

# **Jerome Zanchi (1516–90) and the Analysis of Reformed Scholastic Christology**

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## Preface

This is a study of the Christology of Jerome Zanchi (1516–90), a leading 16<sup>th</sup> century reformed scholastic theologian. Scholars have examined aspects of his theology, but no one has treated his Christology at any length. Filling this gap in the study of reformed scholastic theology in general and Christology in particular, I have adopted a method that is somewhat atypical for reformation studies. This is not primarily a work in church history, historical or systematic theology, although it draws on and should be of interest to practitioners of these disciplines. Primarily, it is a work of philosophy of religion or what is sometimes called philosophical theology.<sup>1</sup> While modern philosophy of religion has largely focused on the existence of God and language about ‘God’, in a rather generic sense, philosophical theology analyses theological concepts in their particularity, rooted in various religious traditions. When approaching Christology in a historical thinker, such as Zanchi, a philosophical analysis should not neglect problems of context and historiography. Such issues must be part of the analysis. But a mere historical study will not deliver a proper understanding of Zanchi’s ideas (no more than a historically uninformed philosophical analysis will). I will try to show that a philosophical engagement with Zanchi brings greater understanding of his Christology. Moreover, this study does not stop at the level of explication: it also critically evaluates the findings. Thus, I hope the chosen approach and topic will be equally useful to students of reformation and post-reformation theology and history as to students of contemporary systematic and philosophical theology.

The text as a whole is bound together by doctrinal topics, themes and trajectories important to the 16<sup>th</sup> century Christological debates as well as by

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1 See e.g. Marcel Sarot, *God, Possibility and Corporeality* (Kampen: Kok Pharos Publishing, 1992), ch. 1; Thomas P. Flint and Michael Rea eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophical Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Oliver D. Crisp and Michael C. Rea eds., *Analytic Theology: New Essays in the Philosophy of Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009) and my review essay, “Från religionsfilosofi till analytisk teologi”, *Theofilos* 4/1 (2012), 74–88.

philosophical issues and arguments. It divides into three parts, comprising two chapters each. The first part is concerned with research in reformed scholasticism and Christological method, the second part with the hypostatic union and the third part with the consequences of the hypostatic union.

In the first chapter, I situate Zanchi in contemporary research into reformed scholasticism. I give an account of what I will call ‘analytic Christology’ and why it is relevant to the present study. In the second chapter, I contextualize Zanchi’s Christology, historically and theologically. I discuss the sources and context of Zanchi’s Christology and characterize it as catholic, scholastic and reformed.

In the second part, on the hypostatic union, I begin by discussing Zanchi’s view of the virgin birth. More specifically, I look at his view of the process of Christ’s hominization. I first conclude that his views are *ad hoc*, at odds with his general anthropology, and will therefore jeopardize Christ’s true humanity. Then I offer some correctives to Zanchi’s views, arguing for a different application of hylemorphism, the general framework in which his anthropology is worked out. In the fourth chapter, I analyse Zanchi’s uses of the part-whole and soul-body *similes* for the hypostatic union. What emerges is a rather ambiguous account of the hypostatic union. At the end of this chapter, I offer further correctives, this time to Zanchi’s assumed metaphysical framework in order to better accommodate the sort of claims he wants to make about the hypostatic union.

The central theme in the debate between the Lutheran and the reformed theologians, the communication of properties, is treated in the third part. Chapter five begins by discussing an interpretation of Martin Chemnitz’ three genera (*tria genera*) of the communication of properties, with special attention to the third and most controversial genus, the majestic genus (*genus maiestaticum*). Then, I introduce two reformed principles that Zanchi used, traditionally expressed as *extra calvinisticum* and *finitum non capax infiniti*. I explicate the metaphysical background to the *non capax*-principle via the distinction between divine simplicity and creational composition. I try to show that the debate was complicated by the fact that Chemnitz, contrary to Zanchi’s assumption, also held a version of the *non capax* and that some of Zanchi’s arguments, therefore, miss the point. After a brief excursion on Calvin’s view on the *non capax* (concluding that there is no case of the ‘Calvin against the Calvinist’ thesis), I return to the interpretation of Chemnitz. I argue that Chemnitz’ reluctance to use scholastic terminology led him to find other ways of expressing the third genus. The soul-body *simile* was perhaps the most central feature of Chemnitz’ Christology, particularly through the patristic concept of *perichoresis*. However, I find this strategy lacking in plausibility and thus defend Zanchi’s argument against Chemnitz’ reliance on the soul-body *simile* as a support to the third genus.

In the sixth chapter, I analyse the most controverted issue in the debate: ubiquity. The chapter begins with giving an account of three notions of presence (circumscriptive, definitive and repletive). I expound the rather thorny background to these notions in terms of the Aristotelian category of ‘place’ (which is a concept, central to the project of physics, conceived as the science of change). I then show that Zanchi tends to argue against a sort of generalized version of ubiquity. This generalized version of ubiquity is founded on what I call the ‘inseparability thesis’, originating in Luther. Secondly, I examine the ways in which the argument for ubiquity receives a characteristically voluntarist qualification in Chemnitz to the effect that Christ’s humanity can be located at many places at the same time if Christ so wills (*multi-voli-presence*). I will argue that there is a sense in which also Chemnitz ascribes to ubiquity. This double-sidedness in his Christology makes it rather difficult to assess his actual position as well as the force of Zanchi’s objections. I conclude that Chemnitz’ notion of ubiquity is significantly weaker than is often assumed by Zanchi and that Zanchi, therefore, sometimes fails to present a relevant argument against ubiquity. Thirdly, I will look at Christ’s ascension and his sitting at the right hand of God the Father, as this was one of the ways in which the Lutherans defended some version of ubiquity. I explore what sense ‘heaven’ had, and offer some explorative strategies for solving dilemmas arising from different views of heaven. Finally, I will look at two scholastic arguments in Chemnitz for multi-location and reconstruct a possible Zanchian response to them.

In the end, I reflect on the value of this study and suggest some trajectories for future research.



## **Part I: Analysis and Reformed Scholastic Christology**



## Chapter One: Reformed Scholasticism and Analytic Christology

In my view, all other forms of inquiry rest upon metaphysical presuppositions—thus making metaphysics unavoidable—so that we should at least endeavour to do metaphysics with our eyes open, rather than allowing it to exercise its influence upon us at the level of uncritical assumption. – Jonathan Lowe.<sup>1</sup>

### 1.1 Introduction

Scholasticism is known for its explicit use of philosophical tools and notions in the service of theology. So is its modern relative, philosophy of religion or philosophical theology. In this chapter I shall argue that there are convergences between these two fields of study, which might be exploited and make a positive contribution to both. More specifically, I shall focus on Christology in the reformed scholastic, Jerome Zanchi, and lay out a method of analysis I shall call ‘Analytic Christology’. To that end I will, in the first section of this chapter, survey the current state of research in reformed scholasticism and place Zanchi within it. I shall show that, within the study of reformed scholasticism, a significant historiographical shift has occurred in the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, I shall argue that the new departure needs to be supplemented with a more philosophical approach. In the second section, I try to give an account of what such a philosophical approach entails.

### 1.2 Approaches to Reformed Scholasticism

A notable historiographical shift has occurred in the study of reformed scholasticism in the last thirty years or so. Idealist presuppositions had shaped research in reformed scholasticism from the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century to mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. In theological texts and systems from the reformation and post-reformation era, many scholars attempted to find a ‘central dogma’ (*Zentraldogma*), an all-governing idea, which was supposed to control the whole theological system or an individual theologian’s thinking. This scholarship more or less assumed that the central dogma for the reformed scholastics was predestination. All

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1 *The Possibility of Metaphysics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), v.



aspects of reformed theology tended to be conceived in the light of predestination as a sort of key that unlocks the whole reformed system.<sup>2</sup>

Proponents of the old approach tended to posit: (i) a (then) commonly accepted dualism between the humanism of the first and second generation of reformers and the scholasticism of their heirs,<sup>3</sup> (ii) a strong assimilation or continuity between the reformed scholastics and the medieval scholastics, (ii) a strong separation from or discontinuity with the early reformers and (iv) that the scholasticism in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century was a distortion of the original “piety” or “Christocentrism” of Calvin and (v) that the first and second generation of reformers for whom they assumed that piety and Christ function as the “authentic” central dogma.<sup>4</sup> A relevant example of this approach is Otto Gründler’s study of Zanchi’s doctrine of God and predestination. He saw in Zanchi a perversion of the “christocentric” and pastorally motivated theology he attributed to John Calvin. Gründler argued that Zanchi went back to medieval patterns of thought, that of “metaphysical causality”, where Christ and biblical revelation had no real place.<sup>5</sup>

As a criticism of the central dogma approach, a new direction was sought from the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century onwards.<sup>6</sup> The new wave of scholarship began to see the

2 So for instance, Brian G. Armstrong, *Calvin and the Amyraut Heresy: Protestant Scholasticism and Humanism in Seventeenth Century France* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969); Basil Hall, “Calvin against the Calvinists” in Gervase E. Duffield ed., *John Calvin*. Courtenay Studies in Reformation Theology (Appleford: Sutton Cortenay Press, 1966), 12–37 and Alexander Schweizer, *Die Protestantischen Centraldogmen in ihrer entwicklung innerhalb der Reformierten Kirche*, vol. 1 (Zürich, 1854). There was some variation in how this idea applied to the material. Some scholars thought that predestination is the central dogma of reformed theology as a whole whereas other thought it only pertains to theology in the scholastic period after Calvin. Whatever the differences between these strands both asserted that predestination was antithetical to a genuine care for Christian spirituality and essentially a detached predestinarian system.

3 Building on the views of for instance Jacob Buckhardt from his *Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien* (Leipzig: Phaidon-Verlag Wien, 1860).

4 This use of the central dogma idea goes (at least) back to Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834) and the German ‘mediating theology’ (*Vermittlungstheologie*) of the 18th and 19th centuries. Christ was made the cognitive foundation for theology and not, as traditionally was the case, Scripture. See Richard A. Muller, “A Note on “Christocentrism” and the Imprudent use of such Terminology”, *Westminster Theological Journal* 68 (2006), 253–60 and Annette G. Aubert, *The German Roots of Nineteenth-Century American Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 42–3, 63–5.

5 *Die Gotteslehre Girolamo Zanchi und ihre Bedeutung für seine Lehre von der Prädestination* (Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1965) based on his english dissertation, “Thomism and Calvinism in the Theology of Girolamo Zanchi (1516–1590)” (Th.D. Dissertation, Princeton Theological Seminary, 1961).

6 It has been presented and defended in several publications. For instance Willem van Asselt, “Reformed Orthodoxy: A Short History of Research” in Herman Selderhuis ed., *Companion to Reformed Orthodoxy*, 11–26 and Richard A. Muller, *After Calvin: Studies in the Develop-*

continuity-discontinuity with medieval scholasticism and the early reformation (with their “pure” humanism) as a much more complex business than the central dogma approach had suggested. The awakened awareness of historiographical problems was in part due to scholarly work done in (late) medieval thought in relation to the reformation. For example, Heiko Oberman<sup>7</sup> showed that the early reformers were profoundly shaped by medieval scholasticism and that there is significant continuity between them that needs to be taken more seriously. Similarly, Paul Oscar Kristeller<sup>8</sup> showed that there is much more continuity and overlap between humanism and scholasticism than had been assumed thitherto. And Charles B. Schmitt<sup>9</sup> has demonstrated that the humanists’ use of philosophical concepts drawn from the Aristotelian tradition is much more pluriform than the central dogma approach assumed. Building on the work of scholars such as Oberman, Kristeller and Schmitt, Richard A. Muller has for the past 30 years taken a leading role in the joint efforts of the renewal of historiography in post-reformation studies. He has tried to explicate the complexities in the educational milieu in reformed thought, the function of literary genres and interconnection between different theological and philosophical concepts.<sup>10</sup> In contrast to the central dogma thesis, Muller concludes, arguing tirelessly from the sources, that the reformed scholastics were much more eclectic – theologically, philosophically and methodologically – than previously had been assumed.

Characteristic of this new perspective is that ‘scholasticism’<sup>11</sup> is described as a

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*ment of a Theological Tradition* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 63–102.

- 7 Heiko Obermann, *The Harvest of Medieval Theology: Gabriel Biel and Late Medieval Nominalism* (3rd edn.; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2000); *The Dawn of the Reformation: Essays in Late Medieval and Early Reformation Thought* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1992).
- 8 *Renaissance Thought and its Sources* (New York: Comumbia University Press, 1979).
- 9 *The Aristotelian Tradition and Renaissance Universities* (London: Variorum, 1984).
- 10 The most important work is Muller’s four volume *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics: The Rise and Development of Reformed Orthodoxy, ca. 1520 to ca. 1725* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1987–2003). It encompasses: Prolegomena (vol. 1); the Doctrine of Scripture (vol. 2); the Doctrine of God (vol. 3) and the Doctrine of the Trinity (vol. 4). See also Carl R. Trueman and R. Scott Clark eds., *Protestant Scholasticism: Essays in Reassessment* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1999). We should note that the idealist tendency has not completely weaned off in reformation studies. See e.g. Alistar McGrath’s repetition of the central dogma thesis in ch. 10 of his *A Life of Calvin* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1995).
- 11 For more on scholasticism see Willem J. van Asselt and Eef Dekker, “Introduction” to their *Reformation and Scholasticism: An Ecumenical Enterprise* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 2001); Willem J. van Asselt, “The Theologian’s Tool Kit: Johannes Maccovius (1588–1644) and the Development of Theological Distinctions in Reformed Theology”, *Westminster Theological Journal* 28 (2006), 23–40 and “Scholasticism Protestant and Catholic: Medieval Sources and Methods in Seventeenth Century Reformed Thought” in Judith Frishman, Willemien Otten and Gerard Rouwhorst eds., *Religious Identity and the Problem of Historical*

method for theology and not as a school of a particular kind; or, alternatively, a methodology that by some kind of inevitability will shape theology in a particular (and undesirable) way. Scholasticism, understood as a mode of academic discourse, is not antithetical to humanism since they were often co-existing in the institutions and the curricula of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Characteristically, Muller says that 'scholasticism'

well describes the technical and academic side of [the] process of the institutionalization of Protestant doctrine [...] It is a theology designed to develop a system on a highly technical level in an extremely precise manner by means of careful identification of topics, division of these topics into their parts, definition of the parts, and doctrinal or logical argumentation concerning the divisions and definitions. In addition, this school-method is characterized by a thorough use and technical mastery of the tools of linguistic, philosophical, logical, and traditional thought. The Protestant orthodox themselves use the term "scholastic theology" as a specific designation for a detailed, disputative system, as distinct from biblical or exegetical theology and discursive, ecclesial theology.<sup>12</sup>

Muller contends that, besides conceptual analysis, scholasticism made good use of a wide range of authorities (*autoritas*) from the bible, the philosophers and the church fathers. This seemingly liberal handling of sources and genres, often against the intention of the quoted authority on one or several issues, can be puzzling to modern readers not acquainted with the particular use of sources in scholastic texts. Instead of quoting for the sake of a particular person or school, the scholastics tended to quote a source for the sake of the truth of the statement.<sup>13</sup> Simply quoting or making use of terminology from, for instance, Aquinas does not make one a Thomist. This was not the way the reformed scholastics cited their sources. They were not keen to use "-isms" in the way modern academics have tended to do.

The diverse character of post-reformation reformed theology comes forth in the way it is sometimes designated by contemporary scholars by the term, 'reformed orthodoxy'. It refers to an international movement with shared confessional standards expressed in such documents as the Heidelberg Catechism, the Westminster Confession and the Canons of Dort. However, not all members

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*Foundation: The Foundational Character of Authoritative Sources in the History of Christianity and Judaism* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 457–470. Influential on van Asselt and Muller was L.M. de Rijk's work, notably his *Logica Modernum: A Contribution to the History of Early Terminist Logic*, 3 vols. (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1962–67).

<sup>12</sup> PPRD, I, 17–8

<sup>13</sup> This is referred to as "reverent exposition" in the literature. For this notion, see e.g. Martijn Bac and Theo Pleizier, "Reentering Sites of Truth: Teaching Reformed Scholasticism in the Contemporary Classroom" in Maarten Wisse, Marcel Sarot and Willemien Otten eds., *Scholasticism Reformed. Essays in Honour of Willem J. van Asselt* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010), 31–54.

of this movement adopted a scholastic style of presentation. The generations following the first and second generations of reformers such as Luther, Melancthon, Calvin and Bullinger would take on the work of codifying and defending what they perceived as true doctrine (orthodoxy). This project took on a variety of styles and genera – and the scholastic method is the closest equivalent to what we think of as academic or scientific prose, although the foundational training in conceptual analysis and logic was far more rigorous for the average early modern academic than for contemporary academics. The scholastic method was, then, not adopted as an alien add-on but was an established form of academic discourse. The context or occasion of writing and presentation determined when it was used. Naturally, then, scholasticism provided the reformed orthodox with a useful tool for the defence of theological truths when combatting theological opposition – both within the wider protestant movement (e.g. Lutherans and Arminians) and with other groups (e.g. Roman Catholics and Socinians). Rather than outmoding scholasticism, humanism added to scholastic discourse a stronger emphasis on the original sources and language in the 16<sup>th</sup> century than in medieval scholasticism. Hence, academic texts in the 16<sup>th</sup> century could sometimes mix different styles and genres, depending on the topic and context (homiletics, rhetorical, exegetical etc.), simply because they were part of the accepted academic toolbox. Typically, the dedications and prefaces of theological scholastic tracts would be written with an adorned humanist Latin style whereas the bulk of the text contained technical jargon and terminology. A patent result of this augmentation is that the reformed scholastic texts would be significantly longer than their medieval forbearers.<sup>14</sup>

The historiographical shift is also evident in Zanchi scholarship. I shall briefly review some of the significant contributions and situate my own. First, John Donnelly's work has been important in the revision of the historiographical assumptions concerning Zanchi. He has for instance analysed the similarities between Zanchi's theology with both Aquinas' and Calvin's theologies. Contrary to Gründler's one-sided "Thomist" Zanchi, Donnelly suggests Zanchi is a "Calvinist Thomist". Second, the work of Christopher Burchill is important for putting Zanchi in historical context. His biographical account (often based on archive material and correspondence) has not only given us a more nuanced view of aspects of Zanchi's theology and life, but also given researchers new avenues to explore.<sup>15</sup> Third, in his works Richard A. Muller often discusses

14 For instance, Zanchi's *De Natura Dei* closely resembles *locus de deo* in Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologia* although it is much longer. See Harm Goris, "Thomism in Zanchi's Doctrine of God" in Willem J. van Asselt and Eef Dekker eds., *Reformation and Scholasticism*, 121–139.

15 It is worth quoting him at length: "Without wishing to take direct issue on the problem of Zanchi's scholastic orientation, it is at least notable that the previous studies of both

Zanchi.<sup>16</sup> Zanchi is portrayed as an important link between the reformers and the scholastics. Fourth, there is more recent scholarship building on the works of such as Donnelly, Burchill and Muller. John Farthing has written several valuable articles dealing with exegesis, patristics and scholasticism in Zanchi's theology.<sup>17</sup> Patrick O'Banion<sup>18</sup> and Dolf Te Velde<sup>19</sup> have studied aspects of Zanchi's theology in its historical context. Recently, the first book-length study on Zanchi since Gründler's and Burchill's works was written by Kevin Budiman who examined natural law and ethics in Zanchi.<sup>20</sup>

My own study takes account of the above, but attempts to introduce a hitherto relatively neglected subject into the field in that it focuses on Christology proper in the early modern period and combines an explicitly philosophical approach with the historically oriented approach promoted by Muller and his colleagues. There are few studies in reformed scholastic Christology. Most of the scholarly efforts have been spent at methodological issues, divine attributes and actions, creation, the covenants and salvation. The existing studies in reformed scholastic Christology have generally concentrated on the work of Christ while the person and natures of Christ have been given a more cursory treatment.

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Gründler and Donnelly have been almost exclusively drawn from the *De Natura Dei*, together with its blueprint in the final section of the Strasbourg Miscellany. To suggest on this basis that Zanchi's theology led to an undervaluation of the role of Christ is simply misleading. The vast bulk, of his exegetical work, not to mention the magnum opus *De Tribus Elohim*, was concerned both to assert and to defend his interpretation of the Chalcedonian teaching on Christology. At least from a formal point of view it would seem difficult to prove any notable departure for them the position of Calvin. Certainly a proper answer to this question will presuppose a more balanced treatment of Zanchi's work as a whole." (Burchill, 'Girolamo Zanchi: Portrait of a Reformed Theologian and His Work', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 15/2 [1984], 206–7.) The present study is a partial response to Burchill's request. See also his "Girolamo Zanchi in Strasbourg, 1533–1563" (Doctoral Thesis University of Cambridge, 1979).

16 There is, for instance, a whole chapter on Zanchi's view of Christ and predestination in *Christ and the Decree: Christology and Predestination in Reformed Theology from Calvin to Perkins* (Grand Rapids, MI.: Baker, 1988, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 2008).

17 To mention some: "Patristics, Exegesis, and the Eucharist in the Theology of Girolamo Zanchi" in Carl R. Trueman and R. Scott Clark eds., *Protestant Scholasticism*; John L. Farthing, "Praeceptor Carissimus: Images of Peter Martyr Vermigli in the Published Correspondence of Girolamo Zanchi" in Frank A. James III ed., *Peter Martyr Vermigli and the European Reformations: Semper Reformanda* (Leiden: Brill, 2004) and "De coniugio spirituali: Jerome Zanchi on Ephesians 5:22–33", *Sixteenth Century Journal* 24 (1993), 621–52.

18 Patrick O'Banion, "Jerome Zanchi, the Application of Theology, and the Rise of the English Practical Divinity Tradition", *Renaissance and Reformation* 29/2–3 (2005), 97–120.

19 *The Doctrine of God in Reformed Orthodoxy, Karl Barth, and the Utrecht School* (Leiden: Brill, 2013) and "Soberly and Skillfully: John Calvin and Jerome Zanchi as Proponents of Reformed Doctrine", *Church History and Religious Culture* 91/1–2 (2011), 59–71.

20 "A Protestant Doctrine of Nature and Grace as Illustrated by Jerome Zanchi's Appropriation of Thomas Aquinas" (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Baylor University, 2011).

Hopefully a study of the person of Christ in reformed scholasticism might widen our view of reformed scholasticism.

The historiographical shift has occurred through a closer attention to the sources, language, structuring principles and the intellectual context of reformed scholastic theology. Without denying the value of all this some scholars have also found it necessary to go beyond this approach and I substantially agree with them.<sup>21</sup> They are positive to Muller's historical approach but also want to let the sources engage with contemporary systematic and philosophical theology. The usefulness of a philosophic approach, as a complement to a more historically oriented approach, is motivated, at least in part, by the fact that medieval and protestant scholastic theology is deeply embedded in philosophical concepts that are not well known to modern readers. Explication of such concepts is not merely a historical but a philosophical task. As I shall show, a historical *cum* philosophical approach can inquire in nuanced ways about the metaphysical assumptions in Christology. That is, it takes such concepts seriously *as* philosophical concepts in their theological usage and context.

Moreover, my interaction with the sources will not merely involve explication of the philosophical concepts in their theological use. I will also offer a theologico-philosophical assessment of the result. It should be noted that explication and evaluation are closely interlinked in the study though they are analytically and methodologically distinct concepts. The assessment will sometimes take the form of defence or elaboration and sometimes constructive revision of aspects of Zanchi's Christology. I have chosen to interact in a constructive and evaluative manner with the texts, because I believe that reformed scholastic Christology is not merely interesting for historians of theology, but also for contemporary constructive work in theology. A similar kind of philosophico-theological oriented methodology has become staple in the study of medieval scholastic theology and philosophy. Our understanding of medieval theology and philosophy has improved due to contemporary philosophers' scrutiny of the period. Older, idealistically motivated interpretations, which were also common in medieval

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21 Dolf Te Velde, wrote: "Muller emphasizes the need for unbiased consultation of the sources and for a keen awareness of the historical and traditional context of the theology in the era of Reformed [Scholasticism]. Nevertheless, he seems to restrict his research to the explicit statements made by the examined theologians. I think we should in addition try to analyse and assess what is going on in their arguments in a more implicit way." in *The Doctrine of God*, 42. I am not sure that Muller's work, at least from the early 1990s and on, contains the kinds of problem Te Velde thinks. The volumes of PRRD show ample evidence that he gets beyond the explicit statements and tries to uncover the philosophical underpinnings. Furthermore, connected to Muller's research is the systematic and philosophical engagement with reformed scholasticism in so-called 'Utrecht School', lead by scholars such as Willem van Asselt and Antonie Vos. For an extensive discussion of these two strands see Dolf Te Velde, *The Doctrine of God* and Martijn Bac and Theo Pleizier, "Reentering Sites of Truth".

studies (portrayed as “the dark ages”), have been replaced with an account of a dynamic and diversified period of intellectual history. More than getting a better understanding of medieval concepts and techniques, it has brought the medievists to bear on issues in contemporary philosophy and theology. Philosophers and theologians are today willing to interact with and learn from the medieval scholastics.

These developments in medieval studies have a small-scale parallel in the study of and interaction with reformed scholasticism. A study like this should not proceed without mentioning some of the main players. First, scholars, such as Antoine Vos, Willem van Asselt, Andreas Beck and Dolf Te Velde, are examples of how philosophical perspectives have expanded on the mere historical methodology.<sup>22</sup> They are part of what is sometimes referred to as the ‘Utrecht School’ and has provided a context for an interchange of ideas not merely about reformed scholasticism but also for an interaction with contemporary theology. Secondly, there are some scholars from the Utrecht School<sup>23</sup> and beyond with a closer association with the Anglo-American philosophical context such as Paul Helm,<sup>24</sup> Oliver D. Crisp<sup>25</sup> James E. Dolezal<sup>26</sup> and Sebastian Rehnman.<sup>27</sup> Indicative

22 Some of them (starting with Vos) have argued that there is a distinctly scotistic influence in reformed scholasticism. They argue that the reformed scholastics relied on so called ‘synchronic contingency’. This is exemplified for instance in the contributors to the collection by Gijsbert van den Brink and Marcel Sarot eds., *Understanding the Attributes of God: Contributions to Philosophical Theology* vol. 1. (Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang, 1999). Paul Helm and Richard Muller disagree with the idea of a scotistic influence, arguing that there is at best inconclusive evidence for this thesis. See Paul Helm, “Synchronic Contingency in Reformed Scholasticism. A Note of Caution”, *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift* 57 (2003), 207–23, the response by Andreas Beck and Antonie Vos, “Conceptual Patterns Related to Reformed Scholasticism”, *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift* 57 (2003), 223–33 and Helm’s rejoinder “Synchronic Contingency Again”, *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift* 57 (2003), 234–8; Richard Muller under the pseudonym, R.A. Mylius, “In the Steps of Voetius. Synchronic Contingency and the Significance of Cornelius Ellbogius’ Disputationes de Tetragrammato to the Analysis of his Life and Work” in Wisse et al., *Scholasticism Reformed*, 94–103.

23 For instance, Martin Bac, *Perfect Will Theology: Divine Agency in Reformed Scholasticism as Against Suarez, Episcopius, and Spinoza*. Brill’s Series in Church History (Leiden: Brill, 2010).

24 E.g. *John Calvin’s Ideas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

25 *Humanity and Divinity: The Incarnation Reconsidered* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); *God Incarnate: Explorations in Christology* (New York: T & T Clark, 2009); *Revisioning Christology: Theology in the Reformed Tradition* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011) and “Desiderata for Models of The Hypostatic Union” in Oliver D. Crisp and Fred Sanders eds., *Christology Ancient and Modern: Explorations in Constructive Dogmatics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2013), 19–41.

26 *God without Parts: Divine Simplicity and the Metaphysics of God’s Absoluteness* (Eugene: Pickwick Publication, 2011)

27 E.g. *Divine Discourse: The Theological Methodology of John Owen*. Texts and Studies in Reformation and Post-Reformation Thought (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002) and “The Doctrine of God: A Semantical Analysis” in Selderhuis ed., *Companion to Reformed Orthodoxy*.

of these is their interaction with the analytic philosophical tradition, which in different ways informs their presentations and evaluations of the reformed scholastics. For my purposes, the work of Crisp in particular is interesting, since he examines Christology in the reformed tradition. Finally, a scholar I shall be interacting with (especially in chapters 3 and 4) who deserves a special mentioning is Richard Cross. Although he is an expert on medieval scholasticism, particularly John Duns Scotus, and has only written a couple of articles directly relating to the reformation period, his work is significant for my study, not the least as a model. His *The Metaphysics of the Incarnation: From Aquinas to Scotus*<sup>28</sup> is a *tour de force* in the study of medieval scholasticism and an excellent example of what philosophical analysis can do for both historians of theology as well as contemporary philosophical theology.

Using Christology as a case study, it is hoped the present study in some measure can contribute to the renewed interest in protestant scholasticism for its own sake as well as a resource in contemporary theology and philosophy. It is now time to turn to an explanation of how I envision philosophy informing the study of reformed scholasticism.

### 1.3 Philosophical Issues in Christology

We have discussed some recent developments in the study of reformed scholasticism and Zanchi's place within it. I closed the previous section with a gesture toward a more philosophical approach to Christology. In this section I shall explore the relationship between philosophy and Christology and in the first two subsections give an account of what I call 'Analytic Christology'. In the third subsection, I discuss how we may assess what philosophy can do for Christology in order to arrive at a defensible Christological position.

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28 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002). Other notable studies in this vein are Alfred Freddoso, "Logic, Ontology and Ockham's Christology", *New Scholasticism* 57 (1983), 293–330 and "Human Nature, Potency and the Incarnation", *Faith and Philosophy* 3 (1986), 27–53; Eleonore Stump, *Aquinas* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 407–26; Michael Gorman "Uses of the Person-Nature Distinction in Thomas's Christology", *Recherches de Théologie et Philosophie Médiévales* 67 (2000), 58–79 and "Christ as Composite According to Thomas Aquinas", *Traditio* 55 (2003), 143–57.



### 1.3.1 Analytic Christology and The Chalcedonian Tradition

In this subsection I will discuss a particular mode of interaction between philosophy and Christology, which I call ‘Analytic Christology’. The term is borrowed from Richard Sturch who says:

Analytic Christology takes something about Jesus for granted. What this is may vary from one theologian to another [...] Analytic Christologists seek to work out what sort of states of affairs must hold, what propositions about Jesus Himself, about God, and about the human race must be true if their ‘basis’ is to make sense. *They are setting out to analyse the implications of their own starting-points*; aware that these starting-points, however true they may be, are only true because certain other things are true as well, they seek to work out what these latter may be.<sup>29</sup>

Sturch claims that Analytic Christology describes one of the modes in which many major theologians have approached Christology. In Sturch’s formulation, the basic idea of analytic Christology is simple: given some starting-point in Christology, other things are implied. The work of the Christologist is to analyse these implications. Now, there are several ways in which Christological implications may be worked out.<sup>30</sup> I shall argue that Chalcedon’s formula is an exercise in analytic Christology.<sup>31</sup> Indeed, it also served as a Christological starting-point for Zanchi and other scholastics, a starting-point that was worked out in a variety of ways. Let us therefore turn to a relevant section of the Chalcedonian formula, which states that the incarnate person of Christ is to be:

recognized in two natures, without confusion, without change, without division, without separation; the distinction of natures being in no way annulled by the union, but rather the characteristics of each nature being preserved and coming together to form one person and subsistence, not as parted or separated into two persons.<sup>32</sup>

The fathers of Chalcedon formulated the implications of the incarnation in terms of one person in two natures with their distinctive characteristics. They took this to be the Scriptural view of Christ. It is important to note that their use of terms such as ‘nature’, ‘person’ and ‘subsistence’ were not intended to adopt Greek philosophical terminology and concepts without discretion. Rather, writing before the advent of higher biblical criticism, they did not know of any strong division between, say, biblical and systematic theology. Although I have left

29 *The Word and the Christ: An Essay in Analytic Christology* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 1–2. Emphasise mine.

30 Sturch distinguishes between analytic, proclamatory and revisionist Christologies and gives example from history. My sense of analytic is broader and includes what Sturch called ‘proclamatory’ and ‘revisionist’. See *The Word and the Christ*, 1–6.

31 For a similar understanding see Crisp, “Desiderata”.

32 Norman P. Tanner ed., *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*. 2 vols. (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1990), I, 86.

proper exegetical issues outside of this study, I think it is important to note these differences between a contemporary and a pre-modern understanding of theology. As analytic Christologists, the fathers of Chalcedon worked out the implications of their Christological basis as found in passages like the prologue of John and Philippians 2:5–8. Hence, for Zanchi, writing from within this tradition, there was a seamless move from exegesis to dogmatic formulation, as they both were embedded in the same whole.

Further, one might say that Chalcedon has an apophatic tenor.<sup>33</sup> The formula provides a basic analysis and not a complete one, since it does not say what the incarnation is but rather what it is not. It is a longstanding practice of creedally orthodox Christologists to identify and reject false (or heretical) views of Christ, views that are perceived as reducing the reality and mystery of the incarnation. This is clearly seen in Chalcedon's four negative adverbs directed against (perceived) heresies. According to the formula, the two natures are to be recognized "without confusion, without change, without division, without separation". These are some fundamental implications of the Christological dogma the fathers of Chalcedon worked out. Had, for instance, the two natures been confused or changed into a third nature the reality and mystery of Christ would have been reduced or eliminated according to the fathers.

Chalcedon is recognised as an authoritative Christological formulation in a majority of the Christian theological traditions. However, Chalcedon is not authoritative because it says everything that can be said about Christ but because it purports to give a basic analysis of or (some of) the necessary conditions for an orthodox doctrine of Christ. Therefore, the formula is, as a starting point, open to developments.<sup>34</sup> There is work left to do for every generation of theologians. Oliver Crisp aptly says that Chalcedon is dogmatically minimalist: it does not say everything that can be said, it only express some rudimentary but important basic claims about Christ. It is not very forthcoming about what person and nature means. Chalcedonian Christology, therefore, may be consistent with a number of analyses of the underlying metaphysics of 'person' and 'nature'. The historical Christological developments give plenty of evidence to such an

33 See also Helm, *Calvin's Ideas*, ch. 3 and Sarah Coakley, "What Does Chalcedon Solve and What Does It Not? Some Reflections on the Status and Meaning of the Chalcedonian 'Definition'" in Stephen T. Davies, Daniel Kendall and Gerald O'Collins eds., *The Incarnation: An Interdisciplinary Symposium on the Incarnation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 143–63.

34 As Karl Rahner famously wrote: "Yet while [Chalcedon's] formula is an end, an acquisition and a victory, which allows us to enjoy clarity and security as well as ease in instruction, if this victory is to be a true one the end must also be a beginning," in "Current Problems in Christology" in *Theological Investigations*, Vol. 1, trans. Cornelius Ernst (Baltimore, MD: Helcon, 1963), 149.