

'Christ's descent' in Massachusetts: The doctrine of justification according to William Pynchon (1590-1662)¹

'The Wise will understand'²

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Introduction

In 1650 William Pynchon (or Pinchin), 'Gentleman in New-England', published a book which bore the title *The Meritorious Price of Our Redemption, Iustification, &c..* The author was not a writer by profession, but a rich trader from Springfield (Essex, England), who had arrived in New England in 1630 as a shareholder in the Massachusetts Bay Company³.

Upon arrival in New England Pynchon first settled at Dorchester, not far from Boston, but within a short time removed to nearby Roxbury, where he became one of the most prosperous fur and corn traders of the colony. In his capacity as magistrate and assistant to the General Court, he held several important positions with the judiciary and the treasury of the plantation. In 1635 or early 1636 for business reasons he removed to Agawam (or Agaam), situated on the banks of the Connecticut River, where he became one of the founding fathers of Connecticut Colony⁴. From March 1637 on he served as a member of the recently installed General Court⁵.

From the start relations between Pynchon and the Connecticut Colony government were marred by friction, and in 1638 he was hauled before the Court on charges of treason and unfair business dealings, favoring the Indians. Especially the (false) accusations of oath breaking and cheating levelled at Pynchon by Thomas Hooker (1586-1647), at the time pastor of the Church at Hartford (Conn.), led to Pynchon's conviction by the General Court⁶. Largely as a result of the deteriorating relationship between Pynchon and Hooker, the settlement of Agawam rescinded its decision to join the new colony of Connecticut and expressed its desire to remain under the Massachusetts Bay government. This took effect in 1641 and Pynchon was granted the authority to govern Agawam,

¹ For a review of contemporary Calvinism in England and New England, cf. W.A. Speck and L. Billington, "Calvinism in Colonial North America, 1630-1715", in: Menna Prestwich, ed., *International Calvinism 1541-1715*, (repr. Oxford, 1986) 257-283; P.G.E. Miller, *Errand into the Wilderness*, (4th ed.; Cambr., Mass., 1975); P.G.E. Miller, *Orthodoxy in Massachusetts 1630-1650*, (New York/London, 1933); P.F. Gura, *A Glimpse of Sion's Glory. Puritan Radicalism in New England 1620-1660*, (Middletown, Conn., 1984); R.T. Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649*, (Oxford, 1979); David D. Hall, *The Faithful Shepherd. A History of the New England Ministry in the Seventeenth Century*, (Williamsburg, Virg., 1972).

² *FD*, 221, 439. (See ABBREVIATIONS below)

³ Although Pynchon's native village, Springfield, was located only two miles to the northeast of Chelmsford (Essex) where the influential nonconformist Thomas Hooker lived and preached until 1630, there is no evidence nor is it likely that Pynchon was among his audience. For the opposition in Essex against Hooker, cf. N. Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists. The Rise of English Arminianism, 1590-1640*, (Oxford, 1987) 188 ff.; cf. G.H. Williams, e.a., *Thomas Hooker. Writings in England and Holland, 1626-1633*, (Cambridge, Mass., 1975) 1-35.

⁴ The nucleus of early Connecticut Colony consisted of three settlements situated on the Connecticut River: Hartford, Windsor and Wethersfield. The Agawam settlement, which was located at some distance to the north of Hartford, initially joined this federation, Joseph H. Smith, ed., *Colonial Justice in Western Massachusetts (1639-1702). The Pynchon Court Record. An Original Judges' Diary of the Administration of Justice in the Springfield Courts in the Massachusetts Bay Colony*, (Cambridge, Mass., 1961) 13; Miller, *Errand*, chap. ii; C. Rossiter, "Thomas Hooker", *The New England Quarterly*, XXV (1952) 469 ff.

⁵ For additional biographical details the reader is referred to S.E. Morison, "William Pynchon, the Founder of Springfield", *Massachusetts Historical Society, Proceedings*, 64 (1932) 67-107; Gura, *A Glimpse*, 304-322; Smith, *Colonial Justice*, 6-31; E.H. Byington, "William Pynchon, the Founder of Springfield", *Connecticut Valley Historical Society. Papers and Proceedings*, 2 (1904) 20-40.

⁶ Th. Hooker emigrated to New England in 1633. He came from Delft (Holland) where for more than a year he had been an assistant to Merchant Adventurers preacher John Forbes, cf. footnote 9. At about the same time as Pynchon, Hooker settled in Connecticut, where he became a very influential figure. He took a large share in the drawing up of the theocratic constitution. Relations between Pynchon and Hooker were bad. Although the latter was an important theologian, Pynchon never cited him, Rossiter, "Thomas Hooker", 459-488; Smith, *Colonial Justice*, 15; Miller, *Errand*, 39-40.

by then called Springfield after his Essex birthplace, and to exercise certain judicial powers. He stayed in office until his trial before the General Court of Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1650, when he was charged with heresy⁷.

In 1646 Pynchon gave his support to a movement which accused the General Court of Massachusetts of disregard of the laws of England and argued for a more liberal system of church government that would make membership available to any one of good behavior, and not just to 'visible saints'. He also urged a more limited rôle for the church in society, as several civil rights and privileges, which in England were regulated by common law, in Massachusetts were restricted to church members only⁸.

After having been published in June 1650 in London, Pynchon's *The Meritorious Price* (also called *Dialogue* after its literary form) circulated in New England from early October of the same year, where it immediately provoked fierce protests. The author's rather unorthodox views on the article concerning the justification of sinners were exposed as the gravest of heresies. Not only did Pynchon question one of the most important ideological mainstays of the social, political and ecclesiastical fabric of Puritan society in New England, but also the intellectual freedom which he allowed himself by discussing such a sensitive topic, combined with his democratic proclivity, was considered to be an axe at the root of the very theocratic concept of the state itself.

Apart from this, Pynchon in the last part of his book attacked John Forbes (c. 1568-1634), a Presbyterian divine highly respected in orthodox Calvinistic circles⁹. Forbes' main work, a treatise defending the doctrine of double supralapsarian predestination after the pattern laid out by the Genevan divine Theodore Beza (1519-1605) and the Cambridge Puritan William Perkins (1558-1602), had been published by Richard Schilders at Middelburg (Zeeland) in 1616. This and other writings of Forbes were eagerly read on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean¹⁰.

The General Court of Massachusetts, which, according to the English Presbyterian and *malleus haereticorum* Thomas Edwards, was well aware of the dangers 'of the Heresies, Errours, and all sorts of Sects amongst us'¹¹, in its session of October 1650 condemned Pynchon's book and ordered a thorough investigation. A declaration of protest was drawn up and sent to England to be printed, and orders were given that the book be burnt in public. Pleas for tolerance which reached the Court from England went unheeded¹². John Norton, a rather mediocre theologian from Ipswich, Massachusetts, was instructed to compose a rebuttal to Pynchon's views, which he duly did. After having circulated for some time in New England, it was printed and published in London on the Court's orders, bearing the title *A Discussion Of That Great Point In Divinity, the Sufferings of Christ*¹³. In it,

⁷ Smith, *Colonial Justice*, 15-16, 25, 89-93, 203; Gura, *A Glimpse*, 304-308.

⁸ Gura, *A Glimpse*, 307-308; Hall, *The Faithful Shepherd*, 127; Miller, *Orthodoxy*, chap. viii.

⁹ From 1593 to 1605 Forbes served as a minister to the Church at Alford (Scotland). In 1606 he was exiled from his country following his involvement with the illegal General Assembly of 1605 (Aberdeen). After settling in the Netherlands (1608) and until a year before his death he served as a minister to the Merchant Adventurers, a powerful society of English cloth merchants, who had their Dutch Court successively in Middelburg (Zeeland, 1582-1621) and Delft (Holland, 1621-1635), cf. Chr. G.F. de Jong, *John Forbes (ca. 1568-1634)*, ([Diss. Groningen, 1987]), and *idem*, "John Forbes (c. 1568-1634), Scottish Minister and Exile in The Netherlands", *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis*, 69 (1989) 17-53.

¹⁰ J. Forbes, *A Treatise tending to Cleare the Doctrine of Ivstification. Written by Io. Forbes, Pastour of the English Church at Middelbvrg, for the instruction of his flocke: And now published by some of them for the good of others...*, (Middelburg, 1616). Cf. State Papers (S.P.) 16, vol. 258, no. 62; S.P. 16, vol. 265, no. 35; S.P. 16, vol. 308, no. 33 (Public Record Office, London).

¹¹ Th. Edwards, *Gangraena: or A Catalogue and Discovery of many of the Errours, Heresies, Blasphemies ...*, (3rd ed., London, 1646) I, 9.

¹² Gura, *A Glimpse*, 309-310; Smith, *Colonial Justice*, 26-28.

¹³ J. Norton, *A Discussion Of That Great Point In Divinity, the Sufferings of Christ; and the Questions about His Righteousnesse active, passive: and the Imputation thereof. Being an Answer to a Dialogue intituled The Meritorious Price of our Redemption, Justification, &c. By John Norton, Teacher of the Church at Ipswich in New England. Who was appointed to draw up this answer by the General Court ...* London, A.M. for G. Gilvert ... 1653. John Norton (1606-1663) was an English Puritan who, shortly after taking his Bachelor of Arts in 1627, had broken off his studies at Peter House, Cambridge. He arrived in New England in 1635. That year he was called as 'teacher' (lecturer) to the Ipswich Church under Nathaniel Ward (who in his *Simple Cobler of Aggawam*, 1647, heavily attacked the 'heresy' of toleration). In 1652, on the death of John Cotton, Norton became teacher at the Boston Church, where he stayed until his death. From 1651-1656 Norton was tutor to Increase Mather, cf. Hall, *The Faithful Shepherd*, s.v.; A.W. McLure, *The Lives of John Wilson, John*

Norton, condemning Pynchon's views as 'an hereticall way'¹⁴, restated the Calvinistic doctrine of justification as had been demanded by the General Court, but he did not contribute any new insights to the debate nor did he take it any further¹⁵.

On several occasions Pynchon was summoned to appear before the General Court, which demanded a revocation. Being a skillful politician, he occasionally hinted that he was prepared to do so, but he never did. At the Court's session of May 1651 he may have admitted 'that I have not spoken in my booke so fully of the prize and merit of Christs sufferings as I should have done'¹⁶, but these words did hardly reflect his feelings and were primarily meant to appease the Court's indignation. Only a faint echo of these words can be found in his later writings, and they did not influence his views¹⁷. When the General Court met again in May 1652 to reach a final decision, Pynchon appeared to have returned to England, beyond the reach of the New England magistrates. From England he continued his polemics against the orthodox Calvinistic position on justification, and in 1655 he published a nearly 450 page volume, called *A Farther Discussion of that Great Point in Divinity, the Sufferings of Christ*¹⁸. Building his views on scrupulous biblicism, he presented a highly philological discussion which centered upon the proper translation and interpretation of various biblical passages which were often used as a foundation for the common doctrine of the formal imputation of the merit and righteousness of Christ to sinners (notably 2 Cor. 5, 21; Gal. 3, 13 and Isa. 53, 5-6). It is not clear what made Pynchon enter the arena of theological debate. He must have realized that the response of most of his fellow New Englanders would be highly negative. Nevertheless, though his theological and political thoughts indeed met with profound disapproval and repressive measures, some people in Connecticut responded favorably. But generally posterity forgot him and the judgement of later historians on the whole was rather negative¹⁹.

It is not known where in England Pynchon received his education, but, as is clear from his published work, his range of reading was extensive. Although he was probably not a trained lawyer or theologian²⁰, he knew Roman and English law, had mastered Greek, Latin and Hebrew. He knew the Jewish *Talmud*, had read classical authors, and knew the writings of many Church Fathers, as he did the work of many Schoolmen and other writers from the Middle Ages, such as Maimonides; in addition he appears to have read the 'Hebrew Doctors' and writers of *Midrashim* such as Rabbi

Norton and John Davenport, (Boston, 1846) 175-248; N. Petit, *The Heart Prepared: Grace and Conversion in Puritan Spiritual Life*, (New Haven/London, 1966) 177-184.

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Norton, *A Discussion*, 248.

15

A year later Norton published another book, called *The Orthodox Evangelist*, (1654) in which he, among other things, continued his attack on Pynchon's ideas in the same vein. But Norton fought many battles and Pynchon's intellectualism wasn't his only target. In fear of Antinomianism and 'enthusiasm', Norton in several works attacked the Quakers and others who had a low opinion of man's gradual preparation to his conversion. At the same time, however, he refused to ascribe any merit to man's actions prior to his conversion; cf. John Ditsky, "Hard Hearts and Gentle People: a Quaker Reply to Persecution", *The Canadian Review of American Studies*, V, 1 (1974) 47-51; Petit, *The Heart Prepared*, 178-179.

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Smith, *Colonial Justice*, 27; Gura, *A Glimpse*, 310.

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cf. footnote 122.

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Cf. Abbreviations, page 23. Part of the edition was issued under the title *The Meritorious Price of Mans Redemption, or Christs Satisfaction Discussed and Explained*, (1655); other books Pynchon wrote include *The Time When the First Sabbath Was Ordained*, (1654), reprinted as *A Treatise of the Sabbath* (1655). In 1662 appeared *The Covenant of Nature made with Adam Described, and Cleared from sundry great mistakes*. In these publications he carried on the discussion started in *The Meritorious Price*; Morison, "William Pynchon", 106.

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F.H. Foster, *A Genetic History of the New England Theology*, (1907) 19-20, called Pynchon's views 'one sided, incomplete, and immature. It was essentially a protest, not in any way a constructive effort', which seems to harsh a judgement; S.E. Morison, *The Intellectual Life of New England*, (1956) 170, thought his work 'devoid of literary merit', which seems equally beside the point; Nicholas Chewney, *Anti-Socinianism; or, A Brief Explication of some places of holy Scripture for the confutation of certain gross Errors and Socinian Heresies, lately published by William Pynchon, Gent. in a Dialogue of his, called The Meritorious Price of our Redemption*, (London, 1656) sig. A1^o, 33, indicated that Pynchon had some influence; Gura, *A Glimpse*, 320-322, mentions Edw. Holyoke, Pynchon's friend and neighbour in Connecticut. Holyoke wrote a book called *The Doctrine of Life, or of Mans Redemption*, (1658), in which he praised Pynchon and repeated his arguments, displaying the same latitudinarian frame of mind. Later the political ideas of Hugo Grotius, on which those of Pynchon and Holyoke were largely based, became more widely accepted in New England, C.K. Shipton, "Literary leaven in provincial New England", *The New England Quarterly*, IX (June, 1936) 212.

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Stout does not list him among the English university men who emigrated to New England, Harry S. Stout, "University Men in New England 1620-1660: A Demographic Analysis", *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, IV, 3 (1974) 398.

Simeon Ben Jochai (c. 100-160). He was also familiar with the work of a host of contemporary authors, including Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Humanists, Calvinists and Lutherans²¹.

Pynchon and the doctrine of Christ's descent into Hell

Pynchon, this 'Enemy of Jesus, grace, and souls' according to Norton²², informs his readers in the Preface to *The Meritorious Price* that 'I have laboured in this Treatise to prove that Christ did not suffer any degree of Gods wrath at all for us'²³. This is, in a Calvinist's words, what Elizabethan divines had called the doctrine of Christ's descent into Hell after his crucifixion. This doctrine as it appears in the Apostle's Creed developed out of several New Testament passages which probably at first bore the meaning that Christ went to the abode of the dead prior to his resurrection. During the Middle Ages it came to mean that Christ's human soul descended into Hell for the release of the holy men of the Old Testament from their captivity in the *Limbus Patrum* or *Haides*, and it became an accepted part of Medieval dogma²⁴.

The first protests against this doctrine came from Abelard, who denied a spatial descent of Christ into Hell and taught that only Christ's power and influence had reached the Hell. Although Abelard was condemned, his views were revived by Durand of Saint Pourcain in the fourteenth century and the Italian Humanist Pico della Mirandola in the early sixteenth century. Reginald Pecock, a fourteenth century English bishop, denied the doctrine altogether and Erasmus also expressed his doubts. It was Calvin however who developed the doctrine more fully. He taught that the descent was Christ's soul's experience of the pains of Hell while his body was still hanging on the cross, especially his soul's experience of the divine wrath against sin which he bore for man's sake and the experience of the spiritual pain of abandonment by God of the One who took to himself the punishment due to sinful humanity²⁵. This doctrine, which was to become the accepted one in the Elizabethan Church towards the end of the sixteenth century, was intertwined with Calvin's whole (anselmian) understanding of justification²⁶.

The origins of the debate in sixteenth century England of Christ's descent into Hell can be traced back to the days of Henry VIII. All through that century the doctrine was considered a matter of controversy, reflecting continental confusion on the subject. Most Puritan writers offered Calvin's interpretation, some like Wm. Perkins, H. Jacob and John Forbes held the more 'mystical' view of Christ's descent into Hell as being a part of his humiliation, and indicating the path laid out for the elect to follow in this life. John Norton, citing the first Schoolmen, distinguished between a penal Hell where Christ, and he only, suffered 'essential torments' before his death (St. Luke 22, 44), and a local eternal Hell into which he did not descend and which was for the reprobates in the world to come only²⁷.

Common to most Puritans however was their rejection of the literal interpretation as represented for instance by the Elizabethan Bishops Thomas Bilson and Thomas Cooper, who taught that Christ descended into Hell to make manifest his triumph over Satan and the damned²⁸. Eventually there emerged a new generation of theologians who entirely denied the doctrine, whether in its Calvinistic

21 Smith, *Colonial Justice*, 6-7; in both his books which are discussed here, Pynchon quoted over 140 different authors.

22 Norton, *A Discussion*, 268.

23 *MP*, sig. A2^{vo}.

24 For a detailed discussion of the debate on Christ's descent into Hell, cf. Dewey D. Wallace, "Puritan and Anglican: The Interpretation of Christ's Descent Into Hell in Elizabethan Theology", *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 69 (1978) 248-287.

25 Nihil actum erat si corporea tantum morte defunctus fuisset Christus: sed operae simul pretium erat ut divinae ultionis severitatem sentiret: quo et irae ipsius intercederet, et satisfaceret iusto iudicio. Unde etiam eum oportuit cum inferorum copiis aeternaeque mortis horrore, quasi consertis manibus, luctari. Correctionem pacis nostrae illi impositam fuisse ex Propheta nuper retulimus, fuisse propter scelera nostra a Patre percussus, attritum propter nostras infirmitates ... Ergo si ad inferos descendisse dicitur, nihil mirum est, quum eam mortem pertulerit quae sceleratis ab irato Deo infligitur, J. Calvin, *Institutio Christianae Religionis*, P. Barth and G. Niesel, ed. (München, 1962-1968), Lib. II, Cap. xvi, 10.

26 W. Stanford Reid, "Justification by faith according to John Calvin", *Westminster Theological Journal*, 42 (1979) 290-307.

27 Norton, *A Discussion*, 115-120.

28 Wallace, "Puritan and Anglican", 255 ff., 265.

or Anglican or Roman Catholic form. Hebraist scholar Hugh Broughton was one of the first to do so²⁹. Other divines 'that have denied that Christ suffered Hell-torments ... even when that doctrine bare the greatest sway', approvingly referred to by Pynchon, included Robert Wilmot, vicar of Clare in Suffolk³⁰, Christopher Carlile³¹ and 'Mr. *Nichols* a student of the Inner Temple'. With the latter is meant Richard Niccols, the author of *A Day Starre for Darke Wandring Soules* (1613)³². About Carlile Pynchon may have been too optimistic, as the former was mainly interested in refuting the Roman Catholic purgatory and literalism concerning Christ's descent 'as an invention of men'. For the rest Carlile was a conformist who stayed firmly within the confines of Calvinistic soteriology³³. In later years the Erastian and Hebraist scholar Dr. John Lightfoot followed in Broughton's footsteps, and so with Pynchon, if on a lower level³⁴. Broughton's contention that the article of the descent of Christ's soul into *Haides* meant that his soul went immediately to Paradise eventually became widely accepted in seventeenth century Anglican theology, even by moderate Calvinists such as Richard Baxter. But the stricter Calvinists and Puritans, like those in New England, kept to the view that Christ suffered on the cross the very torments of Hell due to the damned, if only for a short while³⁵. Indeed, the debate in England and on the European Continent about Christ's descent into Hell constituted an important part of the background of Pynchon's theology. His connections with those students of Hugo Grotius' works, whom by Trevor-Roper are identified as the Great Tew circle, provided another element of background which was equally important. They took their name from the Oxfordshire estate Great Tew of Lucius Cary, 2nd Viscount Falkland, the place where they met regularly in the 1630s and 1640s³⁶. Their orthodox opponents accused them of Socinianism, which accusation is correct only in so far as the term is understood in a more wider, rationalistic and latitudinarian sense, and not as implying anti-Trinitarianism or Unitarianism. The intellectual link between Pynchon and this group is clearly established as he repeatedly stated his affinity to Anthony Wotton (c. 1561-1626) and to Robert Smith, both of whom had been (tempo-

²⁹ Broughton from 1605 to 1611 served as a minister to the English Merchant Adventurers at Middelburg (Zeeland), where he was first assisted and later succeeded by John Forbes, K.L. Sprunger, *Dutch Puritanism*, (Leiden, 1982) 23-24; De Jong, *Forbes*, 42; cf. H. Broughton, *Positions of the Word Hades*, (1605); H. Broughton, *An Explication of the Article ... of our Lordes soules going from his body to Paradise*, (1599); H. Broughton, *Declaration of generall corruption of Religion, Scripture and all learning; wrought by D. Bilson. While he breedeth a new opinion, that our Lord went from Paradise to Gehenna, to triumph over de Devills*, (1603); H. Broughton, *Two little workes defensive of our Redemption, that our Lord went through the veile of his flesh into Heaven ...*, (1604); H. Broughton, *A Replie Upon The R.R.F.Th. Winston for Heads of His Divinity in His Sermons And Survey*, (1605).

³⁰ In *FD*, 329, is mentioned Wilmot's 'manuscripts on *Haides*'; in *FD*, 382, his 'Manuscripts on Christs Descent'. Robert Wilmot (c. 1595-1626) was educated at King's College (Cambridge) and was made a priest in Lincoln early 1619. Within the next few years he became vicar of Clare in Suffolk, where he died in 1626. He was buried on 22 June in Pynchon's own village of Springfield, Thomas Hooker, from nearby Chelmsford, preaching the funeral sermon. In it Hooker praised Wilmot's 'holy life, ... sincere heart, ... unspotted conversation', Williams, *Thomas Hooker*, 7, 36-52.

³¹ *Whose A Discourse concerning two divine Positions. The first effectually concluding, that the soules of the faithfull fathers, deceased before Christ, went immediately to heaven. The second sufficiently setting foorth unto us Christians what we are to conceive, touching the descension of our Saviour Christ into Hell: Publicquely disputed at a Commencement in Cambridge, anno domini 1552. Purposely written at the first by way of a confutation, against a Booke of Richard Smith of Oxford ... published against Iohn Calvin & C. Carlile*, (London, 1582) is often and approvingly quoted by Pynchon; cf. Wallace, "Puritan and Anglican", 266.

³² Pynchon remarked about these authors: 'All which were far from siding with Popish Tenents, as some (to blast the truth) are apt to say, that scarce any deny Christs suffering of Gods vindicative wrath, but Papists', *FD*, 288; cf. *MP*, 101.

³³ Wallace, "Puritan and Anglican", 267; *FD*, 108.

³⁴ Pynchon in his *A Farther Discussion* often cited Lightfoot's *The Harmony, Chronicle and Order of the New Testament*, (1655); Wallace, "Puritan and Anglican", 280-283.

³⁵ P. Toon, *The Emergence of Hyper-Calvinism in English Non Conformity 1689-1765*, (London, 1967) passim.

³⁶ Including the politician Edw. Hyde Earl of Clarendon, G. Morley, John Hales of Eton, the poet Sidney Godolphin, Th. Barlow, the philosopher Wm. Chillingworth, the young Th. Hobbes, H. Hammond, the future Archbishop of Canterbury Gilb. Sheldon, Thomas Gataker and his son Charles, Jeremy Taylor and others. They were significant mainly because they represented an important rationalist section of Church and State, where after 1660 the monarchy and the re-established Church of England would find their strongest support. Until June 1646, when it surrendered to Parliamentary forces, the city of Oxford and its University remained loyal to King Charles I, Hugh Trevor-Roper, *Catholics, Anglicans and Puritans. Seventeenth Century Essays*, (London, 1987) 166-230; cf. Francis Cheynell, *The Rise, Growth, and Danger of Socinianism*, (1643); H.J. McLachlan, *Socinianism in Seventeenth-Century England*, (Oxford, 1951) 54 ff.; [Fr. Eglesfield], *The Life and Reigne of Our Sovereign Lord King Charles the II ... to this present*, (London, 1660) 12 ff., 24-25.

rarily) deprived by Archbishop Richard Bancroft for nonconformity in the wake of the Hampton Court conference (January, 1604). Wotton, a Cambridge man (M.A. 1587, B.D. 1594) who at the time of his deprivation held a lectureship at All Hallows (Barking), was held in high esteem amongst Great Tew members³⁷. Pynchon had known both of them personally and both were important sources of his views. In one of the first pages of *The Meritorious Price* Pynchon said that 'This Argument was framed by M. Henry [= Robert] Smith a godly Preacher, neer thirty yeers since, in my presence' (i.e. not long after 1620)³⁸. About Wotton, who between 1611 and 1614 and again later was openly accused of Socinianism, Pynchon remarked that: 'Mr. Wotton hath expressed to my self his dislike of their exposition that holds that God forsook Christs soul in wrath and Mr. Smith abovesaid, concurred with his judgement'³⁹. Again, Pynchon said of himself to 'approve and follow Mr. Wottons sense'. In the same vein Pynchon acknowledged his spiritual debt to other Great Tew members such as Henry Hammond, and Thomas Gataker whose venom was leveled amongst others against Voetius and Gomarus⁴⁰.

So not only Carlile's anti-Catholicism or Bilson's anti-Calvinism indeed, but Niccols' *Day Starre*, and Broughton's and Lightfoot's theological and philological explorations, and the 'Errors of Justification' of men such as Wotton, Thomas Gataker, Hammond and 'Socinian John' Goodwin⁴¹ and their rationalism and intellectual freedom provided Pynchon with a new platform to tackle the old problem of Christ's descent into Hell⁴². As his denial of Christ's suffering the torments of Hell in whatever form implied the rejection of Calvin's doctrine of justification, Pynchon had to develop another one. This is precisely what he set out to do in his writings.

In doing so Pynchon was accused of Socinianism and Arianism, not only by Norton, but also by Nicholas Chewney in his book *Anti-Socinianism* (1656)⁴³. Anthony Burgess, vicar of Sutton Coldfield and a member of the Westminster Assembly, wrote against Pelagians, Papists, Arminians and Socinians. He was offended by Pynchon's 'errors' and saw in him one of these 'Philistines', who

³⁷ Great Tew member Thomas Gataker, a collector of Socinian books, wrote in defence of that 'blasphemous Heretick' Wotton against charges of Socinianism; so did Pynchon, *FD*, 44; McLachlan, *Socinianism*, 45-48, 133.

³⁸ *MP*, To the reader, sig. A4^{vo}; according to *FD*, 382, 'Henry' was a mistake as his Christian name was Robert. Pynchon explained that this Robert Smith was 'a Reverend Divine, though silenced through the iniquity of the times; he drew up that Argument, that is prefixed to the Table of the Dialogue, against Gods forsaking of Christs soul in wrath'. Probably he was the Robert Smith, who is mentioned by S.B. Babbage, *Puritanism and Richard Bancroft*, (Londen, 1962) 150-151. He matriculated from Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1587; graduated Bachelor of Arts in 1592/3, Master of Arts in 1595 and became a Fellow in 1593. He was instituted Rector of St Nicholas Acon on 7 May 1600, but was deprived at the beginning of 1605. Later in the same year he was licensed to the curacy of Trinity Minorities. Cf. K.C. Finchham, "Ramifications of the Hampton Court Conference in the Dioceses, 1603-1609", *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 36, 2 (April, 1985) 208 ff.

³⁹ *FD*, 382-383. Pynchon on Wotton: 'Let me adde this Testimony of Mr. Wotton, both from my own knowledge, and from the testimony of other eminent Christians, that Mr. Wotton was a man of approved integrity, one that suffered much for Christ, through the iniquity of the times, a man of great reading in all kind of Writers, both Ancient and Modern, and a man of deep judgements; And his book of Reconciliation, was printed in his old age, after much debate, and study, and revising; and therefore what hee saith in this point of Imputation, ought not, and will not bee slighted of the Judicious. The wise will understand', *FD*, 220-221; cf. *Ibidem*, 212. This was Wotton's most influential book, entitled *De reconciliatione peccatoris ... libri quatuor*, (Basel, 1624).

⁴⁰ *FD*, 43, 46, 438; Chewney, *Anti-Socinianism*, 230-233; McLachlan, *Socinianism*, 163-217; Trevor-Roper, *Catholics*, 224.
⁴¹ Gataker and Goodwin feature prominently in Thomas Edwards' list of contemporary heretics, Edwards, *Gangraena*, I, 21 ff., 39, 63; on the Independent preacher John Goodwin, cf. M. Tolmie, *The Triumph of the Saints. The Separate Churches of London 1616-1649*, (Cambridge, 1977) s.v.; McLachlan, *Socinianism*, 49 ff..

⁴² Only one member of the Great Tew circle, Jeremy Taylor, seems to have adhered to the doctrine of Christ's descent into Hell in the triumphalist sense, Wallace, "Puritan and Anglican", 284. Henry Hammond, an Arminian, Royalist and Chaplain to Charles I, recognised Grotius as his master and defended him on several occasions (1655, 1657), Trevor-Roper, *Catholics*, 215-227. Hammond was the author of *Of the Reasonableness of Christian Religion*, (1650). Pynchon quoted mostly from his *A Paraphrase, and Annotations upon all the Books of the New Testament*, (1653). John Goodwin's, *Imputatio Fidei, or a Treatise of Justification*, (1642), contained a strong plea for tolerance, McLachlan, *Socinianism*, 50-51; Edwards, *Gangraena*, I, 13, 16 ff.; III, 68, catalogued Socinianism, Arianism and anti-Trinitarianism (Unitarism) as the most dangerous heresies of his day. He rejected also "that wicked Doctrine of the Toleration of All Religion", *Ibidem*, III, 68.

⁴³ Gura, *A Glimpse*, 314; cf. footnotes 19, 49.

spoil the fountain which the orthodox have been diligent to keep pure⁴⁴. But besides being 'a useful stick with which to beat the Latitudinarians', as Christopher Hill remarks⁴⁵, most of these accusations fail to appreciate the point Pynchon wanted to press. Unlike the majority of Falkland's circle he rejected Arminianism, at least at first⁴⁶. His beliefs about predestination as expressed in *The Meritorious Price* were similar to the *Lambeth Articles* of 1595⁴⁷. In the heat of the debate, however, he seems to have turned away from stricter Calvinism to Arminianism, because five years after *The Meritorious Price* had been published he commented that 'The Dialogue saith, that the subject matter of Justification is beleiving sinners; and in this the Dialogue follows learned Mr. Wotton'. But it seems equally likely, if not more so, that after returning to England Pynchon no longer felt the need to hide behind a screen of conventional Puritan jargon and presented his thoughts more bluntly, if not always consistently⁴⁸.

Be that as it may, Pynchon presented himself as a rationalist, a free and independent mind who urged his readers to adopt a similar open and unprejudiced attitude, after the example of the Jews of Beréa⁴⁹. He was not a Unitarian and neither did he defend Arianism. On the contrary, he *expressis verbis* denounced Arianism in favour of the doctrine of the Trinity, which was thought of in a way which was largely clothed in Aristotelian terms: 'the truth is, a sinners Atonement must be considered as it is the work of all the Trinity', identifying the three Persons as the 'formal cause', the 'meritorious procuring cause' and the 'instrumentall cause' respectively. But to Norton this was not good enough as it still smacked of Arianism, and he maintained that it 'is a great error both in Divinity and Logick to say the holy Ghost who is God and only God is an instrumental cause, which alwaies notes inferiority'. He added that the 'efficient cause of a sinners righteousness is the Father; Father taken not personally but essentially, for God the Father, Son, and holy Ghost'⁵⁰.

To Pynchon both Christ's Godhead and his pre-existence were fundamental to his concept of atonement. In concentrating on Christ's sacrifice as 'Mediatoriall Sacrifice of Atonement', the significance of the historical Christ was reduced considerably, as was that of Christ's moral example, so elementary a doctrine in Socinus' teachings⁵¹. Christ's resurrection, equally important with Socinus as attesting to his divine rank, Pynchon hardly if ever mentioned and sometimes even denied⁵².

On the other hand, as Socinus, Grotius and Erasmus had done before him, Pynchon advocated religious and ecclesiastical tolerance. In *The Jewes Synagogue* (1652) he expressed shame at the authoritarian and theocratic principles of the clerics and magistrates of Massachusetts, and in the closing pages of *A Farther Discussion* he turned their attention to 'Lev. 4, 13,14. where a Church, a Synod, and a Court of Elders and Magistrates, may see that they are sometimes subject to Error in the things of God', after the example of Falkland's *Discourse on the Infallibility of the Church* (1645)⁵³. This implied also a forthright refutation of John Norton's defense of the theocratic concept of the state. Norton had opened his *A Discussion* by giving a justification of the way in which

44 Anthony Burgess, *The True Doctrine of Justification Asserted and Vindicated from the Errours of Many, and More Especially Papists and Socinians ...*, (London, 1654) sig. A3^o; Gura, *A Glimpse*, 314-315.

45 Chr. Hill, *The Experience of Defeat. Milton and some Contemporaries*, (London, 1984) 268.

46 On the universality of grace (2 Cor. 5, 15) Pynchon commented 'that this Assertion of the *Lutherans* and *Arminians* is a dangerous Error, for by it they make every profane person believe, that they have as good a share in the blood of Christ, as any of Gods people have, if they can but repent, intimating thereby that they may repent when they will', *MP*, 89.

47 On predestination he said: 'it is his free grace to elect a certain number of the fallen Sons of Adam to adoption in and through the mediator, as the only way by whom believing sinners must have access to the Father', *MP*, 151; cf. *MP*, 87-88; cf. Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, 30-31.

48 *FD*, 248; Smith, *Colonial Justice*, 30, supposes that at the end of his life Pynchon joined the re-established Church of England, which might well be true.

49 *FD*, sigs. B2^o-B3^o.

50 *MP*, 158; Norton, *A Discussion*, 249-250. The 'Arian' Paul Best was committed to the Gate-House in 1644 for denying the doctrine of the Trinity, Edwards, *Gangraena*, I, 33, 46; McLachlan, *Socinianism*, chap. ix.

51 The reduced importance of the historical Christ and his moral example is a common feature in the work of many seventeenth century Protestant theologians. It may be partly due to the stress laid upon the concept of *sola gratia* as the essence of salvation through Christ, as opposed to the Roman Catholic doctrine of good works, and partly to the still predominantly scholastic and Aristotelian setting of orthodox Protestant theological thought at the time.

52 *MP*, 92.

53 *FD*, 439; Trevor-Roper, *Catholics*, 220.

Pynchon was being dealt with, remarking that the magistrates 'need the Ministry to fix them in the Conscience of Men, and the Ministers need the Magistracy to preserve them from men that have no conscience, or worse'. He stressed the duty of the General Court to suppress heresies like the one Pynchon stood for⁵⁴.

Pynchon's rationalism becomes all the more obvious in that his juridical mind dominates his attempts to clarify the mysteries of justification. The relation between the three Persons of the Trinity - although the Holy Spirit is hardly if ever mentioned by Pynchon -, and that between God and mankind (but not that between believers themselves!) is strictly determined and controlled by a variety of laws, rules, promises, covenants and sanctions. Covenants were not exactly a novelty among New or old England Puritans - especially not in Thomas Hooker's Connecticut⁵⁵ - but Pynchon took their use to an extreme, as in his hands the redemption through Christ became a rational and juridical affair: no mysteries, no speculation, just a matter of common sense and abiding by agreements⁵⁶. Within this framework Pynchon frequently used juridical concepts and reasoning which had been developed by Grotius, in particular in his *De Iure Pacis ac Belli* (1625)⁵⁷.

Like Wotton, Pynchon rejected what he called 'that new upstart formal legal manner (by imputing sin, and inflicting punishments after the manner of the proceedings of legal Courts of Justice)⁵⁸'. His rejection is founded upon the following arguments:

1. The doctrine is contrary to its own interpretation of the 'legal covenant' and to the principles of justice in general. The promise of eternal life is not made upon condition of Christ's personal performance, but on the condition of man's own performance. The moral law ('this perfect rule of legal righteousness') binds every singular person to perform exact obedience by his own power, without any help from what or whom so ever, even without the 'supernatural' help of faith (Lev. 8, 5). He who observes the law by his own power shall be saved. Nobody else can do that for him. God's justice requires that only the soul that sins shall die (Ezek. 18), so God cannot inflict the torments of Hell upon an innocent to redeem a guilty person; moreover, 'Mans Law doth not allow Sureties for capital crimes'⁵⁹. Referring to Grotius Pynchon said:

None (saith he) that is free from the fault can bee punished for the fault of another, because the obligation to punishment ariseth from merit, and merit is personal, having its original from the will, than which nothing is more ours, ... *Grotius* did oppose Mr. *Nortons* kind of imputation, because hee doth oppose the imputation of Christs righteousness in the formal cause of our justification; for thus hee saith, The righteousness which they call imputative, the meer devices of men are thrust upon us, instead of divine Dictates⁶⁰.

2. God never propounded the law of works to the fallen sons of Adam with any interest at all that any of them should obtain justification and righteousness by legal obedience. God gave the law for each man to discover his own corrupt and sinful nature and spiritual death, thereby to provoke him to search elsewhere. 'Therefore it followes by good consequence, that God did never intend to

⁵⁴ Norton, *A Discussion*, sigs. A3^o-A7^o. For a lucid evaluation of the rather complex relationship between Church and State in early Massachusetts, cf. Hall, *The Faithful Shepherd*, chap. vi, "Church and State".

⁵⁵ Miller, *Errand*, 89-98.

⁵⁶ Miller, *Errand*, 39; Pynchon dedicated *A Farther Discussion* to Oliver St. John, Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas: 'because I deem you to be an able Judge, not only in those Controversies that concern the common Laws of this Land; but also in Divine Controversies, and especially in this insuing Controversie, because it hath so much dependance on sundry sorts of Scripture-Laws and Covenants, in all which you cannot chuse but have a judicious inspection, as well as into the Laws of this Land; and the rather, because the Laws of *England*, have either their rise, or in their use, some relation to the said Scripture Laws and Covenants', *FD*, sig. A2^o.

⁵⁷ Trevor-Roper, *Catholics*, 197, 294 note 76.

⁵⁸ *FD*, 437-438; cf. Wotton, *De reconciliacione peccatoris*, 147, 187.

⁵⁹ *MP*, 24 ff., 81-82, 106-107.

⁶⁰ *FD*, 218, 221.

justify any corrupt son of *Adam* ... by our Saviours legal obedience imputed as the formal cause of a sinners justice or righteousness⁶¹.

3. God cannot justify the faithful by imputing Christ's perfect legal obedience, because this kind of obedience would have been insufficient to justify a corrupt son of Adam from his original sin. A sinner's corrupt nature is not the result from his breach of Moses's laws, but of the laws that were given to Adam before his fall (Gen. 2, 16-17)⁶².

4. Apparently borrowed straight from Socinus is Pynchon's next argument: if Christ's legal obedience were imputed to a sinner, and would have been sufficient to justify him from both original and 'actual' sin, then Christ would have made his oblation in vain⁶³.

5. Christ's obedience to the law was but the obedience of his human nature, which every pious Jew had to perform. In Pynchon's words: 'Christ's legal obedience cannot be accounted as a part of his mediatorial obedience', as it was only a precondition. No obedience could procure God's atonement except a particular type of obedience. This obedience was the obedience of the Mediator, not to the laws that were given to Adam before his fall, but to the 'Law of Mediator-ship' as it was given in Gen. 3, 15, and which he performed 'by the joint concurrence of both his natures'⁶⁴.

6. Finally Pynchon pointed out the great confusion that existed among divines about the correct understanding of the doctrine of imputation, as it was not clear what exactly was imputed: Christ's active obedience to the law? If so, what law? His passive obedience in suffering and death only (Forbes)⁶⁵? Or both his active and passive obedience? If both, would this include the purity of his nature in his conception and birth also (Norton)? Did Christ suffer the wrath of God to the full degree? Or to a limited degree only (Ainsworth⁶⁶)? Did he suffer for the whole of mankind including the reprobate, or for the elect only? Did Christ suffer both in body and soul, or in his soul only? From which moment on did he suffer, and for how long⁶⁷?

Pynchon's way out from this metaphysical labyrinth revolved around two main topics: the relation between the Old and the New Covenant, which he put in a new perspective, and the ensuing interpretation of Christ's suffering and death.

Pynchon's interpretation of Gen. 3, 15.

Pynchon's view on the relation between the two Covenants is based on his interpretation of Gen. 3, 15:

from this Proclamation of Enmity, and from this first Declaration of the Combate with Satan, and of the Victory by the seed of the deceived Woman in *Gen. 3.15.* must all the following Scriptures have reference for their true Exposition⁶⁸.

To orthodox Calvinists such as Forbes and Norton the gist of the Old Testament, including the moral law and the Levitical laws regarding the high priesthood and all its ceremonies and symbolism, was limited to being a 'shadow' or 'type' of what was to be fulfilled in Christ's death and resurrection, which was considered as the 'substance' as Forbes called it. In this sense the Old Testament was seen as the announcement and preparation of the New. Norton once remarked about the ceremonial law that 'if you understood it, you would see Christ through it'⁶⁹. However, the Levitical laws and ordi-

⁶¹ MP, 108.

⁶² MP, 108.

⁶³ MP, 108; McLachlan, *Socinianism*, 14.

⁶⁴ MP, 110, 113. Burgess, *The True Doctrine*, 407, rejected this distinction between two kinds of obedience.

⁶⁵ Forbes' limiting of the 'matter' of the sinner's justification to Christ's passive obedience in his death only, was considered by Norton as 'no little error', Norton, *A Discussion*, 252.

⁶⁶ Pynchon had maintained a private correspondence with Henry Ainsworth about this controversy, *FD*, 289-290.

⁶⁷ MP, sigs. A2^{vo}-A2^{vo}.

⁶⁸ MP, sig. A2^{vo}; *FD*, sigs. B3^{vo}-B4^{vo}.

⁶⁹ Forbes, *A Treatise*, 94, 108; J. Norton, *Three Choice and Profitable Sermons Upon Severall Texts of Scripture...*, (1664) 33.

nances have lost their function for the New Israel. Remission of sins is exclusively the result of the death and resurrection of Christ, as they have replaced the Levitical sin-offerings. In explaining Hebr. 10, 18 Forbes even stated the 'ineffectualness of all the sacrifices of the Law' for the forgiving of sins and the justification of the elect⁷⁰, indicating that before Christ there was no remission of sins at all and that all the sacrifices and offerings of the old Israel were without meaning. If otherwise, Christ's death would have been in vain⁷¹.

This argument Pynchon rejected, as in his view the Old Testament laws and ceremonies were as effective as New Testament promises. He too acknowledged the existence of an Old and a New Covenant, but did not identify them with the Old and the New Testament respectively. Instead he identified them with the 'positive Law of Covenant' (Gen. 2, 16-17) which Adam violated, and the 'Laws of the Eternal Covenant' (Gen. 3, 15) concluded between the Father and the Son respectively. This second Covenant was meant to remedy Adam's violation and was promulgated in his presence. Both Covenants, the Old and the New, were given on the sixth day of the Creation, the first before Adam's fall to confirm him in his spotless nature and promising everlasting life on certain conditions, and the second after his fall and in response to it⁷². In other words, Gen. 3, 15 declared the Old Covenant null and void, and proclaimed the New.

This view has far reaching consequences. It implies that redemption of sins through Christ's sacrifice became a knowable and acknowledged reality on the sixth day of the Creation: Christ not only was installed in his office of (Levitical) Mediator on the day man was created, but he assumed that office at the same moment⁷³. On more than one account this interpretation was contrary to orthodox Calvinism which taught about the Patriarch's plight that - in Forbes' words - 'Christ (in whom their blessedness was promised) was not exhibited in their dayes'⁷⁴. But even if he were, he would have been a different Christ from Pynchon's.

In addition, Pynchon claimed that Gen. 3, 15 formulated the charter of the New Covenant - which in another context is also called the 'Law of Mediator-ship' -, of which he gave the following interpretation:

First, That it was Christs satisfactory Righteousness to perform the Covenant on his part by his death and sacrifice. And Secondly, That it was Gods Righteousness to perform the Covenant on his part, which was, to be reconciled to sinners, by not imputing their sins to them, as soon as they are in Christ by faith; The meritorious righteousness of the death and sufferings of Christs combate with Satan, performed on his part, did bind God to perform his said Reconciliation on his part⁷⁵.

⁷⁰ Forbes, *A Treatise*, 103.

⁷¹ Forbes, *A Treatise*, 90.

⁷² Adam fell on the day of his creation. God was able to rest on the seventh day, 'because he had now found out a mediator that should perfect the creation by a redemption', *MP*, 122, 152-153. Pynchon discussed this matter more fully in *A Treatise of the Sabbath*, (1655).

⁷³ *MP*, 5, 145, 154; *FD*, chap. ii, 89-90.

⁷⁴ Forbes, *A Treatise*, 90.

⁷⁵ *FD*, 133-136, 177-178, 250, 331. Pynchon borrowed this definition from Wotton's *De reconciliacione peccatoris* ..., I, chap. iv, and from Grotius. Referring to the latter Pynchon said: 'And (saith hee) in his War and Peace, The death of Christ was not determined by any Law, but by a special Covenant', which by Pynchon was identified with Gen. 3, 15, *FD*, 221, 244-245, 293-294. He continued: 'But Mr. Norton holds, that both the Incarnation, and the Death of Christ, was legal obedience, quite contrary to Grotius', *Ibidem*, 221. Because Norton was not prepared to acknowledge Christ's obedience to this specific Covenant (Gen. 3, 15), Pynchon accused him of Arianism: 'if his Incarnation which was an act of his God-head, was an act of his obedience to the moral Law; then it follows, that the God-head of Christ was in an absolute subjection, and so in an absolute inferiority to his father; for the moral Law is supreme compulsory Law given to inferiors'. Pynchon referred also to Th. Goodwin, S. Rutherford, R. Baxter, Th. Gataker, H. Hammond, J. Goodwin; *FD*, 6, 47, 122; Norton, *A Discussion*, 5-6, 140, 192 ff., 201 ff..

Pynchon's position can also be approached from another angle. If Forbes contrasted the Old and the New Testament as the 'shadow' and the 'substance', and identified the Covenant of Grace with the New Testament (in which the Jews had no share), others, notably continental reformers such as Calvin, Zwingli and Bullinger, were less radical. Their concept of the Covenant of Grace included its development and adaptation to new circumstances, implying the existence of an Old Testament form (including the ceremonial laws) and a New Testament one. Most of these reformers taught the unity, unchangeableness and continuity of the Covenant of Grace in both Testaments. Nevertheless, formally the New Testament still provided the framework for understanding the Old.

Against this background Pynchon's view can also be characterized in that he stressed this continuity to such a degree, that the aspects of development and adaption almost disappear. Although he sometimes seemed to acknowledge the New Testament as the completion of the Old, in fact the New Testament does not add anything new to the Old Testament, and certainly does not represent any higher form of redemption than the Old did. So with Pynchon the tables are turned, the Old Testament overshadows the New and provides the framework for its understanding⁷⁶.

As a result Pynchon's soteriology is conceived largely within Old Testament terms reinforced by extensively quoted Rabbinical literature. Without becoming legalistic though, Hebrew concepts, laws and ritual provide the background for understanding the meaning of Christ's birth, life, sufferings and death. As a result Christ's crucifixion is seen as the sacrifice of atonement after the model of the Old Testament Mediator, that is, it is seen as a 'Mediatoriall Sacrifice of Atonement'. Although Pynchon reasoned the other way around, the results were the same: following the Covenant between the Father and the Son (Gen. 3, 15), Christ was 'fully consecrated to the execution of his Priestly office in making his Soul an acceptable Sacrifice to make Reconciliation for the sins of Gods people'⁷⁷. It was this Covenant, which determined the meaning of all subsequent laws, covenants, ordinances and promises given to Israel. All these were complementary and constituted different aspects of the one and same divine wisdom in acquitting 'beleving sinners'⁷⁸.

I say, this way of justification God was pleased to ordaine by his voluntary positive Law and Covenant with Christ⁷⁹, which was also typified by his positive Covenant of Works, with the Jews. It was his voluntary Covenant with Christ, that upon his undertaking to make his soul a sacrifice for sin, he would be reconciled to beleving sinners, by not imputing their sins to them; that is to say, he would justify them from their sins by his gracious forgiveness; and therefore it is Gods Righteousness according to his Covenant with Christ, not to impute their sins, but to justify them formally by his non-imputation⁸⁰

Israel's belief

Forbes's distinction between 'faith' - which the fathers had -, and 'Christ apprehended by faith as the matter of ... righteousness' - which the fathers had not -, was rejected by Pynchon. Whereas Forbes said that 'Christ was not exhibited in their dayes', Pynchon stated exactly the opposite⁸¹, thereby

⁷⁶ Forbes, *A Treatise*, 100-107; cf. Calvin, *Institutio*, Lib. II, Cap. xi, 8; Cap. x, 2. On Cartwright and the law, cf. D. Little, *Religion, Order, and Law. A Study in Pre-Revolutionary England*, (New York, 1969) 101 ff.; on Perkins: *Ibidem*, 123 ff.; W. Perkins, *A Reformed Catholic*, in: [Perkins, W.], *The Work of William Perkins*, I. Breward, ed. (Appleford, 1969) 515-578; W.R. Prest, "The Art of Law and the Law of God: Sir Henry Finch (1558-1652)" in: D. Pennington and K. Thomas, eds., *Puritans and Revolutionaries*, (Oxford, 1982) 98 ff.; M. McGiffert, "Grace and works: The rise and division of covenant divinity in Elizabethan Puritanism". *The Harvard Theological Review*, LXXV (1982) 469.

⁷⁷ *FD*, 95, 193.

⁷⁸ *FD*, sigs. A2^o-A4^o, chap. ii, 44, 89, 122, 134, 331; Norton, *A Discussion*, 186, 189. Later Pynchon dedicated a separate book to the 'Moral Law of Nature' given to Adam before the fall, *The Covenant of Nature*, (1662), cf. footnote 18.

⁷⁹ I.e. Gen. 3, 15.

⁸⁰ *FD*, 246; cf. Norton, *A Discussion*, 209-212.

⁸¹ Forbes, *A Treatise*, 90; Norton, *A Discussion*, 186-190.

implying that ever since Adam's fall the atonement through Christ has been fully known, not as a promise to be fulfilled in an as yet unknown future, but as the essential meaning and crux of Israel's religion and all their tribal ritual. When God made known to Adam his Covenant with his Son (Gen. 3, 15) which was meant to complete his creation, he also taught mankind the manner in which Christ, 'the seed of the woman', would gain the victory, namely by showing them how to offer up a Lamb in sacrifice: 'all this was declared unto *Adam* in Gen. 3.15. and in the sacrifice of a Lamb'⁸². This manner of completing the creation God also declared to the Patriarchs, both before and after the flood⁸³. It also formed the core of the Decalogue and all the other laws which were given to Israel on Mount Sinai: 'the Decalogue was given by *Moses* to fallen *Adam*, and it was given as a Covenant of grace in Christ'⁸⁴. As a consequence the Patriarchs and all the people of Israel from Adam's fall until the days of the Prophets never went to Hell at all but immediately to God.

Christ and the law

On Mount Sinai God gave his people the Ten Commandments, together with a number of other 'voluntary, ceremonial and typical Laws', and several 'Judicial Laws'⁸⁵. These laws were usually called the 'first Covenant (of Works)', as they concerned the formal and legal behavior of believers before God's presence in his Sanctuary. But the same laws in their 'mystical and spiritual use' were given also and in the first place as a 'Covenant of Grace, and ... Law of faith'⁸⁶, which concentrated on the atonement through Christ's sacrifice. Therefore the Ten Commandments required faith in Christ as well as moral duties⁸⁷,

for it is most evident, that God made a Covenant of Works with the Jews, for their outward Justification, when they came into his holy Sanctuary, as well as a Covenant of Grace in Christ for their moral justification in his presence, both here and at the day of judgement⁸⁸.

This leads to the proper understanding of Leviticus 18, 5: 'do this and live'. This command, said Pynchon, citing Baxter's *The Saints Everlasting Rest* (1650) and John Ball's *A Treatise of the Covenant of Grace* (1645) in support, should be understood 'Evangelically', as meaning 'sincere, uniform, and impartial obedience, not exact fulfilling the Law in every title'⁸⁹. At first Israel complied, but at the end of the epoch of the Prophets the Jews, who were 'addicted to the letter of the Law', made the mistake of putting their trust for their justification solely in 'their outward observation of the said Ordinances'. But 'all the legal Sin-offerings ... could not justify the conscience from moral sins' if their proper meaning were not understood⁹⁰. A similar explanation is given by Pynchon of Psalm

82 *MP*, 152-153; *FD*, 90-91.

83 *MP*, 121; *FD*, sig. A4^{vo}.

84 *FD*, 6.

85 *FD*, sig. A4^{vo}.

86 *FD*, 7, 18, 118-121.

87 *MP*, 103.

88 *FD*, 245.

89 *FD*, 17-22, 113 ff.. Pynchon's use of these authors is an example of how he often quoted his sources: both authors interpreted the Bible in a totally different way than Pynchon did, cf. Baxter, *Saints*, 9; Ball, *Covenant*, 136. According to Th. Edwards this was a habit of all heretics, including the so-called Socinians: 'Mr. *John Goodwin* in his point of Justification quotes *Calvin*, *Bucer* and others, who are knowne *ex professo*, to be of another judgement', Edwards, *Gangraena*, I, 39. Another example is Pynchon's use of William Perkins. Perkins accepted the Calvinistic doctrine of imputation, but was often quoted by Pynchon in support of his anti-imputation drive, cf. Perkins' *A Golden Chain or the Description of Theology* (1592), chap. xviii.

90 *MP*, 121. This was what happened to St. Paul during his conversion experience: 'the spiritual application of the Law to his conscience'. Although arising from different motives, both the Jews and orthodox Calvinists were making a similar mistake by not recognizing the true meaning of the law and of Christ's sacrifice respectively, *Ibidem*; *FD*, 238, 242-246, 251-252.

85, 2-3: 'whether the Psalmist is to be understood of outward or inward Reconciliation, needs not now to be disputed, because the outward is but an exemplification of the inward'⁹¹.

Thus the ceremonial and formal cleansing according to the Levitical laws and ordinances was the vehicle of the justification of the faithful under the moral law⁹²:

this kind of positive ceremonial righteousness was typical to such as had faith in the observation of these Statutes⁹³, to look from the typical ordinances of cleansing and righteous making, to the positive sacrifice of Christ, as the perfection of all the typical cleansing, for that only was ordained to procure Gods eternal Reconciliation in not imputing sin, for the cleansing of the conscience from moral sins; therefore such as did thus keep the Statutes and Ordinances of Righteousness, as *Zachary* and *Elizabeth* did, *Luke* 1.6. should obtain thereby an everlasting Righteousness in Gods sight, instead of the Ceremonial⁹⁴.

Since Christ's sacrifice of atonement is seen as the core of all Old Testament religious practice, the ritual of formal cleansing according to the Levitical ceremonial laws justified the Fathers from their moral iniquities and transgressions. Referring to Ezekiel 45 and Leviticus 16, Pynchon held that:

when persons and things are legally cleansed from ceremonial defilements, they are said to be justified; and therefore the blood of Bulls and Goats, and the ashes of an Heifer sprinkling the unclean under the first Covenant, to produce Gods atonement for their ceremonial justification, did but typifie our moral justification by Gods atonement, and forgiveness for the sake of the blood of Christs Sin-offering under the new Covenant, for nothing but Gods atonement, alone doth cleanse and justifie a sinner⁹⁵.

Thus it is also clear that the word 'typifie' is to be understood as the 'outward' form representing the 'inward' essence.

Since it involved justification of God's people, atonement was effected by the ceremonial law and was proclaimed with the New Covenant: Christ, one of the Persons of the Trinity, in his capacity as Mediator reconciled believing sinners to God. He, himself High Priest after the order of Melchisedeck, offered up his 'mediatorial obedience' in accordance with the way the Levitical priest offered up the trespass-offerings to reconcile Israel with God. Christ paid the 'meritorious price of our redemption, justification and adoption', not by bearing the sin of believing sinners and suffering the wrath of God against them, but by becoming a 'sin-offering and a trespass-offering, and a whole burnt-offering of atonement' himself - which according to Pynchon is the proper 'mystical' meaning of texts like *Isa.* 53, 6, and *2 Cor.* 5, 21⁹⁶. Pynchon taught that:

⁹¹ *FD*, 252.

⁹² *MP*, 116-118, 124. This reasoning went both ways, for: 'the heathen spiritual Christians do thus keep the law by faith; ... it is the prayer of all the godly in all Nations, that they may be found in Gods Statutes, ... which cannot bee till they have faith to look to the end of those things, which is typified by the righteousness of those Ordinances and Statutes', *FD*, 242, 259.

⁹³ As an example Pynchon cited *Num.* 31, 19-24.

⁹⁴ *FD*, 239.

⁹⁵ *FD*, 235-236, 240; in this quotation 'the first Covenant' signifies the 'outward' meaning, and 'the new Covenant' the 'inward' meaning of the same rite. For those who properly understood this, they were identical.

⁹⁶ *MP*, 15, 40-42; *FD*, 190, 209-212.

the true manner how the Lord laid all our sins upon Christ (in *Isa.* 53.6) was after the same manner as the Lord laid the sins of *Israel* upon the Priest and Sacrifice, and no otherwise, as in *Exod.* 28.38 and in *Lev.* 10.17⁹⁷.

Leviticus 16 relates how Aaron was told to put his hands on the head of the sin-offering and to lean on it with all his might. But by no means did this represent God's laying of all the sins of his people upon Christ by imputation, as orthodoxy had it. On the contrary, it signified that the church's faith is essentially a matter of trust: faith means reliance and dependence upon Christ's mediatorial sacrifice 'as the procuring cause of Gods favourable Atonement and acceptance'⁹⁸. Again and again the righteous are in the need of righteousness: 'and then the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever'⁹⁹. The believing sinner, then and now, is taught to put his trust in Christ, because 'whensoever any sinner did bring his sacrifice of righteousness before God, he was thereby directed, how to stir up his faith of dependence upon Christs sacrifice of atonement'¹⁰⁰.

God's righteousness

As appears from his interpretation of the charter of the New Covenant quoted above, Pynchon distinguished between two types of righteousness: one after the Old Covenant in Gen. 2, 16-17, which is defined in terms of man's (in)obedience to the law, punishment and revenge (Norton), and one after the New Covenant in Gen. 3, 15, which is explained in terms of God's mercy and willingness to forgive sins. Pynchon's rejection of the first type as the foundation of the doctrine of justification was closely connected to his rejection of the Calvinistic doctrine of imputation¹⁰¹. Essentially God's righteousness is his forgiveness, which means that he has accepted Christ's mediatorial sacrifice. Norton's rebuttal was that this is a dangerous distinction as it resulted in justification as 'a form without matter'¹⁰². However, dealing with 2 Cor. 5, 21 and Rom. 3, 26, Pynchon claimed the support of John Goodwin, Wotton and Hammond who made the same distinction, and speaking of the latter he remarked that:

Accordingly (saith he) it is here to be resolved, That this phrase being used of God [*That God may be just or righteous*] it must be understood to denote his mercy, and goodness, and clemency in pardoning and forgiving sins; ... Gods righteousness, *i.e.* his mercifull dealing with men under the second Covenant.

Although Pynchon sometimes acknowledged disagreement with Hammond, there was one thing he was quite sure of: 'his reasons are very solid to shew that Gods Justice here is not to be taken as Mr. Norton doth, for vindictive Justice'¹⁰³.

Christ's sufferings

If Pynchon argued against the general idea that Christ's sufferings were the result of Gods wrath against the sins of the elect, he was not saying that from a soteriological point of view Christ's sufferings were entirely devoid of meaning. Sailing between the Scylla of plain Socinianism and the Charybdis of Calvinistic orthodoxy he stated that:

⁹⁷ *MP*, 28, 139; *FD*, 193-194; Norton, *A Discussion*, 43-44.

⁹⁸ *MP*, 36.

⁹⁹ *MP*, 133.

¹⁰⁰ *MP*, 117.

¹⁰¹ *FD*, 6-9, 43-47, 122; Norton, *A Discussion*, 5-6, 140, 192, 201, 248.

¹⁰² *FD*, 248. Which criticism, Pynchon warned, amounted to mocking 'Gods Wisdom and Work, in giving a form to the Angels without matter'.

¹⁰³ *FD*, 140-141; 208-209, 212.

Grotius had good reason to produce such testimonies from the Ancient Divines against *Socinus*, because (as I perceive by several Writers) *Socinus* denied Christs sufferings to belong to the meritorious cause of Christs satisfaction. On the other hand, I do also believe that *Grotius* did as much oppose Mr. *Nortons* kind of imputation, as hee did *Socinus* Tenents¹⁰⁴.

According to Pynchon Christ's obedience to the law, his sufferings and his spotless nature ('*justitia personae*') are 'an ingredient into the meritorious cause of our justification' only in so far as they are a *causa sine qua non*, 'to bind God the Father to perform his Covenant on his part'. But they are no more, certainly not 'the materiall cause thereof', as Norton would have it. Christ's sufferings were ordained for the perfecting of his 'Priestly Consecration'. In obedience to the Covenant made in Gen. 3, 15 he resigned his human nature to Satan's tortures - which because of his sinlessness he felt more sharply than ordinary human beings -, in order that his obedience and perseverance as a Mediator could be tested and tried: 'Thou shalt pierce him in the footsoals' as a sinful Malefactor on the cross - in this sense, and in this sense only, Pynchon conceded that Christ 'bore' the sins of the faithful, namely by bearing 'the false accusations and imputations of sin, from the malignant Jews' as he suffered the ill treatment and tortures of Satan as part of the Covenant with the Father¹⁰⁵. But Christ, by staying faithful until death came, established beyond doubt that his voluntary mediatorial sacrifice of atonement was perfect and worthy of acceptance by the Father¹⁰⁶. This testing of Christ by Satan, culminating in his death on the cross, affected his human nature only, since his divine nature had for the moment withdrawn its assistance¹⁰⁷. Refuting Norton, who maintained the Calvinistic interpretation stating that Christ in body and soul suffered the 'Essential punishment' of Hell but was without sin, Pynchon held that:

such were all the sufferings of Christ, they were all from the voluntary Cause and Covenant, and all his outward sufferings were from his voluntary undertaking (to enter the lists with Sathan, according to Gods declaration in *Gen. 3.15.*) and not from the imputation of the guilt of our sins¹⁰⁸.

The same applies to the obedience of Christ to the moral law during his lifetime. His obedience is not the 'matter' of a sinner's justification, but made him to be a 'Lamb without spot or blemish, fit for sacrifice'¹⁰⁹. This does not mean, however, that Christ's mediatorship depended upon this obedience, as the outcome of his struggle with Satan had also been determined by the Covenant of Gen. 3, 15. This Covenant somehow reminded Pynchon of the 'Laws of a Combate' between God and Satan¹¹⁰:

in case he [Satan] could not prevail by all his ill usage to disturb the passions of the seed of the woman, not any other way to divert him in the course of his obedience, then this seed of the woman (by the only weapon of his righteousness) should break

¹⁰⁴ *FD*, 221.

¹⁰⁵ *MP*, 25-28, 124-125, 139; *FD*, chaps. xi, xiii, 219, 313. Referring to Wotton's *De reconciliatione peccatoris ...*, II, i, chaps. xviii and xx, Pynchon remarked: 'If (saith Mr. *Wotton*) we take sin formally, then I deny that our sins were so imputed to Christ. His words at large I have recorded in my examinations of 2 *Cor. 5.21*', *FD*, 88.

¹⁰⁶ *MP*, 54-55, 110-111; *FD*, sig. B4^{vo}, 89-104, 387-390.

¹⁰⁷ A similar answer to the paradox that, if Christ was really God-man he could not possibly have died on the cross, could be heard within orthodox Calvinism, cf. for instance Perkins' *A Golden Chain or the Description of Theology* (1592), chap. xviii, v, where it is said that we 'may not think that this debasing of Christ came because his divine nature was either wasted or weakened, but because his deity did, as it were, lay aside and conceal his power and majesty for a season'.

¹⁰⁸ Norton, *A Discussion*, 38-41, 79; *FD*, 82, 93-95, 102-103, chaps. xii-xiii.

¹⁰⁹ *MP*, sig. A2^{vo}, 54-55, 110-111; *FD*, sig. B4^{vo}, 89-104, 226; Forbes, *A Treatise*, 95-98.

¹¹⁰ *FD*, sigs. A2^{vo}-A4^{vo}.

his Head-plot in peeces, and so should get the victory of the Victor; and rescue the spoil from his power (or at the least the best part of the spoil) namely, the Elect¹¹¹.

Christ's death and descent into Hell

Within this soteriological framework Christ's bodily death receives its significance as a function of his voluntary death as Mediator. Although God allowed Satan to crucify and kill Christ legally as if he were a sinful malefactor (which he was not), yet God did not give Satan enough power 'as to put Christ to death formally'¹¹². For only a priest could do that, who was Christ himself. In fact Christ did actuate his own death, for at the very same time when the 'Jews put him to death as a malefactor, he laid down his own life by the same power by which he took it up again; *John 10.17.18*¹¹³. Christ died because he wanted to, as he had agreed with his Father to 'lay downe his own life by his own active will, desire and power, without the least naturall unwillingness to die'¹¹⁴. In Pynchon's view the tenet that Christ died under the curse in Gen. 2, 16-17, which defined death for Adam and his progeny as punishment for his transgression, was the Calvinists's - and Norton's - fatal mistake. Instead, Christ's death was a 'super-natural act of obedience, ... it was no less than a Mediatorial oblation', free, active, and mediating, following his free and eternal Covenant with his Father in Gen. 3, 15¹¹⁵. The bodily death of Christ was the result of the torments of the Jews and the Roman soldiers only in so far as they were the 'wicked instruments' of the devil. Christ the Mediator died out of his own active power: 'all the Tyrants in the world, could not separate his soule from his body, (*John 19.11*) no not by all the tortures they could devise, till himselfe pleased to actuate his own death, by the joynt concurrence of both his natures, *John 10.18*¹¹⁶. At the appointed time, when everything that had been prophesied had been fulfilled, Christ sacrificed his soul, meaning he separated his soul from his body by the power of his Godhead and offered it up to God - '*Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit*' - as a Levitical-style trespass-offering for the sins of believers. That is how Christ fulfilled his part of the Covenant which was agreed upon in Gen. 3, 15¹¹⁷. The cross was not the altar, the Roman soldiers were not the priests - at the most they were 'Executioners' -, but Christ's own Godhead was both priest and altar, and his priestly action was the sprinkling of his own blood by his own priestly nature, that is to say, by his divine nature¹¹⁸.

This relates directly to the much disputed article of Christ's descent into Hell. By birth Christ was without sin and pure in nature, and his death was therefore of a totally different character from Adam's¹¹⁹. Pynchon argued that since Christ's death was the result of an agreement between him and the Father, he could not die Adam's spiritual death (or 'first death', which was the immediate consequence of the latter's eating the forbidden fruit as stipulated in Gen. 2, 16-17). Nor did Christ share the corrupt nature of Adam's issue and neither could he die the eternal or 'second death' of the

¹¹¹ *FD*, sigs. A2^{vo}-A3^{vo}, B3^{vo}.

¹¹² *FD*, 400.

¹¹³ *MP*, 99-100, 117; *FD*, 428; Norton, *A Discussion*, 140. Burgess, *The True Doctrine*, 426-427, claimed that Pynchon made Christ's death 'wholly miraculous', which he considered as 'directly contrary to Scripture, *Acts 3.15. 1 Thessal. 2.15.* where they [the Jews] are charged expresly to have *killed Christ*, and that as they did the other Prophets'.

¹¹⁴ *MP*, 49, 64; *FD*, 180-181. On account of suchlike expressions Norton accused Pynchon of calling Christ a homicide, Norton, *A Discussion*, 84. Pynchon countered this by saying that Christ did not deliberately use one of the weapons of the Romans to murder himself; besides, Pynchon considered it 'a prophane expression to compare the act of a Priest in killing a sacrifice, to the act of an executioner that puts a malefactor to death; and it is a like prophane expression to call such a death Self-murder, or Homicide', *FD*, 405.

¹¹⁵ Norton, *A Discussion*, 24-25; *MP*, 71-73; *FD*, 154-156.

¹¹⁶ *MP*, 64. *FD*, 82, 86, 183-186.

¹¹⁷ *MP*, 72-74, 96; *FD*, 90, 263-264. To prove this point Pynchon cited a host of authors, ranging from Origen and Jerom to Perkins, Erasmus and Niccols' *A Day Starre*, *FD*, 408-423.

¹¹⁸ *MP*, 92-93; *FD*, 408.

¹¹⁹ *MP*, 9-11, 54-55.

reprobate¹²⁰. This means that Christ could not have suffered the torments of Hell, neither before his death, for instance in Gethsemane, nor on the cross. Citing Wilmot, Pynchon explained that the 'cup' (Matth. 26, 39) symbolizes Christ's human agony in the face of physical death only¹²¹. Also after his death he could not have descended into Hell; on the contrary, Christ went straight to Heaven¹²². As a consequence God did not forsake Christ while on the cross: '*Mr. Braughton saith, My God my God, sheweth that Christ was not forsaken of God, but that God was still his hope. Secondly, saith he, The word forsaken is not in the text, but why dost thou leave me, but namely, why dost thou leave me to the griefs following, from the malice of the Iewes, as they are expressed in the body of the Psalme*'¹²³. Thus 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me', this 'bitter and lamentable' cry, indicated the agony of Christ's human nature and had nothing to do with the torments of Hell inflicted upon him by the divine wrath¹²⁴.

Conclusion

Indeed, Anthony Burgess was right. Though not anti-Trinitarian, nor Arian, nor genuine Socinian, Pynchon's theology contains many 'Novelismes', at least from Burgess' orthodox point of view. Was Pynchon a Puritan? His biographer Morison thought so¹²⁵; Gura held him for 'a problematic fellow traveler of the Socinians'¹²⁶. True or not, Pynchon, the founder of two congregational Churches, in Roxbury and in Springfield, presents an outstanding example of a prominent member of the New England puritan elite, whose private beliefs were a blend of Calvinistic and anti-Calvinistic tenets. Keeping silent for thirty years, in the early 1650s he openly followed in the footsteps of another member of the Great Tew circle, John Hales of Eton, who at the Synod of Dordt decided to 'bid John Calvin goodnight'¹²⁷. Pynchon obviously reached his conclusions not long after Hales did, and probably on similar considerations.

Many theological issues Pynchon did not touch upon. A few problems which remain may be indicated here. As for the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, Pynchon for obvious reasons rejected the Roman Catholic and Lutheran doctrines. But the ceremonial nature of Christ's sacrifice combined with the argument that Christ's 'flesh, or humain actions alone considered, cannot profit us; therefore not his Blood, nor his Crosse, nor his Stripes, can heal us, alone considered'¹²⁸, also affect the Calvinistic doctrine of this Sacrament. Its meaning tends to be reduced to a Zwinglian-type expression of the believer's dependence on Christ's sacrifice after the example of Aaron.

¹²⁰ *MP*, 56-59, 61-62; *FD*, sig. A2^{vo}, chaps. xvi, xvii, 321. Norton claimed that Pynchon's statement that '*Adams* disobedience had this effect, that it procured a corrupt and sinful nature to himself and to all his posterity, which otherwise had continued righteous and sinless', sounded like Pelagianism because it implied that Adam's posterity was not legally guilty of their forbear's sin, *MP*, 145. Rectifying this in *A Farther Discussion*, Pynchon was forced to concede that Christ was not descended from Adam 'according to the manner of other men', *FD*, 84-86, 286-290. But still Pynchon stressed that Christ was really human, which was proven by his purely human agony in the night before his death, *MP*, 20-22, 42, 49-54. But elsewhere Pynchon conceded that Christ's body was not an ordinary human one: being the 'Holy Habitation of his God-head', it was not subjected to 'putrification', *MP*, 10-11; *FD*, 100.

¹²¹ *MP*, 46; *FD*, 298, 321, 330, chap. xvi.

¹²² Citing Carlile, Broughton and Wilmot, Pynchon rejected the opinion that *Haides* (or *Hades*) meant the place of the damned only. The *Haides* (the translation used by the *Septuagint* of the Hebrew *Sheol*) has a double lot, 'as great *Britaine* doth comprehend *England* and *Scotland*', a place of joy and a place of torment. All souls, good and bad go to *Haides* after death, the bad go to the place of torment and the good go to the place of joy. Christ, 'the Holy one of God', went straight to the place of pleasure, *MP*, 12, 74-75, 79. Pynchon eventually mitigated his views, as he granted that 'Christ suffered the sorrows of *Sheol* and *Hades* in a Metaphorical sense', although these sorrows did not include 'essential' Hell torments. He did not elaborate, *FD*, 108-109, 382.

¹²³ I.e. Psalm 22; *MP*, 57; cf. Calvin, *Institutio*, Lib. II, Cap. xvi, 11-12.

¹²⁴ *FD*, 388.

¹²⁵ Morison, "William Pynchon", 69.

¹²⁶ Gura, *A Glimpse*, 314.

¹²⁷ Trevor-Roper, *Catholics*, 60.

¹²⁸ *MP*, 23, 102; *FD*, 243.

Because the formal and ceremonial aspects of Christ's sacrifice constitute the core of Pynchon's Christology, Christ's resurrection from the grave as well as his ascension, such important articles of faith according to orthodox Calvinism, to a large extent lose their soteriological significance. With Pynchon Christianity changes its character. His contention that the Old Testament religious practises revolved around Christ's sacrifice of atonement changes Christianity into a timeless, sublimated, abstracted and highly intellectual form of Judaism. The Word did not become flesh, it became ritual.

ABBREVIATIONS

MP THE / MERITORIOUS PRICE / OF / Our Redemption, Iustification, &c. / *Cleering it from some common Errors*; / And proving, / 1. That Christ did not suffer for us those unutterable torments of / Gods wrath, that commonly are called Hell-torments, to re-/deem our soules from them. / 2. That Christ did not bear our sins by Gods imputation, and / therefore he did not bear the curse of the Law for them. / 3. That Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law (not / by suffering the said curse for us, but) by a satisfactory price of / attonement; viz. by paying or performing unto his Father that / invaluable precious thing of his Mediatoriall obedience, whereof / his Mediatoriall Sacrifice of attonement was the masterpiece. / 4. A sinners righteousnesse or justification is explained, and cle-/red from some common Errors. / By *William Pinchin*, Gentleman, in New-England. / The Mediator saith thus to his Father in *Psal 40.8,10.* / *I delight to do thy will O my God, yea thy Law is within my heart: (viz.)* I delight to do / thy will, or Law, as a Mediator. / *I have not hid thy righteousnesse within my heart, I have declared thy faithfulness, and / thy salvation:* Namely, I have not hid thy righteousnesse, or thy way of making sinners / righteous, but have declared it by the performance of my Mediatoriall Sacrifice of at-/tonement, as the procuring cause of thy attonement, to the great Congregation for their / everlasting righteousnesse. / *L O N D O N*, / Printed by *J.M.* for *George Whittington*, and *James Moxon*, and are to be sold at / the blue Anchor in Corn-hill near the Royall Exchange. 1650¹²⁹.

FD A / FARTHER DISCUSSION / OF THAT / Great Point in DIVINITY the / *Sufferings of Christ*, / AND / The Questions about his Righteousnesse / *Active / Passive*, / and the Imputation thereof. / BEING / A *Vindication* of a Dialogue, Intituled / *The Meritorious Price of our Redemption*, / *Justification*, &c. from the excep-/tions of Mr. *Norton* and others. / By *WILLIAM PYNCHON*, late of NEW ENGLAND. / *L O N D O N*, / Printed for the Author, and are to bee sold at the Signe of / the three Lyons in Corn-hill, over against the / Conduit. *M D C L V*.

¹²⁹

The title page of the copy kept in the British Library bears the hand written inscription: June 2^{de}.