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AMCL MoNDAY Lecture 1

# The Modern identyt in crisis

‘I believe that with the loss of God, humans lost a kind of absolute and universal system of coordinates, to which they could always relate everything, chiefly themselves. Their world and their personality gradually began to break up into separate, incoherent fragments corresponding to different, relative, coordinates…’ (Vaclav Havel, *Open Letters & Prose*, 1965-1990)

## Previously…

### The Choosing Self

#### Romanticism

#### Capitalism

#### Suspicion

### What happens when God’s Choice of Jesus confronts the Choosing Self?

## A Share in the Reality of God?

### In Christ the offers meets us, to receive a share in the reality of God and the reality of the world, together, not one without the other. The reality of God opens itself in the same way that it puts me completely in the reality of the world. However, I find the reality of the world always, already borne, adopted and reconciled in the reality of God.[[1]](#footnote-1)

### Romanticism’s Pantheist Spirituality

#### The innate connection between the artist’s soul and nature

#### Spinoza, Schleiermacher and Liberal Protestantism

### Hegel’s Lutheran Philosophy

#### ‘This unity of being and thinking…God is therefore here revealed as He is; He is there in the way that He is in itself; He is there as spirit.’[[2]](#footnote-2)

## The Lord Jesus Christ as God’s Choice for Himself?

### ‘Where do you figure in Jesus’ history?

### How significant for the God’s self-determination is the history of the world?

### Hegel also said:

#### ‘The life God and divine cognition might be expressed as a game love plays with itself. If this Idea lacks the seriousness, the suffering, the patience, and the labour of the negative, then it lowers itself into… triteness…in such a life there is neither anything serious in this otherness and alienation, nor in overcoming this alienation.’

### Is this how Nicene theology rolls?

#### Ayres – ‘a supposed dynamism in the divine life.’[[3]](#footnote-3)

#### Behr - ‘To speak of “the triune” or “trinitarian God,” the one God who is three, Father, Son and Spirit, sounds not only odd, but distinctly modalist.’[[4]](#footnote-4)

#### Athanasius vs Arius on the will of the Father

### The reality of God and the reality of the world in the context of the Choosing Self’s preference for pantheism.

### The reality of God and the reality of the world together in Colossians 1

# The share in the REality of God

## Image and Firstborn

### Col.1:13 – ‘the beloved son.’

### Ps.89:27 – ‘firstborn over all nations’

### Ps.110:1 – ‘sit at my right hand’

## Image of the Invisible God

### ‘all the fullness of deity dwelling in bodily form.’

### The Presence of God in the world

### Image, Tabernacle and Temple

### Spirit & Presence

#### The Lukan nativity

#### Sent by the Father in John

#### The Locating work of the Spirit

### The Rule of God over the world

#### The Spiritually designated and empowered human agents

## ‘Everything was created by Him…’

### Enter Arius of Alexandria

#### The Messianic Son was the crucified Jesus

#### Not the Unoriginate Creator

##### ‘God alone is self-subsistent, agennhtoß; he is immaterial, and thus without any kind of plurality or composition; he is subject to no natural processes, no emanation of diffusion of his substance…He is entirely free, rational and purposive.’[[5]](#footnote-5)

#### Arius’ Contention

##### ‘By the will of God, the Son is stably and unalterably what he is, a perfect creature, not just “one among others;” he is the inheritor of all the gifts and glories God can give him, but, since this is the effect of God’s sovereign will, the Father’s glory and dignity is in no way lessened by such a gift.’[[6]](#footnote-6)

#### Arius’ Firstborn

##### ‘Christ is the power of God and the **wisdom** of God’ (1Cor.1:24)

##### The Lord created me [Wisdom] the beginning of his ways, for his works, before the ages he founded me in the beginning. (Prov.8:22&23)(LXX)

##### ‘’He [the Son] is a creature, but not as one of the creatures; a work, but not as one of the works; an offspring, but not as one of the offsprings.’ (De Syn 16 in CA.II.16.19)(Schaff)

### But, Athanasius…

#### Another Word or Wisdom?

#### Placing ‘times’ before the Son

#### ‘God’s will is not in the things which he brings into being, but in him through whom and in whom all things made are brought to be [CA.III.30.61].’(Schaff)

#### ‘Now He says not, ‘was created’ before all things, but ‘is’ before all things. To be created, namely, is applicable to all things, but ‘is before all’ applies to the Son only.’ (Expositio Fidei – 2) (Schaff)

#### Created Wisdom?

##### Colossians 1 and Wisdom sources?

##### Proverbs anticipates the incarnation

#### Created Through Him

##### Created by Word & Spirit Ps.33:6

##### ‘For as the light enlightens all things by its radiance, and without its radiance nothing would be illuminated, so also the Father, as by a hand, in the Word wrought all things, and without Him makes nothing.’ (CA.II.18.31) (Schaff)

#### Willed With Him

##### The Father and His Wisdom

##### Generation without deliberation

##### The Word’s words as a divine self-description

#### Created for Him

##### Protology or Soteriology vs Eschatology

##### ‘Why is there something when there should be nothing?’

#### His Good Pleasure

##### For as not ‘from will’ did [the Father] begin to be good, nor yet is good without will and pleasure (for what He is, that also is His pleasure), so also that the Son should be, though it came not ‘from will,’ yet it is not without His pleasure or against His purpose.

##### The Father as the Son’s pleasure

#### The Son’s pleasure in humility and submission

##### Jn.14:31 …So that the world may know that I love the Father, I do as the Father commanded me.

##### Handing all things over to the Father

#### The Messiah’s Pleasure as the Lord

##### The general resurrection

##### The new Creation

##### The judgement of God

# a share in The Reality of the Word

## Hegel’s Reality for the World

### The first movement of Absolute Spirit is one in which spirit negates itself in producing its own other. This can be equated with the traditional analogy of the Father begetting the Son who is nevertheless of the same essence of the Father since as the negation of spirit, the spirit’s other is still spirit. Since spirit consists in unity amidst distinction, spirit overcomes this negation and differentiation - not by extinction of difference - but rather through reconciliation that produces unity in differentiation. In Western tradition this second movement comes in the analogy of the Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son as the bond of love that unites them.[[7]](#footnote-7)

### Overcoming the world?

## The World in the Father’s pleasure

### The World for the Son in the Father’s pleasure

### The world fit for the exaltation of the Son

### A world that resists the Father’s pleasure?

# conclusion

## In Him All Things Hold Together

# References

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2. G.W.F Hegel, *The Penomenology of Spirit*, ed. Terry Pinkard (Cambridge: CUP, 2018), Par.761, Kindle. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Lewis Ayres, "Into the Cloud of Witnesses: Catholic Trinitarian Theology Beyond and before Its Modern 'Revivals'," in *Rethinking Trinitarian Theology*, ed. Giulio Maspero and Robert J. Wozniak (London: Continuum, 2012). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. John Behr, "Response to Ayres: The Legacies of Nicaea, East and West," *Harvard Theological Review* 100 (2007)., 148 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Rowan Williams, *Arius*, 2nd ed. (London: SCM Press, 2001)., 98 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Ibid., 98 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Samuel M Powell, *The Trinity in German Thought* (Cambridge: CUP, 2001)., 122 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)