the theological perspective is the attempt to ascribe Hooker's theology to the wider dogmatic framework of the Church of England.

The name of Richard Hooker is linked inextricably to the Oxford Movement. The most prominent theologian of the Oxford Movement who showed an obvious interest in the works of Richard Hooker was John Keble. Theologically, his most important characteristic is the attempt to accommodate Hooker's theology to the High Church claims. Keble was a High Church clergyman of the Oxford Movement and he earnestly tried to describe Hooker's theology so that it might appear totally Anglican, or at least dogmatically closer to the English Church

49 *ibid.* 117-119.

50 *ibid.* 122.

than to the Calvinist doctrine.⁵¹ Keble's methodological enterprise was a diligent attempt, but it did not produce the expected results as later scholarship plainly contends.⁵² Keble is primarily interested in the doctrine of the divine origin of episcopacy, in the doctrine of the Eucharist, and in the doctrine of salvation. He does not hesitate to say that Hooker belongs to "the same school of ecclesiastical opinions" that say that "episcopacy grounded on apostolical succession was of supernatural origin and divine authority, whatever else was right or wrong."⁵³ Keble explains that in Hooker's theology the Eucharist is based on the incarnation of the Son of God.⁵⁴ Accordingly, Hooker

51 On the relationship between Hooker and Calvin, Keble is very pessimistic: "He [i.e. Hooker] saw in Calvin a disposition to treat irreverently, not only the creeds, the sacred guards provided by the Church for Christian Truth, but also that holiest Truth itself, in some of his articles." John Keble, *The Works of that Learned and Judicious Divine, Mr. Richard Hooker, with an Account of his Life and Death by Izaak Walton*, vol. I-III (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1836), lxxviii.

52 "John Keble has been at great pains to prove that he defended the divine origin of Episcopacy, in opposition to the claim of Cartwright for the divine origin of the Presbytery. That Keble has succeeded none will admit but those who are of Keble's party." Cf. John Hunt, *Religious Thought in England from the Reformation to the End of Last Century. A Contribution to the History of Theology*, vol. I (London: Strahan & Co. Publishers, 1870), 57. For further details, cf. Alfred Barry, *Masters in English Theology* (London: 1877), 4; Novarr, *The Making of Walton's "Lives"*, 215; Stanley Archer, "Hooker on the Apostolic Succession: The Two Voices", *The Sixteenth Century Journal* XXIV/1 (1993), 73; Atkinson, *Richard Hooker and the Authority of Scripture, Tradition, and Reason*, xii-xv.

53 Keble, *The Works*, lxxv.

54 Another theologian who is concerned with Hooker's doctrine of the Eucharist is Darwell Stone. There are some key aspects of the Eucharist that Stone identified in Hooker. Firstly, Hooker rejects transubstantiation. He does not say whether or not the body and blood of Christ are present in the elements of the Eucharist or whether or not they are only communicated to those who receive the sacrament. Anyway, affirming or denying transubstantiation is not important for Hooker. What is important is that the elements of the Eucharist are the body and blood of Christ to the recipient. Secondly, regarding the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, this should not be sought in the sacrament itself, but in the recipient. The real presence of Christ is described in terms of the participation of the body and blood of Christ, which is the true fruit of the Eucharist. Thirdly, the importance of the Eucharist is due to the true and real participation of Christ, who imparts Himself as mystical head to all the recipients, and who gives the Holy Spirit to all the Christians that are united with him for their sanctification. Fourthly, Stone notices that in Hooker the Eucharist has a sacrificial aspect, although Hooker repeatedly claims that there is no sacrifice in the ministry of the Church. Nevertheless, this sacrificial aspect is not a reference to a real sacrifice, but to a sacrifice of thanksgiving. However, this sacrifice of thanksgiving is of the same importance as the ancient sacrifices of the Mosaic Law. For the whole discussion on the Eucharist, see Darwell Stone, *A History of the Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist*, vol. I-II (London: Longmans and Co., 1909), 239-247.

upholds the ubiquity of Christ's glorified body in the elements of the Lord's Supper, which sounds more Lutheran than Calvinist. He also agrees with the real presence of Christ's body at the Eucharist.⁵⁵ Concerning soteriology, Keble has Hooker distinguishing *in re* between justification and sanctification, when in reality, *in tempore*, the two processes cannot be separated, for they take place simultaneously. Furthermore, Hooker uses the phrase "imputed righteousness" and employs a dual hermeneutic, arguing that Paul speaks more of the righteousness of justification while James the righteousness of sanctification.⁵⁶ Finally, Keble notices that English theology was greatly influenced by Hooker: "...the gradual but decisive change which English theology underwent in the hands of Hooker."⁵⁷

The theologians of the Oxford Movement claimed that the state had abandoned its traditional function of being the Church's protector. The Church must, therefore, reaffirm its autonomy and break all ties with the state. As the Oxford Movement was essentially anti-Erastian,⁵⁸ Keble insisted that the English state promoted liberalism which was hostile to the true religion of the Church. Thus, Keble supports the Episcopal government of the Church and uses Hooker to prove his ideas. Keble notices that Hooker did not highlight the importance of bishops because he gave too much power to the monarch as fundamental representative of the union between the Church and the state. It is evident that the monarch represents the whole Church and overrules even the authority of the Apostles of Christ. Though this position is thoroughly Erastian, Keble tries to accommodate Hooker to his own theology and explains that there were not fundamental differences between Hooker's view and his own. He argued that Hooker ascribed such a great power to the monarch only because he had believed in the complete communion between the Church and state. Based on Hooker's thought, Keble himself was not entirely determined to say that the Church should divorce the state.

Unlike Keble, his follower, Hurrell Froude, plainly said that the Church should separate from the increasing liberal state. Thus, he openly admits that he disagrees with Hooker and urges the clergy to take on a more visible role. Froude regarded the Anglican tradition as being too submissive to the state; the Church should separate from the

55 Keble, *The Works*, lxxx.

56 *ibid.* xcvi-xcix.

57 *ibid.* ciii.

58 Peter Nockles, "The Oxford Movement: Historical Background 1780-1833", in Rowell, Geoffrey (ed.), *Tradition Renewed. The Oxford Movement Conference Papers* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1986), 24-50.

state and assert its individual identity. John Henry Newman had an even more radical perspective. He suggested that one should abandon the Church of England, which is irremediably embedded with Erastianism, and turn to the Catholic Church of Rome. Less combative, Eduard Bouverie Pusey promoted the idea that the union between Church and state might be revigorated if the power of Parliament were to diminish and the power of the monarch to increase; the monarch, however, must be a Christian.⁵⁹

For Hooker, the Church was more than the clergy: Hooker intended to make reference to the Church in its spiritual aspect, the English people at prayer. Thus the civil magistrate could exercise authority in the Church as truly as any bishop. Hooker stated that the Church has the right to choose its own form of government (namely, non-Episcopalian Churches are true Churches) but he also said that the Holy Spirit instituted bishops. The logical inference (which Hooker did not have in mind) is that the Church has no power to change what God had ordained. No human legislation can, in any way, change what God had decreed by his divine law. In this respect, the theologians of the Oxford Movement believed Hooker's doctrine should be revised because, according to Hooker's teachings, "the Church Establishment looked less like an eternal embodiment of divine law than a historical compromise which was now being swept away."⁶⁰ However, the Church has its own authority given by Christ's commission to the apostles, the very source of the apostolic succession. The civil power does not have any jurisdiction over the Church. In the end, concerning the doctrine of salvation in particular, it should be mentioned that the theologians of the Oxford Movement conceded that Hooker's sermon on justification was not in line with their own teaching.⁶¹

John Hunt investigated the theological foundation of Hooker's doctrine of the Church. According to Hunt, the basic ecclesiological principle in Hooker is that the Church must be free from state, because the polity of the Church must be free. Another important idea in Hooker ecclesiology is that the rites and ceremonies of the Church must be observed, even though they might be corrupted. Nevertheless, the order established in the Church is an expression of divine order.

59 For details, see Gascoigne, "The Unity of Church and State Challenged: Responses to Hooker from the Restoration to the Nineteenth-Century Age of Reform", 72-75.

60 S. W. Sykes, and S. W. Gilley, "'No Bishop, No Church!' The Tractarian Impact on Anglicanism", Geoffrey Rowell (ed.), *Tradition Renewed. The Oxford Movement Conference Papers* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1986), 123-125.

61 Peter B. Nockles, *The Oxford Movement in Context. Anglican High Churchmanship, 1760-1857* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 257.

Accordingly, episcopacy is an ancient way of governing the Church. By contrast, presbytery is a modern way of governing the Church. In this context, both ways of Church polity seem to coexist, and Hooker is not a fierce advocate of uniformity, according to Hunt.⁶² However, should Hooker adhere to episcopacy, which he did, it was because of his belief that he was faithful to the ancient Church order that was divine and rational. In this respect, Hooker's natural theology is at issue, as he advocated the natural light, but not to the detriment of Scripture. The use of reason has its limits, because it is firstly the supernatural light that presupposes the natural – a fundamental idea in Hooker's theology.⁶³

It has been already noted twice that Morris has a manifold interest in Hooker's theology. I mention him again because his reading of Hooker is performed both politically and literally, on the one hand, and theologically, on the other hand, as it shall be proved next. Morris' theological reading of Hooker encompasses mainly the doctrine of the Church. According to Morris, Hooker earnestly tackles some essentials of Anglicanism. Firstly, the Church of England continued many practices of the Roman Church that were not found in the Holy Scripture. From this perspective, and according to the Gospel of Christ – but not to the doctrine and tradition of the Church – the word “presbyter” was more relevant than the word “priest.” Episcopacy is a custom established by the Church, and it may be changed should it be proved not to work. Nevertheless, all the above-mentioned things are “indifferent” and therefore they do not affect the salvation of human souls as the essentials of Christianity always do. In Hooker's opinion, it was desirable to follow all these things indifferent according to the Church

62 Hunt, *Religious Thought in England*, 60.

63 This principle of Hooker's theology is extended to his doctrine of Scripture. According to Hunt, in Hooker's theology, Scripture enlightens reason, which means reason is effective, but needs assistance from Scripture. Thus reason is a valid theological method, but it must be used within certain limits and we should always take into account the fact that Scripture helps reason, not vice-versa. Although Hooker defends reason and the light of nature, it is characteristic of his theology to maintain that God has not given men such a natural reason that could lead *per se* to the knowledge of salvation. It is only the light of Scripture that informs us about salvation. The ultimate truth can be found only by means of supernatural revelation, namely Scripture. Reason and the light of nature teaches us our duty, but is unable to teach us anything about salvation. On the other hand, according to Hooker, we know that Scripture is the Word of God by reason. Thus epistemologically and in strictly human terms, reason is the first, and Scripture is the second. There is no Gospel without reason. In this respect, the first outward reason to believe Scripture is the authority of the Church. For further information on Hunt's interpretation of Hooker, see *ibid.* 60.

tradition, authority and reason. Obviously, the Puritans did not approve of this argument, and Hooker tried to offer a basic response. Firstly, we should not rely on Scripture alone. Beside Scripture, there are other means of knowledge and of discovering God's law and will. Unless these means of knowledge contradict reason, they should be used in the theological enterprise. Reason was given by God to help at a better understanding of his revelation. This is the reason why some of the Church practices have been kept through history, namely because they conformed to reason.⁶⁴

Having identified a political reading of Hooker in Paget's work, as already mentioned, his theological reading of Hooker approaches the question of authority in theology with special reference to Church discipline. Regarding the authority of Scripture, Paget argues that Hooker's position is not very well developed and it consists of saying that the Holy Scripture does not contain any information on a certain prescribed polity of Church discipline. Therefore, according to Hooker, is it curious why some adopted it as if it were of divine origin. Regarding the authority of the primitive Church, Hooker contends that the Puritans returned to apostolic authority without any trust in the doctrine of the Church that followed the apostolic times. Historically, however, the appeal to apostolic practice and Church government is futile, because the knowledge of those times is partial and thus imperfect. Accordingly, the return to apostolic time in terms of any given practical matter is an attempt that ultimately becomes theologically futile. Hooker's conclusion is that the practice of the apostolic time cannot be applied to contemporary issues, because the historical context has changed. Regarding the authority of contemporary theologians, Hooker is not particularly interested in defending his position by using their arguments. One of the theologians that Hooker frequently cited was Calvin, whose idea of Church discipline was accepted – at least according to Hooker – because his theology gained the sympathy of many people.⁶⁵

For L. S. Thornton, Hooker was not an Erastian because he believed in a divinely-appointed ministry.⁶⁶ Within Hooker's general theology, the doctrine of the incarnation is of fundamental importance because Christ inaugurates a new type of humanity. Regarding Hooker's soteri-

64 For further details, see Richard Hooker, *Of the Laws of the Ecclesiastical Polity*, vol. I-II (Books I-IV), Introduction by Christopher Morris (London: J. M. Dent & Sons LTD, 1907), viii ff.

65 Paget, *An Introduction to the Fifth Book of Hooker's Treatise of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907), 119-120.

66 L. S. Thornton, *Richard Hooker. A Study of his Theology* (London: SPCK, 1924), 91.

ology, the guarantee for the union of Christ with the believer is brought about through the crucial role that faith plays and also the hypostatic union between humanity and divinity in Christ.⁶⁷ Thornton believes that Hooker took great care in seeing the work of Christ in terms of his role as mediator, a role that stresses the union that exists between Christ and the justified believer. Thornton claims that Hooker grounds salvation in the person and work of Christ, but even though God takes the initiative in man's salvation, man must still display a rational faith or a faith that informs his reading of Scripture.⁶⁸ Even though the justified believer shares a union with Christ, the nature of neither the believer nor Christ changes. Christ remains God, eternal and unchanging, while man remains a human being.⁶⁹

1.1.4 The Literary Perspective

The literary perspective within the traditional view of Hooker's thought makes particular reference to the style of Hooker's entire work. It is within this specific framework that Hooker's books and treatises are regarded as an utterly significant part of the English Church literature, and generally as a part of the whole of English literature. The literary perspective takes into discussion the literary style and the literary devices of Hooker's work. The theologians that took this approach are very sympathetic to and appreciative of Hooker's contribution to the development of English literature overall.

Thus, Benjamin Kennicott's book is a summary and a commentary of Hooker's Fifth Book of the *Lawes*. He does not display a particular bias towards a literary discussion of Hooker's work, but shows nonetheless some brief general remarks concerning the entire *corpus* of Hooker's books. According to Kennicott, the author of the *Lawes* is "learned", and "the subjects of the books are amply discussed." In addition, "the nature of the subjects is profound", and the books are deemed to be "a celebrated defence of the Church of England."⁷⁰ Kennicott holds the opinion that Hooker's work is characterized by "deep and solid reasoning", "important arguments", "perspicuity and force", and a "spirit of exalted piety". As far as the language is concerned, this is "pure, solemn, and energetic". Moreover, it contains

67 *ibid.* 54-61.

68 *ibid.* 26.

69 *ibid.* 66-67.

70 Benjamin Kennicott, *An Analysis of Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity being a Particular Defence of the Church of England* (London: 1819), iii.

the "seeds of eternity", and it "will live till the last fire shall consume all learning."⁷¹

Richard Cattermole manifested a specific interest in Hooker as literary writer. Cattermole holds the opinion that Hooker's books and treatises form a "great theological work, of a highly literary character in our language."⁷² Cattermole is also very appreciative of Hooker because, from a strictly literary viewpoint, the English reformers did not have a distinguished literary style before the reign of Elizabeth.⁷³ As far as Cattermole is concerned, Hooker overcame Bacon in literary skill: "The style of Hooker is richer, more uniformly sustained, more homogenous than Bacon's, more nearly the best English of all periods." And again, "his vast learning is more thoroughly fused, and more effectively taken up by the force of his own genius."⁷⁴ As Cattermole is interested in Hooker's works as English Church literature, but English literature nonetheless, he notices some important aspects. Firstly, the spirit of the age required authoritative quotations from ancient sources, but Hooker seldom quotes such authorities. Secondly, Hooker's work reflects a patristic bias. Thirdly, one essential mark of Hooker's work is the use of reason.⁷⁵ However, the last three books of Hooker bear the mark of inferiority compared to the first five. Cattermole is obviously influenced by the traditional view of Hooker's "unhappy marriage", so he blames Hooker's wife for the lower literary craftsmanship of the last three books.⁷⁶

Contrary to the trend of his contemporary scholarship, George Philip Krapp is not interested in discussing Hooker from the standpoint of theology or philosophy. According to Krapp, Hooker's work has the characteristics of the Elizabethan epoch: firstly, it is a work with largeness of conception and of execution, and secondly, it is a work "of the age of giants, worthy of its place in the rank with the writings of

71 *ibid.* iv.

72 Richard Cattermole, *The Literature of the Church of England Indicated in the Selections from the Writings of Eminent Divines: With Memoirs of Their Lives, and Historical Sketches of the Times in Which They Lived*, vol. I-II (London: 1844).

73 *ibid.* 1. According to Cattermole, it was only Archbishop Parker and Bishop Jewell that qualified as "literary craftsmen" during the reign of Elizabeth I.

74 *ibid.* 22.

75 "Majestic, but not unfamiliar, calmly pouring out the light of reason, but often touched with that imaginative colouring which, in men on genius, is the natural utterance of reason." *ibid.* 22.

76 "They were destroyed, through the stupidity and connivance of his wife, shortly after his decease." *ibid.* 23.

Bacon, Shakespeare, and other great Elizabethans.”⁷⁷ It is distinguished of Hooker that his technique of style is to be commended, and that he wrote his entire work in order to be understood by the average English mind. Krapp advanced a rather peculiar opinion regarding Hooker’s work as literary enterprise, as he noted that “Hooker was consciously and intentionally literary.”⁷⁸ The dignity of his style may also be found in other major ancient writers like Aristotle, Cicero, Chrysostom, Augustine, and Aquinas. Hooker wrote in the “epigrammatic and aphoristic brevity of Bacon,” and mainly worked with concepts, not with images. This is one of the reasons why his work is so difficult to read and understand.⁷⁹ Krapp’s approach to Hooker’s work is important because it explains many characteristics of Hooker’s style, which are of Latin origin. Hooker’s English topic very much resembles of the Latin topic, and many literary devices are the actual translation of Latin formulae.⁸⁰ Krapp finds a reasonable excuse for Hooker, and writes that he “was not following a model of English style, but constructing one,” even if he does not coin new words according to the normal practice of the day.⁸¹ On the contrary, Hooker accepted the English language of the day, and used the then existing literary resources in order to obtain the best possible result.⁸²

As mentioned before, Morris has a multiple interest in Hooker which extends to the literary aspect of the latter’s work.⁸³ In his introduction to one of Hooker’s editions of the *Laws*,⁸⁴ Morris makes a brief description of Hooker’s style, and openly appreciates his work: “He did as much perhaps for English prose as he did for the Anglican

77 George Philip Krapp, *The Rise of English Literary Prose* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1915), 142.

78 *ibid.* 145.

79 *ibid.* 145.

80 Some literary devices of Latin origin used by Hooker: the omission of the verb or of all verbs, except the past participle; the separation of the verb and the past participle, and the placing of the latter at the end of the sentence or clause; the predicate nominative precedes the governing word; an adjective or substantive is placed at the end of the sentence; the adjective follows the noun it modifies. For detailed examples regarding these literary devices, see Krapp, *The Rise of English Literary Prose*, 146-147. For the influence of Latin grammar in Hooker’s works, see Vickers, Brian, “Hooker’s Prose Style”, in Richard Hooker, *Of the Laws of the Ecclesiastical Polity*, A. S. McGrade and Brian Vickers eds. (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1975), 41-59.

81 Krapp, *The Rise of English Literary Prose*, 148.

82 *ibid.* 149-150.

83 Morris’ manifold interest in Hooker consists of the fact that he reads Hooker politically, literally, and theologically.

84 Richard Hooker, *Of the Laws of the Ecclesiastical Polity*, vol. I-II (Books I-IV), Introduction by Christopher Morris (London: J. M. Dent & Sons LTD, 1907).

religion and for political philosophy.”⁸⁵ According to Morris, Hooker never lost control of sentences and of argument. Having a remarkable bias for cadence, Hooker uses emphatic devices that underline the main ideas of his statements. Hooker’s style is melodious, his discourse is urbane, and is characterized by a delicate irony.⁸⁶

To conclude, the traditional view of Hooker’s thought has four main perspectives that shape the classical image of Hooker’s life and work. Even if these four perspectives are not primarily analytical or critical, the resulting descriptive methodology covers a wide range of important aspects of Hooker’s entire work. The historical perspective tackles the biography and bibliography of Hooker, as it is especially focused on personal facts and the development of his work within the historical context of the age. The historiographical writings that pertain to this perspective are neither highly academic, nor altogether historically accurate, but they still offer valuable information on Hooker’s life and work. The political perspective encompasses specific issues to do with public life in the Elizabethan period. Matters of Church government, the relation between Church and state, English society as Christian society, and royal supremacy are all aspects of Hooker’s political thought. The main idea that takes shape after a careful consideration of the political perspective on the traditional view of Hooker is that the English theologian was a Renaissance man, a forerunner of political liberalism, rather than an insightful successor of scholastic theology. The theological perspective encompasses certain issues that are obviously part of Hooker’s theological system. One might argue that polity and theology are interwoven in Hooker, but ultimately they are distinct parts of his thought. The divine origin of episcopacy, the authority of Scripture, the mystery of the sacraments, the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, the righteousness of justification and sanctification, the general question of authority, and the profoundly human character of Church discipline are all theologically different from any other major aspect of Hooker’s thought. The literary perspective is somehow unexpectedly present within the larger framework of the discussions regarding Hooker’s thinking, because it investigates his works not as being particularly a part of English theological literature, but as being a specific part of the whole of English literature. The literary inquiry over Hooker’s works makes reference to the style and literary devices used in the composition of Hooker’s prose as revelatory for his exquisite linguistic

85 *ibid.* vii.

86 *ibid.* vii-viii.

training, especially in Latin. It was this traditional view that shaped Hooker scholarship till almost the second half of the twentieth century. In spite of its powerful image of Hooker, the traditional view finally gave up in the face of the serious analytical research that emerged as an earnest reassessment of Hooker's entire thought.

1.2 The Modern View

In the last two decades of the first half of the twentieth century, the traditional view of Hooker underwent a sudden challenge, and a modern, specifically analytical trend in Hooker scholarship appeared. The novelty of the modern view of Hooker's thought consists of questioning the very authorities that established the traditional view of Hooker. Even if it only lasted for just under forty years (namely until the early 1970s), the modern view of Hooker's thought shook the very foundation that the previous scholarship had laid over more than three hundred years. The modern analytical view is not only descriptive, but also prone to further investigation in all areas of Hooker scholarship. More or less sympathetic to Hooker's person and work, the modern view was methodically built by theologians that were not highly critical of Hooker's motivations in writing his work. Nevertheless the earnest character of their research reflects an objective desire to display Hooker's thinking, especially as a representative part of human investigation.

The modern view of Hooker's thought mainly encompasses a reassessment of the traditional view in almost all its major approaches: historical, political, and theological. The traditional literary perspective has not been challenged, which might confirm the efficiency of some older theological and literary investigations. Nevertheless, a new perspective comes at this stage and it analyses the philosophical aspect of Hooker's thought.

1.2.1 The Historical Perspective

The historical perspective within the analytical view of Hooker's thought reassesses the traditional view by means of solid historical research and of new documentary sources. The modern historical perspective is backed up by new material regarding both the biography and the bibliography of Hooker, and it represents a correction of the

traditional historical perspective. Old data must give way to new evidence and over more than forty years a more reliable and trustworthy image of Hooker has emerged, in the light of newly discovered historical documents.

C. J. Sisson's work is the first radical reassessment of the traditional view of Hooker. Sisson is interested not merely in discussing Hooker, but he carefully investigates the history of the biography and bibliography of Hooker. This was clearly a difficult task, as he had to dismiss many of Walton's claims that laid the basis for a firmly history-rooted view of Hooker. Even though he was working with new valid documentary sources found in the Court of Chancery (the so-called Chancery records), Sisson tried to keep the fragile balance between the Walton's story, and the new available information. Much of the old information used by Walton was not genuine,⁸⁷ argues Sisson, and it was only the Chancery records that could have challenged the traditional picture of Hooker. It was not Walton's fault that his work was inaccurate (unlike Gauden and his books).⁸⁸ The Chancery records revealed a totally new picture of Hooker's married life that radically shifted the traditional view of his "unhappy marriage". Thus Sisson traces the history of Hooker's family for many years after his death and investigates the life and actions of most members of Hooker's family.⁸⁹ In this respect, the entire analytical investigation of Sisson is based on his deep conviction that Hooker was a man that "loved the truth and pursued it." Moreover, the "beauty of his life" and the "attempt to furnish the truth in important matters" for him was eventually confirmed by all new documentary sources.

Unlike Sisson, Peter Munz does not reflect a special interest in Hooker's biography but in Hooker's thought. The actual history of Hooker's life is not the main concern of Munz, who focuses primarily on placing Hooker within the larger framework of the history of thought. In this respect, Munz presents a detailed study of some major

87 In the same period of time, Sisson was not alone in challenging the historical accuracy of Walton's *Lives*. Douglas Bush noted that Hooker's life described by Walton is the result of error and prejudice. According to Bush, Walton's High Church informants wanted to discredit the last three books of Hooker, and they did this by inventing the story of Hooker's "unhappy marriage". Discrediting Hooker directly would have been conspicuous, argues Bush, so they thought of destroying the reputation of Hooker's wife. For further details, see Douglas Bush, *English Literature in the Early Seventeenth Century 1600-1660* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), 223-224.

88 C. J. Sisson, *The Judicious Marriage of Mr. Hooker and the Birth of "The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity"* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940), xi.

89 For further details, see *ibid.* 17-44.