

**A Sociorhetorical Analysis of
Clark H. Pinnock's
Hermeneutical Approach to Biblical Materials,
with Particular Attention to the Role of Religious Experience**

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ABSTRACT

A Sociorhetorical Analysis of Clark H. Pinnock's Hermeneutical Approach to Biblical Materials, with Particular Attention to the Role of Religious Experience.

The goal of this thesis was to use sociorhetorical investigation (SRI) to study religious experience in three books by Canadian, evangelical scholar Clark H. Pinnock: *Biblical Revelation* (1971), *The Scripture Principle* (1984), and *Flame of Love* (1996), with reference to *The Scripture Principle* (2006). I focused on three essential textures layered within his texts: the inner textual, intertextual, and ideological textures. (The sociocultural texture was subsumed under intertexture.)

Through inner textual analysis, we tracked eight lemmas. They provided evidence of Pinnock's movement from biblical inspiration as a grammatical event, to inspiration as a dynamic, cultural work of God within human language, to the imperative of a spiritually-discerning listening to God's will whereby subjective truth (personal *and* corporate experience as recorded in tradition) shares validity with the external truth of the Scriptures.

Intertextual evidence, using the rhetorical feature of "topoi" (seats of argumentation), provided evidence of Pinnock's shift toward mystery, relations within the Trinity, and the mobility of the Spirit; his reasoning from a nexus that was relational and sensitive to experience; then his turn to a religious understanding of Spirit-infused theology stressing the rhetorical edges of presence, power, love, and universal redemption.

Analysis of the ideological texture led us to focus on Pinnock's form of theological reflection, and identified how his understanding of "object" changed, from that of something scientifically verified to that of something truly there that nevertheless could be understood by an interpreting subject. As a result, I discovered evidence of a significant shift in his understanding of God. Yet I also discovered that his new horizons had already been charted by the historic church. For him, the Spirit authenticates genuine experience within the medium of apostolic teaching.

SRI has proven to be a fitting analytic. Though it is still relatively new and in development, it provided a "thick" reading of Pinnock's theological reflections, allowing us to minimize bias or foregone conclusions, and ensuring a solid gathering of data. SRI has opened up a methodological resource for the broader realm of theological investigation.

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To my beloved wife,

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who made countless sacrifices out of love

for me to take this Ph. D. journey.

We are “God’s team forever!”

To my thesis advisor,

Prof. L. Gregory Bloomquist,

who was not only a director but also a mentor,

shaping my head *and* my heart.

Soli Deo gloria.

CAVEAT

In the course of writing this thesis, it came to light that the editorial involvement of Barry L. Callen in the second edition of *The Scripture Principle*, in 2006, was much greater than I had assumed. This was confirmed by Dr. Callen in conversation with him. Though my original goal was to include in my analysis the two editions of *The Scripture Principle*, I narrowed my focus to the first edition, and the other two texts by Pinnock used herein. However, the insights provided by Pinnock in his Appendix at the close of the 2006 edition proved invaluable for filling in details of his life as he reflected upon it near the close of his academic career. So it is that occasional mention is made of the 2006 edition, though it was not used in our sociorhetorical analysis, especially at the innertextual level.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

I. Aim of This Thesis

A sociorhetorical analysis of Clark H. Pinnock's hermeneutical approach to biblical materials, with particular attention to the role of religious experience.

Our aim is to contribute to the analysis of the role of spiritual experience in sacred texts, including the reading itself of sacred texts. Particularly, we will analyze the way this role is evidenced in the rhetoric of a Canadian evangelical theologian. Because of the increasing prominence of this community and its writings in Canada, as well as shifts that are presently taking place in this community, such a rhetorical study has significant contemporary relevance.

Current models in North American evangelical theology reflect the lingering grip of modern post-Enlightenment hermeneutics, which posits a neutral objective vantage point from which one can read any text. This hermeneutic has been moulded by Scottish Common Sense Realism and Baconian induction models that give primacy to evidence and arguments (Archer, Henry, Smith). These models continue to make it difficult to address the significance of a more integral hermeneutical understanding of spiritual experience. Nevertheless, new horizons in evangelical theology have begun to emerge (Bruce, Carnell, Ramm, Pinnock) that attempt to reform an evangelical hermeneutics.

Central among these evangelical reformers is the Canadian theologian Clark H. Pinnock. His work is ideally suited for examining the role that is being proposed to the wider evangelical audience concerning the place of spiritual experience in altering world views, and the inherent epistemological and ontological implications. In order to analyze the theological trajectory proposed by Pinnock's work, we will analyze the rhetorical impact of spiritual experience on his theology and reading of Scripture, and the way in which he proposed that it be understood.

We intend to conduct this examination by using the interpretative analytics of sociorhetorical investigation (SRI). SRI is uniquely designed to analyze the integration of speech and act in texts understood as rhetorical, that is, that communicate actual spiritual experience and/or reflection on it. It will enable us as interpreters to examine the various textures that are evident in Pinnock's corpus (in particular, *Biblical Revelation*, 1971; *The Scripture Principle*, 1984; and *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit*, 1996; with reference to a fourth work, *The Scripture Principle: Reclaiming the Full Authority of the Bible*, 2006, which, according to the book itself, was edited primarily by Barry Callen). It will also enable us to understand their rhetorical nature, including the sources on which Pinnock drew, and the rhetorical force, or ideological shape, of his use of them.

Examining these various textures or "layerings" of Pinnock's texts will allow us to assess (a) the critical moment in Pinnock's spiritual experience whereby he distanced himself from his previous hermeneutic; and (b) the textual reflection by which he communicated both the experience and its significance.

As reflected in Pinnock's speech-acts as a theologian, his texts are a rich rhetorical resource that have already begun to shape in a profound way the new contours of Canadian, and North American, evangelicalism. Given that SRI has to date been successfully applied to reading past authors and ancient texts (Vernon Robbins, L. Gregory Bloomquist), one of our unique contributions will be to apply SRI to the writings of this contemporary theologian. By bringing SRI forward into current rhetorical investigation, we hope to open a new horizon for this multi-disciplinary analytics that reveals the values, convictions, and beliefs embedded in any ancient or contemporary text that we read, including in today's world in which we live; that renders honest our redescription of social data in a text, including experience; that makes public our cultural critiques of a text; and that at the same time critiques the methodologies we currently use (Mack).

II. Introduction: Our Plan

Vernon Robbins identifies several textures in a text. First, there is *innertextuality* with its focus on texts with their words, clauses, and phrases. There is *intertextuality*, which holds the principal text in the foreground of interest while engaging with one or more other texts in the background. Then there is *ideology* with its acknowledgement that also in the foreground is the writer, writing to accomplish something. Ideology includes the writer's world, the writer, and the text's succession of readers (then and now). Rhetorically, because something of the writer's life is expressed in his or her work, this "expression" engages the reader either positively or negatively. An important aspect of the ideological texture is the place of the commentator (i.e., you or me reading in this thesis three works by Clark Pinnock). Yet we also cannot ignore the ideology of our author, reading, writing, and living in his sociocultural moment. Ideology holds his movement as writer in tension with the succeeding generations of readers who intersect and interpret his text(s).

Robbins provides a three-step process for exploring more deeply the nature of ideology:

- * The beginning place is analysis and interpretation of me, as writer of this sentence; and of you, as reader of this sentence.¹

- * Ideological analysis and interpretation include the text, and its role as the guest between you and me in our conversation with each other.

¹ My own social location shares several parallels with Pinnock's, though unlike him, I was born into a conservative, anti-liturgical tradition called the Plymouth Brethren. My father was a pastor in this tradition for over forty years, as was I for two decades. My evangelical heritage I made my own at an early age, and it was reinforced by years of study in conservative, evangelical institutions at the undergraduate and graduate level. Like Pinnock, I did not experience a crisis of faith in any dramatic sense; however, in the late 1980s I began to seek seriously more of the Holy Spirit's influence in my life. A turning point, mundane by many standards, was the evening in 1995 in a village south of Vienna that I was reading a book by Jack Deere, *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit: Discovering How God Speaks and Heals Today* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1993). I sensed that I could continue with my quest, with the possibility of considerable misunderstanding and even rejection within my religious tradition, or I could close the book. I chose to read on, no catastrophe developed, and I continue to seek more of the Holy Spirit. I suspect that my own journey is a primary reason that I have so resonated with Pinnock's writings in the course of this thesis. Meanwhile, the liturgical dimension of worship has opened up for me since I joined the Anglican Network in Canada, and I am now seeking ordination to the priesthood within the same.

* As a third step, we must allow other people's interpretation of the text in which we share a common interest to come to the fore.

Hence, it is "the biases, opinions, preferences, and stereotypes of a particular writer and a particular reader" that will preoccupy our time, especially in Ch. 5, "Ideology."² Yet we must not lose sight of the community to which that individual reader or writer belongs. To focus on the individual alone would take us into the realms of individual aesthetics and psychology. Rather, the individual's ideology always concerns "her or his conscious or unconscious enactment of presuppositions, dispositions, and values *held in common with other people* [emphasis added]."³ These points of view are shaped by groups which mould the more "specific perspectives on the world, society and man, and on the limitations and potentialities of human existence" at a particular time and place in history. For this reason, such commonly held points of view and values are "systematized" in the ideological texture in order to aid with their analysis.⁴ These contexts we will also explore in detail in Ch. 3, "Innertexture," and Ch. 4, "Intertexture."

In this introductory chapter, most of the information comes from sources that are "historico-critical" in genre. (Socio-rhetorical investigation will then take that in the following chapters, and place it on a stronger critical foundation, especially as concerns the theological hermeneutics and method developed by Pinnock.) This information will enable us to identify the fundamental issue throughout these pages, which is how one is a reader of the Bible. Pinnock identified himself as a pilgrim theologian, and he was wrestling with something that was life and death for him. But his question was not his alone; it was also the question of the evangelical communities with which he identified himself. In essence, it was the question of truth, of biblical inerrancy (as we will see highlighted in his controversy with the Evangelical Theological

² Vernon K. Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts: A Guide to Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation* (Valley Forge, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 1996), 95.

³ Robbins, *Exploring*, 95.

⁴ Robbins, *Exploring*, 95-96. Robbins quotes from John H. Elliott, *A Home for the Homeless: A Social-Scientific Criticism of 1 Peter, Its Situation and Strategy*. (Reprint, paperback edition with new introduction. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1990), 268. He also refers to David B. Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution 1770-1823* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press), 14.

Society). Using the tools of sociorhetorical analysis, we will identify how various critical concerns for Pinnock (like “inerrancy”) leap out of the computer analysis, and rhetorically confirm our initial theory.

A. Statement of the Problem

As mentioned above, certain models in evangelical theology favour a modern post-Enlightenment hermeneutics, Scottish Common Sense Realism, and Baconian induction models that give primacy to love of evidences and arguments.⁵ However, these models have not yet addressed the import of the integral hermeneutical feature of spiritual experience. New horizons in evangelical theology have begun to emerge (including authors such as Edward J. Carnell, Bernard Ramm, F. F. Bruce, and Clark H. Pinnock) that attempt to do so by reintegrating within their hermeneutics the role of intuition, the horizon of the reading communities, and experience.

B. State of the Question: Two Helpful Methodologies

Given that Pinnock was not a self-contained unit existing in a universe by himself, our intent is briefly to identify critical social, cultural, and religious influences that shaped his rhetorical world. The social sciences have offered several means of accounting for religious experience within the context of organized religion, of which two are helpful for our purposes.

1. Hermeneutics. “The Spirit withholds disclosure from the objectivizing gaze of the scientist who wishes chiefly to measure, graph, control, and submit reports.”⁶ A hermeneutical methodology stresses the link between the noumenal and the physical in incarnated minds, via bodies that enflesh and externalize the subjective state of those individual minds. In short, even inner religious experience sooner or later results in speech-acts in the public domain, and at that moment becomes subject to a reasoned evaluation by means of hermeneutical principles--in light

⁵ See among others Carl F. H. Henry, Gleason L. Archer, and Wilbur M. Smith.

⁶ Thomas C. Oden, *Life in the Spirit*, vol. 3 of *Systematic Theology* (San Francisco, Calif.: HarperSanFrancisco, 1992), 10.

of not only modernity's scientific method, but also of the living tradition within which any author is embedded, that which Louth will later describe in this section as "paideia." (Even Sperber admits to "ongoing causal chains [which] link the public versions of the myth available to the researcher with the mental versions hidden in the receivers' minds" (8).⁷

In the first half of the twentieth century, Ludwig Wittgenstein travelled the opposite road as Fish, moving from a reading of texts as closed to a reading as open, within the philosophical framework of formalism and anti-formalism. What Wittgenstein wanted to shake off was "ideal" language, the notion that human logic could exist in a vacuum.⁸ He would later argue that the preconceived idea of crystalline pure logic arises from thinking of language as an engine idling, rather than as doing its work. Like hard currency, what he called "language-games" cross national and ethnic boundaries. For example, it is not possible to obey a rule privately; otherwise, thinking you were obeying the rule would be the same as obeying it. Only by intersubjective testing or checks is there a way for language users to determine if a meaning is correct, or merely seems correct. (We note that this principle of intersubjectivity buttresses Pinnock's interpretation of his religious experience. In essence, he turned to Scripture for validation as *the* external criterion, and secondarily to what he called "classic" Christianity. These provided him with the "hard currency" backing of an objective critique which he then applied to his profoundly subjective experience(s).)

Hans-Georg Gadamer provides another helpful philosophical context for the nature of religious experience. His argument turns on the hermeneutical framework of two horizons: the horizon of the text, and the horizon of the reader. Between the two lies a distance that is bridged by "tradition." Gadamer called the awareness of distancing between the two horizons "historical self-consciousness." It is, he declared, a burden that has never been imposed on a

⁷ Dan Sperber, *Explaining Culture: A Naturalistic Approach* (Oxford, UK ; Cambridge, MA, USA: Blackwell, 1996), 38.

⁸ This idealism was the philosophical underlay of his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (first published in German in 1921 as *Logisch-Philosophische Abhandlung*).

previous generation. Unlike the ancients, we have a full awareness of the historicity of everything present. Anything handed down by tradition we can consider from a reflexive position, that of “interpretation.”⁹ For Pinnock, to be open to the text of Scripture meant situating his opinions in Scripture’s seat of opinions. He reoriented himself in speech and in act in relation to its text, foreign as that might be, having recognizing that the “thing” of the text somehow constituted new horizons for his experience of openness and of possibilities.¹⁰

Andrew Louth points out that what emerged in the Enlightenment, and survived its collapse into modernity, is the idea that there is a method by which we can reach empirical truth. Starting from ignorance and confusion, it is the *experimental* method that leads humanity into light and truth¹¹ on the basis of hypotheses and repeatable experiments. The individual is no longer needed to arrive at objective truth. (The repeatable experiments must necessarily confine themselves only to that which can be repeated.)¹² Henceforth, the truth of modern science is expressed mathematically, giving priority to nonverbal language rather than to our ordinary language of words.¹³ It is this preoccupation with the empirical that underlies the historical-critical method as shaped by the Enlightenment; and with its focus on originality, everything else is treated as secondary.

⁹ Hans-Georg Gadamer, “The Problem of Historical Consciousness,” (1987): 89 *Interpretive Social Science: A Second Look*, ed. Paul Rabinow and William M. Sullivan, trans. Jeff L. Close and “Introduction” (1975) by Hans Fantel Berkeley: U. of California Press, 1987, [Originally published as *Le problème de la conscience historique* (Louvain: Institut supérieur de philosophie, 1963), first published in English as “The Problem of Historical Consciousness: 1. The Epistemological Problems of the Human Sciences” in *Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal* 5.1 (1974) 8–14].

¹⁰ Hans-Georg Gadamer, “The Problem of Historical Consciousness,” (1987): 132 *Interpretive Social Science: A Second Look*, ed. Paul Rabinow and William M. Sullivan, trans. Jeff L. Close and “Introduction” (1975) by Hans Fantel Berkeley: U. of California Press, 1987, [Originally published as *Le problème de la conscience historique* (Louvain: Institut supérieur de philosophie, 1963), first published in English as “The Problem of Historical Consciousness: 1. The Epistemological Problems of the Human Sciences” in *Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal* 5.1 (1974) 8–14].

¹¹ Andrew Louth, *Discerning the Mystery: An Essay on the Nature of Theology* (Oxford, Oxfordshire: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 7.

¹² Louth, *Discerning*, 8.

¹³ Louth, *Discerning*, 9.

Tradition, by contrast, is like an echo chamber of Scripture.¹⁴ Allegory is a way of holding us before the mystery which is the principal difficulty of Scripture, and calls for *metanoia*.¹⁵ It is within tradition¹⁶ that the later Pinnock embedded his religious experience, joining with the early Church in seeing his final authority, the Bible, more as an ecclesial means of grace than an archive of propositional truth. Yet how did he enter into this mystery? Gadamer spoke of “Bildung.” He meant by this “form-ation,”¹⁷ a fashioning of the individual so that she or he can benefit as fully as possible from their historical situation. Method, on the other hand (and by that we mean modernity’s *scientific* method), seeks to rise above the situation of the observer so that the person can objectively assess reality.¹⁸ Werner Jaeger, in *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture*, points out that paideia was a continuing tradition (education), borne by a society (culture) and the individual who becomes a member of that society.¹⁹ To borrow a term from Polanyi, for the Fathers there was a “tacit” understanding expressed in the silence of prayer, what Louth calls the “amniotic fluid in which our knowledge of God takes form,” as contrasted to the “focal” knowledge of method and skill acquisition. To participate in the life of the church is to participate in the life of love, itself only fully expressed in speech and act.

Pinnock, contra scholars of the “cultural-anthropological” method, was not content with a focal and abstract understanding of “god” shaped only by his own social and genetic matrix; rather, he chose to set his experience within what he considered a broader living tacit tradition, so as to benefit to the maximum from his historical situation. He awakened not to timeless truths *per se*, but to an eternally present mystery in which he could participate. This paradigm shift

¹⁴ Louth, *Discerning*, 109.

¹⁵ Louth, *Discerning*, 111.

¹⁶ As per Louth, Augustine spoke of allegory as expressing the faith of the simple believer: not attempting to solve problems, but bowing to the ontological difficulties of the ultimate mystery of Christ contained in Scriptures (p. 112). Origen spoke of the whole of Scripture like a symphony: there are parts that sound jarring to the inexpert, but not to the trained ear (p.113). Christ (to whom allegory leads) is not a timeless truth, but rather the eternally present mystery in which we are called to participate (p. 120).

¹⁷ Louth, *Discerning*, 42.

¹⁸ Louth, *Discerning*, 43.

¹⁹ Louth, *Discerning*, 75.

pried him out of a rationalist Enlightenment mode of conservative evangelical (even Fundamentalist) theology into a new experience of the depths and beauty of mystery and tradition.

But, we continue to ask ourselves, what exactly is the essence of a religious experience? Sandra Schneiders, with yet another approach, brings us a step closer by her focus upon the foundations of human spirituality itself.

2. Fundamental (Natural) Theology. Over the last three decades, Schneiders has been a leading Christian thinker in the study of spirituality. For her definition of spirituality, with its anthropological starting point,²⁰ she uses two of Aristotle's categories of causation: the material and the formal objects, described as follows by Britannica Academic Edition online:

There is that of which and out of which a thing is made, such as the bronze of a statue. This is called the material cause. Second, there is the form or pattern of a thing, which may be expressed in its definition. Aristotle's example is the proportion of the length of two strings in a lyre, which is the formal cause of one note's being the octave of another.²¹

Schneiders understands human spirituality as the capacity for self-transcendence, defining the *material* object of spirituality as "the experience of conscious involvement in the project of life-integration through self-transcendence toward the horizon of ultimate value one perceives."²² As

²⁰ Lonergan spoke of the self-constituting subject, a "meaning maker," freely making his or her world as changed by her or his knowing; behind which stands the real world not changed by being known. See Joseph Flanagan, "Lonergan's Philosophy of Art: From Verbum to Topics in Education," in *Meaning and History in Systematic Theology: Essays in Honor of Robert M. Doran, S.J.*, ed. John D. Didosky (Marquette, Wis.: Marquette University Press, 2009), 130.

²¹ Aristotle's "third type of cause is the origin of a change or state of rest in something; this is often called the 'efficient cause.' Aristotle gives as examples a person reaching a decision, a father begetting a child, a sculptor carving a statue, and a doctor healing a patient. The fourth and last type of cause is the end or goal of a thing—that for the sake of which a thing is done. This is known as the 'final cause.' " See *Encyclopaedia Britannica Online*, [Http://www.britannica.com](http://www.britannica.com). See "Aristotle: Causation," accessed 3 February 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/34560/Aristotle/254716/Causation?anchor=ref923097>.

²² Sandra M. Schneiders, "Approaches to the Study of Christian Spirituality," in *The Blackwell Companion to Christian Spirituality*, ed. Arthur Holder (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 16.

a *formal* expression of such, “Christian spirituality as Christian specifies the horizon of ultimate value as the triune God revealed in Jesus Christ to whom Scripture normatively witnesses and whose life is communicated to the believer by the Holy Spirit making her or him a child of God.”²³ (We can visualize Schneiders’ definition by imaging two vertical axes of Christian spirituality²⁴--the material object of the experience of self-transcendence, and the formal object of Christian spirituality *per se*, to provide a helpful framework for defining spirituality in the course of this thesis.)²⁵ However, this definition does not take us into the threads and nuances of a particular religious experience, which is our goal in studying Pinnock’s writings.

In order to probe Pinnock’s particular religious experience(s) and its impact on his writings, we now turn to our chosen methodology, the critical analytic of sociorhetorical investigation (SRI). This analytic will allow us to critique distinct evidences of Pinnock’s religious experience in their outworkings in his writings. In his role as a skilled rhetor, as teller of his story, his textualization of his religious experience opens it to public scrutiny, to the principles of hermeneutics, and to an evaluation of its authenticity via fit and integrity amidst the competing interpretations of the meaning of Pinnock’s spiritual self-understanding.

²³ Sandra M. Schneiders, “The Study of Christian Spirituality: Contours and Dynamics of a Discipline,” in *Minding the Spirit: The Study of Christian Spirituality*, ed. Elizabeth A. Dreyer and Mark S. Burrows (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), 17.

²⁴ Sandra M. Schneiders, “The Study of Christian Spirituality: Contours and Dynamics of a Discipline,” in *Minding the Spirit: The Study of Christian Spirituality*, ed. Elizabeth A. Dreyer and Mark S. Burrows (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), 5–10. Christianity’s “constitutive elements” are Scripture, historical interpretation, and theology, Schneiders, “Study,” 7. The “problematic disciplines” of the behavioural sciences (anthropology, psychology, sociology, theology, and so on) are problematic not because they pose a problem, but rather because they provide a scientific and culturally sensitive means of understanding and applying the nature of Christian spirituality, Schneiders, “Study,” 10. Theology is the swing discipline, both constitutive and problematic in its role.

²⁵ Schneiders argues that there is another interesting feature of theology’s role in the study of spirituality. As constitutive, it is a body of discourse that is part of the history of Christianity, and is the church’s reflection on both Scripture and Christian experience, Schneiders, “Study,” 12; yet it does not provide the “positive datum of either pole,” and remains a second-order reflection on spirituality itself, Schneiders, “Study,” 8–9.

C. Research Hypothesis

Our hypothesis is that we can explore the impact of religious experience on a biblical interpreter's texts by studying the development of (or transpositions in) Pinnock's approach to biblical materials in light of sociorhetorical investigation.

D. Our Chosen Methodology

1. Sociorhetorical Investigation. The interpretative analytic of sociorhetorical investigation is uniquely designed to analyze the integration of speech and act in texts understood as rhetorical; and which, for our purposes, seek to communicate actual spiritual experience and/or reflect on it. As previously mentioned, we will use SRI to examine the various textures that are evident in the three selected books of Pinnock's corpus. We will concentrate on the sources on which Pinnock drew (inner texture), the nexuses of his argumentation (intertexture), and the rhetorical force, or ideological shape, of his use of them.

Scholars of rhetoric argue that oral poetry helped to lay the groundwork in archaic Greece for the development of rhetorical theory and practice. As democratic forms of decision-making emerged in ancient Athens, the skill of persuasive argument gained such high social value that luminaries such as Isocrates, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle taught theories of rhetoric in academies. In numerous cases, poems were explicitly persuasible as competitive "Athenians used public and private occasions to hone their critical and persuasive skills." Of these poems, those most convincing and eloquent "were preserved and diffused by memorization, notes, and transcripts to serve simultaneously for future entertainment and as models for other authors."²⁶ Davida H. Charney takes this concept one step further, suggesting that the same rhetorical skills and strategies characterize the Hebrew psalms, though with a different audience in mind. Due not

²⁶ Davida H. Charney, "Performativity and Persuasion in the Hebrew Book of Psalms: A Rhetorical Analysis of Psalms 116 and 22," *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 40, no. 3 (2010): 247.

only to argumentative dialogue, but also contentiousness as a recurrent theme in Old Testament narrative, one finds as a common rhetorical situation a speaker seeking to “persuade a specific hearer, namely God, to take action within particular historical circumstances.”²⁷ Of interest to us is the persuasive nature of rhetoric in the ancient Mediterranean world, be it Greek or Hebrew. Rhetoric is, in essence, persuasion.

Socio-*rhetorical* investigation seeks to identify, within a given rhetorical situation, rhetorical dialects which are large-scale patterns of rhetorical discourse, called rhetorolects (pronounced “rhet-or-o-lects”). Such patterns of discourse interest us, because SRI proposes that they will provide a glimpse as to *how* we can identify mega-themes in Pinnock’s writings in order to track the interaction between his religious experience, and his ongoing doing of theology and reading of Scripture. The premise is--to use the language of Dupré and Duméry--that an incarnated mind seeks to differentiate a religious experience through the matrix of its world view. This inevitably means that the experience is, in some measure, externalized through speech-act; and speech-act is open to investigation.²⁸ For this reason, SRI’s category of “sacred text” posits that certain qualities characterize “believing” reading; not as new propositional content that non-believers cannot access, but rather as an act that “counts” for something (Thiselton). It is readily apparent that Pinnock, from within his religious experience, perceived himself as a recipient, as addressed extra-linguistically by a directed act of commitment or by promise; in fact, by covenant language.²⁹ SRI provides a sophisticated means of determining

²⁷ Charney, “Performativity,” 249–50.

²⁸ There are at least two characteristics of speech-acts:

(1) There is usually some degree of specificity in the propositional content of the semantic boundaries, which belong to the internal grammar; this makes, for example, a promise a promise. How can one promise without specifying some measure of content, however vague? As Thiselton points out, would you believe a politician who says, “I promise to go forward into the future”?

(2) Although performatives operate in terms of “force,” their function remains completely dependent on the “truth” of certain states of affairs. You can’t “give X” if X is not the speaker’s to give. Jesus’ performative utterances, for example, necessarily presuppose a Christology. Key to the speech-act model is the observation that “the determinant for the effects which an utterance or written communicative message produces is the nature of the act which the agent who speaks or writes performs.” (Thiselton, 597) In other words, is there some sort of extra-linguistic “backing” (598)?

²⁹ Anthony C. Thiselton, *New Horizons in Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1992), 597.

whether Pinnock had a basis for making truth claims about his religious experience and its faith object. It will not only provide us with a comprehensive analytic to investigate the dynamics of our author's religious experience and its ensuing impact, but also allow us to probe the context behind the experience, and his claims of extra-linguistic backing for his experience.

Robbins suggests that rhetorolects genetically precede and shape a given text. Such rhetorical genres are first-order phenomena and inherent within the text's sociocultural context. Literary genres, on the other hand, are broader and classed as second-order "complexes" of rhetorolects. For example, as Robbins probes for rhetorolects in his study of the New Testament, he discovers such rhetorical dialects as pre-creation, wisdom, thaumaturgic, oppositional, death-resurrection, and apocalyptic discourses. It is these literary rhetorolects which he then assembles into broader literary genres, noting that such rhetorolects "functioned within the Messianist culture that existed prior to the stage in which this Messianist movement began to produce literature that was Christian rather than simply Messianist."³⁰ As a specific example, he suggests the book of Luke. When viewed through the lens of its corporate group of rhetorolects, it presents as its goal social reform. Luke 18:27 emphasizes that "What is impossible with mortals is possible for God." Working with an ancient cultural presupposition that "for gods all things are possible," the biblical author introduces his interpretation of Luke that even certain rich people and their behaviour can be changed miraculously by the power of the message of Christ risen.³¹ Robbins probes a text for meaning (inchoate in that it is open to multiple interpretations) using his model of rhetorolects;³² and opens up a space in which new meanings and relationships emerge heuristically for the reader, yet can be measured by the standards of fit and authenticity. How then can this sociorhetorical methodology be brought to bear specifically on Pinnock's writings?

³⁰ Vernon K. Robbins, "Response," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 70 (1998): 103.

³¹ Vernon K. Robbins and Duane F. Watson, eds, "Dialogue Between Vernon Robbins and the Reviewers," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 70 (1998): 113.

³² Vernon K. Robbins, "Response," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 70 (1998): 104.

2. Synopsis. The object and intention of this thesis is to apply to our three Pinnock texts SRI's five textures, described by Robbins as inner texture ("getting inside a text"), intertexture ("entering the interactive world of a text"), social and cultural texture ("living with a text in the world"), ideological texture ("sharing interests in commentary and text"), and sacred texture ("seeking the divine in a text").³³ This thesis will focus especially on three of these textures: the inner texture, intertexture, and ideological texture (which, we suggest, subsumes the social and cultural texture) of Pinnock's books. We will not include the sacred texture, in that Pinnock was not writing Scripture, but rather commenting on it.

Applying SRI to a critical reading of a contemporary theologian is the unique feature of this thesis. As a critical analytic, SRI's fittedness to the task is broadly based, for it is text-based, revealing the layerings of a text; it is persuasive, in that it identifies rhetorical truth claims; and it is ontological, since rhetoric reveals something fundamental about the self. SRI identifies the rhetorical elements at work in a text, such as rhetorolects (that is, rhetorical dialects) with their defining features of topoi; enthymemes; rule, case, and result; and chreiai. It also provides a strategy for probing the pictorial versus logical nature of a text's argumentation.

Our application of SRI will proceed in this manner: we will track the manner in which the topoi (that is, "the essential, rhetorical building blocks of the text")³⁴ are drawn together into rhetorolects with their distinctive configurations of textual "themes, topics, reasonings, and argumentations."³⁵ This analysis of rhetorolects within and across the selected Pinnock texts will then allow us to trace the overall impact of spiritual experience on his theology and reading of Scripture during the thirty-five year span in which he wrote our selected texts (1971 to 1996).

³³ Robbins, *Exploring*, vii-viii.

³⁴ L. Gregory Bloomquist, "Rhetoric, Culture, and Ideology: Socio-Rhetorical Analysis in the Reading of New Testament Texts," eds. J. Hester and J. David Hester, in *Rhetorics in the New Millennium: Promise and Fulfillment* (New York: T. & T. Clark, 2010), 21–22.

³⁵ Vernon K. Robbins, *The Invention of Christian Discourse*, Rhetoric of Religious Antiquity Series, 1 (Blandford Forum, Dorset, UK: Deo Publishing, 2009), 7.

In Robbins' estimation, any broad-based interpretive approach for analysis and interpretation will contain at least two to three hundred strategies and techniques. Just the strategies for investigation alone could focus on written phenomena; religious phenomena; or social, historical, cultural, aesthetic, ideological, psychological, and other phenomena. Hence, "no interpretive approach is entirely different from all others; no interpretive approach is entirely new. Every mode of analysis and interpretation is related somehow to others."³⁶ As we probe the inner texture of Pinnock's three selected works, our approach to inner texture in the following section will differ from other literary and social approaches, in that our principle of organization and application will be *rhetorical* theory. This means that speaker, speech, and audience will form a locus as the "primary constituents of a situation of communication." SRI is set apart from other approaches by its attention to all three constituents rather than just one. And, unlike the reader-response method, we will not limit our attention to readers alone; rather, our goal is to study all the components--rhetorically--of reader, text, story, implied author, narrator, and characters.³⁷

III. Pinnock's Biography, and the Question of Experience

In the 1940s, Clark Pinnock grew up in Park Road Baptist Church in Toronto, a congregation that was strongly influenced by what he later described as the "progressive theological views which had swept through scholarly Baptist circles in North America in the first decades of the 20th century and were being disseminated at that time from the Canadian Baptist Seminary at McMaster University." This theologically liberal perspective of Christianity to which he was introduced as a child was, in his opinion, a "bore."³⁸ As he later reflected on why he did not, as an adult, bolt from evangelicalism as various of his evangelical contemporaries did,

³⁶ Vernon K. Robbins, *The Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse: Rhetoric, Society and Ideology* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 44.

³⁷ Robbins, *Tapestry*, 45.

³⁸ Barry L. Callen, *Clark H. Pinnock: Journey Toward Renewal. An Intellectual Biography* (Nappanee, Ind.: Evangel Publishing House, 2000), 17.

he reflected that it might have been linked to the fact that he was raised “in liberal Christianity and knew how little it has to offer.”³⁹

Pinnock’s personal conversion experience came in 1950, largely through the influence of his paternal grandmother, Madora, and a like-minded Sunday School teacher, Frank Elliott.⁴⁰ As a young teen, he avidly read Calvinist writers, and in his student circles was especially impacted by InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, an evangelical campus ministry still serving today.⁴¹ The theological model of that era, shaped by Reformation Calvinism, had a tendency to be reactionary, and to focus on conserving past thought traditions and cultures.⁴² Years later, in a 1998 *Christianity Today* article entitled “A Pilgrim On the Way,” Pinnock referred to the hegemony of conservative Calvinists in evangelicalism at the close of WW2, concluding that considerable conflict in its ranks in the late 1990s was due to the collapse of that hegemony.⁴³ Even when Pinnock was a young man, two groups were beginning to emerge within evangelicalism: the traditionalists who considered the formulations of their hegemony as “first-order language of revelation”; and the reformists, who beyond the theological core left boundaries undefined and under examination, using fragile second-order language to do so.⁴⁴

In 1963, Pinnock completed his Ph.D. thesis at the University of Manchester with F. F. Bruce (himself an evangelical British scholar) on the meaning and implications of the Spirit of God. Entitled “The Concept of Spirit in the Epistles of Paul,” its outline consisted of: first, “the

³⁹ Clark H. Pinnock and Barry L. Callen, *The Scripture Principle: Reclaiming the Full Authority of the Bible*, 2d ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2006), 268.

⁴⁰ Barry L. Callen, *Clark H. Pinnock: Journey Toward Renewal. An Intellectual Biography* (Nappanee, Ind.: Evangel Publishing House, 2000), 17.

⁴¹ Callen points out that it was in Pinnock’s deep involvement with IVCF that “he experienced the ethos of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship as a coherent whole, a single theological package of biblical commitment and evangelistic fervour, all in a Calvinistic framework.” Callen, *Pinnock*, 22. Through IVCF, he got involved with a movement, not a theology, held together with a piety, not a creed. Clark H. Pinnock, “Evangelical Theology in Progress,” in *Introduction to Christian Theology: Contemporary North American Perspectives*, ed. Roger A. Badham (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 76. This introduced him to the “big tent” of evangelicalism, rather than a narrow, denominational focus. Callen, *Pinnock*, 21.

⁴² Callen, *Pinnock*, 7.

⁴³ Clark H. Pinnock, “A Pilgrim on the Way: Response,” *Christianity Today* 42, no. 2 (9 February 1998): 43.

⁴⁴ Callen, *Pinnock*, 94–95.

‘virile notion’ of *ruach* in the Hebrew Scriptures; moved on to awareness of the ‘two-spirits pattern’ in the Dead Sea Scrolls; and finally arrived at a broader study of the Spirit pattern found in the New Testament.” Pinnock argued that Qumran’s *Manual of Discipline* describes a spirit leading people to do good, and a spirit leading people toward wrong, which the Apostle Paul would later call the “flesh” in Gal 5. Prior to the New Testament, it was only the radical Qumran community that tried to incorporate pneumatology into religious practice and belief.⁴⁵ Pinnock concluded that Paul’s central concept of the Spirit was thus rooted deeply in his Hebrew heritage, which led to his “conviction that Jesus was the Messiah [and] assured him of the dawning of the eschatological age in which the Spirit of God was to act in a new way.” He also concluded that the presumed relevance of Greek literature and philosophy to Pauline thought “alters in inverse ratio as the degree of hellenization increases.”⁴⁶ Callen argues that here is the beginning of Pinnock’s faulting of certain aspects of “classic” Christian doctrine with, from his perspective, its excessive accommodation to non-Christian Greek thinking. We also note that one-third of his Ph.D. thesis was committed to the “determining significance” of the Holy Spirit’s work in believers and in the church. Both themes would provide the groundwork for his theological explorations in the decades to come.⁴⁷

Through the 1960s and into the 70s, Pinnock tended to denigrate subjective religious experience.⁴⁸ Yet, ironically, it was in 1967 that he had his first charismatic experience. At the time, he was Associate Professor of Theology at the Southern Baptists’ New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.⁴⁹ Because he and his wife Dorothy lived off-campus near the heart of the city, they attended not a Southern Baptist church, but Canal St. Presbyterian Church. Given that they could have found a Southern Baptist church near them if they had wanted to, why did they

⁴⁵ Callen, *Pinnock*, 31.

⁴⁶ See Pinnock’s Ph.D. thesis, iv-v. See also Callen, *Pinnock*, 32, fn. 39.

⁴⁷ Callen, *Pinnock*, 32.

⁴⁸ Clark H. Pinnock and Barry L. Callen, *The Scripture Principle: Reclaiming the Full Authority of the Bible*, 2d ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2006), 268.

⁴⁹ Callen, *Pinnock*, 49.

not? Was there already a stirring of discontent with his/their spiritual status quo? Callen tells us, from his interviews with Pinnock, that it was during this time in New Orleans that Pinnock realized his mind-spirit relationship was out of balance. That same year Sarah [their only child] was born, and he suffered a detached retina that left him basically blind in one eye--no small occurrence for an academic.⁵⁰ In a home fellowship group of their New Orleans church, he was prayed for one evening by the home group, and found himself having a new experience with the Holy Spirit.⁵¹

As the 1960s turned into the 70s, Pinnock continued to open himself to spiritual experience. After a divine healing in one of his eyes, he wrote, "I know from personal experience that one such incident can be worth a bookshelf of academic apologetics for Christianity (including my own books)." He gradually came to appreciate charismatics as evangelicals with more voltage, and as a less scholastically bound form of evangelicalism.⁵² At the same time, he journeyed from relative disinterest in things political to the left-side edges of a radical counter-cultural activism in the 70s, and then over the next decade to a place of deep concern for Christian involvement in faith-related issues with government--though once again on the right-side of issues such as life, limited government, adequate national defence, and providing for the poor.⁵³ It was also in 1974 that he left Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, just north of Chicago, where he had begun to teach in 1969.⁵⁴ Scot McKnight, also a former professor at Trinity, tells us that "Clark did call Trinity a 'ghetto,' and [he] moved on." He went next to Regent College in Vancouver, where he found an environment of relative openness.⁵⁵ There he served as the first full-time faculty appointment in theology from 1974-77. (It was also there that he read a book by

⁵⁰ Callen, *Pinnock*, 77.

⁵¹ Callen, *Pinnock*, 77-78.

⁵² Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 269.

⁵³ Callen, *Pinnock*, 115.

⁵⁴ Callen, *Pinnock*, 55.

⁵⁵ Scot McKnight, "Clark Pinnock: My Tribute," unpublished paper, Annual Meeting (San Francisco: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), Friday, seminar M18-401, <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/jesuscreed/2011/11/23/clark-pinnock-my-tribute/#more-22569>.

Stephen Davis that proved to be epic in his intellectual journey: *Debate About the Bible: Inerrancy Versus Infallibility*.)⁵⁶

In 1977, he arrived at McMaster Divinity College in Hamilton, Ontario, where he would teach for the rest of his academic career. In his inaugural lecture in October of that year, he laid out his presuppositions, which in essence we will track rhetorically throughout this thesis:

Classical Christians have always sought to exalt the truth of divine revelation, embodied in the Incarnation and attested in the Scriptures, far above the thoughts of mankind. They have considered the Bible to contain didactive thought models to guide their theology, models which were infallibly authoritative because they originated in God's witness to himself. For this reason they have shown themselves committed to an undiluted, we might say an undemythologized, biblical framework which enjoyed absolute cognitive authority over them.⁵⁷

Yet in the mid-1980s, while becoming more Wesleyan-Arminian in matters of salvation and discipleship, he became more Calvinistic politically, seeing Christ as transformer of culture, and even appreciating Rev. Jerry Falwell's "Moral Majority."⁵⁸ By 2000, he had also moved slightly toward postmillennialism, "which anticipates the faithfulness of the church leading to a greater realization of God's reign on earth before the return of Christ and the eschaton." He was of the opinion that in some cultures, like North America, the church does not need to act counter-culturally; rather, the task is to encourage more Christianization of the existing culture, reminding citizens that God will bless the nation that follows him.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Callen, *Pinnock*, 56, 62.

⁵⁷ Callen, *Pinnock*, 44–45. See Pinnock, "Evangelical Theology," 23–29. Reprinted as Clark H. Pinnock, *The Untapped Power of Sheer Christianity* (Burlington, Ont.: Welch Publishing Co., 1985), 85–100; which became *Clark H. Pinnock, Three Keys to Spiritual Renewal* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Bethany House, 1985).

⁵⁸ Callen, *Pinnock*, 116.

⁵⁹ Callen, *Pinnock*, 114.

IV. Why These Three Texts? Rhetorical Insights from Pinnock's Works

We propose in light of Pinnock's social locations which follow that the three texts we have chosen encompass and illustrate well the critical phases in his journey into religious experience, over the reach of several decades. In order to be both descriptive and analytical, we have provided Pinnock's biography above. In the next section of this chapter we will analyze his works in relation to this brief biography. Our goal is to underscore the ways in which his works reveal rhetorically Robbins' assessment of how ideology demonstrates itself in life. The final section, before starting Ch. 2, will direct the reader into why a proposal is made to draw on sociorhetorical investigation for reading Pinnock in relation to such experience.

A. Individual Locations

How do we begin to analyze another person's values, dispositions, and presuppositions? Evidently, it is not possible to gain direct access to the writer's thoughts. The only point at which one can begin is with the writer, as subject. However, if the reader is also willing to analyze him- or herself (as Robbins suggests), one can then move on to other people's ideology, and finally to the text that "is the special guest in our interpretive conversation." Robbins provides taxonomies with which to situate each reader that are taken from Bryan Wilson's spectrum of seven particular responses to the world.⁶⁰

1. Conversionist. This response sees the world as corrupt because people are corrupt. Salvation only comes through a deep supernatural transformation of the self. "The world will not change, but the presence of a new subjective orientation to it will itself be salvation."⁶¹

⁶⁰ Robbins, *Exploring*, 96. Robbins quotes from Bryan R. Wilson, *Magic and the Millennium: A Sociological Study of Religious Movements of Protest among Tribal and Third-World Peoples* (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), 22-26; and refers to Wilson's articles entitled "A Typology of Sects in a Dynamic and Comparative Perspective" in *Archives de Sociologie de Religion* 16 (1963): 49-63; and "A Typology of Sects" in *Sociology of Religion* (ed. Roland Robertson; Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1969), 361-83. See also Vernon K. Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts: A Guide to Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation* (Valley Forge, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 1996), 72-74.

⁶¹ Robbins, *Exploring*, 72.

In Callen's opinion it was the Calvinist writers of Pinnock's teen years who brought out his ideological side; he came to see Christianity as standing on a divinely revealed base, absolutely and everywhere true, and demonstrable to any serious seeker.⁶² This fundamentalist/evangelical response to its world in that era was thoroughly conversionist; it also tended to have strong introversionist tendencies, seeing the world as doomed to destruction (and from which for premillennialists the only hope was the "rapture"). This conservative theological model did not fail to impact Pinnock's nascent worldview. Decades later in 1987, he would confess that in his early years as a scholar it led him to behave crudely, caught up in the excitement of protecting the church that he loved from the virus of "liberalism." He rued the fact that he became in those early years a militant Christian rationalist.⁶³

2. Revolutionist. This response calls for the destruction of the natural world and its social order in order to save people. Since people lack the power to re-create the world, supernatural powers have to do the destroying. The believers' role is limited to assisting the greater powers, giving witness to their faith by what they do and say.

Pinnock's entire life was spent within the Anabaptist ecclesiological model, which in origin claimed "the countercultural existence of the church itself as the core social strategy for building a new society . . ." He would for a season give a radical edge to that understanding by modelling and encouraging direct involvement (or counter-involvement) in the political process, especially against America's war in Vietnam.⁶⁴ Years later, his zigzagging from quasi-fundamentalism to the extremes on the political left and back to the right would lead to his conclusion that one cannot sanctify any social order, yet would also leave him with a deep appreciation (though not without criticism) for Western democracy.⁶⁵ Such a shift, in his words, demonstrated in the political sphere his "tendency to *experience* things rather than stand back to

⁶² Callen, *Pinnock*, 24–25.

⁶³ Callen, *Pinnock*, 51.

⁶⁴ Callen, *Pinnock*, 114.

⁶⁵ Callen, *Pinnock*, 118.

only observe and analyze. I enter enthusiastically, looking expectantly for what God may be doing.”⁶⁶ His political experiment, what he would refer to as his “radical dream,” resulted in his later assessment that the radicals of that era had been calling for liberation in the one society on earth (the U.S.A.) where there is more freedom than nearly anywhere else. He came to realize that the greatest danger is actually “political monism,” whether too far right or left, which declares itself absolute and has no transcendent value to which it answers.⁶⁷

It seems that his political exploration may have left an impact on his theology, leading to quite a different sort of revolution. More in line with the thinking of the historic church, he came to see the Holy Spirit as continuing to open all creation to the full breadth of God’s grace.⁶⁸ He saw the world itself as a natural sacrament, “recognizing Creator Spirit gives us the opportunity to relate theology to origins and environment in fresh ways.”⁶⁹ His previous idealism found new expression through his encouragement of Christians to help democratic capitalism stop sliding into self-centred materialism. Instead, he concluded that a renewed appreciation for its Christian heritage would help the West to rediscover the hope of social revival that Spirit offers.⁷⁰

3. Introversionist. The world is beyond redemption due to its evil, so believers have to withdraw as far from it as possible. This renouncing and leaving of the world purifies the self. If multiple individuals leave, this can lead to a social movement that establishes separate communities, each “preoccupied with its own holiness and its means of insulation from the wider society.”⁷¹

Historian George M. Marsden in *Fundamentalism and American Culture* claims that, in the aftermath of the “ridicule heaped on [William Jennings] Bryan at the Scopes trial in Tennessee in 1925,” fundamentalism ceased as a coalition of national influence in the U.S.A.;

⁶⁶ Callen, *Pinnock*, 118.

⁶⁷ Callen, *Pinnock*, 113.

⁶⁸ Callen, *Pinnock*, 114. See fn. 71.

⁶⁹ Clark H. Pinnock, *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 62, 64.

⁷⁰ Callen, *Pinnock*, 115.

⁷¹ Robbins, *Exploring*, 73.

instead, fundamentalists began building “a substantial subculture” based on Princeton theology and millenarianism (the “one-thousand-year personal reign of Christ on earth”).⁷² Three themes were then at work within the movement. First, there was the paradox between identification with the “establishment” (due to the lingering influence of American evangelicalism in the previous century), and the sense of being “outsiders”; of “the role of a beleaguered minority with [or against] strong sectarian or separatist tendencies.” Second, inherited from their evangelical heritage were the forces of revivalism and pietism, expressed in an individualism that sought to return to the “Bible alone.” Third, there was “the tension between trust and distrust of the intellect”—even though, as of the 1920s, fundamentalists “stood in an intellectual tradition that had the highest regard for one understanding of true scientific and proper rationality.”⁷³

As touched on in Ch. 4, and soon to be detailed in this chapter, Pinnock would find himself first embraced and embracing, then critiquing and opposing, elements of this fundamentalist profile throughout the span of his academic career in North America’s evangelicalism of the mid and late twentieth century.

4. Gnostic-Manipulationist (Transformational). The mention of “gnostic” brings to mind images of esoteric groups during the early centuries of Christianity who “considered matter evil and denied the real incarnation and bodily resurrection of the Son of God.”⁷⁴ Robbins, rather, by this denominator places the focus on a “*transformed* (emphasis added) method of coping with evil” by a *transformed* set of relationships.⁷⁵ Salvation is possible in this world if people learn for their problems the right techniques and means. Personal divine forces are perceived to be at work even in the innermost nature of creation, which “brings wonderment about the life-nature of all being.” These fingerprints of the divine within the world reveal the innermost nature of our own

⁷² George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelicalism: 1870–1925* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 5–6.

⁷³ Marsden, *Fundamentalism*, 6–7.

⁷⁴ Roger W. Olson, *The Mosaic of Christian Belief: Twenty Centuries of Unity & Diversity* (Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2002), 31.

⁷⁵ Robbins, *Exploring*, 73.

being as humans, “the being of the world, and the meaning of death and life in the world.”⁷⁶ Like the foregoing responses, the gnostic-manipulationist stance rejects the institutionalized means and the existing facilities that enable people to be saved; unlike the previous responses, it accepts the goals of society. To repeat, the emphasis is on transformation of methods and relationships; on having the eyes to really see.

Pinnock reflects this stance in his statement, “I approach theology in a spirit of adventure, being always curious about what I may find. For me, theology is like a rich feast, with many dishes to enjoy and delicacies to taste. It is like a centuries-old conversation that I am privileged to take part in, a conversation replete with innumerable voices to listen to. More like a pilgrim than a settler, I tread the path of discovery and do my theology en route.”⁷⁷ His move from traditionalist to that of gnostic-manipulationist was, in Callen’s consideration, the fruit of his shift to a theology of “reciprocity.”⁷⁸

(1) *Move to Reciprocity*. A critical decision was made by Pinnock while at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in the Chicago-land area. While studying the Book of Hebrews (especially 10:26, “If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left”; and 3:12, “See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God”),⁷⁹ he pondered why Christians are encouraged to persevere if Calvinism is true. He concluded that “a believer’s security in God is linked to the faith relationship with God that must be intentionally maintained and never forsaken.”⁸⁰ This proved to be a bombshell in his reassessment of Calvinism, which at

⁷⁶ Robbins, *Exploring*, 97.

⁷⁷ Pinnock, “Pilgrim,” 43. Anecdotally, McKnight quotes a fellow student from his own days at Trinity. “My friend’s name was Bill and he said he took Pinnock for a class and, if I remember this correctly, he said, ‘Pinnock began as a Calvinist, midway through the course he became Arminian, and then by the end of the semester he had become Calvinist again.’ Then he said something that probably each of us both knows and admires about Clark Pinnock. Bill said, ‘I liked Pinnock because he was [a] man on the move. His theology was always growing.’” See McKnight, “Tribute”.

⁷⁸ Callen, *Pinnock*, 100.

⁷⁹ *New International Version*, ©2011 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan), www.biblegateway.com.

⁸⁰ Callen, *Pinnock*, 102.

the time was the basis for much of evangelical theology and certainly for his. Pinnock moved toward a theological reciprocity earlier shaped by John Wesley (who in the opinion of Randy Maddox, probably derived his view from early Greek theology, especially Macarius),⁸¹ and grounded in the notion of “responsible grace” long taught by Eastern Orthodoxy: that while humans cooperate in the divine-human interrelation, this cooperation in no way merits God’s freely-bestowed grace. Such reciprocity, rather, holds humans responsible to accept God’s offer of restored relationship through Christ.⁸²

These stirrings of the gnostic-manipulationist (i.e., transformational) stance would not go unchallenged, especially coming from a young scholar who had gained renown for his passionate defence of the status quo of a Calvinist-shaped rationalist inerrancy. Pinnock would later describe this resistance, in a 1998 *Christianity Today* article entitled “A Pilgrim On the Way,” as a throw-back to the conservative Calvinists that defined evangelicalism at the close of World War Two,⁸³ and which still maintained control of the teaching of theology in the large evangelical seminaries, publishing houses, and the inerrancy movement, though Calvinism had been declining since the 1950s.⁸⁴

(2) *Shift in Foundations*. In his exploration of older interpretations of Scripture, Pinnock moved beyond Arminian/Wesleyan traditions in regard to “free will theism” to the ancient Eastern understanding of divine-human relations. He determined that non-biblical philosophical perspectives influenced early Western theologians like Augustine, whereas the perspectives characteristic of the ancient Eastern tradition of Christianity are biblically compatible. In particular, he meant the emphasis on genuine human freedom granted by God’s loving grace, rather than some sort of mechanical operation of an absolute divine control that does not allow for real relationality between the Creator and the created.⁸⁵

⁸¹ See Randy Maddox, “John Wesley and Eastern Orthodoxy,” *Asbury Theological Journal* 45 (1990), 2.

⁸² Callen, *Pinnock*, 101.

⁸³ Pinnock, “Pilgrim,” 43.

⁸⁴ Callen, *Pinnock*, 100.

⁸⁵ Callen, *Pinnock*, 128.

Through the 1980s and 90s Pinnock would call for a free will theism based on the Eastern view of salvation focused on the Holy Spirit calling people to participate in the merits of the Christ event. From his viewpoint, the Western (Latin) teaching of substitutionary atonement, and the satisfaction theory of Christ fulfilling the wrathful and righteous requirements of a holy God, were deemed inadequate. Rather, his emphasis shifted from a static state to the dynamic of “spiritual journey, transformation, the divine likeness formed in believers, and human destiny as union with God.”⁸⁶ We find this perspective shaping Pinnock’s 1996 book *Flame of Love*.

Callen argues that Pinnock’s apologetic use of reason was also changing; he moved from the rationalistic epistemology that was typical of evangelicalism at that time to a softer foundationalism, which was noticeably less militant. Pinnock saw himself as a pilgrim-kind of theologian exploring out beyond the fortress to determine what territories were there--yet very much aware that this can be infuriating to the defenders of the fortress! He moved to more of a “postmodern ambiance” in his thinking, in that he postulated a web-like knowledge, working with reasonable probabilities that do not compel faith, but do create a credible atmosphere in which faith can be born and can grow, rather than the (perceived) rationally unshakeable foundation of a biblical text inerrant from the hand of God.⁸⁷ Richard Lints concluded that with this move Pinnock issued a call for a “postmodern orthodoxy.”⁸⁸

(3) *God’s Openness and Self-Limitation*. Pinnock, though wary of process theology, did acknowledge the impact on his thinking by process thinker Charles Hartshorne. One lesson he took from him is that though God is unchanging in character, he is changing in operation. He responds to a changing creation that possesses genuine freedom of decision. Pinnock also admitted that modern culture encouraged in him a new emphasis on human freedom, and on God

⁸⁶ Callen, *Pinnock*, 129.

⁸⁷ Callen, *Pinnock*, 122, 124.

⁸⁸ See fn. 98 in Callen, *Pinnock*, 125; Richard Lints, *The Fabric of Theology: A Prolegomenon to Evangelical Theology* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1993), 234. Lints argues that the postmodern critique of modernity would provide evangelicals with the modern tools, and the desire to critique effectively the modern world. However, it cannot be uncritically accepted, for its dominant trends are a radical extension of the older liberal theological vision.

as self-limiting in relation to this present world. As such, he concluded that modernity has drawn this dimension of philosophical reflection in the direction of biblical teaching. The result for Pinnock was a fresh awareness of a dimension of God's immanence which better equips today's Christians to deal with new insights from science into the origin of the universe.⁸⁹

This conclusion about the divine-human relationship led Pinnock into what many evangelicals consider his most radical and shocking shift (especially from a Calvinist point of view); namely, a limitation of God's complete knowledge of the future. Pinnock fingered Augustine as the culprit who wedded the biblical portrait of God with certain Greek presuppositions, positing a God who exists beyond the realm of change and time, and knows the past and future in a timeless present. Pinnock reasoned, on the other hand, that if history is infallibly known then human freedom is an illusion. Does it not fit the biblical data better if one argues that God knows all that is and has been, but not the future which has yet to happen? Though he knows all future possibilities, he does not have exhaustive foreknowledge of all future not-yet-realized events. "God faces the future as a partly unsettled matter." He is omniscient, but in a way that accords with the character of the created world which he chose and enabled.⁹⁰ Reformed scholasticism had replaced the God of promise and love who acts in human history with a removed deity described by a set of metaphysical statements. "Greek thinking put the perfect and ultimate in the realm of the absolutely transcendent and immutable." So, Pinnock sought a realignment with the even older biblical model via an "open view" of God or a "free-will theism" which revisions classical theism by a shift in focus to God as loving parent, sensitive and responsive.⁹¹

(4) *The Holy Spirit and an Open Soteriology*. As he applied this theological framework to the work of the Holy Spirit, Pinnock began to change his understanding of soteriology. In 1992, in his book *A Wideness in God's Mercy*, his goal was (a) to counter the reductionist inclusivism

⁸⁹ Callen, *Pinnock*, 145–46.

⁹⁰ Callen, *Pinnock*, 152–53.

⁹¹ Callen, *Pinnock*, 154.

of much recent liberal theology of religions; and (b) to provide an alternative to the reactionary restrictivism of much recent evangelical theology. He made two assumptions:

- a) Only because of the redemptive work of Jesus Christ is salvation available to anyone.
- b) God wills to save all people, even if they have not heard the gospel of Christ in their earthly lifetimes.⁹²

Though in his opinion the Scriptures appear to exclude universalism, Pinnock argued that what is guaranteed is the universal possibility of salvation. God judges the heathen according to the light which they have, not according to the light that they do not have.⁹³ He has chosen to delegate to humans the real right to decide, who in their freedom can use it for good or evil. Though he is sovereign, “meaning that all ability exists within the divine image,” he usually does not override human decisions—at least not immediately. Rather, he manages these decisions so that one day his will indeed triumphs; meanwhile, “risk, frustration, and pain lie along the way.” Like a father with a rebellious son, God lets humanity learn that sin leads to destruction. God uses his power as a servant, overcoming his enemies not by annihilating them, but by loving them. He makes room for humanity in his plans, and seeks real mutually responsible relationships with us. Pinnock thus moved into a “catholic” position that has been reflected in some early Christian theologians, in some contemporary evangelicals, and in Anglican, Orthodox, and Roman Catholic scholarship.⁹⁴

(5) *The Nature of Hell*. This in turn opened another horizon within evangelical theology that for Pinnock was ready for change. In 1965, J. I. Packer (an Anglican scholar who has been arguably one of the best known theologians in contemporary evangelicalism) delivered at Fuller

⁹² Clark H. Pinnock, *A Wideness in God's Mercy: The Finality of Jesus Christ in a World of Religions* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1992), 15.

⁹³ Callen, *Pinnock*, 163.

⁹⁴ Callen, *Pinnock*, 155. Amos Yong proposed that Pinnock's thinking was an “inclusivist” option for evangelicals, that is committed to biblical authority and a high Christology. However, he advised that more detailed work be done on how the presence of the Spirit can be dependably discerned in contexts that are non-Christian. Otherwise, he fears that without this clarity, critics will dismiss Pinnock's whole approach as too dangerous. Callen, *Pinnock*, 161.

Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California, the Payton Lectures. His theme was “The Problem of Universalism Today.” In the 1970s and 80s, however, three of his colleagues took the route of cautious innovation, especially as pertains to the impenitent. They were English evangelicals named Philip Edgcumbe Hughes, John Stott, and John Wenham.⁹⁵ In his turn, Pinnock published a significant article in 1990 entitled “The Destruction of the Finally Impenitent,”⁹⁶ followed by his book, *A Wideness in God’s Mercy*, in 1992. Pursuing the theme of the influence of certain elements of Greek thought on the church fathers and Augustine, he argued that the old accommodationist thinking combined belief in God’s hatred of sin, with a presumed universal and inherent immortality of humans. As a result, the conclusion was that a large percentage of humans will spend endless torture in hell.⁹⁷ It was Pinnock’s considered conclusion that final judgment is a moral necessity in God’s universe. However, given the certainty of hell, the question is whether hell is a fire meant to educate, torment, or consume. He argued that it is not the start of a new eternal life in torment, but the end of a life of rebellion. He felt that the weight of the biblical evidence compelled him to take this stance, though he did not desire to create a new division among evangelicals.⁹⁸ For Pinnock--in light of today’s theological climate in which high priority is placed on a levelling tolerance--the key question was one which undergirded so many of his works: how does Christian theology relate God’s saving action through Christ alone to this pluralistic arena?⁹⁹

Pinnock was moving in a direction that we will clarify in the next two chapters with the innertextual and intertextual textures, toward what Callen calls a “hermeneutic of hopefulness.” By definition, any grace is generous; hence, salvation is available to all people, even to those who

⁹⁵ For their seminal works on this subject, Callen suggests: Philip Edgcumbe Hughes (*The True Image*, Eerdmans, 1989); John Stott (with David Edwards, *Evangelical Essentials*, InterVarsity Press, 1988); and John Wenham (*The Goodness of God*, InterVarsity Press, 1974). See also Callen, *Pinnock*, 163.

⁹⁶ See *Criswell Theological Review* 4 (1990), 243-59; and Pinnock’s article in *Christianity Today* (March 20, 1987).

⁹⁷ Callen, *Pinnock*, 164.

⁹⁸ Callen, *Pinnock*, 167.

⁹⁹ Callen, *Pinnock*, 167.

only have the light of general revelation. Key to this perspective for Pinnock was questioning the limiting determinism of a certain early Greek philosophy and its influence on Christian theology. As he put it, why do we look so hopefully to Plato and expect nothing from Buddha?¹⁰⁰

(6) *Post-Mortem Encounter?* Always one to follow lines of logic to their conclusion, Pinnock expressed himself open to the possibility that there might be a post-mortem encounter with Christ for those who have not had a chance to decide for or against him in this life. He referred to 1 Pet 3:17-19 (“For it is better, if it is God’s will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit. After being made alive, he went and made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits”) and 4:6 (“For this is the reason the gospel was preached even to those who are now dead, so that they might be judged according to human standards in regard to the body, but live according to God in regard to the spirit.”),¹⁰¹ recognizing that these passages are exegetically uncertain. People without Christ in this situation he called “premessianic believers.” He remained adamant, however, that committed followers of Christ enjoy an assurance emerging from a conscious trust in Jesus that is not available to the “mere believer.”¹⁰²

Pinnock’s biographer, Callen, summarizes Pinnock’s theological shifts in the 1970s in five categories, which overlap with our observations above:

(a) Pinnock concluded that reciprocity means that God has not willed Calvin’s “terrible decree” whereby due to the divine will people are lost and damned.

(b) Election is corporate. God has chosen a people (Eph 1:3-14). All people are *potentially* elect. Pinnock was helped in this perspective by Robert Shank’s book *Elect in the Son*.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ Callen, *Pinnock*, 168.

¹⁰¹ *NIV 2011*.

¹⁰² Callen, *Pinnock*, 171.

¹⁰³ Springfield, Mo.: Westcott, 1970.

(c) In a dynamic view of God's dealing with people, "predestination focuses on God setting goals rather than enforcing preprogrammed decrees." The primary goal is for the elect to be conformed to the image of his Son (Rom 8:29). Theodicy then does not mean that God is the author of evil.¹⁰⁴

(d) The sinner has a free will. Pinnock then adopted John Wesley's doctrine of universal prevenient grace, whereby God graciously compensates for fallen humanity's inability to respond otherwise.

(e) The atoning work of Christ needs re-examination. In contrast to a narrow interpretation of Calvinist logic, Pinnock asserted that Jesus died for the sins of the whole world. If no human response were possible or necessary, then the two options would be universalism (all will be saved) or Calvinism (God alone chooses who will be saved, and no one else). In the light of reciprocity, however, those who are saved are "those who, in their relative freedom granted by prevenient grace, choose in faith to reach out and accept and continue to appropriate the divine grace offered."¹⁰⁵

5. Thaumaturgical. The focus here is on immediate relief from present and specific problems by a "magical" operation. Supernatural help comes to bear on an individual in a local situation in the form of "healing, assuagement of grief, restoration after loss, reassurance, the foresight and avoidance of calamity, and the guarantee of eternal (or at least continuing) life after death."¹⁰⁶

As mentioned earlier, Pinnock witnessed to the healing of a detached retina that had left him basically blind in one eye.¹⁰⁷ Though open to the thaumaturgic, he also exercised caution in the realm of religious experience. He argued that we need to let the biblical text generate the meaning, and that we do the listening--though he added, "we do not want to deliver the church to

¹⁰⁴ Callen, *Pinnock*, 104.

¹⁰⁵ Callen, *Pinnock*, 105.

¹⁰⁶ Robbins, *Exploring*, 73.

¹⁰⁷ Callen, *Pinnock*, 77.

a papacy of biblical scholars.”¹⁰⁸ He acknowledged that all of us come to the text burdened with all manner of presuppositions. Our modern consciousness accepts it as given that we understand everything in relation to what we already know and believe. Hence, what we need is “critical realism.”¹⁰⁹ Since our encounter with the Word of God takes place in a particular historical situation, we need to allow our assumptions (including thaumaturgical) to be opposed by Scripture, even challenged by it.¹¹⁰

6. Reformist. Does Robbins intend by this term a “dogmatic, exclusive, intolerant fundamentalist Christianity that tends to define authentic Christianity in terms of mental assent to a detailed, comprehensive system of doctrinal assertions?”¹¹¹ No, what he means is an openness to supernatural influence which leads to insights about how to amend prevailing corrupt social structures rather than the world itself. As the structures change, evil is dealt with. Key to this response is investigating and recommending ways of changing the essential orientation of the world. Thus, to counter the tendency of “even the most well-meaning people [to] do highly cruel things,” emphasis is placed on “the structures of interaction, distribution, and valuation in society” instead of the conversionist location’s focus on “the hearts of particular individuals.” Regardless of one’s theological convictions, a reformist orientation argues that people of all social status, races, and classes can be nurtured, healed, and edified.¹¹²

We see significant parallels between the reformist individual location and the features of the theological liberalism of Pinnock’s childhood in Toronto in the 1940s. How would we describe the theological model of that era? Whereas Marsden points out that, in the early twentieth century, fundamentalism in the U.S. (and by extension, evangelicalism) considered it absolutely essential to continue standing in the tradition of private or public social programs, and that such involvement was deemed complementary to “the regenerating work of Christ which

¹⁰⁸ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 232.

¹⁰⁹ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 233.

¹¹⁰ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 234.

¹¹¹ Olson, *Mosaic*, 30.

¹¹² Robbins, *Exploring*, 96–97.

saved souls for all eternity,” by contrast liberal theology (then called the Social Gospel) took its lead from philosophical pragmatism, arguing that “the only test of truth was action.”¹¹³ God’s only concern was religious morality, with its implication

that theological doctrine and affirmation of faith in Christ and his deeds were irrelevant, except as an inspiration to moral action, more specifically social action. The Social Gospel . . . did not deny outright the validity of specific beliefs, but took the pragmatist position that we cannot know anything about their validity until we see what they do. In sharp contrast, conservative evangelicals held that truth could be known directly and not only by a pragmatic test. Moreover, in their view God cared as much about our beliefs as about our actions, although the two were never seen as entirely separable.¹¹⁴

Anglican scholar J. I. Packer, writing with a purposed and polemical tendency, offered the following description of theological liberalism in 2007, which interestingly echoes some of the themes highlighted by Marsden:

Liberal theology as such knows nothing about a God who uses written language to tell us things, or about the reality of sin in the human system, which makes redemption necessary and new birth urgent. Liberal theology posits, rather, a natural religiosity in man (reverence, that is, for a higher power) and a natural capacity for goodwill towards others, and sees Christianity as a force for cherishing and developing these qualities. They are to be fanned into flame and kept burning in the church, which in each generation must articulate itself by concessive dialogue with the cultural pressures, processes and prejudices that surround it. In other words, the church must ever play catch-up to the culture, taking on board whatever is the “in thing” at the moment . . . The intrinsic goodness of each “in thing” is taken for granted. In following this agenda the church will

¹¹³ Marsden, *Fundamentalism*, 91.

¹¹⁴ Marsden, *Fundamentalism*, 91–92.

inevitably leave the Bible behind at point after point, but since on this view the Bible is the word of fallible men rather than of the infallible God, leaving it behind is no great loss.¹¹⁵

We suggest then that, by this taxonomy, theological liberalism (including that of Pinnock's youth) tends to be reformist in that the goals of society are not called into question; and utopian in that people themselves can remake the world without calling in a divine power to destroy or re-create it. These were the responses to the world that Pinnock chose to leave behind in his childhood, and to which he never returned, choosing instead to position himself firmly against it (though his relatively brief flirtation with the anti-Vietnam movement in the 1970s might be construed as reflecting vestigial elements of utopian and reformist tendencies still latent within him). His decades-long resistance to the inroads of theological liberalism marked it as his primary foe, though even here he softened in that he began to envision by the early 1990s a rapprochement between the strengths of evangelicalism and those of theological liberalism.

7. Utopian. Unlike a reformist position, the utopian response argues that the entire social world has to be reconstructed according to divine principles. This new, radical social organization will eradicate evil. Only complete replacement will work, rather than just reformation. Yet, unlike the revolutionist response, "people themselves remake the world rather than that a divine power destroy[s] this present world and re-create[s] another."¹¹⁶ So, rather than withdrawing from the world like the introversionist response, the utopian stance actively and constructively engages the existing order.

Pinnock ranged across the eschatological spectrum, rejecting the present pessimism of premillennialism, embracing the optimism of postmillennialism, yet fully aware of amillennialism's claim that evil is not yet overcome in this present world. Without undue

¹¹⁵ J. I. Packer, "Global Realignment: Who We Are and Where We Stand: A Theological Perspective," open letter, Anglican Network in Canada (2007), http://www.anglicannetwork.ca/pdf/who_we_are_and_where_we_stand_ji-packer_112207.pdf.

¹¹⁶ Robbins, *Exploring*, 74.

speculation, he was content to affirm the already/not yet dynamic of New Testament teaching.¹¹⁷

What makes his theology fascinating is to observe how he criss-crossed all seven of these categories through his career, though not in the order given by Robbins. The man's journey can at the least be characterized as "eventful."

8. Overview of Pinnock's Final Years. Callen provides the following summary of our author's journey. By the 1990s Pinnock had identified three standard profiles of Christian theology: conservative, moderate, and progressive. He himself had journeyed from the conservative (emphasizing cognitive and propositional revelation) to the moderate profile (in which theological voices of the present are given a hearing, but are understood not to hijack the enterprise because this position is deemed rooted in the Christian grammar), and had certainly explored the progressive model. His moderate perspective was moulded by his turning toward the Eastern tradition of Christian thought, replacing his previous Latin emphasis on rationalistic theological patterns (as defined by Pinnock) with the Eastern emphasis on "relational, therapeutic, transformational, and cooperative approaches to Christian faith."¹¹⁸ He integrated the wisdom of the ancient Eastern tradition with Western language like "inerrancy" for audiences such as the Evangelical Theological Society, by using the quadrilateral of Wesleyan theology (i.e., Scripture, tradition, reason, and experience). This model retains biblical centrality, yet stresses, by means of reason and tradition, the transformation of the believer by spiritual encounter with the mystery of divine relationality. As a result, Pinnock's criterion of truth shifted from external and dogmatic criteria to internal and pneumatic criteria, a speaking *to* the church by the living Lord from *within* the church.¹¹⁹

This created space for Pinnock, ideologically, to side ultimately in favour of experience. His hermeneutical linchpin shifted from what has been called the Princeton position, depending upon extra-biblical assumptions and norms of Enlightenment rationalism, to more of a pietistic

¹¹⁷ Callen, *Pinnock*, 119.

¹¹⁸ Callen, *Pinnock*, 180.

¹¹⁹ Callen, *Pinnock*, 181–82.

hermeneutic which was theologically existentialist. “If, indeed, we now live in a postfoundationalist context, the challenge is to discover how best to understand the Bible as the instrumentality of the Spirit as the Spirit seeks to appropriate the sacred text so that it speaks relevantly to us today.”¹²⁰ This position was a wide step away from Pinnock’s early and strict rationalism. As noted above (and precipitated in part by Robert Shank’s book *Elect in the Son*, arguing that all people are *potentially* “elect” in God’s economy), his social location now incorporated humanity’s accountability to God, with an ability to hear and respond to him in genuine freedom of will.¹²¹ In terms of his “individual location,” Pinnock had opted for a cautious legitimizing of religious experience.

V. Goals

(1) We argue that there is a *problematic* inherent in the discourse of contemporary studies in religious experience; that is, its (non)relation to the Transcendent in the form of self-intending revelation. There is “a methodological trajectory that systematically avoids the most critical feature of religious experience, namely, its truth element, or its referent, or its appeal to the Transcendent.”¹²² The problem then is not post-Enlightenment’s turn to method. Method *per se* is not bad. The paideia of the historic church in which Pinnock deliberately embedded himself is an expression of method. Sociorhetorical investigation is also a method, or more broadly, a “critical analytic.” The key, rather, is to find a method that can attune itself to the nature of religious experience in all its breadth, depth, and scope—including the possibility of extra-linguistic backing.

(2) We must bear in mind that we are not looking here at an author intentionally writing as a mystic, but rather at a scholar (though the two are not mutually exclusive). Because it is an interpretative analytic, the insights of sociorhetorical investigation will assist us in exploring the

¹²⁰ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 254.

¹²¹ Callen, *Pinnock*, 99.

¹²² Quoted from an email by Prof. James Pambrun, Monday, Mar. 2, 2009.

nature of Pinnock's public rhetoric, especially as it pertains to his religious experience. It will be important to correlate, if possible, specific events in Pinnock's *biography* with the changes we seek to identify in his thinking. Though his experience(s) was intensely personal and subjective it impacted him intellectually, influencing his skilful use of reason, honed for decades within academia; and shaped his corpus.

(3) Pinnock is writing out of a personalized experience for the *public*. He uses the principles of communication to interact with a world of which he is not entirely in control. For the most part, his writing is not a personal reflection recorded in his private journals. There is rather, in his mind, at least one specific audience which he is seeking to persuade. Rhetoric comes into play here because of this audience. In truth, several audiences are in view among which we must include the audience of the given publisher, which also influenced Pinnock's style of writing and the dynamics of his persuasion.

(4) Wittingly or unwittingly, Pinnock was seeking to *persuade* in relation to his religious experience. In Gadamer's terms, he interfaced his living tradition of the past with the complexities of his present, in light of his religious experience. SRI helps us avoid an inherent danger here, as Bloomquist has noted. That danger is a kind of positivism: the naive notion that one can read Pinnock's texts and "access" his experience, coming up with a definitive scientific summary thereof. No, what one comes up with is what Pinnock wanted his audience to understand. He was writing for "persuasion," and this takes us into the rhetorical realm of ideology.

(5) SRI, like the work of Lloyd Bitzer,¹²³ reminds us that believing reading applies to perceived reality, not fantasy--for a discourse is either rhetorical or unrhetorical (meaning fictive). Thus, the efforts of persuasion point to some sort of perceived reality in the rhetor's (religious) experience, a perception which allows for *rhetorical analysis*, for it is hermeneutically accessible to public critique and logical analysis. Since the elements that comprise the rhetorical

¹²³ Lloyd F. Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 1 (1968): 1-14.

situation (rhetor, audience, exigence, context) are located in reality, the rhetorical situation in turn influences the rhetor. Would an experience divorced from reality, contrived or purely subjective, have sufficient force to elicit efforts on the part of a rhetor to persuade an audience? As Pinnock will later argue, “Hardly,” for a drug trip would qualify as such.

(6) Robbins demonstrates that the model of *rhetorolects* helps us bring the inchoate topic of a rhetorical situation, including a religious experience such as Pinnock’s, into sharper focus. There are genetic historical elements within a given rhetorical situation from which one is “constrained” to draw certain conclusions. As those elements emerge Robbins then offers categories to organize them rhetorically, such as “specific social topics,” “common social and cultural topics,” and “final cultural categories.” These categories will allow us to determine the development of rhetorolects, and their groupings into genre, within Pinnock’s selected texts.¹²⁴ Within Pinnock’s rhetorical situation then--as demonstrated in his three representative writings--SRI will enable us to ask critical questions concerning shifts in the span of his work; and of their origin, be it due to his religious experience or to something else; and of the hermeneutical impact of his religious experience on his corpus.

(7) SRI also informs us, through the input of Consigny, that the rhetor is more like an artist than a scientist, making *rhetorical choices*; he or she does not arrive at an irreducible understanding of a given rhetorical situation or religious experience. The nuances with which rhetor and situation interact are best expressed as “art.” Multiple interpretations are available to the rhetor, requiring integrity (what Bitzer calls “fit”) and receptivity to the “recalcitrant particularities” of the situation.¹²⁵

Summary. The results of the process of writing and reading (with their demand for textual support, argumentation, and evidence) are always filtered through the writer's and reader's social

¹²⁴ The question remains, however, as to how exactly?! On this point, Robbins is rather vague. His intuitive sense of “final cultural categories” needs further exploration and refinement.

¹²⁵ Scott Consigny, “Rhetoric and Its Situations,” *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 7, no. 2 (Winter 1974): 175–86.

location within their respective interpretive communities.¹²⁶ Sociorhetorical interpretation provides us with a sophisticated and comprehensive strategy to access Pinnock's world of meanings, while remaining acutely aware of our own contexts as readers. The result will be a critical reading of a theologian of considerable influence in today's evangelical circles.

A central presupposition of sociorhetorical investigation is that, though we do not have access to an author's conscious--and especially unconscious--thought processes, we do have a text. What sets this thesis apart is its application of the analytic of SRI to the texts of a contemporary author (who sadly died of Alzheimer's Disease on Aug. 15, 2010).

First, we will use Robbins' insights to analyze the *inner texture* of these Pinnock texts, word by word, to identify the most frequently occurring lemmas and their positions in each text. We will be watching for things such as patterns in the repetition of the lemmas, progression in their appearances, their impact on the narration(s) in the texts, and how Pinnock uses them to build his arguments. Second, Robbins will guide us in our exploration of the *intertexture* of the texts as we probe the sources from which Pinnock drew in his use of the specific lemmas. This will ground our study of his writings in his cultural, social, and historical context. Third, through SRI we will explore the *ideological* implications which arise from Pinnock's use of his lemmas. Their clusters within the text will indicate the centres of argumentation, or topoi ("the essential, rhetorical building blocks of the text"),¹²⁷ which preoccupy our author. In turn, these topoi will be drawn together into rhetorolects, which are distinctive configurations of textual "themes, topics, reasonings, and argumentations."¹²⁸ The analysis of rhetorolects within and across the selected Pinnock texts will then allow us to trace the overall impact of spiritual

¹²⁶ Vernon K. Robbins, *New Boundaries in Old Territory: Form and Social Rhetoric in Mark*, ed. David B. Gowler, Emory Studies in Early Christianity, vol. 3 (New York: P. Lang, 1994), 6.

¹²⁷ Bloomquist, "Rhetoric," 21–22.

¹²⁸ Robbins, *Invention*, 7.

experience on his theology and reading of Scripture during the twenty-five year span in which he wrote our selected books (1971 to 1996).

CHAPTER 2

Methodology

I. Definition of Sociorhetorical Investigation

Only just recently has an analytic such as sociorhetorical investigation been available to scholars, and, hence, to our study of Pinnock's hermeneutical approach to biblical materials. With an impeccable pedigree, for its foundation rests on the classic work of Bultmann, Dibelius, and Perrin, SRI as shaped by Robbins is impacting historical-critical research. It is known as sociorhetorical investigation for it presents itself not as a methodology *per se*--by imposing a strait-jacket upon a given text--but rather, in the words of its founder, as an "interpretive analytics."¹ Its goal is "not so much to attain agreement among interpreters as to nurture cooperation² in the gathering, analysis and interpretation of data, even among people who disagree with one another."³ Bloomquist concludes that it is modelled on the pedagogical and scholarly career of Robbins himself, who values dialogue and inclusivity even in the face of oppositional rhetoric. Thus, SRI situates itself rhetorically as "inclusion through hearing."⁴

From 1968 to 1984 while teaching in the Department of Classics at the University of Illinois/Champaign, Robbins concluded as a biblical scholar that historical-critical investigation

¹ Vernon K. Robbins, *New Boundaries in Old Territory: Form and Social Rhetoric in Mark*, ed. David B. Gowler, Emory Studies in Early Christianity, vol. 3 (New York: P. Lang, 1994), 1.

² A question which we can explore in our concluding chapter concerns SRI itself: does it not only help to discern truth claims, but seek to promote them, too? Do we have evidence, from our application of this interpretive analytics to selected Pinnock texts, that SRI anticipates opening up a new horizon in the advancement of truth claims?

³ Robbins, *Tapestry*, 3.

⁴ Bloomquist, "Rhetoric," 32.

excessively focuses on what a given scholar believes a text “documents” in the world outside the text, rather than probing the text itself for its own inner nature and meanings; hence, Robbins concluded that historical-critical methods of the last fifty years have not been able to rise to the task.⁵ Without abandoning their riches, he determined that the key to reforming these methods would be an interdisciplinary analysis and interpretation⁶ out of which could rise an analytic that is applicable to any text, anywhere, and able to integrate rhetorical, literary, and semiotic modes.

Interpreting a biblical text is an act of entering a world where body and mind, interacting with one another, create and evoke highly complex patterns and configurations of meanings in historical, social, cultural and ideological contexts, including religious belief. Rhetorical *argument*, social *act* and religious *belief* [emphasis added] intertwine in them like threads and yarn in a richly textured tapestry.⁷

It was in 1975, while musing on the “we” passages in Acts, that Robbins decided to embark upon the first sustained sociorhetorical study of a biblical passage in light of ancient Mediterranean sea voyages. As he observed in a later study, “This study in 1975 revealed that travelling in a boat on the sea with other people created a social environment that made it natural for some authors in antiquity to use first-person plural ‘we’ for literary accounts of sea voyages.”⁸ Study revealed that such a nautical environment became a well-known cultural phenomenon in other Mediterranean literature. In fact, in 1999 Dennis R. MacDonald proposed that the cultural intertexture of the sea voyages in Acts actually dated back to Homer’s *Odyssey*, and argued that

⁵ Robbins, *Tapestry*, 13.

⁶ The goal of SRC is to be a broad-based approach that draws in the many resources of the social sciences. Though Robbins did not initially incorporate the discipline of psychology, efforts have been made to include the insights of Wilhelm Dilthey. See Robbins, *Tapestry*, 12–13.

⁷ Robbins, *Tapestry*, 14.

⁸ See V. K. Robbins, “The We-Passages in Acts and Ancient Sea Voyages,” *Biblical Research* 20 (1975) 5-18; idem, “By Land and By Sea: A Study in Acts 13-28,” *Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers* 15 (1976) 381-96; idem, “By Land and By Sea: The We-Passages and Ancient Sea Voyages,” *Perspectives on Luke-Acts*, (ed. C. H. Talbert; *Perspectives in Religious Studies*; Special Studies Series, No. 5; Macon, Ga: Mercer University Press and Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1978) 215-42. Fn. 20 in Vernon K. Robbins, “Beginnings and Developments in Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation” (Emory University, Atlanta, GA 30033, USA, 2004), 6, <http://www.religion.emory.edu/faculty/robbins/Pdfs/SRIBegDevRRA.pdf>.

Luke, in his accounts in Acts, was reconfiguring basic scenes in the widely-known Homeric tradition.⁹ (See William Sanger Campbell for an insightful illustration of how “we” passages in ancient historical reporting affirmed historical accuracy, including among others the writings of Thucydides.)¹⁰

The very etymology of the term “sociorhetorical investigation” reveals the inner workings of this analytic, and how it will aid us in our analysis of Pinnock’s selected texts. *Socio* means interaction among people. Robbins assumes that similarities in interactions involving linguistic signs and codes bond people and indicate unifying factors.¹¹ Conversely, just as similarities bind, so differences may mark out boundaries that divide people and groups. In other words, indicators embedded in a text provide clues to the social dynamics absorbed into that text.

Rhetorical means “communication in contexts of interaction among similar and different individuals and groups.” For example, in Mark’s Gospel (in which Robbins has spent much of his academic career) he identifies “role sets” like teacher-disciple, teacher-scribe/Pharisee, healer-afflicted, teacher-political leader, etc. Within these role sets, rhetorical discourse relies on repetition, progression, and convention (which is detected in repetitive patterns). Through these patterns, people discuss, evaluate, and establish commonalities that link them together.

Criticism alludes to the Greek “krinein,” referring to judgment or evaluation. This asserts that a wide spectrum of potential readings of a text is natural; and interpretation is an approximation “because it is an activity, a political, social act of persuasion.” Since meaning and language refuse “closure,” meaning is not an object; it is a process and activity. And because reading is invariably communal, the more an interpretation is understood within its community of discourse, the more that reading is judged to be satisfactory compared to alternative readings. As

⁹ D. R. MacDonald, ‘The Shipwrecks of Odysseus and Paul’, *NTS* 45 (1999) 88-107; cf. C. H. Talbert and J. H. Hayes, ‘A Theology of Sea Storms in Luke-Acts’, *SBLSP* 34 (1995) 321-36. See fn. 22 in Robbins, “Beginnings,” 6.

¹⁰ William Sanger Campbell, *The “We” Passages in the Acts of the Apostles: The Narrator as Narrative Character*, Studies in Biblical Literature (Atlanta, Ga.: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007).

¹¹ Following Kenneth Burke, Clifford Geertz, Roger Fowler, M. A. K. Halliday, and Wayne A. Meeks. Robbins, *New Boundaries*, 4.

Robbins states, “Most texts provide buoys in the channel of interpretation, by suggesting ranges of probable or ‘acceptable’ readings.”¹²

II. Why Sociorhetorical Investigation?

A. Text-Based: SRI Reveals the Layerings of a Text

A significant academic contribution of Robbins has been his discovery of how new boundaries vary in significance for different people. H. J. B. Combrink states that it is this respect for the boundaries of others, but at the same time an unwillingness to bow too deeply before any set of boundaries created by humans, which is characteristic of his sociorhetorical approach.¹³ Not surprisingly, Robbins concluded that literary analysis and the historical-critical method had simply proven to be too one-dimensional. Rather than just words on a page, or as a reflection of real life that was going on around the author, texts are in fact composed of layers of impact, with each texture tinted by the world from which it arises.¹⁴

Inner texture: As we look and listen to the words of Pinnock's selected texts, we will seek to remove all *structural* meaning¹⁵ from the words to focus on interweavings like the repetition of particular words, the creation of beginnings and endings, alternation of speech and storytelling, particular ways in which Pinnock uses words to present arguments, the particular

¹² Robbins, *New Boundaries*, 5.

¹³ H. J. Bernard Combrink, “The Challenge of Making and Redrawing Boundaries: A Perspective on Socio-Rhetorical Criticism,” *Nederduitse Gereformeerde Teologiese Tydskrif* 40 (1999): 1, [Http://www.religion.emory.edu/faculty/robbins/SRS/Combrink/ChallengeBoundSRC.pdf](http://www.religion.emory.edu/faculty/robbins/SRS/Combrink/ChallengeBoundSRC.pdf).

¹⁴ Bloomquist, “Rhetoric,” 2–3.

¹⁵ Phenomenology’s critical method uses “eidetic reduction” in an attempt to bracket out “all metaphysical or empirical ‘common sense,’ putting the phenomenologist in the role of allowing the phenomenon to emerge.” Though Paul Ricoeur acknowledged the impossibility of such a reduction, he still accepted the value of the attempt. Boyd Blundell, *Paul Ricoeur Between Theology and Philosophy: Detour and Return*, Indiana Series in the Philosophy of Religion (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2010), 8. Abel argues that, instead, Ricoeur reversed this method. Rather than searching for an invariable identity for a given word, Ricoeur explored the “eidetic variation” to be found in “the very conflict of interpretations,” claiming that this is how existence is to be interpreted. Olivier Abel, “Paul Ricoeur’s Hermeneutics: From Critique to Poetics,” in *Reading Ricoeur*, ed. David M. Kaplan (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York (SUNY) Press, 2008), 192.

The point here, for our thesis, is that Robbins is seeking to remove the semantic structure of words in the process of innertextual investigation, not their reference (else how could their meaning be recognized?).

“feel” or aesthetic of a given text, and the statement and restatement of a certain theme or topic in differing ways, voices, and word patterns in the text.¹⁶

Intertexture: Pinnock wrote while living in a real world, and his texts represent, or refer to, or use phenomena from that world. We will ask ourselves what images shape Pinnock’s description of human interaction as a twentieth- and twenty-first-century author. We will be looking for his references to objects both material and physical, to historical events, his use of other texts, mention of other institutions, and so on. We will also note how he configures data from outside the text. Does he seek to represent external phenomena accurately; or is he adventurous, creating phenomena that relate in some manner to other phenomena in the outside world? He clearly takes well-known traditions from Wesleyanism and Eastern Orthodoxy, and uses those elements to restructure traditional evangelical theology into something different after his treatment. Are there features of his former perspective that he turns on its head to create a radically new tradition?¹⁷ (Here we anticipate our next paragraph, ideology, in which “authors and readers, characters and narrators, as well as interpreters and their audiences” create alliances that “allow them to achieve their ends” in the reusing of intertextual materials.)¹⁸ It will be important to determine how particular units in Pinnock’s texts participate in the overall written document in which they occur, and then compare a particular document with our selected texts.¹⁹

Ideological: With this texture, the focus shifts to people. Where exactly do the readers, and Pinnock, situate themselves? This question applies to Pinnock’s relations to the various

¹⁶ Robbins, *Exploring*, 7–8.

¹⁷ Robbins, *Exploring*, 40.

¹⁸ Bloomquist, “Rhetoric,” 10.

¹⁹ We will subsume under “intertexture” Robbins’ third layering of social and cultural texture --a profile of the text’s social response(s) to its outside world. This includes how the given text prioritizes final social categories such as being lawful, holy, and so on. For a person looking outward from within Pinnock’s given texts, what would be his or her conclusions about other cultures or religious traditions within the discourse? What sort of world is created by the texts for those readers who take these writings seriously? Robbins, *Exploring*, 71–2. People will be reading Pinnock’s texts from within the perspective of one of two narrative stances: either from within (a) a dominant cultural rhetoric, covering a broad territorial region; or from within (b) a subcultural rhetoric, identifying with a subgroup that claims to enact better the values of the dominant status throughout their entire life cycle as a people, Robbins, *Exploring*, 86.

groups around him; then the question can be broadened to include his ideological discourse. Is there, for example, consistency over the decades between his mode of interpretation and the life he has lived, or is there evidence of a progressive feeling of alienation on his part that increases across the years?²⁰ Does he provide evidence of being aware of his biases, applying critical self-awareness to his own treatment of sources? SRI will enable us to probe for insights and deficiencies in this area among others in his critical reflections.²¹

B. Persuasive: SRI Identifies Rhetorical Truth Claims

Combrink highlights the argumentative nature of Christian rhetoric, especially in theology,²² affirming Cunningham's unequivocal claim that Christian theology is best understood as persuasive argument. It is the nature of theology to be involved in debates, disputes, and arguments. As Cunningham puts it, one always finds theologians trying to persuade others, and themselves, of a particular understanding of Christian faith. "The goal of Christian theology then is faithful persuasion: to speak the word that theology must speak, in ways that are faithful to the God of Jesus Christ and persuasive to the world that God has always loved. This has been the goal of Christian theology since the days of one of its earliest practitioners, St. Paul."²³

It is important to note that Robbins came to see that the five textures of a text were not fragmented threads. Rather, a topos weaves into its web of argumentation elements from various

²⁰ Robbins, *Exploring*, 114–15.

²¹ Under "ideology," we will subsume Robbins' final texture of sacred text. For a "thick" description, it will be necessary to consider Pinnock's use of the four previous textures, within which, embedded deeply, he intimates the relationship between humans and the divine; Robbins, *Exploring*, 130. At the level of sacred text, Pinnock is a textbook example of someone who displays a growing unease with his earlier sense of self-understanding. Through the course of this thesis, it will become evident how relentless has been the drive within this man to move into deeper authenticity in his relationship with Jesus Christ, impelled by his ever-evolving hermeneutic.

²² H. J. Bernard Combrink, "The Contribution of Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation to the Reformed Interpretation of Scripture," in *Reformed Theology: Identity and Ecumenicity II, Biblical Interpretation in the Reformed Tradition*, eds. W. M. J. Alston and M. Welder (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2007), 3, [Http://www.religion.emory.edu/faculty/robbins/SRS/Combrink/CombrinkSRReformTheology.pdf](http://www.religion.emory.edu/faculty/robbins/SRS/Combrink/CombrinkSRReformTheology.pdf).

²³ As quoted from D. S. Cunningham, *Faithful Persuasion: In Aid of a Rhetoric of Christian Theology* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991), 5.

textures. Then, as the topoi interact with one another, they in turn generate larger frames of interpretation we introduced earlier as rhetorolects (rhetorical dialects). This is evident in the study of early Christian authors, whose use of ancient rhetorolects was clearly intended to be persuasive. They would embed the argumentation of one frame (i.e., rhetorolect) within the pictorial depiction of another, and by interweaving topographies (pictorial and narrative) with topologies (enthymematic and syllogistic)²⁴ from different rhetorolects, they created new interactive environments of picturing and reasoning. Then their weaving of several rhetorolects together gave voice to their unique arguments through their distinctively Christian discourse.

As we probe Pinnock's texts, we expect SRI to "highlight the topological and topographical shifting, interweaving, and interaction as [his] discourse proceeds."²⁵ Through its lens, we will seek to determine if he amplifies topoi and utilizes them in argumentation to generate new configurations of meaning; to explore sociorhetorically which topoi he selects; and then to ask ourselves if he introduces new rhetorolects into the conversation of his theological circles in order to reconfigure and redirect that conversation.

C. Ontological: Rhetoric Reveals the Self

There was a time, in the medieval era (what Cheryl Glenn calls the early modern age),²⁶ when rhetoric, religion, and social practice were wedded in the Western world. As a result, educational practices at that time were wholly informed by religion, with a codified rhetoric of religion that was the "strongest, most persistent cultural force at the time." Those times have changed, yet the self-interpretative process in writing reflects in any culture a wedding of rhetoric, religion, and practice. Though globally-speaking the spiritual nature of humanity is not

²⁴ Bloomquist, "Rhetoric," 23.

²⁵ Bloomquist, "Rhetoric," 25.

²⁶ Cheryl Glenn, "Rhetoric, Religion, and Social Practices," in *Rhetoric, the Polis, and the Global Village: Selected Papers from the 1998 Thirtieth Anniversary Rhetoric Society of America Conference*, eds. C. Jan Swearingen and Dave Pruett (Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1999), 32.

now expressed in explicitly Christian terms, the ontological dimensions are still evident in the process of communication, for communication is the externalising of one's sense of self.

Enlightenment duality. A duality became evident in the Enlightenment, and is still seen in the metaphors used today in the West to depict a modern person's understanding of a text. Whereas the weaving metaphor, as in a thick tapestry, had been used since Roman times to signify the webs of meaning embedded in a text,²⁷ modernity favoured two others. The first (used of literature) is that of mirrors, whereby one glass reflects upon another to create a virtual world, an image of the world generated within the text yet from a vantage point distinct from the world. A second metaphor, that of windows, has been used in historical studies, whereby the historian (as an outsider) looks into a text from an abstracted, neutral position somewhere above it, or out through the text (again as a visitor) to its outside world. Both metaphors of mirrors and windows imply a bifurcation between history and literature, a separating of mind and body: culturally transcendent "propositional truth" is assumed to exist in disembodied frames of understanding, with which any informed observer can objectively interact. Within this duality, only praxis (not belief) can be verified in a scientific sense, meaning that modernity's rhetoric is historicist, reading the past through the lens of an ever-evolving, ever-improving future.²⁸

Self-in-community. Though the self of the author is not revealed in a text, the author-in-community is revealed. A text cannot exist apart from its originating world; hence, by its very nature it is dialogic. It always originates within the medium of its world's social, cultural, and ideological meanings; and it is always read through the medium of the reader's nexus of social, cultural, and ideological meanings.²⁹ Robbins argues that, since the fullness of truth always escapes us,³⁰ "Our best chance for getting insights into the nature of truth is to understand the

²⁷ Robbins, *Tapestry*, 18.

²⁸ Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, vol. 3, Paperback ed. 1990, trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 210–12.

²⁹ Robbins, *Tapestry*, 19.

³⁰ As Prof. James Pambrun point out, there is always a surplus to truth that exceeds our conditioned statements or assertions. However, this does not imply that our conditioned statements are necessarily less than true.

relationships things can and do have to one another.” SRI, as an analytic, is convinced that the understanding of self emerges within the overlapping spheres between the text, the reader, and the reading communities past and present.³¹ (We note, by way of warning, that the relationships derived from texts are created by and through *communication*. Therefore, hermeneutics alone will not do full justice to the rhetorical task.)

Self-in-praxis. Because rhetoric is geared to do something, it is inseparable from praxis. Glenn points out that in our age the continued study of rhetoric has expanded its boundaries of self beyond male, public, and political. It now includes male and female, public and private, politics and religion, and there is a continual push to study more and more sites of religious belief and rhetorical expertise. This expansion of rhetoric, religion, and social practices has influenced everything from voting rights and citizenship, to safety, freedom, and opportunity.³² The inherent inseparability of rhetoric from practice creates understandings that are not “new,” but rather always/already. Every generation fuses religious conviction, centuries if not millennia old, “with self-consciously persuasive language and social action” unique to its social and cultural milieu.³³

Rhetoric inseparable from belief. Augustine advised Christians metaphorically to carry the gold out of Egypt. However, according to Cheryl Glenn, here lies a critical distinction between the ancient rhetoric of politics vis-à-vis religion: whereas politics had persuasion, or *pistis*, as the cause, the rhetoric of religion had persuasion, or *pistis*, as the effect.³⁴ She claims that ancient rhetoric was integrated with belief, concluding that “*pistis*,” or belief, was the cornerstone of early, persuasive, political and social practices in the rhetoric of the Hellenistic period. Studies indicate that many of the features of Greek rhetorical persuasion were very close to the Christian notion of faith, with belief reflected in social practices such as speeches, deeds,

³¹ Robbins, *Tapestry*, 38.

³² Glenn adds that, if in doubt, the evidence of this convergence of rhetoric with praxis is seen in most towns and cities in churches “with their programs ranging from Sunday services and meals-on-wheels to twelve-step and child-care programs; in shelters for the homeless, diseased, and abused; and in soup kitchens and hospices.”

³³ Glenn, “Rhetoric,” 33.

³⁴ Glenn, “Rhetoric,” 31.

and actions. It was common practice in the Greco-Roman world for politics, as well as state religions, mystery cults, Judaism, and Christianity to weave together rhetoric, religion, and social practices. Glenn's conclusion, like Robbins', is that "Christianity served to validate and invigorate pagan rhetorical practices."

Suspicion of self. There can be a dark side to the persuasive nature of rhetoric, however. Students of rhetoric caution us against concluding from a text that the profile of the writer which emerges is invariably who that person really is. No, the profile that emerges is rather what the person writing *wants* the reader to know about the world, or more specifically about her- or himself, for a good writer identifies with the listener in order to communicate well. Given the persuasive nature of rhetoric, SRI's ideological texture alerts us to the possibility of intentional fallacy by the author. Even more humbling, it also alerts us to this same tendency in us as readers, and, as an analytic, provides a safeguard from our own fragmented, eclectic, and, hence, self-serving interpretations of a text, past or contemporary.

Robbins points out that, initially in one's work, incomplete data is not misleading--rather, it is all true in its context. At a certain point in the gathering stage, however, one decides that there is enough data to produce a "thick interpretation" of the text. Now one begins to enact some aspect of modern intellectual discourse, and here an awareness of one's bias is indispensable to the interpretive moment. Most likely, one as reader has adopted "a primary location" within an influential and current mode of interpretation that is appealing, and will therefore use other modes eclectically. This eclecticism, however, has an inherent danger, for it creates a very fertile environment for one ideological texture to dominate over all other textures in the text. So, SRI's analytic, if followed, compels any researcher (including this writer) to investigate multiple textures of the text, and to draw deliberately on resources and criticisms from various other intellectual disciplines beyond his or her instinctive comfort zone.³⁵

³⁵ Robbins, *Tapestry*, 232.

Rhetorical horizons of author, text, and self. It was a certain fixation on boundaries in the historical-critical approaches which prompted Robbins to seek a thicker understanding of ancient texts. He rejected the failure to incorporate other disciplines, with its ensuing overemphasis on only one dimension of the text (such as in structuralism, linguistics, or form criticism as used by Bultmann, Dibelius and Schmidt), approaches which, for example, were critical of comparing the Gospels to existing Greco-Roman biographies.³⁶ SRI, rather, with its awareness of the multiple power plays at work in an intellectual discourse, allows us to probe the interpretive horizons of the text itself, and the horizons of the interpreters (present, and those past).³⁷ “Analysis and interpretation of ideological texture lead to socio-rhetorical analysis of *modern commentaries* [emphasis added] as well as socio-rhetorical analysis of New Testament texts themselves.”³⁸

Bloomquist draws out this essential role of self in the interface of text and reader, noting that should discontent creep into a person’s understanding of sacred text, the search may begin for an alternative culture with a differing sacred response to the problems or evils that one is facing.³⁹ Because the reading process of a text is dynamic, value and meaning arise as the individual seeks a new configuration of the self within the light of a sacred text (itself necessarily coloured by its specific cultural context).⁴⁰

³⁶ Combrink, “Challenge,” 2.

³⁷ Robbins, *Tapestry*, 234.

³⁸ Robbins, *Tapestry*, 235. Congruent with this understanding of horizons is yet another set of horizons, as explicated by Ricoeur. He identifies three characteristics of the Enlightenment’s understanding of the interface between the *present*, the past of *history* (the space of experience), and the *future* (the horizon of expectation).

(a) Each new era is now thought of as a new quality of time, a *Zeitgeist*, stemming from its new relationship to the future with its irreversible trajectory of “progress.”

(b) Yet such a notion of progress comes at the cost of an ever contracting space of experience, with a diminishment of the burden of history within the present generation.

(c) Thus, history is something that can be made and bent to the collective will of the human race. See Ricoeur, *Time*, 210–12.

This Hegelian notion of an *Aufhebung*, of a lift into an inevitable and total fusion of reason in history with its reality (Ricoeur, *Time*, 207), we set to one side as a possible rhetorlect in contemporary Western society. Does Pinnock, we ask ourselves, interact with this notion—or reinterpret it as a new rhetorlect to explicate better his unfolding, theological vision in light of the impact of religious experience?

³⁹ L. Gregory Bloomquist, “The Rhetoric of Suffering in Paul’s Letter to the Philippians,” *Theoforum* 35, no. 2 (2004): 207.

⁴⁰ Robbins, *New Boundaries*, 2.

Fortunately, Pinnock as an apologist and theologian has left for our study a clear rhetorical trail as he moved from one theological paradigm to another in his life-long attempt to reconfigure his sense of self in light of his experience of Scripture--a transformation that the intertextures of SRI will enable us to chart.⁴¹

III. How to Use Sociorhetorical Investigation

Rhetoric's persuasive nature will be important in our study of Pinnock's writings, for he clearly found a way to accommodate the implications of his spiritual experience without moving into a culture of belief different from that of the historic Christian story. Over the decades, he kept the subject matter of his argumentative rhetoric firmly centred within orthodoxy. Discovering how he did so might allow us to contribute an important insight to academia's ongoing discussion of whether a particular belief structure should or even can be favoured in the study of religious experience.

A. Rhetoric as Persuasion

A driving force within SRI, which must remain at the forefront of our analysis of Pinnock, is the awareness that rhetoric is more than communication, for it includes "the appropriate setting and context for communication to take place in the real world."⁴² In rhetoric, *persuasion* plays a role in shaping the setting and the narrative outline with which the author, consciously or unconsciously, is working.⁴³

⁴¹ Bloomquist, "Suffering," 208.

⁴² Bloomquist, "Suffering," 201.

⁴³ In *The Invention of Christian Discourse*, Robbins presents his case that the Apostles' Creed is argumentative in nature, and more than a collation of cognitive statements. (Developed out of a Roman baptismal creed called the Roman Symbol, by the end of the fourth century it was divided into twelve "articles," each supposedly written by an apostle. See Robbins, *Invention*, 22.) When the first eight articles are compared with the final four, Robbins notes how the story-line itself is the basis for a particular belief:

(1) I believe in a basic story-line about God the Father and His only son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit.

(2) Therefore, I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

Second, rhetoric happens in the context of *cognitive frames*. We as humans give order to cognitive items by reasoning in one domain to make sense of the items in another. In other words, in the words of cognitive science we “frame” an idea. A working definition of frame is “any system of concepts related in such a way that to understand any one concept it is necessary to understand the entire system; introducing any one concept results in all of them becoming available.”⁴⁴ A word and its meaning can only be understood if we know why the speech community created the category of experience in the first place--and then include that reason in the frame in which the word is embedded.⁴⁵ For well over a century scholars have presumed that the different thought worlds of form criticism and genre criticism are separate from each other. This assumption Robbins turned on its head. He accepted instead “the extensive empirical evidence that human cognition presupposes at its most basic levels the transporting of aspects of one conceptual domain to another conceptual domain. In other words, at its foundations human cognition is metaphorical.”⁴⁶

Miriam Petruck uses the word “prototype” rather than metaphor to clarify such framing. A prototype is “a fairly large slice of the surrounding culture against which the meaning of a word is defined and understood.”⁴⁷ By means of prototypes, humans configure and reconfigure their perspective on what is “typical” and what is “atypical.” In North America robins and

Because he sees the internal dynamic of the Creed as argumentative, this means that it does not simply contain a chain of beliefs or a general story-line. Rather, it contains a persuasive story-line that has an “I believe, therefore I believe the following” structure, which in turn provides the underlying impetus of the Creed. Among ancient professions of faith, it is a “particular” story. If a person replaced “God the Father Almighty” with “ever omnipotent Zeus,” or God’s “only Son” with “Isis, mistress of every land,” Robbins points out that both the content of the story and the subject matter of the argumentation would move decisively into an alternative culture of religious belief. See Robbins, *Invention*, 25.

⁴⁴ See Miriam R.L. Petruck, “Frame Semantics,” in J. Verschueren, J-O. Östman, J. Bloomaert, and C. Bulcaen (eds.), *Handbook of Pragmatics: Manual* (Philadelphia/Amsterdam: J. Benjamins, 1997) 2; online: <http://framenet.icsi.berkeley.edu/papers/miriamp.FS2.pdf>. Robbins, *Invention*, 100, fn. 94.

⁴⁵ Robbins, *Invention*, 100.

⁴⁶ Robbins, *Invention*, 99.

⁴⁷ Miriam R.L. Petruck, “Frame Semantics,” in J. Verschueren, J-O. Östman, J. Bloomaert, and C. Bulcaen (eds.), *Handbook of Pragmatics: Manual* (Philadelphia/Amsterdam: J. Benjamins, 1997) 6. Fn. 97 in Vernon K. Robbins, *The Invention of Christian Discourse*, Rhetoric of Religious Antiquity Series, 1 (Blandford Forum, Dorset, UK: Deo Publishing, 2009), 101.

sparrows are considered typical birds, but not ostriches and penguins, which are atypical. For Christians in the ancient Greco-Roman Mediterranean world, at least six conceptual domains were typical. With the introduction of the Christ event, these existing domains were not abandoned, but rather reconfigured. Ancient Mediterranean society's "typical" patterns of wisdom, prophetic, apocalyptic, pre-creation, miracle, and priestly conceptuality were redeveloped by Christians by the year 100 CE into "a complex system of things that were 'typical' in [their] world, which many other people would, on first blush, consider 'atypical.'"⁴⁸ Like those early Christians, who "successfully launched a new culture of discourse in the Mediterranean world that expanded and became continually more nuanced and complex throughout twenty centuries in the history of the world,"⁴⁹ we will be watching to see if Pinnock reconfigures existing metaphorical frameworks within his world.

Lastly, rhetoric needs to be analyzed through an *interdisciplinary* approach. Keenly aware that traditionally sociology has shown little interest in texts⁵⁰ whereas anthropology directs its attention to the close relationship between language, communication, and texts,⁵¹ Robbins deliberately structured SRI as an interdisciplinary model, though he is quick to caution that no multidisciplinary approach will lead to a mythical promised land in which reigns "one correct interpretation"; rather, we will be applying an analytic that delights in dialogue.⁵²

B. Five Textures of a Text

The conceptual framework through which we will assess the persuasive nature of Pinnock's rhetoric will be the five textures posited by Robbins since 1996, like five "threads" woven into any text which tune the reader to its cultural, social, moral, and religious context, be

⁴⁸ Robbins, *Invention*, 100–101.

⁴⁹ Robbins, *Invention*, 120.

⁵⁰ Vernon K. Robbins, "Rhetoric and Culture: Exploring Types of Cultural Rhetoric in a Text," in *Rhetoric and the New Testament: Essays from the 1992 Heidelberg Conference*, eds. Stanley E. Porter and Thomas H. Olbricht (Sheffield, U.K.: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 444.

⁵¹ Robbins, "Rhetoric," 445.

⁵² Robbins, *New Boundaries*, 35.

the text written or oral, poetry or prose, in stone as statuary, in fabrics as art, or in music and song.

1. Inner Texture. All studies of a communicative expression begin with some sort of “text.” It is usually the only link between the reader and the author. Thus, Robbins’ first analytical texture is the inner world of the text itself, with a conscious setting aside of the world or worlds around the text and the reader’s interpretive moments. The hermeneutical principle in play here is that the best guide into the formal world created by the text, is the text itself. As Bloomquist points out, “to ‘hear’ a play like Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*, one does not need to be one of Shakespeare’s original audience or to know Shakespeare’s world or that of medieval Scotland. It is enough to be able to follow the play in the form of the words that are used, the characters, their relationships and actions, the arguments of the plot and narrative.”⁵³

Robbins argues that the inner texture of any text is itself comprised of at least six (sub)textures:

(a) *Repetitive texture and pattern*: repetition that “introduces interpreters to the overall forest, if you will, so they know where they are as they look at individual trees.”⁵⁴

(b) *Progressive texture and pattern*: sequences of words and phrases throughout a unit of text, such as the repetition of a pattern like “I . . . you.”

(c) *Narrational texture and pattern*: “Narrational texture resides in voices (often not identified with a specific character) through which the words in texts speak.”⁵⁵ For example, if we consider a particular Pinnock text as a stage, what staging of events occurs in the discourse? By its very nature, a discourse allows only a limited number of people to be on stage. So, who is speaking?⁵⁶

⁵³ Bloomquist, “Suffering,” 202.

⁵⁴ Robbins, *Exploring*, 8.

⁵⁵ Robbins, *Exploring*, 15.

⁵⁶ Robbins, *Exploring*, 18.

(d) *Opening-middle-closing texture and pattern*: a discourse makes assertions and then supports them with reasons, it clarifies them by using opposites and contraries, and it may present short or elaborate counterarguments.⁵⁷

(e) *Argumentative texture and pattern*: whereas ancient argumentative devices included assertions, reasons, opposites, analogies, examples, and citations of ancient written testimony (as exemplified in *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, 87 BCE),⁵⁸ all of which are able to be identified by clear lexical clues,⁵⁹ our challenge will be to identify the contemporary argumentative devices that Pinnock employs to persuade today's readers, for our author (as a life-long apologist of the Christian faith) is clearly writing to persuade.

(f) *Sensory-aesthetic texture and pattern*: a text can evoke thought, emotion, sight, sound, touch, and smell. In the same manner, it can also evoke or embody reason, intuition, imagination, humour, and so on. Bruce Malina points out that these various sensory actions, in both the Old and New Testaments, for example, are discerned by three "body zones," using parts of the human person as metaphors for classification (heart and eyes; mouth and ears; and hands and feet).⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Robbins, *Exploring*, 21.

⁵⁸ Robbins, *Exploring*, 21.

⁵⁹ *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.43.56 - 44.57 illustrates the development of an idea with the seven precepts of rhetoric (see Robbins, *Exploring*, 21-22):

- (a) Thesis (opening statement)
- (b) Rationales ("because . . .")
- (c) Contrary with Rationale ("I say, then . . .")
- (d) Restatement of Thesis with Rationales ("But on the other hand . . .")
- (e) Analogy (a ship's security versus the security of the republic)
- (f) Example and Testimony of Antiquity ("It is this that, in my opinion, Decius well understood . . .")
- (g) Conclusion

⁶⁰ As quoted in Robbins, *Exploring*, 29-31. See Bruce J. Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*, edition no. 3, revised and expanded (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 73-77. He identifies:

- a) The zone of emotion-fused thought, such as a heart for thinking, along with eyes that fill the heart with data, eyelids, pupils, and the activities of these organs. "In our culture, this zone would cover the areas we refer to as intellect, will, judgment, conscience, personality thrust, core personality, affection, and so forth."
- b) The zone of self-expressive speech, with a mouth for speaking, along with ears that collect the speech of others, tongue, lips, throat, teeth, jaws, and the activities of these organs. "In our culture, this zone would cover the area we refer to as self-revelation through speech, communication with others, the human as listener who dialogues with others in a form of mutual self-unveiling, and so on."
- c) The zone of purposeful action, with hands and feet for acting, arms, fingers, legs, and the activities of these organs. "In our culture, this zone would cover the area of outward human behavior, all external activity,

As Robbins points out, this first stage of analysis looks for meaning in verbal structure, in the texture of the language itself. We actually attempt to remove all structural meanings from the words in order to let their order yield its basic sense. Only with this stage completed are we then ready to move on to the interaction between a given text and the world that surrounds it.⁶¹

2. Intertexture. Now we turn to the participation of a particular text in the overall written corpus to which it belongs, and with texts in the world beyond the document.⁶² This is the integration of a text's formal world with "other 'worlds' of other texts, as well as with the social, cultural and sacred worlds of people's experience,⁶³ such as phenomena in language used in other texts and in daily speech (Robbins' oral-scribal feature); social factors like the structures of families and households, etc.; cultural modes of understanding and belief; and historical events outside of the texts that become in turn historical accounts by means of the narrative discourse.⁶⁴ In their relation to their outside world, texts prove to be dynamic: one text might, for example, imitate another text but place different people in it; or restructure a well-known tradition so that it ends differently or has very different implications for belief and action; or it might even invert a tradition, turning the previous rhetoric on its head to create something new.⁶⁵

One of our tasks at this level will be to determine if Pinnock's texts simply configure the phenomena of their outside world accurately, or if his goal is adventure by creatively generating

human actions upon the world of persons and things."

In the seemingly bizarre story of 2 Kgs 4:8-37, for instance, the prophet Elisha pleads with God to resurrect the life of the only child of the wealthy woman from Shunem. Contrary to today's sensibilities, he prays and then stretches himself out completely upon the dead child as it lies on its bed. To ancient listeners, Elisha's speech-act would have implicitly made sense. They would have noted that, with his mouth to the child's mouth (self-expressive speech), his eyes to the child's eyes (emotion-fused thought), and his hands on the child's hands (purposeful, outward action), Elisha was calling on God from within all three zones of his person; that in the scene, "the prophet Elisha symbolizes his total living self as he lies on the child he seeks to resuscitate." The prophet, in other words, was summoning and offering the whole of himself to God in intercession on behalf of another, and God graciously answered. Inner textural threads (inseparable from the socio-cultural values, and described in our next section) help us realize that it is not the miracle of resurrection that stands front and centre in this passage, but rather the power of self-sacrificing intercession by a faithful follower of Yahweh. Malina, *NT World*, 68-70.

⁶¹ Robbins, *Exploring*, 7.

⁶² Robbins, *Exploring*, 38.

⁶³ Bloomquist, "Suffering," 203.

⁶⁴ Robbins, *Exploring*, 3.

⁶⁵ Robbins, *Exploring*, 40.

something new, relating data in his text “in some provocative way to phenomena outside the text,”⁶⁶ leaving his interpretive stamp upon the reconfigured results.⁶⁷

3. Social and Cultural Texture. At this stage, we as readers are invited to live with Pinnock’s texts in our world, compelled to do so by the inherent power within a text to effect social change.⁶⁸ Robbins assumes that a text has absorbed the pigments of the values, practices, and institutions of its originating culture. These textual colours, transmitted to the reader by certain engaging devices in a given text, are consciously or subconsciously then woven by the reader into webs of significations, webs which have been culturally produced, and which in turn produce culture.⁶⁹

What kind of world view and value system does [a text] reinforce or inculcate? What kinds of actions would it encourage people to undertake and what kinds of beliefs and convictions would it encourage people to hold? What kinds of attitudes would it encourage people to have about those outside their community? Therefore, what kind of community might this text nurture?⁷⁰

Then, the impact upon us as reader by the “world” of a particular text⁷¹ is determined in three different ways.

(a) We are influenced by *specific* social topics within the text, such as “resources for changing people or social practices, for destroying and re-creating social order, for withdrawing

⁶⁶ Robbins, *Exploring*, 40.

⁶⁷ Other possible avenues of entrance into Pinnock’s use of texts include:

- a) oral-scribal intertexture, such as recitation, recontextualization, reconfiguration, narrative amplification, and thematic elaboration, Robbins, *Exploring*, 40–58;
- b) cultural intertexture (insider knowledge), Robbins, *Exploring*, 58–62;
- c) social intertexture (commonly held by all persons of a region), Robbins, *Exploring*, 62–63;
- d) and historical intertexture, Robbins, *Exploring*, 63–68.

⁶⁸ Robbins, *Exploring*, 3.

⁶⁹ Robbins, *New Boundaries*, 2.

⁷⁰ Bloomquist, “Rhetoric,” 26–7.

⁷¹ Robbins, *Exploring*, 71.

from present society to create one's own social world, or for coping with the world by transforming one's own perceptions of it";

(b) then by *common* social and cultural topics, like customs, values, and modes of relationships, which are reflected within the text's intertextual world; and

(c) thirdly, by the *final* social and cultural location which the text selects as ideal for us, the reader, be it the dominant cultural stance of the majority, or a subordinate, oppositional, or marginal cultural stance of a minority.⁷² Cultural analysis will not be something extrinsic to Pinnock's texts.

4. Ideological Texture. Rarely do texts simply devise a world of their own for no other purpose than creativity, or merely report social and cultural realities from their own vantage point; rather, texts are rhetorical, and, hence, ideological. The author seeks to "configure and reconfigure cultural and historical belief systems, including those systems' 'biases, opinions, preference, and stereotypes.' "⁷³ In other words, Pinnock had a *purpose* as he wrote for his ideal reader, all the while embedded in the social and cultural world into which he was born. This means that the value systems in his texts mirror back to us as readers his social and cultural realities, including those he felt compelled to change due to experience and/or reflection.

Robbins prefers to describe the ideological stage as "simply an agreement by various people that they will dialogue and disagree with one another with a text as a guest in the conversation."⁷⁴ Thus, the ideological texture is at the opposite end of the scale from that of inner texture (stage one). The biases, opinions, preferences, and stereotypes of a writer or a reader are encouraged to come to the fore, with the text as the medium by which comparisons are made between the writer and the reader. In fact, while analyzing the writer, the reader is also being analyzed by the text, for the language that the text evokes and nurtures subtly interacts with the particular view point of the reader as interpreter.

⁷² Robbins, *Exploring*, 3.

⁷³ Bloomquist, "Suffering," 205.

⁷⁴ Robbins, *Exploring*, 95.

The ideological texture can in turn be teased apart into several strands. First, there is the individual location of the *reader* (meaning us, the interpreters). “Only if you have significant insight into the ideological texture of your own presuppositions, dispositions, and values will you be able to analyze the ideological texture both of other people’s interpretations of a text and of a text that is the mutual interest of you and another person who has interpreted it.”⁷⁵ From a sociological perspective, Bloomquist follows Robbins in pointing out that an individual can find her- or himself in one of five possible settings vis-à-vis the surrounding culture.⁷⁶ The person can be part of the dominant culture (like a member of American culture in the 20th century); or of a “subculture,” which in the example of an ethnic subculture defines itself by resisting a few elements of the dominant society rather than that society as a whole. A person can also reject such dominance and seek out a “counter-culture” as an alternative to the existing rhetorics (moving from North American capitalism into a subcultural form of Christianity or feminism is an example). If the same person lacks for vision, he or she can choose to attack the existing culture by joining a “contra-culture.” A mass movement in the early stages of a revolution, or young men in urban gangs, provide examples. Last is “liminal culture,” in which the individual or group finds itself in transition. Generational or migrational flux comes to mind here.⁷⁷

Second, there is the reader’s *interpretative relation* to other rhetorics, ranging from a particular faction or sub-group such as just noted above; to historic traditions (a special allegiance when interpreting the Bible and the world, like Protestant, Catholic, etc.); to multiple historic traditions throughout the world, which link New Testament interpretation to Judaism, out of which Christianity emerged, as well as to traditions like Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, and Native American religion.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ Robbins, *Exploring*, 96.

⁷⁶ Bloomquist, “Suffering,” 206–7.

⁷⁷ Robbins, *Exploring*, 86–88. He develops these categories more fully in his article, Robbins, “Rhetoric,” 443–63.

⁷⁸ Robbins, *Exploring*, 101.

Third, Robbins includes modes of *intellectual* discourse, and fourth, spheres of *ideology*--the particular mode of discourse through which a biblical interpreter comments on a significant matter.⁷⁹ As important as the particular mode of one's choice is the awareness that, as interpreters, we have an ideological perspective. This ideological texture will shape our understanding of Pinnock, and it is under its wings that we draw in the following fifth texture as well.

5. Sacred Texture. As the last of Robbins' five textures, we turn our attention to the relation of humans to the divine, in which the reader is seeking the divine through a text. Within the Bible, for example, SRI isolates the following elements of sacred texture: communication about gods, holy persons, spirit beings, divine history, human redemption, human commitment, religious community, and ethics.⁸⁰

As Bloomquist points out, suppose a person is happy within a particular sacred context. This could take the form of a Pentecostal or charismatic "Toronto Blessing" culture. The person will use rhetoric and rhetorical topics that reflect that particular culture. However, should discontent creep in for any particular reason, the search may begin for an alternative culture with a differing sacred response to the problems or evils that one is facing. The same person might turn to a liberal reformist culture, or perhaps to a liturgical setting that better portrays divine mystery with the accompanying human response of awe.⁸¹ In other words, what is at play here is not only the image of the self, but the much greater view of one's place in the world. When we need a new image, because of social, cultural, ideological or religious changes, our existing model has evidently failed us. "It is at that point, however, that we can chart the transformation or proposed transformation that leads someone in that position from one system to another as s/he attempts to discover a new configuration (or refiguration of the existing system) . . ."⁸²

⁷⁹ The mode through which an interpreter comments includes "theological, historical, sociological, anthropological, psychological, [and] literary discourse," Robbins, *Exploring*, 106.

⁸⁰ Robbins, *Exploring*, 4.

⁸¹ Bloomquist, "Suffering," 207.

⁸² Bloomquist, "Suffering," 208.

Our choice of Pinnock's material covering thirty-five years will provide us with a clear picture of the strategies he used in his efforts to achieve well-being, and to overcome obstacles to fullness of being, through his use of sacred text and via the ideological lens through which he read it.⁸³ This is really the major point of this thesis: that Pinnock's works reveal textually an author coming to grips with his changing place in the world.

C. Rhetorolects and Their Elements

If one is willing to accept the analogy that a cultural system is like a set of major and minor premises, then a rhetorolect (rhetorical dialect) contains a specific set of major and minor theses with their claims about God and the world supported by rationales and the other typical elements of an argument.⁸⁴ Or, as Robbins describes a rhetorolect, it is the logical and meaningful integration of different mini-cultures within a larger, overarching culture.⁸⁵ Looking at it from the bottom up, whereas a topos is a sociocultural and linguistic frame that provides a familiar and logical place for an argument, a rhetorolect is an overarching collation of frames (of topoi) that cluster around one another--a process that, in Robbins' words,⁸⁶ is heuristic and dynamic and ever on the move.⁸⁷

⁸³ See fn. 43 in Bloomquist, "Suffering," 207.

⁸⁴ Combrink, "Challenge," 11.

⁸⁵ As quoted in Robbins, V. K. "The Dialectical Nature of Early Christian Discourse," *Scriptura: the International Journal of Bible, Religion and Theology in Southern Africa* 59 (1996), 356.

⁸⁶ Vernon Robbins, in conversation with Peter Robinson, 26 Sep. 2009.

⁸⁷ Rhetorolects can also be understood as Idealized Cognitive Models (ICMs), i.e., conventionally organized mental networks in Mediterranean culture and tradition:

* generic spaces = conceptual mental spaces;

* experienced spaces (firstspace) = experiences of the body in social places;

* conceptualized spaces (secondspace) = sensory-aesthetic and cognitive experiences creating cultural, religious, and ideological places;

* spaces of blending (thirdspace) = debate, reconciliation, elaboration, and avoidance in relation to cultural, religious, and ideological places. Robbins, *Invention*, 108.

"People's words and phrases cause people to recruit conventional discourse frames (rhetorolects or ICMs [Idealized Cognitive Models]) that invite pictures of spaces and actions that exist in cultural memory. Sensory-aesthetic experiences of the body in various social places in the world – like household, village, city, synagogue, kingdom, temple, and empire – are the 'firstspace' [underlining added] contexts in which people develop and perpetuate special pictures and memories in their minds. People activate cognitive and conceptual abilities to interpret these social places and actions as 'secondspace' cultural, religious, and ideological places. In addition,

As mentioned earlier, the genius of early Christian writing was to reconfigure existing rhetorolects, hence, creating new configurations of speech. Though he used the word “discourse” rather than Robbins’ word “rhetorolect,” in 1980 Paul Ricoeur wrote an essay entitled “Toward a Hermeneutic of the Idea of Revelation.” He argued for five discourses in the Hebrew Bible: prophetic, narrative, prescriptive, wisdom, and hymnic discourse.⁸⁸ His intent was to identify the various literary homes of differing discourses in the Hebrew Bible.⁸⁹ Ricoeur’s suggestion was ground-breaking, making an important advance in biblical interpretation by calling attention to the power of biblical literature to create poetic modes with their creative images of human life in the world.⁹⁰

Robbins prefers to speak of dialects rather than styles, discourses, or poetic modes, for his metaphor highlights the *persuasive* rhetorical nature of language. Just as dialects converse with one another within a recognizable linguistic boundary, so rhetorolects⁹¹ are a form of language identified by a distinctive configuration of themes, topics, reasonings, and argumentations.⁹² (It is important to note that this description offered by Robbins does not actually reveal any persuasive intent. It remains an open question as to whether he provides an adequate argument for persuasion as central to SRI.) Due to the breadth of their rhetorical dialects, first-century

people use processes of part-whole, similar-dissimilar, opposite, etc. to relate pictures, actions, and reasonings (in ‘generic’ spaces) to one another. In the context of these activities, people negotiate their daily lives in ongoing contexts of sensory-aesthetic experiences which are ‘thirdspace’ ‘spaces of blending.’ Sociohistorical interpreters are accepting the challenge of analyzing and interpreting six rhetorolects that invite people to recruit organizing, cultural frames that blend places and spaces in special networks of reasoning and argumentation in particular ways: wisdom, precreation, prophetic, miracle, priestly, and apocalyptic.” Robbins, *Invention*, 108.

⁸⁸ Robbins, *Invention*, 53.

⁸⁹ Though Ricoeur did not list groupings of discourses, Robbins suggests that narrative poetics, for example, are to be found in their home in Genesis through Exodus 19, Joshua through 2 Kings, Ezra-Nehemiah through 1-2 Chronicles, and perhaps Ruth. Robbins, *Invention*, 53.

⁹⁰ Robbins, *Invention*, 54.

⁹¹ Naming rhetorolects poses a problem, in that the names themselves are metonymic: “the names refer to the conceptual domain of a rhetorolect by referring to some sector of the domain rather than to the entire domain.” It is exceedingly difficult to find terminology that refers to the entire conceptual domain of any rhetorolect. A significant sector is chosen, instead, to refer to the entire domain. Understandably, scholars of SRI differ one with the other, as one emphasizes one sector of the domain whereas another stresses a different sector of it. Robbins, *Invention*, 112.

⁹² Robbins, *Invention*, 69.

Christians could address topics and issues ranging from the microcosmic to the macrocosmic, from visible to invisible realms, including “individual human bodies, households, villages, synagogues, cities, temples, kingdoms, empires, the created world, and God’s uncreated realm.”⁹³ This prepared Christianity to function first locally, then to become the privileged religion of the Roman empire, and then to function in contexts almost anywhere in the world.⁹⁴

Questions shaping this thesis therefore are: What are the fundamental topoi, and, hence, rhetorolects, that emerge in Pinnock’s selected corpus? And are they persuasive in nature? As a theologian, and especially as an apologist, he was well tuned to his cultural and theological context, so his texts will provide us with a fascinating laboratory for the exploration of this question. To pursue our questions, we will need to understand better some of the building blocks that underlie Robbins’ analytic.

1. Topoi. Since 1996, scholars around the world have been working with the multi-textural analytic offered by SRI, presupposing that a text reflects social, cultural, and ideological communication. At the same time, however, Robbins and the team working with him have shifted their focus from textural analysis to topical analysis of the text. The word preferred by Robbins for the framing of an argument is “topos” with its primary sense of place (ranging in meaning from geographic locale to occasion or opportunity).⁹⁵ His rationale is based on Aristotle’s idea that a “topos is a landmark on the mental geography of thought, something that

⁹³ As mentioned earlier, Robbins identifies six such “dialects” throughout the Bible, which are constructed as follows:

1. Wisdom: that speech of God, Christ, and believers will produce fruitfulness.
2. Apocalyptic: that Christ’s initial coming produced a new beginning, and Christ’s return will produce a new world.
3. Pre-creation: that God’s and Christ’s primordial existence produces eternal life in believers.
4. Prophetic: that God calls people, including Christ, to call and exhort people to be a righteous kingdom.
5. Miracle: that God’s power working in and/or through Christ and believers produces bodily transformation.
6. Priestly: that sacrifice by Christ and believers produces glorification of God and holy benefit for believers. See Figure 3: Rhetoric Internal to Each Rhetorolect, Robbins, *Invention*, 118.

⁹⁴ Robbins, *Invention*, 120.

⁹⁵ No. 5117, R. L. Thomas, *New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek Dictionaries*, updated ed. (Anaheim, Calif.: Foundation Publications, 1998), www.lockman.org.

evokes a constellation of networks of meanings as a result of social, cultural, or ideological use, something, in other words, very much like what Carol Miller describes as a ‘place to which an arguer (or problem solver or thinker) may mentally go to find arguments.’”⁹⁶

To refine his meaning, Robbins turned to Walter J. Ong,⁹⁷ who argues that when an ancient author dating back at least to the time of Quintilian (c. 35 - c. 100) wanted to develop a “proof,” or a line of thought on a topic such as the guilt of an accused criminal or friendship or whatever, he or she could sketch out something by working with *topoi* that Ong has labelled *analytic commonplaces*.

In the ancient Mediterranean world, the socially accepted authority for such a category of commonplaces was the collections of sayings that the given society had formulated on various topics of interest such as loyalty, decadence, and so. The ancient writer would work these formulas into her or his own speech-making or writing. Such collections of wisdom Ong called *cumulative commonplaces*.⁹⁸ For example, several abstract headings (i.e., *topoi*) have been identified which socially shaped discourse in the New Testament, such as honour and shame; patronage, reciprocity, and grace; kinship and the household of God; and purity and pollution.⁹⁹

Both the analytic and the cumulative commonplaces were woven into ancient oral communication, which invariably relied upon fixed materials inherited from the past. As Robbins notes, the end result in ancient society was that *topoi* emerged from a variety of conceptual locations, permeated with knowledge that could be richly reconnected.¹⁰⁰ In early Christian literature, as that knowledge was moulded and communicated, the *topoi* took two differing forms. They either served to depict something pictorial (rhetographical), or to construct arguments (rhetological).

⁹⁶ Bloomquist, “Rhetoric,” 20–21. Quoting from Miller; Warnick, 108 .

⁹⁷ See Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (New York : Routledge, c1988, 1995) 110-11, quoted in Robbins, *Invention*, 81.

⁹⁸ Robbins, *Invention*, 82.

⁹⁹ The Context Group is comprised of Bruce J. Malina, John H. Elliott, Jerome H. Neyrey, Richard Rohrbaugh, John J. Pilch, Philip F. Esler, Halvor Moxnes, and other members. See Robbins, *Invention*, 85.

¹⁰⁰ Robbins, *Invention*, 82.

2. Enthymemes. When constructing an argument, not always is every premise clearly stated. An “enthymeme,” another helpful device for tracking arguments, is understood as a syllogistic argument that is incompletely stated. For example, if one argues that “ ‘All insects have six legs; therefore, all wasps have six legs,’ the minor premise, ‘All wasps are insects,’ is suppressed.” Though the speaker is free to omit any one of the propositions (including the conclusion), usually it is the one that comes most naturally to mind that is omitted.

As Robbins puts it, topoi “reside at the base of enthymemes, since topoi function persuasively in descriptive and explanatory discourse on the basis of pattern recognition.”¹⁰¹ For example, consider how the topos of honour generated a seat for an argument for ancient Mediterranean listeners. Within its pattern of values, their “experience of ‘recognizing the pattern’ gave credibility to the topos, evoking a conviction that the pattern is ‘sure’ (based on a ‘sign’) or ‘probable’ (based on ‘likelihood’).” For ancients, honour was not simply an idea or theme, but rather a nexus for enthymematic and completing convincing arguments--though arguments that would not have the same rhetorical power in today’s Western culture, given that at least one premise in the ancient setting was culturally assumed.¹⁰²

3. Rule, Case, and Result. Our contemporary syllogistic use of enthymemes differs from ancient rhetorical use. Aristotle originally applied enthymemes (see his *Prior Analytics*, ii, 27) to persuade rather than instruct, basing his argument on probabilities or signs.¹⁰³ Robbins recognized this, realizing that a key to ancient rhetorical persuasion is argumentation from *probabilities*. Ancients were comfortable working from “sure assumptions” (signs) or from probable assumptions (“likelihoods”), rather than from abstract philosophical thought devoid of context such as we use today. In ancient literature, the argument usually took the persuasive form of Rule, Case, and Result, rather than today’s argumentative form of Major Premise, Minor

¹⁰¹ Robbins, *Invention*, 83.

¹⁰² Robbins, *Invention*, 82–83.

¹⁰³ That is, “on propositions that are generally valid or on particular facts that may be held to justify a general principle or another particular fact.” *Britannica* 10 June 2009. See “Enthymeme,” <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/188934/enthymeme>.

Premise, and Conclusion.¹⁰⁴ This persuasive manner of arguing is important for understanding Pinnock for it provides us with an alternate means of exploring his argument in each of our three books, a means of Rule, Case, and Result (persuasion) rather than Premises and Conclusion (argumentation).

Why is such an ancient alternative worth trying? Because it brings to the fore the role of probability rather than certainty, an important factor as we explore something as ephemeral in nature as Pinnock's religious experience.

4. Chreiai. We now introduce yet another element of ancient Mediterranean argumentative strategy--"chreiai," noteworthy because they integrate both word and *deed* in the act of persuasion. A chreia as a literary unit is a brief reminiscence of a person that highlights a speech, action, or both.¹⁰⁵ It draws out as of equal importance the role of actions, which can sometimes even precede speech, and also identifies instances where specific speech is prior to generalized maxims or sayings within a tradition. By studying ancient treatises entitled *Progymnasmata*,¹⁰⁶ Robbins concluded that in a rhetorical text, speech-act was summarized in a chreia or chreiai with the purposeful intent of persuading a given audience. Such literary units

¹⁰⁴ Robbins, *Invention*, 82–83.

¹⁰⁵ "Chreia" (from the Greek *chreiodes*, 'useful') is 'a brief reminiscence referring to some person in a pithy form for the purpose of edification,' by taking the form of an anecdote that reports either a saying, an edifying action, or both. It amplifies a brief account of what someone has said or done, and is composed by using these steps:

1. Praise the sayer or doer, or praise the chreia itself
2. Give a paraphrase of the theme
3. Say why this was said or done
4. Introduce a contrast
5. Introduce a comparison
6. Give an example of the meaning
7. Support the saying/action with testimony of others
8. Conclude with a brief epilogue or conclusion"

From <http://rhetoric.byu.edu/Pedagogy/Progymnasmata/Chreia.htm>, by Gideon O. Burton, ed., "Chreia, or Anecdote," in *Silva Rhetoricae* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 26 May 2009), <http://rhetoric.byu.edu>.

¹⁰⁶ *Progymnasmata* wove oral and written speech closely together in the early first century BCE. Students would write and rewrite brief literary units before adapting a unit to "a larger rhetorical/literary persuasive setting" such as an extended prose composition. Students would then express the exercises orally to practice their argumentation. See Robbins, *New Boundaries*, 25.

were not meaning-neutral, but rather directed by the author in a highly biased fashion toward a persuasive goal, thus making rhetorical use of a text inseparable from ideology.¹⁰⁷

A central feature then of a chreia or chreiai is persuasion through speech and act. They form essential building blocks of enthymemes (also persuasive in nature), which are in turn underlaid by topoi; that is, familiar and logical places for an argument¹⁰⁸ which reflect the arguer's cultural and ideological context. These constitutive elements of rhetorolects, brought to light through sociorhetorical investigation, provide us with a sophisticated means of probing the persuasive side of Pinnock's communication to his readers about and, even more so, by means of his own self-transcendent experience(s).

D. Argumentative Words Versus Pictures

A mark of Robbins' brilliance is his ability to identify lacunae in New Testament studies, and to devise a new conceptual framework, including vocabulary, to address the perceived lack. Yet true to form, he does so not unilaterally, but while engaging with leading scholars, past and present, in his field.

A particular gap which he has identified, and which will be a question we carry forward in our rhetorical analysis of Pinnock, is the "absence of terminology for interpreting the visual texture of a text, namely the rhetoric of a text that invites people to recruit images and pictures in

¹⁰⁷ We note, by way of example, how Luke's account of Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus is replete with action integrated with speech, both human and divine. The role played by ancient chreiai hints that Luke's intent, within this particular textual unit, was not to provide an objective, meaning-neutral depiction of spiritual transcendence per se, such as would meet Enlightenment criteria, but was rather to create a biased, persuasive depiction of a spiritual event in Paul's life to be interpreted entirely in light of Jesus' post-resurrection speech and appearances noted earlier in Luke-Acts. Wright argues that the "remote god" view permeates today's religious climate with its "dogma that all dogmas are wrong, the monolithic insistence that all monolithic systems are to be rejected." Ironically, this contemporary point of view is argued with the same insistence as was the older dogmatists' claim of a particular formulation and interpretation. It takes two expressions:

(a) Human religions are at best vague approximations, for god is, or the gods are, so far away that they are largely unknowable.

(b) Or, pantheism claims that all religions are simply different languages expressing the concept that "god" is the divine or sacred aspect within the present world. See N. T. Wright, *The Challenge of Jesus: Rediscovering Who Jesus Was and Is* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 100.

¹⁰⁸ Vernon Robbins, in conversation with Peter Robinson, 26 Sep. 2009.

the mind.” He has identified the opposites within this lacuna as rhetological language vis-à-vis rhetographical language (mentioned above). Both types of communication are used by a skilful writer to create his or her argument, though one mode is usually favoured. An example serves to describe this concept.

Robbins points out that 1 Corinthians 1:30-31 presents a christological belief that Jesus is the Messiah:¹⁰⁹ “God is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, in order that, as it is written, ‘Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.’ ”

Approaching the argument of 1 Cor 1:30-31 using not the structure of Major Premise, Minor Premise, and Conclusion, but rather of Rule, Case, and Result, we note that the Rule that Paul cites comes from Jer 9:24, in which (at the time of Jeremiah’s writing) the very epicentre of holiness, the Temple, was in the midst of being overrun by pagan warriors carrying their “conquering” gods. Shamed by such a defeat of international proportions at the hands of foreign deities, the prophet nonetheless stubbornly calls for boasting in Yahweh’s glory and future vindication. Centuries later, with this as his Old Testament Rule, Paul presents to his readers in Corinth the Case that there is power in the message that Jesus, in *his* humility and apparent cosmic defeat, has been vindicated as the Christ. The Result in Paul’s argument is, by logical extension, the inclusion of these ordinary broken Corinthians in Christ’s holy Kingdom--on the basis of their faith in the message of Jesus, and nothing else.

¹⁰⁹ Robbins, *Invention*, 97–98. “An enthymeme is sometimes defined as a ‘truncated syllogism’ since either the major or minor premise found in that more formal method of reasoning is left implied. The enthymeme typically occurs as a conclusion coupled with a reason. . . .

Example: We cannot trust this man, for he has perjured himself in the past.

In this enthymeme, the major premise of the complete syllogism is missing:

Those who perjure themselves cannot be trusted. (Major premise - omitted)

This man has perjured himself in the past. (Minor premise - stated)

This man is not to be trusted. (Conclusion - stated)”

See “Enthymeme,” in *Silva Rhetorica* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 2009), [Http://humanities.byu.edu/rhetoric/Silva.htm](http://humanities.byu.edu/rhetoric/Silva.htm).

What would this declaration of Christ's vindication look like if expressed in "Christography," in the pictorial-narrative realm of belief with narration of Jesus acting as the Christ? For that, Robbins turns to Matt 9:20-22.¹¹⁰

Then suddenly a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his cloak, for she said to herself, 'If I only touch his cloak, I will be made well.' Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, 'Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well'. And instantly the woman was made well.

When Paul's rhetological description in 1 Corinthians is paralleled with Matthew's rhetorographical description in Matt 9:20-22, the keenness of Robbins' insight is evident. The enthymeme not mentioned but assumed in both texts is the ancient Jewish assumption that holiness radiated out from the Temple in concentric circles. Hence, the farther one was from the Temple, the greater one's state of unholiness. Yet in Matt 9, Matthew portrays Jesus as the epicentre of Yahweh's holiness, allowing someone on the outer fringe of wellness and health deliberately to touch him, and taking her non-health to himself. Unlike the unclean Babylonians who overran the Temple precincts and defiled it, bringing their unholiness in with them, here the holiness and shalom of Jesus moves out to overwhelm the disease that was binding this suffering woman. She, like the later Corinthian believers, is drawn into the radius of Jesus' holiness and made clean.

Summation

Methodologically-speaking, as Robbins points out, in the West we regularly develop dimensions of "rhetology," of argumentative words and concepts, at the expense of good terminology to interpret the pictures and narrative of "rhetography," as exemplified in the Matthean

¹¹⁰ Robbins, *Invention*, 86.

story above. This then plays out in theology, which is reasoning (i.e., argumentative-enthymematic discourse) about God or the divine. As Robbins puts it, “We have substantive discussions concerning how theological discourse should be constructed, and these discussions and their results are highly productive.” However, to balance this conceptual emphasis, that which is missing from the discussion is “theography, description and narration of God and God’s activities.”¹¹¹ It is Robbins’ hope that a new era in biblical and theological interpretation will emerge—including theographical tools--once interpreters begin to explore the dynamic interactive relation between rhetology and rhetography.

We suspect, in light of this bifurcation, that Pinnock’s use of argumentative vocabulary will dominate any use on his part of pictorial communication. This may raise a red flag in our final critique of his selected writings, revealing an absence of rhetographical vocabulary which thus weakens the strong features of analysis and interpretation in his work as a biblical commentator, theologian, and explorer of the role of religious experience.¹¹² However, this is supposition at this point, and an inner textual analysis of Pinnock’s writings, including the several subtle sub-textures identified by Robbins, will help us to locate him either firmly in the midst of rhetological persuasion, or choosing to challenge its conventional boundaries with deliberate rhetorographical language.

¹¹¹ Robbins, *Invention*, 86.

¹¹² Robbins, *Invention*, 86–87.

CHAPTER 3

Inner Texture:

Getting Inside the Text

A text creates a picture, and the power of a text is that picture. Long after reading, it lingers in the reader's mind with the potential to effect change--sometimes powerful change. For that change to happen, however, the picture needs to be understood. Here lies the role of innertextual analysis, which as SRI's first stage looks for meaning in the word use by the author. Acknowledging the unavoidability of a basic sense of meaning in the words of a given text, and the impossibility of completely stripping away that basic sense in this first stage of analysis, we nonetheless deliberately choose to treat the words as "tools for communication." This rather abrupt approach is an attempt on our part to stop and listen to the order, the repetition, and the progression of the semantic units themselves. This in turn provides us with "the context for meanings and meaning-effects" that we will then interpret (as Robbins puts it) "with the other readings of the text."¹ Accountable quantitative methodology will assist us in this task, especially with its analysis of the frequency distributions of key lemmas in each book.

Central to the role of innertextual analysis is its emphasis on six "kinds" of "texture and pattern"² within the inner texture (Robbins uses this nomenclature to avoid the notion of textures of a texture). We will apply them to Pinnock's three representative texts, these patterns being (a) repetitive; (b) progressive; (c) narrational; (d) opening-middle-closing; (e) argumentative; and (f) sensory-aesthetic.³ It would be helpful, however, to pause at this point to remind ourselves of how we arrived at these six elements of inner texture, and what

¹ Robbins, *Exploring*, 7.

² Robbins, *Exploring*, 7-8.

³ Robbins, *Exploring*, 7.

they promise to do. So, let us detail at the beginning of this chapter how these six patterns contribute to a certain kind of meaning.

The word “relations” is key to our definition. In the mid-1980s, Robbins began to shape an analytic for the interpretation of religious texts of antiquity based on Anthony C. Thiselton’s *The Two Horizons*, who in turn wove together “the writings of Ludwig Wittgenstein with the writings of Heidegger, Bultmann, and Gadamer.” What emerged for Robbins was the discovery of just how creative a mode of discourse the New Testament was within the first century of Mediterranean society. What also emerged was an approach to its interpretation which was, unlike the “literary-historical-theological methods of the 19th and 20th centuries,” an analytic rather than a methodology.⁴ This reflected a philosophical decision on his part: that whereas (a) a methodology is rooted in the belief that “the true nature of something is ‘in something itself,’ ” (b) an interpretive analytic is rooted in the belief that something’s true nature is “exhibited in the way it relates to all other things.” This was the prioritization of a philosophy of relations over a philosophy of essence or substance. Or, to put it another way, it was the difference between saying to someone, “You are included on your own terms” (a presupposition of the 21st century), as opposed to saying, “You are included on my terms” (a presupposition of the 19th and 20th centuries).⁵

This philosophy of relations in turn informed the five textures of a text that Robbins isolated (i.e., inner, inter, social/cultural, ideological, and sacred). In the interplay of their relations, the dynamic nature and meaning of the text emerges within its original context, plus its interpretive context. In the same way, Robbins realized that each of the five textures was itself composed of constituent elements in a web of relations.

⁴ Robbins, *Invention*, 4.

⁵ Robbins, *Invention*, 5.

As noted above, the inner texture is comprised then of the patterns of repetition, progression, narration, opening-middle-closing, argumentation, and sensory-aesthetic. The meaning that emerges from the inner texture is understood, in general terms, as that of language as a symbolic act which shapes the history, society, culture, and ideology in which people live, which they know, and which they presuppose. More specifically (and practically, for our purposes), the intermingling of the six patterns of innertexture produce the argumentative and aesthetic patterns found in Pinnock's texts.⁶

I. Repetitive Texture and Pattern

We are now seeking an initial glimpse into the overall rhetorical movements in our selected texts. The precise nature of the boundaries between one unit of discourse and another will not become evident here. Nor will we find the meanings of the inner sequences yet. Rather, like a biologist, we make a broad assessment of the forest, after which we will be better prepared to select individual trees for our study. As repetitive data gathers into clusters, an "overarching view of the texture of the language" will invite us to move in closer for details of the text.⁷

We narrow our focus now to primary process and form, looking for "structured movement that produces process and meaning effect."⁸ Although in a smaller portion of text a word needs only to reoccur once to be considered a repetitive feature, the scope of our project means that those words which occur *most often* will receive our attention. It is these reoccurring words and phrases that indicate repetitive structure. The challenge, of course, when analyzing 1075 pages of text in four books (including *The Scripture Principle*, 2006)

⁶ Robbins, *Tapestry*, 46.

⁷ Robbins, *Exploring*, 8.

⁸ Robbins quotes Robert Wuthnow, "Infrastructure and Superstructure: Revisions in Marxist Sociology of Culture," in *Theory of Culture*, eds. Richard Münch and Neil J. Smelser (Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford: University of California Press, 1992), 165.

is to isolate reoccurring key words. Such a task, and the use of this analytic itself, would be almost impossible without the help of computers.⁹

As we now begin to explore repetitive texture, please note that for the sake of brevity, short-forms will be used.

Table 1

Short-Forms Used in Reference to Pinnock's Books

<i>Biblical Revelation</i> (1971)	BRev 71
<i>The Scripture Principle</i> (first edition, 1984)	ScPr 84
<i>Flame of Love</i> (1996)	FoL 96
<i>The Scripture Principle</i> (second edition, 2006)	ScPr 06

All lemmas occurring more than 130 times in Pinnock's three books are listed. By grouping key words into units of hundred, comparisons can be made from book to book as to frequency and changes in vocabulary. Such groupings, as noted earlier, allow us to determine specific trees of interest in the vast forest spread before us.¹⁰

⁹ Fortunately, Nota Bene, the bibliographic software in which this thesis was written, provides a search option which lists the occurrences of all words in a text from highest to lowest.

On the drop-down Tools menu, choose Page Indexes > Mark > Create Auto-Mark File. Give a name to this new .amf file, click OK, then on the next menu assign an appropriate value to: Exclude Words Appearing More than (Number of Times); and Exclude Words Appearing Fewer than (Number of Times). For example, entering the respective values 100 and 50 will create a list of all words in the document that occur between 50 and 100 times.

¹⁰ Robbins, *Exploring*, 8.

Table 2

All Lemmas Occurring Above 130 Times

<i>BRev 71</i>	<i>ScPr 84</i>	<i>FoL 96</i>	<i>ScPr 06</i>
		God=1660 Spirit=1495	
	we=1069 God=1001		God=1086 we=1032
	Bible=889		Bible=980
Scripture=782	us=617		text=633
God=520	text=586	us=595	us=591
revelation=404		Jesus=455	Scripture=440
		Christ=381	Testament=371
	Testament=336	life=353 world=348	revelation=346 Jesus=337 We=330 biblical=322 Word=312 Spirit=299 human=297 one=291
Bible=317 we=292	Scripture=324 revelation=319 one=296 Word=292		
	human=280	love=287 Son=286	
	way=276 We=273 Jesus=264		way=266 truth=251
theology=236 truth=232 biblical=229 inspiration=228	truth=249 Spirit=239	church=254 creation=253 power=241	
Christ=216 divine=215		Father=218	more=227 authority=224 New=223 church=213
	biblical=209 more=203 authority=195	I=207 one=202	Paul=195

Christian=187 Word=184 no=184 faith=167 one=164 Testament=157 us=138 text=134 authority=131	I=190 New=187 if=186 church=185 such=183 no=167 own=164 Old=163 Paul=153 people=152 upon=152 Christ=147 been=146 Scriptures=146 cannot=145 faith=145 even=140 meaning=139 like=138 given=135 up=135 make=134 Christian=131 may=131	human=188 new=178 work=170 people=168 also=166 grace=165 divine=158 may=153 been=152 way=150 community=144 truth=139 being=138 salvation=130	Old=188 I=186 such=183 Christ=180 Christian=179 own=170 no=170 faith=168 been=167 divine=161 Scriptures=149 even=140 if=140 like=140 meaning=140 people=139 cannot=135 may=133 itself=132

A cursory glance at the table above first notices Pinnock’s use of the word “God,” which ranges from first to second in frequency in our three selected books. Yet whereas “God” and “Bible” are at the top of the lists for books one and two, *Flame of Love* stands apart from this pattern. In it, God, members of the Trinity, and relationships within the Godhead receive focused attention, whereas the words “Bible” and “authority” do not even make the list of FoL 96’s top 130 lemmas.

Summation

Our brief look at repetition indicates the possibility of an emerging pattern; that is, an innertextual uniqueness to FoL 96 setting it apart from BRev 71 and ScPr 84. A scan of the vocabulary lists reflects this pattern, revealing an interesting shift in the flavour of the

words used in FoL 96 (which is Pinnock's theology of the Holy Spirit). Whereas the first of our three books BRev 71 uses Christ 216 times, the word Jesus does not even make its top-130 list. On the other hand, in FoL 96 Christ is used 381 times, while Jesus appears 455 times. By way of another distinction, BRev 71 emphasizes words such as revelation, theology, truth, divine, and text, to name a few; in FoL 96, words appear which are inherently relational and intersubjective, such as life, world, love, church, power, human, people, grace, and community; while ScPr 84 bridges the gap with the nature of its repetitions. Though this will be dealt with more fully in the final section of this chapter, entitled Sensory-Aesthetic Texture, we note innertextually that something different is underway, indicating that FoL 96 may be more experience-oriented than the other two books.

II. Progressive Texture and Pattern

Sociorhetorical investigation proposes that repetition and progression can be taken seriously on their own terms.¹¹ "Progression emerges out of repetition." For example, a given word may be repeated by an author time and again within a unit of text, evidence of a focus or theme important to the writer. Second, an oft repeated lemma may progress to another oft repeated lemma, and then another, like stepping stones. Third, progression "may exhibit a sequence of subunits throughout a span of text."¹²

Although alternations like "I . . . you"; reiterations like "I, I, I . . . they, they, they"; and chains like "hope and righteousness . . . righteousness and God . . . God and people who believe"¹³ are helpful textual indicators in smaller units of text, we will find them too minute as progressions over the scope of three books; there is simply too great a volume of words to process.

¹¹ Robbins, *Tapestry*, 49.

¹² Robbins, *Exploring*, 10.

¹³ Robbins, *Exploring*, 9.

Likewise, in a relatively small selection of text from an ancient source it is possible to track not just the progression of words, but also the progression of each word's meaning within the text. We acknowledge that, for our thesis, the scope of the progressive texture will need to be narrowed, for (as already mentioned) our field of analysis stretches *from book to book* in our three selections from Pinnock's corpus. Though tracing small variations is not possible, repetition does allow us to track changes in the most obvious words.

Although this stage can prove laborious and tedious, it is well worth the effort. As already mentioned, progression within repetition can reveal to us how themes progress in one book compared to the other two. Second, we may uncover phenomena that serve as stepping stones to yet more discoveries in the text, with one phenomenon linking heuristically to the next and so on. Third, subunits and their sequencing may become visible throughout the span of the text, surfacing thanks to an analysis of progression.¹⁴ Hence, methodologically, the frequency of lemmas will be listed for each book, as demonstrated in the model table below.

Table 3

Example of Occurrences of Key Lemmas Per Page

<i>Page</i>	script*	revela*	Bible	theol*
9	0	2	1	5
10	1	2	2	8
11	4	6	3	10
<i>Total</i>	5	10	6	23

Our analysis will be guided by questions such as: "What patterns emerge from the repetition of certain topics in the text? What topics replace other topics in the progression of the text? Is there continual repetition of the same word throughout the unit, or is there slight modification at almost every progressive stage? Does the progression bring certain

¹⁴ Robbins, *Exploring*, 10.

kinds of words together but not others? Is there repetition that occurs in steps that create a context for a new word in the progression?”¹⁵

A. Accountable Quantitative Methodology

Due to progression, fascinating avenues of investigation open up in the inner texts of Pinnock’s material. However, our work needs to be grounded analytically, not just in terms of common sense realities such as observation. At the innertextual stage, the meaning of words is not important. Repetition is, so pattern recognition plays a major role here. To that end, an indispensable aide to our analysis is each book’s Table of Contents. The chapter outlines and pagination provide a framework and backdrop in which to embed the progression of given lemmas. This will become evident in the following section.

Second, even more important are certain insights from accountable quantitative methodology. In sociolinguistic research, one often has to choose between large amounts of data from a small sample (often the case with ancient texts) or small amounts of data from a large representative sample (as in our case). As a result, when a database reaches a certain size, it can become difficult to search it systematically for individual variables.¹⁶ Shana Poplack, a professor at the Department of Linguistics of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ottawa, has written extensively about the field of corpus linguistics, especially with electronic corpora.¹⁷ She offers the following criteria for the survey methodology of a mega-corpus.¹⁸

¹⁵ Robbins, *Tapestry*, 50.

¹⁶ Shana Poplack, “The Care and Handling of a Mega-Corpus,” in *Language Change and Variation*, eds. R. Fasold and D. Schiffrin (Amsterdam: Benjamins, 1989), 411.

¹⁷ Shana Poplack, “Foreword,” in *Creating and Digitizing Language Corpora*, eds. J. Beal, K. Corrigan, and H. Moisl (Houndmills: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2007), ix.

¹⁸ A major challenge in Poplack’s field is how to “tame” the representative, lexical forms in a corpus for which there is no standard orthography, such as dialects in Montreal of native French-speakers (Poplack, “Foreword,” ix-x). This is not an issue in our thesis, for we are using standard, academic, English lemmas without transcription.

(1) *Validation of the sample.* For the purposes of innertextual analysis in this thesis, we are not taking a purely random sample of Pinnock's use of words. Thus, we do not have to worry about statistical fluctuation which could lead to serious gaps in the data (as, for example, in a random sample of the population in a given area or region, for which the ratio of males to females would need to be accounted).¹⁹

(2) *Characteristics of the sample.*²⁰ This we will present in the summary of our findings.

(3) *Nature of the data.* "It is well known that what survey methodology offers in breadth and range, it loses in depth."²¹ The goal of our inner textual analysis of Pinnock is to let the key lemmas speak for themselves, stripped of their literary context. Depth is not an issue, in that we are not doing historical or linguistic research into each lemma. Breadth and range is our goal.

(4) *The computer corpus and its construction.*

(a) Data transcription: There is a major trade-off between size of the database and level of detail of the transcription. If one is doing syntactic and lexical work especially, as are we, "the larger the corpus the better, with the point of diminishing returns nowhere in sight, since a large number of interesting constructions and forms (e. g. most loan-words) are exceedingly rare in natural speech." But a massive corpus size makes the analysis of fine details unfeasible. For automated treatment of the corpus, too much detail diminishes effective analysis of the superstructure. ". . . fine transcription is really only useful in phonological and some morphological work, which generally require smaller corpora, where . . . the individual analyst would wish to impose his own analysis."²² Poplack thus

¹⁹ Poplack, "Care," 418.

²⁰ Poplack, "Care," 418.

²¹ Poplack, "Care," 426.

²² Poplack, "Care," 430.

neatly describes the difference between the study of frequency distribution in an ancient and usually small-sized text, and our attempt to assess 1075 pages of data in four books.

(b) Transcription protocol: “Our transcription protocol is largely determined by the ultimate goal of the automatic data manipulation phase of the project.” For us, this means the construction of a computerized database in which all the words of Pinnock’s three books are accessible, save for common words such as “a,” “the,” etc. This recorded data must then be rendered faithfully and consistently.²³ To achieve the automated treatment of the data, we will use Nota Bene software to compile all lemmas, per book, according to frequency of use.²⁴

(c) Data correction:²⁵ The goal of this thesis is not statistics *per se*. Precision in counting and presenting of data will be important, as will be a sufficient degree of accuracy. Perfection is not required, however, in that rhetorical trends in Pinnock’s books can be detected just as well with 97 percent statistical accuracy as with 100 percent accuracy. In Poplack’s words, “The projected use of the corpus, as end-product or tool, is clearly the determining factor. Those for whom the corpus is a tool tend to advocate minimal annotation. These researchers are able to tolerate more indeterminacy and ambiguity . . .”²⁶

(d) Automated manipulation of the corpus:²⁷ “The construction of a data base must obviously be guided by the uses to which it will be put.” In our case, our intent is to conduct a quantitative study of lemma frequency by means of word frequency lists generated by Nota Bene.

(e) Representativeness: This is “the extent to which the sample of observations drawn from the corpus corresponds to the parent population.” It involves “identifying the

²³ Poplack, “Care,” 431.

²⁴ Because a root word may have variant forms, the base of the lemma is used (marked with an asterisk), which allows for multiple endings.

²⁵ Poplack, “Care,” 434.

²⁶ Poplack, “Foreword,” xi.

²⁷ Poplack, “Care,” 437.

major sources of variation in the population (of speakers and utterances) and taking them into account while constructing the sample.”²⁸ Variation is not an issue for us, in that our innertextual analysis is purposely not measured against Pinnock’s word usage in every book and article of his corpus over four decades of writing.²⁹ This thesis is not a linguistic history of his word use. Our nod to “representativeness,” rather, is reflected in our initial choice of the books which we have selected from his entire corpus.

Thus, one might legitimately ask, “Why these three books in particular?” Given the numerous books and articles that Pinnock wrote, our selection process narrowed to these, as they represent discernible phases or shifts in Pinnock’s writings. Ray C. W. Roennfeldt, author of *Clark H. Pinnock on Biblical Authority* (1993), came to the same conclusion concerning two of our selections. In his estimation, *Biblical Revelation* and *The Scripture Principle* (1984) “stand as twin peaks of [Pinnock’s] theological endeavours. Yet these works, although dealing with the same subject, appear to offer two distinct views of ‘the inspiration, inerrancy, and authority of Scripture.’”³⁰ Roennfeldt concluded that BRev 71 represents Pinnock’s “early period” (1965-74) and ScPr 84 his “later period” (1975-84).³¹ For our purposes, *Flame of Love* (1996) is included in our representation because it summarizes Pinnock’s reflections on the theology of the Holy Spirit, the topic of his Ph.D. thesis, with which he began his academic career thirty-three years earlier.³² (And the

²⁸ Poplack, “Foreword,” xi.

²⁹ Variations of the data from the typical bell shaped curve is a statistical concept called dispersion or variance. “Variations from the typical approximation of a normal distribution is called *skewness*.” A curve with scores heavily concentrated toward the upper end of the frequency distribution is called negatively skewed; with scores predominantly at the lower end of the distribution, the curve is called positively skewed. Gerald R. Adams and Jay D. Schvaneveldt, *Understanding Research Methods* (New York: Longman, 1985), 358.

³⁰ Ray C. W. Roennfeldt, *Clark H. Pinnock on Biblical Authority: An Evolving Position*, Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series (Berrien Springs, Mich.: Andrews University Press, 1993), 2.

³¹ Larry Perkins, “Re-Assessing Pinnock’s Pilgrimage,” review of *Clark H. Pinnock on Biblical Authority: An Evolving Position*, Berrien Springs, Mich.: Andrews University Press, 1993, Ray C. W. Roennfeldt, *Christian Week*, 8 June 1993, 18. See Roennfeldt, *Pinnock*, 362-63.

³² Clark H. Pinnock, “The Concept of Spirit in the Epistles of Paul,” Ph. D. dissertation (Manchester, U.K.: University of Manchester, 1963).

Appendix in the 2006 edition of *The Scripture Principle*, closing off the last book our author wrote, provides priceless insights into his writing career.) These selections then provide us with a “narrative plot” for the role of religious experience in his corpus.

(f) Frames: We acknowledge that we present a “sample frame” without seeking to account for missing sources of variation in our data.³³ Our goal in using Accountable Quantitative Methodology is to avail ourselves of a tool that will enable us to take a snapshot of the rhetorical progress in the dominant lemmas in Pinnock’s three texts. It is in a following chapter on Ideology that we will probe the implications of such progress for the general goal of this thesis, namely. “A sociorhetorical analysis of Clark H. Pinnock’s hermeneutical approach to biblical materials, with particular attention to the role of religious experience.”

B. Frequency Distributions

Generally-speaking, an analysis of the frequency distribution of a given lemma should have more than three “classes” of scaled data (i.e., the page groupings below), for too few may conceal the distribution of the data. More than sixteen, however, “may result in a scarce distribution for some of the classes.” The purpose of the graphic is to distribute data from the lowest values to the highest. The distributions are created using math and common sense, with data grouped in a fashion that makes sense. The first and last classes are generally open (using only one boundary, with “less than” or “more than”), to capture values at the lower and upper percentiles. Typically, the mathematical basis involves classes that “are built around the mean and the standard deviation . . . whereas the class in the middle of the frequency distribution contains the mean. The distance for the remaining classes is separated by the standard deviation.”³⁴ For our purposes, determining the mean

³³ Poplack, “Foreword,” xi-xii.

³⁴ Donijo Robbins, *Understanding Research Methods: A Guide for the Public and Nonprofit Manager*, vol. 149 of *Public Administration and Public Policy: A Comprehensive Publication Program*, ed.

and standard deviation is not necessary to determine rhetorical trends.

Specific lemmas needed to be chosen for our analysis of frequency distribution, so why were the following selected? First, a limit needed to be set.³⁵ Because the focus of our thesis is Pinnock's hermeneutical approach in light religious experience, words for God were included. Also, the selection of lemmas was narrowed to those linked specifically with rhetoric, interpretation, historical setting, and experience *per se*; in other words, to lemmas that pertain to hermeneutics and religious experience. Though dozens of words were counted and graphed, the eight chosen emerged as having a specific bearing on rhetorical analysis in light of religious experience. Second, we also wanted to avoid words that are present largely in one book but not the other two. Frequency was key: which words, meeting our rhetorical criteria, occurred most often and across all three writings? In Table 2 above, lemmas over 130 uses are listed. When words pertaining to God are eliminated, and lesser words such as personal pronouns, negations, and so on are removed, the most common lemmas remaining are Bible, Scripture, text, and revelation. Authority, history, and tradition are included, for they are fundamental to rhetoric, and experience is key to the stated goal of this thesis. Third, as will become evident in the section: Narrational Texture, subsection Plot, these lemmas represent voices that play a pivotal role in the narration of our texts.

Evan M. Berman (New York: CRC Press (Taylor & Francis Group), 2009), 193, E-book, University of Ottawa.

³⁵ As just mentioned, the ideal range of "classes" in a frequency distribution study numbers between three (fewer, and the distribution of data might be concealed) and sixteen (more might result in a scarcity of distribution).

1. Of “Scripture” and/or “Scriptures”.

	<i>B Rev 71</i>		<i>ScPr 84</i>		<i>FoL 96</i>		Total
Pages	freq.	%	freq.	%	freq.	%	
<49	76	5.9	168	13.0	10	0.8	
50-99	231	17.9	124	9.6	3	0.2	
100-49	157	12.2	67	5.2	7	0.5	
150-99	185	14.4	60	4.7	7	0.5	
>200	100	7.8	56	4.3	37	2.9	
Total	749		475		64		1288
	58.2		36.8		4.9		99.9%

Notes:

“freq.” = the frequency with which a lemma occurs in a given “class” of pages for each of the three representative books.

“%” = the percentile obtained by dividing the frequency of, for example, the lemma “Scripture*” with 76 occurrences (in the “class” of <49 pages) by the total of 1288 occurrences across the three books, multiplied by 100, to yield 5.9%. This provides in digital form, at a glance, Pinnock’s use of that lemma in that section of that book as a percentile of total usage in all three books.

“Scripture” is a priority for our author, providing data for the “foundation of Christian theology” as the subtitle of *Biblical Revelation* puts it. And it is the “Scripture” principle that provides the title and focus for book two. Yet in the third book, *Flame of Love*, it plays very little role as a lemma in Pinnock’s theology of the Holy Spirit, accounting for only 4.9% of its total occurrences across the three books. (We will notice this same tendency with the lemma “Bible” or “biblical*” in section 3, below; and again when we consider the particular references to Bible passages in FoL 96 as contrasted to the

other two books, in our next chapter on intertextuality). When the lemma “Scripture” does occur in FoL 96, it is primarily to deal with the Holy Spirit and his leading of “the church into truth along the path of mission,” as described in Ch. 7 of that book’s Table of Contents. When we assess the use of “Scripture” chronologically, it drops precipitously from 58.2% frequency in 1971, to 36.8% in 1984, to 4.9% in 1996. Are we seeing innertextual evidence, in Pinnock’s estimation, of other sources of authority which have arisen across the intervening twenty-five years?

N.B. - Please turn to the close of this chapter for a set of graphs in differing colours, which allows us to depict visually a given lemma (in this case, “Scripture”) across all three books.

2. Of “revelation” and/or “revelat*”.

	<i>B Rev 71</i>		<i>ScPr 84</i>		<i>FoL 96</i>		Totals
Pages	freq.	%	freq.	%	freq.	%	
<49	204	21.4	223	23.4	22	2.3	
50-99	79	8.3	49	5.1	2	0.2	
100-49	80	8.4	28	2.9	3	0.3	
150-99	64	6.7	55	5.8	8	0.8	
>200	38	4.0	15	1.6	85	8.9	
Totals	465		370		120		955
	48.8		38.8		12.5		100.1%

With the lemma “revelation” or “revelations,” there is a heavy concentration of use in the opening section of BRev 71, and ScPr 84. A quick glance at the Table of Contents of the respective books removes any mystery, for Pinnock starts both with an opening chapter concerning the pattern of divine revelation. It is understandable that there would be a

significant spike in the use of this word. Yet in FoL 96, “revelation” (like “Scripture”) is primarily limited to Ch. 7, with this difference in the frequency: in a specific count in the seventh chapter, “revelation” (77) is used over twice as many times as “Scripture” (34). Analytically, this seems to suggest an appeal to a dynamic concept of revelation vis-à-vis an earlier objective static understanding of Scripture. Is the priority of revelation decreasing in the span of his three books in light of something else?

3. Of “Bible” and/or “biblical*”.

	<i>B Rev 71</i>		<i>ScPr 84</i>		<i>FoL 96</i>		Totals
Pages	freq.	%	freq.	%	freq.	%	
<49	89	5.9	154	10.2	13	0.9	
50-99	112	7.4	233	15.4	12	0.8	
100-49	92	6.1	205	13.5	9	0.6	
150-99	197	13.0	156	10.3	9	0.6	
>200	84	5.6	104	6.9	44	2.9	
Totals	574		852		87		1513
	38.0		56.3		5.8		100.1%

“Bible” is overwhelmingly present throughout BRev 71 and ScPr 84; and quite evenly distributed throughout those writings. In ScPr 06, at the close of the book Pinnock provides an Appendix; a short, autobiographical sketch of his life and career (just twenty pages in length) published in 2006 entitled “The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible: Thoughts since 1984.” Here we find a distinct concentration of the lemma “Bible” (78 occurrences), indicating a lemmatical attempt by Pinnock to set his life and career within a biblical framework. This provides a counterweight to FoL 96’s scant mention of “Bible” (evident only from p. 200 onward, dealing with the Spirit’s guiding of the church into

mission), and paralleling its minimal reference to “Scripture” and “revelation.” That the Appendix in ScPr 06 was published ten years after *Flame of Love* indicates that Pinnock’s high esteem of Scripture did not flag in FoL 96’s exposition on the Holy Spirit; rather, we have rhetorical evidence suggesting that theological grounds other than Scripture were being used in his argument in FoL 96.

4. Of “text*”.

	<i>B Rev 71</i>		<i>ScPr 84</i>		<i>FoL 96</i>		Totals
pages	freq.	%	freq.	%	freq.	%	
<49	8	1.2	75	10.9	7	1.1	
50-99	3.9	0.6	8.3	1.2	0.4	0.1	
100-49	7	1.0	133	19.2	2	0.3	
150-99	33	4.8	225	32.6	5	0.7	
>200	52	7.5	115	16.6	17	2.0	
Totals	104		556		31		691
	15.1		80.5		4.2		99.8%

Again, the same pattern plays itself out with the lemma “text*.” Despite mammoth use in *The Scripture Principle*, and considerable use in BRev 71, its presence is almost negligible in FoL 96. When coupled with the pattern of frequency noted above for Scripture, revelation, and Bible, we have innertextual evidence in FoL 96 of Pinnock’s shift in argument from a rhetoric that is text-based to something else. (Pinnock’s most extensive usage of “text*” in ScPr 84 occurs in the final sections concerning the Holy Spirit’s role in biblical revelation and inspiration. If we are detecting a shift in rhetorical base in FoL 96--Pinnock’s magnum opus on the Spirit--this suggests that the Spirit’s working is not to the exclusion of the text of Scripture, but rather in conjunction with it.)

5. Of “authorit*”.

	<i>B Rev 71</i>		<i>ScPr 84</i>		<i>FoL 96</i>		Totals
pages	freq.	%	freq.	%	freq.	%	
<49	24	5.6	90	20.8	1	0.2	
50-99	69	16.0	79	18.3	2	0.5	
100-49	36	8.3	19	4.4	5	1.2	
150-99	20	4.6	30	6.9	1	0.2	
>200	13	3.0	22	5.1	21	4.9	
Totals	162		240		30		432
	37.5		55.5		7.0		100%

The lemma “authorit*” almost disappears in the frequency distribution of FoL 96, whereas it figures prominently for the other two books, especially in those sections pertaining to the phenomena of inspiration and revelation. This suggests a link in Pinnock’s thought between authority and Scripture. In FoL 96, when “authorit*” does occur, it is linked with Spirit, truth, and the church in mission. Given the noticeable lack of emphasis on authority, the work of the Holy Spirit rhetorically-speaking appears to be considered self-authenticating.

6. Of “history/histories” and/or “historic/historical/historically”. Our goal, as stated earlier, is to get together frequently used words that are in common lexically. The “histor*” lemma (graphed as is, below), proves to be too broad for our investigation, for it includes meanings such as historians, historiography, and so on. Therefore, in the following table, we narrow our frequency distribution for this lemma to “history/histories” and/or “historic/historical/historically,” all of which convey not only a relation to or a concern with

history or historical events, but also imply “a method of investigation in which the history of the object is studied.”³⁶

	<i>B Rev 71</i>		<i>ScPr 84</i>		<i>FoL 96</i>		Totals
pages	freq.	%	freq.	%	freq.	%	
<49	98	14.8	45	6.8	27	4.0	
50-99	37	5.6	44	6.6	43	6.5	
100-49	45	6.8	75	13.3	36	5.4	
150-99	68	10.3	35	5.3	12	1.8	
>200	30	4.5	21	3.1	43	6.5	
Totals	278		220		161		659
	42.0		35.1		24.2		101.3%

In BRev 71, Ch. 1 provides an important setting for Pinnock’s references to history. There, he links it with the pattern of divine revelation in time, space, and the recordable past. In ScPr 84, references to history spike from Chs. 4 through 6 (pp. 85-154), where all three chapters deal with Scripture--in human language--and historically related issues such as incarnation, accommodation, biblical criticism, and so on. Whereas Pinnock’s theology of the Holy Spirit in FoL 96 does not avoid history, usage peaks in Ch. 7, subtitled as “Spirit leads the church into truth along the path of mission.” This indicates that our author moves from history as the setting and confirmation of Scripture’s contextualization in BRev 71; to history as a verification of Scripture’s enculturation in ScPr 84; to history as the *medium* in which dynamic and relational Spirit enacts God’s plan for history through global missions, in FoL 96. This suggests innertextually a shift from a rational to a personal starting point for Pinnock’s theology.

³⁶ “historical, adj. and n.” *OED Online (Oxford English Dictionary)* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2010), [Http://www.oed.com](http://www.oed.com).

7. Of “tradit*”.

	<i>B Rev 71</i>		<i>ScPr 84</i>		<i>FoL 96</i>		Totals
pages	freq.	%	freq.	%	freq.	%	
<49	5	2.0	23	9.4	8	3.3	
50-99	14	5.7	23	9.4	3	1.2	
100-49	45	18.7	18	7.3	12	4.9	
150-99	8	3.3	18	7.3	4	1.6	
>200	3	1.2	21	8.6	40	16.3	
Totals	75		103		67		245
	30.9		42.0		27.3		100.2%

BRev 71 shows an increase in the use of “tradition” in its middle section (Ch. 3, “The Character of Christian Theology”) when dealing with the nature of theology--not unexpectedly, for Pinnock offers a short analysis of Christian theology. In FoL 96, by contrast, “tradit*” spikes noticeably in Ch. 7 entitled “Spirit & Truth,” pertaining to the Spirit’s revelatory role “conveyed in the story of the mighty acts of God.”³⁷ In ScPr 84, an increase in “tradition” is linked with a chapter entitled “The Act of Interpretation.” This suggests that when Pinnock does rely on tradition to strengthen his argument, it is related to the interpretation of God’s acts in history. This may suggest that for the later Pinnock, tradition becomes integral to the process of biblical interpretation (a different emphasis than the tradition of interpretation *per se*, in BRev 71). Yet curiously, he does not rely on the usage of “tradit*” in FoL 96 when discussing the Spirit and the church (pp. 113-48), where we would expect at least some reliance on tradition to support his claims. As noted above in the lemma “authority,” there is a noticeable lack of emphasis on the authority, whether

³⁷ Pinnock, *Flame*, 225.

internal or external. The question therefore arises again: given the infrequent mention of the lemmas “tradit*” and “authorit*” in FoL 96, on what methodological ground does Pinnock base his theology of the Holy Spirit?

8. Of “experience” and/or “experiences”.

	<i>B Rev 71</i>		<i>ScPr 84</i>		<i>FoL 96</i>		Totals
pages	freq.	%	freq.	%	freq.	%	
<49	26	7.9	35	10.7	33	10.1	
50-99	8	2.4	11	3.4	25	7.6	
100-49	36	11.0	7	2.1	19	5.8	
150-99	10	3.0	24	7.3	50	15.2	
>200	11	3.4	7	2.1	26	7.9	
Totals	91		84		153		328
	27.7		25.6		46.6		99.9%

A possible answer to our question about Pinnock’s methodological authority in his pneumatology comes from the next lemma, “experience/experiences.” BRev 71 correlates “experience(s)” with divine revelation, especially in Ch. 1 (pp. 19-52), and with the character of Christian theology in Ch. 3 (pp. 107-47). ScPr 84 shows a spike in usage of the lemma in its first two chapters concerning revelation and biblical witness. In both books, experience is couched within a theological and biblical framework.

In FoL 96, the greatest use of “experience” occurs in two chapters dealing with human union with the Spirit, and with the Spirit’s role in universal salvation (pp. 149-214). There seems to be no evidence indicating that, at its time of writing, Pinnock had abandoned all the theological scaffolding that he had carefully constructed over the previous twenty-five years since writing BRev 71. If this is correct, then evidence emerges

from our innertextual analysis--by implication--to suggest that here is his methodological authority. And Pinnock's rhetorical treatment of spiritual experience is deliberately grounded within a broader framework of "classic" Christian theology.

Summation

We have found that previous studies in the speech community provide criteria for a sociolinguistic data base. For our purposes, they are: as large a volume of data as possible; an accurate transcription system based on a well thought-out and transparent protocol; and rapid accessibility of all tokens of a lexical item or syntactic structure.³⁸

To sum up our observations above, we noticed a shift in words that predominate in *Biblical Revelation* and *The Scripture Principle*, yet are only faintly represented in *Flame of Love*. In FoL 96, oft repeated words such as experience, open, universal, life, love, power, world, and creation (conveying relational and intersubjective connotations) receive infrequent use in the other two books. For example, ScPr 84 (84 occurrences) embeds "experience" in a chapter concerning biblical witness (Ch. 2)--and, in the 2006 edition, also in Pinnock's testimony as described in the Appendix. On the other hand, FoL 96 with 153 uses of "experience" or "experiences" correlates experience either with the Holy Spirit's relation to the other persons of the Trinity (Ch. 2, "Spirit & Trinity") or to humans' union with the Holy Spirit (Ch. 5) through the sacraments and charisms.

In our analysis of progression, we turned to frequency distribution studies. We narrowed our study to eight representative lexica. "Scripture" plays little role in FoL 96, despite its considerable presence in the other two books. When it does occur, it is in a chapter concerning the Holy Spirit's leading of the church into mission. "Revelation" reflects the same pattern. In FoL 96, it too predominates in the chapter concerning the Spirit's guiding of the church, though its frequency is twice that of "Scripture." This may

³⁸ Poplack, "Care," 438–39.

indicate that “revelation” conveys a broader and more dynamic meaning for Pinnock, in contrast to a static, more objective meaning for Scripture. The use of “Bible” follows the same pattern. (Its greatest frequency in ScPr 06 is in the Appendix concerning Pinnock's summary of his theological journey since 1984.) Lemmatic evidence indicates he sets his theological journey (writing near the end of his career) within a biblical context. We conclude that FoL 96's infrequent use of the lemmas Scripture, revelation, and Bible is not due to a low regard for the same; but rather, that other authorities have emerged to support Pinnock's rhetoric. “Text” reflects the same pattern, dropping in frequency from 686 occurrences in ScPr 84 to 38 in FoL 96. By whatever means Pinnock argues his case in FoL 96, it is from something other than a text-based rhetoric.

By contrast, though “authority” figures prominently in the other two books, in FoL 96 it is almost not present. When it does occur, it is linked with Spirit, truth, and the church in mission. With the lemma “history,” our frequency distribution analysis indicates that our author moves from history as the setting and confirmation of Scripture's contextualization in BRev 71; to history as a verification of Scripture's enculturation in ScPr 84; to history, in FoL 96, as the medium in which dynamic and relational Spirit enacts God's plan for history through global missions. This suggests innertextually a shift from a rational to a personal starting point in Pinnock's later theology. “Tradition” increasingly becomes integral to the process of biblical interpretation (a different emphasis than the tradition of interpretation *per se*, in BRev 71). Given the infrequent mention of the lemmas “tradit*” and “authorit*” in FoL 96, on what methodological ground does Pinnock thus base his theology of the Holy Spirit?

In summary, we offer this possibility: for the later Pinnock, the work of the Holy Spirit rhetorically-speaking is self-authenticating. Yet he continually sets Spirit's work within a broader framework of biblical interpretation. In the same way, the word “experience” shows greater usage in FoL 96 than in the previous two books, yet lemmatical

evidence indicates that Pinnock's rhetorical treatment of spiritual experience is deliberately grounded within a broader framework of "classic" Christian theology. It appears, in both cases, that he has not abandoned all the theological scaffolding that he carefully constructed over the previous twenty-five years.

III. Narrational Texture and Pattern

We are reminded by Robbins that the words of a text speak through different *voices* or narration. (By way of distinction between voice and character, Robbins informs us that "Socio-rhetorical criticism views voice in text as the medium for the 'consciousness' or 'vision' of the characters and the narrator, who are 'concretizations drawn from a represented world. . . .'"³⁹)

When reading the opening words in a text, one automatically presupposes a narrator, who may simply continue with the narration or may now introduce characters who are described as acting in a certain way. The narrator may have these people speak for themselves (at which point they themselves become speaking actors), or may introduce "written texts" that speak, like a biblical quotation. In all of this, some sort of discourse programmatically moves forward. There may be alternation between narration and attributed speech; or a particular kind of speech like a question or command may establish a recognizable narrational pattern. Whatever the pattern, it is at this stage that the units or scenes within the text begin to emerge.⁴⁰ Robbins argues strongly for the importance of the role of the narrational texture. He points out that without it, the interpreter of a text is easily seduced by the narrator within the text. "For example, if the author does not talk about Homer, neither does the interpreter; if the author does not mention adultery, neither does the interpreter; if the author wants to be understood as against society, the interpreter adopts

³⁹ Robbins, *Tapestry*, 34.

⁴⁰ Robbins, *Exploring*, 15.

a position against society.”⁴¹ In other words, the interpreter does not escape the actual rhetorical force of the text.

A landmark work in advancing the analysis and interpretation of narrational texture, in the opinion of Robbins,⁴² was David B. Gowler’s *Host, Guest, Enemy, and Friend: Portraits of the Pharisees in Luke and Acts* (1991). First, Gowler pointed out that characters exist as both people and words. As such, they are *Doppelgänger*s existing in the consciousness of the reader: generated by the text, they are finally apprehended by the reader. This complexity is well illustrated in Miguel de Cervantes’ character Don Quixote, who “is more real than Cervantes, but still remains an airy nothing formed by the poet’s pen.”⁴³

Second, Gowler posited a socio-narratological approach whereby the relationship between literary analyses of a character, and analyses of the cultural context in which the author created the narrative, is dialectic.⁴⁴ Once the reader recognizes that “various cultural scripts” are embedded in every narrative, and that characters cannot be ripped from context and text, then the given passage can speak for itself. Every text, though varying from age to age and culture to culture, “is a socially symbolic act and assumes certain cultural norms.” Gowler notes as example in Footnote 131 that whereas a loud belch after a pleasing evening meal would be deemed rude in Western culture, in another culture it might not only be a necessary compliment to the chef, its absence could be considered rudeness on the part of

⁴¹ Robbins, *Tapestry*, 55.

⁴² Robbins, *Tapestry*, 54–55.

⁴³ David B. Gowler, *Host, Guest, Enemy, and Friend: Portraits of the Pharisees in Luke and Acts*, Emory Studies in Early Christianity (New York, Bern, Frankfurt am Main, Paris: Peter Lang, 1991), 71.

⁴⁴ Gowler’s methodology proposes the following outline for character analysis: 1) Direct definition, the most explicit form of characterization, yet subject to the reliability of the narrator and characters. 2) Indirect presentation, which is based in inference and thus is less reliable and explicit. Most indirect presentations involve (ranging down the scale of explicitness): a) speech; b) action; c) external appearance of the character as depicted in the narration; d) environment of the character, such as physical surrounding, family, or social class; e) and comparison/contrast of one character with another. See Gowler, *Host*, 72–73.

the diner. Skills are necessary then for the social and cultural analysis of any character⁴⁵ (and even more skills are required when bridging the gap between the present age and the characters of an ancient work).⁴⁶

A. Narrative Time

In our narrational analysis of Pinnock's three books, the narrative time seems clear. Though his first published book was *A Defense of Biblical Infallibility* in 1967, the texts under our examination range (as noted earlier) from 1971 to 1996. In *Biblical Revelation* (1971), Pinnock contrasts the inadequate religious hermeneutics prevailing in the 1960s and early 70s with the "scriptural concepts of inspiration and revelation." Claiming Scripture as his epistemological base for Christian theology, and demonstrating to his satisfaction that this was the position of church leaders through the centuries, Pinnock then measures traditional and modern systems of hermeneutics against his proposal of a proper Christian criticism.⁴⁷

Thirteen years later in *The Scripture Principle* (1984) Pinnock offers a resolution to the biblical authority debate from the vantage point of Scripture (as in *Biblical Revelation*), but this time expanding his scholarly scope to include also three fundamentals: a) divine authorship; b) human character; and c) the dynamic work of the Holy Spirit. His goal is to move beyond the prevailing futile "imponderables" and technical preoccupations of conservative evangelicals' inerrancy debate as characterized in the early 1980s. His locus shifts to the Bible as a "saving and equipping knowledge of God" for everyday life, clearly Christ-focused. He still wishes to uncover the Bible's own portrait of a doctrine of

⁴⁵ Gowler, *Host*, 71–74.

⁴⁶ Some of the culturally-bound assumptions of ancient Mediterranean society included "honor and shame society, patron-client contracts, limited good, purity rules, and kinship/"oikos" groups. See Gowler, *Host*, 74.

⁴⁷ See dust-jacket of Clark H. Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation: The Foundation of Christian Theology* (Chicago, Ill.: Moody, 1971).

inspiration, but this time with a depth of sensitivity to the humanity of Scripture, guided dynamically by the Spirit into “a faithful, proper interpretation and understanding of the Scriptures.”⁴⁸

Flame of Love (1996) radiates with Pinnock’s desire to “restore the oft-neglected Spirit to centrality in the life and witness of the church.” This book is clearly catholic (“in the sense of respecting the beliefs and worship of the historic church”) and evangelical (with special emphasis on the heritage of the Reformation). The mission of the church in his estimation is not to know *about* God, but to *know* God. Attention to the Spirit moves us beyond “sterile rationalist religion” in the direction of intimacy and immediacy with God that every generation longs for.⁴⁹

B. Plot

In light then of our analysis of textual repetition and progression, and the above summary of the narrative time in Pinnock’s books, we propose our “plot” sociorhetorically-speaking. Since Robbins is talking about narrational voices such as power and privilege, by “plot” we mean the way whereby Pinnock shifted from a hermeneutical foundation for scriptural authority that is arguably positivistic and almost exclusively Bible-based, to a foundation that--though still textual--is open, dynamic, communal, universal, relational, and Trinitarian. Clearly he is reading Scripture differently, as the years progress, than he was in *Biblical Revelation*.

BRev 71, with its Scripture orientation, links experience almost exclusively with the reading and study of the propositional witness of the Bible (i.e., with first-order biblical exegesis). By 1996, however (as typified in *Flame of Love*), the vector of experience is now

⁴⁸ See dust-jacket of Clark H. Pinnock, *The Scripture Principle* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1984).

⁴⁹ See dust-jacket of Clark H. Pinnock, *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1996).

relational, his matrix centring first upon the Holy Spirit's interactions within the Trinity, and then radiating outward in relation to humans (and creation) in their union with Spirit. We will explore the precipitator(s) of this change in our following chapters on the intertextural and ideological textures.

C. Narrative Voices

The "narrational texture resides in *voices*" (emphasis added) not always identified with a specific character, which speak the words within a particular text. From the very beginning of the text the "*narrator*" commences a "*narration*" by introducing "*characters*" who "act," and who often "speak" (becoming themselves narrators or "speaking actors"). As the narrator, and/or speaking actors, and/or "written texts" speak, this entire project moves forward in a pattern that can be discerned in the alterations between narration and attributed speech, or in a particular type of speech such as question or command; all of which reveal units or scenes in the discourse.⁵⁰

The challenge, when working with a text significantly larger than "X" number of verses, has been aptly summarized by Bloomquist in his analysis of Pope Benedict XVI's *Caritas in veritate*:

in the case of the Gospels, narrative characters and voices are clear, be it in a parable -- such as "the Good Samaritan" or in a controversy story -- such as Jesus' encounter with the Temple authorities over the coin with Caesar's effigy on it. If, however, we are able to discern a *narrative texture* . . . , including narrative characters' voices, plot, narrative time, etc., then we may be able to suggest some unique ways of looking at this text.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Robbins, *Exploring*, 15.

⁵¹ L. Gregory Bloomquist, "A Sociorhetorical Examination of Benedict XVI's Encyclical, 'Caritas in Veritate'," unpublished paper, contrib. Peter S. Robinson (St. Paul University, Ottawa, Canada, 2010), 7.

Our goal then is to identify some narrative characters' voices in Pinnock's three books, along with time line and plot (considered above). As Gowler mentions, these voices may be directly defined, the clearest form of characterization; or they may be indirectly defined, with appropriate inferences.⁵² By that, Gowler means "Traits [that] are displayed or exemplified, not catalogued"; traits which, because of their very indirection, readers can ponder for further implications of those traits.⁵³

1. Voices in Pinnock's Texts. Let us begin then with a common and obvious technique for expressing the author's voice, which is directly defined: the personal pronoun, "I." Even a presentation as obvious as Pinnock's use of the first person singular personal pronoun hides depths of complexity. Robbins details exactly how scholars on the leading edge of research into narrational texture began to separate the several threads of narration in the late 1970s and 80s. Alan Culpepper was a pioneer in this endeavour, as he (with Rhoads and Michie, and Chatman) began "to distinguish between real author, implied author, narrator, characters, narratee, implied reader and real reader."⁵⁴

Culpepper observed that though a given narrative is the work of a *real author*, this person is usually unknown to the reader. Hence, in Pinnock's use of "I," the author that is available to us (the reader) is the *implied author*. This is an "ideal, literary, created version" of the real Pinnock, evoked by the narrative the real author has written. This implied author is not the real author, nor is it the narrator in the story who tells the story. It is rather "the sum of the choices made by the real author in writing the narrative," and is inferred from the narrative. In other words, Culpepper argues that the implied author is the literary artist or the creative intellect of the real author, encountered by the reader in the text.⁵⁵ This may

⁵² Gowler, *Host*, 72–73.

⁵³ Gowler, *Host*, 171.

⁵⁴ Robbins, *Tapestry*, 54–55.

⁵⁵ This process, according to Staley, is more than just passive. Rather, "a text's implied author is that singular consciousness which the reader *constructs* [emphasis added] from the words of a text: a

result in a relatively accurate picture of the real author or, on the other hand, it might result in a picture that is highly manipulated by the real author for purposes that she or he chooses not to disclose. For this reason, an important principle for us to bear in mind is that several works by one author “present different images of their implied authors” (though in the case of a single work redacted by several hands, one implied author nonetheless emerges in the text.)⁵⁶

The voice, however, that we as readers hear in a text is a rhetorical device known as the *narrator*.⁵⁷ This voice may be a character in the narrative, or undramatized; it may be the implied author’s voice, or the voice of a character who differs from the implied author. Culpepper (quoting Wayne C. Booth) warns that this overlap of narrator and implied author is one of the most frequent errors a reader can make when reading a narrative: that is, naively to identify an undramatized narrator with the author that created it. There is always a distinction, even if the author him- or herself was not aware of it when writing. So, as the reader progresses through the story, it is the narrator that guides her or him, introducing characters and the inner world of the story, and providing “the proper perspective from which to view the action.”

Here lies another danger in reading a narrative unless made explicit: the narrator tells the reader what to think.⁵⁸ Jeffrey L. Staley (also referred to by Robbins) points out that this awareness allows the reader “to come to grips with the text’s strategies and

consciousness which knows the story backward and forward.” Jeffrey Lloyd Staley, *The Print’s First Kiss: A Rhetorical Investigation of the Implied Reader in the Fourth Gospel*, Dissertation Series / Society of Biblical Literature (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1988), 29.

⁵⁶ R. Alan Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design*, Foundations and Facets: New Testament (Philadelphia, Pa.: Fortress Press, 1983), 15–16.

⁵⁷ Powell argues that “narrator” is found in the third layer of an embedment. In the first layer of Real Author > Text > Real Reader, “text” is comprised of Implied Author > Narrative > Implied Reader. “Narrative,” in turn, is comprised of Narrator > Story > Narratee. These are “part of the narrative itself, part of the discourse through which the story is told.” Mark Allan Powell, *What is Narrative Criticism?* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1990), 27.

⁵⁸ Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 16–17. Culpepper clarifies two roles for the narrator: 1) to *intrude* in the flow of the story, making comments to the reader; and 2) to assume a *self-conscious* attitude, aware that he or she is speaking to the reader or audience.

manipulative ploys . . . and to perceive how these all hang together to educate, entertain, or persuade the implied readers.”⁵⁹

With these insights in mind then, we begin our “voice” analysis of Pinnock’s books under consideration. We begin by noticing that “I” is used only occasionally to express the voice of the implied author in the three narratives.⁶⁰ By means of analysis we find that *Flame of Love*⁶¹ uses “I” 112 times specifically to express the implied author’s voice; and, though written as a personal work by Pinnock, is still not as reliant on “I” as the 1984 edition of *The Scripture Principle*, in which the personal pronoun is used by the implied author most often, with 167 occurrences.⁶²

With the pronoun “we,” the preferred voice of the implied author reveals itself in force: BRev 71 uses “we” or “We” (in a global sense that includes all possible uses) 400 times; ScPr 84, 1340 times; and FoL 96, 841 times. This use of “we” might imply a certain distance or professionalism that Pinnock wishes to demonstrate. At the same time, we do not want to make too much of this, for “we” might simply reflect the academic style with which he is most familiar.

This combination of “I” and “we” references comprises the self-expression whereby our author Pinnock is known to us in these three books. As such, he and the implied author appear to be one and the same. However, we are aware (thanks to the insights of Culpepper and Staley) that between us as readers and Pinnock as real author stands the implied author’s “purposefulness inferred from [each] entire text’s discourse” that we seek to

⁵⁹ Staley, *Print*, 29.

⁶⁰ BRev 71, by my count, uses “I” 63 times throughout the book (please note that these global figures from Nota Bene’s Orbis search engine which include uses of the personal pronoun by the implied author, and also his quotes from Scripture and from other authors). In ScPr 84, “I” is used 192 times, and in FoL 96, 207 times.

⁶¹ FoL 96 uses “I” to express the implied author’s voice with this frequency: Introduction, 11 times; Ch. 1, 13; Ch. 2, 4; Ch. 3, 17; Ch. 4, 4; Ch. 5, 11; Ch. 6, 17; Ch. 7, 25; Conclusion, 10; with a total of 112 occurrences.

⁶² By my count, ScPr 84 uses “I” as the implied author’s voice with the following frequency: Introduction, 13 times; Ch. 1, 21; Ch. 2, 36; Ch. 3, 11; Ch. 4, 5; Ch. 5, 12; Ch. 6, 15; Ch. 7, 10; Ch. 8, 11; Ch. 9, 11; Conclusion, 22; for a total of 167 occurrences.

develop from multiple readings.⁶³ We are also quick to note that this purposefulness is rhetorical; it seeks to persuade. We proceed in our study then resolved to conduct this project with a “hermeneutic of suspicion,” in the most positive sense of its meaning.

Numerous other characters contribute voices in Pinnock’s books. God figures prominently, to start with, especially in terms of the Trinitarian confession of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Of these the general name of “God” appears most frequently. (A table is included in the footnotes to illustrate the frequency of use of the various names of God in our selected books.)⁶⁴ When capitalized, the word invariably expresses the classic historical meaning of the Christian church, referencing God as tripartite, transcendent yet immanent, all-powerful, all-knowing, and so on. This God is definitely more than an object of theological speculation. He acts, and this dynamism also characterizes the individual persons of the Godhead. Whereas the Son is the incarnation of this deity in space/time, the Holy Spirit is typified, as confirmed in word count and progression, as the personal, universal presence and dynamism of this God pre-dating the incarnation of the Son.

Within the corpus of Pinnock’s books used for this thesis, *Flame of Love* refers most often to the Holy Spirit with 1541 references. When this theme is assessed diachronically, there is a noticeable increase by the author from the first book through to the third. The implied author grants ever increasing space to the “voice” of the Spirit as he speaks from book to book. This same increase in usage of the voice of “Christ” and “Jesus” can also be seen progressing through our books. In fact, FoL 96 is something of a tipping point for Pinnock. Within each book before it, “Christ” and “Jesus” are used more often than “Spirit.” But in FoL 96, “Spirit” clearly dominates in usage and focus over the other

⁶³ Staley, *Print*, 29.

⁶⁴	<i>BRev</i> 71	<i>ScPr</i> 84	<i>FoL</i> 96
“God”	522	993	1660
“Spirit”	88	230	1541
“Christ”	198	142	379
“Jesus”	80	264	453

persons. It is not that pneumatology supplants Pinnock's high Christology in *Flame of Love*, for this book also displays the highest frequency of the voices of Christ and Jesus. Rather, usage indicates that the voice of the Spirit dynamically complements and completes that of the historic Jesus and the resurrected Christ.

Spirit is . . . associated with hope. The Spirit brooded over the waters of creation to bring life and order out of chaos. Spirit makes dry bones live and raises Christ up as first fruits of those who sleep in death. Spirit belongs to the future and creates hope in people, being the power by which this present world will be transformed into the kingdom of God. Spirit opens up the future by realizing God's goals for history and pressing toward fulfilment.⁶⁵

Other characters in the corporate narrative include the Father, the Son, and the Trinity itself. It is immediately evident that the space granted their voices in FoL 96 vastly exceeds the space given to their voices in the other books.⁶⁶ In the other two, "father*" can refer to a father in a general sense or to the church fathers or to God. Such is not the case in *Flame of Love*, however; there "father" is most often referring to the first person of the Godhead, and often includes the direct article, "the" Father, which tends to objectify him. With the Son, the term means the "pre-existent Son,"⁶⁷ who is not a mere emissary of the prophetic sort, but "God incarnate, dwelling among us, the revelation of God without peer."⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Pinnock, *Flame*, 39.

⁶⁶	<i>BRev</i> 71	<i>ScPr</i> 84	<i>FoL</i> 96
"Father*"	15	17	225
"Son*"	9	13	291
"Trinit*"	7	2	145

⁶⁷ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 97.

⁶⁸ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 34.

This classic meaning of God is consistent in Pinnock's usage in all three books. What does emerge as notable though is the occasional disappearance of the definite article in reference to Son (and Father and Spirit) in FoL 96. The reader encounters sentences such as "Spirit is not gender-specific quite the way Father and Son are,"⁶⁹ in which Pinnock treats their identities as personal names rather than descriptions, thus making the divine persons more accessible and intimate to the reader.

Use of the word "Trinity" is also consistent through the books. It invariably means "a transcendent society or community of three personal entities" in which "Father, Son and Spirit are the members of a divine community, unified by common divinity and singleness of purpose"; hence, "The Trinity portrays God as a community of love and mutuality."⁷⁰ Of note is Pinnock's lack of reference to the Trinity in BRev 71 and ScPr 86. The word is seldom used, and when he mentions "Trinity" he treats it as a teaching, as a "dogma . . . [that] arose because the Scriptures taught and the people of God experienced the overwhelming reality of God in threefold form."⁷¹ Yet when we turn to FoL 96, we encounter such sentences as:

* "let us begin with the doctrine of God and focus on the liveliness of the Trinity and the identity of the Spirit within a loving relationality";⁷²

* "Trinity is a mystery, but it is not an irrationality";⁷³

* "we say that the Trinity is a society of persons united by a common divinity";⁷⁴

* "the dance of the Trinity and the sabbath play of new creation."⁷⁵

Liveliness? Mystery? Society? Dance and play? Note how Pinnock's emphasis has shifted from Trinity as object of belief and study to a living entity that acts, that plays, that

⁶⁹ Pinnock, *Flame*, 15.

⁷⁰ Pinnock, *Flame*, 29.

⁷¹ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 141.

⁷² Pinnock, *Flame*, 21.

⁷³ Pinnock, *Flame*, 29.

⁷⁴ Pinnock, *Flame*, 35.

⁷⁵ Pinnock, *Flame*, 39.

even (metaphorically speaking) dances. Something has profoundly shifted in his understanding of the deity across the twenty-five-year span of our three books.

Yet another set of voices that speaks in Pinnock's writings pertains to the Scriptures themselves, including revelation, Bible, word, and text.⁷⁶ As the title of "*The Scripture Principle*" suggests, Pinnock's writings are text-centric, and driven by the question, What does the Bible say about the pattern of revelation?⁷⁷ Central to this book is the tenet that Christianity rests on Jesus Christ. Christian truth in turn comes through Scripture and brings a doctrine of inspiration with it.⁷⁸

The words "Scripture" and "Bible" seem to be used synonymously to indicate the textual locus that God has given, and through which he speaks to humanity. As evidence, consider this quote from *Biblical Revelation* (1971), with underlining added:

The Bible is the witness to and the graphical residue of the divine act-word event, the locus in which God's revealing activity now takes place. . . . The Holy Spirit created *graphie* (writing) that revelation might be conveyed in a written form (Heb 3:7; 2 Pe 1:21). By the Scriptures God speaks to His church (Mt 22:43; Ac 28:25; Heb 10:15). The Bible is the embodiment of extant revelation, the deposit of divine truth for the doctrinal, moral and spiritual welfare of God's people. . . . Revelation *generates* Scripture! . . . The creation of *graphie* is the final stage in quite an extended process of divine revelation. Revelation is the act of God revealing Himself; inspiration is a recording of the revelation in writing, so that Scripture is the authentic expression of it.⁷⁹

76	<i>BRev</i> 71	<i>ScPr</i> 84	<i>FoL</i> 96
"Scripture"	749	475	64
"Bible/biblic*"	574	852	87
"text*"	164	686	38
"word"	265	343	94

⁷⁷ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 3.
⁷⁸ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 19.
⁷⁹ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 35.

The voices of the Bible and Scripture are invariably linked with authority and a trustworthy standard applicable in all ages, speaking in a bipartite fashion through the Old Testament and New. This biblical revelation takes the form of covenant with Israel in the OT, and then the NT builds on the modalities of the OT, forming a new covenant made effective in Jesus Christ.⁸⁰ Save for BRev 71, “Bible” is preferred in usage by Pinnock almost twice as often as “Scriptures.”

“Text” in turn refers to the actual graphic contents of divine revelation. Though on occasion it does speak (i.e., “It is terribly important to let the text speak authentically”⁸¹), more often it stands as the written matrix through which God or a biblical writer speaks. Though textual criticism reveals “the genuine humanity of the text”⁸² and its discrepancies and inconsistencies, nonetheless, the “text is a unique medium and contains the freight of revelation to such an extent that the gospel is attested where the Spirit is effectually working.”⁸³

The voice of the “Word” is clearly linked with the Scriptures. “After all, what is ‘God’s Word’ if it cannot be identified with any extant text?”⁸⁴ As yet another voice in the narrative of our books, it speaks primarily in Scripture for God. “The divine Word is cast into permanent form in Scripture, which is the durable vehicle of special revelation and provides the conceptual framework in which we meet and comprehend God.” It is “inscripturated”⁸⁵ and accommodates itself to human language.⁸⁶ Yet this same Word was made flesh,⁸⁷ and speaks through the historic figure, Jesus. God creates by the Word,⁸⁸ but

⁸⁰ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 8-9.

⁸¹ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 87.

⁸² Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 271.

⁸³ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 69.

⁸⁴ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 10.

⁸⁵ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 34, 37.

⁸⁶ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 133.

⁸⁷ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 10.

⁸⁸ Pinnock, *Flame*, 56.

the Word is not identified with nor speaks on behalf of the world or the cosmos. Though objective, especially as it pertains to Scripture, Word's voice can also be heard subjectively: "God encounters the human subject by means of an experience of the Word, which faith recognizes to be present"⁸⁹

2. Voices in Tradition. Another noticeable change during the writing of Pinnock's three books is the change in the voice of tradition. In BRev 71 he dismisses tradition as a " 'Bible to the second power,' namely, a human ego, whether a collective ego (tradition) or an individual one (the pope's or my own)."⁹⁰ The loss of Scripture *alone* "leads to a new sacerdotalism (the church is the matrix of the tradition)."⁹¹ If there are any positive tones to tradition's voice, they are heard echoing down from the Reformation, for "the Lutheran and Reformed orthodox traditions hold to the plenary, verbal inspiration of the Bible . . ."⁹²

Yet in ScPr 84, the voice of catholic (lower-case "c") tradition surfaces like a trustworthy logical lens that stands between us, as readers, and the biblical text.⁹³ By this point in his ongoing development, Pinnock has concluded that "Tradition must be part of the answer. We read the text with certain beliefs already in our minds, whether cultural or theological, and these certainly affect how we evaluate what we find."⁹⁴ By the time we reach FoL 96, tradition's voice is ringing out clearly, and not just since the time of the Reformation. "I have dipped into the treasures of Catholic and Orthodox traditions in ways that I had not done before and have found affinities that surprised and delighted me,"⁹⁵ though Pinnock offers this caveat: we must "not allow tradition to control our reading of the Bible in ways that silence its message."⁹⁶

⁸⁹ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 47.

⁹⁰ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 97.

⁹¹ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 111.

⁹² Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 156.

⁹³ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 79.

⁹⁴ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 170.

⁹⁵ Pinnock, *Flame*, 18.

⁹⁶ Pinnock, *Flame*, 138.

As we now shift in our analysis from tradition itself to human voices within it, we find that tradition's ancient voice is paralleled by that of the church fathers. In BRev 71, mention is made (just twice) of the early Fathers, and their unanimous consent concerning the true sense and interpretation of the Scriptures.⁹⁷ In Pinnock's other works the Fathers' voice is mentioned a few times in each book, but minimally. Tradition's voice clearly receives more focus than the church fathers' voices *per se*, though the Fathers do serve as one strand in Pinnock's evolving dynamic hermeneutic: "Let us read [the Bible] with the creeds, liturgical practices and teachings of the fathers in mind. This is being attentive to the presence of the Spirit in the church and having a sense of a living continuity."⁹⁸

3. Voices Today. When we turn to the voices of contemporary authors, the quantity of references changes significantly. Total references to authors' voices in the footnotes of BRev 71 number 616; in ScPr 1984, 375; and in FoL 96, 377. Both BRev 71 and FoL 96 include references to popes, encyclicals, Orthodox and Anglican writers, and/or documents; ScPr 84, on the other hand, does not. In the following paragraphs, given such a plethora of voices, we will examine only that voice most quoted in each of Pinnock's respective books. Sometimes Pinnock refers to the same author in all three books, but typically the contemporary voices in his first book, BRev 71, are not quoted in his last book of our study. There seems to be a clear progression in his choice of sources, and, hence, in voices-- something to bear in mind in our next chapter on intertextuality.

The most frequent contemporary voice we hear in *Biblical Revelation* is John Warwick Montgomery, with 22 references. The profile of that particular voice, speaking and emerging for us at this innertextual stage solely from its quotations in BRev 71, is abetted by Pinnock's own definition of Montgomery as "A most emphatic voice on behalf

⁹⁷ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 124.

⁹⁸ Pinnock, *Flame*, 233.

of a historical apologetic.”⁹⁹ Experience¹⁰⁰ from Montgomery’s view is to be distrusted as the sole basis for theology, for its source is indeterminate, and it is not capable of validating its claims to truth in the face of alternate religious experiences.¹⁰¹ Defending the claims of Christianity is a priority; hence, the importance of the role of authority. Scripture’s claims are self-evident: “the gospel is eminently satisfying to heart and mind, no reasonable person can sidestep the necessity of making a decision in regard to it.”¹⁰² It is also self-sufficient; neither another standard is to be added to it (like tradition) nor exalted over it (as in liberal theology).¹⁰³ Theological theorizing “operates by a process of induction from biblical data on the basis of which conceptual models are created and continually checked.”¹⁰⁴ “Extra-biblical linguistic and cultural considerations” are to be interpreted by the Bible, not vice-versa.¹⁰⁵

This ferreting out of details through voice analysis bears us helpful fruit. For example, we can detect seeds of future thoughts in Pinnock's writing that are sown by Montgomery. Pinnock (referring to Montgomery) mentions that “The new view of truth held in Catholic and Protestant circles corresponds remarkably to an age-old motif in the Eastern Orthodox Church. From earliest times Orthodox theology has stressed mystical experience, and rested authority with the Spirit moving in the church.”¹⁰⁶ (This is a line of reasoning that Pinnock will pursue to its apex in *Flame of Love*.) Montgomery argues that “The material of theology needs both to be intellectually grasped and spiritually experienced in the community of the faithful. Let the Trinity serve as an example.” (In

⁹⁹ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 47.

¹⁰⁰ We realize that “experience” implies the question, “What kind?” Are we speaking of bodily, emotional, purposeful, sensory-aesthetic, or some other type of experience? The lemma “experience” is used by Pinnock in all three books, though most extensively in FoL 96. See histogram at the close of this chapter.

¹⁰¹ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 25.

¹⁰² Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 71.

¹⁰³ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 122.

¹⁰⁴ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 136.

¹⁰⁵ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 210.

¹⁰⁶ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 128.

terms of lemmatic repetition and progression, we have seen how Pinnock models this deepening appreciation of the communal nature of the Trinity. This includes his increased allusions to the Trinity, and to the three persons thereof.)

We ask ourselves this question then on the basis of our analysis of voices in Pinnock's narrative: is the ongoing development in Pinnock's thought due to a radical discontinuity in his thought at some point in the twenty-five years that our study covers, or is it rather a logical evolution of intellectual seeds sown in his fertile mind at the beginning of, or even before, 1971? In other words, was there a predisposition to change and exploration that has always characterized our author's temperament, and which grew precipitously in his later years?

As we move on to *The Scripture Principle*, the lead voice to emerge through a word count is that of Edward Farley with 14 occurrences, including references in footnotes. Whereas BRev 71 quotes mostly from protagonists, in ScPr 84 Pinnock quotes most often from an antagonist of his argument for the Scripture principle. The voice of Farley is eager to overturn traditional Christian thinking that theology should be "done in the house of authority."¹⁰⁷ In his opinion, the entire traditional theological project seems now to be falling apart, and he no longer supports it with his own belief.¹⁰⁸ "The problem of evil and the reality of human freedom rule out the existence of a God such as is presupposed by the biblical concept of revelation and inspiration."¹⁰⁹ Neither the Scripture principle nor salvation history are credible concepts. Farley "sees the connection and rejects them both."¹¹⁰

As for other authors, James Barr is referenced 13 times. In Pinnock's opinion, Barr's voice seeks "to lure Christians away from what he calls 'fundamentalism.'"¹¹¹ from

¹⁰⁷ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), ix.

¹⁰⁸ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), xiii.

¹⁰⁹ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 25.

¹¹⁰ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 61.

¹¹¹ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 13.

whose company he has distanced himself.¹¹² A major concern on Barr's part is that conservatives link salvation and belief in the Scriptures so closely that someone with a non-conservative view of the Bible has no right to the hope of salvation, rather than being judged on the basis of her or his response to Jesus Christ.¹¹³ He also critically points out that conservatives' commitment to the canonical text lessens their estimation of the value of the critical work done on the earlier stages of a more primitive layer of tradition than the NT itself.¹¹⁴ Whereas Pinnock argues for an analogy between the incarnational nature of Jesus and that of the Bible--just "As the Logos was enfleshed in the life of Jesus, so God's Word is enlettered in the script of the Bible"¹¹⁵--Barr's voice is raised to defend critical freedom against the resurgence of dogmatic Bible reading.¹¹⁶

Barr critically reviewed *The Scripture Principle* for Pinnock, judging it unacceptable from the left in that Pinnock did not go far enough in his treatment of inspiration (while another voice, that of Roger Nicole, judged it unacceptable from the right, for Pinnock went too far).¹¹⁷ Despite his vigorous academic debate across decades with Farley and Barr, Pinnock irenically confides in the Appendix of ScPr 06 that, given his "more inductive approach to the text that avoids the tendency to strained exegesis forced by a presuppositional theory," he has nonetheless "been helped by scholars like Edward Farley and James Barr to realize without embarrassment that God has given the Scriptures in human forms and languages."¹¹⁸

We note in passing that voices from other Christian traditions are also raised in Pinnock's corpus. In *Biblical Revelation* we hear Karl Rahner and Cardinal Ratzinger, as well as Popes John XXIII, Pius X, Benedict XV, and Pius XII. Speaking for Orthodoxy in

¹¹² Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 14, fn. 6.

¹¹³ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 18–19.

¹¹⁴ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 92.

¹¹⁵ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 124.

¹¹⁶ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 163.

¹¹⁷ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 258, fn. 17.

¹¹⁸ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 259.

his book *The Eastern Orthodox Church* (1963), Ernst Benz is given mention. At this point in *Biblical Revelation*, such voices are limited to the subject of hermeneutics, be they Catholic or Orthodox, and are (primarily) recruited in support of Pinnock's favoured understanding of inspiration and inerrancy. It is, however, a beginning--and a significant step forward as Pinnock's appreciation for the historic church grows.

Though both editions of *The Scripture Principle* are silent in reference to encyclicals and popes, several Catholic voices speak in *Flame of Love*, including some who spoke in *Biblical Revelation*. Pope Paul IV in "Dogmatic Constitution on the Church" in 1964 encourages the church to stay rooted in Scripture, yet to be open to new models of doctrine and praxis.¹¹⁹ The Second Vatican Council's "Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions" argues that the ever-present Spirit counters "restrictivism," for the Spirit seems to work in other religions too.¹²⁰ John Paul II delights in the cosmic range of the Spirit's working. And the Catechism of the Catholic Church stresses Jesus' death as the "recapitulation" of Israel's and (more broadly) humanity's story, experiencing all the stages of life.¹²¹

At the same time, an Anglican voice warns of the dangers inherent in charismatic religion but not (as Pinnock takes pains to point out) at the cost of closing down openness to God's working--see the Doctrine Commission of the Church of England's "Holy Spirit and the Future," written in 1991.¹²²

As we close this section on voices, we note that Pinnock turns to several contemporary authors in *Flame of Love* (1996), referring to Wolfhart Pannenberg 32 times alone. He also turns to Karl Barth as a significant voice (15), whom we will consider more

¹¹⁹ Pinnock, *Flame*, 220, 278, fn. 9.

¹²⁰ Pinnock, *Flame*, 186-87.

¹²¹ Pinnock, *Flame*, 95.

¹²² Pinnock, *Flame*, 139.

closely in our next chapter on the intertextural texture; to James Dunn (17), Hans Küng (16), and Jürgen Moltmann (25).

New voices are added as well from Orthodoxy, enriching the layering already evident in Pinnock's inclusion of Catholic and Anglican voices. Daniel B. Clendenin shifts the focus of justification from a judiciary perspective, favoured within conservative evangelicalism, to that of Christ's death on the cross as a victory sweeping us up into God's love in order to participate in the divine nature.¹²³ Ernst Benz's voice highlights, among other points, the Spirit's authority as ultimately mystical and charismatic, though that authority also comes through communal sources like bishops, Scripture, councils, etc.¹²⁴ Bishop Kallistos (Timothy) Ware advises that "Many Orthodox feel that, as a result of the filioque, the Spirit in Western thought has become subordinated to the Son—if not in theory, then in practice. The West pays insufficient attention to the work of the Spirit in the world, in the church, in the daily life of each man."¹²⁵ Other Orthodox voices also included in the narrative are those of Georgios Mantzaridis, Christoforos Stavropoulos, and Vladimir Lossky.

Summation

Our focus in this section entitled "Narrational Texture and Pattern" has been on the narrative time, plot, and narrative voices in Pinnock's three texts (specifically in tradition and today), all of which help us discern the narrational texture (Bloomquist). As for narrative time and plot, Pinnock (as implied author, and undramatized narrator) takes us through his arguments for a move from what he deemed the inadequate religious hermeneutics prevailing in the 1960s and 70s in evangelical circles to a Scripture-based understanding of inspiration and revelation (read, divine authorship); that included historic,

¹²³ Pinnock, *Flame*, 156.

¹²⁴ Pinnock, *Flame*, 232.

¹²⁵ Pinnock, *Flame*, 197.

traditional, academic, and socio-cultural insights (read, human authorship); as enlivened through the dynamic work of the Holy Spirit (with universal scope). We demonstrate that it was a move from a text-based to a relational-, communal-, and Trinitarian-based hermeneutic.

We identified numerous “voices” of “characters” in Pinnock's texts, shaped by the “narrator” into a “narration.” These voices emerged through our innertextual analysis of the repetition and progression of key lemmas. There is a discernible lemmatic movement from God as object for discussion to God as Trinity in social relationship, a mystery at dance and play. Correspondingly there is a drop in Pinnock’s use of text-based words like Scripture, Bible, and text as our analysis moves into FoL 96, his theology of the Holy Spirit. We also noticed a trend whereby history and tradition (including the church fathers) are used less as a convenient source of proof texts, and more as an interpretive lens through which Scripture is read.

The most frequent voices are those of contemporary authors. Certain of those voices introduce the richness of ancient perspectives, awaked to the mystery of divine self-revelation--and preserved in historic traditions such as Catholicism and Orthodoxy. These voices selected by Pinnock unite in affirming Scripture as the principal hermeneutic which critiques modernity (and any given society). Countering that position are other modern voices introduced by Pinnock which argue for a contemporary hermeneutic that relativizes the voice of Scripture.

In summary, we can say that Pinnock’s three books create a narrative that relies primarily on speaking (usually through other authors’ voices) as opposed to action; and that is clearly linked with biblical passages (the ultimate voice of authority within his hermeneutic). As his appreciation for the voice of the Holy Spirit waxes, so too does his openness to other sources of insight within historic Christianity, with their relative authority. Once again we have evidence that the reflections by Pinnock upon the role of

spiritual experience are embedded within what he calls “classic” (i.e., confessional) Christianity.

IV. Opening-Middle-Closing Texture and Pattern

For several decades, source, form, and redaction criticism have presupposed that one first makes analytical comparisons among texts before moving to a close holistic analysis of one text on its own terms. Robbins reverses this procedure. He argues that the initial step is to work with the critical text first. And in this process, an understanding of the opening-middle-closing texture prepares the reader to then move into the argumentative and aesthetic textures.¹²⁶ A consideration of how a text opens, progresses, and closes reveals the span of the text. Within this span, one can probe for the beginning and ending of a plotted time, and then compare this plotted time with the story time.¹²⁷

With the books we have chosen from Pinnock’s corpus, we will analyze each book from its start to its close. Then, in given sections, we can zero in for more detailed analysis.

A. “Textual” Word Grouping

The first group of words that we explore in order to delineate the textual opening, middle, and closing sections of our chosen books is of a textual nature (including the words Scripture, revelation, Word, text, Old Testament, and New Testament).¹²⁸

“Revelation” is used in the opening of *The Scripture Principle*,¹²⁹ yet in the last

¹²⁶ Robbins, *Tapestry*, 53.

¹²⁷ Robbins, *Tapestry*, 50.

¹²⁸ BRev 71 relies more upon the word “Scripture” than any of the other books, with usage that pervades the book. The words “Scripture” and “Bible” pervade BRev 71 and ScPr 84, yet are only present in significant numbers in ch. 7 of FoL 96. “Revelation” occurs most often in ch. 1 of BRev 71, and ch. 1 of ScPr 84 (in each case pertaining to the pattern of divine revelation). In FoL 96, it is confined to ch. 7. The use of “Word” is most prominent in chs. 1, 7, and 9 of ScPr 84. In FoL 96, once again, it is limited to ch. 7. And “text” reaches its apex in chs. 2 and 6 of BRev 71; in chs. 2,3, and 6-9 in ScPr 84; yet only in ch. 7 of FoL 96.

¹²⁹ “Word” is used intermittently throughout, peaking in chapters dealing with revelation, the Word and the Holy Spirit, and interpretation. (This opens the possibility that Word in particular expresses for

three quarters, considerable emphasis is placed upon the word “text” as a finishing emphasis.¹³⁰ Since BRev 71 mentions “text” only at its very end when dealing with hermeneutics, ScPr 84’s increased use of “text” in its middle and closing sections may indicate that Pinnock is moving to a broader narrative approach to the Bible, with textual realities now shaping his theological considerations rather than the other way round.

Meanwhile, FoL 96 once again stands apart--a little bit like the Johannine writings in contrast to the Synoptic Gospels, though in this case by the same author. It only concerns itself with the “text” word grouping (such as “Bible,” “Scripture,” “revelation,” “Word,” and “text”) in its final seventh chapter, which pertains to the Spirit leading the church into truth (with implications of the issue of authority). Otherwise, the words receive scant mention. Other priorities seem to shape the structure of this book, with textual concerns and lemmas linked to the “text” word grouping superseded by something else.

B. “Theology” Word Grouping

We can also draw together a group of words that pertains to the second-order category of theology, words such as theology, truth, inspiration, divin*, faith, authority, history, religion, church, and tradition. By amalgamating the results of their usage, the following picture emerges starting first with BRev 71: “Faith,” “authority,” and “history” provide an opening section, and in the middle section of the book, theology and tradition come to the fore. (We may be detecting here a proto-broadening in Pinnock’s thought to the historic church even as early as 1971, indicated by his turning to sources far more ancient than his Baptist tradition.)

In ScPr 84, again “authority” figures prominently in the opening section, while “divin*” and “history” shape the middle section.

Pinnock that which *God* has made known of himself to humanity.)

¹³⁰ In ScPr 84, references to “Old Testament” and “New Testament” are few.

In FoL 96, “theology” provides an opening¹³¹ as does “divin*.” “Faith” and “church” yield a middle section, while in the closing section “truth” occurs in noticeable numbers only in ch. 7, and “authority” does not really register at all. Something in *Flame of Love* is bracketing and providing a greater context for Pinnock’s categories of theological thought, something different than the theological categories used by him in the other books. We will carry this insight forward with us.

C. “God” Word Grouping

Another grouping of words which we can probe for insights into textual divisions within our selected books concerns God, including Christ, Jesus, Spirit, son*, father*, and trinity.

The word “God” predominates through all the books, being used the most in FoL 96; as such, it provides us with no distinctive patterning. However, in BRev 71 an opening is provided by use of the word “Christ.” In ScPr 84, a more distinctive sectioning occurs. “Jesus” is clearly linked with an opening section, and “Spirit” provides a closing section. In FoL 96, the separating of sections crystalizes the most: “trinity,” “father*,” and “son*” all provide a clear opening; then the emphasis shifts in the middle section to “Christ” and “Jesus.”

This might be an answer to our observation above of a greater context in *Flame of Love* than strictly theological categories. The biblical and theological word groups that figure so prominently in BRev 71 and ScPr 84 are squeezed primarily into one chapter at the close of FoL 96, namely, Ch. 7. Rather the “God” words shift toward the persons of the Godhead, making this book the most Trinitarian of the three, at least in terms of word usage. A relational focus appears to be emerging.

¹³¹ It spikes in ch. 2, entitled “Spirit in Creation.”

Summation

We see the possible emergence then of a shift in the opening-middle-closing strategy in Pinnock's books: initially, in *Biblical Revelation* there is a progression through an opening emphasis on divine "revelation," focused on Jesus and Christ as revealed in Scripture and/or the Bible, to a closing emphasis on hermeneutics as specifically defined by the biblical text. (The inherent risk of such a grounding of hermeneutics is that "the way we have always done it is *to look at the way we have always done it.*")¹³² Such an opening-middle-closing strategy alters over the following decades: an opening emphasis on revelation which is Jesus-centric persists through the writing of ScPr 84. However, a pronounced interest in the word "text" emerges in the middle and later parts--a movement to more of a narrative hermeneutic perhaps, or to a heightened appreciation for the inclusion of extra-biblical material, or to a critical approach to the biblical text. In any case, we have in *The Scripture Principle* a new voice, with minimal previous mention in *Biblical Revelation*.

Flame of Love, on the other hand, though placing much of its emphasis on a second-order word group focused on theology, demonstrates a relational tilt. Its opening section with a strong Trinitarian focus on "father*" and "son*" is followed by a middle section emphasizing Christ and Jesus. It concludes with a final section concerned with words related to the Bible--yet still in conjunction with the Spirit and truth.

A helpful insight into Pinnock's view of spirituality emerges from words *not* employed in these three books. Though he clearly delights in and favours concepts of dynamism and openness as seen in FoL 96, our author does not rely on words such as "inner" or "internal," nor (and this is significant in light of growing interest in spirituality in the West) on the word "mystery" in any of these books. He obviously understands

¹³² Blundell, *Ricoeur*, 46.

spirituality as alive, operative, energizing, and vital, yet considers such spirituality as ably expressed through and within the parameters of traditional Christian theology.

V. Argumentative Texture and Pattern

As the study of the argumentative texture unfolds, two fundamental forms of reasoning are revealed. The first form is *logical* (or enthymematic). That is, the discourse very specifically presents assertions with the support of reasons, it clarifies them with opposites and contraries, and may present counterarguments that are short or elaborate. The second form is *qualitative* (sometimes called paradigmatic). The reader is encouraged to accept that which is portrayed as real by the quality of the images and descriptions. Analogies and examples are used (and in ancient Mediterranean literature, citations of ancient testimony).¹³³

Rhetorical theory provides extensive analytical tools to probe better the argumentative texture of texts, both ancient and modern. Robbins¹³⁴ points the reader to Cicero's sorting out, in 87 B.C.E., of the devices central to argumentation in *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. (Cicero classified the devices as Thesis, Rationales, Contrary with Rationale, Restatement of Thesis with Rationales, Analogy, Example and Testimony of Antiquity, and Conclusion.)¹³⁵ Because in Western society today arguments are typically presented as a syllogism with Major Premise, Minor Premise, and Conclusion,¹³⁶ Cicero's schema of

¹³³ Robbins, *Exploring*, 21.

¹³⁴ Robbins, *Exploring*, 21–23.

¹³⁵ Cicero, *Rhetorica Ad Herennium* (The Loeb Classical Library; trans. Harry Caplan; Cicero in Twenty-Eight Volumes; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989 [87 B.C.E.]), 4.43.56–44.57 (pp. 369–71).

¹³⁶ Yet another form of ancient rhetorical argument relied on a literary figure known as a “sorites.” In a sorites of the Aristotelian type, for example, the predicate of the opening statement becomes the subject of the next, until the series ends with the subject of the first statement linked with the predicate of the immediately preceding statement:

“All true believers seek the will of God, / All who seek the will of God desire to grow in grace, / All who desire to grow in grace read the Bible daily, / Therefore, all true believers read the Bible daily.”

In a “pseudosorites,” there is a strange sort of illogic in which the first event (A) is contracted by the second event (B). Perhaps the most familiar pseudosorites is the reply of Daniel's three friends to King

argumentation, if used as an analytical tool, can be reduced to the familiar syllogistic format. A thesis and a rationale together, for example, would provide the Minor Premise (rationale) and the Conclusion (thesis).¹³⁷

However, a different mode of argumentation is also available to us courtesy of ancient rhetoric. An analysis of early Christian discourse indicates that argumentation functioned as persuasion in these contexts, not as “formal logic” using the three parts of a dialectical syllogism, but through argumentation that was *enthymematic*. An enthymeme is “A syllogism in which one premise is suppressed,”¹³⁸ making it incomplete, with a premise or conclusion assumed rather than stated. Such ancient argumentation argued then from “signs” (pure assumptions) or from “likelihoods” (probable assumptions), rather than from decontextualized philosophical thinking.¹³⁹ The skeletal underlay of this mode was Rule, Case, and Result, rather than Major Premise, Minor Premise, and Conclusion.¹⁴⁰ We will use this mode, in light of Cicero’s “variations,” as an avenue of investigation to understand better representative arguments from each of Pinnock’s books. As Cicero put it,

Indeed, after having expressed the theme simply, we can subjoin the Reason, and then express the theme in another form, with or without the Reasons; next we can present the Contrary . . . ; then a Comparison and an Example . . . ; and finally the Conclusion. . . . A Refinement of this sort, which will consist of numerous figures of diction and of thought, can therefore be exceedingly ornate. The following, then,

Nebuchadnezzar, in which they declare that, though (A) confident in God’s ability to deliver them, they (B) submit themselves absolutely to his sovereign will:

“(A) If the three are thrown into the fiery furnace for not worshipping the Babylonian gods or Nebuchadnezzar’s image, God is not only able to deliver them from the furnace but will do so; yet (B) even if he does not do so . . . the three would not participate in Babylonian pagan worship practices.” See Richard D. Patterson, “An Overlooked Scriptural Paradox: The Pseudosorites,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 53, no. 1 (March 2010): 19–21.

¹³⁷ Robbins, *Exploring*, 23.

¹³⁸ 22 July 2010, *Oxford English Dictionary* (England: Oxford University Press, 2009),

[Http://dictionary.oed.com](http://dictionary.oed.com).

¹³⁹ Robbins, *Invention*, 82.

¹⁴⁰ Robbins, *Invention*, 83.

will illustrate a treatment in seven parts-- . . . in order that you may know how easily, by the precepts of rhetoric, a simple idea is developed in a multiple manner: . . .¹⁴¹

In other words, Cicero provides an outline of Thesis, Rationales, Contrary with Rationale, Restatement of Thesis with Rationales, Analogy, Example and Testimony of Antiquity, and Conclusion. Robbins gives an example of what this format can look like when applied as an interpretive lens to Jas 5:14-16, a miracle rhetorolect that presents a story of a healer's actions on the malfunctioning body of some sick person, in light of previous stories of healing. The hearer envisions the elders of the faith community being called together, their prayer over the sick person, and anointing with oil. Customarily when this happens, "the sick are saved, the Lord raises them up, and the person's sins are forgiven." What is the conclusion for members of the faith community, the "wisdom" about the miracle that is a deduction on the basis of the story's action? "The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective."¹⁴² We will now apply the insights above to individual

¹⁴¹ Cicero, *Rhetorica Ad Herennium*, The Loeb Classical Library, trans. Harry Caplan, Cicero in Twenty-Eight Volumes (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989 [87 B.C.E.]), 369-71 (4.43.56).

¹⁴² "Miracle Reasoning

Question: Are any among you suffering?

Case: They should call for the elders or the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord (5:14).

Result/Case: The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven (5:15).

Result: Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed (5:16a).

Rule: The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective (5:16b)."

In another example, Robbins refers to the image-descriptive structuring of apocalyptic language of the ancient Mediterranean world. All time (past, present, and future) and all space (cosmic, earthly, and bodily) are configured in terms of good and holy/evil and corrupt. Various theses and rationales are used to make God's actions in all time and all space (heaven, earth, Sheol, etc.) into the Rule that arches over Cases and Results. Cases identify those who are evil and those who are righteous, while Results show how the unrighteous will be destroyed and the righteous preserved. The dominant rubric, then, is "God's story," stretching from the present into the past and the future, creating a universe where only righteousness will eventually exist. See Robbins, *Invention*, 196, 336.

For examples of topoi used by early Christians, see Robbins, *Invention*, 84-85. These include friendship with flattery and frankness of speech, covetousness or greed, household management, love of honour or fame, patronage, and so on.

arguments in our books by Pinnock.

A. The Scripture Principle (1984)

As an example of argumentative texture and pattern, we will first assess the entire book of ScPr 84 by means of Cicero's seven rhetorical variations, and then look at one representative argument. (The following page numbers refer to the 1984 edition.)

Thesis: Fundamental to Christian thinking is the acceptance of the bipartite Bible (ix). This means the "Scripture principle": the OT and NT, with their doctrinal interpretations, are in a unique place of authority for Christian faith, practice, and reflection. This book is a systematic treatment of the concept (222).

Rationales: Because God entered this world within the parameters of Jesus' life, Jesus Christ must be the centrepiece of the Christian revelation (10), which is bipolar: objective and subjective, general (universal) and special (5). Pinnock favours the inductive-historical approach: it positively relates history and faith; and affirms Scripture as "the grammatical residue of a revelation which bears marks of credibility" (45). Yet factual empirical knowledge falls short of absolute certainty, for we are dealing with probabilities (46). The Bible does not give us a doctrine of its own authority and inspiration; practically, it testifies to salvation in Jesus Christ (54); as such, it is a covenant document designed to lead us to know God and love him (55). Yet the Bible itself calls for faith in God. How does it wish us to approach it, and for what purpose (133)? NT writers could interpret the text in new ways for new circumstances because the OT is a text oriented to the future of God's salvation (176). The NT reinterprets the OT in light of the higher stage of revelation that has dawned; it uses pre-Messianic Scripture to render the new substance of the gospel. Thus, Christians read the NT into the Old (181).

Contrary with rationales: There was a cultural shift beginning in the Renaissance to secular modernity, and then to rationalist modernity as brought on by the Enlightenment

and the theologically liberal response to it (xiii). Deists first suggested that reason alone could find truth; revelation was necessary for questions of piety or obedience.

Schleiermacher, reared a deist, linked revelation with the experience of the heart (21). Neo-orthodox scholars after WW I suggested that revelation is not “a universal human capacity of mystical experience.” It is an encounter with God’s Word not captured in propositions (i.e., orthodoxy) nor in experience (i.e., liberalism). “Modern theology is marked by a shift to the functional and the existential,” but the Bible is not allowed to discipline this inner work of subjectivity (157). Conservative evangelicals in turn have acted as though an interpretive operation by a trained technician delivers truth--without need of the Spirit (214). Yet a question is posed: just as NT Greek, for example, is translated “to convey the message of the Bible in a fresh and intelligible way to the modern audience . . . surely it is right also to render the [theological] categories in new forms that would bring out the same meaning for the twentieth century[?] Surely theological translation is what we ought to be doing to help people grasp the message of the Bible.” However, “transformation” is often done in the name of “translation”--both Tillich and Bultmann considered their work as translation. However, they substituted twentieth-century philosophical ideas for biblical content (218).

Restatement of thesis with rationales: Spirit dynamism is the key. Divine inspiration of Holy Scripture arises organically out of the Christian pattern of revelation; the biblical text has a human character; and there is also a *dynamic* ministry of the Spirit in relation to the Bible (xviii). Biblical norms can be dynamically interpreted and freshly applied in today’s ever-changing situations (13). The NT does not know of a bifurcation, like modernity, between personal revelation (a transforming experience) and verbal communication (which modernity refuses to affirm as a message full of content and truth given in intelligible speech and language) (14). The living Word is not different from the textual Word; rather, through the Spirit what is written comes alive and becomes

contemporary to us. Conservatives have been tricked into defending the Bible in the wrong way, and maneuvered into an alien defence formation. We all need to turn back to the Christ-centred and nontechnical approach to the Bible. Pinnock believes that such truthfulness of Scripture is best conveyed still by the term “inerrancy.” (224)

Analogy: In interpretation, do we choose event-symbols that may be historical, or truth-symbols as infallibly defined by the parameters of Scripture itself (23)? As example, pagan myths are worked over in Genesis, but not from a mythical framework; rather, they are “broken myths” presented from the angle of Israel’s knowledge of God (123).

Example and Testimony of Antiquity: Jewish belief at the time of Jesus held that the Spirit had been withdrawn due to human disobedience; the Christian claim was that he had come due to the Messiah’s obedience (12). Jesus and the apostles used a dialectic: they read the OT as God’s Word, and they qualified it in view of the new messianic situation. Ironically, in the NT era it was the Jews who were the “conservatives,” insisting on the final authority of the text; the early Christians were the “liberals,” maintaining that the gospel takes us all beyond that in light of the Christ event (43). Since the rise of religious liberalism, Schillebeeckx claims that our modern standpoint has become “an intrinsic and determinative element for understanding God’s revelation.”¹⁴³ William Hordern uses the classification of transformers (who change Scripture in light of modern demands) vs. translators (who explain it as intelligibly as they can) (210).

Conclusion: The alternative is to approach the Bible in “believing circularity,” avoiding foolish cynicism and fearful fundamentalism (136). Pinnock sees this “Scripture principle” approach as his “manifesto for evangelical critical liberty” (143)--that is, the effectiveness of the Bible to mediate to us salvation in Christ. Positive criticism clarifies and sheds new light upon the Bible (143). This is a middle way in which a text is letter and

¹⁴³ See *Interim Report on the Books Jesus and Christ*:3, 1980, available at the St. Paul University Library.

spirit. We lay down the parameters of its meaning, and we listen for richer and fuller meaning from God (193). Word and Spirit, text and situation, are in a dialectical relationship of *adaptation* in light of the Christ event, although the core content of the symbols that the Bible provides set the parameters for their own use (190). It is this adaptation that Warfield refused to see (201). The collision comes when one's assumptions find themselves opposed by Scripture. Then Scripture must rule, and the given assumption is to be deemed negative (209). Yet what serves as a valid interpretation (215)? The text itself serves as such; and the "past hermeneutical wisdom" of tradition--an authority of counsel, not of command; and the "living community of believers who collectively hear the Word and assess the interpretation" (216).

To summarize in the light, then, of Cicero's seven rhetorical variations to representative arguments, in *The Scripture Principle* (105) Pinnock draws a *result*, a conclusion: "inspiration should be seen as a dynamic work of God." This is concluded based on at least one major *case* or rationale that is introduced at the beginning of the chapter: we are responsible to accept "the fact that God gave his Word in human language" (85). The major premise (or assertion or *rule*) which allows this argument to work is unstated, and therefore an enthymeme. It would go something like this: a work of God that is able to use human language is dynamic (implicitly, to a greater degree than just a direct word of God that does not use human language). All that goes in between (85-105) appears to be supplementary argumentative material. It is important to note that this analysis also reveals the value of opening-middle-closing texture. In this particular book, we discover that the opening contains the key rationale, the closing the key conclusion, while the middle "fleshes out" the rationale by means of a (unstated) rule.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁴ I wish to acknowledge Prof. Bloomquist as the source of this insight, in the course of one of many conversations we had while he directed this thesis.

B. Biblical Revelation (1971)

With BRev 71, we again apply Cicero's seven rhetorical variations first to the entire book. (The following page numbers refer to BRev 71.)

Thesis: To present the two choices before the church in 1971, "either we put the Bible above all else, or we put something above the Bible" (228).

Rationales: Revelation is the divine activity of self-disclosure in history and language (29), and the existential import of these revealing works is directly linked with their historical factuality (31) as interpreted by God. Inspiration is the extension of this modality of revelation (33). As a result, Scripture is the grammatical residue of redemptive divine revelation (21). This word-act is "graphe," and conserved by the Holy Spirit (35). Objective analysis allows us to determine Scripture's meaning (78). Pinnock's methodological foundation is the inductive-historical approach (45): "Theology is the inductive science which catalogues, interprets and relates the revealed data. Just as natural science is the technical expression of the data discovered in nature, theology is the expression of the truths of divine revelation" (134). The theologian like the scientist does not determine the nature and qualities of the objects of his investigation. "The exegesis of Scripture thus has absolute priority over all systems. Systems which fail to fit the data are to be dismantled" (135).

Contrary with Rationale: Neoorthodoxy affirms that Scripture is personal (rather than propositional) and historical (rather than literature) (23). James Barr claims that "apparent errors" in Scripture occur because the biblical writers' sources were themselves in error. Pinnock rejects Tillich's and Wittgenstein's limits on the ability of symbols to communicate transcendent truth (116-17). He questions reason, tradition, and experience as authorities in biblical interpretation (123-33). The alternatives in modernity that seek to detach revelation from authority are: divine activity, an I-Thou encounter, and religious experience (163).

Restatement of Thesis with Rationales: The issue in contemporary theology is, What is an adequate foundation (107)? Biblical writers reflected on Christ, not on their experiences. “The Christ event took place outside of us (extra nos) for our sakes (pro nobis). The existential dimension is the result of the factual, and depends on it” (222). Pinnock sees the Christian faith as grounded in supernatural reality, in divine revelation in word and event (226). If the text addresses and interprets us existentially by simply naming an existential event long ago, then Pinnock’s point is: why be bound by the text? The “inerrant” view of inspiration of Scripture provides the means of putting the Bible above all else. Because faith stands in relation to an object, that object has to be self-validating (37). Authority is not self-validating (44).

Analogy: Pinnock states “The humanity of the Bible no more necessitates errors in the text than the humanity of Christ requires sin in His life.” (162) So, Christ who affirms his own authority sets himself under the authority of the OT, delegates apostles with his authority, and from this flowed the authority of the apostolic writings for the church (63). (Note: at this point, Pinnock seems to confuse sin with finite limitations. Do errors in Scripture due to authorial finitude in worldviews and textual resources constitute sin?)

Example and Testimony of Antiquity: “Pietism generally ends up discarding Scripture as the necessary creative source of faith” (225). Pinnock uses 2 Tim 3:16 as his definition of the scriptural testimony.

Conclusion: “To err is human--ergo, God gave Scripture by inspiration--so that, it does not err” (176). His reason? Christ was sinless yet this does not render a docetic Christ, or make historical study of his life impossible (176).

What happens if we apply this mode of Rule, Case, and Result to generate a representative argument in BRev 71? In Ch. 1, Pinnock discusses the pattern of divine revelation, from which his conclusions are foundational for the rest of the book: “The context in which biblical inspiration should be viewed is that of divine revelation” (20). At

the chapter's close, he claims that divine revelation is objective and meaningful since the veracity of Christ's self-disclosure provides its "foundation stone" (52). As a *result/conclusion*, Scripture is not just "a nonconceptual, ecstatic experience of mystery" recording "an attempted human interpretation" (22), but the "locus," "vehicle," and "transcript" of Christ the living Word. It is the "inscripturated Word of God," the grammatical expression thereof (37). His *rule/assertion* is an enthymeme: this inscripturated Word proves itself to be true revelation because it meets the same standard of perfection as the living Word, its divine "ultimate datum" (37)--it demonstrates a perfection of errorlessness as demanded by all the criteria of modern logical positivism.

(This ties in nicely with the first representative argument we generated for *The Scripture Principle*. It is to BRev 71's argument concerning Scripture's errorlessness that Pinnock reacts in ScPr 84 with his correction. By 1984 he posits a work of God that is able to use human language, and is more dynamic than a direct word of God that does not use human language. Such language was stripped of its social-cultural and ideological implications in his earlier positivist stance.)

The opening-middle-closing argument in BRev 71's representative argument thus goes like this. Pinnock opens and closes with his *case* (that divine revelation is true). The middle of his argument is given to questionable and acceptable conclusions/*results* concerning the nature of Scripture. And woven throughout his argument is the enthymeme of his *rule* (that Scripture confirms its errorless nature by meeting modernity's rigid positivist demands of scientific and technical perfection).

C. Flame of Love (1996)

Turning to Cicero's seven variations once more, we apply them to the whole of FoL 96 before generating a representative argument for it too. (The following page numbers refer to FoL 96.)

Thesis: Due to the Fall, the Spirit has been sent forth “on a mission of restoration through incarnation” to heal people “from within our nature by God’s power,” and the entire cosmos (23). “God uses his two hands [Spirit and Son] in the work of redemption” (92).

Rationales: The ground of ontology is God as pure relationality; a dynamic Trinity with love and grace is primary. Thus, the world is called into being with the potential of loving relationality within itself (23), for God wishes an echo of the trinitarian life on the finite level (47). He incorporates all who believe into the new humanity created in Christ by the Spirit. Thus, Jesus bespeaks particularity, and Spirit bespeaks universality (188).

Contrary with Rationale: This contrasts with Descartes’ understanding of the human as a thinking individual. Rather, personhood is inseparable from relationship and communion (30). Liberal theology refers only to the divine element in Jesus, rather than to the Holy Spirit dwelling in him (92). In certain juridical models of the atonement, the resurrection is simply an add-on rather than the means by which Christ’s salvific life culminates in the defeat of death itself (99). The two errors to avoid are universalism, and restrictivism (that is, non-Christians will all be damned whether they hear the gospel or not) (190-1).

Restatement of Thesis with Rationales: Rather than using legal terms for justification, let us use the lens of “union” (149). It is called ‘theosis’ or participation in the divine nature (150), and the source of our spirituality (151). Though it need not, the *filioque* clause might threaten the principle of universality, that the Spirit is universally present implementing the universal salvific will of Father and Son. The *filioque* can promote christomonism (196), whereas “Viewing the Son’s incarnation as an event in the history of the Spirit lets us consider particularity in the context of universality” (197). “Because of Spirit, everyone has the possibility of encountering him--even those who have not heard of Christ may establish a relationship with God through prevenient grace” (199). Thus, we can

accept spiritual depth and truth in other religions though, on the other hand, we must reject darkness and error, and at the very least see other faiths as insufficient apart from fulfilment in Christ (202). For this the spiritual gift of discernment is key (208), since we recognize the Spirit at work in the world beyond the church in the double mission of Son and Spirit and the link between them. Truth incarnate is the criterion for testing spirits, hence, it is christological (1 John 4:2-3) (209). As such, “Revelation is not primarily existential impact or infallible truths but divine self-revelation that both impacts and instructs” (226).

Analogy: ‘Spirit’ does not convey in the Bible the Platonic notion of incorporeality, but rather of a gale-force wind, an irrepressible creation dynamic (22). God does not will to be alone, so the church is the colony of heaven in which his love overflows (47). God’s presence is in the sacramental, charismatic, and diaconal dimensions of church life (11), and the Spirit heals the church of its brokenness as it is led into the truth (47).

Example and Testimony of Antiquity: Gregory of Nyssa (Cappadocian fathers) began with social trinitarianism (33). Logos Christology contrasts with the historic “last Adam” Spirit Christology (i.e., recapitulation), which views Christ as an aspect of the Spirit’s mission (80). Christ was in some sense victim, but also victor, as confessed by Eastern Orthodoxy (106). Anselm, culturally, gave a rational explanation of the atonement in apologetics (*Cur Deus Homo*) as an issue of his age’s social propriety and of honour (107). Meanwhile, theologians in the medieval church spoke about a “desire” (votum) by those of other faiths for Christ and the sacraments which would result in their salvation (205-6).

Conclusion: God’s scope of reconciliation is the whole universe (23). The Spirit is drawing us to God’s wedding banquet and union with himself (47). The cross must be seen as an intratrinitarian drama whereby God welcomed suffering into the triune life (104). “This means paradoxically that though it is the power of creation, it is also the power of suffering love, which does not remove our weakness or eliminate pain” (116). The goal of

mission is the gathering of the nations plus the transformation of creation; thus, Spirit revives the church as a means to this end (144).

When the mode of Rule, Case, and Result is applied to the representative argument found in Ch. 7 of FoL 96, we discover as our *case*/rationale that the “imperative of timeliness” is integral to doctrinal fidelity (215). By this Pinnock means that “A theology that does not inquire after God’s will for the present may be orthodox but is not really listening to God” (215). Spiritual discernment that genuinely grapples with contemporary issues, acknowledging the hermeneutical horizons that unite Christ-followers today with Christ-followers past, leads to fresh insights for the church (216) and promotes harmony. Key to this developmental approach to interpretation is tradition (22), an interpretive process which Pinnock calls “mystical” (232-33). The *result*/conclusion is a theology (and soteriology) reflective of the breadth of God’s concerns not just for the church but for the globe, for its many different peoples, and for the cosmos beyond (216-17). The enthymeme, that is, Pinnock’s *rule*/premise, is hinted at when he claims that “truth is not something merely external: it is also internal” (231). He is suggesting a subjective starting point for his theological enterprise whereby inner truth (personal *and* corporate experience as recorded in tradition) shares validity with the external truth of the Scriptures.

As for opening-middle-closing, Pinnock opens his argument with his *result* (that theology and more particularly soteriology reflect God’s cosmic concerns). The middle and closing sections deal with his *case* (that the timeliness of contemporary concerns and insights unites today’s readers with past readers through the developmental interpretation provided by tradition). His *rule* is enthymematic, namely, a subjective starting point of tradition’s (read, experience’s) asymmetrical legitimacy with the external starting point of Scripture.

Summation

The form of argument in Pinnock's three books is usually *logical* (or enthymematic). We have looked for major assertions (*rules*), the rationales (*cases*) that support them, and the conclusions (*results*) to be drawn. We note that the format of all three representative arguments in his books under our study is *case/rationale* leading to *result/conclusion*, the *rule* being provided by an enthymeme.

We have avoided trying to sum up the argumentative texture of each entire book. This is clearly not possible to do in the space of this thesis. Also, our desire is that such a summation should be clear to the reader by the further sociorhetorical insights provided from each book, by means of the material below.

VI. Sensory-Aesthetic Texture and Pattern

The final category of "texture and pattern" appeals to the senses including thought, emotion, touch, sound, sight, and even smell. The text "evokes or embodies" these senses by appealing to reason, intuition, imagination, humour, and so on. This means that a wise interpreter is looking for various "types" of literature, which in turn will take different "forms" (such as proverb, riddle, or parable).¹⁴⁵

To begin, Robbins offers this initial starting point: "identify and group every aspect of a text that refers to a part of the body (like eyes, ears, nose, etc.) and to actions or perceptions related to a part of the body (like seeing, hearing, smelling, etc.)."¹⁴⁶ Positively, such thoroughness of methodology (always a strong point of SRI) compels us to research hidden strata in a text that are easily overlooked. Though it is evident that not every detail of our five textural categories is applicable to the vast span of a book, or of several books, we find it surprising how the sensory-aesthetic texture does confirm a movement that we

¹⁴⁵ Robbins, *Exploring*, 29–30.

¹⁴⁶ Robbins, *Exploring*, 30.

have already detected in these books by Pinnock. Consider the following, where references to the five senses are listed by occurrence per book:

Table 4

Occurrence of the Five Senses

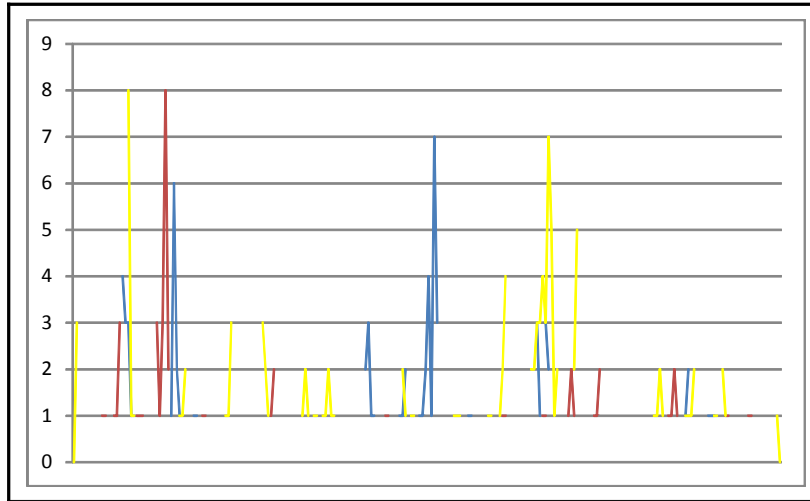
	BRev 71	ScPr 84	FoL 96
“ <i>See/sees/seeing/seen/etc.</i> ”	194	186	98
“ <i>Eye(s)</i> ”	8	23	13
“ <i>Hear/hears/heard/hearers/hearing</i> ”	21	69	71
“ <i>Hand(s)</i> ”	15	46	50
“ <i>Feet</i> ”	84	3	0
Total	322	327	232

What becomes immediately apparent when combining the results of the verb “see” with the noun “eye(s)” is Pinnock’s preference for the visual over the other senses. His preference, especially in *Flame of Love*, is for words that are either visually-friendly such as open, mystery, universal, love, and world; or easily visualized such as dynamic anthropocentric words like human, experience, life, creation, and power. For example, we noted above in our histograms that the lemma “experience” is used just as frequently in BRev 71 as in the other two books, and “tradition” too. Yet curiously, as evidenced in the table above, in terms of total usage we find that FoL 96 has the least total use of sensory-aesthetic words.

Let us consider the lemma “experience” for a possible link between experience and relationality in *The Scripture Principle*.

Histogram of “experience/experiences”:

BRev 71 (blue); ScPr 84 (red); FoL 96 (yellow)

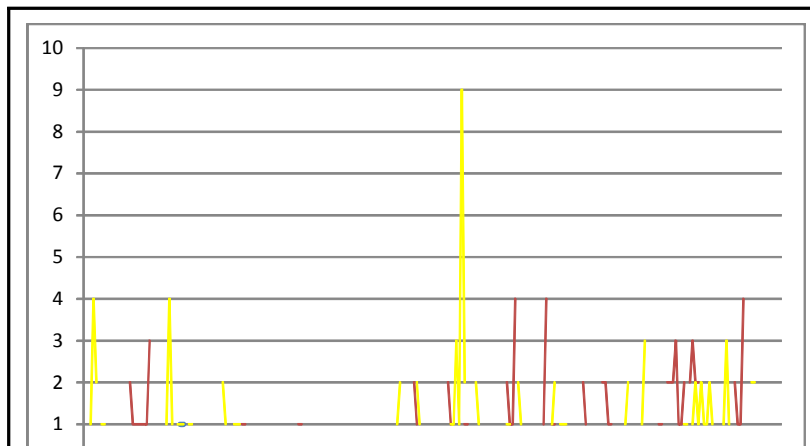


Here lies an important distinction that we must not overlook: notice how Pinnock’s earliest work in our corpus, BRev 71 (graphed in blue), is Word-oriented as it links “experience” almost exclusively with the

propositional witness of the Bible, and especially with the character of Christian theology. ScPr 84 (graphed in red) appears to follow in that vein. From the innertextual data that lies before us, it seems the early Pinnock worked with the assumption that Christian experience found its locus particularly in study and reflection upon theology, the “witness” of the Bible to its readers. Years later in FoL 96 (graphed in yellow), the matrix of “experience” becomes relationship--and centred on the Holy Spirit, be that within the Trinity (demonstrated by a peak in FoL 96’s word usage in Ch. 1, “Spirit & Trinity”), or in relation to humans (with another peak in Ch. 5, “Spirit & [Human] Union”).

Histogram of “open*”:

BRev 71 (blue); ScPr 84 (red); FoL 96 (yellow)

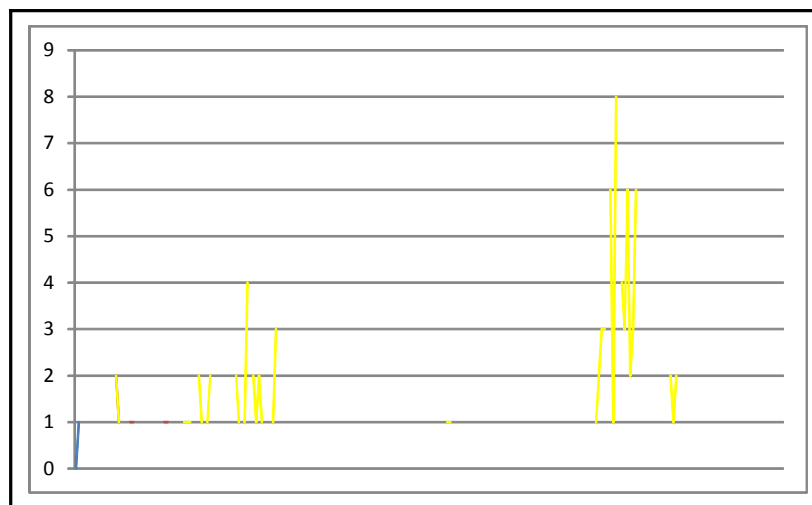


Our innertextual study seems to indicate that not only does Pinnock’s vocabulary shift, so too

does his attitude. Whereas the lemma “open*” occurs only 19 times in BRev 17, it and other words conveying the idea of expansiveness and horizons appear and grow in usage in his later writings. ScPr 84 (116 times) relies on “open*” especially in its last section dealing with Spirit, interpretation, and unfolding revelation—all topics that are dynamic in nature rather than static. And in FoL 96 (127 times), usage of “open” and/or “openness” reaches its apex in Ch. 4 (pp. 113-48), in which Pinnock describes the Spirit’s indwelling in the church and his sacramental and charismatic presence for mission. Throughout the book, this “openness” in terms of the chapter headings conveys a distinct impression of others-centeredness in ever-widening concentric circles within creation, with chapter titles such as “Spirit & *Church*” (Ch. 4), “Spirit & *Union*” (Ch. 5), and “Spirit & *Universality*” (Ch. 6).

Histogram of “universal*”:

BRev 71 (blue); ScPr 84 (red); FoL 96 (yellow)

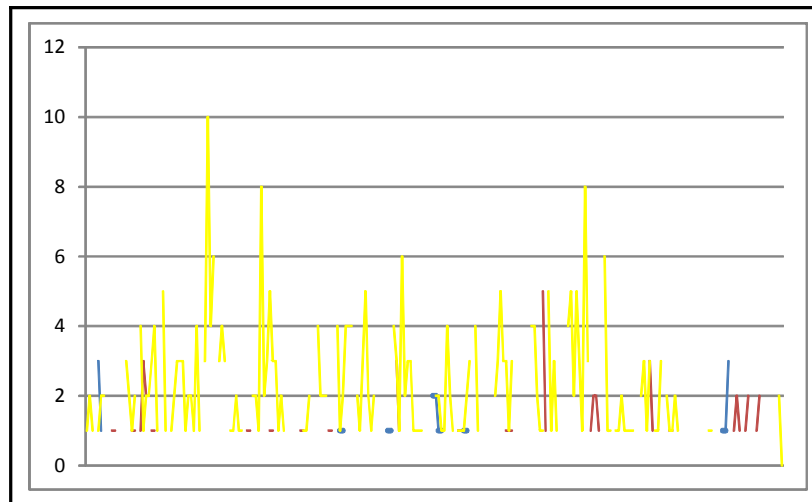


Likewise, “universal*” as a lemma appears seemingly from nowhere in the word usage of FoL 96 with no significant occurrence in the other two books. Here we find the word group woven into Ch. 2, “Spirit &

Creation,” and peaking in usage in Ch. 6, “Spirit & Universality.” In this, Pinnock’s theology of the Holy Spirit, which refers the least to text, Scripture, and even “Bible,” an outward- and cosmos-focused orientation (as reflected in lemmas like experience, open, and universal) is far more evident than in the other writings combined.

Histogram of “life*”:

BRev 71 (blue); ScPr 84 (red); FoL 96 (yellow)



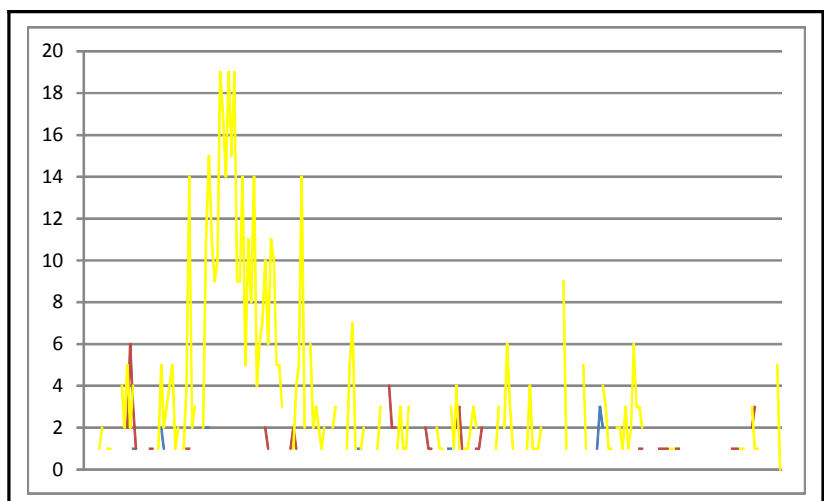
“Life*” likewise reflects a similar pattern of minimal usage in BRev 71, ScPr 84, and then an explosion of usage in FoL 96. There it peaks in Ch. 1, “Spirit & Trinity,” and then also receives considerable use in

Spirit’s involvement in creation (Ch. 2) and in the ultimate goal of salvation, loving union with God (Ch. 5). This confirms a shift in trajectory, innertextually, which we have noticed already; of a distinction between ScPr 84 and FoL 94 vis-à-vis the earliest book of our study, BRev 71.

Histogram of “creat*”:

BRev 71 (blue); ScPr 84 (red); FoL 96 (yellow)

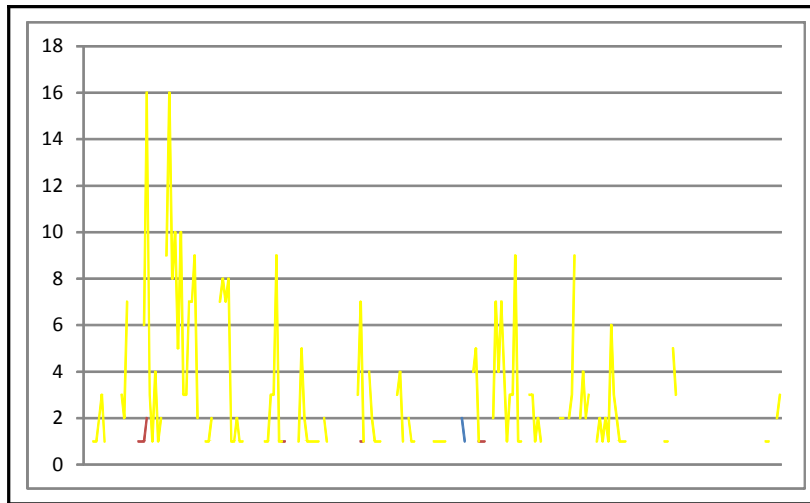
Offering a possible connection to the theme of *theosis* is “creat*,” which displays a surge of usage in FoL 96 when



Pinnock deals with “Spirit in Creation,” the Spirit’s role in the created order (with 298 mentions in this second chapter alone). It also hits another peak in Ch. 3, “Spirit & Christology,” though considerably less with 72 occurrences. This is the chapter in which according to the Table of Contents “The Spirit anointed Jesus of Nazareth to heal human brokenness from the inside and bring about atonement.” The evident link (with this lemma) between Christology and atonement in Ch.3, and creation in Ch. 2, lends weight to the suggestion that a cosmos-transcending dimension seems to be rising in FoL 96.

Histogram of “lov*”:

BRev 71 (blue); ScPr 84 (red); FoL 96 (yellow)



“Lov*” as a word group has a minimal presence in Pinnock’s books (BRev 71 = 7; ScPr 84 = 34), save in FoL 96 with a total of 401 occurrences. Given that its usage peaks in Ch. 1, we turn to the Table of

Contents to find that this principal concentration concerns the inner Trinitarian life of the Godhead. It appears that Pinnock grounds his understanding of love, and of the Holy Spirit as the “flame of love” (see book title), in the inter-communal relationships within the deity, now making this his theological starting point.

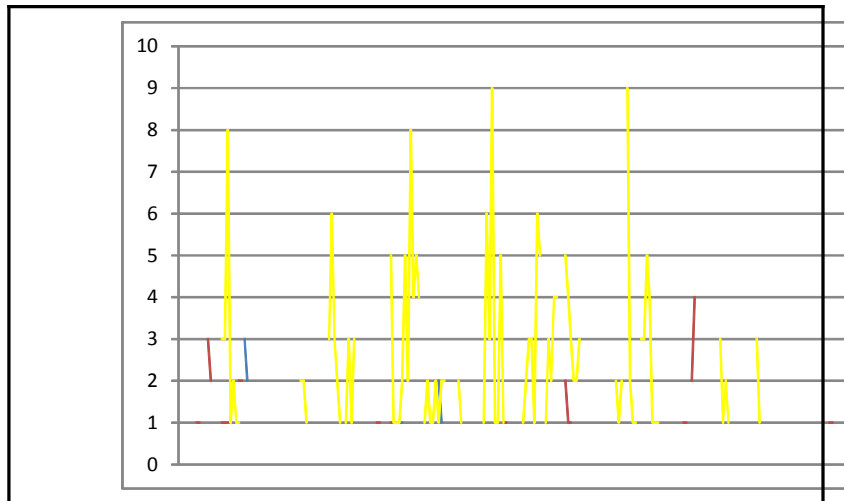
As possible confirmation of the observation above concerning a relational starting point, consider Pinnock’s usage of the lemma “unite,” “unity,” and “unitary.” Usage of

“unit*” is relatively insignificant in BRev 71 (total use = 28) and in ScPr 84 (25 occurrences).¹⁴⁷ Though in FoL 96 Pinnock uses this lemma less than many other lemmas we have studied so far (hence, the lack of a graph), nevertheless there is a marked increase in its appearance in Ch. 1, concerning the Spirit’s relationship to the Trinity; and at the close of Ch. 7, describing how the Spirit leads the church into truth. We notice that both chapters involve a relational matrix. *Flame of Love* once again demonstrates a consistent relational tendency that we have noticed emerging throughout this innertextual analysis.

Histogram of “power*”:

BRev 71 (blue); ScPr 84 (red); FoL 96 (yellow)

“Power*” is another lemma that displays an importance in FoL 96 (total = 288) vis-à-vis the other two books. If we follow the peaks in its usage in FoL 96 using the Table of Contents, we note that beginning



in Ch. 1 Pinnock describes the Holy Spirit as the power source of life and creation. In Ch. 3, he depicts the Spirit’s powerful presence upon Jesus of Nazareth and the healing of human brokenness effected through his cross-death. Ch. 4 dwells upon the Spirit’s role in empowering the church, and Ch. 6 lays out the goal of salvation; that is, loving union with and in Trinitarian life through the Spirit. Power then is inseparable from the person and

¹⁴⁷ The only noticeable cluster of uses is in Ch. 3, “Inspiration and Authority.”

ministry of the Spirit, and that is inseparable from the historic Jesus of Nazareth. Unlike earlier lemmas such as Scripture, revelation, Bible, and text, which invariably focused on the topic of truth, the theme of power infuses *Flame of Love* and displays a cosmic dimension.

When we correlate “power” with the lemma “world*,” does our theory of a cosmic dimension to God’s salvific work hold true? ScPr 84 has double the references to world, worlds, worldview, and other such elements of the lemma as does BRev 71.¹⁴⁸ And, exceeding their usage, FoL 96 surges to 362 uses of the lemma--recording as high as eleven occurrences per page, especially in its treatment of inter-relational communion within the Trinity (Ch. 1), and in the Spirit’s involvement in both creation (Ch. 2) and the church (Ch. 4). This suggests not only some sort of emphasis on the Spirit’s generation (and care?) of creation, but also on his and the Trinity’s ongoing interest and involvement in the world through the church; in other words, a possible theological basis for global missions.

Summation

In FoL 96 when Pinnock treats of creation, the theme is inseparable from the Spirit’s role in the created order, in Christology, and in atonement. This lends weight to the suggestion that a cosmic dimension rises to the fore in FoL 96. When we correlate “power” with the lemmas of “world*” and then “creat*,” we find our theory of a cosmic dimension to God’s salvific work holds true. Power (within the chapters in which it predominates) is inseparable from the person and universal ministry of the Spirit, and that is inseparable from the historic Jesus of Nazareth (with his universal implications).

¹⁴⁸ “world*” in:
 BRev 71 = 52
 ScPr 84 = 110
 FoL 96 = 362

We also find a spike in Pinnock's usage of the word "Bible" in his "Appendix" to *The Scripture Principle* (2006), the last book he wrote. This opens the possibility that we have uncovered here a context (or perhaps "the" context) in which Pinnock chose to embed his theology over the decades of his scholarship and, in turn, in which he situated his understanding of spiritual experience; that of holy Scripture.

VII. Concluding Thoughts concerning Innertexture

The goal of exploring the inner texture of a text is to note the movement in the key lemmas used by the author. Interpretation of the implications awaits the later stage of "ideology." We will therefore limit our comments to conclusions we can draw from the progressions and repetitions we have noted so far, and our analysis of the patterns of narration, opening-middle-closing, argumentation, and sensory-aesthetic.

Repetitive texture does not delineate the precise nature of the boundaries between units of discourse, nor does it reveal the meanings of the inner sequences. We do find preliminary indication, however, that FoL 96 is set apart from BRev 71 and ScPr 84 in its use of experience-oriented words:

* Whereas BRev 71 uses Christ 216 times and hardly mentions the word Jesus, FoL 96 uses Christ 381 times, and Jesus appears 455 times.

* Whereas BRev 71 emphasizes words such as revelation, theology, truth, divine, and text, FoL 96 emphasizes relational and intersubjective words such as life, world, love, church, power, human, people, grace, and community.

Progressive texture allows us to track changes in eight lemmas across Pinnock's three texts using insights from Accountable Quantitative Methodology by means of frequency distribution. FoL 96's preference for the lemma "revelation" over "Scripture" may indicate that "revelation" conveys a broader and more dynamic meaning for Pinnock (as of 1996), in contrast to a static and more objective meaning for "Scripture." (His use of

“Bible” reaches its greatest frequency in ScPr 06 when he, in retrospect, deliberately sets his own theological journey within a biblical context.) We have evidence (by comparing our selected books) that FoL 96's infrequent use of the lemmas Scripture, revelation, and Bible is not due to a low regard for the same; but rather, that the author is turning to other authorities to support his rhetoric. FoL 96's infrequent use of “text” indicates that, by whatever means Pinnock argues his case, it is from something other than a text-based rhetoric.

With the lemma “history,” frequency distribution analysis indicates that our author moves from history as the setting and confirmation of Scripture's contextualization in BRev 71; to history as a verification of Scripture's enculturation in ScPr 84; to history, in FoL 96, as the medium in which dynamic and relational Spirit enacts God's plan for history through global missions. This may indicate innertextually a shift from a rational to a personal (or Personal) starting point in Pinnock's later theology. When this is coupled with his use of the lemmas “tradit*” and “authorit*,” especially in FoL 96, it appears that he considers the work of the Holy Spirit, rhetorically-speaking, self-authenticating though not at odds with a broader framework of biblical interpretation.

Narrational texture takes us first into Pinnock's plot (as implied author, and principle narrator) as he moves the reader from the positivist hermeneutics in evangelicalism in the 1960s and 70s to (a) a Scripture-based understanding of the Bible's divine authorship; (b) that includes the historic, traditional, academic, and socio-cultural dynamics of human authorship; (c) as enlivened through the universal work of the Holy Spirit. This in essence is a move from a text-based to a relational-, communal-, and Trinitarian-based hermeneutic. The analysis of the repetition and progression of key lemmas reveals the “voices” of various “characters.” God, for example, moves from being an object for discussion to being a Trinity in social relationship, a mystery at dance and play. Text-based words drop in usage, like Scripture, Bible, and text, when we move into

FoL 96; and history and tradition provide the voices through which Scripture is heard. Certain contemporary voices introduce us to the richness of ancient perspectives, preserved in historic traditions such as Catholicism and Orthodoxy. They affirm Scripture as the principle hermeneutic which critiques modernity, in contrast to certain other modern voices introduced by Pinnock which argue for a contemporary hermeneutic that relativizes the voice of Scripture. Pinnock's narrative relies primarily on speaking (usually through other authors' voices) as opposed to action, with biblical texts providing the ultimate voice of authority for his hermeneutic. His growing appreciation for the voice of the Holy Spirit correlates with his openness to other sources of insight within historic Christianity, though with a relative authority. Our analysis of narration provides evidence that Pinnock embeds the role of spiritual experience within what he calls "classic" (i.e., confessional) Christianity.

Opening-middle-closing texture differs in strategy from book to book. In BRev 71, the opening emphasizes divine revelation in Jesus Christ as the ground and context of scriptural inspiration, and closes with an argument for a hermeneutic defined by the biblical text (hence, running the risk of circular reasoning).¹⁴⁹ In ScPr 84 a new voice emerges. Revelation which is Jesus-centric persists; however, the word "text" appears in the middle and later sections, suggesting a heightened appreciation for the inclusion of extra-biblical material, or a critical approach to the biblical text. Meanwhile, FoL 96 leans toward relational terms. While employing a second-order word group focused on theology, it opens with a strong Trinitarian focus on "father*" and "son*," followed in the middle section by Christ and Jesus. It concludes in its final section with words related to the Bible--yet still relational, in that they pertain to Spirit and truth. Interestingly Pinnock chooses not to employ various words current in today's conversation about spirituality such as "inner," "internal," or "mystery." He delights in and favours concepts of dynamism and openness,

¹⁴⁹ Blundell, *Ricoeur*, 46.

especially in FoL 96; as the same time he deems traditional Christian theology as capable--and preferable--for the formulation and expression of a vital human spirituality.

Argumentative texture in our selection of Pinnock's books is usually *logical* (or enthymematic). By means of major assertions (*rules*), the rationales (*cases*) that support them, and the conclusions (*results*) drawn from them, we note that the format of all three representative arguments in BRev 71, ScPr 1984, and FoL 96 is similar; that is, the *case*/rationale leads to the *result*/conclusion, and the *rule*/assertion is provided by an enthymeme.

In ScPr 84 (Ch. 4), Pinnock's *result*/conclusion as a representative argument is that Biblical inspiration is a dynamic work of God. His *case*/rationale is that God gave his word in human language. The major premise (or assertion or *rule*) which allows this argument to work is an enthymeme: a work of God that is able to use human language is dynamic (implicitly, to a greater degree than just a direct word of God that does not use human language). The opening of the chapter contains the key rationale, the closing the key conclusion, while the middle "fleshes out" the rationale by means of a (unstated) rule.

In BRev 71 (Ch. 1), the *case*/rationale is that biblical inspiration should be viewed in the context of divine revelation, especially the Christ-event. As a *result*/conclusion, Scripture is the "inscripturated Word of God," its grammatical expression, rather than just the recording of religious experience. The *rule*/assertion is an enthymeme: this inscripturated Word proves itself as perfect as the living Word by a perfection of errorlessness--as determined by all the criteria of modern logical positivism. The chapter opens and closes with the *case* (that divine revelation is true), while the middle of the argument focuses on other scholars' questionable and acceptable conclusions/*results* concerning the nature of Scripture. Woven throughout is the enthymeme of the *rule* (Scripture confirms its errorless nature by meeting modernity's rigid positivist demands of scientific and technical perfection).

In FoL 96 (Ch. 7), Pinnock's *case*/rationale is that the "imperative of timeliness" is integral to doctrinal fidelity; that is, the imperative of spiritually-discerning listening to God's will. The *result*/conclusion is a theology (and soteriology) reflective of God's cosmic concerns. The enthymeme in this argument is the *rule*/premise: a subjective starting point whereby inner truth (personal *and* corporate experience as recorded in tradition) shares validity with the external truth of the Scriptures. The chapter opens with the *result* (that theology and more particularly soteriology reflect God's cosmic concerns). The middle and closing sections deal with the *case* (that the timeliness of contemporary concerns and insights, uniting today's readers with past readers through the developmental interpretation provided by tradition, leads to a cosmic perspective). The *rule* is enthymematic, namely, a subjective starting point (expressed in tradition) sharing an asymmetrical legitimacy with the external starting point of Scripture.

Sensory-aesthetic texture reveals Pinnock's preference for the visual over the other four senses throughout our books. This tendency is especially noticeable in *Flame of Love*, where he favours words that are either visually-friendly such as open, mystery, universal, love, and world; or easily visualized such as anthropocentric words like human, experience, life, creation, and power. In FoL 96, the lemma "creat*" suggests a vital complementarity of the Spirit's role with the atonement, with Christology, and with the created order. It is in this context that Pinnock prefers to embed spiritual experience; that is, in a universal context far broader than just a pietistic focus on the individual's experience or that of the faith community, or today's scholarly preference for analysis of the individual as a monad in relation to transcendent horizons of being. When the lemmas of "power" and "world*" are compared with "creat*," we find that power is available to our world through Jesus of Nazareth as understood in classic Christianity. In the last book that he wrote, *The Scripture Principle* (2006), Pinnock's testimonial in the "Appendix" shows a spike in his usage of the word "Bible." His academic career, which began with a high commitment to Scripture, ends

there as well. Though the vectors of experience and relationality dominate in his 1996 theology of the Holy Spirit, we find that underlying his growing interest in and appreciation for tradition and subjective experience is an unshakeable commitment to the “Scripture principle” as historically classically understood.

Addendum 1: Emergence of Topoi in Innertexture

We suggest that Pinnock’s conscious (and subconscious) attention grows in focus near the close of his academic career on the Holy Spirit, and on words from this set: open, universal, life, love, world, creat*, power, and religion. All convey thought *and* emotion, and combine reason *with* intuition and imagination. What is fascinating is that every one of these lemmas when graphed shows almost no activity in either of the other books by Pinnock. *Flame of Love* is unique with its decided emphasis on the sensory-aesthetic texture. This is also confirmed by the *absence* of certain emphases in Pinnock’s texts. We would for instance expect key words that are frequently used in today’s scholarly conversation about spiritual experience. Yet the word “heart(s)” receives little attention, nor does “inner,” “internal,” “mystery,” or “unite-unity-unitary.” Though common coinage in numerous books and journals today on spiritual experience and self-transcendence, Pinnock shows little interest in them as a word set. This suggests innertextually some sort of alternative offered by Pinnock for the grounding of the study of spiritual experience.

We also find innertextually a possible answer to an earlier question (113). Is the ongoing development in Pinnock’s thought due to a radical discontinuity in his thought during the twenty-five years that our study covers, or is it rather a logical evolution of intellectual seeds sown at, or even before, 1971? Though the elements of his later argument(s) are already there at the beginning of his career (such as a high regard for Scripture and its authority; an awareness of historical voices and their arguments; and some awareness of social-cultural context), we discover a noticeable shift in lemmas midway

through his career. Scripture becomes more human, whereby we mean rooted in the human authors' settings and worldviews. Past interpretive voices shift from being argumentative devices to support his viewpoint as held in the early 1970s, to being valued lenses through which to read Scripture, and social-cultural context is granted far more weight in his interpretive methodology. Evidence appears innertextually that tradition (the voice of interpreters past) steps forward to share a legitimate authority (though asymmetrically) with Scripture.

All of these discoveries made in the inner texture, by the way, affirm these words by Poplack: “. . . what for me remains the most exciting aspect of corpus work [is] the opportunity it affords to serendipitously discover what one wasn't looking for, to characterize the patterned nature of linguistic heterogeneity, and in particular the hidden, unsuspected or ‘irrational’ constraints that are simply inaccessible to introspection or casual perusal.”¹⁵⁰

As mentioned earlier (41), rhetorolects “are distinctive configurations of textual ‘themes, topics, reasonings, and argumentations.’ ”¹⁵¹ Though we will not focus on such “rhetorical dialects” till Ch. 4, “Ideology,” we note in passing that *Flame of Love* may represent a shift with respect to rhetorolects; meaning a shift to a completely different form or genre of discourse. Pinnock begins FoL 96 by noting that the book “is a theology of the Spirit,”¹⁵² yet finishes it with a note of surprise. He discovers at its conclusion that what he had intended to be a reminder and “a few corrections” had become “a constructive *vision* of the Spirit” (emphasis added), infused with a spiritual vitality “rare and thin in the religious circles” that he inhabited.¹⁵³ So, did he at the close of his academic career discover something that had gone forward unstated for all those years? As mentioned just above, he

¹⁵⁰ Poplack, “Foreword,” xii.

¹⁵¹ Robbins, *Invention*, 7.

¹⁵² Pinnock, *Flame*, 11.

¹⁵³ Pinnock, *Flame*, 247.

never really abandoned his commitment to the Scripture principle as classically understood. This was confirmed earlier in our analysis of the lemma “text*,” from which we concluded that in FoL 96, “the Spirit’s working is not to the exclusion of the text of Scripture, but rather in conjunction with it” (90). Likewise we found innertextually “no evidence . . . Pinnock had abandoned all the [previous] theological scaffolding . . .” in his use of the lemma “experience*” (94). It seems rather that by reflection on what he had earlier taken for granted in a narrow modern way (i.e., the Scripture principle), he discovered the broader implications of the Spirit’s role in revelation, soteriology, and spiritual experience. The result was a completely different type of style and vocabulary.¹⁵⁴

Mention was also earlier made of starting points in Pinnock’s theology; for example, as evidenced in the renewed respect granted by Pinnock to tradition’s role as a subjective centre (148; compare 129); in his shift “in his understanding of the deity across the twenty-five-year span of our three books” (109, 113); and his shift “from a rational to a personal starting point” in our analysis of the lemma “histor*” (96). At this point in our thesis, these observations appear to be made on the basis of a “sense”-meaning level. They will, however, be validated in the following chapter.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁴ For these insights, and the following, I am indebted to the critique of Prof. Pambrun in a response to this chapter dated 20 July 2011.

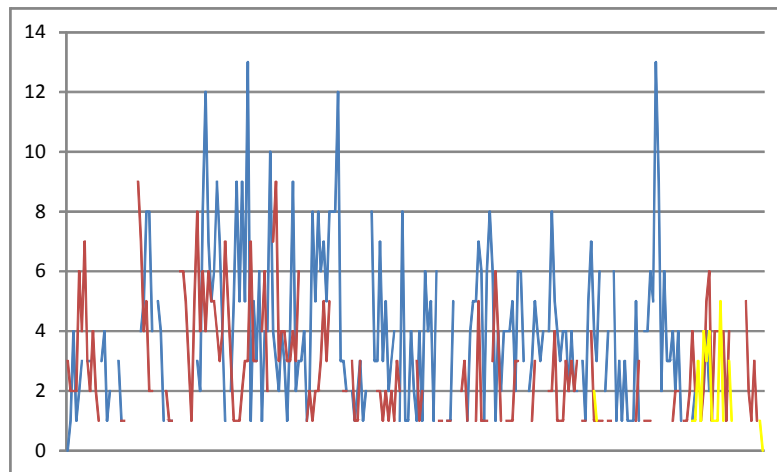
¹⁵⁵ Consider also these claims made in this chapter: FoL 96 may be “more experience-oriented” than the other two books (80); “the inter-communal relationships within the deity . . . [make] this his theological starting point” (101); we have rhetorical evidence suggesting that other theological grounds for his argument were in play (92); “relational and intersubjective connotations” (100); “a move from a text-based to a relational-, communal-, and Trinitarian-based hermeneutic” (122); and “a foundation that—though still textual—is open, dynamic, communal, universal, relational, and Trinitarian” (105-6).

Table 5
Key Lemmas Graphed per Selected Pinnock Books

Frequency Distributions

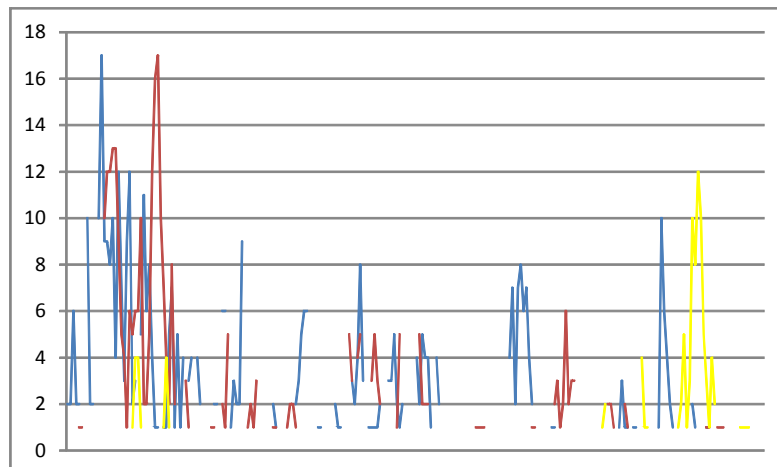
1. Histogram of “Scripture” and/or “Scriptures”:

BRev 71 (blue); ScPr 84 (red); FoL 96 (yellow)



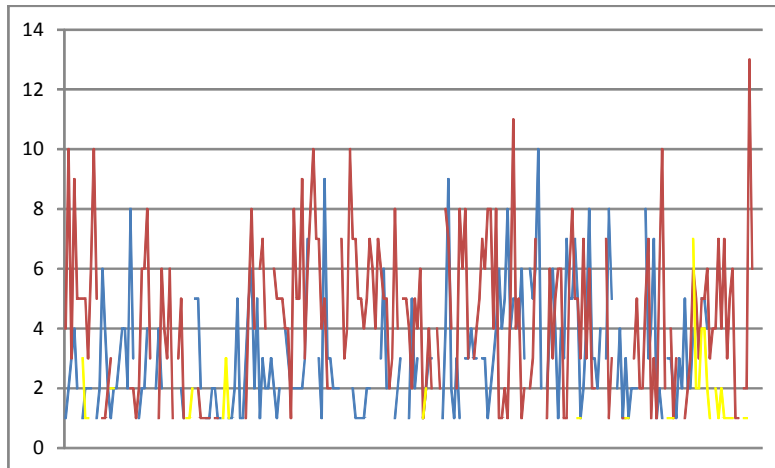
2. Histogram “revelation” and/r “revelat*”:

BRev 71 (blue); ScPr 84 (red); FL 96 (yellow)



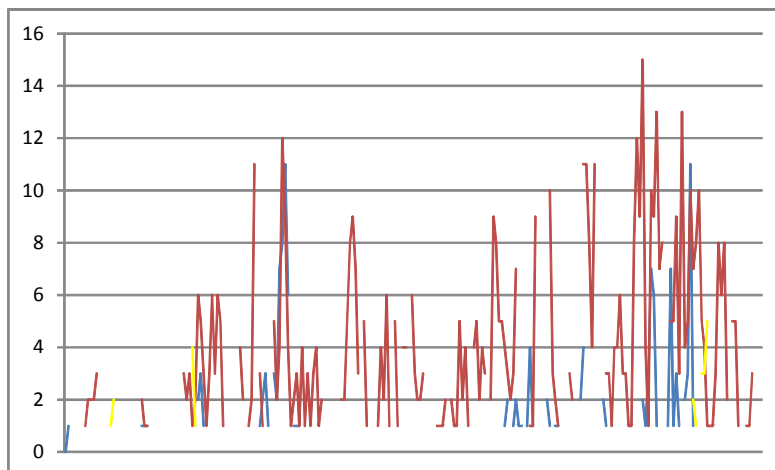
3. Histogram of “Bible” and/or “biblical*”:

BRev 71 (blue); ScPr 84 (red); FoL 96 (yellow)



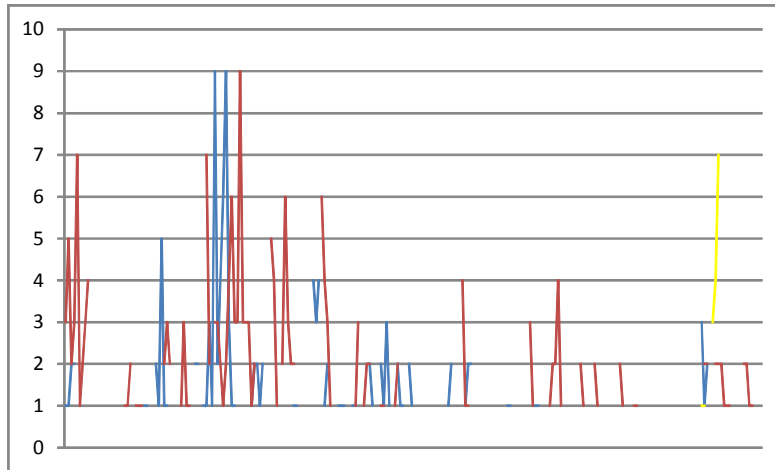
4. Histogram of “text*”:

BRev 71 (blue); ScPr 84 (red); FoL 96 (yellow)



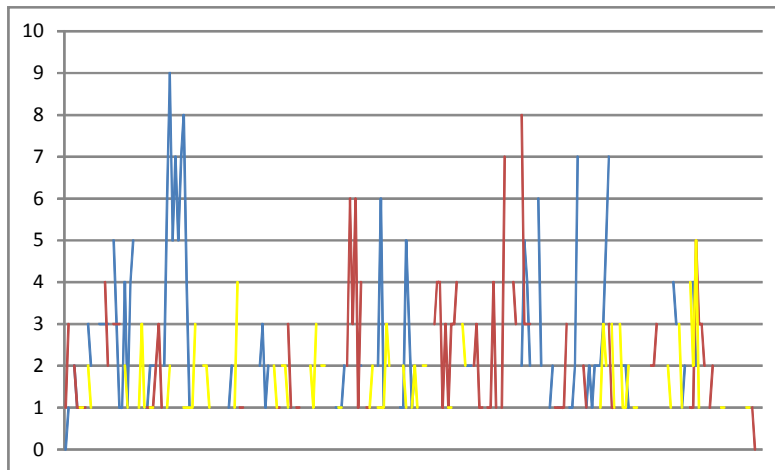
5. Histogram of “authorit*”:

BRev 71 (blue); ScPr 84 (red); FoL 96 (yellow)



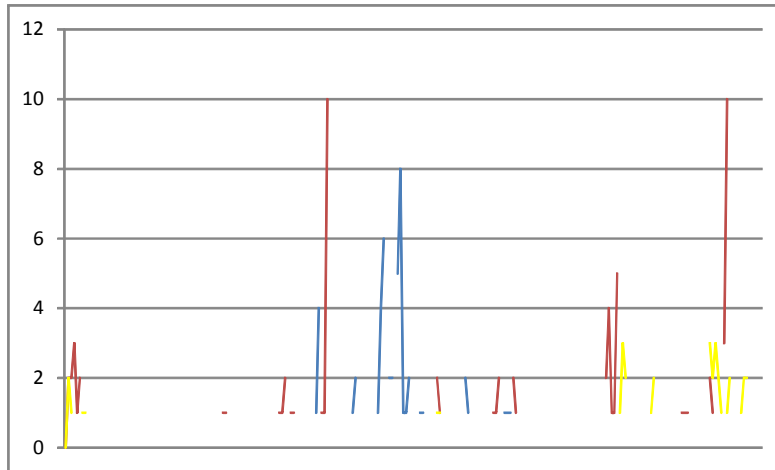
6. Histogram of “history/histories” and/or “historic/historical/historically”:

BRev 71 (blue); ScPr 84 (red); FoL 96 (yellow)



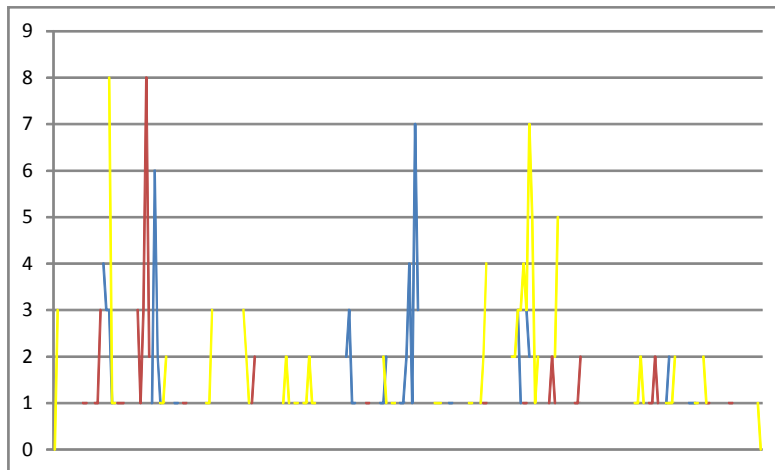
7. Histogram of “tradit*”:

BRev 71 (blue); ScPr 84 (red); FoL 96 (yellow)



8. Histogram of “experience/experiences”:

BRev 71 (blue); ScPr 84 (red); FoL 96 (yellow)



CHAPTER 4

Intertextural:

Entering the Interactive World of a Text

No text is written in a vacuum. Its language is always interacting with *something* “outside” the text. That might be physical or material objects, other texts, historical events, customs, roles, values, institutions, or some sort of system; but the language is always that of interaction. The text also attempts either to “represent” external phenomena accurately, or it “creates” phenomena in an adventurous way. Even in the act of creating though, the language still relates the world inside the text to phenomena outside the text.¹ This is unavoidable, for no text is written in a vacuum.

For example, we see Pinnock and evangelicalism engaging Roman Catholicism and Orthodoxy more and more following the 1960s. Pinnock therefore does not stand theologically alone. Also, the 60s and 70s were a time of turmoil socially, philosophically, and theologically, especially in light of American involvement in the Vietnam War. We see Pinnock with the passing of decades distancing himself from that turmoil, and able to reflect back upon the complexity through which he had lived and in which he had participated.

Intertexturally-speaking this means that, if we picture a continuum with the author on the left side, the text in the middle, and the reader on the right, to work then with the intertextural

¹ Robbins, *Exploring*, 40.

texture is to focus on the area between the author (to the left) and the text (in the middle), rather than between the text and the reader (to the right), as is the case with the inner texture.² For example:

Table 6

<i>Author</i>	<i>Text</i>	<i>Reader</i>
^ ^		

Intertextural Focus

(We note that we situate ourselves as “readers” of Pinnock on the right side of the spectrum. As such we are taken up into that world fashioned by the intended meaning of the text; that is, the world of the text. Yet this is also true of Pinnock, and his (re)discovery of the world of his texts. His religious experience was one that discovered in his work as reader how the scriptural authors were first readers too, as were the scholarly sources to which he turned across his academic career, like Barth. [We will find this confirmed in this chapter by his more solicitous understanding of Barth and his context.] Yet the biblical “world” always remained Pinnock’s prime referent.)

To continue our analogy with the spectrum above, the author in turn is located socially and culturally in the exceedingly complex world that encompassed her or him at the point of writing. For our intentions, it is Pinnock’s interaction with his world in the late twentieth and very early twenty-first century that now comes to the fore. Understandably his location in this world presents just one part of (and one perspective on) a very large picture. This too is reflected in our nomenclature: whereas the term “intertexture” implies the entire social and cultural world

² Robbins, *Tapestry*, 96.

external to our author, “intertextural” implies the intersection between that world and Pinnock in particular. This accounts then for the title of this chapter.

A text may take one of three strategies in its configuration and reconfiguration of the outer phenomena of the author’s world. (1) It may imitate another text, but place different people in it. (2) It may alter a well-known tradition by changing its ending, resulting in “different implications for belief and action.” (3) Or it may so change a tradition that it results in a completely new tradition. Yet regardless of the strategy, the new configuration results in a rich interweaving of historical, social, and cultural phenomena including other texts.³ Though this current stage of intertextural texture involves the exploration of multiple texts, the controlling object is still “to interpret aspects internal to the text under consideration.”⁴

Key to the intertextural stage is the discovery of the “edges” that surround the centres of argument used by an author. These centres are called “topoi,” after the Greek word for place or territory.⁵ Bloomquist points out that this concept (quoting Carol Miller) builds on the Aristotelian notion that a topos is a “place to which an arguer (or problem solver or thinker) may mentally go to find arguments.” Our intent is to probe the various textures of Pinnock’s books using Robbins’ analytic to discover the topoi that have been employed in his texts. In Bloomquist’s words, “Topoi thus can be understood as those landmarks on the mental geography of thought, which themselves evoke a constellation of networks of meanings as a result of social, cultural, or ideological use--and the argumentative embedding of these topoi in the presentation of the argument(s) of the text.”⁶ Discerning these topoi is of primary importance for us in this

³ Robbins, *Exploring*, 40.

⁴ Robbins, *Tapestry*, 96 The importance of this step can be seen in this: It is the boundaries established by *intertextural* analysis and interpretation that provide interpreters with the canons of literature with which they work. Robbins, *Tapestry*, 97.

⁵ Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1964), vol. 8, p. 187.

⁶ L. Gregory Bloomquist, “Paul’s Inclusive Language: The Ideological Texture of Romans 1,” in *Fabrics of Discourse: Essays in Honor of Vernon K. Robbins* (eds. David B. Gowler, et al.; Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 2003), 174.

section of intertextuality. And this raises an interesting question: what is the proper context for exploring topoi?

In our previous chapter considerable effort was made to track the repetition of key lexica in Pinnock's three books. A noticeable shift quickly became evident in our analysis of their repetition and progression. Words that predominate in *Biblical Revelation* and *The Scripture Principle* are only faintly represented in *Flame of Love*. Yet in *Flame of Love*, highly repeated words such as experience, open, universal, life, love, power, world, and creation receive infrequent use in the other two books. We also traced the development in meaning of a very important word in Pinnock's writings, thanks especially to our author's own comments in the "Appendix" of ScPr 06, a word that does not occur often yet which provides an underlying enthymeme in all of the arguments under our study. That word is "inerrancy."⁷ When listed per book in Pinnock's works, below, "inerrancy" completely disappears in FoL 96.

Table 7

Occurrences of "inerran*"

BRev 71	82
ScPr 84	81
FoL 96	0

Here is strong evidence then of another comment made by Bloomquist, that "we may suggest with some confidence that . . . repeated lexica evidence characteristic features of *topoi* and their reconfiguration in a particular author's work. . . ."⁸ The identification of such topoi we will defer till the closing section of this chapter.

— — — — —

⁷ The lemma "inerran*" occurs in BRev 71, 82 times; in ScPr 84, 81 times; and in FoL 96, not at all!

⁸ Bloomquist, "Paul's Inclusive Language," 178.

I. Oral-Scribal Intertexture

Robbins offers a definition of oral-scribal intertexture as “a text’s use of any other text outside of itself, whether it is an inscription, the work of a Greek poet, noncanonical apocalyptic material, or the Hebrew Bible.”⁹ He provides more elaboration in a later book. “The Greek root “*rhēt-*” refers to that which is expressible, i.e., that which can be communicated by being stated.” Hence, rhetoric is the field of study that specializes in interpretation and analysis of “expressive language in a concrete utterance,” or if you will, the “expressible.” Whereas the field of early Christian studies paid considerable attention to printed words and historical objects, the focus has shifted of late to “the sounds people articulated as they gestured and moved their bodies in space and time to communicate their attitudes, hopes, fears, beliefs, and arguments.”¹⁰ In turn, a distinction arose between an “oral culture” with “living oral tradition,” and a “rhetorical culture” with “dead written tradition.” The earliest Christian communities, though possibly illiterate for the most part, were nonetheless aware that they lived in a society in which writings existed, and on occasion were recited. Thus, they lived in a rhetorical culture.

When a letter was read to such a community, such as an epistle by the Apostle Paul, not only were there scribal dynamics in play due to the recording of the epistle in written form, but also oral dynamics. Paul probably spoke his letters to a scribe; when they were later communicated, they were experienced orally by those gathered to hear “as a person performed a written composition in their midst.” To expand the circle wider, such compositions were themselves a dynamic interrelation of oral and written discourse, whether in spoken or written form.¹¹

Given these features of oral-scribal intertexture, what characterizes intertextuality? What does it feel like? As part of his answer to that question, in the earlier years of his research Robbins turned to an essay by Gail O’Day with the subtitle “A Study in Intertextuality.” O’Day

⁹ Robbins, *Exploring*, 40.

¹⁰ Robbins, *Invention*, 9.

¹¹ Robbins, *Invention*, 10–11.

offers this definition: “Intertextuality refers to the ways a new text is created from the metaphors, images, and symbolic world of an earlier text or tradition.”¹² A text, especially a biblical text, by means of a disciplinary approach “encodes its own authority internally,”¹³ for it arises within a particular faith community which shares texts and traditions, using and reusing them to provide its own interpretive stance.¹⁴

This concept was driven home to me personally on a warm summer day in the 1980s, the memory still lingering with me almost thirty years later. I had dropped by to visit my aging maternal grandmother while wearing a suit, for I was on my way to some sort of social gathering. She glowed with pleasure to see her grandson so well dressed, and said admirably, “Don’t you look gay!” Though I did not have then the sophistication to explain in sociorhetorical terms what had just happened, especially for my grandmother, I knew instantly that her backward-looking social world of references, symbols, and linguistic expressions had ceased to exist, dramatically, over just the previous few decades, and she was not even aware of it. On the other hand, an astute author *is* aware of the social shifts around her or him, and deliberately reconfigures the material of language to provide a new expression and interpretation for his or her voice.

Michael Fishbane,¹⁵ considered by O’Day to be the single most important contributor to the study of intertextuality in Scripture,¹⁶ provides two telling points.¹⁷ First, (and relating more to ideological texture, which occupies our next chapter) “there is no authoritative teaching which is not also the source of its own renewal.” For those who study a given text, it remains a dead letter “unless revitalized in the mouth of those who study them.” Fishbane illustrates this with a

¹² Gail R. O’Day, “Jeremiah 9:22–23 and 1 Corinthians 1:26–31: A Study in Intertextuality,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 109, no. 2 (1990): 259 We bear in mind that Robbins’ notion of and emphasis upon “intertextuality” has continued to change since 1990.

¹³ Robbins, *Tapestry*, 97.

¹⁴ O’Day, “Intertextuality,” 259.

¹⁵ See Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford, U.K.: Clarendon Press, 1985).

¹⁶ O’Day, “Intertextuality,” 259.

¹⁷ O’Day, “Intertextuality,” 260.

referral to how Judaism “has sought to dignify the status of religious commentary” with the well-known Talmudic image of God at work studying and interpreting his very own Torah.¹⁸

Second, this process which Fishbane called “inner biblical exegesis” is “no merely literary or theological playfulness.”¹⁹ There is a practical crisis that precipitates such an intertextual transferal of symbolic language, due to “the incomprehensibility of a word or a rule, or the failure of the covenantal tradition to engage its audience.” A dialectic results, pitting tradition against the talent of the individual. As the tradition sets the agenda of problems, or establishes the language which needs to be reworked, its role is that of “determinative hierarchical preeminence.” Interfacing with this is the “individual talent” (or the representative of a school of thought) who responds to the present-day ignorance by clarifying, transforming, or exploiting the tradition into a new text.²⁰

As the oral-scribal intertexture draws into its orbit other texts outside of itself, it reconfigures them in the following five basic ways offered by Robbins in *Exploring the Texture of Texts*. We will explore quotations and indirect references from Pinnock’s most-referenced authors in the five following sections the categories of Recitation, Recontextualization, Reconfiguration, Narrative Amplification, and, as a wrap-up of our findings, Thematic Elaboration.

A. Recitation

“Recitation is the transmission of speech or narrative, from either oral or written tradition, in the exact words in which the person has received the speech or narrative or in different words.”²¹ Robbins has concluded that such recitation is characterized by seven categories:

¹⁸ Michael Fishbane, “Inner Biblical Exegesis: Types and Strategies of Interpretation in Ancient Israel,” in *Midrash and Literature*, eds. Geoffrey H. Hartman and Sanford Budick (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), 19.

¹⁹ Fishbane, “Inner,” 34.

²⁰ Fishbane, “Inner,” 34.

²¹ Robbins, *Exploring*, 41.

- (a) Replication of exact words of another written text.
- (b) Recitation of exact words with one or more differences.
- (c) Omission of words in such a manner that the word-string has the force of a proverb, maxim, or authoritative judgment.
- (d) Recitation of a saying, using words different from the authoritative source.
- (e) Recitation that uses some of the narrative words in the biblical text plus a saying from the text.
- (f) Recitation of a narrative in substantially one's own words.
- (g) Recitation that summarizes a span of text that includes various episodes.²²

Of the seven categories above, Pinnock normally uses only two: replication of the exact words of another author, or the summarizing of spans of text (that is, recontextualization). Methodologically, because there are so many pages of material in just these three books of Pinnock, we must necessarily narrow our focus in this section on "Recitation" to those authors who are quoted most often--and who are quoted directly. By our reckoning, Pinnock refers to other authors at least 1752 times.

Synchronically the most frequent contemporary voices referred to in *Biblical Revelation* (1971) are John W. Montgomery (22 references), and Karl Barth (21). As we move on to *The Scripture Principle* (1984), the lead voice to emerge is that of Edward Farley (14), then James Barr (13). And in *Flame of Love* (1996)--though several contemporary authors are referenced often (Wolfhart Pannenberg [32], for example; and Jürgen Moltmann [25])--there is heavy use of traditional ecclesial sources, especially from within historic traditions like Catholicism, Orthodoxy, and Anglicanism.

Thus, we make the following decision: we will explore *over the span* of our books those authors who receive most attention in total references.²³ (For a list of authors, see below.)²⁴ By

²² Robbins, *Exploring*, 41–43.

²³ In terms of total references across all books chronologically (BRev 71, ScPr 84, and FoL 96), we find the following authors:

counting authors referenced in the footnotes or endnotes, we know that, apart from Pinnock's use of his own writings (seventy references), Karl Barth is referenced most often with forty-nine occurrences. By using the scanned material of Pinnock's three books, a simple search in Nota Bene can be made on the word "Barth." A list of his books from which Pinnock quoted can then quickly be drawn together.²⁵

Second, we bear in mind that sociorhetorical criticism arose within the context of, and has to date been used primarily on, ancient texts. For intertextual insights Robbins turned to a treatise by Theon of Alexandria that was written in 50-100 C.E. to assist students learning to write Greek. Theon's principal methodology, common for that day, was to advise the writing and rewriting of anecdotes and short sayings available to the teacher in current literature or from anecdotes. A student would then work through a list of exercises that included:

(1) Recitation

Barth, Karl = 44

Dunn, James D. G. = 26

Farley, Edward = 14

Pannenberg, Wolfhart = 39

Pinnock, Clark H. = 27

Ramm, Bernard = 24

²⁴ Frequently referenced authors per chronological order of Pinnock's books (BRev 71, ScPr 84, and FoL 96), with total references to the given author:

Baillie, John. 6, 1, 2 = 9

Barth, Karl. 21, 8, 15 = 44

Bromiley, Geoffrey W. 2, 2, 1 = 5

Cullman, Oscar. 3, 1, 1 = 5

Dulles, Avery. 1, 6, 6 = 13

Erickson, Millard J. 1, 5, 4 = 10

Gilkey, Langdon L. 3, 2, 3 = 8

Kaufman, Gordon D. 7, 1, 1 = 9

Moltmann. 0, 0, 25 = 25

Morris, Leon. 2, 1, 1 = 4

Packer, James I. 11, 8, 2 = 21

Pannenberg, Wolfhart. 5, 2, 32 = 39

Pinnock, Clark H. 9, 2, 16 = 27

Rahner, Karl. 3, 4, 8 = 15

Ramm, Bernard. 13, 10, 1 = 24

²⁵ *Against the Stream; Church Dogmatics*, especially vol. 1, "The Doctrine of the Word of God"; "Rudolph Bultmann--An Attempt to Understand Him" in *Kerygma and Myth*; and *The Word of God and the Word of Man*.

- (2) Inflection (different cases, persons, and numbers)
- (3) Commentary
- (4) Critique
- (5) Expansion
- (6) Abbreviation
- (7) Refutation
- (8) Confirmation²⁶

With the exception of inflection, Theon's analysis provides us with an insightful measure to gauge how Pinnock references other authors. Does he, having directly quoted an author, comment then on his or her work, expand on it, refute it, or something else? These questions allow us to group together and look for edges around his sets of references to other authors, which we can pry and poke in order to enter more deeply into his rhetorical strategies. It is important to note also that recitation does not necessarily mean "authority" in Theon's case, though it often does in scriptural cases.

Barth. This monumental thinker is clearly Pinnock's favoured dialogue partner across all three books (the only author to receive more references is Pinnock himself), and seems to be viewed with grudging favour. In endnotes and footnotes, Barth is directly or indirectly referenced 34 times in BRev 71, 12 times in ScPr 84, and 15 times in FoL 96 (a total of 61 occurrences); and he is often quoted, as summarized above. Two of his commentators are also referenced by Pinnock: Philip J. Rosato,²⁷ who provides some intriguing insights that proved most helpful in the development of this thesis; and Klaas Runia.²⁸

Biblical Revelation (1971). When we draw together the direct and indirect quotes that Pinnock uses from Barth, this theological summary emerges: redemptive revelation in Christ is

²⁶ Robbins, *Exploring*, 44–45.

²⁷ Philip J. Rosato, *The Spirit as Lord: The Pneumatology of Karl Barth* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1981).

²⁸ Klaas Runia, *Karl Barth's Doctrine of Holy Scripture* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1962).

of absolute importance--on this salvation rests. Next to this revelation, Scripture is of relative importance in that it serves as the record and vehicle of Christ's salvation. There could, for example, have been a gospel without Scripture.²⁹ As Barth claimed, God could have given "the canon in the form of an unwritten prophetic and apostolic tradition . . ."³⁰ However, Barth's existential emphasis on revelation is disputed by Pinnock using a quote from a discussion recorded between Barth and Harnack, in which Harnack asked Barth how we can know of Jesus other than through critical-historical study, lest we imagine him in our own image.³¹ This is a primary concern of Pinnock's: that religious experience is a flimsy base on which to rest our case for revelation and inspiration. Pinnock charges that such is the basis on which Barth has constructed his neoorthodoxy.

Though Scripture is of relative importance next to the redemptive revelation in Christ, it is nonetheless self-interpreting. Barth argues that Scripture has no need of a magisterium outside itself, for the authoritative witness to Jesus Christ in Scripture is "the source and guiding principle of all Christian doctrine and exposition."³² However, in arguing for plenary verbal inspiration (and against a neoorthodox view of Scripture), Pinnock charges that neoorthodoxy holds common cause with various scholars who evidence "doctrinal deviations from biblical teaching." Barth himself, according to Pinnock, dismissed verbal inspiration as a "spook."³³

The Scripture Principle (1984). There is only one direct quote of Barth in this book. In this quote, Barth claims that the biblical writers spoke "as fallible, erring men like ourselves."³⁴ Pinnock worries that Barth skirts the "edge of the cliff" with such a comment, that he relativizes the theistic claim of the Bible (the "Scripture principle") to make it time-bound and erroneous

²⁹ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 36.

³⁰ Karl Barth, *The Doctrine of the Word of God* (vol. 1/1 of *Church Dogmatics*; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1963), 117.

³¹ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 43, fn. 56.

³² Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 114, fn. 16.

³³ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 159-60, fn. 54.

³⁴ Karl Barth, *The Doctrine of the Word of God* (vol. 1/2 of *Church Dogmatics*; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1963), 507.

like all other beliefs.³⁵ Yet we do not want to overlook an impressive shift by Pinnock here as he interacts with Barth on the human dimension in inscripturation. In BRev 71 Pinnock could not see beyond the errorless inspired wording of every biblical text as a mode of God's own inerrancy. Now he accepts the contemporary insight that all statements are conditioned by their historical context, and share the biases and limitations of their age. We find Pinnock therefore arguing that the far greater issue is not inerrancy, but whether biblical authority can be understood as "anything *more* [emphasis added] than a reflection of its time and place."³⁶

Flame of Love (1996). Pinnock expands on a quote from Barth, that "Sulky faces, morose thoughts and boring ways of thinking are intolerable in this science" of theology.³⁷ Pointing out that for Barth theology is actually more of an "art" than a "science," despite our tendency to think of science as a collection of facts, Pinnock speaks appreciatively of theology as beautiful because God is beautiful.³⁸ To move this comment from the poetic realm to the practical, he grounds it in the social Trinity, which "depicts God as beautiful and supremely lovable. God is not a featureless monad, isolated and motionless, but a dynamic event of loving actions and personal relationality." He quotes Augustine, who captured this thought in his comment "Too late did I love thee, O Fairness, so ancient yet so new" (*Confessions* 10.27).³⁹

Pannenberg. With Wolfhart Pannenberg, we find four direct quotes in BRev 71 alone.

Biblical Revelation. First, Pinnock quotes him to counter the (neoorthodox) notion that Scripture does not make a revelational claim,⁴⁰ for Pannenberg states that Jesus' ultimate revelation is in his return, though there is a proleptic aspect to his revelation in Scripture now. True, such current revelation is partial, yet it is revelationally valid nonetheless.⁴¹ To counter the

³⁵ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 91-92, fn. 14.

³⁶ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 91-92, fn. 14.

³⁷ Karl Barth, *The Doctrine of God*, vol. 2/1 of *Church Dogmatics* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1964), 656.

³⁸ Pinnock, *Flame*, 43, fn. 47.

³⁹ Pinnock, *Flame*, 42-43.

⁴⁰ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 20, fn. 2.

⁴¹ Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Jesus--God and Man*, 1st ed., trans. Lewis L. Wilkins and Duane A. Priebe (London: SCM Press, 1968), 108.

role of religious experience (at least when religious experience is deemed sufficient in and of itself),⁴² Pannenberg is quoted as confirming that faith's certainty of the exalted Christ is based entirely on what happened in his resurrection and ascension in history, not on present experience.⁴³ This line of argument Pannenberg roots in the church's historic understanding of "truth." Since the patristic period, truth has meant a reasonable argument that makes at least a provisional decision possible. In this light, an openness to what has not yet happened in Jesus' history (the proleptic dimension) could be a decisive element of the "proof" of its truth.⁴⁴ Context is important to Pannenberg too. Using recitation, Pinnock refers to Pannenberg's argument that Paul's appeal to Deut 21:23, using its claim that persons hanged for crimes are cursed by God to support his view of Jesus and the law, makes sense "only for one who accepts all the statements of the Old Testament as an irrevocable and eternally binding authority."⁴⁵

Flame of Love. In this text we find two more direct quotes of Pannenberg. First, "creaturely independence" is not at odds with God, but rather is the goal of his creative work; in the incarnation the whole universe was shown to be created with a view to us.⁴⁶ Second, participation in Jesus' salvation is not impossible for those outside the church, since Jesus is the criterion of their salvation. Because salvific standards are behavioural as well as cognitive, the ultimate standard of the kingdom's requirements is embodied in Jesus' teaching and activity. On this basis, in interfaith dialogue we are well advised to begin not with dogma but with the presence and goodness of God.⁴⁷

⁴² Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 40, fn. 44.

⁴³ Pannenberg, *Jesus*, 28.

⁴⁴ Pannenberg, *Jesus*, 110, fn. 117.

⁴⁵ Pannenberg, *Jesus*, 250.

⁴⁶ Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 2, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1994), 135–36, 389–96.

⁴⁷ Wolfhart Pannenberg, "The Religions from the Perspective of Christian Theology and the Self-Interpretation of Christianity in Relation to the Non-Christian Religions," *Modern Theology* 9, no. 3 (July 1993): 211.

Ware and Benz. Pinnock now recites authors who are Eastern Orthodox. This leads him into a reconsideration of the role of the Holy Spirit within the Trinity.

Flame of Love. From Bishop Ware, he uses two direct quotes, both of which he affirms. The first is Ware's quote of a statement by St. Seraphim of Sarov that "The true aim of the Christian life is the acquisition of the Holy Spirit."⁴⁸ In the second, Ware expresses his overriding concern that "Many Orthodox feel that, as a result of the filioque, the Spirit in Western thought has become subordinated to the Son" (116). The filioque clause, expressing an alternate understanding of the role of the Spirit, emerges in the shift of topoi in Pinnock's argument as his writings progress.

Another direct quote is taken from Ernst Benz, though a comparison of Benz' text with the quote offered by Pinnock indicates that Pinnock has cited the text with "one or more differences" (162). The differences are slight, however, and make no alteration in the meaning. Benz notes that for the Orthodox believer, "the central event of the Eucharist is the descent, the appearance, the divine presence of the resurrected Christ."⁴⁹ Of interest to us is Benz' emphasis as he contrasts the Orthodox understanding of the Eucharist with the Catholic understanding. Though admitting in Orthodoxy that there is an understanding of transformation in the elements during the Eucharist, he stresses the existential dimension of the Spirit's descent upon the gathered congregation and the ministering priests and deacons, which effects the mystery of the divine presence of Christ to his people. Pinnock's appreciation of such an existential moment is light years away from the Baptist tradition within which he was raised, whereby the bread and wine are simply a "remembrance" of Christ's death and resurrection. The sacramental role of the Spirit, together with his immediacy and existential presence, is a growing theme within this set of Orthodox references.

⁴⁸ Timothy Ware, *The Orthodox Church* (London, England ; New York, N.Y.: Penguin Books, 1993), 234–36.

⁴⁹ Ernst Benz, *The Eastern Orthodox Church: Its Thought and Life*, Anchor (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1963), 36.

Papal Sources and John Paul II. The value of exploring intertextually the shift of topoi in argumentation via direct quotations is further highlighted as we look now at Pinnock's treatment of papal sources. He uses such sources in only two of his three books, BRev 71 and FoL 96, but what a contrast there is between the two.

Biblical Revelation. An interesting dichotomy opens up in this first book: the papal sources used in BRev 71 are not repeated in FoL 96⁵⁰ and vice versa. Each set of sources is unique to that particular book, and no papal sources are used in *The Scripture Principle*. (This may indicate that intertextually-speaking BRev 71 and FoL 96 with their use of papal sources are, ironically, closer in underlying spirit and authorial intent than one would suspect. Experience plays an important role in both, though in the first book, negatively; and in the second, positively.)

Pinnock recites directly from four papal sources in BRev 71. First, he confirms Pope Leo XIII's claim that "it is impossible that God himself, the supreme Truth, can utter that which is not true."⁵¹ Pinnock also quotes from the fourth session of the Council of Trent, which declared itself on this matter by stating that Scripture was divinely authored and dictated "either orally by Christ or by the Holy Ghost."⁵² He reacts vigorously to Pope John XXIII,⁵³ who offered the following words in his prayer delivered on Oct. 11, 1962, at the beginning of the Vatican Council.⁵⁴

62. Although the Church has contributed much to the development of culture, experience shows that, for circumstantial reasons, it is sometimes difficult to harmonize culture with

⁵⁰ Apart from John Paul II's writings, the other papal sources in *Flame of Love* are *Catechism of the Catholic Church*; Pope Paul IV's *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* (1964); *The Malines Document: Theological and Pastoral Orientations on the Catholic Charismatic Renewal*, prepared at Malines, Belgium, May 21-26, 1974; *The Malines Document III* (1979); and *Vatican II: Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions*.

⁵¹ Pope Leo XIII, *Providentissimus Deus: On the Study of Holy Scripture* (Rome: Vatican, 1893), par. 20, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/leo_xiii/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_18111893_providentissimus-deus_en.html.

⁵² Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 158.

⁵³ As quoted by Pinnock from "The Documents of Vatican II," by Walter M. Abbott, S.J., p. 715), in Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 126.

⁵⁴ See Vatican document AAS 54 (1962), p. 792.

Christian teaching. These difficulties do not necessarily harm the life of faith, rather they can stimulate the mind to a deeper and more accurate understanding of the faith. The recent studies and findings of science, history and philosophy raise new questions which affect life and which demand new theological investigations. Furthermore, theologians, within the requirements and methods proper to theology, are invited to seek continually for more suitable ways of communicating doctrine to the men of their times; *for the deposit of Faith or the truths are one thing and the manner in which they are enunciated, in the same meaning and understanding, is another* [italics indicate the source of Pinnock's recitation of exact words with one or more differences]. In pastoral care, sufficient use must be made not only of theological principles, but also of the findings of the secular sciences, especially of psychology and sociology, so that the faithful may be brought to a more adequate and mature life of faith.⁵⁵

Though Pinnock recites only the lines in italics above, the section is recorded in its entirety, for here is an edge of a topos we have already noticed emerging in Pinnock's texts. The difference between the substance of the deposit of faith and its formulation is vehemently rejected by the early Pinnock. In fact he charges that such a stance is "the application of evolutionary theory to the development of dogma."⁵⁶ He therefore laments *Dei Verbum*, with its redefinition of inerrancy as truth put by God into sacred writings "for the sake of our salvation":

Therefore, since everything asserted by the inspired authors or sacred writers must be held to be asserted by the Holy Spirit, it follows that the books of Scripture must be acknowledged as teaching solidly, faithfully and without error *that truth which God*

⁵⁵ The words are recorded in the "Pastoral Constitution On the Church In the Modern World Gaudium Et Spes Promulgated by His Holiness, Pope Paul VI On December 7, 1965"; http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html

⁵⁶ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 126.

wanted put into sacred writings for the sake of salvation [italics indicate Pinnock's actual quote].⁵⁷

By means of critique, confirmation, and strong refutation, the early Pinnock rejects the movement he detects in papal sources over the past several decades toward an integration of the human dimension with the process of inscripturation (especially as confirmed in the social sciences), and, hence, with biblical inspiration. Yet, ironically, Pinnock will have moved by 1996 (and as early as 1984) to a position of inerrancy not at odds with that of the magisterium in Rome.

Flame of Love. This is the only book of those that we are examining in which Pinnock quotes from John Paul II, reciting directly from the pontiff three times. The first quote is on the opening page of the "Introduction"; namely, that in the third millennium the church looks toward "the great jubilee."⁵⁸ From the same encyclical, he then references at the opening of the second chapter of FoL 96, "Spirit in Creation,"⁵⁹ that the history of salvation is the history of humanity. The Spirit has always been at work as "the breath of life which causes all creation, all history, to flow together to its ultimate end, in the infinite ocean of God."⁶⁰ To this end, despite the arduousness of the journey, our calling is "to a fullness of life which far exceeds the dimensions of earthly existence, because it consists in sharing the life of God."⁶¹ The broad sweeping cosmic nature of Spirit's person and working continues to emerge, highlighting the openness, expansiveness, and universal dimensions of God's love.

⁵⁷ Pope Paul VI, *Dogmatic Constitution On Divine Revelation Dei Verbum Solemnly Promulgated by His Holiness Pope Paul VI* (Rome: Vatican, 1965), par. 11, http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651118_dei-verbum_en.html. See also Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 74, fn. 51.

⁵⁸ Pope John Paul II, *Dominum et Vivificantem: Encyclical Letter of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II on the Holy Spirit in the Life of the Church and the World* (Sherbrooke, Qué., Canada: Éditions Paulines, 1986), 69.

⁵⁹ From section 64, paragraph 4.

⁶⁰ Pope John Paul II, *Dominum et Vivificantem: Encyclical Letter of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II on the Holy Spirit in the Life of the Church and the World* (Sherbrooke, Qué., Canada: Éditions Paulines, 1986), 95.

⁶¹ Pope John Paul II, *The Gospel of Life: Encyclical Letter Evangelium Vitae* (Sherbrooke, Qué., Canada: Médiaspaul, 1995), 4. See Pinnock, *Flame*, 151-52, fn. 7.

Moltmann. Our analysis of Jürgen Moltmann's recitations all occur in just one book, *Flame of Love*, where Pinnock references him twenty-eight times, though he quotes him directly just four times. It is important to note that he agrees with every reference he makes to Moltmann; there is no instance of contradiction by Pinnock. He quotes or references a particular passage, then comments, expands, or confirms it.

Flame of Love. In his first direct reference, Pinnock quotes Moltmann concerning the nature of God ("In order to comprehend the New Testament's testimony to the history of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, theology had to develop the trinitarian concept of God")⁶² and the nature of the created realm ("The Spirit is the principle of creativity on all levels of matter and life. She creates new possibilities and in these anticipates new designs and blueprints for material and living organisms. In this sense the Spirit is the principle of evolution").⁶³ So complete is God's identification with this created realm, and especially with humanity, that "In the passion of the Son, the Father himself suffers the pains of abandonment . . ."⁶⁴ Yet we let fear close us to openness to the full range of the Spirit's gifts, to "The charismata of the Spirit [which] are present wherever faith in God drives out the fears of life and wherever the hope of resurrection overcomes the fear of death." It is our passive sins, "our despairing attempt not to be ourselves," that prove the greatest hindrance.⁶⁵

Summary. We note edges emerging in this section for several topoi. Concerning the nature of inerrancy, the issue for Pinnock becomes not inerrancy *per se*, but rather whether biblical authority can be understood as "anything more than a reflection of its time and place."⁶⁶ The role of theology is briefly discussed, particularly as it is touched by beauty. Theology, and

⁶² Jürgen Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God: The Doctrine of God* (London: SCM Press, 1981), 16. See Pinnock, *Flame*, 35, fn. 30.

⁶³ Jürgen Moltmann, *God in Creation: A New Theology of Creation and the Spirit of God*, The Gifford Lectures, 1984–1985 (San Francisco, Calif.: Harper & Row, 1985), 100.

⁶⁴ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God: The Cross of Christ as the Foundation and Criticism of Christian Theology*, Preface by Richard Bauckham (London: SCM Press, 2001), 145–53, 178–96, 292.

⁶⁵ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation* (London: SCM Press, 1992), 188. See Pinnock, *Flame*, 138–39, fn. 52.

⁶⁶ Pinnock, *Scripture Principle* (1984), 91–92, fn. 14.

especially scriptural authority, offer adequate bounds to safeguard human religious experience, not just individually but also globally--as circumscribed by the teachings of the historic church (hinting at an emerging humanistic dimension to Pinnock's thought). This leads into the cosmic and sacramental role of the Spirit. It also leads into the cosmic nature of divine revelation (that is, general revelation), as brought to light in the humanities. Yet the Spirit, in Moltmann's words, the principle of creativity and evolution, is blocked by our human inauthenticity.

These changes of topoi indicate a seismic shift from the exclusive focus on the legal and juridical standards of salvation that underlay Pinnock's thinking in *Biblical Revelation*, a theology deeply influenced by the Calvinism then prevalent in evangelical circles in North America.⁶⁷ They indicate that the topos of salvation itself is shifting from the forensic to something deeper, to something that is fundamentally ontological. In saying no to such a gift of God's salvation, one is effectively saying no to the divine gift of our very humanity.

B. Recontextualization (vs. Indirect Reference)

In recontextualization, we are probing background material. Unlike recitation, this is data that relies on wording from another text without any statement or implication that the words stand written somewhere else.⁶⁸ To illustrate, this category applies when a New Testament author takes a prophecy that was originally intended to refer to a contemporary historical figure and uses it, for example, to refer to a later figure such as John the Baptist or Jesus.

⁶⁷ Pinnock summarizes his earlier, theological starting point in Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 266. "Ramm had wearied of evangelicals fighting over inerrancy and longed for them to rejoice in the Bible's solid testimony to Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. I had come to the place at which Ramm also had arrived. For us, the Bible seldom addresses its authority and says nothing about its inerrancy. The *rationalistic (Western) model of biblical authority that I had learned early from B. B. Warfield* (italics added) and others had exaggerated these concepts to fit a theological system that had been adopted in advance. I was learning 'not to force the Bible onto a Procrustean bed of extra-scriptural assumptions about authority and perfection.' " (Embedded quote from Clark H. Pinnock, "New Dimensions in Theological Method," in *New Dimensions in Evangelical Theology: Essays in Honor of Millard J. Erickson*, ed. D. S. Dockery [Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1998], 204.)

⁶⁸ Robbins, *Exploring*, 48.

Clearly Pinnock does not do this with any of his quotations; in his academic setting, such referential relocation would have been deemed highly inaccurate. In his desire to avoid plagiarism, he invariably mentioned the author's name or footnoted the material that he borrowed from her or him. So, rather than "recontextualization" *per se*, we find it more helpful to shift our focus to "indirect reference" to fit better our contemporary reality. Why then is indirect reference worthy of its own section? Much of Pinnock's referenced material serves as background information which he then wove into his own perspective. In fact, most of Pinnock's use of other authors falls into this category. Such volume is worthy of its own section, to allow for closer inspection.

Methodologically, we turn to the footnotes or endnotes in each of Pinnock's books for this step. Each indirect reference is then located on its given page in one of Pinnock's books. Then using Excel, a table is made listing the reference's page and footnote/endnote number, the page in the text from which it was taken, and a summary is made of the indirect quote. When this procedure is used for the principal authors referenced by Pinnock, one has at a glance the intertextual material and ideas that were absorbed by Pinnock from his sources--and an apt summary of the influence of a particular author's thoughts as incorporated by Pinnock into his own material.

1. Barth. As mentioned earlier, the most referenced author in the books we are studying is Karl Barth, and we will focus now on Pinnock's use of his indirect references.

Biblical Revelation. Barth serves as a sparring partner for Pinnock in this book. Pinnock first objects to Barth's claim that God is known only as subject, not as object (which, Pinnock concludes, rejects revelation as "propositional" truth, a tenet dear to his heart in 1971).⁶⁹ Barth begins rather with the "logical circle" of belief of Scripture as revelation and witness, both as self-asserting and self-attesting truth.⁷⁰ This is in sharp contrast to the perspective of B. B.

⁶⁹ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 24.

⁷⁰ Runia, *Barth*, 5–7.

Warfield (a Presbyterian professor of theology at Princeton Seminary from 1887 to 1921) which moulded the early Pinnock; namely, that “the witness of the Spirit terminated upon the indicia of truthfulness which the revelation contained.”⁷¹ In BRev 71, Pinnock’s goal is to use this Princetonian hermeneutical model as promoted by Warfield to insure the rational certainty of Scripture.

The apologetically driven advantages of such a theology for modernity are evident. When “the predestinarian framework of high Calvinism” is added to Warfield’s view, God is thought of as directing and controlling the biblical text through its supernatural inspiration (with dictation an option, from Calvin’s point of view). As a result, with divine sovereignty so totally controlling the nature of the Bible, it guarantees Scripture as therefore perfectly inerrant in all regards for it partakes “of the attribute of divine truth itself.”⁷² But because Pinnock concludes that Barth, like Bultmann, sees faith as existing without proof, and Christian revelation as dependent on the decision to believe it, Pinnock declares him the great fideist of the twentieth century, allergic to Christian evidences with his claim that the Spirit enables believers to “know” religious truth.⁷³ Barth’s “logical circle” is deemed by Pinnock a “vicious circle.” Besides, adds Pinnock, how can Barth’s claim prove self-validating when it is analyzed in an open-to-investigation form?⁷⁴

Once again, at the heart of the issue for Pinnock is the role--and the danger--of religious experience with its lack of substantive content. Experience merely affirms whatever the person already believes (which for the Barthian, is the Christological parts). How can we possibly know of Jesus other than through critical-historical study, lest we imagine him in our own image?⁷⁵ To claim that the Christ-event though historical is “beyond substantiation and authentication by

⁷¹ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 38, fn. 40.

⁷² Roennfeldt, *Pinnock*, xviii.

⁷³ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 40, fn. 43.

⁷⁴ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 42, fn. 53. Compare Karl Barth, *The Doctrine of the Word of God*, vol. 1/2 of *Church Dogmatics* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1963), 535.

⁷⁵ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 43, fn. 56.

ordinary historical inquiry” is “existential subjectivity.”⁷⁶ Barthians, like liberals, divorce the Scriptures from the Word of God.⁷⁷

Moreover Pinnock in 1971 sees both Rome and radical Protestantism as fusing religious experience with authority: while Catholics unite Scripture and tradition with the magisterium as referee, radical Protestants (including Barth) interpret the Bible in light of the church's ongoing tradition--a vicious circle.⁷⁸ Pinnock sees the culprit as a differentiation between the event of God speaking in a historical situation, and the human recording of the same.⁷⁹ Thus, he rejects Barth's hermeneutical circle, that the exegesis of Scripture is influenced by the theological presuppositions of the interpreter.⁸⁰ In Pinnock's opinion, Barth's summary that “To err is human--Scripture is human--therefore, Scripture errs” should rather be understood as “To err is human--ergo, God gave Scripture by inspiration--so that, it does not err.”⁸¹

The Scripture Principle (1984). A significant shift in Pinnock's assessment of Barth's view of Scripture occurred at some point over the intervening thirteen years after he wrote BRev 71. In this second of our books, Pinnock now commends Barth's conclusion that some Fathers held to a mantically-mechanical model of inspiration (“mantic” meaning “prophetic”), including

⁷⁶ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 46, fn. 63.

⁷⁷ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 68.

⁷⁸ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 125, fn. 36. See Barth, *Dogmatics 1/2*, 606–12. Pinnock reacts to Barth's claim that Luther and Calvin saw Scripture as inspired because it speaks of Christ by the inspiration of the Spirit (1/2:520–21), not by the grammatical content. Barth argues that in post-Reformation Protestantism by around 1700, as natural theology and secularism crept in, scholars, when they said, “The Bible is the Word of God,” came to mean “The Bible, as exposed to human inquiry brought under human control, is the Word of God.” (1/2:522–23) In this seventeenth- and eighteenth century doctrine of inspiration, “The Bible was now grounded upon itself apart from the mystery of Christ and the Holy Ghost.” It became a “‘paper Pope,’ and unlike the living Pope in Rome it was wholly given up into the hands of its interpreters.” (1/2:525) Pinnock summarizes this argument as an attempt by Barth to rewrite the Reformation as “a brief neoorthodox paradise.” Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 153.

⁷⁹ Barth argues that “Deus dixit” and “Paulus dixit” are two different things (1/1:127–28). He argues that “fallible men speak the Word of God in fallible human words,” which is an act of God's sovereign grace (1/2:529). He claims that we expect to hear the Word of God in the Bible, but “the presence of the Word of God itself . . . is not identical with the existence of the book as such” (1/2:530), but Pinnock counters that this as an attempt to free revelation from the text of Scripture. Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 166.

⁸⁰ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 218.

⁸¹ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 176.

Augustine.⁸² Pinnock agrees with Barth, and Runia's insight about Barth, that the Bible as part of revelation truly speaks for God; it reveals "God's will of salvation," and it reveals "God Himself in his will of salvation";⁸³ yet--critically--there is now a distance between the Word of God and the text of the Bible.⁸⁴

Pinnock now speaks of the early Barth, seeing him as one who preferred the subjective over the objective, and who argued that God transforms the fallible human word into an existential Word by a miracle. Yet he also argues that in the outworking of his theology, the later Barth stayed essentially orthodox and understood the content of Scripture to stand beyond criticism.⁸⁵ Barth effectively abandoned his own hermeneutical model of rejecting revelation as primarily information and in danger of being an object of human control; otherwise how could he have written the orthodox theology that he did?⁸⁶ Pinnock also affirms Barth's suggestion of the term "saga" for a "storylike expansion of God's intervention in history and not accessible to historical investigation as such"⁸⁷--unthinkable in 1971. Now he agrees with Barth that Scripture occasions fresh events of revelation (though he continues to disagree with him that the textual elements are merely fallible human words).⁸⁸

Though other theologians share Barth's nervousness about cosmic revelation, Pinnock cannot but see general revelation as salvific in that it reveals God.⁸⁹ Yet at the same time, he is sympathetic to Barth's concerns about general revelation overshadowing scriptural revelation.

⁸² Barth, for his part, is willing to accept verbal "inspiration," meaning "that circle of God's manifestation by the Spirit only for our illumination by the same Spirit," whereby the biblical witnesses are the link between God and us. However, he is not willing to accept verbal "inspiredness," encompassing the mechanical view. Barth, *Dogmatics 1/2*, 517–19, esp. 518. Compare Pinnock, *Scripture (1984)*, xii, fn. 9.

⁸³ Runia, *Barth*, 56.

⁸⁴ Pinnock, *Scripture (1984)*, 99, fn. 25.

⁸⁵ Pinnock, *Scripture (1984)*, 158, fn. 8. See Barth, *Dogmatics 1/2*, 528–30.

⁸⁶ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture (2006)*, 267.

⁸⁷ Pinnock, *Scripture (1984)*, 123–24.

⁸⁸ Pinnock, *Scripture (1984)*, 164; also 91–92, fn. 14. However, Pinnock is unrelenting in his concern about Barth's extreme Scriptural perspective. He charges that he approaches the "edge of the cliff," for to relativize the Scripture's theistic claim (the "Scripture principle") is to make it time-bound and erroneous like all other beliefs. Barth comes close to this cliff when he speaks of the witnesses of Scripture as "fallible, erring men like ourselves." Barth, *Dogmatics 1/2*, 507.

⁸⁹ Pinnock, *Scripture (1984)*, 7.

His concerns were not without cause and context, for in the early twentieth century Barth witnessed Nazism's use of general revelation to support its notions of race and calling.⁹⁰

Pinnock is now completely at ease with Barth speaking of a distance between the Word of God and the biblical text, having concluded that language is a limited and imperfect medium through which God's saving plan is spoken.⁹¹ Pinnock is compelled to confess that the Barthian view of revelation forces evangelicals to acknowledge objective divine disclosure *coupled* with the subjective reality of God speaking to us today.⁹² Then Pinnock again references Runia, who argues that the Bible is not only where revelation may take place, but it must be included in the revelation, must belong to it, for it is revelation. Yet at the same time, revelation is broader and is not just event.⁹³

Flame of Love. We note immediately the switch in Pinnock's choice of volumes within Barth's *Church Dogmatics* as he progresses through the three books we are studying. In BRev 71, he drew most often from vol. 1/2 ("The Doctrine of the Word of God"), and again in ScPr 84. However, in FoL 96 he draws principally from vol. 3/1 ("The Doctrine of Creation") and vol. 4/1 ("The Doctrine of Reconciliation"). Let us explore the implications as these two emerging themes of creation and reconciliation work themselves out.

Focusing first on the relational nature of the Trinity, Pinnock notes that Barth took a disapproving stance toward the role of intratrinitarian experience, limiting its working to the person of the Holy Spirit (in contrast to Moltmann).⁹⁴ His hesitation may have been due to the early twentieth-century understanding of "person" as an autonomous independent self. Pinnock, a generation later, defines "person" rather as intersubjectivity, without which personhood does not

⁹⁰ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 6.

⁹¹ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 100.

⁹² Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 155.

⁹³ Runia, *Barth*, 47–48.

⁹⁴ Pinnock, *Flame*, 10, fn. 3. Compare Karl Barth, *The Theology of Schleiermacher: Lectures at Göttingen, Winter Semester of 1923/24*, ed. Dietrich Ritschl, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1982), 261–79.

exist.⁹⁵ Thus, it is from within the Trinity that God's love, not necessity, explains the creation of humans with whom God chooses to co-exist.⁹⁶ Barth spoke of creation as the external basis for covenant, and covenant as the internal basis of creation. He saw the love of God grounding creation,⁹⁷ but he elevated unity over diversity within the Trinity, making him in Pinnock's eyes a "neomodalist."⁹⁸

In terms of the outworking of that love in soteriology, Barth uses the framework of "representation." As he puts it, salvation is "The way of the Son of God into the far country" on humanity's behalf.⁹⁹ This salvation does not override human freedom, but rather accepts risk and allows real rejection by humans.¹⁰⁰ Turning from a strong rationalist bent seen in BRev 71, and a primarily judicial role assigned to justification in that book, now Pinnock references Barth approvingly when he argues that justification does not need to be absolutized into a monopoly, but rather needs to find its relative place in the bigger soteriological picture¹⁰¹--though not at the expense of assimilating and syncretizing openness to God's salvific work in other religions.¹⁰² By the time he writes FoL 96, Pinnock is also awake to beauty and aesthetics. He finds that theology is beautiful for it focuses on God's beauty. Though Barth calls it "science," Pinnock concludes that for Barth it is really more of an "art," even given Barth's protests that aesthetics cannot be a legitimate task of theology.¹⁰³

⁹⁵ Pinnock, *Flame*, 36.

⁹⁶ Karl Barth, *The Doctrine of Creation*, vol. 3/1 of *Church Dogmatics* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1958), 95.

⁹⁷ Pinnock, *Flame*, 45, fn. 55.

⁹⁸ Pinnock, *Flame*, 33-34, fn. 25. Compare Karl Barth, *The Doctrine of the Word of God*, vol. 1/1 of *Church Dogmatics* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1963), 400.

⁹⁹ Karl Barth, *The Doctrine of Reconciliation*, vol. 4/1 of *Church Dogmatics* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1961), 157-210. For his part, Pinnock prefers the metaphor of atonement as a "theodrama," with God loving the Son while judging him as humanity's representative. Or, he also speaks of Calvary as a black hole which sucked in our sin, our death, and our destruction. With such a magnitude of grace, Pinnock concludes that we are in if we do not opt out! Pinnock, *Flame*, 108-9.

¹⁰⁰ Pinnock, *Flame*, 190, fn. 10.

¹⁰¹ Barth, *Dogmatics 4/1*, 528. Compare Pinnock, *Flame*, 240, fn. 46.

¹⁰² Pinnock, *Flame*, 203, fn. 37.

¹⁰³ Pinnock, *Flame*, 43, fn. 47. Also Karl Barth, *The Doctrine of God*, vol. 2/1 of *Church Dogmatics* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1964), 656. With missions a concluding theme in FoL 96, Pinnock laments that theology has neglected mission, save for Barth. See Pinnock, *Flame*, 141, fn. 59.

2. Rosato. Also, included in FoL 96 are references from Philip J. Rosato's *The Spirit as Lord: The Pneumatology of Karl Barth*. As a corrective to Barth's perceived excesses, Pinnock integrates five indirect references to Rosato.

Flame of Love. Rosato provides a highly perceptive insight: that Barth offers his readers one thread which Barth felt could justify Schleiermacher's goal of starting theology with the believing Christian as the focus. That thread is pneumatology (a theology of the Holy Spirit).¹⁰⁴ However, Rosato argues that "one comes face to face with the problem that the Redeemer Spirit so monopolizes Barth's attention that the Creator Spirit has no power to lead man to truth which is not explicitly christological. Thus, man cannot attain ontic certainty apart from the historical appearance of divine reality in the person and work of Jesus Christ."¹⁰⁵ However, when natural theology is rightly integrated into one's thought systems, it becomes an inherent facet of knowing the dynamic work of the Spirit, and also offers an exciting means of framing contemporary scientific insights within theology.¹⁰⁶ "Barth's Spirit theology overshadow[s] man's role in history,"¹⁰⁷ Rosato points out. Barth claims man is not spirit by nature but only because of graced encounter with the Spirit.¹⁰⁸ Pinnock, like Rosato, counteroffers with a pneumatological slant, arguing that ontologically "we are creatures of God's Spirit. The Spirit has brought forth a human spirit and created the possibility of a dialogue with itself."¹⁰⁹

3. Clendenin. Daniel B. Clendenin, an evangelical scholar, is also a student of Eastern Orthodoxy. In *Eastern Orthodox Christianity: A Western Perspective*, three of the four themes on which he focuses emerge in *Flame of Love*: apophaticism as a prostration of the intellect before God; the Holy Spirit's internal authority in Scripture and tradition; and theosis as the believer's

¹⁰⁴ Indeed, Barth claimed that revivalism perhaps understood better than nineteenth century theology that truth-content, though necessarily conditioned, is not totally in man's control but is the situation of faith as the work of the Holy Spirit. Philip J. Rosato, *The Spirit as Lord: The Pneumatology of Karl Barth* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1981), 3–5.

¹⁰⁵ Rosato, *Barth*, 149.

¹⁰⁶ Rosato, *Barth*, 148–49.

¹⁰⁷ Rosato, *Barth*, 148.

¹⁰⁸ Rosato, *Barth*, 141–48.

¹⁰⁹ Pinnock, *Flame*, 73, fn. 54.

union with Christ (the fourth theme which Pinnock ignores completely is that of icons as a focus of adoration).¹¹⁰ All of Pinnock's references to Clendenin are in FoL 96, and he is his most cited authority in relation to Orthodoxy--though we note that this author, for all his sympathies, is not actually an Orthodox writer.¹¹¹

Flame of Love. Given his embrace of pneumatology as his theological starting point, Pinnock by now happily weaves into his theological method the "apophatic" tradition whereby a theologian is not limited to biblical data alone, but also reflects on the experiences generated by it. In line with his broadening understanding of revelation, the atonement is considered not primarily penal, nor is humanity's relationship to God primarily legal.¹¹² Rather justification is the beginning and "theosis" is the goal and the source of humanity's inconsolable longing, with ecstasy awaiting us. Pinnock likes the Eastern emphasis on righteousness as God's saving activity; righteousness is being swept up "into the love of God for participation in the divine nature."¹¹³ And he affirms Orthodoxy's position that Scripture, contra Western individualism, is best interpreted within the bosom of the church. The Spirit is gently guiding the church into truth that is dynamic and charismatic, testing that truth not by experts but by the people of God within the church.¹¹⁴ Pinnock also agrees with Clendenin's claim that for Orthodox and Protestant, the papacy is an obstacle to church unity unless it relinquishes its claim to primacy of dominion, an event that would be truly momentous for the global church.¹¹⁵

4. Ware and Benz. Pinnock's intent in his use of Ware's material (referenced in FoL 96, and nowhere else) seems to be remedial, presumably for the evangelical community; i.e., to clarify that Orthodoxy's stance on human union with God (or theosis, or divinization) is

¹¹⁰ See the summary provided on the back page of the paperback edition, 1994.

¹¹¹ Clendenin is founder and director of "Journey with Jesus: A weekly webzine for the global church." Visit <http://journeywithjesus.net/DanielBClendenin.shtml>; as of 18 Nov. 2011.

¹¹² Daniel B. Clendenin, *Eastern Orthodox Christianity: A Western Perspective* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1997), 120–25.

¹¹³ Pinnock, *Flame*, 156.

¹¹⁴ Clendenin, *Eastern*, 102–6, 109–16.

¹¹⁵ Clendenin, *Eastern*, 99–102.

personal, with no suggestion that humans become God. The Creator/creation distinction is never erased. Within that relationship, sin is real but it has not erased human freedom to decide. Thus, salvation requires divine grace *and* the human will. Benz' material on the other hand is referenced in both BRev 71 and FoL 96. What a contrast emerges when Pinnock's use of Benz is compared between these two books.

Biblical Revelation. In 1971 Pinnock refutes Benz.¹¹⁶ The heart of his refutation is that though theology is "ectypal" (a copy), and not "architypal" (the original) in its knowledge of God, "what knowledge we have in Scripture *is* knowledge of *God*."¹¹⁷ Pinnock responds so strongly because he believed the historic church has relied on mystical experience (now wedded with the existentialism of the West), and it is trapped in an interpretive lens in which "Truth is closely identified with the evolving consciousness of the church"--meaning tradition.¹¹⁸ He rejected Orthodoxy's claim that "truth" is the mystical encounter with the Spirit in the biblical text, understood in and safeguarded by tradition.

Flame of Love. Now consider Pinnock's about-face when we observe his references to Benz in 1996. His first reference includes material in which Benz asks why the Eastern church did not develop a legal/penal understanding of God, as the Western church did. His answer is that Orthodoxy focuses on Jesus' floods of extravagant divine love rather than on God's anger (Benz affirms that Jesus did indeed speak of hell, but the Eastern church has not made damnation its preoccupation).¹¹⁹ This attitude is reflected in the Eucharist, in which for an Orthodox believer the central issue is not the transformation of the elements (though the Eastern tradition does accept a form of transubstantiation) but the presence of the resurrected Christ, turning Communion into a time of great celebration rather than a sad memorial.¹²⁰ What now delights Pinnock is the Eastern church's emphasis on mystical encounter, allowing for the historical

¹¹⁶ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 128, fn. 42.

¹¹⁷ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 127.

¹¹⁸ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 128.

¹¹⁹ Benz, *Eastern Church*, 43–53.

¹²⁰ Benz, *Eastern Church*, 36–38, and ch. 2.

development of truth yet without being encumbered by formal (and legal) criteria. This approach means that no absolute guarantees are made that we will not make a mistake, but trust is placed in the authority of Spirit to lead his church without error into truth.¹²¹

5. Papal Sources and Pope John Paul II. Pinnock references seven papal sources (including *The Episcopate and the Primacy* by Rahner and Ratzinger, later Pope Benedict XVI).

Biblical Revelation. Touching briefly and approvingly on Popes Benedict XV and Pius X, who strongly reaffirmed a literal understanding of the inerrancy of Scripture in the early 1900s,¹²² Pinnock then declared that circumstances in papal circles changed dramatically for the worst. As far as Pinnock was concerned, Pope Pius XII contributed to Rome's decline from its historic affirmation of the inerrancy of Scripture with the following recitation in its context (with changes in Pinnock's source):

When then such modes of expression are met within the sacred text, which, being meant for men, is couched in human language, justice demands that they be no more taxed with error than when they occur in the ordinary intercourse of daily life. By this *knowledge and exact appreciation of the modes of speaking and writing in use among the ancients can be solved many difficulties, which are raised against the veracity and historical value of the Divine Scriptures* [Pinnock's recitation in italics], and no less efficaciously does this study contribute to a fuller and more luminous understanding of the mind of the Sacred Writer.¹²³

¹²¹ Benz, *Eastern Church*, ch. 3.

¹²² Pope Pius X in "Lamentabili" on July 3, 1907, and especially "Pascendi Domenici gregis" on September 8, 1907; and Pope Benedict XV in "Spiritus Paraclitus" on September 15, 1920. See Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 158.

¹²³ Compare Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 172-73, with Pope Pius XII, *Divino Afflante Spiritu: On Promoting Biblical Studies, Commemorating the Fiftieth Anniversary of Providentissimus Deus to Our Venerable Brethren, Patriarchs, Archbishops, and Other Local Ordinaries Enjoying Peace and Communion With the Apostolic See* (Rome: Vatican, 1943), par. 39, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xii/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_30091943_divino-afflante-spiritu_en.html.

Again, Pinnock viscerally disagreed with the notion that there is a difference between the substance of the deposit of faith and its formulation. He traces this fault line within Catholic thought to Cardinal Newman, maintaining that “Newman was not converted to Rome; Rome was converted to Newman.” Given Newman’s view of dogma not as a fixed deposit but as organic, evolving, and maturing, Pinnock argues that truth under his influence began to mean (within Catholic doctrine) the existential concerns of the church at a given time. This was, in essence, “the application of evolutionary theory to the development of dogma.”¹²⁴ In Pinnock’s opinion (writing in 1971) this then takes contemporary expression in the “situational theology” of Rahner and Ratzinger, whereby Scripture and tradition are united, with the magisterium acting as referee.¹²⁵

Flame of Love. Pinnock’s recitations of John Paul II parallel comments, expansions, and confirmations of themes touched on by Clendenin and Ware. For example, due to the sanctifying work of the Spirit, John Paul II teaches that we are freed from sin’s domination by the God who empowers but does not overpower—we must choose to repudiate sin. Due to human freedom, persistent and final refusal to repent can only mean hell¹²⁶ as the final outcome for sinners who persist in faithlessness and lovelessness.¹²⁷ Yet God’s power is active everywhere through the Spirit, making it possible for anyone, regardless of time and place, to receive God’s offer of grace.¹²⁸ John Paul II speaks of the presence of Spirit in non-Christian religions,¹²⁹ though he criticized Buddhism for its disdain for the world and its detachment, and Islam for portraying

¹²⁴ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 126.

¹²⁵ Karl Rahner and Joseph Ratzinger, *The Episcopate and the Primacy*, ed. Karl Rahner, Quaestiones Disputatae (New York: Herder and Herder, 1961), see vol. 1, no. 4.

¹²⁶ Pope John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope* (London: J. Cape, 1994), 185–86.

¹²⁷ Pinnock, *Flame*, 212.

¹²⁸ Pope John Paul II, *Dominum et Vivificantem: Encyclical Letter of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II on the Holy Spirit in the Life of the Church and the World* (Sherbrooke, Qué., Canada: Éditions Paulines, 1986), 76.

¹²⁹ See Pope John Paul II, *Encyclical Redemptor Hominis Addressed by the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to His Venerable Brothers in the Episcopate, the Priests, the Religious Families, the Sons and Daughters of the Church and to All Men and Women of Good Will, at the Beginning of His Papal Ministry* (Ottawa: Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1979).

God as majestic but not gracious.¹³⁰ In the mystery of God's dealings we must be open to new truth from the Spirit as experienced in all the churches.¹³¹

6. Moltmann. Pinnock's indirect use of Moltmann is found only in *Flame of Love*. A feature that Pinnock will repeat several times from Moltmann's theology is sabbath rest and the playful nature of the Spirit; in fact Moltmann argues that creation itself emerges as sabbath play.¹³² Pinnock also adopts Moltmann's stance that Spirit theologically-speaking underlies all later salvific acts,¹³³ generating a fundamental openness of the universe to God and to the future, and to the work of the Spirit in continuing creation.¹³⁴ Pinnock argues that because of the influence of Barth on Reformed theologians like Moltmann and others, they sound more like what would have formerly been called Arminianism, especially as pertains to relational ontology.¹³⁵ Though Pinnock makes little mention of Arminianism in any of our books, that is precisely the theological model into which he moved as he left behind the Calvinism of his earlier thinking.¹³⁶ He says as much in his introduction to Roennfeldt's *Clark H. Pinnock on Biblical Authority: An Evolving Position*, pointing out that "Arminian theology has its own way of thinking about things, including biblical inspiration and authority." The God who emerges in this model is one who woos, who invites, who is "father and friend" and "takes us into account even in his self-revelation." The perspective of the nature of sacred Scripture changes too, for the Scriptures "do not suddenly appear by an abrupt charism but arise from the breathing of God's Spirit in the whole of the community."¹³⁷

¹³⁰ John Paul II, *Crossing*, 77–117.

¹³¹ See Pope John Paul II, *Christian Unity: Encyclical Letter "Ut Unum Sint" of the Holy Father John Paul II on Commitment to Ecumenism* (Sherbrooke, Qué., Canada: Médiaspaul, 1995).

¹³² Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 276–96, ch. 11.

¹³³ Pinnock, *Flame*, 10, fn. 4.

¹³⁴ Moltmann, *God in Creation*, ch. 8.

¹³⁵ Pinnock, *Flame*, 239, fn. 44.

¹³⁶ Pinnock maintains that Moltmann, with Pannenberg, Plantinga, and several other theologians today, are essentially social Trinitarians; i.e., they set their work in the plurality of God as a real, loving reciprocity. Pinnock, *Flame*, 34.

¹³⁷ Roennfeldt, *Pinnock*, xx-xxi.

Moltmann for his part casts Jesus' life within the Spirit's preparation and empowering. For ancient Israel there would come a uniquely equipped charismatic leader, and, hence, a special anointing of the whole community (meaning Israel's messianic hope included the pneumatological expectation of Pentecost).¹³⁸ Then when Jesus comes, he is already anointed by the Spirit as Christ in Mary's womb.¹³⁹ Through the waters of baptism he entered into a solidarity with sinners and took their cause upon himself; with that, baptism in water and baptism in Spirit coincide.¹⁴⁰ Life-giving miracles then happened through Jesus because the energies of the life-giving Spirit were at work in him.¹⁴¹ In Gethsemane he experienced a crucifixion of will by the Spirit's power before his execution.¹⁴² Through all of this, in Jesus as the Son the Spirit found the ideal receptacle for God's self-communication; his power could fully be poured out upon him.¹⁴³

Moltmann then finds several important correlates for Spirit-orientation that emerged in the early decades of the church. First, Christian community was meant to reflect the communion of the Trinity, which is the ontological basis of that communion, and, hence, the church.¹⁴⁴ To be persons we must depend on one another in order to be ourselves, analogous to the divine Persons themselves.¹⁴⁵ Second, Spirit was not so much a creedal issue for the early church as a fact (through his power and gifts) of their experience.¹⁴⁶ Hence, conversion was Spirit event, and not just "new birth" event (as favoured by contemporary evangelicals).¹⁴⁷ Third, those who identify

¹³⁸ Moltmann, *Spirit of Life*, 51–57.

¹³⁹ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ: Christology in Messianic Dimensions* (London: SCM Press, 1990), 78–87.

¹⁴⁰ Moltmann, *The Way*, 87–94.

¹⁴¹ Moltmann, *The Way*, 94–136.

¹⁴² Moltmann, *Spirit of Life*, 62–65.

¹⁴³ Moltmann, *Spirit of Life*, 65–66.

¹⁴⁴ Moltmann, *Spirit of Life*, ch. 11.

¹⁴⁵ Moltmann, *Spirit of Life*, 157–58.

¹⁴⁶ Moltmann, *Spirit of Life*, ch. 9.

¹⁴⁷ Pinnock, *Flame*, 165–66, fn. 38. See Moltmann, *Spirit of Life*, 151–52. Moltmann argues that whereas for Barth the experience of the Holy Spirit is to be known wholly in knowledge of Christ, for Otto Weber ("Barth's faithful pupil and selfless interpreter") it is to be known wholly in expectation of the eschaton. For Moltmann, life in the Spirit now contains a "surplus of hope" that can only be fulfilled by future, eternal life; however, that life has already begun in our regeneration and is something we can narrate. While expectations hurry ahead, experiences follow "like a divine trail laid in the life of the individual, the community and creation. Every exodus is accompanied by trials and perils, but also by 'signs and wonders', which are perceived by the men and women who

with Jesus must expect to taste both the experience of his presence and the experience of Godforsakenness, just as Jesus experienced.¹⁴⁸

7. Pannenberg. In BRev 71 Pinnock accepts Pannenberg's argument that the dissolution of the "Scripture-principle" today is due to theology's abandonment of its claim to universality. As Pannenberg argued, theology has chosen rather to see itself as "a special field, becoming a special science beside other special sciences . . . At this point disobedience against the first commandment is very likely to be committed."¹⁴⁹

The Scripture Principle. In this book Pinnock indirectly references Pannenberg's statement that Jesus' claim to truth was justified in his resurrection by God, ground zero for his "Scripture-principle"'s affirmation of universality. God wants to be known not so much from nature but from his acts before human eyes,¹⁵⁰ which provides the orientation within which to read the Bible in the spirit of faith in God.¹⁵¹

Flame of Love. The bulk of Pinnock's background material from Pannenberg occurs here, with this book's endnotes containing thirty references to the author. Pinnock relies heavily on Pannenberg's description of the Trinity; namely, that God is spirit, the mighty power of creation, and the Trinity is the "field of deity" of Father, Son, and Spirit, all three existing as eternal forms therein.¹⁵² Because of this relational essence God knows and expresses love, something that would not be possible if he were a unitarian Subject. Love for sinners then flows from his relational communal Being.¹⁵³ Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, first acted creatively before acting redemptively (paralleling Barth's emphasis on creation and then covenant),¹⁵⁴ with the

are travelling the same road."

¹⁴⁸ Moltmann, *Spirit of Life*, 73–77.

¹⁴⁹ Wolfhart Pannenberg, "The Crisis of the Scripture-Principle in Protestant Theology," *Dialog* 2, no. 4 (Fall 1963): 308.

¹⁵⁰ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 8.

¹⁵¹ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 134.

¹⁵² Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology, Vol. 1*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1991), 370–84.

¹⁵³ Pannenberg, *Systematic 1*, 395–96, 422–23, 428–32.

¹⁵⁴ Pannenberg, *Systematic 2*, 76–115.

goal of moving reality and creation into Trinitarian likeness in ever more complex entities, a process for creation that will only be completed in the eschaton when there will be no more brokenness and provisionality.¹⁵⁵

The Holy Spirit thus is the transcendent framework through whom to reappraise ecology, origins, and stewardship.¹⁵⁶ As a result, rather than being enemies, modern science and evolutionary theory provide new opportunities and new lenses (more affirmation here of the religious experience topos) to recover the truth of Creator Spirit.¹⁵⁷ Theology, if it will awaken to this, has a means of integrating evolutionary theory¹⁵⁸ within the theological vector of Spirit for a teleological account of preconditions for a life-filled world, for cooperation, and also for community.¹⁵⁹

Conclusion. Our study of Pinnock's indirect references reveals the emergence of defining characteristics of three principal topoi that came into play in Pinnock's theological journey. There is a pronounced shift from a topos of inerrancy, especially as pertains to biblical inspiration but also to religious experience; to a second topos of spiritual interiority¹⁶⁰ rooted in the historic Christian faith. This in turn hints at a third topos, one of universality and ecumenism. To further refine the use of topoi in Pinnock's work an Addendum has been added at the close of this chapter. It attempts to provide a deeper analysis of the nature of topoi in contemporary society (the world in which Pinnock wrote), and their impact upon and reflection in the writings of Pinnock under our examination.

¹⁵⁵ Pannenberg, *Systematic 2*, ch. 7, esp. 161–74.

¹⁵⁶ Wolfhart Pannenberg, *An Introduction to Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1991), 37–52.

¹⁵⁷ Pannenberg, *Systematic 2*, 115–36.

¹⁵⁸ Pinnock, *Flame*, 65, fn. 34. See Pannenberg, Wolfhart. *Toward a Theology of Nature: Essays on Science and Faith*. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993.

¹⁵⁹ Pannenberg, *Systematic 2*, 76–136.

¹⁶⁰ By way of nomenclature, it seems that, in light of what we know about the nature of Pinnock's development, "religious experience" (or "interiority") is the most helpful term to identify critically what is going forward in terms of the significant shifts. The term is intended to convey the real depth of the meaning as to what happened in Pinnock's theological development. His experience of spirituality underwent certain transpositions (see 17, 19, and 38).

C. Reconfiguration

The category of “reconfiguration” is an intertextual recounting of a situation “in a manner that makes the later event ‘new’ in relation to a previous event.”¹⁶¹ Robbins provides the example of the use by 1 Peter 2:22-25 of Isaiah 53. More than simply recontextualization, the Isaiah tradition is *reconfigured* “without reference to these words standing written in another place.” Terms in the 1 Peter passage are borrowed from Isaiah 53, such as “committed no sin,” “no guile was found on his lips,” “bore our sins,” “by his wounds you have been healed,” and “straying like sheep.” As a result, the Isaianic figure is reconfigured into Jesus, depicted as bearing our sins “in his body on the tree.”¹⁶² Thus, the new event is similar to the earlier event; however, it “replaces or ‘outshines’ the previous event, making it a ‘foreshadowing’ of the more recent one.”¹⁶³

Also, reconfiguration is a malleable process, for it can take an earlier text in various unforeseen directions as it weaves “new dimensions into existing modes” of thought. Such was the case “in the official version of the Qur’an overseen by Muhammad’s secretary Zayd b. Thâbit and authorized by the caliph ‘Uthmân” in the seventh century E.C.¹⁶⁴ Robbins argues that Surah 1 within Islam is not unlike the Lord’s Prayer in Christianity as it energetically and dynamically blends together aspects like the Lord’s Prayer with “aspects characteristic of Psalm 1 in the Hebrew Bible.”¹⁶⁵ Yet at the same time the Qur’an reconfigures Jesus in a direction that Christians argue is unexpected, and inconsistent, with his Judeo-Christian trajectory.

We argue for our purposes that Pinnock was not merely rearranging or reconfiguring themes in ScPr 84, and especially in FoL 96, that are “similar” to earlier themes in BRev 71 in light of his ongoing religious experience. Rather there was an amplification in his later reading of

¹⁶¹ Robbins, *Exploring*, 50.

¹⁶² Robbins, *Tapestry*, 107–8.

¹⁶³ Robbins, *Exploring*, 50.

¹⁶⁴ Robbins, *Invention*, 6.

¹⁶⁵ Robbins, *Invention*, 59–60.

his earlier themes which had to do with a “conversion” of his very self. This takes us into our next section.

D. Narrative Amplification

Whereas reconfiguration pulls an event forward into the author’s period as a foreshadowing or fulfilment, narrative amplification retrojects an event or understanding from the author’s period backward into a previous setting. Robbins tells us that this occurs in an extended composition of text “containing recitation, recontextualization, and *reconfiguration* [emphasis added].” It is exemplified, he argues, when the “Gospel of Mark repetitively puts early Christian belief in the death and resurrection on the lips of Jesus in the form of chreiai.”¹⁶⁶

Negatively-speaking, there is a particular event in *Biblical Revelation* that illustrates this second principle of retrojection. It revolves around a central theme for Pinnock at that time, which was the Princetonian view of plenary inerrancy championed by Warfield (described above). Pinnock used Barth as the foil against which he directed most of his argumentative energy in the defence of his cause; that plenary verbal inspiration is the foundation of Christian theology. You will recall in our previous section that Pinnock reacts viscerally to Barth's claim that Luther and Calvin deemed Scripture as inspired because it speaks of Christ by the Spirit rather than by its grammatical content.¹⁶⁷ Following the Reformation, argued Barth, as natural theology and secularism crept in, scholars counterbalanced this growing error with a tendency toward literal inerrancy, concluding that the phrase “the Bible is the Word of God” means “the Bible as exposed to human inquiry brought under human control.”¹⁶⁸ Visible by 1700, the doctrine of inspiration experienced a “stiffening” via a “supranaturalistic character” into an expression of natural theology: “The Bible was now grounded upon itself apart from the mystery

¹⁶⁶ Robbins, *Exploring*, 51.

¹⁶⁷ Barth, *Dogmatics* 1/2, 520–21.

¹⁶⁸ Barth, *Dogmatics* 1/2, 522.

of Christ and the Holy Ghost.” It became a “paper Pope.”¹⁶⁹ Pinnock in turn accused Barth of reconfiguring, or rewriting, the Reformation as “a brief neoorthodox paradise.”¹⁷⁰ He accused Barth of a negative retrojection, arguing that Barth and his fellow neoorthodox scholars had such a high view of the Reformers, Luther and Calvin, that they sought to “relieve them of their doctrine of inspiration”; that though Luther and Calvin did hold to verbal inspiration, Barth remodelled (or amplified) them both in his image; so that “by a felicitous inconsistency on occasion [they] rose above it to a *personalistic*, ‘Christocentric’ conception.”¹⁷¹

Ironically (in light of Pinnock’s later writings post-1984), at the same time that Pinnock was rejecting Barth’s supposed “narrative amplification,” he himself was retrojecting his own modern positivist perspective of the inerrancy of the Bible’s “indicia” back upon the Reformation (as well as upon the New Testament data, and the church of the first several centuries). He unwittingly committed the same retrojection of which he accused Barth.

Positively-speaking, however, we also discern exciting examples of narrative amplification as Pinnock’s books progressed, especially in the genre of his *Flame of Love*. Indeed our negative example above serves to underscore how Pinnock, as reader, develops a new relation to the biblical text. He remains a reader of its text, but becomes a different reader. There is a conversion on his part. We also suggest that this in turn leads to a re-reading (or amplification) of his own earlier narratives.

Pinnock mentions in the “Conclusion” of FoL 96 that he began the book intending to bring certain forgotten truths to mind; he did not, however, expect “that a constructive vision of Spirit would take shape.”¹⁷² Is it possible that the serendipitous movement of the book was due in part not just to doctrinal reflection, but to his discovery of something that was present but had gone forward unstated? (Bear in mind that he wrote his doctoral thesis in 1963 on “The Concept

¹⁶⁹ Barth, *Dogmatics I/2*, 525.

¹⁷⁰ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 153, fn. 30.

¹⁷¹ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 153.

¹⁷² Pinnock, *Flame*, 247.

of the Spirit in the Epistles of Paul”).¹⁷³ We have already noted in our innertextual study in Ch. 3 of this thesis that we can track his movement from a rational to a personal starting point in his later theology (92); that something “profoundly shifted in his understanding of the deity” (108); that he began to operate from a “subjective centre” (150). This rhetorical movement unfolded as he relocated his theological starting point in the inter-communal relationships within the godhead. Yet within all this movement he maintained a foundation that was “open, dynamic, communal, universal, relational, and Trinitarian,” yet still *textual* (100).

So, FoL 96 reflects a different kind of genre than do BRev 71 and ScPr 84. Though personal experience and the role of the subject play a part, there seems to be a deeper and more fundamentally heightened awareness of self with respect to the entire world of the scriptural text. We see this reflected via Pinnock’s use in Romans of a relational topos that “broadens, rather than shifts, to include . . . a true religious experience of representation and solidarity” (228). “Beauty” and “aesthetics” also grow in rhetorical significance (179), as does his appreciation for “Trinitarian likeness” (188), and the revelatory role of the Holy Spirit. He also came to acknowledge, and not ungrudgingly, the role that context played in Barth’s suspicion of a Spirit Christology, which meant for the liberal theologians of Barth’s day a preoccupation “with man’s universal search for salvation that . . . circumvents the unique salvific import of Christ for all men”—that is, an inspirational, not an incarnational, Christology (201, note 193).¹⁷⁴ All indices are evidence of narrative amplification as we move from BRev 71 into Pinnock’s later writings, reflected in his ever increasing apprehension of the Holy Spirit and “theosis.”

Once this religious experience occurs, then *all* earlier writings are seen in a new light (including Pinnock’s use of certain texts in FoL 96 which are “amplified” or “soar” in comparison to his other two books). This explains for us the mobility that FoL reflects across not only the Scripture texts but also across traditions (including Catholicism, Orthodoxy, and

¹⁷³ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 258, fn. 16.

¹⁷⁴ For quote, see Rosato, *Barth*, 160.

Anglicanism). This is also why the work of Moltmann and Pannenberg comes to the fore along with references to creation, social Trinity, reconciliation, and so on.

Further, Pinnock's "self" plays a strategic role (47). We have evidence of a deepening of his own experience (a conversion) as reader, and as a result a deeper encounter with the world expressed in the biblical texts. This "converted" way of seeing helps to explain why "he never veered from this path..." (228); why "he returns to the same Bible books as he writes work after work" (219); why he always turned "toward and *into* historic orthodoxy in his search for a new paradigm to deal with contemporary challenges, rather than from it" (257-58).

E. Thematic Elaboration

The section above on narrative amplification has provided us with a stronger hermeneutical basis for what we will now treat under thematic elaboration, which along with recitation serves as a significant part of our analysis.

Thematic elaboration means that a theme or issue emerges in a unit of text, taking the form of a thesis or chreia.¹⁷⁵ With ancient literature this happened at the beginning of a unit, and then meanings or meaning-effects unfolded in the argumentation as the unit progressed. Robbins suggests that the major topics used to elaborate the theme were *rationale*, *argument from the opposite*, *analogy*, *example*, and *authoritative testimony*.¹⁷⁶ Our intent, however, is to identify contemporary, not ancient, rhetorical practices of thematic elaboration in Pinnock's writings. We seek these elaborations by an analysis of his use of those authors he most frequently references.

Review. First, let us briefly review what we have learned so far from oral-scribal intertexture, whereby our texts rework material from outside themselves.¹⁷⁷ In Pinnock's references to Barth in BRev 71, he uses Barth to support the rejection of religious experience.

¹⁷⁵ Bear in mind that "A chreia is a brief statement or action aptly attributed to a specific person or something analogous to a person," taking the form of a "sayings chreia," an "action chreia," or a chreia with both speech and action attributed to a specific person. See Robbins, *Exploring*, 41.

¹⁷⁶ Robbins, *Exploring*, 52.

¹⁷⁷ Robbins, *Exploring*, 40.

Yet as we look closely at the references to Pannenberg, especially decades later in FoL 96, we note the emergence of the legitimacy of religious experience; yet fused with the authority of revelation, an authority based in historical fact, especially concerning Christ's death and resurrection. The early Pinnock will later move to an understanding of the nature of truth that includes personal experience. This proves to be extremely important for his assessment of the believing subject, as he begins to accept that the universe has been created with a view to us humans to delight in it and enjoy it. And the believing subject includes all of humanity. The eternal destiny of all humans, including those who have never heard of the historic Jesus, will also emerge as another theme.

Meanwhile, in BRev 71, Runia in his helpful commentary entitled *Karl Barth's Doctrine of Holy Scripture* argues that one can reject a dualism of form and contents, yet make a distinction between the divine message and its cultural form (and worldview).¹⁷⁸ He argues that the Spirit accommodated himself to the biblical authors, as they at the same time used the full range of their human capacities in the process of inscripturation.¹⁷⁹ In 1971 Pinnock was not yet willing to make this step. Using indirect quotation, the topos within which we find Pinnock at the beginning of our books is that of an inerrancy predicated on Warfield's positivistic perspective of inspiration--and defended vigorously.

By the time of ScPr 84, the topos of revelation changes in Pinnock's indirect references, shifting from a divine act alone to a divine and human partnership. There is now a legitimate place for human inquiry and involvement in the process of inscripturation. This means Pinnock demonstrates more ease in balancing the objective nature of revelation with the subjective. In turn, this valuing of the subjective role allows him to appreciate religious experience in a fuller

¹⁷⁸ Klaas Runia, *Karl Barth's Doctrine of Holy Scripture* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1962), 89–90. See Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 73, fn. 44.

¹⁷⁹ Barth, *Dogmatics I/2*, 503–26. Barth defends the exclusive authority of the Bible as the only witness in and to the church (2/1:538–85). If God had only given a spiritual-oral tradition as canon, the church would be concentrated upon herself and only in dialogue with herself (1/1:117–18). Rather, because of the “divine act of majesty” inherent in the earthly Jesus, he as cosmic ground of being is self-revealing and our ultimate standard; no magisterium is necessary outside of him (4/2:38–39, 122–23, 149–50).

light. He comes to see it as a medium of divine revelation, though it must be subject to an authority more objective than itself. That authority is Scripture. In FoL 96 the indirect references from which Pinnock draws in Barth's work, concerning the topos of revelation, shift from a positivist inerrancy to a nuanced form of critical realism, balancing God's integral involvement in inscripturation with that of the human writers. Without abandoning a strong "word" focus, the parameters of his topos change to include the dimensions of reconciliation and creation. Drawing on Pannenberg, Moltmann, and others, the nature of the Trinity and its intersubjectivity (contra Barth) become the basis for an enriched view of the covenantal nature of creation, itself fundamentally relational; and of the representative nature of Christ's salvation for the human race.

In *Flame of Love* Pinnock shifts topos again. The movement is theological, with a move to a relational ontological Spirit-driven theology (religious experience, if you will) which now takes a practical expression. Our author finds a satisfactory methodology by looking backward into the early centuries of the church (as valued within Orthodoxy) for a pre-Enlightenment model that actually speaks to the issues and problems of modernity (and we might add post-modernity). The human intellect discovers freedom in prostration before God. The Holy Spirit's authority is paramount, and internal to Scripture and tradition. The goal of creation, and God's salvific work, is the believer's union with Christ.

As seen in his indirect recitations from Ware and Benz, Pinnock the early positivist apologist is now irresistibly drawn to the mystery of the Eastern Eucharist whereby Christ in some unfathomable mystery presents himself to his gathered people using created elements--and by so doing re-enacts his own incarnation. The rationalism so evident in his first book rejected truth through experience and tradition (i.e., past experience) as a loss of objectivity due to fusion in the ever-evolving consciousness of the church. He now renounces that to ponder (if not accept) transubstantiation (and possibly transelementation)¹⁸⁰ with its ontological significance of

¹⁸⁰ For a contemporary, theological analysis of transelementation, see George Hunsinger, *The Eucharist*

sacramental presence. At no point does he offer criticism of his Eastern sources. We also notice that the bulk of the referenced material from Clendenin, Ware, and Benz is found in chapters of FoL 96 that deal with the Holy Spirit's relationship to "union," "universality," and "truth."

Papal indirect references, like Orthodox sources mentioned above, evidence Pinnock's emerging delight in the universal appeal of the Spirit to all who seek or have sought spiritual light. Love is the ultimate criterion as stated in 1 John 4:7, not rational certainty. The question then is, where is love working anonymously? The answer is, where godliness and holiness (as well as doctrine) are seen in religion.¹⁸¹ However, implicit in Pinnock's topos of universality and ecumenism is a church that is conciliar in nature. He understands the ideal global expression of Christianity as taking the form of unity within diversity, rather than of diversity under a hierarchical form of unity.¹⁸²

It is evident that, as Pinnock moves into an ever more open and inclusive understanding of salvation and the church, the edges that define and guide that turn of topos are (re)discovered in the historic church. Yet his turning is always toward and *into* historic orthodoxy for new paradigms to deal with contemporary challenges, rather than from it.

Contemporary Elaboration. Let us now identify by contemporary, not ancient, rhetorical practices a thematic elaboration for each of Pinnock's books. Our methodology is to collate all of Pinnock's references recorded in our Excel data base book by book, starting with BRev 71. We group all those of significance (be they direct quotes or indirect references) for BRev 71, then move on to ScPr 84, and so on. The net result is a focused analysis of the intertextual material at play in the books under our examination. From this comes a profile of the themes elaborated in these books.

and Ecumenism, ed. Iain Torrance, Current Issues in Theology (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

¹⁸¹ John Paul II, *Crossing*, 194.

¹⁸² Pinnock, *Flame*, 234, 236-37.

However, we offer a brief word about contemporary rhetorical practices. Brooks and Warren, in a classic work on the nature of modern rhetoric and argument entitled *Modern Rhetoric*, outline six methods that comprise contemporary exposition. Key to all six methods is *interest*; that is, it is essential to decide first what specific question will concern the project at hand. With the controlling question decided, modern analysis then depends on the following six principles.¹⁸³ Because this process is described in more detail in the Addendum at the close of this chapter, only a brief summary is now provided.

Principle One is *identification*, answering the question “What is it?” Principle Two is *comparison and contrast*, whereby an unfamiliar object is set against the familiar.¹⁸⁴ Principle Three is *illustration*, in which the goal is to relate the particular to its class.¹⁸⁵ Principle Four is *classification*. A particular item is related to a class, but by ranging classes from the least inclusive to the most inclusive like a filing system, to arrive at new knowledge.¹⁸⁶ Principle Five is *definition*. A definition is not of a thing but of a word, setting the limits within which a term can be used.¹⁸⁷

Of particular interest to us is Principle Six, *analysis*, for though to some degree Pinnock uses all of the methods listed above, he relies heavily on analysis in his work as a scholar, and this will shape our assessment of the thematic elaboration in the books we have chosen. As Brooks and Warren point out, by analysis a thing, person, or idea can be divided into component parts that are mutually supportive of the structure. Thus, it is only taking place when the one taking things apart recognizes the principle of the relation among the parts.¹⁸⁸ (Is it not interesting that Pannenberg [192] refers to the Trinity as the “field of deity” of Father, Son, and

¹⁸³ Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren, *Modern Rhetoric* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1970), 62–63.

¹⁸⁴ Brooks and Warren, *Modern*, 69–70.

¹⁸⁵ Brooks and Warren, *Modern*, 81.

¹⁸⁶ Brooks and Warren, *Modern*, 90.

¹⁸⁷ Brooks and Warren, *Modern*, 100–1.

¹⁸⁸ Brooks and Warren, *Modern*, 130–31.

Spirit,¹⁸⁹ without which God would be a unitarian Subject incapable of relationships within himself? His Trinitarian essence allows for the detailed analysis of “parts” [though Trinitarianism argues that parts cannot refer to persons in the Trinity] that Pinnock delighted theologically to conduct, *and* for the principle of unity which allows Pannenberg to argue for classic theology’s legitimate claim to universality, even in the face of today’s pluralistic religious context.)

Biblical Revelation (1971). The ground of truth is God as subject and object. Scripture as God’s revelation shares this same subject-object complementarity, thus errorlessness extends to all its indicia. Though Runia argues that there is distinction between the divine message and its cultural form and worldview, Pinnock’s appreciation for the role of culture and worldview in the process of inscripturation is minimal at this point. Pinnock accuses Barth of retrojecting neoorthodoxy onto the earlier writings of the Reformers and certain church fathers. Pinnock turns to Pannenberg for support that the certainty of the exalted Christ is based entirely on what happened in his resurrection and ascension in history, not on present experience. (However, Pannenberg does open up some space for an interpretative moment, by noting that “truth” since the patristic period means a reasonable argument making at least a *provisional* decision possible. Reason has its limits.) Pinnock turns for support as well to Popes Pius X and Benedict XV in the early twentieth-century, and to their reaffirmation on behalf of Rome of a literal understanding of inerrancy.

The Scripture Principle (1984). Scripture is true objective revelation, but is set within the broader context of God’s general revelation which (though not as specific) is also true and objective. Turning to Pannenberg, Pinnock quotes approvingly of his claim that the dissolution of the Scripture-principle today is due to theology’s abandonment of its claim to universality. That universal claim is based on God wanting to be known, not so much from nature, but from his acts before human eyes. We humans are all oriented to a horizon that encompasses and transcends us. The Barthian view of revelation compels evangelicals to acknowledge objective divine

¹⁸⁹ Pannenberg, *Systematic I*, 370–84.

disclosure--and the subjective reality of God speaking to us today. As Runia argues, the Bible is not only where revelation may take place, it “is included in the revelation, belongs to it, is revelation”--and not just event.¹⁹⁰

Flame of Love (1996). Let Spirit in a social trinitarian understanding become the transcendent framework through which to do theology, objectively *and* existentially. Barth is appealed to, in order to affirm that God’s love alone grounds creation. Love compels God to choose co-existence with humans; and due to love, creation is the external basis of his covenant, and covenant the internal basis of creation. Concerning pneumatology, Runia suggests that the one thread which Barth offered to justify Schleiermacher’s goal of starting theology with the believing Christian as the focus was a theology of the Holy Spirit. Pinnock turns to Moltmann as he argues that Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, acted first creatively before acting redemptively. Spirit’s ongoing goal is to move reality and creation into Trinitarian likeness in ever more complex entities till the creature, distinct from the Father in the Son, is united to God by the ecstasy of the Spirit. Hence, in every age Spirit has been orienting people to this mystery of divine love, and effects our reconciliation with Father through the Son. Spirit also ensures that truths are embedded in religious traditions. Such redemptive bridges to other traditions therefore allow us to ask if God’s word has been heard by their adherents.

Pope John Paul II put strong emphasis on the sanctifying work of the Spirit, which frees us from sin’s domination. Love is the criterion for grace at work in 1 John 4:7. Where is it working anonymously? The answer is, where godliness and holiness (as well as doctrine) are seen in religion. He, too, spoke of the presence of Spirit in non-Christian religions. Because Spirit is active everywhere, it is possible for anyone, regardless of time and place, to receive God’s offer of grace.

¹⁹⁰ Runia, *Barth*, 47–48.

Summation

Verbal inspiration for the early Pinnock, with his understanding that each word in the original text was authored by God exactly as written (in the original autographs, at least), compelled him to reject Barth's perspective on the same subject. Yet by the time of his writing ScPr 84, we note through his recitations from Barth some movement in Pinnock's understanding of inspiration; especially an acknowledgment of the indispensable role that human authors played in the development of the divine text, rooted as they were in their culture and social values. And in FoL 96 none other than Barth is referenced in an appeal to a growing theme for the later Pinnock, that the beauty of God touches all things, including theology.

Pinnock definitely edges closer, as seen in his quotes and recitations, to more of an experiential subject-oriented stance. This accounts for his turn to authors in the apophatic tradition of Eastern Christianity such as Ware and Benz, and to certain papal sources, especially John Paul II. With Moltmann, the creativity and potentiality of the Spirit emerge in his recitations. It is Spirit who is the principle of evolution, creating new possibilities and in these anticipating new designs and blueprints for material and living organisms.¹⁹¹ With this created realm, and especially with humanity, God's identification is made complete in the passion of his Son.

In our opinion a critical shift in topos is reflected in Pinnock's quotes and indirect references from Rosato. It concerns Schleiermacher's starting point for pneumatology, with believing humans as the subject. This starting point serves as justification for Pinnock, via his profoundly *rational* rediscovery of pneumatology, to make the believing Christian a central focus in his theology. (We will learn elsewhere that Pinnock had already had an experiential involvement with the charismatic movement dating back to the late 1960s.) Moving to a Spirit Christology provides a framework for the subjective dimension of human involvement in inscripturation, and with it the human nature of Scripture too. By siding with Rosato, Pinnock

¹⁹¹ Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 100.

acknowledges that letting Logos Christology dominate Spirit Christology can result in a subordination of the Spirit to the Son.¹⁹² He now has a means of solving the objective-subjective dichotomy of inscripturation with which he grappled unsatisfactorily in BRev 71. The believing subject is a legitimate agent (though not errorless) in the process of the inspiration of Scripture. Like Christ's incarnation the key is human finitude through which the divine works, a genuine finitude set within its particular social and cultural setting--with standards of cultural "truth" distinct from the scientific and technical exactitude demanded by modernity.¹⁹³

With his references from Moltmann, Pinnock distances himself from Barth's polemic against religious experience, and embraces Moltmann's efforts to recover a more experiential basis for the doctrine of Spirit.¹⁹⁴ It is he whom Pinnock introduces to affirm a whole new dimension to the Spirit, that of playfulness! Not only does Spirit coequal Christ in God's salvific activity, his (or, à la Moltmann, "her") fingerprints in creation provide a profile of the free spontaneous child-like nature of God. To effect this shift of theological model, Moltmann considers it important to remove the filioque clause from the Nicene Creed, which in his opinion has the net effect of subordinating the Spirit to the Son (Pinnock's reasons for doing the same).¹⁹⁵

¹⁹² Rosato, *Barth*, 157–58.

¹⁹³ We note that Pinnock acknowledges that Barth was reacting to his early twentieth-century context, one in which Spirit Christology could mean for liberal theologians a preoccupation "with man's universal search for salvation that . . . circumvents the unique salvific import of Christ for all men"--an inspirational, not an incarnational, Christology. Rosato, *Barth*, 160.

¹⁹⁴ Pinnock, *Flame*, 10, fn. 3.

¹⁹⁵ Moltmann, *Spirit of Life*, 71–73, 306–9. See also Pinnock, *Flame*, 82, fn. 7. Moltmann's argument for striking out the filioque clause is as follows:

"1. If the Spirit is said to proceed from the Father, this also says that he proceeds from the Father of the Son, for it is only in relation to the Son that the first Person of the Trinity has to be called 'Father'.

2. If the Spirit proceeds from 'the Father of the Son', then he has his origin in the Father's relation to the Son. He proceeds not only from the Father, but also from his fatherhood.

3. The fatherhood of the Father cannot be thought without the sonship of the Son. If the Spirit proceeds from the fatherhood of the Father, then the Son is not uninvolved. His sonship participates indirectly in the direct procession of the Spirit from the Father. The Son accompanies the procession of the Spirit from his Father.

4. The procession of the Spirit consequently presupposes the existence of the Father and the Son, as well as the reciprocal relationship of the Father and the Son: 'As soon as God is called Father, he is thought of as having a Son'.

5. Even though the primordial relations have to be distinguished from the perichoretic relations in the life of the Trinity, the Spirit's hypostatic existence is nevertheless given its imprint by the Father and by the Son: from the Father, as origin of the Godhead, the Spirit receives his hypostatic divinity, from the Son and from the Father

In fact, according to Pinnock none other than John Wesley shared the same conviction¹⁹⁶--which neatly completes the circle of Pinnock's journey into Arminianism.

It is evident from the references to Pannenberg that he, together with Moltmann and others, takes the social Trinity seriously as genuine community within the Godhead.¹⁹⁷ When the Spirit is understood as the "bond" of love that participates in and shares with humans the love between Father and Son, then such a Person-love is deemed more than simply a "fostering environment."¹⁹⁸ It was at this relational level, argued Pannenberg, that Augustine had difficulty with interpersonal trinitarian communion, presupposing that the intratrinitarian relations were solely of *origin*, and thuswise describing the fellowship of the Father and the Son by the Spirit.¹⁹⁹ Yet as Pannenberg points out, it was as *person* that Jesus of Nazareth received the Spirit; hence, he argues that we can only say that "the Spirit proceeds from the Father and is received by the Son." Like Moltmann, he concludes that the filioque clause to the third article of the Creed of 381 was a regrettable one-sided addition.²⁰⁰

and from their reciprocal relationships he receives his inner-trinitarian configuration or Gestalt.

The Filioque addition therefore contributes nothing new to the statement about the procession of the Spirit from the Father. It is superfluous, not required, and it can consequently be struck out." See Moltmann, *Spirit of Life*, 306.

¹⁹⁶ Pinnock, *Flame*, 197, fn. 21.

¹⁹⁷ Pinnock, *Flame*, 34.

¹⁹⁸ Pinnock, *Flame*, 40.

¹⁹⁹ We acknowledge that many theologians, and not just Catholics, would have reservations with the way Augustine's understanding of the Trinity is referred to here, albeit Pinnock is referencing Pannenberg's reading. There remains much more hermeneutical and historical homework to do at this point. Reference is later made to a "social Trinity"; the impression is given that the Trinity refers to a relation among persons, but another tradition, coming from both Augustine and Aquinas, is that the persons of the Trinity are a "subsistent relation." This then backs up to the question of what is meant by "procession" and such terms as "origin." Though this is not a matter to be resolved in this thesis, it highlights how the theological community has yet to be clear on these terms.

²⁰⁰ Pannenberg, *Systematic 1*, 315–19, esp. 317 The theological basis of Pinnock's re-interpretation of the Trinity and of the person of the Spirit, as shaped by Pannenberg, is revealed in our analysis of thematic elaboration. The social and relational nature of the Trinity means that God loves the creature in the Son's self-differentiation from the Father (Pannenberg, *Systematic 2*, 21–32, 61–76), and "Spirit is the ecstasy by which God, without leaving himself, can enter the world and be present" (Pinnock, *Flame*, 60). Self-awareness is fundamental to a religious interpretation of creation; in Judeo-Christianity, suffering from sinful, human choice is not eliminated by God but rather redeemed (*Systematic 2*, 161–74). Second, we notice Pinnock's embrace of the historic emphasis on recapitulation, with the call to re-enact Christ's obedience to God made to every individual (*Systematic 2*, 48, 52). Solidarity, not individualism, depicts Christ's work for us (*Systematic 2*, 419–21, 429–30). Third, another familiar theme is also noticeable. Because Spirit in every age has been orienting people to the mystery of divine love

II. Cultural Intertexture

Just as a text interacts with other texts, so too does it interact with other cultures. Thus, this section requires that we have a clear understanding of what we mean by “culture.” For his part, N. T. Wright suggests that, more broadly-speaking, worldview is comprised of two axes: a vertical axis with “story” at the top and “symbol” at the bottom; and a horizontal axis with “praxis” on the left and “questions” on the right. Within this matrix he argues that “*culture* denotes particularly the praxis and symbols of a society, both of which are of course informed by the controlling story, and reflect particular answers to the worldview questions.”²⁰¹

Robbins points out that culture is the sort of interaction that is “insider knowledge.” It is the “kind of knowledge [that] is known only by people inside a particular culture or by people who have learned about that culture through some kind of interaction with it--either vicariously in a context of education or in a context of direct interaction with members of it.” This cultural intertexture appears in a word or concept as it is patterned and configured; in systems, codes, scripts, and values; in myths; and in texts.²⁰²

He goes on to add that, by way of illustration, the rhetorolects in which first-century Christians conceptualized, communicated, and argued were embedded in “well-known social, political, cultural, and religious locations of thought and action in the Mediterranean world.” Wisdom was located within the conceptual domain of “household”; prophetic within “kingdom”; apocalyptic and pre-creation narrative within “empire”; miracle within “intersubjective body”; and priestly within “temple.” To this list can also be added the contexts of synagogue, country-village, and city.²⁰³ What then are the cultural settings within which we can locate Pinnock? The

(*Systematic I*, ch. 3), the truths embedded in religious traditions provide redemptive bridges to those traditions, offering ground for us to ask if God’s word has been heard by their adherents (Pannenberg, “Religions,” 285-97).

²⁰¹ N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1992), 124.

²⁰² Robbins, *Exploring*, 58.

²⁰³ Robbins, *Invention*, 63.

categories of “Reference or Allusion,” “Echo,” “Social Intertexture,” and “Historical Intertexture” will all help us to determine this question.

A. Reference or Allusion

“Evangelicalism” in Pinnock’s three writings clearly serves as a culture (i.e., a sub-set of Western Christian logico-meaningful understanding and action in life). So too do his references to “Catholicism” and “Orthodoxy”; and more narrowly “Southern Baptist,” “charismatic,” “Ontario,” “Canadian,” and “Vietnam” (a major focus of his during the 1970s). Using the word-usage lists compiled as a first step in the innertextual texture, we discover that none of these words are found in the list of words used more than one hundred times in each of our books. By means of a simple table, we note the actual number of occurrences:

Table 8

References or Allusions to Culture

	<i>BRev 71</i>	<i>ScPr 84</i>	<i>FoL 96</i>
evangelicalism	4	2	3
Catholics	8	4	6
Catholicism	10	-	-
Orthodoxy	5	3	10
Southern	-	-	-
Baptist(s)	5	7	5
charismatic(s)	-	3	35
Ontario	-	-	-

	<i>BRev 71</i>	<i>ScPr 84</i>	<i>FoL 96</i>
Canada	-	2	-
America(n)	6	4	2

Europe(an)	-	-	-
Britain/British	-	-	-

Several features of this far-from-exhaustive display of expected cultural words prove to be curious. Note, for example, the several times that the number of occurrences of a given word in one book by Pinnock is found within roughly the same range of occurrences in another--and then escalates in the third book. At the least, we can point to a certain thematic consistency in his usage as an author. More importantly, however, is how this brief survey highlights the peculiar manner in which Pinnock seems to abstract himself from his social context in his writings. As one of Canada's leading evangelical theologians for at least two decades, one would hardly know his origin from these three works. From within the loci of his authorial choices, which were almost invariably North American, British, or European, no mention is made of "Britain" or of "Europe," not just culturally-speaking but at all (save for an occasional footnote). When there is reference to a cultural setting, it tends to be to the U.S.A.

In a curious way Pinnock seems to float above his cultural setting, with few specific cultural markers linking him to his setting. Though he clearly distances himself from a modernist mindset theologically-speaking, his writing style in our books seems to depict the very essence of the modernist abstraction that he decries within contemporary evangelicalism. (The exception to this is his autobiographical Appendix in the close of the last book he ever published, *The Scripture Principle*, 2006.)

B. Echo

In the North American cultural context within which Pinnock is writing, what "echoes" or influences do we detect in what he is saying? What words or phrases evoke or potentially evoke "a concept from cultural tradition." Echoes are rather indistinct. There is no word or phrase that is "indisputably" from a particular tradition, so an echo might be heard by one person, but not by

another. As a result, we bear in mind that interpreters “will debate the presence or absence of a particular echo in the text under consideration.”²⁰⁴

The first cultural echo we detect in Pinnock’s works pervades *Biblical Revelation* (1971); namely his philosophical basis for inerrancy, positivism. Here is the underlay for Pinnock’s seemingly unshakeable commitment to plenary verbal inspiration. As he describes it elsewhere, he was driven by the conviction that it was “epistemologically crucial to be able to prove that there is a perfect Bible which can serve as a theological axiom or first principle for a rational system of theology.” With sovereign God (in a Calvinist sense) guarding inspiration from the contaminating influence of humans, the result was—in his estimation—an unflawed inerrant Bible as source of truth, rationally explicable for those with the eyes to see.²⁰⁵

Inherent to this position was the positivist assumption that one can see raw data through eyes that are unbiased and truly objective, as though floating above the intellectual landscape free of all cultural and social attachments. In the words of Teilhard de Chardin,

In its early, naive stage, science, perhaps inevitably, imagined that we could observe phenomena in themselves, as they would take place in our absence. Instinctively physicists and naturalists went to work as though they could look down from a great height upon a world which their consciousness could penetrate without being submitted to it or changing it. . . . It is tiresome and even humbling for the observer to be thus fettered, to be obliged to carry with him everywhere the centre of the landscape he is crossing.²⁰⁶

Positivist argumentation is thus based on the conviction that revelation is an objective historical reality, irrespective of personal decision or of experience. As Pinnock put it in BRev 71, as

²⁰⁴ Robbins, *Exploring*, 60.

²⁰⁵ Roennfeldt, *Pinnock*, xviii-xix.

²⁰⁶ Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *The Phenomenon of Man* (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1955), 32.

historical *fact*²⁰⁷ the inductive-historical methodology draws out true meaning.²⁰⁸ “In holding that the infallibility and inerrancy of Scripture are relative to what the text, by objective analysis, intends to teach, we do not mean to restrict biblical authority but, rather, to let it function.”²⁰⁹ And again, “The exegesis of Scripture thus has *absolute priority* over all systems. Systems which fail to fit the data are to be dismantled.”²¹⁰

Also, inherent in this position is a subtle docetic element, “a strong inclination to suppress and disregard various of the human characteristics of the Bible. . . .”²¹¹ Human involvement in the process of inscripturation from this point of view is deemed a liability, opening the “inerrant” nature of Scripture to scholarly criticism, and exposing a yawning gap of possible flaws, meaning “mistakes.” An essential feature in this positivist echo is the strong epistemological emphasis on rationality and knowing. Systems of thought and knowing are placed front and centre.

The second cultural echo in Pinnock’s texts is what we will call an evolutionary paradigm. This is a mindset of openness and growth that sees development as essential to the essence of creation. Such development is necessarily organic, moving from a seed-like beginning into the maturity and fullness of the full-grown plant or organism. This model sees the Spirit as having embedded a potentiality of meaning within any given “text,” for any given age;²¹² and to awaken to this paradigm is to awaken to the realization of more than one meaning in the text. Why? Because the interpreting subject brings the ever expanding boundaries of her or his very self to the interpretive task, and interpretation is filtered through each person’s uniqueness. Pinnock awakens to this process over the decades resulting in a shift toward ontology, a move from knowing to being.

²⁰⁷ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 44.

²⁰⁸ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 45.

²⁰⁹ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 78.

²¹⁰ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 135.

²¹¹ Roennfeldt, *Pinnock*, xix.

²¹² Roennfeldt, *Pinnock*, xx.

It was Heidegger who led the way into this insight, taking the hermeneutical question much deeper than “Who says it?” to “What is the nature of the being who is asking the question?” Breaking with any method, he found understanding to be a mode of being, rather than knowledge *per se*. Instead of asking “On what condition can a knowing subject understand a text or history?” (the question that preoccupies Pinnock in BRev 71, as he argues for his positivist methodology for inerrancy and biblical authority), Heidegger asks “What kind of being is it whose being consists of understanding?” So, Pinnock’s later preoccupation centres on the dynamic of love within the social centre of the Trinity, and as an outflow into creation and humanity. Relational dynamics surge to the fore even in biblical interpretation, for he concludes that interpretation in the spiritual realm is impossible without the engagement of the Holy Spirit. Pinnock (though Heidegger is dismissively mentioned in BRev 71)²¹³ is nonetheless drawn into the influence of Heidegger’s hermeneutical circle; that the ontology of understanding is implied in the methodology of interpretation, and the methodology of interpretation is grounded in the ontology of understanding.²¹⁴

The third cultural echo, hand in hand with the model above, is Pinnock’s increasing openness to mystery, best described by metaphor and symbol. With growing ease he includes in his hermeneutic the role of “saga” to describe certain elements of the Scripture story that are rooted in pre-history or use as their referents the supernatural. As he puts it, what we find in Scripture are “broken myths,” allusions to ancient myths now translated in light of Israel’s knowledge of God (or the church’s knowledge of Christ).²¹⁵ Pinnock moves closer to agreeing with Donald Bloesch’s reference to the Bible as a sacrament for evangelicals, as the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, a vehicle by which the Spirit preaches Christ to us

²¹³ The mention of Heidegger here serves to dismiss his emphasis on subjectivity, Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 27. Pinnock then refers to “the later Heidegger,” and his understanding of “man as the loudspeaker for the silent tolling of being, the hermeneut of the gods. . . .” (224-25).

²¹⁴ Paul Ricoeur, “Existence and Hermeneutics,” in *The Conflict of Interpretations: Essays in Hermeneutics*, ed. Don Ihde, trans. Kathleen McLaughlin (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1974), 19.

²¹⁵ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 149.

(reflected in Tertullian's attitude, Pinnock assures us).²¹⁶ To hear the Word of God, we must stand in the privileged circle of the Holy Spirit of mystery. Our author now understands genuine orthodoxy to be alive when Spirit and the Word are rightly balanced.²¹⁷

The fourth cultural echo reflects happenings in the philosophical landscape in North America in the late twentieth-century. Pinnock makes passing mention of the two horizons of the text and the reader,²¹⁸ reflecting some awareness if even indirectly of the pioneering work of Hans-Georg Gadamer and Paul Ricoeur, among others. He mentions critical realism, which N. T. Wright has championed over the last few decades. This is the awareness that all of us come to a text burdened with all manner of presuppositions, accepting as given that we understand everything in relation to what we already know, experience, and believe.²¹⁹ Critical realism sets our encounter with the Word of God in a particular historical situation, yet provides a critical means for our assumptions to be opposed by Scripture (or any other perspective), and even challenged and undermined.²²⁰

The fifth cultural echo from the field of theology is Arminianism. One of Pinnock's passions over the years was to grapple with the mystery of the link between God's Word and textual utterances. Having abandoned a Calvinistic positivist model of word-perfect textual utterances as guarantor of the divine Word, Pinnock accepted that "God's Word comes to us incarnated in human speech and culture." Roennfeldt suggests that Pinnock's turn to an Arminian model took ten years to affect his doctrine of Scripture. As he turned from his Warfield-like Princetonian hermeneutic, he found a model already in existence that better reflected his own theological journey, a model several centuries old. In typical Pinnock fashion he wholeheartedly embraced Arminianism, and let the chips fall where they may.²²¹

²¹⁶ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 190. Such a sacramental use of the Bible, suggests Pinnock, might actually make evangelicals more sensitive to Catholic theology!

²¹⁷ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 191.

²¹⁸ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 224.

²¹⁹ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 233.

²²⁰ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 234.

²²¹ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 23, fn. 31.

The church always has struggled to discern what is of God, and what is of the human instrument.²²² As Pinnock's appreciation grew for a healthy scholarly stance on relativism (inherent in the evolutionary paradigm which he gradually embraced) and human certainty and reason, his appreciation also grew for the Holy Spirit's role in ensuring the authority and authenticity of Scripture. He came to realize that without the Spirit the Word of God would not have its power.²²³ With this realization came also a fading of militantism, for the fruit of his former univocal interpretation of the biblical text had forced upon him the role of defender/crusader for the truth.²²⁴ Instead he moved over the years to a much gentler explication of his point of view, with far less arrogance and willingness to crush those threatening his conviction of the one right and orthodox understanding of the biblical text.

A final echo that is not explicated by Pinnock is the very title of his book, the "Scripture principle." It is an expression that is used by Pannenberg in his article "The Crisis of the Scripture-Principle in Protestant Theology" written in 1963. He argues that theology has to be more than an interpretation of a given faith; it has to be a universal science. Key to this is what he calls the "Scripture-principle," whereby the understanding of all things in universal history is connected to the God of the Bible, and the God of the Bible is understood anew as the creator of the world. In this universal context he is the God of history, "and the understanding of the world as history is that interpretation of reality which the biblical concept of God has opened to mankind."²²⁵ This universality echoes through Pinnock's later books, especially in *Flame of Love* (1996). When the following lemmas from it are graphed, they explode off the page in comparison to their usage in the other books: religion, power, creation, world, love, life, Trinity, father, son, universal, spirit, and open. All are dynamic and/or relational concepts, not static. Noticeably, at

²²² Roennfeldt, *Pinnock*, xxiii.

²²³ Roennfeldt, *Pinnock*, xx.

²²⁴ Roennfeldt, *Pinnock*, xviii-xix.

²²⁵ Pannenberg, "Crisis," 313.

the same time there is an almost complete lack of the word “authority” in FoL 96. The later Pinnock is working from within a radically different topos.

C. Social Intertexture

“Social” like the word “culture” can be invested with differing understandings. For example, Bloomquist understands “social” as referring to the broad swath of common human experiences, while “culture” is the way that human experience is understood locally. Robbins on the other hand considers cultural knowledge as the background of a text, and something that is taught “with careful use of language and transmission of specific traditions,” whereas social knowledge is visible and in the foreground. Through general interaction it can be uncovered, for it is knowledge “held by all persons of a region, no matter what their particular ‘cultural’ location may be.” Robbins’ definition of “social” as foreground knowledge then usually falls into four categories:

- (a) Social role (soldier, shepherd, slave, athlete) or social identity (Greek, Roman, Jew, etc.)
- (b) Social institution (empire, synagogue, trade workers’ association, household)
- (c) Social code (e.g., honour, hospitality)
- (d) Social relationship (patron, friend, enemy, kin)²²⁶

Our analysis of the intertexture of the social phenomena about which Pinnock writes in his works permits us to eliminate what he does not write about. To continue our graph above, we note the absence or low expression of words that pertain to social activities such as meals together, sex, transportation, marriage, commercial transactions, and so on.

²²⁶ Robbins, *Exploring*, 62.

Table 9*Social Phenomena*

	BRev 71	ScPr 84	FoL 96
airplane	1	1	-
business (i.e., circumstance)	0	2	2
family	-	3	5
homosexuality	-	3	-
marriage	2	2	9
sexual	-	-	2
Vietnam	-	-	-

(Note that even of the nine references to “marriage” in FoL 96, four pertain to the biblical metaphor of the “marriage of the Lamb.”)

More broadly, the social/cultural context of Pinnock’s texts centre on his role as scholar and professor. In his biography by Callen,²²⁷ we learn that apart from part-time employment during his summers as a student, Pinnock’s entire life was spent in academia (retired, he taught a summer course at McMaster Divinity College in Hamilton just a year before his unexpected death from Alzheimer's Disease on Aug. 15, 2010). Though he served actively and with commitment in a Baptist church in Hamilton for years (Little Bethel Community Church) and was an enthusiastic worshipper, he never stepped into such social roles as pastor, tradesman, or business professional.

His career spanned several seminaries, all of them evangelical in whole or in part, including time spent in New Orleans, Chicago, Vancouver, and Hamilton. Keenly aware of social trends and with an apologist’s heart, he spent most of his working hours in a closeted (and institutional) environment, surrounded with Christians of like mind and faith. In this setting his

²²⁷ Barry L. Callen, *Clark H. Pinnock: Journey Toward Renewal. An Intellectual Biography* (Nappanee, Ind.: Evangel Publishing House, 2000).

social relationships were shaped by his role of professor and expert (with some renown in evangelical circles), both roles with considerable authority, especially over the students within the classes he taught. For those students he was not unlike a patron, bestowing rewards on those who performed well according to the academic standards of the course. In was in its context a position of considerable power.

How would we describe the social code in such a scholarly and academic setting? One noticeable feature is that of honest inquiry; one is expected to follow the trail of evidence wherever it leads (though parameters are set by the nature of the academic institute itself, and its doctrinal position). It is also a setting where pursuit of truth can trump personal relationships. If someone is offended in the course of one's critique, that person has to work through the misunderstanding; the critique after all is not intended to be personal. And the audience in which such discussion is carried out is usually beyond the range of one's immediate social/cultural context. It might even be worldwide, especially if the forum is leading academic journals and publishing houses.

D. Historical Intertexture

In sociorhetorical criticism "historical" refers to events. It is integral to, yet separate from, "social" intertexture (which includes political and economic factors) and cultural phenomena. To interpret a historical event then requires "knowledge of social, cultural, and ideological phenomena operative in it."²²⁸ By means of some research outside the texts of our books, for example, we learn that another role played by Pinnock over the decades was that of reformer. We need to remember that in 1971 when Pinnock wrote *Biblical Revelation*, "the times they were a-changin'." It was the peak of the Vietnam era in the U.S.A., and Callen tells us that Pinnock was not immune to those social dynamics. He claims that Pinnock had always had a social conscience. He became convinced that evangelicals needed to risk practising the demands of the

²²⁸ Robbins, *Exploring*, 63.

gospel in public affairs, and began to explore the possible implications of a Christian political radicalism.²²⁹ He was sensitive to evangelicalism's caricature by Vernon Grounds as "sometimes too conservative (sanctifying the status quo), quietistic (naively trusting Providence to remedy social injustice), pietistic (focusing only on the spiritual needs of individual souls), perfectionistic (only supporting the unqualified good), legalistic (righteousness usually defined as abstinence from particular evil practices), nationalistic (nearly equating the American way of life and Christianity), and pessimistic (real hope lies only at the need of the age with the return of Christ)."²³⁰

Hence, in terms of zigzag, an enormous "zig" occurred around 1970 for Pinnock, altering his perspective on church-state relations and political theology. He concluded that dispensational premillennialism was an eschatology that stands in radical opposition to the powers that be, and which makes a person a potential radical. He was in touch with students, including Jim Wallis, who formed the "Peoples Christian Coalition" while at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Ill. Wallis would soon produce the periodical *Post American*, which became *Sojourners* magazine.²³¹ Pinnock helped him and other students recognize that the Christian countercultural support they needed was provided by John Howard Yoder. Frequent writers at that time in the periodical were Wallis, Pinnock, Yoder, and Catholic radicals like Dorothy Day.²³² These writers shared the conviction that real social changes comes through the witness of a prophetic minority that counters the prevailing value system with an alternative vision of Christ on the cross. Pinnock later described the three legs of this social stance as: (a) alienation from North American culture; (b) a resurging radical theology with foundations in Anabaptism; (c) and a new left radical movement that went a long way beyond any Christian commitments.²³³ He

²²⁹ Callen, *Pinnock*, 107.

²³⁰ Vernon Grounds, *Evangelicalism and Social Responsibility* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1969), 4–6. As quoted by Callen on p. 107.

²³¹ Callen, *Pinnock*, 108. *Sojourners* is found at www.sojo.net.

²³² Callen, *Pinnock*, 109–10.

²³³ Callen, *Pinnock*, 110.

identified with a Christian socialism that sought the collapse of the current tyrannical rotten system--though a socialism distinctively shaped by faith. Yoder's Christocentrism and biblical foundations appealed to Pinnock, along with his interpretation of Jesus' revolution which called for suffering in the face of evil, and downward mobility for servanthood. Meanwhile, at this point *Sojourners* magazine was hoping that the Viet Cong would prevail over American imperialism, and that a new China would emerge under Mao. The new emphasis on "church growth" was also welcome.²³⁴

As he left Trinity in 1974 for Regent College in B.C., Pinnock had become more irenic in style (perhaps in part tempered by his deep admiration of the nonviolent response to the Vietnam War); felt less threatened in the wider non-evangelical world of scholarship; and believed that the inerrancy position needed to be balanced by deep exegesis of the text.²³⁵ While in Vancouver from 1974-77, his "zig" from his initial conservatism to radical Christianity "zagged" back to support of Ronald Reagan's new conservatism. He began reading Richard John Neuhaus, who--in Pinnock's opinion--shook off social romanticism without abandoning his social conscience. In hindsight, the latter Pinnock was disturbed by how quickly Christians move with prevailing social movements. He referred to that era as his "radical dream," and concluded that the radicals had been calling for liberation in the one society on earth where there is more freedom than nearly anywhere else. The greater danger in his opinion was a "political monism" whether too far right or left, which declares itself absolute and has no absolute value to which it answers.²³⁶ By 2000 he concluded that the resistance to the war in Vietnam helped inadvertently to enslave large parts of Southeast Asia. It also left behind the countercultural perspective of the Anabaptist model, "moving from the countercultural existence of the church itself as the core social strategy for building a new society to seeking to bring the general society under God's law by a combination of evangelistic and political initiatives." Eschatologically, in Callen's opinion

²³⁴ Callen, *Pinnock*, 111.

²³⁵ Callen, *Pinnock*, 112.

²³⁶ Callen, *Pinnock*, 113.

Pinnock leaned slightly toward postmillennialism, whereby the faithfulness of the church leads into an ever greater realization of God's reign on earth before Christ's return and the eschaton.²³⁷ To further that end, given God's openness and his intent to reclaim the whole of creation, democratic capitalism deserves the clear though not uncritical support of Christians.²³⁸

1. Multiplicity of the Data. Especially when dealing with an ancient text, there is within it a limited amount of information about historical events as referenced in it. Thus, scholars spend time seeking to determine if the given text provides the only information about the event, or whether other independent accounts also exist. For this reason four questions are asked:

- (1) Is this the only information about an event?
- (2) Are all existing accounts dependent on one another?
- (3) Do the independent accounts agree on the basic issues?
- (4) Do the independent accounts contain significant disagreements?²³⁹

Obviously, when dealing with a contemporary rather than an ancient author these questions are not of pressing concern, in part because we inhabit the same cultural milieu and instinctively know the answers to many historical questions. What these questions do reveal, however, is how little reference there is in Pinnock's three books to contemporary events. His writings travel along a very narrow stratum of historical intertextuality; in fact, his time references are almost invariably to events that are distantly past such as the early church or the Reformation. From our contemporary perspective, there is a detached characteristic to his works in terms of social and historical events as well as personal allusions, heightening the theoretical aspect of that which he writes about.

Indirectly this lends weight to the "rhetorical" dimension of Pinnock's writings, for the abstract nature of his texts lends strength to his goal of persuasion. There is little or nothing entertaining about his style; almost no storytelling; and his theoretical explorations tend not to

²³⁷ Callen, *Pinnock*, 114.

²³⁸ Callen, *Pinnock*, 114.

²³⁹ Robbins, *Exploring*, 63–64.

invite the reader to draw her or his own conclusions. He is writing at a theoretical level to inform, to argue, and to *convince*.

2. Nature of the Data. Those assessing ancient documents place different levels of trust in different kinds of data. Records of various kinds are deemed more reliable historically than literary accounts with their wide range of rhetorical interests. Robbins lists:

(1) Historical inscriptions, annals, records, and so on.

(2) Literary discourse consisting of literary narration (as in John 20:11, with Mary weeping at Jesus' tomb); epistolary discourse (as in 1 Cor 2:1, Paul's summary of his intent while in Corinth); and speech of a character in a narrative (as in Acts 22:4-5, one of Paul's legal defences). When we apply this prism to Pinnock's material, we find he is not quoting from historical inscriptions; rather, most if not all of his references are drawn from epistolary sources written by other authors. His writings are finely tuned and scalpel-like. He is a very focused writer.

More helpful for our purposes is the following grid provided by Robbins. In order to ascertain better the historical facts, events, and customs outside of Pinnock's texts, this precise formulation of questions is offered. It revolves around the basic axis of plausibility or implausibility.²⁴⁰

(1) *People, places, and institutions: positive evidence outside of Pinnock's sources, or no evidence?*

In BRev 71 the few outside references that Pinnock makes include the "Heilsgeschichte" school of biblical interpretation, *sola scriptura* and by implication the Reformation, Bultmann and the New Hermeneutic, and pietism (which at that point he dismisses as a movement that ended up "discarding Scripture as the necessary creative source of faith").²⁴¹ ScPr 84 likewise makes little mention of historical data outside the text. Pinnock

²⁴⁰ Robbins, *Exploring*, 64–66.

²⁴¹ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 225.

does refer to Origen, Irenaeus, and Docetism; to the Enlightenment (with Kant and Schleiermacher); to secular modernity, forms of biblical criticism, and to religious liberalism. By far and away, however, he focuses on the writings of other authors. By the time of his writing of FoL 96, one notices more mention of church fathers, and more references to other Christian traditions (like the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church²⁴² and especially Eastern Orthodoxy). John Wesley appears more often too, especially as concerns his view of prevenient grace.

(2) *Events: positive evidence outside Pinnock's texts, no evidence, or historically implausible evidence?*

Current events seldom figured at all in BRev 71. One of the few events that receives specific mention in ScPr 84 is World War I, and the rise of neoorthodoxy thereafter. Pinnock also mentions the rise of Nazism when referring to the context to which Barth reacted in at least one of his theological positions. An even more contemporary reference is an aside about terrorism, made in his critique of predestinarian thinking. "My difficulty with both these groups is that they think opportunistically. They want to be able to appeal to strong divine causality when it suits them (e.g., to secure a perfect Bible) but not when it doesn't (e.g., when a madman blows up an airplane). But one can only be permitted to do this if one admits that thinking consistently is not very important."²⁴³

Another "event" that could perhaps be listed under "persons" is that of C. S. Lewis' *Chronicles of Narnia*. (Lewis and his books have had a huge impact on Western evangelicals since the 1950s, making him perhaps the most popular author in such circles during the late twentieth century.) Pinnock's reference to Lewis' story of the land of Narnia is actually used to strengthen and illustrate Pinnock's position on salvation for those who have not explicitly heard the gospel--possibly the only story to which Pinnock refers in the span of his books.

²⁴² Pinnock, *Flame*, 124.

²⁴³ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 102. Also mentioned in the 2006 edition on p. 129.

(3) *Customs: positive evidence outside Pinnock's texts, or historically implausible evidence?*

Talk of customs does not surface in BRev 71, and in ScPr 84 is limited to brief mentions of the ancient Mediterranean worldview, illustrated by an image-rich quote from Shirley Jackson Case: "The sky hung low in the ancient world. Traffic was heavy on the highway between heaven and earth. All nature was alive with supernatural forces."²⁴⁴

Pinnock likewise makes some references to Jewish beliefs at the time of Jesus.

FoL 96 provides a brief nod to a contemporary debate in Western theological circles, namely, the gender of the Holy Spirit. Pinnock mentions that "spirit" is feminine in Hebrew and Syriac, neuter in Greek, and masculine in Latin (influencing English usage). He then goes on to deal with the strengths and weaknesses of the feminine address of Spirit, choosing to stay with the traditional model. However, a reader will quickly notice that Pinnock often uses "Spirit" (and "Father") as a name of personal address, like "Jesus," rather than objectifying the word by speaking of "the" Spirit.²⁴⁵

When Pinnock's use of Scripture references are compared and graphed across his books the pattern that emerges for each book is almost identical. In other words, he returns to the same Bible books as he writes work after work, favouring some sections of the Old and New Testament but not others. Several features stand out in this pattern. First, there is a successive increase in his use of verses from each book as his three books progress. His references from certain Bible books in BRev 71 increase in ScPr 84, then peak in FoL 96.

Second, as we assess *Flame of Love*, we notice that biblical references used here are not so much an exception to the usual pattern as an amplification thereof. Below are the references Pinnock uses, with the references listed per Bible book. Notice how his use of material in FoL 96, compared to the other books, soars for Luke, John, Acts, Romans, and 1

²⁴⁴ Pinnock *Scripture* (1984), 149.

²⁴⁵ Pinnock, *Flame*, 15-16.

Corinthians. There is something about this mid-section of the New Testament that draws him back again and again as he turns to the Scriptures for support of his argumentation. Third, we also notice that Luke, John, Acts, Romans, and 1 Corinthians (in terms of usage) rank in almost exact chronological order. In the use of biblical references across the span of our books, this is the “well thumbed” section of Pinnock’s Bible.

Table 10

Scriptural References from Luke to 1 Corinthians

	BRev 71	ScPr 84	FoL 96	<i>TOTAL</i>
Luke	21	10	28	59
John	20	21	56	97
Acts	23	24	63	110
Romans	17	21	62	100
1 Corinthians	14	34	63	111

Summary. All of these phenomena, woven seamlessly into the implied author’s voice in Pinnock’s texts, provide insights into the narrative from data outside his texts. They also help us see into the rhetorical nature of Pinnock’s writings, for though he became much more generous and gentle to those of an opposing view, he never ceased to long for a reformation within evangelicalism, and wrote to that end. Though an extensive analysis of the social intertexture is not the goal of this thesis, this brief discussion does highlight just how rich the social intertexture of Pinnock’s books proves to be.²⁴⁶

III. Identification and Assessment of Topoi in Pinnock’s Writings

This section will play the role of a general interpretation and assessment of everything that has been written up to that point, and prepare the reader for the following chapter on

²⁴⁶ Robbins, *Exploring*, 63.

ideological texture. Although it might appear that Pinnock's turn to religious experience would displace the authority of (or significance of) Scripture, this does not happen. In fact, the lexical indicators of this chapter bring us as readers back to the role that Scripture played in Pinnock's work.

A growing conclusion in light of our intertextual probings is this: Pinnock did not abandon contemporary evangelicalism. However, what he sought to do was shift the topos, the seat of argumentation, within it from positivist inerrancy to an expression of religious experience. This can be demonstrated by his use of Scripture references in the books of Luke through 1 Corinthians. His tendency is to track distinct courses through each New Testament book, as he writes BRev 71 through to FoL 96. It seems as though, as his spiritual journey progresses and he authors book after book, he returns to each book of the Bible with fresh eyes, yet using new sets of references in any given book rather than simply reusing the same sets of data again and again. He appears to approach the same biblical material from a new seat of argumentation.

For example, a close comparison can be made between the Scripture references used by Pinnock from Luke through 1 Corinthians. By means of an Excel spreadsheet a table can be made with the total references listed vertically per Bible book, and horizontally by each of Pinnock's three books (with page numbers). When the data is so arrayed, it allows one to look visually for clusters in which all the Pinnock books use the same given verse or chapter of a biblical book, or on the other hand in which one book draws exclusively from a biblical book which is ignored by Pinnock's other writings.

Luke. We note, using this method, that in FoL 96 most of the references are drawn from Lukan texts not used in the other two books. Only one reference, Luke 10:21, is shared between FoL 96 and BRev 71 of all the texts Pinnock used from Luke in both books. When comparing the other books to each other, we find that BRev 71 and ScPr 84 share three

clusters of references from Luke;²⁴⁷ ScPr 84 and FoL 96 overlap with references that cluster in Luke 1 and 14; while, as just noted, there is little shared use of Lukan texts between BRev 71 and FoL 96.²⁴⁸

John. In all of his books, in terms of his use of references, Pinnock shows familiarity with John from chs. 1-12; then focuses on 14-17, and 20-21. These provide the backbone to his use of this Gospel, while other references are scattered throughout John. Comparing Pinnock's books to each other, there are four Johannine verses that are shared between BRev 71 and FoL 96.²⁴⁹ When comparing both BRev 71 and ScPr 84 with FoL 96, an interesting insight emerges. Pinnock references texts in John, chs. 2-4, 14, and 17 far more in FoL 96 than in the other books, drawing on Johannine material that he does not use in his other two books; for example, in ScPr 84, John 17 receives no attention whatsoever, and only scant attention is paid to ch. 20.

What is going on here? Let us take an overview of these chapters. Consider that John 2 includes the wedding at Cana in Galilee where Jesus turned water into wine, and Jesus' clearing of the temple; ch. 3 includes Nicodemus' late night visit to Jesus, and ch. 4 concerns the Samaritan woman, and Jesus' healing of the official's son. All are narrative in nature, rather than stylistically didactic. Then in chs. 14-17, we find Jesus bequeathing his last words to his beloved disciples on the eve of his murder. These passages are intensely personal, and an intimate reflection of the heart of our Lord. Interpreting them is a world away from treating them like raw factual apologetic material (comprehensible without interpretation, from a positivist point of view) drawn from Romans, for example. As we learn elsewhere in this thesis, these texts from John lend themselves more readily to rhetography than they do to rhetoric, and are therefore a different style of rhetoric.

²⁴⁷ Found in chs. 4, 11, and 24

²⁴⁸ The exception is Luke 10:21, and ch. 24 (which all four books draw from).

²⁴⁹ John 1:14, 18; 15:26-27; 16:13-14; and 17:3.

Acts. First, all three books by Pinnock use material which overlaps three times.²⁵⁰ Second, when we consider each book individually, we find that ScPr 84 uses chs. 6-8 in Acts much more than the others; FoL 96 makes far more use of chs. 2 and 9-10 in Acts; and ScPr 84 and FoL 96 cluster several references around chs. 13-16. We mention this to make the following point: a completely different use of texts separates BRev 71 from FoL 96 (their only overlap is Luke 2:1). Though Pinnock uses almost every chapter of Acts,²⁵¹ we note that distinct tracks emerge in his use of their reference material. It is as though with each new writing project he finds a separate reference trail through the book of Acts.

Romans. The three Pinnock books cluster their references in chs. 1; 3; and 15:4-19. As well, FoL 96 draws extensively from chs. 4-6, and also makes extensive use of ch. 8. Only BRev 71 draws from ch. 9, while ScPr 84 uses chs. 10-11. The only points of convergence between BRev 71 and FoL 96 are Rom 1:4 and 8:16. The only points of convergence between FoL 96 and ScPr 84 are 5:12 and 8:16. And interestingly, the only points of convergence between BRev 71 and ScPr 84 are 3:2; 8:16; and 15:4. Each book draws differently from Romans, for of 100 references (at least) to Romans in all three books, the above references provide the only overlap. Now, this could indicate that Pinnock is very familiar with Romans and ranges across the book freely. It still leaves us asking though, "Why?" What do the references that are unique to FoL highlight? Is there a change of topos to be discovered in BRev 71's use of Romans, vis-à-vis the later ScPr 84's use? We will return to these questions and others shortly in order to probe deeper into the implications of Pinnock's use of material from this biblical book.

1 Corinthians. Comparing the three Pinnock books, we find material clustered in chs. 1; 2; and 15. Only FoL 96 uses ch. 6,²⁵² while ScPr 84 favours chs. 7 to 11:5. BRev 71 makes far less use of 1 Corinthians than the other two books, and FoL 96 uses 1 Corinthians far

²⁵⁰ Drawn from chs. 1; 4:8-35; and 17.

²⁵¹ He does not, however, use chs. 11-12; 18; 21-23; and 25.

²⁵² FoL 96 also uses chs. 12 to 13:7, and 14 to 15:5.

more. Surprisingly, for all the references found in ScPr 84 and FoL 96 from 1 Corinthians, these two books only share verses nine times in common. Whereas BRev 71 and ScPr 84 share seven out of the ten references that BRev 71 uses from 1 Corinthians, only three verses are shared between Pinnock's first book, BRev 71, and his later book, FoL 96.²⁵³ The dissimilarity between each book's tracks through 1 Corinthians as Pinnock's writings progress across the decades is marked.

Coincidentally, we note that the two passages from 1 Corinthians common to all three of Pinnock's books provide a fitting summary of his theological themes: the life-giving work of the Holy Spirit, and the historical resurrection of Jesus. 1 Cor 2:14 (New International Version) reads, "The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned." And 1 Cor 15:17 reads, "And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins."

It appears, as the references in Luke through 1 Corinthians are charted and probed, that we might have support here for a theory that will be tested in the next chapter of this thesis. That is, that over the span of his books Pinnock moves to a new rhetorolect (as a means of convincing the reader) which in nature is meditative rather than apologetic; irenic and wooing rather than argumentative and logical; and aesthetic, sensuous, and humanistic rather than rational. Might that rhetorolect be "wisdom"?

A. Pinnock and Topoi in the Book of Romans

Pinnock's references to the Letter to the Romans can be used as a kind of measure to assess what has gone forward. We note that, as modelled by Bloomquist's reading of Paul in the next paragraph, an entirely new relation to readers is identified. Something happened in

²⁵³ All books use 1 Cor 2:14; 15:14; and 15:17--the only point of overlap between BRev 71 and FoL 96.

the depths of Pinnock's own self-understanding that changed his world; as a result, fuller dimensions of the scriptural world rose before him.

Pinnock references Romans 89 times in his three books. When each of those references is located in the appropriate Pinnock book, a summary can be made and listed in an Excel table (along with the references taken from the book of Romans per Pinnock book). At a glance, this provides an overview with which to explore the differing seats of argument he uses as he reads the referenced data, for movement from one centre of argumentation to another is evidence of a shift in topoi.

To begin, we will create a contrast to Pinnock's handling of biblical material by turning to an article by Bloomquist entitled "Paul's Inclusive Language: The Ideological Texture of Romans 1." Here we have a rhetorically sophisticated analysis of Rom 1:16-32 using Paul's interplay of topoi as he presents his argument for this section of Romans. The first topos (or "landscape" or particular mental picture) for his Jewish readers concerned the Gentiles. This topos depended on a Jewish cultural understanding that assumed a special relationship between God and Israel, and between no other people. In light of this topos, "for a Jew dishonour and defilement would customarily have been the result of regular contact with the Gentiles." In contrast Paul's own experience of living with Gentiles was profoundly different, specifically in Rome.²⁵⁴ Such cultural involvement by Paul with Gentiles would likely have been construed by Jews who held to this cultural landscape as a matter of dishonour. For them Paul's actions (even in "an emotion-fused way") among the Gentiles could only logically bring him dishonour, and impoverish him as a person.²⁵⁵

The second topos speaks of dishonour: "Because I do not see myself as dishonored because of the gospel." (Rom 1:16) This gospel probably means "the announcement of

²⁵⁴ L. Gregory Bloomquist, "Paul's Inclusive Language: The Ideological Texture of Romans 1," in *Fabrics of Discourse: Essays in Honor of Vernon K. Robbins*, eds. David B. Gowler, L. Gregory Bloomquist, and Duane F. Watson (Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 2003), 178.

²⁵⁵ Bloomquist, "Paul," 179.

significant life-changing action on the part of God.”²⁵⁶ Yet culturally-speaking this proclamation could be perceived as dishonouring if it took the form of a dishonoured crucified messiah on a cross. Also, it could be perceived as dishonouring within Jewish culture if it linked with the “Gentile” topos (unless, within this setting, it were kept in a Jewish cultural context). However, to proclaim such a gospel publicly as a great liberating act toward those who clearly do not deserve it--and who in fact caused the dishonour--was nothing less than scandal. Yet Paul, by weaving these two topoi together, argues that such a gospel portrays God’s glory and his righteousness, yet is evident only to those who “believe.”²⁵⁷

Now, contrast this depth of discovery by Bloomquist of the rhetorical currents underlying a range of verses in Romans with Pinnock’s handling of verses from the same book.²⁵⁸ We immediately notice that Pinnock tends to use each individual verse as a separate disconnected unit of thought in support of his greater theological argument, with little mention of context. The result is a certain one-dimensionality to his treatment of the biblical material, for his emphasis is not on the deeper rhetorical movements within a given textual unit, but on the face-value reading of the verse (what Ricoeur would call a “naive” reading). Though his awareness of Scripture is broad and deep, and his scholarly thought is certainly informed by it, he tends to quote from the Bible in an “illustrative” manner as he writes. One has the impression that as he writes, verses come to mind which are exemplary of what he is trying to say, and so he weaves them into the text he is writing. Yet he is not proof-texting,

²⁵⁶ That action could be understood “thaumaturgically (e.g., a bodily healing), conversionally (e.g., a life-direction-changing reality), apocalyptically (e.g., a cataclysmic or catastrophic series of events that changes a person, community, nation, or world), utopianly (e.g., the creation of a new ‘space’ and ‘time’ for a people to flourish), or some other way.” Bloomquist, “Paul,” 179.

²⁵⁷ Bloomquist, “Paul,” 180.

²⁵⁸ As we ponder the difference identified between what Bloomquist wrote above on Paul and his outreach to the Gentiles (and, more broadly, humanity), and what is being affirmed of Pinnock, is it possible that Paul’s openness to the Gentiles (his “weaving these two topoi together”) was in direct relation to the depth he saw in the “person” of Christ? Notice how, as seen in the progression of Pinnock’s thought, our analytic of sociorhetorical investigation hints at the rhetorical layering that unfolded in Paul’s developing corpus, too.

for he does show an awareness of context. It is rather that he does not go deeper for meaning into a textual unit than its face-value in his appeal for support of the particular theological argument he is crafting. That theological argument is his rhetorical priority.

As Pinnock's thought progresses from *Biblical Revelation* through *The Scripture Principle* to *Flame of Love*, one can observe in his use of references from Romans how his seat of argumentation shifts. He works from a different centre (topos) as each of his books progresses.

Biblical Revelation. Through Pinnock's use of Romans in BRev 71 we see a topos centred in inerrancy, that is, the factual objectivity of God's redemptive acts (Rom 1:4) as recorded in Scripture, a divine oracle which is God-authored. Yes, biblical writers demonstrated their personalities through their writings, but (for Pinnock at this point) any exposure of the limitations and inaccuracies of their worldviews (and, hence, writings) is tantamount to "error" in the text. Rather, because written language is "objective," it serves as an extension of the modality of the divine speaking, including even single words (15:4). The Spirit then creates faith "through" the indications or evidences of its errorless extrasubjective truth as the grounds of faith (8:16). (This is fitting evidence, by the way, for what Barth qualified as the insidious creep of "natural theology and secularism"; 195). A second dimension of this primary topos is God's all-powerfulness and judgment. His power vanquishes every foe (1:16), for his anger rests on those who do not obey the truth (1:18-19). Paul in Romans uses the language of imprecatory psalms to indict God's enemies (3:10-18), and any discomfort on our part with his use of such psalms actually speaks to the relativity of our age (9:22).

We also have in BRev 71 a foretaste of Pinnock's future "orthodox" career as a theologian. He argues that *the* characteristic of the teaching office in the church is "faithfulness," that is, serving as a steward of the mysteries of God (Rom 12:7).²⁵⁹ This

²⁵⁹ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 144.

faithfulness Pinnock strived to demonstrate throughout his long decades of writing and teaching of theology. We can affirm that he never veered from this path, always choosing to root himself at the centre of historic biblical truth as understood by the church universal.

The Scripture Principle. Here is a critical moment in the rhetoric of Pinnock. The centre of his argumentation visibly changes, as evidenced by his use of Romans. Whereas in BRev 71 God's anger is on all who disobey (Rom 1:18-19), Pinnock now stresses, using the same verses, God's *presence* to all people (as Maker), a witness that is inescapable (1:19). While continuing to affirm Scripture as indeed God's oracle (3:2), and Adam's historicity, Pinnock emphasizes now that Adam serves more as an etiological paradigm for all of humanity (5:12). These are indications of a shift to a topos that is relational: Pinnock now reads the Bible as a covenant document, as a text with the goal of leading people to know and love God in light of the Christ event (15:4). He relies now on an integrative hermeneutic that waits for the text being studied to disclose itself in a holistic manner in relation with the rest of the canon, a community-based reading that respects the weaker brother (14:1). He acknowledges a subjectivity in believing whereby God gives an inward revelation of the truth and certainty of his revelation to the reading community (and, hence, the individual), through Spirit who makes the Christ action historically and existentially effective (8:16). We see Pinnock now grappling with God's severity (especially in the Old Testament) in light of contemporary concerns, rather than holding God's wrath over sinners as a threat, as earlier done (11:22). Indeed, even 2 Tim 3:16 is no longer deemed to argue for inerrancy, but rather for the practical profitability of Scripture to the reader (16:26-27). Between 1971 and 1984, Pinnock's use of Romans indicates that the lens through which he reads Scripture has altered radically, especially concerning his understanding of the reading subject, and religious experience.

Flame of Love. Here the relational topos broadens rather than shifts, to include (from Pinnock's perspective) a true religious experience of representation and solidarity. Jesus'

historical resurrection is in solidarity with humanity (Rom 1:4). Yes, legal satisfaction of God's anger is linked with Christ's death (3:25), but by his death and resurrection Jesus especially recapitulated humanity's history (4:25). Salvation involves transformation through union with God (chs. 5-6), and the goal of salvation is theosis (5:1-2). In other words, Christ's life reverses the human "no" (5:10). Also, Jesus now pours--representatively--the love of God into our hearts experientially (5:5) by the Holy Spirit. Hence, atonement speaks primarily of a loving relationality with God, with Spirit drawing us in (5:11). Rather than fundamentally a legal transaction, Christ's work is being portrayed by Pinnock as a spiritual power event that grants life for death (5:12).

As he reads Romans Pinnock is now comfortable understanding the Spirit as working (at least occasionally) in the religious dimension of cultural life (8:9). Because sinners can genuinely respond to grace (with Arminian implications), Calvinism's "irresistible grace" is not required (7:24-25). The Spirit's universal presence can woo and apply that prevenient grace--and does--to any human in any age (5:18). Humanity (including world religions) is destined not for wrath but for salvation (11:32). Matter is becoming spirit, marching not into entropy but resurrection (8:22). Romans is now read as a book that teaches a culmination of grace in human history; a book that is optimistic rather than pessimistic about humanity's future (5:17).

However, speaking realistically, in this present world the path to Christ-likeness is a long gradual journey (13:14). For unlike with Abraham and his son Isaac, God let his incarnate Son die on a cross, and thus welcomed suffering into the centre of the triune life (8:32). As a result, in this broken world we now have the privilege and grounds of calling out for God's healing. Though we recognize that it is temporary, nonetheless healing comes through a prayer that simply invites Father into the problem with one's physical body (14:8). In the midst of the wreckage of this world, Spirit gives hope; he opens the future by realizing God's goals for history now (15:13).

IV. Concluding Thoughts concerning Intertextural

In contrast then to the sociorhetorical analysis offered by Bloomquist of the first chapter of Romans, the impetus for the shift in topoi in Pinnock's books is found somewhere other than in his exegetical treatment of the biblical material. Methodologically his handling of scriptural data stays the same in all three of his books from 1971 through to 1996. The critical moment in the change in topoi can be graphed like this:

<i>BRev 71</i>	<i>ScPr</i>	<i>FoL 96</i>
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Intertextural evidence indicates that Pinnock's shift in topoi happened during the years between *Biblical Revelation* in 1971 and *The Scripture Principle* in 1984. (It is important to note that Pinnock first became involved in the charismatic movement, and had a powerful spiritual experience which he attributed to the Holy Spirit, in the late 1960s. *ScPr* 84 was written approximately fifteen years after that initial experience.) Our intertextural investigation suggests that the centre of his argumentation lies somewhere outside his reading of the scriptural text, for throughout all the books, it is as though Pinnock uses biblical texts as a platform to make a theological point. His arguments do not seem to flow from the texts, but rather the texts are illustrative of his arguments. We suggest, given our findings in the earlier section entitled "Oral-Scribal Intertexture" (159), that such a change was precipitated by theology, and linked integrally with Pinnock's personal spiritual experience during the 1970s. As an outworking of those changes, he then began to read Scripture differently.

Following *BRev 71*, with its emphasis on extrasubjective truth and grammatical certainty, one can see Pinnock transition first in his understanding of the phenomenon of Scripture, moving to a topos that is relational and sensitive to the experiences of the reading subject (*ScPr* 84); then broaden out into a religious experience of Spirit-infused theology via representation and solidarity, stressing the rhetorical edges of presence, power, love, and universal redemption in *FoL 96*.

But which comes first: his charismatic renewal, and then his theological shift; or vice versa? It was in Barth that Pinnock found such a challenge to, and grounds for, his then existing “determinative hierarchical preeminence,” which led to a change in topos to interiority, through the suggestion of a pneumatology that starts with the individual. Yet material external to our selected books suggests that it was personal experience which fomented the *openness* to a critical moment of change. A result of such openness was a new topos through which he then read Scripture to confirm his changed point of view, which compelled a turn to entirely new sets of biblical references, even when using the same biblical material as earlier.

By way of example, consider Pinnock’s use of “authority,” and his commitment to Arminianism as a theological lens. We noticed the “lack of the word ‘authority’ in FoL 96” (211). Yet at the same time, Pinnock began to appreciate that Scripture is “best interpreted within the bosom of the Church” (181). He came to appreciate the Spirit’s authority to lead his church, and the legitimacy of religious experience when fused with the authority of revelation “based in historical fact” (194). He also “wholeheartedly embraced Arminianism and let the chips fall where they may” (209). Perhaps we witness here not a rejection but a transposition of “authority” for Pinnock, resulting in his greater appreciation for the role of the historic church in not only interpreting, but complementing the Scripture’s authority. As a result, he turned rather to the Love which woos and draws those loved; offering those who resist the right to do so, yet persistently calling even them into a new lifestyle in which all is sacrificed to please the One loved.

Summary. The aim of this fourth chapter was to draw on the intertextual feature of socio-rhetorical investigation in order to identify, trace and comment on the basic shifts that have occurred in Pinnock’s work. These shifts have been strategically identified on pages 209-14 and elsewhere with regard to “cultural echoes.” They consist of the movement from a more literal (judicial/inerrancy) approach to the biblical text to one that makes room for the

response of the reader (i.e., religious experience; 87, 159, 170, 191-92) to a further shift, *based on this pivot of experience*, that enlarges the horizon of meaning from the biblical text to the wider cosmic and historical references (social Trinity, creation, reconciliation, etc.). The final section of this chapter then relates these results to those developed in Ch. 3 in order to show how both chapters mutually support and re-enforce this reading of Pinnock's work and its development. Certain key lemmas (as noted in Ch. 3) highlight the rhetorical movement in Pinnock's books, confirming our summary above. Such rhetorical movement also confirms the goal of this thesis, which is to conduct "A sociorhetorical analysis of Clark H. Pinnock's hermeneutical approach to biblical materials, with particular attention to the role of religious experience." We suggest that, in our intertextual analysis, we have detected just such a movement.

Though this will be further explored in Ch. 5, "Ideology," we tentatively offer the genre of "wisdom" to describe Pinnock's new rhetorolectical perspective. He never abandoned his commitment to the Scripture principle in its historical classical sense. Why not? A critical phrase is found in Ch. 3, "Inner Texture"; namely, "the Spirit's working is not to the exclusion of the text of Scripture, but rather in conjunction with it" (90). We also concluded in Ch. 3 that there was "no evidence ... Pinnock had abandoned all the theological scaffolding" (94) which characterized *Biblical Revelation* in 1971. It appears that Pinnock found room to continue holding to classic theology due to his uncovering of the broader implications of the Spirit's role in revelation, soteriology, and spiritual experience. It appears that *Flame of Love* took for granted the "Scripture principle," and then reflected on what in fact was at the origin of that commitment. Such reflection would account for its completely different type of vocabulary and style, and why it appears on the surface to abandon much of the earlier terms of vocabulary used in BRev 71 and ScPr 84.²⁶⁰ Note in Ch. 2 how this is

²⁶⁰ For example, on p. 100 of Ch. 3, where textual evidence indicates that the use of "experience(s)" is noticeably different in FoL 96, where its 153 occurrences correlates "either with the Holy Spirit's relation to the other persons of the Trinity (Ch. 2, "Spirit & Trinity") or to humans' union with the Holy Spirit (Ch. 5)

exactly what was referred to in the context of the development of topoi, where Robbins reminded us that they “reside at the base of enthymemes, since topoi function persuasively in descriptive and explanatory discourse on the basis of pattern recognition”²⁶¹ (67). That may be why new emphases emerge in FoL 97 not normally associated with spiritual experience in Pinnock’s other books; and why it does not refer as much as his earlier texts to “authority” or “tradition.” It is a different genre. This also helps us to understand the surprise expressed in Ch. 3 (93) with respect to some of the lexical markers regarding “authorit*” and “tradit*.” (For more rhetorical analysis, see “C. Contemporary Topoi in Pinnock’s Three Books,” 254.)

So, what does this mean? We suggest that in Pinnock’s case religious experience refined and deepened the socio-rhetorical scheme to give it a more multi-layered look. Hence, our rhetorical insights into recurrent themes such as evangelicalism, Arminianism, community, and Pinnock’s earlier Calvinistic background come back into play in a new light. We do not just have a text or texts, but a community of readers. Granted, texts played an important role in Pinnock’s life. We just noted (230) that “Our intertextual investigation suggests that the centre of his argumentation lies somewhere outside his reading of the scriptural text,” and in Ch. 3 that there was “no evidence ... Pinnock had abandoned all the [previous] theological scaffolding” (94). Yet there is a consistency here in meaning. We have a community of readers in which Pinnock finds himself that is always negotiating the world of the text with the Scriptures (in *Flame of Love*, for instance, Trinitarian love). He seems to have discovered, or rediscovered, that the Scriptures cannot be read apart from that historic community of readers, especially when it is referenced as the “church.”

It seems that Pinnock could only have deepened his spiritual experience and his more universal perspective by deepening his commitment to the scriptural texts as revelatory texts.

through the sacraments and charisms.”

²⁶¹ Robbins, *Invention*, 83.

Consider, for example, how the resurrection played an integral role for him.²⁶² Clearly, in this chapter and in the Addendum, his change in spiritual experience and universal outlook are set within his shift from a Logos Christology to a Spirit Christology (336). Is it not also possible, however, that he developed a greater facility for reading the biblical texts through the lens of tradition because of his growing trust in the revelatory power of Scripture?

We noted that Pinnock “never ceased to long for a reformation within evangelicalism, *and wrote to that end*” (italics added, 220). Whereas earlier we described the social/cultural context of Pinnock’s texts as “centred on his role as scholar and professor” (212), might we not be wiser, given our conclusions above, to include in that description “prophet and reformer”? After all, rhetoric seeks to change, does it not? And good rhetoric shows us how.

²⁶² See in this chapter pp. 138, 170-71, 237.

Addendum 2: Emergence of Topoi in Intertexture

Scientific analysis has profoundly shaped the world of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. This impact cannot be overlooked as we assess the oral-scribal and cultural intertextures woven into Pinnock's rhetoric, and our search for the topoi that moulded this argumentation. This means that the insights offered by Robbins and others into the rhetorical intertextures of the ancient Mediterranean world need to be complemented and completed by an analysis of today's scientific--and global--realities, especially in the West. Following is a brief sketch of the rhetorological context of our age.

A. Finding a Rhetorical Way into Modern Scientific Analysis

In light of our research to date, and by means of insights from scholars who explore the nature of scientific analysis, we offer a tentative profile of the oral-scribal and cultural intertextures at play in the contemporary setting of Pinnock's authorial world.

1. Overview of the Philosophy of Ancient Greek Scientific Thought. Charles B. Thaxton provides a helpful summary of the ancient Greek perspective on science. It was an age when nature was deemed a living organism, imbued with the attributes of divinity (in that it was self-revealing), final causes, and divine purposes. It was not created, but eternal and self-existent. Hence, it was by the *mind* that humans apprehended these purposes within nature, through deductive reasoning which led to the apprehension of axioms and principles, and then to all particular truths. Classical Greeks therefore turned to builders of systems for knowledge of nature and reality (ex., "Euclid in geometry, Galen in anatomy, Ptolemy in astronomy, Plato and Aristotle in philosophy, etc."). Sensory experience did not lead to new knowledge; it only provided illustrations already known through reason--and thus was distrusted. Even the pre-Socratics tended toward a science of nature that was not

experimental.²⁶³

As late as the twelfth century C.E., European philosophers shaped by the thought of Plato argued and taught that the senses were deceitful, for truth was arrived at only by reason²⁶⁴ (which is why modern science did not start in the early days of Christianity).²⁶⁵ The medieval church in turn co-opted and adapted the ancient Greek model for their service by subordinating material reality to ideals; “what must be” was more important than “what is”; forms and essences comprised reality, not material things.²⁶⁶

“The medieval world picture inherited from the Greeks was that of a vast hierarchy of beings extending from the deity in the empyrean heaven at the outer edge of the universe, through a graded series of angels inhabiting the ten concentric crystalline spheres surrounding the central earth, to the levels of human beings, animals, and plants on the earth itself, which formed the system’s cosmic center.” There was also a difference in movement. The terrestrial domain (earth, air, fire, and water) moved rectilinearly down toward the centre of the earth, having a beginning and an end; while the heavenly domain (above the moon) “was composed of a more perfect fifth essence and possessed eternal circular motion.” According to ancient mechanics, it was intelligence (angels, in the eyes of the medieval church) that rolled the planetary spheres around their courses, for motion was due only to a constantly applied push. This was not a difficult task for angels, for the planets were light, due to their construction from the fifth essence. As a result, this worldview provided human beings in the Middle Ages a cosmic sense of their own importance, for they were at the centre of the cosmos.²⁶⁷

It took a different paradigm, however, to move people away from Aristotle’s notion of a constantly applied mover and a world of ideals. In late medieval Christianity, the

²⁶³ Charles B. Thaxton, “A Dialogue with ‘Prof’ on Christianity and Science,” in *God and Culture: Essays in Honor of Carl F. H. Henry*, eds. D. A. Carson and John D. Woodbridge (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1993), 284.

²⁶⁴ Thaxton, “Dialogue,” 285.

²⁶⁵ Thaxton, “Dialogue,” 284.

²⁶⁶ Thaxton, “Dialogue,” 285.

²⁶⁷ Thaxton, “Dialogue,” 285.

dissemination of the Old and New Testaments in people's own languages (and the renewed study of them) placed a premium on the material world as good, real, and substantial. Sensory experience was therefore concluded as legitimate. It was rediscovered in the Bible, for example, that Moses validated the Ten Commandments by referring to the "voice" that the people had *heard* (Deut 5:23). An empirical test was offered to identify a false prophet (Deut 18:22). The letter of 1 John was introduced by its author with an empirical emphasis: we have heard, seen, and touched (1:1). And Jesus invited his disciples to touch him and see, following his resurrection (Luke 24:39).²⁶⁸

"So it was the perceived *fact* of creation, not merely the doctrine about it, that was the key to understanding how belief in creation influenced the rise of modern science." The Christian doctrine that nature is created began to be taken seriously in late medieval science, rather than authority *per se*.²⁶⁹ As a result, early scientists relied more on observation, using the five senses and experimentation, than on a priori reasoning. Yet authority was a part of this, for it was belief in God, and the Bible as derived from him, that "allowed them to rely on experience as a better authority with regard to nature than the words of Aristotle, the priest, or even interpretations of the Bible." Disputes between nature and some biblical verses used to support the ancient, Pythagorean, animistic, Aristotelian world view could be settled by going to nature, according to Galileo.²⁷⁰ Along with Galileo and Kepler,²⁷¹ others emerged with empirical sightings to refute the Aristotelian model, scientists such as Copernicus and Tycho Brahe. Then came Newton, and his work banished the almost two thousand year reign of the Aristotelian terrestrial/celestial dichotomy.²⁷²

2. Rise of Modern Scientific Method. With the move from the ancient Greek philosophy of science to empirical sightings, methods of exposition were developed with an aim to set forth a subject with arguments to convince the reader of the desirability or truth of

²⁶⁸ Thaxton, "Dialogue," 286.

²⁶⁹ Thaxton, "Dialogue," 287.

²⁷⁰ Thaxton, "Dialogue," 289.

something. Such exposition involved description and narration, and an appeal to the imagination's ability to re-create an event or object.²⁷³ Brooks and Warren, in *Modern Rhetoric*, outline six methods that comprise contemporary exposition. Fundamental to all six is the role of interest. Because "the question controls the answer," and sharpens the interest that the subject holds for the researcher, it is essential to decide what specific question will control the project. That main question governs the thesis, and in turn can be subdivided into lesser questions.²⁷⁴

Principle One is *identification*, answering the question, "What is it?" With her or his use of identification, "the writer makes a kind of frame or chart in which to locate the item that needs to be identified."²⁷⁵ Principle Two is *comparison and contrast*. Humans instinctively use comparison and contrast to set an unfamiliar object against the familiar.²⁷⁶ When used intentionally, however, it is important to determine the kinds of purpose to be used for the comparison and contrast, plus the area of interest (i.e., the class).²⁷⁷ Principle Three is *illustration*. Unlike comparison and contrast, in which two or more particular items

²⁷¹ Thaxton, "Dialogue," 289–90.

²⁷² Thaxton, "Dialogue," 291.

²⁷³ Brooks and Warren, *Modern*, 61.

²⁷⁴ Brooks and Warren, *Modern*, 62–63.

²⁷⁵ Brooks and Warren, *Modern*, 69.

²⁷⁶ Brooks and Warren, *Modern*, 69–70.

²⁷⁷ There are three kinds of purpose for the comparison or contrast:

- (a) We can inform about one unfamiliar item by relating it to another item familiar to the reader.
- (b) We can inform about both unfamiliar items by relating them to a general principle familiar to the reader.
- (c) We can compare and contrast familiar items to inform about a general unfamiliar principle or idea.

As for the area of interest (the class), the comparison or contrast must occur within a special area of interest; that is, "a group or class that is defined by a special interest brought to the material." See Brooks and Warren, *Modern*, 71.

There are four ways of presenting material, though sometimes there is a mixture of methods:

- (a) Fully present one item, then fully the other, with continuous comparison or contrast between them.
- (b) Present part of one item, then part of the second in relation to the first item, till all relevant parts have been dealt with.
- (c) Present one item fully, then while presenting the second refer, part by part, to the first item.
- (d) Move from a general principle to the process of comparison or contrast; or through the process to the principle. See Brooks and Warren, *Modern*, 73.

in their class of significance to the arguer are set in contrast one to the other, in illustration “we cite the particular item (or items) to clarify the nature of a class in which it is included.”²⁷⁸ With illustration, the particular and its irrelevant qualities play a role, for the interest for the reader “lies in a tension between the relevant and the irrelevant.” Yet as fascinating as the particularities of that item might be, the goal is to relate the particular to the class.²⁷⁹ Though mainly expository, illustration can also describe and narrate; it can be used for humour and satire, and can in its turn employ burlesque and discrepancy.²⁸⁰

Principle Four is *classification*. This is a natural process of bringing order out of experience; it relates a particular item to a class, but by ranging classes from the least inclusive to the most inclusive. Such organizing of knowledge is like a filing system, which leads on to new knowledge. Each class expresses the idea or concept of the qualities that a particular item has in order to belong to that class.²⁸¹ Again, interest is important: the significant characteristics are significant to whom? It is the classifier who determines the basis of classification, but not arbitrarily.²⁸² Principle Five is *definition*. A definition is not of a thing but of a word, setting the limits within which a term can be used. “If we define *cat*, we are telling how to use the word *cat*.”²⁸³ (“Definition,” from Latin, comes from “de” [with relation to] and “finis” [limit].) Even with a synonym, a word that approximates the meaning of another word, if one does not know the synonym one still needs a definition of it.²⁸⁴ So it is that metaphor, which expands meaning by developing new ranges in the literal base, is thus dangerous to definition (for definition seeks to limit the meaning of a word in an acceptable way).²⁸⁵ Principle Six is *analysis*, whereby a thing, person, or idea can be divided into

²⁷⁸ Brooks and Warren, *Modern*, 79.

²⁷⁹ Brooks and Warren, *Modern*, 81.

²⁸⁰ Brooks and Warren, *Modern*, 82–83, 87, 89.

²⁸¹ Brooks and Warren, *Modern*, 90.

²⁸² Brooks and Warren, *Modern*, 92.

²⁸³ Brooks and Warren, *Modern*, 100–1.

²⁸⁴ Brooks and Warren, *Modern*, 101.

²⁸⁵ Brooks and Warren, *Modern*, 113. An important part of a definition is convertibility; that is, a definition is essentially the “to-be-defined” (definiendum) and the “definer” (definiens). The terms are

component parts that are mutually supporting of the structure. Thus, an analysis is only taking place when the one taking things apart recognizes the principle of the relation among the parts.²⁸⁶ It is important to note with analysis that one's interest in the object determines the method used; a chemist and a connoisseur analyze wine according to very differing methods. Also, analysis is not to be confused with classification. For example, if one's focus is chemistry, it is not necessary to place one's mother in a religious, ethnic, or financial classification in order to regard her as a chemical structure.²⁸⁷

3. Shift from Empirical to Paradigmatic Model. So it is that empiricism, the dominant view of science from the seventeenth to mid-twentieth century, found the methods of exposition to be a useful tool. Beginning in the seventeenth century, there was an insistence "to let scientific theorizing be objectively and rationally governed by nature via empirical observation," as confirmed by Galileo, Kepler, and Newton.²⁸⁸ The Baconian view (Francis Bacon, 1561-1626) thus posited:

1. Collecting observational data in a purely objective form, free of all prejudices or prior preferences;

interchangeable, meaning, convertible. For example: slave (to-be-defined) is (=) a human being who is the legal property of another (definer) (p. 101).

Yet a definition can be too broad when the definer is larger than the to-be-defined; i.e., "A slave is a man." And a definer can be smaller than the to-be-defined: "A table is a piece of furniture on which we serve meals." The definer and the to-be-defined have to be the same size; that is, co-terminous (p. 103).

The structure of a definition is part of classification, whereby the subject is set in a class, and its differing characteristics from other items is pointed out. As such, it is a natural process. For example, the definition of species is genus + differentiae (setting one species apart from the others). The to-be-defined equals the definer (p. 104-5).

An extended definition is when, for a complicated concept, a definition serves as the basis for an entire theme. The formula is a frame, using genus, species, and differentiae to make a basis for the development of the discussion. The differentiae may not only be listed, but explained at length (p. 115, 116-17). (Note: The broader scientific ordering is Kingdom > Phylum > Class > Order > Family > Genus > Species.)

²⁸⁶ Brooks and Warren, *Modern*, 130-31.

²⁸⁷ Brooks and Warren, *Modern*, 131.

²⁸⁸ Del Ratzsch, *Science & Its Limits: The Natural Sciences in Christian Perspective* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 17.

2. Organizing the data “in some naturally perspicuous way”, without smuggled presuppositions;

3. Inductively arriving at correct generalizations and explanatory principles out of the organized data.²⁸⁹

Yet as Del Ratzsch points out,

when scientists collect data, they have to have some presuppositions, some idea of what is or what is not going to help this particular study. When they organize their data, they must have some views concerning what goes with what and what goes into what category. And although these views or hypotheses or theories may be suggested by the data, they are not logical consequences of the data. They are the results of creative insights on the part of humans.²⁹⁰

In response to perceived flaws, beginning in the early to the middle part of the twentieth century, these responses were hammered out to maintain the empirical model:

1. *Modern symbolic logic*. Science, including mathematics, “seen as a paradigm instance of rationality,” has to conform to the structure of modern logic.²⁹¹ The *hypothetico-deductive* model argued that from hypotheses about a natural regularity, one can deduce a prediction. If the principle leads to incorrect consequences, then the principle is incorrect. Therefore, the hypothesis is false on purely logical grounds.²⁹²

2. *Empirical element*. Nothing was scientific unless it was empirical or subject to empirical testing. All logic-constrained procedures were to be laid on an empirical foundation.

²⁸⁹ Ratzsch, *Science*, 18.

²⁹⁰ Ratzsch, *Science*, 20.

²⁹¹ Ratzsch, *Science*, 21.

²⁹² Ratzsch, *Science*, 24.

3. *Objectivity*. This could be maintained communally within science. True, individual scientists would fall victim to subjectivity, but the community refused to let the non-objective gain entry.²⁹³ Therefore, the hypothetico-deductive model enshrined tentativeness in the scientific structure; and scientific fact and progress were deemed a neutral process.²⁹⁴

Yet empiricism was not without its challengers. Kant (1724-1804) had already concluded that nature is uniform, which means we can have some idea about any experience we can have; yet, at the same time, with his emphasis on subjective structures within us, and our only access to reality being through our experiences, he argued that we can only *perceive* the external world--in other words, a type of idealism.²⁹⁵

Popper (1902-94) too helped to undermine positivism. He argued that “one could never logically legitimately infer theory from data,” and that induction does not actually exist for there is no particular “logical flow” from particulars to a theory. For example, the ratio of all the tests established to determine a hypothesis measured against all tests not yet attempted in the cosmos is precisely zero. At best, a theory is “probable.”²⁹⁶ The best science could thus do was generate falsifiable theories. By implication, as Popper pointed out, empirical data also has to be falsifiable and vulnerable to rejection by scientists. Yet “scientific theories were supposed to be kept or rejected on the basis of empirical data.” How then did one accept or reject empirical data? His answer was that an element of human choice entered science precisely at this point.²⁹⁷

It was Thomas S. Kuhn, however, with *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962) that “swept hard objectivity, thorough empiricity and rigid rationality to the fringes of science and established humans at the very center of science.”²⁹⁸ Kuhn did so with the notion

²⁹³ Ratzsch, *Science*, 25–26.

²⁹⁴ Ratzsch, *Science*, 26.

²⁹⁵ Ratzsch, *Science*, 39–40.

²⁹⁶ Ratzsch, *Science*, 34.

²⁹⁷ Ratzsch, *Science*, 35.

²⁹⁸ Ratzsch, *Science*, 40–41.

of a *paradigm* (i.e., “that some accepted examples of actual scientific practice--examples which include law, theory, application, and instrumentation together--provide models from which spring particular coherent traditions of scientific research”).²⁹⁹ New paradigms generate new expectations, and invariably anomalies occur. Lesser anomalies may simply be ignored, but should significant anomalies accrue the discipline may enter a crisis state. If so, its adherents first seek for a solution within the old paradigm.³⁰⁰ If no solution is found, and there are no existing resources to deal adequately with the crisis, the old paradigm may be cautiously maintained. However, the crisis may also precipitate a scientific revolution that sweeps away the old paradigm for a new one.³⁰¹ Central to the Kuhnian picture is wholism; that is, there is a unity that determines the nature of the parts themselves. One’s perceptions are shaped by one’s beliefs, expectations, conceptual framework, mindset, and so on. Observers are not passively watching as things outside themselves imprint objective information on their minds. For our rhetorical purposes, then, not just one’s sense organs, but one’s very person is involved in perception within the scientific process.³⁰²

4. Rise of the Visual. Harmon and Gross offer us another rhetorical access point into the nature of modern scientific analysis. These two authors arbitrarily begin the “modern” era in science in the year 1905 (through to the present), with the presentation of Einstein’s first relativity articles.³⁰³ Their criterion is the ensuing change in the nature of modern communicative practices, as reflected in scientific articles, with its move toward components other than words such as pictures, tables, and equations. They argue that such visuals in turn

²⁹⁹ Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1962), 10.

³⁰⁰ Ratzsch, *Science*, 43.

³⁰¹ Ratzsch, *Science*, 44.

³⁰² Ratzsch, *Science*, 45.

³⁰³ Notice that Harmon and Gross’ pinpointing of Einstein’s first relativity articles in 1905 precedes by just a few years Mailloux’s pinpointing of the split within the language arts in the second decade of the 1900s. At the same time that the Newtonian framework was being dismantled (see Thaxton), rhetoric--which offers a solution to the myth of empiricism’s pure objectivity--was being sundered in the university language departments of the U.S.A.

effected communication. While equations reduce nature to its basic regularities, in tables we see data that brings us closer to nature and the laboratory; line and bar graphs depict the relationships among the data; photographs and detailed drawings provide a sensuous experience, which is foundational to all empirical knowledge; and schematics visualize new facts and theories. Hence, the communication today of all original research reflects a common backbone due to the style of the “scientific paper,” with its discrete parts such as Title, Abstract, Results, Discussion, Conclusion and so on. Utility is paramount, for this format allows an interested reader to skip to the salient features. The writing style of these papers is also devoid of the literary effects of poet or novelist. The focus is on impersonality and careful attention to technical details, without attempts to draw in the general reader.³⁰⁴ Although sentences are relatively short and simple, “The flesh-and-blood people doing the research are largely invisible outside their names and institutional affiliations after the title.”³⁰⁵

Harmon and Gross argue that we may be witnessing yet another shift that is underway, with significant rhetorical implications, in the phenomenon of scientific writing as typified by the International Human Genome Sequencing Consortium’s article, “Initial sequencing and analysis of the human genome,” initially released (rather than published) in 2001. Despite the ongoing impact of Gutenberg’s printing success a half-millennium ago, the Consortium’s paper “first went public on the World Wide Web. . . . [which] may very well witness the extinction of the original scientific ‘paper’ appearing in print.”³⁰⁶

Through the span of their book, these two authors build their argument by identifying key scientific illustrations that characterize the nineteenth century, choosing as examples “Boyle’s schematic of his air pump, Hooke’s flea, Perrault’s chameleon, Maria Merian’s

³⁰⁴ Joseph E. Harmon and Alan G. Gross, eds, *The Scientific Literature: A Guided Tour* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007), xxii.

³⁰⁵ Harmon and Gross, *Scientific*, xxiii.

³⁰⁶ Harmon and Gross, *Scientific*, xxiv.

Suriname insects, *Botanical Magazine's* plants, Lambert's Cartesian graph, and Mendeleev's periodic table." These all demonstrate one characteristic: even into the nineteenth century, visuals in the typical scientific article were rare, partly due to the expense of drawing and publishing them. They point out that it is not uncommon at that time to find all the illustrations for an annual volume of a journal bunched together in a slim section at the end. Yet today the scientific article is as much a visual document as it is a verbal document. Indeed, the authors' own research indicates that tables and pictures take up about a quarter of a typical scientific article in the twentieth-century, offering a seamless fusion of words and visuals, with each overcoming the limitations of the other in their explanation of the natural world.³⁰⁷

Another rhetorical characteristic emerges as well. Over the last four centuries, as the quantity of pictures in science has grown, so too has their character. "More and more, they depict not the things of nature and the laboratory by themselves, but theories and data trends." Reference is made to Martin Rudwick, who in *History of Science* argues that from 1760 to 1840, drawings of nature depicting geology became ever more theory-based, what he calls "highly abstract statements in a visual language." The trend continues to grow, for today's pictures used in science are steeped in theory; consider, for example, visual depictions of the formation of the earth, how the subatomic world behaves, how a key biological molecule is structured, how life originated on earth, or how one maps the universe.³⁰⁸

As well, another characteristic of modern visuals is the preponderance of Cartesian graphs and tables of data. This is due to increased quantifications, for instruments and methods for measuring and calculating properties continue to multiply. "Both tables and graphs overcome the limitations of the verbal in conveying relationships among and within

³⁰⁷ Harmon and Gross, *Scientific*, 152.

³⁰⁸ Harmon and Gross, *Scientific*, 153.

complex arrays of data.” Whereas written languages depict numbers in linear sequences that are not easily compared, Harmon and Gross highlight how graphs and tables guide the eye with their alignment, horizontal and vertical lines, and their use of white space. The same applies in the twentieth century to the increased use of equations. They function as “a visual shorthand for communicating mathematical relationships among physical, chemical, or biological properties.” Such strings of numbers and symbols are able to capture concisely what words could only clumsily describe. For a classic example, one need look no further than to the formula of him who began the modern era, Einstein’s “ $E = mc^2$.”³⁰⁹

B. The Rhetorical Context of the Modern Scientific Age

In light of our brief analysis above, we venture to make some observations about the rhetorological world in which Pinnock wrote.

1. Potential for Shifting Paradigms. Should further evidence be needed to support Kuhn’s hypothesis of how scientific paradigms shift, consider how the scientific community is currently abuzz with a report of tentative findings that challenge Einstein’s absolute for the speed of light. In the autumn of 2011, an “experiment, known as OPERA, found that the particles produced at CERN near Geneva arrived at the Gran Sasso Laboratory in Italy some 60 nanoseconds earlier than the speed of light allows.”³¹⁰ It is not an understatement to say that, as the data is challenged, and ongoing tests seek to replicate and further refine the data, the world’s scientists hold their collective breath.

2. Separation of Divine and Matter. This has been an age characterized by a chasm between the divine and matter with its ensuing despair; that is, we are speaking of modernity’s deep conviction that the theistic God cannot be fused with the scientific realm.

³⁰⁹ Harmon and Gross, *Scientific*, 153.

³¹⁰ “Faster-Than-Light Neutrino Puzzle Claimed Solved by Special Relativity,” see Blogs > The Physics arXiv Blog, *Technology Review (Published by MIT)*, 14 October 2011, Accessed 21 Dec. 2011, [Http://www.technologyreview.com/blog/arxiv/27260/?p1=blogs](http://www.technologyreview.com/blog/arxiv/27260/?p1=blogs).

Thaxton argues that it was none other than Newton who inadvertently precipitated this conclusion. The emerging scientific world view took root, not in ancient Babylon, China, or India, but in medieval Europe because the seeds for materialism were sown by Newton--who, ironically, was trying to understand God's omnipresence. For Newton, given his definition of density as M/V (mass per unit volume), space equalled God.³¹¹ Einstein later pointed out that this equation meant that there is no relation between matter and space. In Einstein's paradigm, by comparison, to throw away matter would also mean to throw away space, for the two are inseparably joined together.

Hence, as Thaxton points out, "If space is God and there is no relation between matter and space, as required by Newton's physics, then how could the *Logos* become flesh and be born in Bethlehem?" For Newton, miraculous action "across the great conceptual chasm between God (= space) and matter" must be denied. (He later, by the way, also denied the incarnation and Christ's deity, though not publicly.)³¹² Within his paradigm, there was logically no room for divine revelation, with its affirmation of communication with finite material human beings. This would account then for the appeal of Deism and the rise of the Enlightenment. As a result, God was now viewed visually rather than conceptually, as no longer "up there" above earth but "out there" beyond the limits of infinite space. This made him far away, seemingly inaccessible to prayer, with the earth floating as just a tiny fleck of dust in the cosmic void. Cynicism followed, and with it for many a climate of despair.³¹³

3. Tentativeness. The principle of objectivity within what became known as the hypothetico-deductive model enshrined tentativeness in the scientific structure. This developed from the model's particular conception of scientific progress, which was deemed legitimate only when conducted from within a stance of neutrality. Such a neutral process is

³¹¹ Thaxton, "Dialogue," 292-93.

³¹² Thaxton, "Dialogue," 294.

³¹³ Thaxton, "Dialogue," 296.

always open to further confirmation and adaptation. As uncompleted investigation, it is always (potentially) ongoing. Therefore, few if any conclusions can be declared absolute.³¹⁴

4. Re-legitimacy of Subjectivity. The collapse of pure empiricism re-legitimized subjectivity. Much earlier, Greek scientific philosophy had been characterized by the deductive powers of the observer. Now, with the Kuhnian discovery of the role of paradigms, the conclusion-making observer was once again deemed inseparable from the scientific process. As we quoted from Ratzsch above, Kuhn “established humans at the very center of science” (242).

This observer-centric perspective can be seen in Mailloux’s rhetorical hermeneutics. He begins with Socrates’ offer of a pseudo-etymology of Hermes, “messenger of the gods, translator of their meanings to humans, interpreter par excellence.”³¹⁵ Yet Hermes was not to be trusted, for he was a contriver, a trickster, a liar—that is, Plato’s archetypal Sophist. By Mailloux’s understanding, Socrates was asserting that interpretation and language use are inseparable, as are “the discourses that theorize those practices,” meaning hermeneutics and rhetoric.

Whereas hermeneutics interprets texts, rhetoric persuades audiences. Interpretation means to interpret one text into another, while rhetoric transforms one audience into another.³¹⁶ This transformation is not value-free, for there is an inescapable “ethnocentrism” to articulation; “our webs of vocabularies, beliefs, and desires constitute both the power and limits of our rhetorical and interpretive acts.” We are free agents, but we always move within our enculturation, and because of it. This concept overlaps with human finitude, since “we are never not in a particular culture with a particular set of practices or form of life.”

Therefore, to find the ground of interpretation and the evaluation of actions we need to look

³¹⁴ Ratzsch, *Science*, 26.

³¹⁵ Steven Mailloux, “Articulation and Understanding: The Pragmatic Intimacy Between Rhetoric and Hermeneutics,” in *Rhetoric and Hermeneutics in Our Time: A Reader*, eds. Walter Jost and Michael J. Hyde (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 378.

³¹⁶ Mailloux, “Rhetoric,” 379.

inside and outside of one's culture. This is "the historical context in which judgments are made and supported."³¹⁷

5. Critical Realism. The re-legitimization of subjectivity privileges rhetoric. It has even developed into an "ethnos" of Western intellectuals which now prohibits the imposition of one's beliefs on other cultures, forcefully. Verbal persuasion, rather, is valued over physical violence, and rhetoric is privileged over war, both among groups and among cultures. An ethnos such as ours in the West thus establishes a continuum, from "physical conquest" to "cultural imperialism" through to "respectful understanding." On the basis of this spectrum, cruder forms of ethnocentrism toward other cultures are deemed justly to be condemned.³¹⁸

Forms of ethnocentrism are not unalterable, however. Though one cannot completely transcend her or his cultural context, it can nonetheless be slowly significantly changed.³¹⁹ Along the continuum mentioned above, various stances are judged as "incommensurable." That is, value judgments can be made, though the actions and speech acts of another culture must first be located in their own contexts of desires, beliefs, and vocabularies. Yet because there is an ability for communication between cultures, "the condemnation of cruder forms of ethnocentric behavior toward other cultures" is still possible. Referencing Rorty, Mailloux affirms that even distant cultures still overlap with others to such an extent that there is real communication between them. Key to the assessment of incommensurability, however, are not abstract observers but observers who participate. It is participation which moves the observation from an intercultural status to an intracultural status. At the end of the day, the principle of incommensurability is an interpretive category "that enables us to deal with competing modes of communication and intelligibility within and outside our own cultural

³¹⁷ Mailloux, "Rhetoric," 389.

³¹⁸ Mailloux, "Rhetoric," 389–90.

³¹⁹ Mailloux, "Rhetoric," 389.

communities.”³²⁰

There is, what we might call, a critical realism to the reweaving (constituting “what we call learning”) of inter- and intracultural exchange. “Try harder with interpretive translation or give up and go bilingual; continue the attempt to translate a set of alien terms into your own language or learn the other community’s language.” Mailloux refers to Evans-Pritchard’s illustration from the Zande people, to point out that a person cannot escape his or her cultural weavings. A person embedded within her or his cultural context “cannot think that his thought is wrong.” Yet though a person’s beliefs vary and fluctuate, one can allow for different situations, and permit empirical observation and doubts. Interpretation and persuasion reweave the web--and change takes place within cultural communities and between them by weaving beliefs from another culture into one’s own.³²¹ Preconception cannot be avoided, but objectivity is obtained by its confirmation--arbitrary inappropriate preconceptions are found not to work.³²²

A parallel is standpoint theory. This model, argued from Hunter’s feminist perspective, posits that those excluded from ruling power have a standpoint. Their perspective is usually unheard, for access is denied to it; and it is different from the society and its culture of which it is a part. Yet this standpoint has the potential to be a place for change and renewal. Such situated knowledge is admittedly necessarily partial, yet it “is concerned with retaining a concept of the real as a critical realism rather than a naive realism.” The goal is to make sense of the “not-subjected of people’s lives”³²³ in the relationship between the subject and ideology, by delineating areas of domestic, economic, political, and social relations lying on the fringe.³²⁴

³²⁰ Mailloux, “Rhetoric,” 390.

³²¹ Mailloux, “Rhetoric,” 391.

³²² Mailloux referencing Joel Weinsheimer, Mailloux, “Rhetoric,” 382.

³²³ Lynette Hunter, “Feminist Thoughts on Rhetoric,” in *The Changing Tradition: Women in the History of Rhetoric*, eds. Christine Mason Sutherland and Rebecca Sutcliffe (Calgary, Alta.: University of Calgary Press, 1999), 237.

³²⁴ Hunter, “Feminist,” 238.

The pathway out of exclusion “is through story, or narrative, or poetics.” Yet she laments the lack of analogous critique when dealing with criticism, art, or aesthetics. “It is as if, textually, standpoint operates in awareness of this ‘third place,’ but without any idea of how to discuss it; hence, it turns toward the arts, and gestures toward strategies that seem to articulate situatedness.” Hence, in contemporary western aesthetics, the absolute/relativist divide in the arts is underwritten by the critical notion that language is adequate or inadequate to representation. Hunter proposes that the history of rhetoric provides an appropriate vocabulary for such a critical role.³²⁵

6. Rhetographical Language. The adequacy or inadequacy of language to represent reality provides us with an excellent segue into another feature of today’s rhetorolectical context, the role of pictorial language. Considerable mention could be made of the development of photography and cinematography in the twentieth century, and their ensuing rhetorical impact on communication around the globe, including the prevalence today of thirty-second sound-bytes in political discourse.

Historically-speaking, however, Robbins (in *The Invention of Christian Discourse*, quoting Averil Cameron), draws our attention to early Christian rhetoric with its close relation between verbal argumentation (or rhetology) and the visual (rhetography). Because ancient Mediterranean culture was traditional in nature, early Christians situated their images and arguments in familiar places, but recontextualized, recombined, and reconfigured the old to create new commonplaces. For their listeners, the result was something that was different and new, but somehow familiar and true.³²⁶ In the same way, their topoi (which reside at the base of rhetorolects) were also pictorial and argumentative. They functioned as the basis of pattern recognition for their descriptive and explanatory discourse. As the pattern was recognized by the listener, conviction of its surety or probability was enhanced. These

³²⁵ Hunter, “Feminist,” 239.

³²⁶ Robbins, *Invention*, 80–81.

patterns (or *topoi*) in turn undergirded enthymematic argumentation, and provided a nexus for them. Then, as a given *topos* was elaborated, it created space to bring in other *topoi*, and the recontextualization and reconfiguration continued apace.³²⁷

Today, however, we have noted how Hunter highlights the lack of analog in critique when standpoint theory attempts to discuss the “third place,” and its turn toward the arts for strategies that articulate situatedness.³²⁸ Likewise, Robbins regrets the absence today of vocabulary to interpret a text’s visual texture. As a result, in the study of Christology this leads to “an emphasis on *christo-logos*, the argumentative-enthymematic realm of belief that Jesus is the Messiah (Christ),” rather than Christography. Similarly, it results in theology rather than theography, that is, the “description and narration of God and God’s activities.”³²⁹ (Robbins thus provides a sociorhetorical justification for Pinnock’s intuitive turn from what he called *Logos* to Spirit Christology; see 133, 200, 234, 252.)

Pinnock clearly wrote within the genre of “theology,” not theography. He was embedded within a rhetorical age that esteemed exposition, as detailed by Brooks and Warren. His early writings favoured the rhetological rather than the rhetographical. His style tended toward an abstract neutral analysis of the topic at hand, not unlike today’s scientific research. Yet in *Flame of Love*, his work on the Holy Spirit, he urged a shift (in conservative

³²⁷ As mentioned earlier, in ancient, Mediterranean society, interpreters focused on “the constituents that function as Rule, Case, and Result, rather than Major Premise, Minor Premise, and Conclusion.” The essence of argumentation was not “formal logic” or “formal validity,” nor was it “the presence or absence of all three parts of a dialectical syllogism.” Rather, pattern recognition was applied to descriptive and explanatory discourse such that recognizable *topoi* (that is, “seats of argumentation”) emerged. These *topoi* did not function in a decontextualized philosophical manner; rather, they gave strength to the unspoken assumptions lying at the base of an argument (i.e., enthymemes). This means that ancient arguments were of an inductive-deductive-abductive nature (Robbins, *Invention*, 82-83).

From the time of Quintilian at least, these *topoi* (or “*loci communes*”) were classified in two different senses. There were abstract “seats of argument” that functioned like “headings” in today’s usage, like cause, effects, opposites, likeness, definition, and so on. When one wanted to develop “proof” for an argument, one could always draw from these rhetorical headings. Also, there were commonplaces which were collected into various topics such as “loyalty, decadence, friendship, or whatever” which were then worked into the speech that one was making (Robbins, *Invention*, 82, fn. 21).

³²⁸ Hunter, “Feminist,” 239.

³²⁹ Robbins, *Invention*, 86.

thinking) from what he called Logos Christology to Spirit Christology. He was convinced that a renewed focus on the role and ministry of the Holy Spirit compelled a new way of doing theology, first in our understanding of the earthly ministry of Jesus, and then in an ensuing openness in theology to the role of the visual, of narrative, of the emotive.

Just as there has been neglect of the Spirit as Creator, there has been neglect concerning the work of the Spirit in relation to Christ. . . . I have a suggestion. Let us see what results from viewing Christ as an aspect of the Spirit's mission, instead of (as is more usual) viewing Spirit as a function of Christ's. It lies within the freedom of theology to experiment with ideas. . . . Yet it is striking how systematic theologies, in explicating the divine-human person of Christ, forget altogether about the Spirit. It was anointing by the Spirit that made Jesus "Christ," not the hypostatic union, and it was the anointing that made him effective in history as the absolute Savior.³³⁰

Summary. We asked ourselves a question in the opening section of this Addendum, namely, what is the proper context for exploring topoi, especially with a contemporary scholar such as Pinnock? This was answered in part in our comments made in the section "Oral-Scribal Intertexture" (159). We then broadened our study to include rhetorical features of our contemporary age. We noted the distinctives between the argumentative and the visual textures of communication as described by Hunter, Robbins, and Pinnock. We have noted also, emerging since 1905, the proliferation--in the writing of scientific analysis--of diagrams, charts, and graphs in an effort to broaden language's limitations in communicating the full range of research insights and theories.

We suggest that the rhetoric of contemporary scientific analysis, with its rhetorolectical shift to the visual, is mirrored (consciously or unconsciously) in the rhetoric of Pinnock. We suggest that he situated his writings within the prevailing rhetorolect of our

³³⁰ Pinnock, *Flame*, 80.

modern age, that of scientific analysis and communication. The topoi that emerge in his books, and the enthymematic structures that they undergird, are better understood in this wider rhetorological setting. So too is the anthropological principle we observed in Barth's thought (à la Schleiermacher, see below). Pinnock even mirrored the growing openness of the scientific community to rhetography, as he ventured into new modes of language to describe both the Holy Spirit, and religious experience with the Spirit.

C. Contemporary Topoi in Pinnock's Three Books

Barth, originally Pinnock's foil, explains the shift in topos that Pinnock would eventually make, with his growing appreciation for the role of the individual when understood within the theological framework of pneumatology. According to Rosato, such movement in Barth was incipient yet detectable, especially as reflected in his analysis of Schleiermacher's theological starting point using the individual. Barth provided justification for Pinnock to move to a pneumatology, rational in nature, that nonetheless made the believing Christian a central focus in his theology. From this, we suggest, flowed for Pinnock an *experiential* rediscovery of the legitimacy of religious experience, and its role in epistemology.

Then moving far beyond Barth, Pinnock found in Spirit Christology a legitimization of the subjective (human) dimension of the Bible's inscripturation, by refusing to let Barth's Logos Christology dominate.³³¹ Like Moltmann, he distanced himself from Barth's polemic against religious experience.³³² We suggest that he now had a means of solving the objective-subjective dichotomy in inspiration with which he (and his evangelical community) had grappled unsatisfactorily in BRev 71. Doctrinally, he concluded that this involved the significant step of removing the filioque clause from the Nicene Creed. (Though Pinnock did

³³¹ Rosato, *Barth*, 157–58.

³³² Pinnock, *Flame*, 10, fn. 3.

not turn to his support in his argumentation, he noted that Wesley shared the same conviction.)³³³

Following Pannenberg, Pinnock reconfigured his received understanding of the Trinity by moving to a social model, rather than working with an “origins” perspective tracing back to Augustine. “Person-love” provided a better definition of the nature of the Holy Spirit, bringing to the fore features of a new topos of religious experience including love, openness, and Spirit’s universal working in nature and human history (creation and covenant) prior to the incarnation of the Son. There followed a profound re-evaluation of the nature of humanity too, as made in the image of the social Trinity. Spirit was now perceived as “the ecstasy by which God, without leaving himself, can enter the world and be present.”³³⁴ Human self-awareness (and experience) within this religious interpretation emerged as a legitimate ground for knowing God. Pinnock was then compelled to re-explore his understanding of God’s dealings with all of humanity, including those who within their religious systems had/have not heard of Christ, or had/have heard in a misinformed fashion. The truths implicit in religious traditions he now deemed redemptive bridges into those traditions.³³⁵

Methodologically, Pinnock needed to find a new means of expressing the topos of religious experience. He sought a method that was relational, ontological, Spirit-driven--and rhetographical. Specifically, he found it within Arminianism (and pietism), reckoning that it could better account for the Scripture’s description of the process of inscripturation. He also discovered numerous parallels between this new Arminian position on the freedom of the human will; and that of the ancient church (as treasured particularly within Orthodoxy, and per many sources, within Catholicism). This fused with his experiential topos to create new edges such as prostration of the human intellect before God as the pathway to freedom; the

³³³ Pinnock, *Flame*, 197, fn. 21.

³³⁴ Pinnock, *Flame*, 60.

³³⁵ Pannenberg, “Religions,” 285–97.

authority of Spirit in inscripturation and tradition; humanity's union with Christ as the ultimate goal of creation and God's salvific work; and paramount to the Eastern perspective, the role of mystery and sacramental presence expressed rhetographically.

The empirical model so evident in the early Pinnock was now undone, replaced by a historic paradigm rediscovered within Christianity. Earlier, he had rejected truth through experience and tradition (which in essence is others' past experience), considering it the loss of objectivity due to his differentiation between truth, and its defusion into the ever-evolving consciousness of the church. (This dichotomy was later bridged, we suggest, by his acceptance of Gadamer's horizons of understanding, reflected in *The Scripture Principle*.) Even his writing style confirmed his point of view: a distant, objective, and neutral treatment of the subject at hand not unlike scientific reporting, and largely devoid of illustrative and graphic language. Yet by *Flame of Love*, he clearly cherished human experience, past and present, as fundamental to epistemology itself, and turned to a writing style more dependent on imagery including that of divine dance.

He also shifted his emphasis with respect to which Scriptural texts he cited and when. The role played in *Flame of Love* by his enhanced references to John's Gospel (and Luke, Acts, Romans, and 1 Corinthians) is not insignificant in this regard (220). Not only is there a new appreciation on his part for the "narrative" character of these texts; and not only is there an exploration of "rhetography" as a legitimate and necessary expression of the spectrum of textual meaning; there seems also to be, with respect to meaning, a shift in rhetorlect toward "wisdom." This brings into play the role of a religious experience on Pinnock's part whereby all is seen with new eyes. Yet there is more, especially regarding reading and hermeneutics. There is a moving back and forth (future and past) that is centred in the present moment of Pinnock, as reader. His world "opens up," that is, it becomes wider and richer in scope, as he rediscovers new depth to the texts of Scripture. (Consider, for example, Pinnock's use of the Book of Romans, 223.)

In “Narrative Amplification” (190), we alluded to an error in Pinnock’s earlier readings, whereby he unwittingly retrojected his positivist perspective onto ancient and biblical texts--while accusing Barth of the same. But the same elements of this section also showed how Pinnock developed as a reader, later moving “to an understanding of the nature of truth that includes personal experience” (194). This is why FoL 96 refers to an aesthetic dimension. There is a depth dimension of the self where the self discovers a bond with a world that is elemental, that is, prior to the differentiation between subject and object. Is it not that experience that transforms the back and forth movement identified in the section on Narrative Amplification?³³⁶ As a result, Pinnock’s topoi changed. He found himself in a situation where he could imagine a wider circle of readers, as he himself turned to a wider circle of writers (see the authors mentioned in “Recontextualization,” 176).

As Pinnock moved into an ever more open and inclusive understanding of salvation and the church, he turned especially to the writings of Pope John Paul II. As John Paul II argued from 1 John 4:7, love is the ultimate criterion of God’s salvific standard, not rational certainty. The question then is, where is love working anonymously? The answer is, where godliness and holiness (as well as doctrine) are seen in religion; a critical realization of love, if you will.³³⁷ (Like his Orthodox sources, however, Pinnock elected to stay within a conciliar framework.)³³⁸

Yet in all of his movement across the theological--and rhetorolectical--spectrum, we make this important notation as we close this chapter: that Pinnock’s theological turnings were always toward and *into* historic orthodoxy in his search for a new paradigm to deal with

³³⁶ I am indebted to Prof. Pambrun for this insight, from our discussion of this chapter in December 2011. Aristotle, in contrast to Plato, argued that knowing is an act and a perfection of one’s own being. Rather than presupposing a duality between the knower and the known, à la Plato, he posited that the more perfect the knower, “the more perfect is the identity between knower and known.” See Flanagan, “Lonergan’s,” 114, also 115–17.

³³⁷ John Paul II, *Crossing*, 194.

³³⁸ Pinnock, *Flame*, 234, 236–37.

contemporary challenges, rather than from it. He would not tolerate what he deemed syncretism.

CHAPTER 5

Ideology:

Sharing Interests in Commentary and Texts

Ch. 5 sketches out for us how to craft a mode of understanding that relates critical thinking and experience, in view of a transposed understanding of the “truthfulness” of the biblical text. Yet Pinnock did not grapple with this issue in an isolation chamber. Rather, his questioning was enriched by his interaction with his social “self,” as will be noted in his “Relation to Groups” (273). However, our focus will not be on the groups as such. Rather, it will be on how he crafted in the midst of his participation in these groups a form of theological reflection. That is the ideological issue that comes back into play in this chapter concerning ideology, the third of our textual textures.

The ideological texture of a reading of Pinnock’s texts focuses our attention on our writer, his world, and the relationship between him and his readers. It also invites us to attend to ourselves as readers; to the text; and to other interpretations by original and later readers. Shared interests, community, and horizons of meaning come into play. Rhetoric is key, for understanding its dynamics invites us to understand how a way of understanding “stands in relation to an ‘ideological field’ ” (5:10). But, as noted, it is not simply a question of ourselves as readers. It is also the world of the writer. “Ideology is the intersection of the writer’s rhetorical locations with

the perceptions of her or his first and later readers” (1:34). So, we have the intersection of writer, text, and reader; then of ourselves as readers (and perhaps writers) of a text; all in relation to Pinnock who is writer in relation to his texts and his readers. Truly, this is a complex hermeneutical process!

I. Reasons for the Ideological Texture

A. Review

Pinnock’s central concern was how to be a faithful yet informed reader of the Scriptures, of the Bible. The originality of his work was to develop a form of theological reflection (an “epistemology”) that could break away from (in his perspective) his paleo-Calvinistic early reading, and liberate both himself and his communities with respect to what the truthfulness of Scripture means. That was the burning issue so critical for his own self-understanding (280, 286, 338).

We know, for example, that in the course of making her or his point an interpreter adopts a particular intellectual mode of discourse that might be “theological, historical, sociological, anthropological, psychological, or literary.” That choice then becomes a “particular mode of social production.” Comprised of interaction and exchange, the chosen mode in turn stands in relation to an “ideological field” that makes up this modern/postmodern world in which we live.¹

The following material will take up what was developed in Chs. 2 through 4, namely, how does religious experience shape a theological method without collapsing into some form of pure piety or subjectivism or individualism? (In this light, the references to history and historical communities now begin to make sense.) This led us into a discussion of rhetoric; that is, how Pinnock’s intellectual (critical) modes occupied different rhetorical spaces. Ch. 1 set up this question, for we were left asking “What is Pinnock’s approach then?” Given the developments and shifts in his career, given the debates with their social settings, how did he develop a

¹ Robbins, *Exploring*, 106.

“hermeneutical approach” that privileged the role of religious experience? Reading Callen’s biography answered part of that question, but we desire a more precise understanding of Pinnock’s hermeneutical approach.

That is why this thesis selected these four texts by Pinnock, and not others. They are identified in relation to a mode of theological reasoning that deals with the interpretation of Scripture. We suggest that our thesis shows that the texts were the appropriate selections. But how does one read those texts? The answer is to apply the techniques of socio-rhetorical investigation, beginning with innertexture and then intertextural textures. When one does that, our choice is validated at the end. Our four texts tell us something about the method Pinnock crafted. Now, with this third texture of ideology, the thesis focuses on Pinnock’s form of theological reflection. It builds on the earlier chapters, which tracked why Pinnock went through so many shifts, and how he developed or crafted a form of thinking (theological reasoning) which he himself hoped would contribute to “reform,” a reform involving his relationships to various groups. His religious experience played a strategic role in shaping that theological reflection, and he wrestled with the role that the Bible plays in conjunction with religious experience. Hence, he educated himself, and the evangelical thinkers with whom he interacted, on the meaning of truth in Scripture, concluding that it was the “hermeneutical linch-pin” (37) that holds in unitive tension all the other jostling forces of the hermeneutical equation.

B. Links Between Theological Method and Inerrancy

Let us now link the question of theological method to the question of inerrancy, for this seems to be a pervasive issue in the ideology of Ch. 5. Examples of the issue of truth and inerrancy arise: (i) “divine truth requires revelation in language” (278); (ii) the infamous case with the Evangelical Theological Society violated “the inerrancy clause of the E.T.S. constitution” (281); (iii) the “inerrancy debate” (105, 282); (iv) Pinnock’s role in InterVarsity Christian Fellowship was in a “trusted context” and “a shared view of biblical inerrancy” (284);

(v) Pinnock's role in the E.T.S. (with its insistence on the Bible as inerrant), a defining centre for him across the decades (280-82, 284); (vi) "rational certainty" as linked to inerrancy (178); (vii) how in his "early years, he was seeking certainty in faith via inerrancy" (291); (viii) his "shift . . . from a rational framework to . . . experience" (292); (ix) "fundamentalists with their passion for certainty" (292); (x) and, "believers easily become inconsistent when their whole worldview seems to be threatened" (298).

All these concern ideology and worldview. Whereas the preceding chapters set up the reason to do analysis, we now come back to the issue of what kind of theological form of reasoning Pinnock employed; that is, as a reader who remained a disciple of the text, but whose reading was informed by religious experience. However, before we comment on the evident shifts in Pinnock's writings, let us summarize representative methodologies available for the study of religious experience, and certain key thinkers within each given approach.

II. Modes of Intellectual Discourse

Ideological texture is an act of freedom of interpretation that we bring to the text. It is not just something we simply find out about at the end of our reading. Thus, as a texture it actually envelopes the first two textures of inner texture and intertexture. Yet they serve to educate our ideological texture, meaning, they transform it into a more distanced and ethical form of understanding. How ideology does so depends on the particular discourse that one chooses.

A. Historical-Critical Discourse

This form of discourse, as Robbins points out, is ideologically aligned with historical-critical interpretation. The mode adopted is that of accurate historiography. When used for theological commentary, the result is theological insight attained through historiography, leaving the reader with a feeling of certainty that there is no better insight into the material than the historical perspective which the author is presenting. "This mode of discourse represents

dominant culture rhetoric in the field of biblical studies today.”² For a reader of Pinnock, it is soon apparent that historical-critical discourse predominates in the selected books under our investigation. It is his favoured discourse.

As early as 1971 in *Biblical Revelation*, Pinnock took issue with John Hick, who at that point was neoorthodox and would later move into theological relativism.³ Hick understood revelation as God’s disclosure of himself, rather than as a propositional system of ideas. He then shifted to experience for he concluded that revelational claims were not self-validating.⁴ Pinnock, though, rejected an understanding of revelation merely as “encounter” or as “activity.” He argued that revelation includes a web of divine truths from him who has spoken through the prophets.⁵ He based his argument on the conviction that revelation is an objective historical reality, irrespective of personal decision or of experience. He pointed to what he called historical “fact,” which coupled with faith is the basis of the inductive-historical approach.⁶ (Pinnock was still seeking to come to grips with the nature of symbols, for not all symbols communicate in the same way, and symbols can never be taken for what they hope to communicate.)⁷

Contrary to his interpretation of Fuchs, Ebeling, and Gadamer with their understanding of Scripture as standing in existential dynamic relation with the interpreter, and open to interpretations contrary to what the writer intended, Pinnock argued that the biblical text addresses and interprets us. His argument was that if the text is simply naming an existential event long ago, then there is no need to be bound by it. “Pietism [as example] generally ends up discarding Scripture as the necessary creative source of faith.”⁸ The historic view of Scripture as

² Robbins, *Exploring*, 106-7.

³ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 21.

⁴ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 24.

⁵ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 26.

⁶ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 45.

⁷ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 116-17. At this point in his scholarly career, Pinnock affirmed an errorless Scripture based on Christ’s errorlessness. He rejected the claim that to err is human, Scripture is human, therefore it errs. Rather, he argued that “To err is human -- *ergo*, God gave Scripture by inspiration -- so that, it does not err.” His reason? Christ was sinless, yet this does not render a docetic Christ or make historical study of his life impossible. See Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 176.

⁸ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 225.

“the grammatical residue of a revelation which bears marks of credibility”⁹ was his counter-argument to the rise of “scientific criticism” in biblical studies which “made it impossible to treat the biblical material as reliable historical sources.”¹⁰ However, as the 1970s progressed, Pinnock became aware (contra Warfield, one of his earliest theological mentors) that factual empirical knowledge of Scripture falls short of absolute certainty, for we are dealing with *probabilities*¹¹ which rest “in part upon a number of historical and logical evidences which validate the truth of the Christian message.”¹² He was learning to be content to work with reasonable considerations.¹³

In 1984 in *The Scripture Principle*, amidst the various models of historical-critical and history-of-religions discourses in the world of biblical studies, Pinnock continued to define inspiration as “a divine activity accompanying the preparation and production of the Scriptures,”¹⁴ a long-term affair operating within the whole history of revelation through gifts of prophecy, insight, imagination, and wisdom from the Spirit.¹⁵ Whereas biblical criticism operates with an attitude of suspicion of the text, and is willing to overthrow it in the name of critical freedom, he became convinced that, though we need to be concerned about the stage of the development of the text, the final shape of the Bible is most important.¹⁶ We approach it as our God-given norm, our rule of faith and practice, submitting to it without reservation.¹⁷ There is an identity between Scripture and the Word of God, so that the data for theology is sought in the vehicle of revelation first, with reason playing a critical role.¹⁸ Because there is a basic coherence

⁹ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 46.

¹⁰ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 49.

¹¹ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 46.

¹² Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 47.

¹³ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 50.

¹⁴ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 63.

¹⁵ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 64.

¹⁶ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 65.

¹⁷ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 66.

¹⁸ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 68.

and reliability to the narrative of Scripture,¹⁹ there is also factual reliability.²⁰

By highlighting the positive work that can be done through various forms of criticism, Pinnock now affirmed structural criticism, the study of the structures and deep levels at which the biblical languages function, including the role of texts and symbols. He added his commendation that “Although the structuralists tend to assume material apparently historical is actually mythical, thus denigrating the historical foundations of the Bible, it is not necessary [to] follow them in this.”²¹ The integration of these scholarly insights into the “Scripture principle” approach generated for Pinnock what he called a “manifesto for evangelical critical liberty,” though he acknowledged that others might claim he was merely dressing up critical theories in acceptable pious clothing. In his defence, he pointed out that for Christians of our age, there is no going “home” to the simplicity of pre-critical thought, of simply equating the words of the Bible and the words of God without acknowledging the human dimension. “If our certainty rests instead where it ought to--for simple as well as for educated believers--in the effectiveness of the Bible to mediate to us salvation in Christ, then positive criticism poses no threat, but offers clarification and new light upon the Word of the Lord.”²² The problem is not with the particular form of criticism; it is rather with a naturalistic worldview that dominates academic and intellectual life.²³ “The main point to make is that the historical method, although properly oriented to mundane reality, ought not to be imprisoned within a naturalistic worldview.”²⁴ Openness to the supernatural can go hand in hand with historical toughmindedness.

By way of postscript to this section, and by his own admission, Pinnock’s goal in *Biblical Revelation* was to explore his growing doubts about the biblical witness that was supposed to undergird the doctrine of inerrancy. Historical-critical discourse had created space in his thinking

¹⁹ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 69-74.

²⁰ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 74-79.

²¹ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 141.

²² Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 143.

²³ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 147-48.

²⁴ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 148.

for an alternate perspective. To his surprise, he found the proof texts wanting. He naively assumed that by sharing the resulting good news of his discoveries made in the actual textual witness, evangelical readers would be appreciative of “a more realistic doctrine of biblical inspiration.” Many were not. Almost thirty years later in 1999, he sadly concluded that “the desire to have absolute truth is for many evangelicals stronger than their desire to accept the actual biblical witness.”²⁵

B. Social-Scientific Criticism

Developed in the last quarter of the twentieth century, this mode aligns itself with social and cultural anthropologists “and focuses on ‘pivotal values’ like honor and shame and common perceptions like patron-client and kinship relationships, limited good, hospitality, and purity in the Mediterranean world.” The goal is to overcome anachronism and ethnocentrism. With its leadership coming from the Catholic Biblical Association, this mode of commentary primarily underlies the Society of Biblical Literature. To practice the ideological texture of this discourse is to locate oneself among social scientists rather than among theologians or literary critics.²⁶

In his awareness of the social and cultural values of ancient biblical writers, Pinnock quoted Shirley Jackson Case: “The sky hung low in the ancient world. Traffic was heavy on the highway between heaven and earth. All nature was alive with supernatural forces” (223). This awareness, he concluded, allows us to realize by today’s standards that not everything reported as supernatural in the Bible was necessarily so. Perhaps some of Mark’s telling of demonic possession would be assessed differently today by means of psychology’s perspective? Perhaps Matthew was using a midrash-like way of describing some of the details of Jesus’ birth in his gospel?²⁷ Pinnock advised that there needs to be a balance whereby biblical scholars are tuned to

²⁵ Callen, *Pinnock*, 237.

²⁶ Robbins, *Exploring*, 107.

²⁷ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 149.

legitimate concerns of theologians and church leaders; and whereby those in church leadership are less nervous, and allow biblical scholars freedom to work.²⁸

C. Alternative Modes

Although historic-critical and social-scientific critical discourses are still major modes in contemporary biblical studies, they do not stand alone. Other modes have emerged, and are briefly summarized below. Pinnock, however, demonstrated little interest in them in the four books under our consideration. We will suggest a reason why at the close of this section.

1. History-of-Religions Discourse. Created by the work of Mircea Eliade during the twentieth century, this discourse like the previous one uses historical-anthropological resources. However, it uses them “to compare religious rituals, myths, festivals, and practices in groups anywhere in the world.”²⁹ Whereas literary critics seek the relation between story and discourse, a historian of religion considers the primary issue to be “the application of myth to the ‘life of’ a particular person ([called] a *vita*).”³⁰ In the Gospel of Mark, for example, the challenge from this perspective is to determine how the story of the myth and the life of Jesus “play with each other to create the incongruous story the text itself calls ‘gospel.’ ” For Jonathan Z. Smith, quoted by Robbins, the fundamental nature of the Jesus discourse “is to intertwine a belief in God who has the final say over humans with the life of a person who engaged in radical enough activity to get himself killed in Jerusalem--a major ritual, political, and economic center of Jewish life during the first century.”³¹

Although Pinnock assumed the “life of” Jesus, the *vita*, as the hermeneutical cap-stone of Old Testament theology, he did not attempt to explore in any of our four books the process of

²⁸ Pinnock, Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 150.

²⁹ Robbins, *Exploring*, 108.

³⁰ See “2. [< Latin *vita* life.] A biography, the history of a life; spec. = curriculum vitae n. at curriculum n.” *OED Online (Oxford English Dictionary)*. See Vernon K. Robbins, *Exploring*, 109.

³¹ Robbins, *Exploring*, 108.

mythologization whereby Christians determined and attributed divinity to Jesus, a process also seen, as mentioned, in the divinization of sacred figures in other religions.³²

2. New Historical Discourse. This mode is modelled particularly by Burton Mack, and is “perhaps most accurately described as postmodern ‘new historical’ commentary.” Committed to generating a new historiography of first-century Christianity, Mack draws on historians of religion like Smith, and also postmodern critics such as Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault. He concludes that early Christians created their “history” of Jesus, of which the Markan account is a “moment,” “by interrelating myth and ‘lives of’ Jesus in highly complex and multivalent ways.” What sets this approach apart from theological and social-science discourses is its understanding of Christianity as one religion among all other religions rather than as *the* unique religion that appropriately, and authoritatively, informs a person’s worldview by its own distinct discourse.³³

Just as Pinnock shows little interest in history-of-religions discourse, there is zero mention of Mack in the four books which we are analyzing. This highlights a possible paucity in his scholarship. His work is time-stamped, in that his principal antagonist is the theological liberalism of the early and mid-twentieth century. Pinnock was certainly aware of post-modernity, as we will see shortly, but his apologetic energies were focused on issues that he saw as a threat to the evangelicalism of his day. During his peak years as a scholar, post-modernity was not his principal concern. (We find here a possible indictment of the evangelicalism of that era (if not today) as something of a theological backwater, fighting rearguard battles rather than keeping abreast of then current or impending theological trends.)

³² An interesting example is provided by Mark W. Hamilton, “Mythos und Mythologie: Studien Zur Religionsgeschichte und Theologie,” review of “Mythos und Mythologie: Studien zur Religionsgeschichte und Theologie,” in *Ägypten und Altes Testament* 70, Manfred Görg, *Review of Biblical Literature* 2 (2012) Reviewing twenty-five essays written by German scholar, Manfred Görg, he points out that there are “instantiations of Israel’s underlying views of the world (Mythos) in specific cultural narratives and practices (Mythologie),” especially as shaped by Egyptian antecedents. We do not find Pinnock engaging with this level of discourse. One is left wondering to what degree such an engagement would have enriched these works had his probing intellect done so.

³³ Robbins, *Exploring*, 109.

And yet later in his career Pinnock was aware of post-modern trends, and offered (if indirectly) an answer to its issues by his rediscovery of the irreducibly relational nature of the Bible's story. Theologically, one can track across his scholarly career a shift from a rationalist systems-oriented perspective to a relational perspective including a healthy degree of relativity. He moved from the Reformation's jurisprudence of justification as the defining soteriological lens to Eastern Christianity's emphasis on 'union' or "theosis" (i.e., participation in the divine nature).³⁴ He deemed this theosis the source of human spirituality (compare our comments about Schneiders' model; 9, 11), and so insistent was he on its prioritization that he structured *Flame of Love*, his opus magnum, with union in mind. In the ordering of its chapters, for example, he placed the salvation of the individual ("Spirit & Union") after ecclesiology ("Spirit & Church"), subtly reminding the reader that we can only enter into divine union through the medium of relations with Christians gathered in community as the church.³⁵

By turning from, in his opinion, the forensic Greco-Roman concept of justice to the dynamic Hebrew concept of righteousness as "God's saving activity," conversion for Pinnock became equated with awakening to the realization that there is something that God wants of us that no one else can give--our love.³⁶ Such theosis, however, is not to be equated with the new historical discourse's relativizing of all religions,³⁷ though it does hold out the exciting possibility of meaningful dialogue about religious experience with New Historical Discourse and non-Christian Eastern religions, providing more commonality than Pinnock originally thought.³⁸

3. Postmodern Deconstructive Discourse. Yet another postmodern mode with which to approach a text is through "deconstruction." Commentary is considered, from the perspective of

³⁴ Pinnock, *Flame*, 149-50.

³⁵ Pinnock, *Flame*, 151.

³⁶ Pinnock, *Flame*, 156-57.

³⁷ Pinnock, *Flame*, 154.

³⁸ For example, in Eastern religions non-duality might not always be intended when union with "god" is celebrated as the goal of salvation. "Sankara, who understands God to be beyond conceptual reach and salvation as union, can sound rather Christian at times. We need to be clear about what we intend and patient to hear what others wish to say." Pinnock, *Flame*, 154.

this ideological texture, as a social product. Stephen Moore, for example, uses this discourse to pull the Markan text forward into the present. Rather than reflecting on religious phenomena in antiquity, he understands Mark's text "in the context of other media in the world in which we live today." He uses the production of the postal system to explain how Jesus' final message addressed to the eleven is collected by the mysterious young (mail)man and carried to the tomb or office. However, due to the failure of the female postal workers (depicted by Mark with little regard for equal-opportunity employment), Jesus' message goes adrift like a postcard lost in a bag, or the victim of a strike or sorting accident. This mode of discourse, says Robbins, gives Moore "access to very different social and economic circles of production" than the theological, social-scientific, or history-of-religions mode.³⁹

III. Relation to Groups

Relation to groups plays a role in the elaboration of the ideological texture, for like the ideological texture it is related to our author's mode (or method) of reading Scripture. Something transformative happened in the course of Pinnock's career regarding how he read Scripture. At the same time, the impact of the development of his theological approach effected his relations to certain academic groups, especially groups within the evangelical community. The feedback from such groups in turn effected the development in his reading of Scripture.

Earlier, we showed from Bloomquist's article (229) how a shift at the level of rhetography brought out a shift at the level of self-understanding in *Romans*. We suggest that the reference to religious experience changed not only something in Pinnock's mode of reading Scripture, but also in his relation to groups more directly associated with his work as a theologian, among which was his community of readers. We have already mentioned that the "*Sensory-aesthetic* texture reveals Pinnock's preference for the visual over the other four senses throughout his four books. This tendency is especially noticeable in *Flame of Love*, where he

³⁹ Robbins, *Exploring*, 110.

favours words that are either visually-friendly such as open, mystery, universal, love, and world; or easily visualized such as anthropocentric words like human, experience, life, creation, and power” (154). This growth of appreciation for experiential concepts coincided with his opening to the riches of historic Christian worship and worldview, which in turn drew other groups into Pinnock’s orbit of relations (if not personally, then at least in his reading and research).

For insights into the relation of groups within the ideological texture, Robbins turns to Jeremy Boissevain, who “has developed a taxonomy that Bruce Malina has introduced to New Testament interpreters for analysis of different kinds of groups.”⁴⁰ As usual, Robbins then creatively adapts this model and suggests seven options. Since ideology is the intersection of the writer’s rhetorical location with the perceptions of her or his first and later readers, our goal in this section is to weave the characteristics of these kinds of groups into the discussion of Pinnock's biography.

A. Clique

What characterizes a clique is the word “coalition.” Its members gather together regularly for a limited purpose in distinct parties due to a strong sense of affection and common identity. Everyone in the clique interacts with the others of the group. Within it, three levels of membership are observed: *core members*, who attend all the time; *primary members*, who rarely meet alone and sometimes with the group; and *secondary members*, who participate from the fringe.⁴¹ Cliques can play a role in an author’s life. For example, it was widely known that C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien, and several others met regularly in an Oxford pub as a clique that called itself “The Inklings.” Yet in Pinnock’s writing in the four books we explore, we find almost no autobiographical material offered for the reader, save for the Addendum in ScPr 06. However, the group that Pinnock was part of at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in the early 1970s,

⁴⁰ Robbins, *Exploring*, 100.

⁴¹ Robbins, *Exploring*, 100.

opposing America's involvement in Vietnam, provides a good case study for this understanding of clique as described by Robbins. His biographer, Callen, attests that several lives impacted Pinnock's, and his life theirs, in an enriching interpersonal manner. Those persons included Wallis, Yoder, Day, and others (218). Pinnock was clearly a core member for a time of this clique. His status as professor would certainly have influenced those in the clique who were students at Trinity during those years.

We can also suggest clique-like involvement on Pinnock's part with the authors of the books he read. Key authors shaped and led him, at least for a while.⁴² Save for Barth, all are authors who wrote primarily in the twentieth century, all are white males of American, British, or German cultures, all write in English or German, and all are Protestant save for Küng. In other words, the clique of thinkers that dominated Pinnock's references (and clearly was moulding his thoughts) was tightly homogeneous when graphed on a global culture scale. It was also a razor-thin representation of theology when measured against today's global theological community, against its plethora of theological models, and across 2000 years of Christian thought.

We wonder if this clique of authors proved the counter-weight to Pinnock's membership in the anti-Vietnam movement. For after a few years, his intellectual probing led him off in what would have been deemed, by his former Trinity clique, a more "establishment"-oriented path.

B. Gang

Though similar to a clique, a gang is leader-centred. Likewise, its members gather together regularly for a limited purpose in distinct parties due to a strong sense of affection and common identity. Basically, it can be described as "a large clique with a single leader."⁴³ For his part, Pinnock does not seem to have sought a socially-oriented leadership role. Rather than being

⁴² Within the endnotes or footnotes of our four books, we find Karl Barth (German) referenced 50 times; Wolfhart Pannenberg (German), 42; James D. G. Dunn (British), 34; Bernard Ramm (American), 34; Edward Farley (American), 30; James Barr (British), 29; J. I. Packer (British/Canadian), 29; Hans Küng (German), 27; John W. Montgomery (American), 26; and Jürgen Moltmann (German), 25 times.

⁴³ Robbins, *Exploring*, 100.

an ebullient personality who was highly people-oriented, in the profile that emerges of him from his writings he seems shy by nature, and more tuned to the world of ideas than to people. This would help to explain the tendency he had, as he himself admitted, to make stark sweeping declarations on a given issue, allowing little room for disagreement, that would then leave certain individuals offended by his lack of tact. He freely admitted that in his writing style, he often operated out of enthusiasm, not always thinking in advance whether some readers might misunderstand or object.⁴⁴

That said, for Wallis, his involvement in the clique described above may well have been perceived as a “gang” led by Pinnock. This means that a group depends on its members’ perspectives. Pinnock helped Wallis and other students recognize that the Christian countercultural support they needed was best presented by John Howard Yoder. Frequent writers in the periodical were Wallis, Pinnock, Yoder, and Catholic radicals like Dorothy Day.⁴⁵ These writers shared the conviction that real social change comes through the witness of a prophetic minority that counters the prevailing value system with an alternative vision of Christ on the cross. Pinnock later described the three legs of this social stance as: (a) alienation from North American culture; (b) a resurging radical theology with foundations in Anabaptism; and (c) a new left radical movement that went a long way beyond any Christian commitments.⁴⁶

C. Action Set

Like the two previous categories, an action set too is a coalition for a limited purpose. It is distinguished, however, by a coordination of actions to reach a particular goal, rather than being a group that simply meets social needs. In an ad hoc fashion, leadership arises from within the group as its members join forces.

⁴⁴ Callen, *Pinnock*, 189.

⁴⁵ Callen, *Pinnock*, 109–10.

⁴⁶ Callen, *Pinnock*, 110.

The earlier gang that included Wallis and Pinnock was moved forward by Wallis to become a tangible action set. Pinnock's foray into social reform, particularly the radical theme and social movement shared with Wallis, faded. It did not fade for Wallis, however. He went on to form the "People's Christian Coalition" while at Trinity, which would soon produce the periodical *Post American*, which would later become the *Sojourners* periodical (whose current by-line reads "Celebrating 40 Years of Faith in Action for Social Justice."⁴⁷ This action group could be characterized as a form of Christian socialism--distinctively shaped by faith--that sought the collapse of what they considered a rotten system.⁴⁸

A later goal-oriented action set which Pinnock initiated, and which he did not abandon, was shared with liberal theologian Delwin Brown. During the 1980s, Pinnock participated in occasional respectful debates with Brown, leading to the book they co-authored in 1990, *Theological Crossfire*, in the form of a dialogically organized conversation. The book was precipitated by Brown's review of *The Scripture Principle* in 1984. Pinnock and he then corresponded, and Pinnock was invited to teach in the Aspen summer school sponsored by Iliff School of Theology. Brown was a faculty member there, and later dean.⁴⁹ This set of actions gave flesh to Pinnock's desire, in the latter phase of his career, to see conservative and liberal theology bridge across through their strengths to one another.

D. Faction

As the name indicates, this group (also of a temporary nature for a limited purpose) comes together at the initiation of or on behalf of a specific person. It is goal oriented, though with a negative orientation: the key individual personally recruits followers "according to structurally diverse principles . . . in conflict with another person or persons, with whom he or she was formerly united, over honor and/or control over resources." A faction exists for the

⁴⁷ Callen, *Pinnock*, 108.

⁴⁸ Callen, *Pinnock*, 111.

⁴⁹ Callen, *Pinnock*, 147.

purpose of rivalry, the conflict is political (hence, ideological), and the longer it remains united, the more its characteristics become corporate.⁵⁰

Within our four writings by Pinnock, within his biography, and through comments made by others, one does not get the impression that the later Pinnock was a divisive person. In fact, as his writings progressed over the decades his style seems ever more respectful for those whom he opposed. However, the early Pinnock had a different attitude. In 1965, he was appointed assistant Professor in New Testament in New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. His fear began to grow of the inroads of neo-orthodoxy in the seminary. One professor, who was not alone, studied and appreciated the theological work of Paul Tillich. Pinnock sensed in such a theological stance “the increased hesitancy to affirm that God’s revelation is intelligibly given in the form of informational statements about the divine nature and will.” He concluded that he had been brought to the seminary to stand against such a drift from classic theology.⁵¹ Then, in 1967 he accepted an appointment to Associate Professor of Theology, moving from New Testament studies. Why? Pinnock concluded that theology “is where faith encounters today’s world.”⁵² From this centre, he believed he could better integrate theology with apologetics, and counter the advances of liberal theology.

By 1968, Pinnock was reminding Southern Baptists, who were beginning to emerge from the isolation of their historic enclaves, of the danger of theological drift from sure foundations. He identified such blind alleys as reducing Jesus to religious sensitivity (Schleiermacher), ethical insight (Ritschl), existentialist spirit (Bultmann), or symbol of Being (Tillich).⁵³ In 1969, in his book *Evangelism and Truth*, Pinnock explicitly linked the two themes: “Biblical evangelism requires divine truth; divine truth requires revelation in language; revelation in language requires the *deposit of infallible Scripture* [emphasis added]. As soon as confidence is weakened in the

⁵⁰ Robbins, *Exploring*, 101.

⁵¹ Callen, *Pinnock*, 49.

⁵² See Note 22, from an interview with Barry Callen, 18 April 1998. Callen, *Pinnock*, 49.

⁵³ Callen, *Pinnock*, 46.

integrity of our source material, evangelism is weakened to a corresponding degree.” Callen points out that woven throughout Pinnock’s argument is the assumption that mind sets like humanism and scientism were trying to squeeze God out of the modern world view--and out of churches too.⁵⁴

At this time, he was lecturing to large gatherings of Baptist ministers and to campus groups, often through InterVarsity Christian Fellowship. In effect, he was calling his listeners to a new Reformation, “to set God’s Word above man’s word.” His rallying cry was to “reject all theology and criticism that refuses to bring itself under the divine authority of Holy Scripture, and all traditionalism which weakens that authority by adding to the Word of God.”⁵⁵ Understandably, during his four years in New Orleans Pinnock was noticed as a potential shaper of theological thought by his contemporary evangelicals.⁵⁶

The later Pinnock would admit that during that time he was bitten with the bug of “preoccupation with apologetic certainty,” but he had since recovered.⁵⁷ As of 1981, he was feeling “less desperate” and sounding “less dogmatic.” Six years later in 1987, he would confess that though he may have behaved crudely during that time in New Orleans, he was caught up in the excitement of protecting the church that he loved from the virus of “liberalism.” He was at that time, in other words, a militant Christian rationalist.⁵⁸

We need to point out that the circle went all the way round: the later Pinnock was not always treated gently by *his* critics, either. In his “Afterword” to Callen’s biography (written Aug. 10, 1999), he notes that it was not his “changing” that had been problematic for certain of his evangelical critics. If he had moved from theological liberalism back to standard evangelical ideas, such change would have been deemed as necessary movement. It was, rather, the direction

⁵⁴ See note 16, quoting from Pinnock, *Evangelism and Truth* (Tigerville, S.C.: Jewel Books, 1969), 18-19; in Callen, *Pinnock*, 47.

⁵⁵ Callen, *Pinnock*, 49.

⁵⁶ Callen, *Pinnock*, 49-50.

⁵⁷ Callen, *Pinnock*, 50; Clark H. Pinnock, “A Response to Rex A. Koivisto,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 24 (1981): 154-55. See Note 29 in Callen, *Pinnock*, 49-50.

⁵⁸ Callen, *Pinnock*, 51.

of some of his changes that caused the problem. Basically, Pinnock offended certain evangelical gatekeepers “for not leaving supposedly irreformable issues alone.” For example, his book *A Wideness in God’s Mercy* (1992) challenged soteriological restrictivism; *The Scripture Principle* (1984) and *Tracking the Maze* (1990), rationalism and scholasticism within evangelicalism; and *The Openness of God* (1994), theological determinism. For some, these topics were all considered off-limits. Pinnock noted that a major factor in the formation of evangelicalism was the old rationalist Princeton orthodoxy; and for some of his critics, this Reformed theology cannot be improved upon. To suggest its reformation, or to call it “paleo-Calvinism” (by which Pinnock meant the influences of Enlightenment rationalism he had earlier rejected), is seen as a special threat by those still adhering to Princeton orthodoxy. “Without intending it, my life experience has placed me in a position to help people become free of paleo-Calvinism, if they should want to, of course.”⁵⁹

During the 1990s, at an Evangelical Theological Society meeting in Philadelphia, Pinnock and John Sanders of Huntington College, another evangelical scholar who shared numerous of his key views, led a seminar responding to their critics. A seminary professor read from the floor part of Romans 10, and called on them to “recant.” To his credit, Pinnock answered softly, which was well appreciated by many others in attendance. Yet he continued to attend E.T.S. sessions, as he had over the decades, even though his work was often criticized. He believed he needed to listen, and believed his evangelical colleagues needed to do the same.⁶⁰

The pressure from opponents would not ease for Pinnock, however. At the instigation of a faction within the E.T.S. opposed to his view on the openness of God, on Oct. 26, 2001 the membership passed the following resolution: “We believe the Bible clearly teaches that God has complete, accurate, and infallible knowledge of all events past, present, and future including all future decisions and actions of free moral agents.” For ten years such a resolution had been

⁵⁹ Callen, *Pinnock*, 271.

⁶⁰ Callen, *Pinnock*, 189.

discussed, precipitated by the debate over what had come to be called Open Theism. The three individuals in the forefront of the debate, and targets of the resolution, were Greg Boyd of Bethel College, Sanders, and Pinnock. As Open Theists, they had written and argued for “God’s self-limitation in dealing with his free human creatures. Because he desires their free response . . . he neither predetermines nor foreknows their moral choices.”⁶¹ At the heart of the debate for E.T.S. members was whether such a position violated the society’s understanding of “inerrant” Scriptures. 253 members voted yes out of 360 ballots cast.

The next November, 2002, at the annual meeting in Toronto, yet another vote was held by the E.T.S. challenging “the legitimacy of the membership of Clark Pinnock and John Sanders for violating the inerrancy clause of the E.T.S. constitution,” with members present voting 171 to 131 on the motion against Pinnock, and 166 to 143 against Sanders. The executive committee was now charged with examining the matter over the coming year to determine if charges should be brought against the two members, according to the constitution.⁶² In October 2003, Pinnock met with the executive committee, who called him to account about a footnote in his recent book *Most Moved Mover*. The issue at hand was unfulfilled prophecies, and whether God’s affirmation had failed to come true. In reference to 1 Thess 4:17, Pinnock had written that “contrary to Paul, the second coming was not just around the corner . . .” Before the committee, “Pinnock agreed with his accusers that his language in that note ‘Unintentionally and unfortunately . . . strays beyond what I was getting at, and is thus objectionable. . . . I do not believe that God’s prophets ever err. They always tell the truth when all is said and done.’” The committee recommended that constitutional charges against him be dropped.⁶³ When it came to a vote the next month before

⁶¹ David Neff, “Foreknowledge Debate Clouded by Political Agenda: Evangelical Theologians Differ Over Excluding Open Theists,” 1, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2001/novemberweb-only/11-19-13.0.html>.

⁶² Doug Koop, “Evangelical Theological Society Moves Against Open Theists: Membership of Pinnock and Sanders Challenged by Due Process,” 1, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2002/novemberweb-only/11-18-54.0.html>.

⁶³ Ted Olsen, “ETS Leadership Issues Recommendations on Kicking Out Open Theists: Evangelical Theological Society’s Executive Committee Unanimously Recommends Clark Pinnock Stay; Majority Says John Sanders Should Go,” 2, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2003/octoberweb-only/10-27-41.0.html?start=2>.

the whole membership of the E.T.S., the “proposal to expel Pinnock received 212 yes votes and 432 no votes, thus failing to reach the necessary two-thirds majority by a wide margin. Sanders squeaked by. The proposal to expel him received 388 yes votes and 231 no votes, barely missing the required 66 2/3 percent by less than four percentage points.”⁶⁴ The tenor of the proceedings did prove to be peaceful and respectful, however, rather than filled with the predicted “fireworks,” a “rapprochement” that allowed all parties to express their intent and emotions, and by which the constitution was honoured.⁶⁵

One can appreciate why, over the years, Pinnock sometimes felt a little envious of his critics, who exhibited less change in their journeys and greater consistency of thought. “My journey certainly does reveal changes in my orientation and substance.” Are those theologians who do not change lucky enough to have seen the truth when they were young, and simply stayed the course; or are they stubborn enough to hold to a position even when the position became open to major challenges? For his part, Pinnock confessed, “There is no other possibility for me than to be a pilgrim without permanent residence or certain destination. I cannot be content with unexamined beliefs just because they are traditional. I feel compelled to face up to hard questions, even if there are more questions than easy answers.”⁶⁶

In his scholarly activities, then, coalitions and factions formed for a time focused around various issues, though no direct mention is made of them in our selected books. Pinnock’s ongoing efforts to redefine the inerrancy debate within evangelicalism led him into factions with some scholars who proved to be allies, and into strong opposition from others.

It is arguable that Pinnock formed part of a faction but not a gang (though he could have been seen by some to be the leader). He was, after all, being shown by E.T.S. to have broken away with a small group of dissidents. He did not, however, organize a faction, complete with its

⁶⁴ David Neff, “Dispatch from Atlanta: What Fireworks? Anxieties and Attack Turn to Grace and Truth as the Evangelical Theological Society Votes on Open Theism Proponents’ Membership,” 1, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2003/novemberweb-only/11-17-41.0.html>.

⁶⁵ Neff, “Dispatch,” 2.

⁶⁶ Callen, *Pinnock*, 270.

own journal and administrative structure. He was content to act more in a prophetic role, exposing within evangelicalism the dangers that he saw and calling people to take action.

E. Corporate Group

This is a group with a dimension of permanence to it. From a centre of common interests and rules (norms) which fix members' relations to one another through rights and duties, others are recruited to join. If property is defined broadly, then the common interests of this group can be called property interests.⁶⁷

Given the earlier description of an "action set" as a coalition for a limited purpose, coordinating its actions to reach a particular goal (276), we might first ask ourselves if Pinnock's beloved evangelicalism falls into the action set category, at least at its conception. Though there is no central organization or officially sanctioned leadership, within the movement (now several decades old)⁶⁸ leadership has continued to emerge as individuals arise, offering their unique set of gifts to provide a way forward for the community in the face of a particular goal or problem it has encountered. Though evangelicalism does fit such a description, its size as a movement likely makes it too large to qualify for Robbins' definition of an action set. Rather, Pinnock's story highlights that there is a concept of "rights and duties" within evangelicalism's corporate context. It also includes within its ranks actions sets and especially factions with defined goals, convinced to a high degree of specificity what identity as "evangelical" means. It was Pinnock's challenge of certain assumed standards that lead to his near ouster from the E.T.S.

As well as evangelicalism in general, he belonged to other corporate groups in the seventy-plus years of his life, including the specific circle of Baptist churches with which he identified. In the 1960s that included the Southern Baptists; and during his years in Canada, the

⁶⁷ Robbins, *Exploring*, 101.

⁶⁸ Tim Stafford, "Teeming Diversity: The Third Lausanne Congress Demonstrated That Global Evangelicalism Has Been Transformed," *Christianity Today* 54 (December 2010): 38.

Convention Baptists of Ontario and Québec.⁶⁹ Another important corporate group which shaped his life for decades was InterVarsity Christian Fellowship.⁷⁰ Such a theologically united yet ecumenical movement was a mould for evangelical Christianity to which he was introduced in his Baptist church while a teenager. Even as late as the 1960s, I.V.C.F. still provided a trusted context within which he could gather with pastors and church leaders across the U.S. to plead for faithfulness to a shared view of biblical inerrancy that was almost inseparable from evangelicalism at that time.

The Evangelical Theological Society⁷¹ was a “corporate group” which provided Pinnock with a defining centre across the decades, and a forum within which to plead for certain changes within evangelical theology. It was also a source of grief at times. His experiences of facing a committed faction within a corporate group, intent upon his removal from the group for reasons related to theological “property interests” (283), did not embitter him toward evangelicalism. He

⁶⁹ The Convention was strongly influenced by liberal theology in the first decades of the twentieth century, but in the latter half turned back toward its evangelical roots. Pinnock’s influence at McMaster Divinity School, a leading seminary, was one of many factors in that turn.

⁷⁰ See IVCF of Canada (Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship), “About > About Inter-Varsity,” <http://www.ivcf.ca/ivcf/myweb.php?hls=10023>.

According to its web site, Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship has existed in Canada since 1929. What began as a simple idea of students gathering for prayer, Bible study and witness now spans more than 60 university and college campuses and Inter-Varsity Pioneer Camps in six provinces. The goal is to help students on campus “explore how God fits into their lives” accompanied by IVCF staff. Canada’s IVCF is one of ten founding members of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students (a network of student movements in over 150 countries).

Internationally, in 1947 leaders from Canada and nine other student movements met at Harvard University in the United States to establish a campus ministry in every university in the world. With plans laid since the 1930s and stalled by World War Two, a group finally met in Oxford in 1946 to draft a constitution for what was to become IFES. As this draft was being completed, “members of the student group in China, the most recently formed and also the largest of the movements, sent a telegram confirming their interest in forming a world movement. Minutes of the 1946 meeting call this a ‘striking confirmation’ that their plans were in accordance with God’s will.” That commitment still defines affiliation to IFES. See IFES (International Fellowship of Evangelical Students), “About > Our History,” <http://www.ifesworld.org/about/history>.

⁷¹ See ETS (Evangelical Theological Society), “About > About the ETS,” <http://www.etsjets.org/about>. The Evangelical Theological Society was founded in 1949 as “a group of scholars, teachers, pastors, students, and others dedicated to the oral exchange and written expression of theological thought and research.” Publishing a peer reviewed, quarterly journal, called the *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* (J.E.T.S.), what sets the E.T.S. apart from some other theological societies is its insistence that all members sign yearly a doctrinal statement that reads, “The Bible alone, and the Bible in its entirety, is the Word of God written and is therefore inerrant in the autographs. God is a Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each an uncreated person, one in essence, equal in power and glory.”

seems to have counted such happenings as part of the cost of reform within the E.T.S. and the larger evangelical community it represents. In 2006 he would write in the Appendix of the second edition of *The Scripture Principle* that “It was obvious that reforming a cherished element of fundamentalism like biblical inerrancy would be slow and painful. . . . a familiar experience of walking a tightrope, explaining to the liberals why so few revisions were being made and to the fundamentalists why there were so many.”⁷²

F. Historic Tradition

“A historic tradition is one to which a person exhibits special alliance when interpreting the Bible and the world. Examples are the Catholic tradition, the Protestant tradition, or a specific tradition (e.g., Lutheran or Reformed) within Protestantism.”⁷³

1. *Baptist Tradition*. This was the first historic tradition to which Pinnock was introduced--by birth. It is an ecclesial home that he never left.

2. *Evangelicalism*. In Pinnock’s teen years, this became his macro-tradition of choice. In a Postscript which he wrote decades later in 1999, he affectionately referred to it as “the big tent” in which he discovered the ecumenism of an interdenominational coalition. This is where, by his account, he “met God,” and though he would need to grow beyond a number of assumptions which he unquestioningly accepted in the mid-1950s, he considered himself to have been enriched thereby. Without being blind to its weaknesses of biblicism, sectarianism, and even meanspiritedness, he concluded that we “see arising a company of the best quality of theologians that we have ever had, men and women who are developing compelling understandings of the gospel for our day. For my part, it is not time to vacate the big tent. Rather, it is time to work vigorously for needed reform.”⁷⁴

⁷² Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 258.

⁷³ Robbins, *Exploring*, 101.

⁷⁴ Callen, *Pinnock*, 266–67.

3. *Collapse of Calvinism*. As Callen puts it, it was not the Wesleyan, Anabaptist, and Pentecostal traditions that deemed Pinnock to have moved out rashly on his own. It was the “paleo-Calvinists,” who had decided to stop developing theologically beyond the guidelines of the Westminster Confession (in contrast to Reformed theologians like Karl Barth). They it was who deemed him beyond the pale.⁷⁵ For his part, Pinnock found his only adequacy to be “in a humble walk with the Spirit of God who calls, enlightens, gifts, and sends” as he moved from the scholasticized Reformed viewpoint held by a sizeable number in the evangelical tradition in the mid- and late-twentieth century, to an increasing acceptance of core elements of the Eastern tradition, later Wesleyan streams of perspective, and a growing appreciation for many Pentecostal scholars. Interestingly, at the same time his loyalty to his Baptist roots continued to grow deeper too.⁷⁶

For Pinnock, his entire chain of logical conclusions began to unravel with his questioning of the perseverance of the saints. He was teaching at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in 1970, and dealing with the doctrine in the book of Hebrews. As mentioned earlier (26), he found that with his Calvinist understanding he was having trouble making sense of texts like Hebrews 3:12 and 10:26, all addressed to Christians. He concluded that the believer’s security in God or “faith-union with Christ” is tied at least in part to human partnership. He witnessed that “once I saw that, the logic of Calvinism was broken in principle, and it was only a matter of time before the larger implications of its breaking would dawn on me.”⁷⁷ Those implications, nineteen years later, he listed as five:

(1) There is no “horrible decree.”⁷⁸ Pinnock was referring to 3.23.7 of the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, where Calvin writes,

⁷⁵ Callen, *Pinnock*, 176.

⁷⁶ Callen, *Pinnock*, 177.

⁷⁷ Clark H. Pinnock, ed., *The Grace of God, the Will of Man: A Case for Arminianism* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Academie Books, 1989), 17.

⁷⁸ Pinnock, *Grace of God*, 19.

I again ask how it is that the fall of Adam involves so many nations with their infant children in eternal death without remedy unless that it so seemed meet to God? Here the most loquacious tongues must be dumb. The *decree*, I admit, is *dreadful* (italics added); and yet it is impossible to deny that God foreknew what the end of man was to be before he made him, and foreknew, because he had so ordained by his decree. Should any one here inveigh against the prescience of God, he does it rashly and unadvisedly. For why, pray, should it be made a charge against the heavenly Judge, that he was not ignorant of what was to happen? Thus, if there is any just or plausible complaint, it must be directed against predestination.⁷⁹

Calvin makes the claim because of his Augustinian premise that God determines all that happens in the world; and since not all are saved in the end, as Calvin believed the Bible taught, he could arrive at no other conclusion. Now, for Pinnock, who earlier had been compelled to follow the same line of logic, the “insight of reciprocity” allowed him to rethink the doctrine of perseverance. “It became possible for me to accept the scriptural teaching of the universal salvific will of God and not feel duty-bound to deny it as before. . . . The dark shadow was lifting; the logic of Calvinism could not longer blind me to these lines of biblical teaching.”⁸⁰

(2) What then does divine election mean, if God is not selecting some to be saved?

Pinnock was drawn in the 1970s to a possible answer: “that election is a corporate category and not oriented to the choice of individuals for salvation.” Hence, Eph 1:3-14 (for example, verses 4-5: “For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will . . .”)⁸¹ can be understood as referring to a *class* of people that God has chosen for his Son; to be in Christ is to be joined to and to belong to this elect body. This

⁷⁹ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, tran. Henry Beveridge (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2008), 630.

⁸⁰ Pinnock, *Grace of God*, 19.

⁸¹ *The Holy Bible*, New International Version (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1978).

understanding would provide Pinnock with considerable latitude later in his career, when absolute divine omniscience became an issue for him.⁸²

(3) Predestination for Pinnock then became more a matter of God “setting goals for people rather than forcing them to enact the preprogramed decrees.” God chooses to limit his powers to enable relatively autonomous humans to exist with him, and to share in his divine creativity. With a power that is higher than merely coercive, “God invites humans to share in deciding what the future will be. God does not take it all onto his own shoulders.” Pinnock then reconsidered theodicy, finding a way to conclude that God did not will Auschwitz in eternity past, nor any other form of evil. Rather, human choices bear devastatingly real fruit.⁸³

(4) The depth of human sinfulness and the nature of the atonement next came under Pinnock’s scrutiny. Rather than following Wesley’s suggestion of universal prevenient grace as a counter to the doctrine of the total depravity of the sinner, he was drawn to question total depravity itself “as a possible ambush designed to cut off non-Augustinians at the pass.” He could not find evidence that Jesus, or the Bible, regarded people as totally depraved; rather, Scripture appeals to people as if they are able genuinely to respond. “The gospel addresses them as free and responsible agents and I must suppose it does so because that is what they are.”⁸⁴ Barth’s version of substitution also shaped Pinnock’s thought: that of a great exchange whereby Jesus, the last Adam, rose victorious over sin and Satan by standing in the place of the entire human race. His only point of contention with Barth was to balance, from his point of view, Barth’s excessive emphasis on the objective direction of the atonement. As Pinnock put it, “Faith after all is the condition for the concrete realization of this salvation in anyone able to respond.”⁸⁵

4. *Pietism*. This interpretive lens grew in importance for Pinnock across the span of his scholarly career. As for its definition, Barth claims in *Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth*

⁸² Pinnock, *Grace of God*, 19-20.

⁸³ Pinnock, *Grace of God*, 20-21.

⁸⁴ Pinnock, *Grace of God*, 21-22.

⁸⁵ Pinnock, *Grace of God*, 22-23.

Century that in the Europe of the eighteenth century, Christianity became more of an individualistic inner matter,⁸⁶ and the original pietist was fundamentally an individualist. He or she was fighting for Christianity as a personal encounter with and communion with God, rather than as a church, creed, historical force, guide to life, help in life, or power in life.⁸⁷ For such pietists, the transformation of the following themes was deemed essential:

(1) The incarnation of the word of God in Jesus.⁸⁸ The real birth of Christ was redefined by pietism as in our hearts. His real saving death is what is accomplished in us; his real resurrection is his triumph in those who believe in him.⁸⁹

(2) Fellow-man. Christianity for early pietists was directed toward the individual, not in the abstract, but to the particular individual as related to her or his fellow man. This other person becomes not just my sister or brother in Christ, but *my* sister or brother. Community now strengthens me,⁹⁰ and this community needs to be free in order to allow for private assemblies of “elect aliens,” who belong together in a special way because of leading personalities. The result was pietist separatist groups, who then banded together in an all-embracing separatist group known as the world-wide church.

(3) Authority. No longer alien and external, authority favours the inner personal formation devoted to oneself.⁹¹ Inspiration is not just of Scripture or church, but of the individual prophet and seer. It is inward, it is one’s deepest conviction, and it no longer differs from supreme freedom.⁹²

(4) The divine command. No longer general and needing to be interpreted for the specific situation, the divine command rather is specific, telling a person what is required within a certain

⁸⁶ Karl Barth, *Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century* (*Protestantische Theologie Im 19. Jahrhundert*) (London: S.C.M. Press, 2001), 99.

⁸⁷ Barth, *Protestant*, 109.

⁸⁸ Barth, *Protestant*, 100.

⁸⁹ Barth, *Protestant*, 101.

⁹⁰ Barth, *Protestant*, 102.

⁹¹ Barth, *Protestant*, 103.

⁹² Barth, *Protestant*, 104.

situation.⁹³

(5) The concept of mystery, or of the sacrament. Christian mystery is now accessible personally. Man has become the sacrament, with an inner spiritual baptism (an inner Eucharist), and a direct personal converse of the soul with God.⁹⁴

When Barth's five characteristics are applied to Pinnock's understanding of pietism, we can appreciate the appeal of pietism to Pinnock, still in his early years, held in tension with his longing for the rational certainty offered in the Princetonian view of inerrancy. Barth argued, with point (1) above in mind, that the claim for the verbal inspiration of Scripture is "but an extremely effective making present of the incarnation of the word" in a convenient and easily understood codification "for the possession of and at the disposal" of the person living today.⁹⁵ Pinnock increasingly turned to the existential role of the Spirit as authorizing the process of inspiration, and of safeguarding its interpretation in any age. At the same time, in *The Scripture Principle*, he balanced this relevance of experience with the Scripture's own claims of authority, and with the phenomena of human language embedded in culture and worldview. Pinnock's stance on the incarnation of the word of God in Jesus grew more nuanced than the classic pietist position as described by Barth.

In regards to point (2), Pinnock also nuanced classic pietism's commitment to the individual. He became keenly aware of the historic church and its two millennia of teaching and traditions, finding in it a hermeneutic and metanarrative more appropriate to the theological conditions of today than that of rationalism, and serving as a counter to the extreme individualism of the Western world. Without distancing himself from the legitimacy of a person's religious experience, the broader context of the church catholic compelled him to re-evaluate the beneficiary role of ecclesial authority (3) in interpreting one's living of the divine command (4). He became aware of the flow of the church's historic experience--that is, its tradition--and the

⁹³ Barth, *Protestant*, 105.

⁹⁴ Barth, *Protestant*, 107.

⁹⁵ Barth, *Protestant*, 101.

weight it carries in sanctioning an individual's religious experience today. By 1996, he writes positively of sacrament in *Flame of Love*, exhibiting a depth of appreciation not expected in a Baptist scholar. As he moved deeper into the charismatic realm of experience and theology, he also sought to nuance the emphasis on experience with the historic church's understanding of sacramental mystery (5). Eastern theology's apophatic tradition drew him, providing a rich source of counsel into the mysteries that shape one's encounter with God.

William Abraham described Pinnock's pietist track as his joining a "Protestant underworld of protest" seeking a return to the Scriptures' soteriological vision, and represented not only by pietism, but by early Methodism, and Pentecostalism as well. It is an approach fueled by an unease "with a purely cognitive approach to the Christian faith."⁹⁶ However, we are compelled to conclude that Pinnock's positive references to pietism must be qualified. Abraham goes on to argue that these movements, despite their remarkable success "as agents of evangelization" for a period of time, eventually were drawn (for good or for bad) into "a [broader] Protestant conception of Scripture, complete with its epistemic categories, even though this often sat uneasily with their usage and their original intention."

An epistemological quest preoccupied Pinnock. He acknowledged that in his early years he was seeking certainty in faith via inerrancy, what he later called Reformed scholasticism. His biographer Callen describes this phase as a fundamental assertion "of the supposed total divine control of this present world."⁹⁷ Pinnock began to question this assertion. He began to see the word "evangelical" as belonging to the whole church, meaning "gospel" people, and not restricted to "a conservative, post-fundamentalist subculture in the church" or a "subset of a subculture."⁹⁸ In the coming decades, he would shift his attention from a rational framework to the experience, the power, the practicality, and the mission expressed in the charismatic

⁹⁶ Callen, *Pinnock*, 91; William J. Abraham, *Canon and Criterion in Christian Theology: From the Fathers to Feminism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 474–75.

⁹⁷ Callen, *Pinnock*, 90.

⁹⁸ Callen, *Pinnock*, 90.

movement (though not their excesses and peculiarities). He would come to appreciate *function* more than *form* in the area of biblical authority and meaning, disavowing anything that detracts from Christian discipleship and mission.⁹⁹

Even as early as 1966, Pinnock claimed that experience *confirms* but does not *create* the gospel which history validates and philosophy studies. He refused to accept a view that Christianity, as a free encounter with divine reality, takes place only within personal experience and is thus entirely contentless and self-authenticating.¹⁰⁰ Pinnock's understanding of pietism grew rather into a soteriological vision of the Bible coupled with the Spirit's working through the historic church, rather than a purely individualistic approach more characteristic of the earlier pietistic movement.

5. *Christian Theology and Greek Philosophy.* Relatively early we can trace Pinnock's move (as a theologian with a New Testament studies background) toward the relationship between historic Christianity, traced back to the church fathers, and the Hellenism of that classic period. It is Callen once again who neatly points out a proleptic feature to Pinnock's passion for pneumatology.¹⁰¹ As early as his Ph.D. thesis,¹⁰² Pinnock had argued for a bridge between the Hellenistic setting of Paul's use of Spirit, and his use of the Old Testament via the Qumran community (Pinnock had taken Semitic studies at the undergraduate level at the University of Toronto). As a community, Qumran was an exception. Unlike most Hebrew writers who were working in the centuries closest to the start of the church, "the radical Qumran community . . . clearly sought to incorporate pneumatology into religious belief and practice."¹⁰³ Arguing that Paul rooted his concept of the Spirit in this thread of Hebrew heritage, Pinnock then parted company with "certain aspects of 'classic Christian doctrine.'" Rather than presuming that Greek

⁹⁹ Callen, *Pinnock*, 80.

¹⁰⁰ Steven J. Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom* (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 38. Also, Callen, *Pinnock*, 81, nts. 114, 116.

¹⁰¹ Callen, *Pinnock*, 31–33.

¹⁰² Clark H. Pinnock, "The Concept of Spirit in the Epistles of Paul," Ph. D. dissertation (Manchester, U.K.: University of Manchester, 1963).

¹⁰³ Callen, *Pinnock*, 31.

literature and philosophies shaped Paul's concept of Spirit, he concluded that Paul's conviction as a converted rabbi of Jesus' Messiahship "assured him of the dawning of the eschatological age in which the Spirit of God was to act in a new way," a way that would prove to be as dynamic as the "virile notion" of *ruach* in the Hebrew Scriptures;¹⁰⁴ and coupled with what he called the "all-determining significance" of the Spirit's work in believers and in the church.¹⁰⁵

Over a decade later, in December 1978 at the thirtieth annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society (convened at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School), he presented a paper entitled "The Need for a Scriptural, and Therefore a Neo-Classical Theism." In the "classical synthesis" of revelation and rationalism, he argued that biblical theism and classical theism were *not* the same thing. Over the centuries, Augustine and the Western Christians that followed him had attempted to interpret a biblical message that at its core is historical and personal, by means of Greek metaphysical categories which at their core are a-historical and impersonal. As a result, the dynamic ontology of the Bible clashes with the static ontology of Greek thought. Even Jacob Arminius and John Wesley had not gone far enough. They appreciated love-centred and relational categories of theology, but remained quite Western in their traditional definitions of God's perfections such as unchangeability, eternity, and so on.¹⁰⁶

In a book he edited in 1989 entitled *The Grace of God, the Will of Man*, Pinnock wrote the first chapter, called "From Augustine to Arminius: A Pilgrimage in Theology." Once again, his starting point was the dynamic view of God that can be seen in the Bible versus the ancient Greek world's negative view of the passage of time and of historical change. He argued that in the Greek view, the Deity was presented "in terms of pure actuality, changelessness, timelessness, and the like--ideas that negate the value of history and historical change."¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ Clark H. Pinnock, "Concept," iv-v. As quoted by Callen, *Pinnock*, 32, nt. 39.

¹⁰⁵ Callen, *Pinnock*, 32.

¹⁰⁶ Callen, *Pinnock*, 128–29. See Kenneth Kantzer and Stanley Gundry, eds., *Perspectives on Evangelical Theology: Papers from the Thirtieth Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1979), 40–41.

¹⁰⁷ Pinnock, *Grace of God*, 24.

Pinnock concluded that it was time to reconceptualize evangelicalism's view of God. He set about doing so on the basis of three insights:

(1) Clarity was needed about the doctrine of divine immutability. Plato's idea of a perfect being that would not change had reached too far. It had virtually stripped God of any kind of responsiveness, undercutting piety's assumption of reciprocity between God and humans. Pinnock proposed that though God is unchangeable in his being and character as personal agent, he does change in his relationships with people and creation.¹⁰⁸

(2) The notion of God's timelessness limited his ability to deliberate, remember, or anticipate. Yet the picture of God in the Bible is of someone operating from within history and within time as well as outside it. "If he were not able to be within time, he would not be able to be with us on our journey or freely relate to what goes on or make plans and carry them out or experience the joy of victory or the anguish of defeat, as Scripture says God does."¹⁰⁹

(3) Consequently, divine omniscience does not entail exhaustive foreknowledge of all that will happen. Otherwise, everything that humans would ever choose to do is "already spelled out in the divine knowledge register," leaving no truly significant choices to be made--a form of theological determinism. Rather, free choices are *potential*, something not yet known even by God, for "they are not yet settled in reality." Through this lens, many biblical texts now came alive for Pinnock, including "Perhaps they will understand," or "Perhaps they will repent" (Jer 3:7; Ezek 12:3). God also pleads, "If you change your ways, I will let you dwell in this place, but if not . . ." (Jer 7:5-7) and even questions himself, "What shall I do with you?" (Hos 6:4). "The God of the Bible displays an openness to the future that the traditional view of omniscience simply cannot accommodate."¹¹⁰

Later, in 1994 Pinnock wrote a chapter in *The Openness of God* entitled "Systematic

¹⁰⁸ Pinnock, *Grace of God*, 24.

¹⁰⁹ Pinnock, *Grace of God*, 24-25.

¹¹⁰ Pinnock, *Grace of God*, 25-26; Callen, *Pinnock*, 240-43.

Theology.”¹¹¹ The concept for the book originated with John Sanders (who had come to many of his own “openness” insights about God separate from Pinnock’s mentoring), though priority was given to Pinnock’s name due his prominence in the marketplace.¹¹² The authors argued that the catastrophes of this world were not planned by a divine purpose. To suggest otherwise is to fall prey to some elements of Greek thought which have constituted a serious distortion of the biblical balance between God’s transcendence, and his intimate immanence and cooperation with human agency. Though he attributed the teaching of God’s impassibility more to Plato than to the Bible, Pinnock notes that “Plato was not altogether wrong to say that God must be free of certain kinds of passion and emotion.” Since God is not a creature, his response to physical pain (being without body) or loneliness (dwelling within a Trinity) “must in some ways be an imaginative response to the suffering of a creature.”¹¹³ The book argues that Reformed scholasticism replaced the God of promise and love who acts in human history with a removed deity described by a set of metaphysical statements, for ancient Greek thought put the perfect and ultimate in the realm of the absolutely transcendent and immutable. Pinnock sought a realignment with the older biblical model (29), an “open view” of God or a “free-will theism” which would revise classical theism. Doing so would then shift the focus to God as loving parent, who is sensitive and responsive to humanity.¹¹⁴

To complete the circle, Callen points out that Gordon Fee, noted Pentecostal New Testament scholar, wrote a large volume in 1994 entitled *God’s Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul*. There, on the first page, he cited Pinnock’s unpublished 1963 dissertation as foundational to the subject. He argued that “the crucial matter for Christian life, from beginning to end” is the Spirit of God “as an experienced and living reality.” Yet today “the

¹¹¹ Clark Pinnock and et al., *The Openness of God: A Biblical Challenge to the Traditional Understanding of God* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1994), 101–25.

¹¹² Callen, *Pinnock*, 153.

¹¹³ Pinnock, *Openness of God*, 118–19.

¹¹⁴ Callen, *Pinnock*, 154.

Spirit is largely marginalized in our actual life together as a community of faith.”¹¹⁵ What began for Pinnock as a scholarly and (possibly) abstract thesis statement as a doctoral student turned out to become the defining motif of his academic career, influencing others, including leading evangelical thinkers.

6. *Theological Liberalism*. In our study of historic tradition, we cannot ignore the ongoing presence of theological liberalism throughout all of Pinnock’s life. Born into a liberal Baptist church in Toronto, he consciously chose to leave that setting as a teen. The early part of his scholarly career was spent to some degree in opposition to a faction promoting the advance of liberal theology within the Southern Baptist denomination. Yet as he entered the latter part of his career, Pinnock began to hope for a rapprochement between evangelicals and liberals (36). He was motivated in part by his conviction that the two current modes within Protestantism are both needed for the good of the church, for they share the desire to “correlate the Christian message with human existence.”¹¹⁶ Of their differences, he described evangelicals as being more preoccupied with the “message” pole, and liberals with the “human existence” pole. Conservatives rely on “the truth believed to be in Christ as biblically reported; liberals certainly are open to the Christian past, but finally tend to live by the best of modern conclusions.” He saw the truth as lying somewhere between (1) the old fundamentalism which woodenly understood Scripture as a catalogue of pre-formed truths which are the source of definitive doctrinal propositions; and (2) Bultmann, who “sees the New Testament issuing existential challenges to needy modern humans without offering reliable historical information or religious dogmas.”¹¹⁷

This desire took practical expression. Pinnock participated with liberal theologian Delwin Brown in occasional respectful debates and the co-writing of *Theological Crossfire* in 1990, a book in the form of a dialogically organized conversation. This resulted in an invitation to

¹¹⁵ Callen, *Pinnock*, 33.

¹¹⁶ Callen, *Pinnock*, 97.

¹¹⁷ Callen, *Pinnock*, 98.

Pinnock to teach in Iliff's Aspen summer school (277).¹¹⁸

G. Multiple Historic Traditions Throughout the World

Pinnock's relation to other religions was not positive in 1972, as reflected in *Biblical Revelation*. His language was at times caustic and condescending, such as "A cursory glance at the history of religions will show how much existential fervor there is among savages who gladly perform atrocities on behalf of fiendish gods."¹¹⁹ Sociology's claim that religions are historically conditioned might damage other religions, he opined, but not Christianity, for "the finality of Jesus Christ and the inspiration of Scripture provide an Archimedian point in the flux of the human situation" which set it apart from any form of historical conditioning.¹²⁰

By the time of the first edition of *The Scripture Principle* (1984), Pinnock's conversion from modernism, which had been moulding his rationalist worldview at the very time he was raging against it, was well underway. In a far humbler spirit, he moved into an "individual location" of consciously relating "New Testament interpretation not only to Judaism, out of which Christianity emerged, but to traditions like Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, and Native American religion."¹²¹ He could affirm that religion in general offers a revelation of "the vision people have of what is ultimate and sacred to them," giving them an orientation for life and a criterion of what is true and valuable.¹²² He saw the incarnation as something not at odds with the theism of Judaism and Islam, but rather inherently possible in their revelation of God's power and love. "The claim goes beyond, but not against, anything in those religions."¹²³ Because the church is now in touch with world religions, it is "in a position to learn what is true in their experience of the God who addresses everyone"; and "it may be possible to sharpen our

¹¹⁸ Callen, *Pinnock*, 147.

¹¹⁹ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 43.

¹²⁰ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 128.

¹²¹ Robbins, *Exploring*, 101-2.

¹²² Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 3.

¹²³ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 11.

understanding of what God is intending in the Bible.”¹²⁴ He was now comfortable assessing religions, including Judaism, in a progressive evolution-of-religion mode whereby “God engaged Israel in a process of education that was meant to take them from a lower to a higher plane of religion and morality.”¹²⁵

Ever the apologist, however, Pinnock was compelled to ask how we can understand the finality of Jesus Christ in the sphere of world religions.¹²⁶ His considered conclusion was that of a twofold trajectory in New Testament revelation: the cross work of Jesus Christ, plus the Spirit’s coming on the day of Pentecost. This Spirit event fulfilled “the subjective side of revelation in the Christian understanding and balances the objective pole. It answers the human need for subjective immediacy in religion and forces us to the dynamic and contemporary dimensions of revelation.”¹²⁷ Yet he sounded a warning to Christians involved in religious studies. “Because religion touches the deepest emotions, believers easily become inconsistent when their whole worldview seems to be threatened. We can be tempted by clever epistemological tricks that offer to ease the pain of religious doubt. But our love for the God of all truth must be great enough for us to refuse such seduction. What lies in mystery should be allowed to so lie.”¹²⁸ This willingness to live with mystery and ambiguities allowed him, near the close of his life, to reflect back on his earlier longing for certainty. “Later I would see the degree to which the foundationalism of modernity had been reflected in my own early work. ‘It did so in a covert way,’ I reported, ‘since I was not tuned into these subtleties. Because religion appeals to the need for security in life, it is easy to fall into foundationalism as a way of attaining it. It has a particularly seductive appeal for fundamentalists with their passion for certainty.’ ”¹²⁹

¹²⁴ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 20.

¹²⁵ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 110-11.

¹²⁶ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 171.

¹²⁷ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 36.

¹²⁸ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 152-53.

¹²⁹ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 258, nt. 15.

Pinnock's appreciation for divine activity in world religions would take full flower in *Flame of Love*. More broadly than just religion, he now sought God's fingerprints in all of life's experiences. "One encounters the Spirit not only in religion but in experiences of every kind. God is in the love we feel for one another. God is present in the give-and-take of relationships. God comes in the compassion we feel in the midst of brokenness."¹³⁰ Now he sought to understand nuances in the thought of world religions. "Even Hinduism, which sounds monistic and nondualistic, speaks dialectically. It is not always clear that nonduality is meant. Sankara, who understands God to be beyond conceptual reach and salvation as union, can sound rather Christian at times."¹³¹ In fact, he brings an eschatological dimension to the issue of world religions, suggesting that though religions are currently locked in competition and coexistence, in dialogue and apologetics, such a time will end when the rulers of earth bring their honour and glory into the new Jerusalem (Rev 21:24, 26).¹³² The Spirit of the eschaton is the same Spirit who now helps followers of Jesus to discern what, in human culture and religion, God is using to draw everywhere people to friendship.¹³³ "People search for God in religions; are we to say that they never encounter God in religion, in spite of the inadequacies and distortions that are to be found in every religious worldview?"¹³⁴ In the same way that Spirit helps us sift through what is true *and* not true in Christianity, he helps us recognize that "Though most religions contain some truth, they also contain much that is dark and oppressive. We know that from our own experience of Christianity, in whose history sin has often tragically manifested itself."¹³⁵ Spiritual discernment--note the existential dimension--is a gift of the Spirit.¹³⁶

It seems then that references to groups plays a role in the elaboration of ideological texture. Ideologically, Pinnock read the Scriptures in community. Our understanding of his

¹³⁰ Pinnock, *Flame*, 73.

¹³¹ Pinnock, *Flame*, 154.

¹³² Pinnock, *Flame*, 189.

¹³³ Pinnock, *Flame*, 182.

¹³⁴ Pinnock, *Flame*, 188.

¹³⁵ Pinnock, *Flame*, 206.

¹³⁶ Pinnock, *Flame*, 208.

modes of interpretation is expanded by our understanding of that community (or communities). Something transformative happened in the course of his career regarding how he read Scripture, and this fifth chapter elaborates that. The development of his theological approach impacted his relations to certain academic groups, especially groups within the evangelical community, for these relations were developed in his reading of Scripture. As example, we need only consider his sometimes tempestuous relations with the Evangelical Theological Society (280, 284).

IV. Pinnock's Interpretation

Up to this point, innertextual analysis has provided us with a means of assessing the world that Pinnock made in his texts, while intertextual analysis has opened windows to the real world standing behind Pinnock's authorial world. Now our ideological analysis allows us to probe the persuasive process of Pinnock's overarching argument, an argument shaped by historical-critical discourse, and to some degree social-scientific criticism. What comes to the fore is his growing willingness to acknowledge the legitimacy of religious experience in what he called "Spirit-hermeneutics" (301).

We argue in this thesis, and especially in this chapter, that Pinnock deliberately attempted "to move an audience from one social and culture position to another" over the span of his academic career.¹³⁷ To do so, he moved from a clearly identifiable topos of Enlightenment presuppositions to another topos of dynamic Spirit-interpretation centred in classic Christianity, and legitimizing religious experience. This was a shift discernible enough to elicit strong reactions from those holding to his previous interpretive stance. He moved to another rhetorical dialect in the later part of his career characterized by what we can call contemplative writing, a rhetorlect not new to the reading public, but new to Pinnock. Such changes can be graphed as follows, the moment of shift rhetorically-speaking is indicated by "/" (234):

¹³⁷ Bloomquist, "Paul," 176.

*BRev 71**ScPr**FoL 96*

Topos of “experience”:

----- // -----

Rhetorolect of “contemplative writing”:

----- // -----

A. Shift of Topos

Our research indicates that the topos of religious experience had begun to shift for Pinnock (in part through a charismatic experience) at a point before the writing of *BRev 71*, though becoming evident *textually* prior to the writing of *ScPr 84* and *FoL 96*. As he himself put it,

Earlier in my own life, I did not think much about Spirit-hermeneutics because I was myself committed to scholastic habits of thinking and did not welcome exegetical liberties. I was committed to a rational-propositional model of biblical authority and more than a little suspicious of human subjectivity. I wanted no part in any possible diminishing of the objective authority of the Bible as I understood it. I was working with a model which claimed that the meaning of texts is discovered by using reason and the best scholarly tools, linguistic and otherwise. I thought that the Spirit had fulfilled his obligations to his people millennia ago through inspiration, when he delivered the Bible to the church. *What else was there for the Spirit to do now, I wondered* (emphasis added).¹³⁸

Using the time-line that we have established, in *Biblical Revelation* (1971) Pinnock was still writing from within a topos of Enlightenment presuppositions. He predicated divine

¹³⁸ Clark H. Pinnock, *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 18, no. 2 (2009): 158, Originally presented as a paper at “Spirit & Scripture: A Symposium on Renewal Biblical Hermeneutics,” Regent University, 17–18 Oct. 2008.

“revelation” on propositional truth and history, rejecting neo-orthodoxy’s stress on personal experience and Scripture as literature. His rejection at that time of a formative role for religious experience was fourfold starting with the claim that (1) to rely on the subjective accreditation of Scripture is evidence that Scripture is not self-validating; (2) experience is a flimsy foundation for anything (drugs also induce an experience); (3) experience tends to confirm whatever beliefs the experiencing subject begins with; and (4) experience cannot assure us if its origin is divine, demonic, or human.¹³⁹ Due to his conviction that “objective analysis” reveals an errorless scriptural text, he argued that, though humans err, God gave the Scriptures; and since God cannot err, there can be no error in the original autographs. He rejected Tillich’s and Wittgenstein’s limits on the ability of symbols to communicate precisely the same meaning to all people at all times, and was at this stage seemingly unaware of Gadamer’s studies in historical self-consciousness. He affirmed the self-authentication of Scripture on the basis of objective propositions affirmed by the scientific method.

Yet several topos-shaping factors were in play in this era of Pinnock’s life. We argue that principal among them was the impact of Karl Barth on Pinnock’s theology. That influence provides us with several rhetorical “edges” whereby we may identify Pinnock’s shift to another topos which valued experience. Five edges in particular catch our attention.

1. Barth. We have already noted Pinnock’s heavy reliance on Barth as a theological authority (122, 166-68, 170, 178, 180). Barth had detected the theme of pneumatology in his study of Schleiermacher--which alone could justify for him Schleiermacher’s anthropological starting point. Near the close of his life Barth wrote, “I would like to reckon with the possibility of a theology of the Holy Spirit, a theology of which Schleiermacher was scarcely conscious, but which might actually have been the legitimate concern dominating even his theological activity.” Pneumatology opened for Barth a generous re-evaluation of the church’s past, including the pietists and rationalists who preceded Schleiermacher; the “Moravians of a lower order of the

¹³⁹ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 42-43.

eighteenth century”; the “Enthusiasts” who were so poorly treated by the Reformers; and before them

those agitated and contemplative souls, the spiritualists and mystics of the Middle Ages. Could it not be that so many things which for us were said in an unacceptable way about the church and about Mary in Eastern and Western Catholicism might be vindicated to the extent that they actually intended the reality, the coming, and the work of the Holy Spirit, and that on that basis they might emerge in a positive-critical light?

He went on to wonder if perhaps one could include in this list “Schleiermacher’s miserable successors in the nineteenth century and the existentialist theologians in our twentieth century as well?”¹⁴⁰

A commentator on Barth, Philip J. Rosato, writes that Barth’s goal was to change the tide in Protestant theology by appreciating Friedrich Schleiermacher fully, but at the same time by excising his errors concerning Spirit theology. Rosato maintains that in his publications after 1947 Barth returned to one crucial question: “did Schleiermacher really intend to write a theology of the Holy Spirit?” Then Rosato makes a startling assertion, that “Barth himself gradually became more properly a *pneumatocentric* than a *Christocentric* theologian (emphasis added).”¹⁴¹

In *Dogmatics in Outline*, Barth defended a human role in a theology of the Holy Spirit (the third article of the creed, as he put it).¹⁴² To avoid the comfortlessness of a totally objective interpretation of the Apostles’ Creed, in the third article humans participate subjectively in the

¹⁴⁰ The use of such a heterodox database for pneumatological insights meant for Barth that one would need to test, and then retain, the good that was affirmed by sects and heretics back across the centuries. With such care, it is possible that yet another chapter could be written of the history of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church gathered by the Holy Spirit. “This is merely a suggestion, as is only proper, of what I dream of from time to time concerning the future of theology in general, and in particular concerning the perplexity in which I find myself as I attempt to evaluate Schleiermacher as well as also those who preceded and succeeded him.” Barth, *Schleiermacher*, 278

¹⁴¹ Rosato, *Barth*, 3.

¹⁴² Rosato, *Barth*, 3.

work of God in a free and active sharing. “Man belongs to the Creed,” for there is “a faith in man, so far as this man freely and actively participates in the work of God.” This participation is that hidden work of God’s Spirit on earth, part of his outgoing from the Father and the Son. This subjective dimension, argued Barth, explains the “modern exuberance” introduced to theology in the middle of the seventeenth century, and brought by Schleiermacher into a systematic order “as a strained attempt to bring the truth of the third article into force.”¹⁴³

Rosato points out that in Barth’s *Protestant Theology in the 19th Century*, the same point surfaces.¹⁴⁴ For Schleiermacher to plant himself at the centre of what was a subsidiary centre for the Reformers does not mean that a genuine proper theology could not be build from his starting point. This “*could* be the pure theology of the Holy Spirit; the teaching of man brought face to face with God by God, of man granted grace by grace.” Barth’s only concern was whether Schleiermacher would recognize and ensure as much validity for the divinity of the *Logos* as for the divinity of the Holy Spirit. Starting in reverse position from this second centre did not invalidate his theological method *per se*.¹⁴⁵

Rosato also mentions that Barth in his *Church Dogmatics* 4/1-3 “had the good instinct” to place the church, faith, love, and hope under the sign of the Holy Spirit. But, Barth questions, could the same be done with justification, sanctification, and calling? And creation by God the Father? “Might not even the christology which dominates everything be illuminated on this basis . . . ?” After all, given that God is essentially Spirit (John 4:24, 1 Cor 3:17), “isn’t he the God who in his own freedom, power, and love makes himself present and applies himself?”¹⁴⁶

By way of criticism, however, Rosato does points out that for Barth the “Redeemer-Spirit is never quite fully acknowledged as the Creator-Spirit of man’s corporeal being and rational

¹⁴³ Karl Barth, *Dogmatics in Outline*, trans. G. T. Thomson (London: SCM Press, 1949), 137–38.

¹⁴⁴ Rosato, *Barth*, 4.

¹⁴⁵ Karl Barth, *Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century: Its Background and History* (Protestantische Theologie im 19. Jahrhundert) (London: SCM Press, 1972), 460.

¹⁴⁶ Barth, *Schleiermacher*, 278.

dynamism.”¹⁴⁷ Another criticism is that in Barth the “role of the Spirit and of man is reduced to that of noetic and subjective compliance with the ontic and objective reality of Jesus Christ.”

“Man’s own successes and failures on the road to salvation through union with the transcendent are not seen as the media through which God’s life-giving Spirit encounters him.” Barth leaves in doubt “whether man’s free quest for liberation is seen as a necessary counter pole to God’s universal spiritual activity in and for the world which stands over against Him,”¹⁴⁸ which would accord more with the central intention of Orthodox thinkers.¹⁴⁹

Our study indicates that the seismic shift for Pinnock into a new topos began as he moved his starting point of theology to the knowing subject, “to start theology with the believing Christian as the focus.”¹⁵⁰ If this is correct, then in essence Pinnock was reaching back to a paradigm shift affected by Schleiermacher within Western theology and studies of spirituality. Barth, used by Pinnock as a rhetorical foil in BRev 71, became an earnest dialogue partner in his later three books. We suggest that here is an enthymeme, an unstated element of Pinnock’s argument: that none other than Barth’s grudging affirmation of the legitimacy of religious experience via Schleiermacher was a necessary corrective to the rationalistic Calvinism into which evangelical scholarship had been drawn since the nineteenth century, especially in North America.

2. The Two “Hands” of God. We note that unlike Barth it was the determination of Pinnock to give co-legitimacy to the role of the Son *and* the Holy Spirit, not just in a noetic and subjective fashion but also in an ontic and objective manner. This can be observed as Pinnock’s theological instincts and personal experience of the Spirit’s presence and power were expressed in the pneumatology of his magnum opus *Flame of Love*:

¹⁴⁷ Rosato, *Barth*, 154.

¹⁴⁸ Rosato, *Barth*, 161.

¹⁴⁹ Rosato, *Barth*, 163.

¹⁵⁰ Rosato, *Barth*, 5.

The Trinity may be pictured as a spiral action, spinning and releasing the power of its momentum outward, producing circular motions outside itself. . . . As the Spirit mediates the relationship between Father and Son, he also mediates the relationship between creatures and God. The goal is that we may enjoy the responsive relationship that the Son enjoys with the Father. The Spirit seeks to reproduce in the world the interior mystery of God, ever spiraling it back toward God. . . . Spirit is the artisan who by skillful ingenuity sees to it that creaturely forms arise and move toward fulfillment.¹⁵¹

Pinnock came to appreciate the redemptive role of both Son and Spirit (referring to them as the two “hands” of God with the Spirit’s role manifest in creation and new creation, and the Son’s role in redemption).¹⁵² He would go so far as to argue that the specificity of the Christ-event should be subsumed under the universality of the Holy Spirit as Creator.¹⁵³ This shifted his focus from soteriology at the point of crucifixion, to soteriology inclusive of Christ’s living and rising as well, and empowered by the Spirit as life-giver.¹⁵⁴ Pinnock suggested that the church be viewed as the Spirit-anointed event that was Jesus Christ;¹⁵⁵ and that its power is still sacramental and charismatic, as it was in the early centuries of its history.¹⁵⁶ His vision of Christianity shifted from juridical means to the ultimate goal of “union” with God, with the salvation of the individual inseparable from ecclesiology. We can only become Christians in community.¹⁵⁷

He was also convinced that the charismatic/Pentecostal movement, which elevated awareness of pneumatology on a global scale, was a pivotal reality in twentieth-century Christianity. It had certainly proven itself a welcome nourishment in his own life, for “The

¹⁵¹ Pinnock, *Flame*, 60.

¹⁵² Pinnock, *Flame*, 62–64, 66.

¹⁵³ Pinnock, *Flame*, 81.

¹⁵⁴ Pinnock, *Flame*, 98.

¹⁵⁵ Pinnock, *Flame*, 113.

¹⁵⁶ Pinnock, *Flame*, 119.

¹⁵⁷ Pinnock, *Flame*, 151.

spiritual vitality so evident in Scriptures is rare and thin in the religious circles I inhabit. The atmosphere is restrained and the style highly cognitive; expectations are rather low regarding the presence of the kingdom in power.”¹⁵⁸

3. Grace *Plus* Normativity. A third discernible edge in Pinnock’s shift of topoi is an openness to other traditions, though not to religious relativism. He came to understand God’s salvation through a lens of generosity and openness, without completely embracing universalism. He concluded that the Spirit, working among all peoples, uses religious experience as a preparatory means of pointing to the way of Jesus, revealed in his specificity as Immanuel, the unique God-man amongst us. Thus, as Pinnock’s appreciation for the role of the Holy Spirit waxed, so too did his openness to other sources of genuine insight within Christianity, and to a qualified degree without it (“Voices Today,” 117). “If we listen for the Spirit’s voice in the midst of the ambiguity of religions, the issue of discernment becomes key.”¹⁵⁹ It appears that the Fundamentalist hermeneutic of his early years was not deemed broad enough to account for all the data.

He accepted a range of meanings including multi-valency, inherent in the Scriptures though still controlled by a norm, by “a given structure which disciplines the interpretations and is backed up by the spirit of truth.” He penned this quote in a review of James K. A. Smith’s *The Fall of Interpretation: Philosophical Foundations for a Creational Hermeneutic*.

More often than not, the need for interpretation has been connected by theologians and philosophers with the fall rather than with creation. The author contests this assumption and proposes a creational hermeneutic in dialogue with Augustine and contemporary continental, especially French, philosophy. People have thought interpretation to be necessary because of the confusion and lack of clarity brought about by sin, and the task

¹⁵⁸ Quoted from Clark H. Pinnock and Delwin Brown, *Theological Crossfire: An Evangelical-Liberal Dialogue* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1990), 69; see Callen, *Pinnock*, 198.

¹⁵⁹ Pinnock, *Flame*, 207-8.

of thinkers has been conceived of as penetrating the darkness and restoring the light. Smith recognizes that this effort is impeded by the situatedness and tradition-bound nature of our human knowledge and contends that it would also be impeded in paradise. There too there would have been room for interpretation and space for a plurality of voices. The author . . . believes there would be even in the creation as God intended it “a multivalent chorus of tongues.” This would not result in rampant relativism, however, because what is being interpreted has a given structure which disciplines the interpretations and is backed up by the spirit of truth.¹⁶⁰

SRI has already informed us, thanks to the input of Consigny, that the rhetor is more like an artist than a scientist. He or she does not arrive at an irreducible understanding of a given rhetorical situation or religious experience. Multiple interpretations are available to the rhetor, requiring integrity (what Bitzer calls “fit”) and receptivity to the “recalcitrant particularities” of the situation.¹⁶¹ For Pinnock, any “artistic” interpretive use of the history of the origins of the Christian religion and its use (in Robbins’ terms) of various religious rituals, festivals, myths, and so on was inseparable from the normative role played by the Christian Scriptures. It needed to be a hermeneutic which includes the subjective role of the interpretation of Scripture, and sociocultural influences.¹⁶² However, it is the Spirit, he argued, who links mind, study, prayer, and interpretation together.¹⁶³ It is the Spirit that leads us into the meaning of what Jesus said, as understood in the new contexts that have since arisen.¹⁶⁴ It is the Spirit who guides in exegesis and application. Hence, it follows that practitioners of biblical interpretation must be believers filled with the Spirit.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁰ Clark H. Pinnock, “A Response by Clark Pinnock,” in *Dialogues in the Philosophy of Religion*, by John Hick (London: Palgrave, 2001), 260.

¹⁶¹ Consigny, “Rhetoric.”

¹⁶² Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 167-68.

¹⁶³ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 168-69.

¹⁶⁴ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 171.

¹⁶⁵ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 173.

Yet even as the vector of experience and relationality grew in Pinnock's appreciation, any perception of a lack of reliance on an external authority in favour of subjective experience was countered by his deep unshakeable commitment to the "Scripture principle" as historically classically understood. Interestingly, as Pinnock's thinking continued to evolve, he began to reflect characteristics of Robbins' individual location of transformation (i.e., "gnostic-manipulation," 25). His view of the world developed and changed, and his perception shifted in favour of what he deemed a deeper and more meaningful interpretive pattern discernible within the Bible.

4. Hermeneutical Circle. Somewhere between 1971 and 1984 (the years between his writing of BRev 71 and ScPr 84), Pinnock wholeheartedly embraced philosophy's hermeneutical circle, a move which further precipitated his re-evaluation of religious experience. His understanding of "object" changed, from that of something scientifically verified to that of something--though truly there--that is nonetheless understood by an *interpreting* subject.¹⁶⁶ By the time Pinnock wrote ScPr 84, he now understood the special revelation of Scripture as set within the broader context of God's general revelation (to which the scientific method could indeed legitimately be applied) and the horizons of reader and text, providing him with a much more nuanced and localized understanding of divine revelation.

5. Political Involvement. It was in the mid-1970s that Pinnock turned away from Calvinism as a political philosophy, due to "the impact of the 1960's [sic] when a lot of people about my age were jerked around by the social and cultural wildness of the time." He later concluded that, together with others in the Sojourners group in which he participated, they needed to justify, by means of an Anabaptist counter-cultural theology, the positions the group

¹⁶⁶ We find evidence thereof in 1974, when on the campus of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School Pinnock was a featured E.T.S. speaker. His topic was the "classical synthesis" of biblical theism and classical theism. He was now aware of, and explored, the tension for the church fathers between interpreting a biblical message which is historical and personal, while using Greek philosophical categories that at their core are a-historical and impersonal (293).

was drawing from the New Left (“revolution, pacifism, egalitarianism, etc.”).¹⁶⁷ Hence, while his religious experience¹⁶⁸ in the charismatic revival of the late 1960s precipitated a shift of topoi, to some degree so too did his political experience less than a decade later.

B. Shift of Rhetorolect

As indicated in our graphs above (234, 301), a second rhetorolectical change can be identified between the writing of ScPr 84 and FoL 96. Pinnock’s *Flame of Love* reflects a more contemplative style of writing and argument, in which the reader is invited into holism, play, dance, and the joy of the Holy Spirit. One notices quickly that our author is using a completely different rhetorical category than that of BRev 71.

Even in the writing of *The Scripture Principle*, subtle changes can already be noticed. Consider the following comments by Scot McKnight,¹⁶⁹ a friend of Pinnock, and like him a former professor at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. He points out, as example, a personal admission that Pinnock made in 1984 which was omitted from the later edition in 2006:¹⁷⁰ “I can only answer for myself, as one who argued in this way [of total inerrancy] a few years ago. I claimed that the Bible taught total inerrancy because I hoped that it did—I wanted it to.”¹⁷¹ Pinnock got personal again in the Appendix of the second edition with these words: “I have moved from defending the Bible in a scholastic manner to understanding it in a more pietistic way.”¹⁷² He also described himself as “a neo-evangelical,”¹⁷³ having moved from

¹⁶⁷ Clark H. Pinnock, “Response to Daniel Strange and Amos Yong,” *Evangelical Quarterly* 71, no. 4 (October 1999): 353–56.

¹⁶⁸ What mystified him, at the time of writing, was how he was not influenced by the libertarian human freedom and reciprocity with the divine that C. S. Lewis modelled for him as a youth. He thinks it was the influence of paleo-Calvinism through J. I. Packer in the circles of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, of the old Princeton theological model, and of Francis Schaeffer. “A mystery for me then is, not why I changed from paleo-Calvinism (which was due to its severe difficulties), but why I ever accepted it, since the alternative symbolised by C. S. Lewis was at hand and known to me.” See Pinnock, “Response,” 353.

¹⁶⁹ McKnight, “Tribute.”

¹⁷⁰ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 84.

¹⁷¹ Pinnock, *Scripture* (1984), 58.

¹⁷² Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 255.

¹⁷³ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 258.

“philosophical” to “simple” biblicism;¹⁷⁴ and from Francis “Schaeffer’s militant rationalism to [F.F.] Bruce’s more bottom-up *irenica* scholarship” (emphasis added). He confessed that he had learned in his later years, like C.S. Lewis, to “live with ambiguity.”¹⁷⁵

It is our contention that, as Pinnock identified and rejected the “seductive appeal” of the “foundationalism of modernity [which] had been reflected in [his] own early work,”¹⁷⁶ he found it necessary to move into a different rhetorical dialect to argue his case and persuade his listeners. This was a change that took decades to develop. Why? We suggest that he was already wrestling with how to incorporate religious experience into his mode of theological reading. That is, the issue was how he was to educate himself and evangelical thinkers on the meaning of truth in Scripture. As he had argued earlier, the Bible is “the touchstone of truth, [or else it] . . . stands in need of one. The move toward mystical subjectivism will result in the demise of authentic Christianity.”¹⁷⁷ By 1996, his understanding of the nature of God had also noticeably shifted from a Fundamentalist rationalist view of God. He had reassessed the nature of deity (and, hence, of ontology): that God, as pure relationality, delights to present himself not only through reason but as especially present in the sacramental, charismatic, and diaconal dimensions of church life.

Key to this reappraisal was his understanding of “Spirit,” moving from the Platonic notion of incorporeality to (in his opinion) the Bible’s understanding of God as a gale-force wind, an irrepressible creative dynamic.¹⁷⁸ As he put it, God is spirit, and when we encounter spirit we encounter God.¹⁷⁹ Creative acts underlie salvific acts, and there can be no redemption without first there being creation. Spirit is the ground of the world’s becoming, and Spirit is with humanity on its journey through time.¹⁸⁰ This later Pinnock now read Scripture and assessed

¹⁷⁴ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 257.

¹⁷⁵ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 258.

¹⁷⁶ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 258, nt. 15.

¹⁷⁷ Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 229.

¹⁷⁸ Pinnock, *Flame*, 22.

¹⁷⁹ Pinnock, *Flame*, 32.

¹⁸⁰ Pinnock, *Flame*, 50-51.

religious experience from “within” a historic church hermeneutic rather than from that of the Enlightenment.

Impacted as we have suggested by Barth, Pinnock opted to peer (to paraphrase Robbins)¹⁸¹ into his own nature and that of the cosmos through the lens of pneumatology. This opened up an ideological space for him which he was later compelled to reconfigure rhetorically. Yet it was not at the expense of his deepest theological convictions vis-à-vis biblical authority, which continued to redirect his rhetorical relocation. That relocation in turn unveiled new theological horizons hitherto unnoticed (for him) yet consistent with the historic presuppositions he affirmed. This was further confirmed for him as he discovered that Christian thinkers and worshippers centuries and millennia before him had charted a similar trajectory within the historic traditions of the church. Such realization increased his momentum, and conviction, that his rhetorical relocation had something to offer to the evangelical community that he knew and loved--whatever the cost.

Hence, this former Fundamentalist Baptist had, in light of a profound religious experience, shifted in his very manner of knowing and arguing.¹⁸² He moved from a model that was linear, goal-oriented, and separate, to a model of knowing that was noticeably more intuitive, emotive, empathic, and connected. He now reflected a willingness to journey with others of differing perspectives, co-labouring with them in a process of discerning the nature of truth--as revealed (and this is an important caveat) within Scripture and the classic teachings of the church. Scripture as sacred text he now understood as “open,” offering its own metanarrative, carrying its own ring of authority, and firmly embedded in the public domain. It was, as Donald Bloesch suggested, sacramental: dead in the hands of some, yet alive by the agency of the Holy Spirit.¹⁸³

¹⁸¹ Robbins, *Exploring*, 97.

¹⁸² Ray Roennfeldt argues that it took about ten years for Pinnock’s shift from a strict Calvinist paradigm to that of Arminianism to filter down into the rest of his theological conclusions—including his early conviction that only Calvinist determinism could account for an orthodox belief in biblical inspiration. Callen, *Pinnock*, 101–2.

¹⁸³ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 190.

For his part, Pinnock did not consider himself a theological maverick (i.e., an unbranded calf) but rather an explorer, a pioneer.

I approach theology as an adventure and as a journey of discovery. . . . I am very curious about its subject matter and restless in regard to conventional answers. I am constantly on the lookout for better solutions and am always out to engage a wider range of voices. I even like to propose new models in the ‘four views’ book format to see if they will fly and to foster our growth as hearers of the Word of God. I guess that I am ‘reformed’ in a sense different from my critics: . . . I want to see more reform. . .¹⁸⁴

He understood theology as a second-order phenomenon informed by Scripture, in continuity with tradition, and as timely. Theology “can and ought to speak to the present by the power of God.”¹⁸⁵ Another defining feature of his rhetoric was his enthusiasm which often surfaced. “It is my nature to be enthusiastic about the fresh insights that I find and I am inclined to speak and write passionately about them even before they have been thought through thoroughly enough.”¹⁸⁶

Summation

As we close this chapter, we note that the ideological texture does not simply come into play at the end of a process (i.e., in chronological order after the inner texture and intertextual textures). It is there as a problematic from the beginning, which helps us appreciate the ethical feature of socio-rhetorical analysis. It invites us to distance ourselves from the presuppositions we bring to our reading of the text, and invites us via a mode of critical reflection (the tools of

¹⁸⁴ Pinnock, “Response,” 349-50.

¹⁸⁵ Over the decades, he changed his mind “mainly in one way not in many.” His paradigm shift began at the latest in the early 1970s, and worked itself over the next three decades. The shift pertained to the doctrine of God when his root metaphor shifted from God as absolute monarch to God as loving parent. See Pinnock, “Response,” 351.

¹⁸⁶ Pinnock, “Response,” 351.

SRI) to identify how the forces of meaning (self-understanding in relation to a world of meaning) actually show themselves in the texts. In this light, we suggest that a hallmark of Pinnock's rhetoric is authenticity. He stayed true to his presuppositions, namely, classic Christianity.

We find hints that the ongoing development in Pinnock's thought was not due to a radical discontinuity at some point in his thinking. Rather, there seems to be a continual questing and probing by this man that were inherent to him, a pushing of theological parameters that resulted in a logical evolution of intellectual seeds sown in his fertile mind prior to the first book in our study, *Biblical Revelation*, just eight years after his Ph.D. thesis centred on the work of the Holy Spirit in 1963. There seems to be a predisposition to change and exploration that always characterized his temperament, and which continued to grow in his later years. His academic questing made him similar to so many of today's scholars; however, given the shift of topoi and also of rhetorolect which reflected his journey he deliberately positioned his scholarship within an authority that he recognized, and publicly acknowledged, as ultimate.

An initiating factor in his relocation of topoi was his charismatic (and ongoing) religious experience that commenced in the late 1960s, though his four books under our study make little or no mention of it. Pinnock came to see God, and supernatural help, as coming to an individual in her or his local situation by healing, spiritual gifts of power, insight, miracles, and the assurance of eternal life after death. Given the deep influence on the early Pinnock by certain Calvinist thinkers and their writings,¹⁸⁷ one could argue that this generated within him considerable tensive force: while affirming on one hand his Baptist tradition's primacy of experience as source of truth, he was compelled by his understanding of Calvinism to deny experience as a legitimate epistemological means of discovering truth. Yet our thesis suggests that it was religious experience that precipitated his search for referential categories that lay outside his existing frames of conceptualization; it created the distancing necessary to

¹⁸⁷ Calvinist writers read by the teenaged Pinnock included John Murray, Martyn Lloyd-Jones, Cornelius Van Til, Carl F. H. Henry, James I. Packer, and Paul Jewett. See Callen, *Pinnock*, 20.

acknowledge a certain relativity to his perspective, and in those authorities upon whom he had been drawing; it opened his theological horizons to the broader historic church encompassing evangelical Protestantism; and it gave rise to a new form of persuasion in his writing, a contemplative rhetorolect that sought to win over the reader by grace and a rational abandonment to the “holy” Spirit.¹⁸⁸

To summarize, in this chapter our focus has been on a shift in method that Pinnock employed for reading Scripture. Two significant sentences emerged:

* “His perception shifted in favour of what he deemed a deeper and more meaningful interpretive pattern discernible within the Bible” (309).

* “This later Pinnock now read Scripture and assessed religious experience from ‘within’ a historic church hermeneutic rather than that of the Enlightenment” (312).

Our attention is drawn back to what was written at the end of Ch. 4, where we noted that “Something happened in the depths of Pinnock’s own self-understanding that changed his world; as a result, fuller dimensions of the scriptural world rose before him” (228). This in turn was reflected in *topoi* throughout his four representative books (192-93). In BRev 71, as noted in Pinnock’s use of Romans, “we see a *topos* centred in inerrancy, that is, the factual objectivity of God’s redemptive acts (Rom 1:4) as recorded in Scripture, a divine oracle which is God-authored” (231). In *The Scripture Principle* (both editions), there is a rising stress on interiority or “subjectivity in believing whereby God gives an inward revelation of the truth and certainty of his revelation to the reading community (and, hence, the individual), through Spirit . . .” (232). In FoL 96, the relational *topos* then broadens, rather than shifts, to include (from Pinnock’s perspective) a universal religious experience of representation and solidarity. The context for our reference to “groups” earlier in the chapter was to sharpen the import of this method, such as academic societies and schools that within the evangelical community interpreted Scripture. This

¹⁸⁸ Callen, *Pinnock*, 114.

movement helps to underscore how Pinnock developed a method configured by a heightened awareness of the role of spiritual experience.

CHAPTER 6

Conclusion

In the earlier chapters of this thesis, we reflected on Pinnock's theological form in line with our title "A sociorhetorical analysis of Clark H. Pinnock's hermeneutical approach to biblical materials" The question itself was set up in the material in Ch. 1, "Introduction," where we provided a brief biography of this prominent Canadian evangelical (17), who was a contributor to the rhetorical shifts that are presently taking place in the evangelical community in North America. At the close of that chapter the reader was left asking, "So, what is Pinnock's approach then?" Given the developments and shifts in his career, given his debates within their social and theological settings, how did he develop a "hermeneutical approach" that privileged the role of religious experience? Callen's excellent biography of Pinnock answers that. But how do we get at a more precise understanding of Pinnock's hermeneutical approach? That is precisely what this thesis has attempted to answer.

To complete the second part of our thesis statement, ". . . with particular attention to the role of religious experience," we have analyzed the way this role is evidenced in Pinnock's rhetoric. Current models in North American evangelical theology reflect the lingering grip of modern post-Enlightenment hermeneutics, which posits a neutral objective vantage point from which one can read any text. This hermeneutics has been moulded by Scottish Common Sense

Realism and Baconian induction models that give primacy to evidence and arguments.¹ These models continue to make it difficult to address the significance of a more integral hermeneutical understanding of spiritual experience. Nevertheless, Pinnock is just one exemplar of new horizons in evangelical theology which have begun to emerge in the attempt to reform an evangelical hermeneutics by integrating the role of intuition, the horizon of the reading communities, and experience.²

Our hypothesis has been that we can explore the impact of religious experience on a biblical interpreter's texts by using as example the development of (or transpositions in) Pinnock's approach to biblical materials, plus the analytic of sociorhetorical investigation. Not unlike the example of early Christians,³ we have been watching Pinnock to see if he reconfigured existing metaphorical frameworks within his world. To see how he did so, this thesis selected three representative texts by him, and not other texts. They were identified intuitively in relation to a mode of theological reasoning that deals with the interpretation of Scripture. We suggest that the thesis, at its end, shows that the texts were the appropriate selections. At first blush, they offered to give us an answer, and they have done so. They are *Biblical Revelation*, 1971; *The Scripture Principle*, 1984; and *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit*, 1996 (with occasional reference to *The Scripture Principle: Reclaiming the Full Authority of the Bible*, 2006).

But how have we read those texts? Simply put, we applied in Ch. 2 the techniques of sociorhetorical investigation, commencing with its analysis of their inner texture, Ch. 3; and then intertexture, Ch. 4. The texts told us something about the method Pinnock crafted. Then in Ch. 5, "Ideology," the thesis focused on that method, namely, his form of theological reflection and

¹ See Archer, Henry, and Smith.

² See Bruce, Carnell, and Ramm.

³ Early Christians "successfully launched a new culture of discourse in the Mediterranean world that expanded and became continually more nuanced and complex throughout twenty centuries in the history of the world." Robbins, *Invention*, 120.

interpretation. Ch. 5 in turn brought us as readers back to the beginning with its links to the results of inner texture and intertextuality. It helped us to understand why Pinnock went through numerous shifts, and how he developed or crafted a form of thinking (or theological reasoning) which he himself hoped would contribute to a “reform” within evangelicalism, and its numerous groups with whom he had relationships.

I. Our Goals

By introducing SRI into current rhetorical investigation, our hope has been to open a new horizon for this multi-disciplinary analytic that reveals the values, convictions, and beliefs embedded in any ancient or contemporary text that we read, including texts in today’s world. We have also sought to render in an honest manner our redescription of social data in Pinnock’s texts, including the role of experience. Such an honest rendering allows us to make public our cultural critiques of the texts, which at the same time offers a critique of the methodologies currently in use (Mack).⁴ Earlier in Ch. 1 we set seven goals for our task (38). They mould the shape of this Conclusion.

A. Problematic: Extra-Linguistic Backing

A problematic inherent in the discourse of contemporary studies in religious experience is the tendency to disallow for the Transcendent in the form of self-intending revelation. Hence, we have argued that, in reading Pinnock, it is critical to find a method that can attune itself to the nature of religious experience in all its breadth, depth, and scope—including the possibility of extra-linguistic backing.

We have observed how SRI advances truth claims inherent in Pinnock’s works. Though Robbins places an emphasis on dialogue and inclusivity rather than oppositional rhetoric in his

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⁴ Robbins, *Exploring*, see quote on back cover.

development of sociorhetorical analysis (42), SRI really anticipates doing more. We noted Pinnock's relentless challenging of the status quo, with its implication of longing for authenticity. There is a truth claim here that SRI as an analytic offers to discern and also, we suggest, to promote. We mentioned that "the fullness of truth always escapes us" (49). While true of absolute truth, we do need to distinguish between "intellectual" truth and "practical" truth. What we meant was that use of SRI has shown how it provides for ontological and cognitive insights, which in turn allow for a critical reading of Pinnock.

A strategy by which SRI does so is through the introduction of an element of ancient Mediterranean argumentative strategy called "chreiai," noteworthy because they integrate both word and *deed* in the act of persuasion (68). A chreia, as a literary unit, is a brief reminiscence of a person that highlights a speech, action, or both.⁵ It draws out as of equal importance the role of actions, which can sometimes even precede speech, and also identifies instances where specific speech is prior to generalized maxims or sayings within a tradition. By studying ancient treatises entitled *Progymnasmata*,⁶ Robbins concluded that in a rhetorical text speech-act was summarized in a chreia or chreiai with the purposeful intent of persuading a given audience. Such literary units were not meaning-neutral, but rather directed by the author in a highly biased fashion toward a persuasive goal, thus making rhetorical use of a text inseparable from ideology.⁷

⁵ A "chreia" (from the Greek "chreiodes," meaning "useful") amplifies a brief account of what someone has said or done, and is composed by using these steps:

1. Praise the sayer or doer, or praise the chreia itself
2. Give a paraphrase of the theme
3. Say why this was said or done
4. Introduce a contrast
5. Introduce a comparison
6. Give an example of the meaning
7. Support the saying/action with testimony of others
8. Conclude with a brief epilogue or conclusion"

From <http://rhetoric.byu.edu/Pedagogy/Progymnasmata/Chreia.htm>, by Burton, "Chreia."

⁶ *Progymnasmata* wove oral and written speech closely together in the early first century BCE. Students would write and rewrite brief literary units before adapting a unit to "a larger rhetorical/literary persuasive setting" such as an extended prose composition. Students would then express the exercises orally to practice their argumentation. See Robbins, *New Boundaries*, 25.

⁷ We note, by way of example, how Luke's account of Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus is replete with action integrated with speech, both human and divine. The role played by ancient chreiai hints that

Another feature of a chreia as it persuades via speech-act is its formation of essential building blocks of enthymemes,⁸ suppressed premises of arguments built upon underlying topoi. Those topoi are familiar and logical places for an argument⁹ which reflect the arguer's cultural and ideological context. And the topoi in turn are constitutive elements of a deeper level called rhetorolects which, when brought to light through sociorhetorical investigation, have provided us with a global rhetorical context for probing the persuasive side of Pinnock's communication to his readers about and, even more so, by means of his own self-transcendent experience(s).¹⁰ SRI highlights for us that experience is inseparable--whether or not it is communicated--from the innertexture, intertexture, and ideology of its "text." Hence, ideology is the intersection of the initial readers of the text, and of the succeeding generations of readers, with the writer's persuasion in its sociocultural matrix; just as the writer in turn has responded as reader to the writers that shaped her or his intertextural world.¹¹

Luke's intent, within this particular textual unit, was not to provide an objective meaning-neutral depiction of spiritual transcendence per se, such as would meet Enlightenment criteria, but was rather to create a biased persuasive depiction of a spiritual event in Paul's life to be interpreted entirely in light of Jesus' post-resurrection speech and appearances noted earlier in Luke-Acts. Wright argues that the "remote god" view permeates today's religious climate with its "dogma that all dogmas are wrong, the monolithic insistence that all monolithic systems are to be rejected." Ironically, this contemporary point of view is argued with the same insistence as was the older dogmatists' claim of a particular formulation and interpretation. It takes two expressions:

(a) Human religions are at best vague approximations, for god is, or the gods are, so far away that they are largely unknowable.

(b) Or, pantheism claims that all religions are simply different languages expressing the concept that "god" is the divine or sacred aspect within the present world. See Wright, *The Challenge of Jesus: Rediscovering Who Jesus Was and Is*, 100.

⁸ An enthymeme is the suppression of a premise in a syllogism, and hence an implication that is persuasive in nature.

⁹ Vernon Robbins, in conversation with Peter Robinson, 26 Sep. 2009.

¹⁰ Hence, we take a position contra to Harvey Whitehouse (1:11), who by means of certain current theories in cognitive psychology and social theory maintains that universal features of human memory mould political organization and ideology, if activated in certain ways. For him, "episodic" memory is the sum of personal experiences as conceptualized in unique episodes in one's life, whereas "doctrinal" memory is general, and propositional by nature. He theorizes that religions are based exclusively on episodic memory or on semantic memory, the former giving rise to nature religions, and the latter to theistic religions. See Harvey Whitehouse, *Arguments and Icons: Divergent Modes of Religiosity* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 4–5.

¹¹ In contrast to Whitehead, we suggest that there is not an episodic context of natural religions that is based on personal experience, as well as a doctrinal context of arid, transcendent ideas divorced from experience. The traditions, or experiences, of those who have gone before us are interwoven ideologically with our thought processes by means of reason. One's "doctrine" is thus that commendable and trustworthy body of teaching to

Yet texts do more than allow us to explore preexisting worlds; we must always bear in mind that they create them--so that in the interpretive process, a necessary conflict arises. A "text's own ideologically creative position and realities" are experienced by us as readers today, and are shaped by our position. "Ideological texture starts with movement evidenced in the text, but that very movement enshrined in the text leads to a self-reflection that leads subsequent readers to their own conflicts and resulting movements."¹²

Loneragan nuanced this concept in his assessment of the truth element of a text, distinguishing between "mediated meaning" and "mediating meaning."¹³ For example, to hear two people speaking a dialect of Chinese, if one does not understand it, is to be aware that the sounds of that language mediate meaning to the initiated but not to oneself. More deeply, however, to speak that dialect is not just to make the appropriate sounds, but to *make* meaning in and through the mediation of the sounds. In this manner humans "constitute themselves" as they intend the meanings, with the result that we as humans are "meaning makers." Such meaning-making occurs in a context that includes the self-constituting self freely making his or her own world; and the world made by the subject, as changed by her or his knowing. Nonetheless, Lonergan argues, this also includes the real world that does not change by being known.¹⁴

Pinnock's religious experience(s) demonstrates the role of extra-linguistic backing (14, 38, 319). Though in this thesis we have subsumed SRI's fifth texture of "sacred text" under ideology, it nonetheless posits that certain qualities characterize "believing" reading; not by new propositional content that non-believers cannot access, but rather as an act that "counts" for something (Thiselton). It is readily apparent that Pinnock, from within his religious experience, perceived himself as a recipient, as addressed extra-linguistically by a directed act of

which one turns to contextualize one's episodic memories. We suggest that SRI's texture of ideology exposes an artificiality in Whitehead's bifurcation between experience and doctrine.

¹² Bloomquist, "Paul," 176.

¹³ Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 135.

¹⁴ "In self-knowledge the subject is both the meant and the meaner who constitutes the meant." See Flanagan, "Lonergan's," 129–30.

commitment or promise; in fact, by covenant language.¹⁵ SRI has provided a sophisticated means of determining whether Pinnock had a basis for claiming the “truth” of the faith object of his religious experience. As an analytic, it not only provides us with a comprehensive means to investigate--by his texts--the subjective dynamics of his religious experience and its ensuing impact, it also allows us to probe behind the experience into his claims of extra-linguistic backing for his experience.¹⁶

The very structure of *The Scripture Principle* reflects this resolve. The first section focuses on the divine inspiration of Scripture, lest we risk losing our apostolic norm and truth standard; the second on the human character of the Bible, lest we overlook its innertextual and intertextual textures; and the third on the Spirit, lest we risk falling into legalism and losing the freshness and relevance of scriptural piety. “It would be a wise policy to orient ourselves to these three guiding lights. We can say with Paul, in line with the three crucial dimensions, that (1) we have a divine treasure, (2) in human vessels, (3) empowered by God (2 Cor. 4:7).”¹⁷ The ancient truth in the hands of the dynamic ministering Spirit, evaluated today in its historical and sociocultural context, was for Pinnock the touchstone for affirming extra-linguistic backing.¹⁸

¹⁵ Thiselton, *New*, 597.

¹⁶ Wright, from a perspective of critical-realism, suggests the following criterion for judging worldviews. It also applies here: “it must appeal to some sense of fittingness, or appropriateness. There must be, as in a scientific theory, a sense of clean simplicity, of things fitting together and making sense. A historical construct can present itself as more fitting and appropriate than some other construct, without appealing to any external *a priori* of a particular agenda which would thereby be legitimated or reinforced.” Wright, *The N. T.*, 136.

¹⁷ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 247–48.

¹⁸ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 250–51. See also Pannenberg, “Crisis,” 308. Here lies Pinnock’s answer to evangelicals’ fear of subjectivity. There is a subjective dimension to Scripture, for revelation is bipolar and must come “to” someone; *Scripture* (1984), 155. The living Word is not different from the textual word, for “through the Spirit what is said comes alive and becomes contemporary to us.” However, conservative Christians fear the subordination of the word to subjective experience, *Scripture* (1984), 156; hence, they denounce modern theology’s shift “to the functional and the existential.” Unfortunately, the result of this fear means that the Bible is not allowed to discipline the inner work of subjectivity, *Scripture* (1984), 157. Yes, early pietists like Thomas Muntzer and “spiritual” Anabaptists did elevate experience over the Bible’s authority, though concentration upon the subjective began in earnest with Schleiermacher. But on the other hand, evangelicals with all their fears can still be drawn into locating the authority of the Bible in changed lives (due to their pietist roots), simply sidestepping awkward intellectual questions; *Scripture* (1984), 159.

This argument by Pinnock reflects Pannenberg’s use of the term “Scripture-principle” back in 1963. In an article entitled “The Crisis of the Scripture-Principle in Protestant Theology,” Pannenberg described theology’s unfortunate retreat from its earlier, universal claims, beginning with the scholasticism of the High Middle Ages

B. Pinnock's Rhetorical Biography

In Ch. 5 the ideological texture alerted us to all the developments and transpositions that occurred in Pinnock's texts-- but none of those references arose out of a reading of Chs. 2 to 4. The basic reference rather was to Pinnock's biography by Callen. So, what is the issue? The question is set up for us, and identified, with Pinnock's move from his early and strict rationalism to a new social and rhetorical location (what we have labelled a change in *topos*). Influenced in part by Robert Shank's book *Elect in the Son*, arguing that all people are potentially "elect" in God's economy, Pinnock began to acknowledge humanity's accountability to God, with its ability to hear and respond to him in genuine freedom of will.¹⁹ With that theological relocation, Pinnock moved into a cautious openness to religious experience.

However, as just said, that simply sets up the question, "What will this have to do with a mode of theological reasoning?" In essence, we suggest that Pinnock was looking for a hermeneutical linchpin. He found it, we have argued, in Barth's reluctant acceptance of Schleiermacher's anthropological starting point. This was in turn confirmed by "the wisdom of the ancient Eastern tradition." Pinnock discovered that his criterion of truth could shift, yet retain its biblical centrality. Meanwhile, from contemporary philosophical insights he found that "all of us come to the text burdened with all manner of presuppositions" which Scripture has to be allowed to challenge, and to "generate the meaning" while we do the listening (33). Yet for Pinnock, this was always in relation to how Christian theology relates "God's saving action through Christ alone to this pluralistic arena" (31). The result was a reconfiguration of his biblical hermeneutic, and his conclusion that prior to Reformed scholasticism there was an "even

when theology as "a supernatural realm of special religious knowledge" was separated from "so-called natural knowledge." The result was the growth of its self-understanding over the following centuries "as a positive science working in the particular field of the divine revelation found in Scriptures." Yet Pannenberg argues that the Scripture-principle has always been universal in intent, for theology's "conception of reality in relation to God . . . cannot be understood at all without God." The Scripture-principle is "the task of understanding all things in relation to the God the Bible, and thus to understand the God of the Bible anew as the creator of the world."

¹⁹ Callen, *Pinnock*, 99.

older biblical model” (29). However, he could acknowledge that in the modern era some elements, such as process theology, have drawn “philosophical reflection in the direction of biblical teaching,” leading to “a fresh awareness of a dimension of God’s immanence” (29).

Following the lead of post-modernity, he came to postulate “web-like knowledge” (28). This change of mode in theological reasoning we have defined as a shift in *rhetorolect*, or a conscious move into a new rhetorical dialect; as a movement toward a wisdom-like mode of expression and persuasion which did not abandon his earlier prophet-like instincts, but contrasted sharply with its confrontation-oriented mode of reasoning and persuasion.

C. His Public Audience

Pinnock was writing out of a personalized experience for the public, and interacting with a world of which he was not entirely in control. For the most part, his writing was not a personal reflection recorded in his private journals. There was rather, at any one time, at least one specific target audience which he was seeking to persuade. Rhetoric comes into play here because of such an audience.²⁰ Bloomquist argues that the ideological texture focuses on what authors do with preexisting topoi (the centres of argumentation); how they alter, confirm, nuance, and reshape them. Rhetorically, an author reconfigures the topoi by changing their identity from one state to another; or changes how the topoi are employed or could otherwise be used in argumentation for a given public.²¹

At the same time, the potential audience influenced our author. In Ch. 5, “Ideology,” we reflected on where exactly the readers and Pinnock situated themselves. This led us to consider Pinnock’s relations to the various groups around him, which then broadened to include his ideological discourse. Though his arguments and conclusions changed across the decades, he himself insisted that there was consistency over the decades between his mode of interpretation

²⁰ In truth, several audiences are in view, among which we must include the audience of the given publisher with its particular influence on Pinnock’s style of writing and the dynamics of his persuasion.

²¹ Bloomquist, “Paul,” 174.

and his underlying presuppositions. Indeed, from his perspective his later theology better reflected those deep assumptions than did his earlier reasoning. He invited his public audience to consider the evidence, to enter into the progression of his thought, and to draw the conclusion of either a unitive consistency in his thinking across the decades, or a growing sense of alienation on his part from ultimate reality.²²

D. His Persuasion

Pinnock's material over twenty-five years has provided us with a clear picture of the strategies he used to overcome obstacles in his use of sacred text via the ideological lens through which he read it (22-37). We can track in his works how he, as an author, came to grips with his changing place in the world. Consider several mentions that have been made of such development in his thinking:

“While studying the Book of Hebrews . . . he pondered why Christians are encouraged to persevere if Calvinism is true” (26). “Pinnock moved beyond Arminian/Wesleyan traditions in regard to ‘free will theism’ to the ancient Eastern understanding of divine-human relations” (27). His “apologetic use of reason was also changing” (28). “This conclusion about the divine-human relationship led Pinnock into what many evangelicals consider his most radical and shocking shift . . . namely, a limitation of God’s complete knowledge of the future” (29). It is within tradition that Pinnock embedded his religious experience, “[seeing] the Bible, more as an ecclesial means of grace than an archive of propositional truth” (10). “Pinnock was moving in a direction that . . . Callen calls a ‘hermeneutic of hopefulness’” (31); and he “summarizes Pinnock’s theological shifts in the 1970s in five categories” (32). “These were the responses to the world that Pinnock chose to leave behind in his childhood” (36). And lastly, “What makes his theology fascinating is to observe how he criss-crossed all seven of these categories through his career” (37).

²² Robbins, *Exploring*, 114–15.

In our investigation of his religious experience, cultural-social dynamics have proven indispensable for analyzing his rhetorical situation. However, were we to use this context alone it would prove too limiting, for Pinnock clearly did not attribute his religious experience exclusively to the cognitive transmission codes which he employed as communicator while locked within his specific cultural matrix.²³ Rather, as mentioned above, he posited a self-intending revelation from beyond himself; that is, some form of divine guidance.²⁴ Because of his conviction about such an external self-intending revelation, he sought to persuade others.

This became evident in his rhetoric, which we have shown to be a different kind of truth statement than one that simply affirms a fact, for he persuaded, attested, and committed to something. Rhetorically, he built on what has been called an “originary world.” More than mere communication, his setting and context were self-selected be it consciously or to some degree unconsciously. Hence, we noted Cunningham’s claim that “one always finds theologians trying to persuade others, and themselves, of a particular understanding of Christian faith” (47). Glenn pointed out that “Every generation fuses religious conviction, centuries if not millennia old, ‘with self-consciously persuasive language and social action’ unique to its social and cultural milieu” (50). Also, Robbins reminded us that when one “begins to enact some aspect of modern intellectual discourse, . . . an awareness of one’s bias is indispensable to the interpretive moment” (51). Because “Pinnock as an apologist and theologian has left for our study a clear rhetorical trail as he moved from one theological paradigm to another” (53), we have been able to “frame” his concepts (54). There are “clear lexical clues” that he left behind, and which allow us

²³ Whitehouse, *Arguments*, 2 Unlike Whitehouse (and Sperber and Fish), Pinnock rejected the claim that episodic memory, as expressed in local rituals and cults, and relying on revelatory experiences transmitted through sporadic collective action, is a sufficient cause for what he experienced.

²⁴ Although Pinnock would retain the word “inerrancy” in the following decades, as early as *Biblical Revelation* in 1971 he had begun to create a reflective space for a rigorous biblical criticism—in conjunction with a Spirit-led dynamic reading of the scriptural text (see Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* [2006], 261). Rather than distinct from or unrelated to the theme of spiritual experience, *Biblical Revelation* reveals a momentum that seemed already to be well underway within the early Pinnock. He later stated as much in 2006, when he acknowledged that his own ecclesial heritage had focused on a militant advocacy of a virtually unqualified biblical inerrancy; i.e., an errorless Bible that was deemed the essential anchor for a defensible Christianity; but which his Ph. D. mentor F. F. Bruce eventually abandoned as untenable.

“to identify the contemporary argumentative devices” that he employed (57). Just as dialects “converse with one another within a recognizable linguistic boundary,” so the analysis of rhetorolects has highlighted for us in Pinnock’s texts how he configured his “themes, topics, reasonings, and argumentations” (64). Summarizing those rhetorical dialects is our focus in these final three sections.

E. Rhetorical Analysis

In our innertextual analysis, key words were quickly identified by Nota Bene’s search engine, Orbis. A work sheet was then opened in Excel, with the page numbers of a given book (*Biblical Revelation*, for example) listed from beginning to end in the column on the left, and in the columns to the right with key lemmas noted per page. Then, thanks to the Chart Wizard in Excel, this data was depicted visually²⁵ in histograms.²⁶ Each chart gave a diachronic depiction of the occurrence of a particular lemma through the whole of the respective book. The data for the lemma from the second book was simply copied and pasted into this chart, resulting in two lines on the graph depicting the same lemma as it occurred throughout the two books. For example, a given lemma like “script*” was depicted from *Biblical Revelation*, *The Scripture Principle*, and *Flame of Love* in one chart.²⁷ With charts opened beside each other (as separate Excel work sheets), an immediate comparison of the given lemma in all three books could be made. When all the data for all the key lemmas was converted into charts (all contained within one Excel file), we were able to advance from work sheet to work sheet, chart to chart, tracking and comparing lemmas all the way through the books. This enabled us to track factually, with

²⁵ In Microsoft Office Excel 2003, a column of numbers is highlighted, the graph icon at the top of the page is clicked and under “Chart type,” “Line” is chosen. Clicking “Next,” under “Series” the name of the book is assigned to the data (ex., BRev 71), “Next” is clicked, and under “Chart title” a name for the chart is given (ex., script* 1). For a final time, “Next” is clicked, “As new sheet” is selected and then assigned a name (ex., script 1).

²⁶ For a thorough description of histograms, see Donijo Robbins, *Understanding*, 194-95.

²⁷ In Excel, with one chart already open, under “Window” at the top of the page one simply selects “New window,” then “Arrange...,” then “Horizontal,” then “OK” to open the second chart. Under “View,” unselect “Sized with Window,” and select “Zoom,” set “Magnification” at 50%, and select “OK.”

data from the texts themselves, the following changes in Pinnock's rhetorical context, from relatively early in his career to the end stage of his scholarship.

F. Role of Rhetorolects

Robbins demonstrates how an author takes existing socially or culturally intelligible topoi and their argumentation, and ideologically reshapes them into new topoi or arguments. "If the elaborations 'catch on' in some way, and themselves become developed, it is likely that we are looking at the creation of a 'rhetorolect,' a configuration of topoi and their argumentation 'that is generated through a process whereby widely recognized topoi are recontextualized and reconfigured to create conventions that support reasoning in new contexts.'"²⁸ Robbins also demonstrates how rhetorolects help us bring the inchoate topic of a rhetorical situation, including a religious experience such as Pinnock's, into sharper focus, for there are genetic and historical elements within a given rhetorical situation from which one is "constrained" to draw certain conclusions. As those elements emerge, Robbins then offers categories to organize them.²⁹

First, we have argued that Pinnock's experience with the Holy Spirit created a rhetorical space³⁰ which over the ensuing decades allowed for a deep re-evaluation of his theology. His early question "What else was there for the Spirit to do now . . ." (298) became the question that undid the inertia of the topos of his rational-propositional model of the Scripture's authority. He came to discover a dynamism in Jesus' hermeneutic of Old Testament texts which proved a fitting corollary to the dynamism of the Spirit's work in the cosmos, and the dynamism of his own religious experience. His growing awareness of the vivacious nature and work of the Spirit,

²⁸ Bloomquist, "Paul," 175.

²⁹ The question remains, however, as to how exactly? On this point, Robbins is rather vague. His intuitive sense of "final cultural categories" needs further exploration and refinement.

³⁰ In Gadamer's terms, in the interface between the living tradition of the past and the complexities of Pinnock's own present, space was created for re-evaluation by his religious experience. SRI helps us avoid an inherent danger here, as Bloomquist has noted. That danger is a kind of positivism: the naive notion that one can read Pinnock's texts and "access" his experience, coming up with a definitive, scientific summary thereof. No, what one comes up with is what Pinnock wanted his audience to understand. He was writing for "persuasion," and this takes us into the rhetorical realm of ideology.

and his trust in that Spirit's guiding, were correlative with his discovery of another topos, that of an anthropological hermeneutic as per Barth and Schleiermacher. Innertextually, the histogram of "life" demonstrates how Pinnock extrapolated from a relationally-oriented topos to the whole of reality (139). We observed Pinnock's conclusion that the divinization of all creation is the intent in the heart of the Trinity (i.e., theosis), a theme common to Eastern Orthodoxy. In similar fashion, we documented how his argumentation moved into a reflective, meditative rhetorolect reminiscent of past writers of Christian spirituality across the centuries. This was an amazing rhetorical shift for an author who earlier was a spokesperson and apologist for a hard-edged, reason-centric conservatism, if not Fundamentalism, promoted among Baptists in Canada and the United States in the 1960s and 70s.

Second, we note how Pinnock's journey ranged rhetorolectically across all seven of the individual locations that Robbins provides for the analysis of an author's ideology. He rejected the *gnostic-manipulationist* and *utopian* ideological locations into which he was born in a liberal Baptist church in Toronto. Yet the impact of that theologically liberal view of the world set the trajectory for his academic future. His constant probing and pushing of boundaries depicted a mind that was comfortable neither with conformity, convention, nor constriction; and which eventually arrived at an ever growing appreciation for the bridge-like potentiality and even beauty to be found in other theological positions, including those beyond Christianity. In his teenage years, he moved into a *conversionist* and *introversionist* location through the conservative evangelicalism that he deliberately embraced. This theological viewpoint he would never leave. However, the role of religious experience (which drew him into evangelicalism in the first place through a distinct conversion experience; and which was a defining feature of Baptist theology) continued to define his theological journey, mistrusting it as he did in his early years. Latently in his Ph.D. thesis on the Holy Spirit, and more explicitly later through his involvement with the charismatic movement, he broadened his viewpoint to include the *thaumaturgical* location, personally experiencing healing in one of his eyes (20), and then

persuading others toward more openness to the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit. His relatively brief experiment with political *revolution* in the early 1970s turned him back with renewed energy toward the social and political status quo, and a *reformist* stance. This last ideological location we suggest became the defining stance of Pinnock's later life and work. Keenly aware of the cross-currents at work in his larger social and cultural setting in Canada and in North America, his principle efforts at reform were focused on evangelicalism across the continent. His desire was to shift it from its prevailing Enlightenment rationalist topos to the historic paradigm of classic Christianity. Ideologically, he proved to be a reformer at heart.

Third, we found further confirmation via Robbins' insights into the graphic nature of rhetoric, unearthed through his historical exploration of Aristotle's distinction between (1) pictorial-narrative elaboration (rhetography); and (2) enthymematic-syllogistic elaboration (rhetology). Robbins argues that "in the West we regularly develop dimensions of 'rhetology,' " (71) of argumentative words and concepts, at the expense of good terminology to interpret the pictures and narrative of rhetography. This then plays out in our theology, favouring an argumentative-enthymematic discourse about God or the divine. As Robbins puts it, "We have substantive discussions concerning how theological discourse should be constructed, and these discussions and their results are highly productive." However, to balance this conceptual bias, that which is missing from the discussion is "theography, description and narration of God and God's activities."³¹ An inner textual analysis of Pinnock's selected writings located his willingness to transit from rhetological persuasion (without challenging its conventional boundaries) toward deliberate rhetorographical language. Whereas argumentative vocabulary dominated over pictorial communication in BRev 71, theographical language came to the fore in his work on pneumatology in FoL 96. This was in conjunction with the emerging rhetorlect described above that was meditative yet still persuasive in style. This graphic-orientation was

³¹ It is Robbins' hope that a new era in biblical and theological interpretation will emerge--including theographical tools--once interpreters begin to explore the dynamic, interactive relation between rhetology and rhetography. See Robbins, *Invention*, 86–87.

evidenced in his straining for word pictures to describe the work of the Spirit, opting for terms such as cosmic dancing, joy, and other emotive expressions. Rhetology is still there, but he was compelled to turn back to a style of writing prioritizing the symbolic richness of the historic church and its teachings (“Argumentative Words Versus Pictures,” 70).

As an analytic, SRI has lived up to its claims. It has allowed us to track rhetorically how Pinnock accepted, then critiqued and rejected, logical positivism. He accepted Gadamer’s hermeneutical circle, recognizing the horizons of writers and readers. He accepted, via Barth, Schleiermacher’s anthropological starting point of the believing individual. He turned to the historic church’s theological paradigm of recapitulation. He rejected his earlier scepticism of religious experience as rationally suspect and unverifiable, and accepted the legitimacy of experience as an essential element of belief, and of orthodox belief, too; concluding that the Spirit authenticates genuine experience within the medium of the apostolic teaching. He thus became an exemplar of key critical hermeneutical decisions that the evangelical church faced in the mid- to late twentieth century, as it struggled to re-express the historic faith through newer, more fitting, *topoi*. Yet he proved authentic to his own convictions in his relentless commitment to a hermeneutic grounded within historic Christianity.

G. His Rhetorical Choices

We have already noted that sociorhetorical investigation identifies within a given rhetorical situation the constituent configurations of *topoi* (overlapping web-like networks of meaning) and *rhetorolects* (large-scale patterns of rhetorical discourse). These elements have provided us with the “how” to identify the mega-themes in Pinnock’s writings. We close by re-addressing the goals we set for ourselves at the close of Ch. 1 (38), four of which concern us here:

- (1) Are there discernible shifts in the span of Pinnock’s work?
- (2) Are the shifts due to his religious experience or to something else? That is, is there evidence that the changes between his discourse and his situation are radical or stylistic?

(3) If radical, what are the salient indicators of the hermeneutical impact of his religious experience on his corpus?

(4) If radical, are there elements from his texts that are dependent on the “truth” of certain states of affairs, extra-linguistic to his rhetorical situation?

Numbers (3) and (4) we sought to answer above; while numbers (1) and (2) we answer below.

1. Are there discernible shifts in the span of Pinnock’s work?. In Ch. 3, “Inner Texture,” our analysis of lemmas revealed a distinction between *Flame of Love* and Pinnock’s other works, with its emphasis on “relational and intersubjective words such as life, world, love, church, power, human, people, grace, and community” (143). We found evidence in its *progressive* texture of “infrequent use of the lemmas Scripture, revelation, and Bible” due not to low regard for the same, but rather to the rise of the legitimacy of other authorities buttressing the Scriptures’ primary role (96). The *narrational* texture indicated that the voices in FoL 96 changed from “a text-based to a relational-, communal-, and Trinitarian-based hermeneutic,” with the rise of appreciation for history and tradition as legitimate voices through which one hears Scripture (117).

In terms of the *opening-middle-closing* texture, BRev 71 stressed “divine revelation in Jesus Christ as the ground and context of scriptural inspiration” (145) argued from the Bible alone, whereas ScPr 84 saw the rise of a new voice in the middle and later sections, that of the more generic lemma “text,” suggesting a heightened appreciation by Pinnock for the inclusion of extra-biblical material, or of a critical approach to the biblical text. Then FoL 96 leaned toward relational terms, with a strong Trinitarian focus on “father*” and “son*” followed in the middle section by “Christ” and “Jesus” (145). The final section concluded with words related to the Bible--yet still relational, and pertaining to Spirit and truth (145). However, we noted that his writing was revelation-centric rather than subjective, in that he chose not to use terms common in today’s study of spirituality such as “inner,” “internal,” or “mystery” (121).

While in the *argumentative* texture all books followed a similar style, whereby the *case*/rationale leads to the *result*/conclusion, and the *rule*/assertion is provided by an enthymeme (146), in the *sensory-aesthetic* texture of FoL 96 Pinnock showed a marked preference for the visual over the other four senses. He favoured words that were “either visually-friendly such as open, mystery, universal, love, and world; or easily visualized such as anthropocentric words like human, experience, life, creation, and power” (136).

2. Shifts due to religious experience or to something else. Is there evidence that the changes between Pinnock’s discourse and his situation were radical or stylistic? SRI, influenced by the work of Lloyd Bitzer, reminds us that believing reading applies to perceived *reality*, not fantasy--for a discourse is either rhetorical or unrhetorical (meaning fictive). The elements that comprise the rhetorical situation (rhetor, audience, exigence, and context) are located in reality. The rhetorical situation in turn influences the rhetor. Would an experience divorced from reality, contrived or purely subjective, have sufficient force to elicit efforts on the part of a rhetor to persuade an audience? Pinnock’s response was “Hardly,” for a drug trip would qualify as such. We have argued that the efforts of persuasion point to some sort of perceived reality in Pinnock’s religious experience, a perception thus hermeneutically accessible to public critique and logical analysis.³²

We suggest that the ground was laid for his extra-linguistic argument as early as his Ph.D. thesis, which included elements of historic Christianity, the Old Testament, the Hellenism of that classic period, and the Holy Spirit, a potent amalgam later to become the “defining motif of his academic career” (293). Over the ensuing decades, reinforced by the role of religious experience, this evolving interpretive lens discerned ever more layerings of richer meaning in texts already familiar to him. He came to the conclusion as a seasoned (and battle-scarred) theologian that even perspectives from the social sciences and other religions could serve to sharpen our understanding of what God intends in the Bible. Yet his instinct was always to realign his

³² Bitzer, “Rhetorical.”

emerging theological models, including his controversial work on an “open view” of God’s sovereignty, with the revelation of Scripture and its historic pre-Modern interpretations.³³

Our findings in Ch. 4, “Intertextural,” supported our findings in Ch. 3, “Inner Texture”; that Pinnock’s rhetorical movement was “from a more literal (judicial/inerrancy) approach to the biblical text to one that makes room for the response of the reader . . . to a further shift, *based on this pivot of experience*, that enlarges the horizon of meaning from the biblical text to the wider cosmic and historical references (social Trinity, creation, reconciliation, etc.)” (232). A locus of meaning emerged (i.e., a topos) which demonstrated his switch from what Pinnock called his earlier “Logos” Christology to “Spirit” Christology. We discovered this by identifying edges between different sets of ideas at the level of topoi by graphing certain key lemmas such as scripture, revelation(s), Bible, text, authorit*, histor*, tradit*, and experience.

The next set of edges, identified in Ch. 5, “Ideology,” were those linked to Pinnock’s shift in rhetorolects. (We remind ourselves that the difference between ideology and rhetorolects is the difference between what the author is trying to do [ideology], and the rhetorical strategy she or he uses, the manipulation of words to effect the “thing” being attempted [rhetorolect]). It is our conviction that Pinnock’s shift was first precipitated by his change in topos; that is, his discovery through Barth via Schleiermacher of the legitimacy of an anthropological starting point. Barth in his critique of Schleiermacher discovered a nascent theology of the Holy Spirit in

³³ In 1981, in the first edition of *The Scripture Principle*, Pinnock reflected briefly on his writing of BRev 71. He summarized his earlier position on biblical inerrancy as built on just one incorrect assumption: “that all Scripture is inspired by God in the sense of prophetic inspiration (‘I have put my words in your mouth’) which amounts to *de facto* dictation (what Scripture says, God says--period). Ten years after BRev 71 was published, he could say “I identify very much with the clear stand it takes on Biblical authority. I am not aware of having changed this in any vital respect. But I do also detect omissions and distortions in the argument at certain points, which I would not wish to repeat today.” See Pinnock, “Response to Koivisto,” 155.

Near the close of his career, he again reflected back on that era as a longing for theological certainty, a longing he could accept as legitimate though vulnerable to the “foundationalism of modernity” which had captivated his early thought. The answer he discovered was the “Scripture principle”; namely, that the sociocultural character of the Bible’s authority is indeed reflected in the content, setting, and form of any given text. However, that text speaks with extra-linguistic backing, and is thus capable of initiating and then governing a radical religious experience. See Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 262.

Schleiermacher's effort to account for the existential longing of the late eighteenth-century,³⁴ whom Barth, ironically, referred to in his addendum as the "old sorcerer." In fact, he delighted to imagine a some-day conversation with Schleiermacher in the kingdom of heaven that would last a couple of centuries.³⁵ Pinnock takes Schleiermacher's anthropological centre combined with Barth's emergent pneumatological instincts, and fills that theological frame with the contents of historic classic teaching on the Holy Spirit (though he never fully embraced neoorthodoxy, as made evident in BRev 71).

Due to his religious experience Pinnock abandoned naive positivism, with its assumption of clear unfettered knowledge of the textual world, and accepted a distancing between himself and the Scripture writers. In this interpretative space he then opened to the role of mystery, tradition, and by extension, heightened appreciation for religious experience. He did not use humour as a rhetorical strategy.³⁶ He resorted rather to a meditative effusive style as he sought to draw the reader into a burning flame-like interaction with Spirit. He longed to see our contemporary age swept up into an experiential encounter with the Spirit that is described in the Eastern Church as mystery, theosis, and endless love. One is left with the impression that he strained his extensive vocabulary to give some description to the transcendent truths he was seeking to communicate. He tried to depict emotions and ecstasy as an enticement, like a dance with the Spirit. From within this new rhetorlect, his efforts to argue rationally (i.e., rhetologically) *had* to be completed and expanded by his efforts to argue metaphorically (i.e., rhetographically). He was compelled to express himself with a response to the Spirit who is source of all reason yet infinitely beyond human reason.

³⁴ Barth, *Schleiermacher*, 278.

³⁵ Barth, *Schleiermacher*, 277.

³⁶ Prof. Bloomquist pointed out during a discussion of Barth's perspective that Barth's addendum, "Concluding Unscientific Postscript on Schleiermacher," is modelled on Kierkegaard's book entitled "Concluding Unscientific Postscript." In that book, Kierkegaard used humour and irony to expose the specious thinking of his day. On its first page, he declared that he would use mime, pathos (affections), and discourse to draw his readers into conversation about their need to change. Bloomquist suggested that Barth used humour too, but it was more biting and harder to agree with unless one accepts his argument.

We also noticed how Pinnock moved ideologically from his early years as a defender of an embattled minority (safeguarding within evangelicalism the sway of Enlightenment rationalism) to a reformer inviting other evangelicals to embrace the riches of a broader, but classic, Christian ecumenism. From within its breadth he then reassessed how he and Christians could relate to other faith traditions around the globe. Interestingly, his own movement mirrored his understanding of the centripetal and centrifugal directions of the Triune God's dealings with the cosmos. Pinnock's desire to drive away dissidents from his early narrow centrifugal understanding of orthodoxy was replaced by a much broader centripetal appeal to Christians and non-Christians alike, to be drawn into the cosmic sweep of God's recapitulative plan in Jesus through the Spirit. This might explain why there was a noticeable lack of data concerning his social and cultural locations. Instead, we observed a single-mindedness to his focus. He was laser-like in his attention to the theological dimension of the issues under discussion in his three books; all other social and cultural issues were deemed secondary to that axis.

Aware of the various forms of ideological discourse about him, Pinnock (firmly rooted in historical-critical discourse) moved to greater appreciation for social-scientific and even history-of-religions discourse. He continually sought understanding, and delighted to be a pioneer of new avenues of insight. What separated him from the embrace of new historical or postmodern, deconstructive discourses, however, was his unshaking commitment to an orthodox theological centre against which all other perspectives were measured. This was for him the issue lying at the heart of twentieth-century theology. Writing from a position of comfort, wealth, and even power (relative to a global perspective), the eventual means he used to achieve that end was not through the institutionalization of power, but the sagacious use of the media available to him as a teacher. He influenced primarily through ideas. It was the gradual influence of religious experience in his own life that had freed him from his unwitting defence of the Enlightenment rationalism that underlay his early view of inerrancy. That shift unveiled to him new horizons for exploration and response to the crises facing evangelicalism in the late twentieth century; however, he determined

that those horizons could only open for him within the boundaries of the historic faith, not outside them.

We can think of Pinnock's journey as "an epistemological quest" that never ceased to preoccupy him (288). In his search for authenticity he claimed that he could not be content with "unexamined beliefs" (279). He persisted in being a "shaper of theological thought" in North America's evangelical community (276), willing to pay a price for abandoning his earlier Princeton position with its particular Calvinist perspective, yet whose logical conclusions had begun to unravel for him. Not to follow his perception of emerging truth meant becoming in his opinion like the " 'paleo-Calvinists,' who had decided to stop developing theologically" (283). However, though he argued vigorously with them as his antagonists, he agreed with them on this: religious experience needs to be interpreted by an authority greater than itself. That authority is Scripture. This, we suggest, was Pinnock's deepest ideological commitment.

H. His Contribution to Christian Spirituality

Although in the books under our study Pinnock made no overt effort to contribute to the study of Christian spirituality *per se*, he nonetheless serves as a model for this generation's spiritual search. He recognized that post-modernity posed a real challenge to historic hermeneutics with its description of every text of Scripture as bounded by time and transience. The result was a fallible Bible only of human origins. This, he concluded, was "the deepest problem facing biblical authority today . . . not whether there are errors in the text but whether the text can be viewed as anything more than a reflection of its time and place. How could it have escaped the relativity that hangs over all things human?"³⁷ His answer was the existential role of the Holy Spirit in hermeneutics. "If, indeed, we now live in a postfoundationalist context, the challenge is to discover how best to understand the Bible as the instrumentality of the Spirit as

³⁷ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 118.

the Spirit seeks to appropriate the sacred text so that it speaks relevantly to us today.”³⁸

Let us then end where we began by circling back to Ch. 1, and Schneiders’ helpful paradigm of Christian spirituality using two of Aristotle’s four types of causation (11). Our study of Pinnock has provided us with fresh insights to embellish her model. For example, like Schneiders, the *material* cause of spirituality is in Pinnock’s later work the anthropological starting point (i.e., the inherent spiritual potential of human self-transcendence). The *formal* cause does not essentially differ either, for he clearly opts for Christian theism. As Schneiders puts it, this “specifies the horizon of ultimate value as the triune God revealed in Jesus Christ to whom Scripture normatively witnesses and whose life is communicated to the believer by the Holy Spirit making her or him a child of God.”³⁹

However, we propose that the *efficient* cause changed significantly for Pinnock due to his shift in topos. (Note: the third and the fourth causes are not developed by Schneiders in her model.) This third cause “is the origin of a change or state of rest in something”⁴⁰ For Pinnock from within a Trinitarian paradigm, the Holy Spirit is the “efficient” cause that moves humans into spiritual self-transcendence. This is the essential teaching in his *Flame of Love*. Decades earlier, however, we suggest that Pinnock would have focused on the salvific role of Christ as this efficient cause. It was his shift into a relation-centric topos that elevated for him his

³⁸ Pinnock and Callen, *Scripture* (2006), 254. On the basis of extra-linguistic backing Pinnock argued with Pannenberg that:

(1) There is the element of exclusivism in the Christian truth claim. “Truth can be only one, because nothing can be true that is not consonant with every other truth.” To take seriously God’s eschatological revelation in Jesus Christ is to accept Jesus’ challenge to confess him alone, and Peter’s claim that salvation is available in no one but Jesus.

(2) There is the element of inclusivism in the Christian faith. The one God has revealed himself to all human beings: “no human being as creature of God can exist without any relationship to the creator.”

(3) There is the element of a factual pluralism. Christian self-understanding accepts that different belief systems and conflicting truth claims belong together. This in a way even reflects the plurality within God’s trinitarian life, though it should not be mistaken for a “pluralism of principle,” for then we would lose sight of “the unity of the truth for all those who search for the truth or claim to have obtained a piece of it. . . .” See Pannenberg, “Religions,” 297.

³⁹ Schneiders, “Study,” 17.

⁴⁰ See *Britannica*. See “Aristotle: Causation,” accessed 3 February 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/34560/Aristotle/254716/Causation?anchor=ref923097>.

appreciation for the Spirit's role in creation, and also in re-creation. As he himself put it, he moved from a Logos-Christology to a Spirit-Christology.

Thomas C. Oden, quoting Aquinas, identifies the same causative role of the Spirit in the process of salvation, in the Scholastics. Of interest to us is his mention of the "efficient" effect of the Spirit. He writes (*italics*, and comments in square brackets, added): "The same triune reasoning was expressed by the Scholastics in terms of the causes of salvation--the original cause [material cause] of salvation as the love of God the Father, the meritorious cause [formal cause] of justification as the sacrifice of the Son, the *efficient cause* of actually received salvation as the power of the Spirit eliciting by grace the response of the free will of the redeemed sinner (Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* II-I, Q112, II, pp. 1140-43)."⁴¹

What shifted for Pinnock over his career was the "human" dimension in the efficient cause (what Aristotle described as "a person reaching a decision, a father begetting a child, a sculptor carving a statue, and a doctor healing a patient.")⁴² This third cause Pinnock had earlier correctly identified, but restricted to divine influence alone. With his shift of understanding from Calvinism to an Arminian perspective on human volition coupled with divine will and act, Pinnock's appreciation for God's role in human spirituality never lessened; however, he came to regard as legitimate the complementary role of humans in that process too. (This in turn precipitated a re-evaluation of the formal cause, in that other religions came to be appreciated as expressions of general revelation, without this making their revelation normative.)

The *final* cause, as argued from Pinnock's material, was his rediscovery of the early church's recapitulation model; that is, Christ's representation of humanity and creation to the Father with their ensuing theosis into the Father's heart. As presented in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* article above, Aristotle's last cause is the end or goal of all things—that for the sake of which a thing is done. Following his wedding of divine and human causation (third cause), we

⁴¹ Oden, *Spirit*, 25.

⁴² *Britannica*. See "Aristotle: Causation," accessed 3 February 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/34560/Aristotle/254716/Causation?anchor=ref923097>.

argue that Pinnock grounded the axis of the final cause in the representative nature of Christ's redemption, in line with the historic church and its honouring of Messiah Jesus as the second Adam, on whose shoulders rested the fate of the universe in Jesus' choice to obey or disobey his Father. This final causation thus sees the image of Christ one day reflected in the whole of the redeemed cosmos. With that shift, even Pinnock's style of rhetoric changed to become, as we have noted above, noticeably more meditative, irenic, and confidently appreciative of the role of religious experience.

I. Rhetor as Artist Rather Than Scientist

In closing, we recall our seventh goal at the conclusion of Ch. 1, to explore the rhetor as "more like an artist than a scientist, making *rhetorical choices*" (40). Pinnock has reminded us that there is a God-designed freedom inherent to human interpretation rather than an irreducible understanding infallibly achieved by a reader. She or he, with multiple interpretations available for his or her persuasion of others, must seek "integrity (what Bitzer calls 'fit') and receptivity to the 'recalcitrant particularities' of the situation" (40, 305); hence, confirming the critical importance of authenticity in hermeneutics.

In this light, Pinnock has proven himself a sterling role model for contemporary Christianity, especially in its search for extra-linguistic backing. Indeed, the clues to his example are so obvious as to be overlooked. They are expressed in the titles of his books we have studied, which depict for us our author's hermeneutical gamble: that there is an authority great enough to subsume any shift in topos or rhetorical dialect, be it in the ancient Mediterranean world or in the complex age in which we live; namely, "biblical revelation" and the "Scripture principle." We suspect that to this Pinnock would have added one caveat: that such revelation can only be rightly interpreted when done so through the dynamic help of holy Spirit, who is *experienced* as the "flame of love."

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