The Meaning and Method of Systematic Theology
in Amandus Polanus

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An Historical Introduction
Amandus Polanus was born in Troppau, Silesia in 1561, one of the nine children of Heinrich and Martha Polan. He was educated at the Gymnasium of St. Elizabeth in Breslau, whose rector was Petrus Vincentius. Its curriculum was strongly influenced by Melanchthon for his texts on Greek grammar and on rhetoric and dialectic were used in preparing the students for their 'examen ordinandorum'. Through his teachers Vincentius and Nikolaus Steinberg, Polanus was introduced to the works of Calvin and Beza and became a strong supporter of their teaching on predestination.

He pursued his university studies in theology at Tubingen, Basel and Geneva. He matriculated at Tubingen in April in 1583; while there he followed the dispute between the Lutheran Jakob Andreas and the Reformed Lambert Danaeus concerning the election of grace and centered on the interpretation of Romans 9, 11. Polanus was sympathetic with the arguments of Danaeus in this case. It was at Tubingen also, that he discovered the work of Jakob Schegk (1511-1587), who was Professor of Medicine and Philosophy. It is probably from Schegk that he learned about Aristotelian philosophy; indeed,
Emil Weber in his study of scholasticism among the Older Protestant Orthodoxy called Schegk the "Vater und Bahnbrecher der neuen Scholastik". Schegk, with his neo-scholasticism was much opposed to Peter Ramus; so one cannot help but surmise that Polanus in his mature thinking probably used more of Aristotle than Ramus would have approved and more of the Ramist method than Schegk would have approved.

In July, 1583, Amandus Polanus matriculated at Basel, where he found his strongest theological Doktorvater in Johann Jakob Grynaeus. In 1584, Polanus also went to Geneva, in order to benefit from the "accuratissimas theologicas praelectiones et acutissimas disputationes" of Theodore Beza.

The period of 1584-1590 was spent in service (theological superintendent) with the Bohemian-Marienschen Brethren fellowship in Namiest, Heidelberg and Basel. In 1590, Polanus presented, defended his doctoral thesis and was named a Doctor of Theology by the faculty at Basel. This is the university at which he did his major academic work. In 1596 he was named Professor of Old Testament at that university and by May, 1600 was named Rektor of the University.

His first major academic publication was a commen-
tary on the Book of Daniel. But his commentaries on
the Old Testament are supplemented too, by his defense
of dogmatic treatises and his considerable work as a
systematic theologian. The beginning of his systematic
work is found in his *Partitiones Theologicae, logica*
*methodo instructae*, whose manuscript he submitted to
Grynaeus in June, 1588. It is, by method and content,
typical of his later and major systematic work, the
*Syntagma Theologiae Christianae*, written in 1609 shortly
before his death. The *Syntagma* brings together a great
amount of learning, in an impressive systematic scheme.
Its use of the Fathers was anticipated by a collection
of theses, developed on the several topics of theology
and interpreted by reference to both Latin and Greek
Church Fathers. This work, the *Symphonia Cathedri* was
prepared with Conrad Waldkirche and appeared in 1607.
The other major preparation for the *Syntagma* was Polanus' mos
devolved treatise on logic and rhetoric, published
again with Waldkirche in 1605, entitled: *Syntagma logicum*
Aristotelico-Ramaeum.

There are themes which, in the publication and de-
defense within the university, give some indication of his
polemical and lively interest in systematic theology.
Many of his treatises deal with the role and meaning of
Holy Scripture; they are directed especially against Cardinal Bellarmine. Indeed, a record of this polemic dating from 1598 until 1610 was collected and published under the title *Collegium Anti-Bellarminianum*. Among his treatises, he developed the doctrine of the church, a major statement on predistination, and a number of theses on the offices of Jesus Christ. Among all these his most distinctive contribution was in systematizing and developing the orthodox reformed teaching on Holy Scripture.

On 18 July, 1610, Amandus Polanus died, a victim of an epidemic in Basel during the years, 1609-1611.  

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Note - of interest to English speaking readers is a list of Polanus' pupils which includes a Scotsman, "Register Janus Macullath Scotus," cf. Stachelin, p. 39.
Introduction: Systematic Theology and Editorial Strategy
Introduction:

This study of the theological work of Amundus Polanus will be developed around one essential concern: what is the basis of a systematic presentation of Christian doctrine? The question of theological coherence is both a technical question and a theological one.

The theologian uses linguistic and philosophical analysis in working with propositions and concepts. An exploration of the literary and exegetical assumptions of the theologian brings to light the way in which words become concepts and the concepts develop into doctrine. The theologian however must give some accounting of the theological significance of the points under discussion. If one presents Christian doctrine with the understanding of the church or Christian experience as the beginning, then these must be more fundamental and give more powerful coherence to the whole gospel than some other starting point. Polanus' system is both analytic and synthetic. We intend to demonstrate the function of analysis and synthesis in his development of doctrine.

The clue to Polanus' systematic theological work is the means by which he develops theological conceptuality and the method by which he builds upon this conceptuality.
toward a coherent and to some extent comprehensive viewpoint concerning the relation among the doctrines.

The first chapter of this thesis examines the basic principles of theological science. The issue for theology is the relation between the truth of being and the truth of statement. Statements about the truth of God are referential and relational, their truth deriving from the truth of God himself. The adequacy of theological propositions is measured by the sense in which they expound the true and necessary sense of God's revelation in Holy Scripture.

The second chapter of the thesis examines the methodology by which Polanus derives the true and necessary sense of Scripture and the way in which this sense is organized into propositional language. This chapter deals with the role of Peter Ramus and Aristotelian logic in Polanus' use of logic. The third chapter, on scripture, is an amplification of the logical method discussed in chapter two.

The remaining part of the thesis consists in an examination of the doctrine of God's essential properties, the doctrine of the Trinity, and an examination of God's works and will in the doctrine of the decrees and predestination. The problem throughout these chapters is the
logical priority given to the ontological perfection of God, serving to divide the economic and the immanent views of the Trinity and to shape theological propositions according to an inflexible axiomatic presentation.

The chief source for our study of Amandus Polanus is his greatest volume, the *Syntagma*, published in 1609. We have used the 1609 edition, found in the New College, Edinburgh collection of Polanus' works. For the convenience of the reader, we will refer to this volume throughout, giving identifying pagination, the column in which the reference is found, and the center column identification letter (usually a-k), which will speed location of the quotation.

The only study of Polanus' work is by Heinrich Faulenbach. We will refer to his study throughout this thesis but will take critical exception where the material dictates.
On Theological Principles
Amandus Polanus begins his systematic presentation of Christian theology with a prayer. This prayer is addressed to Jesus Christ the Lord, who is described as the 'thesaurus' of theological understanding. He had been made wisdom, justification, sanctification and redemption to us by God the Father. The theologian, therefore, prays for the gift of the Holy Spirit from Christ the Mediator, that he might be led into the truth. The theologian comes as a sinner, 'toto pectore precor', yet seeking divine grace through Christ. ¹

The task of the theologian, Polanus believes, is centered on Christ and his grace, is subject to Christ's gift of the Spirit, and becomes an acknowledgement of salvation effected in Christ and for our sake.

Theology originates as God's word concerning himself, or the prophetic action through which God works his will. ² The language of theology, or speech about God, is drawn "ex prescripto verbi Dei." ³

Polanus develops a theme from Augustine ⁴ in order

¹ Polanus, Amandus. Syntagma Theologiae Christianae. Hanover, 1609 Edition; Liber I, p. 1 (1). ² Ibid., 1(1)D. ³ Ibid., 1(2)F. ⁴ Ibid., 1(1)i.
to establish a clear and unique understanding of Christian theology. The truth of theology depends on God's own power of revelation. Theology, in its more general and universal usage, is the reflection by mankind upon the meaning of history, nature or society. Yet Polanus, in agreement with Augustine, finds in mythology, poetry and civil religion no firm basis for Christian theology. If theological knowledge depends on God revealing himself, then such efforts to devise a natural theology represent the vanity, ignorance and error of those ignorant of God (Gal 4:8, Eph 2:1). This false theology concerning God is false because it is mere opinion, presumptive wisdom growing only from mankind's corrupt nature.  

One begins the theological task, therefore, in a clear commitment to the word of God itself. The theologian is a listener to the proclamation and deeds of God concerning himself. The wisdom of natural theology is, in the final analysis, human opinion. The authentic wisdom of Christian theology rests upon God, who speaks and acts.

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5 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber I, 1(1)E-F.
The Truth of Theology:

To establish the truth of theology, Polanus asks three questions from the Aristotelian logic of the late Medieval period: 'an sit Theologia vera', concerning the possibility of theology being true; 'quid sit', or the essence of theology; and 'quod eius subjectum', or the proper subject under discussion.

The possibility of theological truth is established through divine and human witness as well as through a series of syllogisms. One finds in the ancient philosophers what Polanus terms a universal consensus of all people. Justin Martyr in the *Cohortatio ad gentiles*, Clement of Alexandria in his *Stromateis* and *Protreptico ad Graecos* and Augustine in *De Civitate Dei* use this approach. Polanus, in line with the ancient tradition, comes to a negative conclusion: "Omnes enim etiam Gentiles agoverunt, esse veram Theologiam: etsi errarunt in occasione quae illa sit." 6

The human witness of the church is unique as an acknowledgement and act of rendering thanks to God.

The initiative of God in assuring the truth of

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6 Ibid., 2(1)C.
theology is established by the use of a syllogism:
"Si Deus est, Theologiam esse necesse est: Antecedens verum est; Ergo consequens. Connexi probatio: Si Deus est, Theologiam esse necesse est: Ac si Deus est, sapiens est. Ergo si Deus est, Theologiam esse necesse est." (7)

True theology, therefore, is the wisdom (sapientia) of the divine essence. No other understanding will suffice as the essence of true theology. Both Duns Scotus, in question four of his Prologue to the Sentences and Thomas, in question one, article six of his Summa Theologica hold that true theology is wisdom. "Holy teaching," Thomas claims, "should be declared to be wisdom highest above all human wisdoms, not indeed in some special department but unconditionally." (9)

Other sciences derive their truth through natural evidence and guide their investigations by means of certain reasoned principles. The science of theology, however, does not assume its principles from human reason but from the supreme truth of divine revelation. (10) The first

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(7) Ibid., 2(1)F.
(10) Aquinas, ibid., p. 23. (21, a6).
way of judging divine matters, Thomas claims, derives from the wisdom of the Holy Spirit and its gifts. The importance of this in Polanus' construction of a sound theological system is grounding theological science and its truth in the absolute priority of revelation and subsequently giving propositional priority to God's own freedom and initiative. God is the proper subject matter of theology. The truth of theology, therefore, never consists in a simple exchange between God's nature and theological words and reasonings. The scope of theological truth belongs within the incomparable and infinite nature of God's freedom and the truth of his own initiative. Polanus holds to the insight of Scotus in this respect:

"Subiectum Theologiae est infinitum nemini cognitum, nisi quatenus sese regetit. Unde & ipsa infinite & supra omnem analogiam caeteris disciplinis supereminent." 11

Polanus lays the theoretical groundwork here for a presentation which is never closed in upon itself. The truth of the proposition must be drawn upward into the fuller significance of God's majesty, rather than the system nominally identified with man's reason. Yet

11 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber I, l(l)D.
Polanus is clear concerning *scriptural realism.*

God's wisdom and truth is manifested in Scripture:

"Idem manifestum est ex principiis Theologiae, hoc est, Scripturis Sacris, quarum summa sunt articuli fidei et praecpta Decalogi. Articuli autem fidei sunt de Deo Patre, Filio, & Spiritu Sancto, ejusque domo Ecclesia Sancta Catholica & beneficiis Dei in ipsam. Decalogus praecepit est subiectum principiorum & totius scientiae, cum tota scientia virtute contineatur in principiis."  

The Form of Theology:

Polanus' general outline for theology comes from Duns Scotus. The reality of the word always resides in God and in his express image, Jesus Christ. The image of that word is communicated to those who are blessed by a clear vision of their unity with Christ (theologia beatorum) or to those in pilgrimage (theologia viatorum), who by faith are united to Christ.  

The practical impact of Scotus upon Polanus is considerable. (1) The formation of theological intelli-
gibility begins with the free initiative of God himself;
(2) The form of propositions themselves open upward into
the infinite form of God himself; (3) the word of God is
discovered in the perfect form of Christ and expressed
only derivatively and subordinately in propositional
language; (4) the centrality of Christ is assured through
his hypostatic unity with the Father and his mystical
union of grace with his people.

Essential theological knowledge resides in God him-
self; our rational knowledge is formed in similitude to
the word of God. The word of God forms the analogical
basis for theological conceptions. Polanus believes the
work of theology is the work of adoration. The supreme
reality of God's essential nature is the fount for inves-
tigation and praise, "... a Scholasticis usitata Theologia
Dei item Theologia exemplaris dicitur, ad quam velute ad
ideam & exemplar primigenium, primarium & immutabile expressa
ac conformata est velut efficies Theologia creata, quan
divinam Theologian nos adoranus, ac non investigamus: &
pars est, ut ita dicamus, sapientiae Dei essentialis." 13

A number of Church Fathers employ this division

13 Ibid., p. 2(2)E.
between archetypal and ectypal theology. The philosopher Philo spoke of a primitive form, a first type, the idea or exemplar. He believed God the exemplar was the archetype of all rational natures. 15 Clement of Alexandria found in the royal man, Jesus Christ, the image of human rationality: "For 'the image of God' is His Word (and the divine Word, the light who is the archetype of light, is a genuine son of Mind); and an image of the Word is the true man, that is, the mind in man, who on this account is said to have been created 'in the image' of God, and 'in his likeness, because through his understanding heart he is made like the divine Word or Reason, and so reasonable."

Basil the Great in his treatise Against Eunomius believes that the unity of form and image describes the inseparable unity of Father and Son. "Si Patris image vere Filius est, omnis autem imago vel substantiae, vel formae, vel figurae, vel speciei, vel coloris imago est: Deus autem in nullo horum, sed in sola substantia est: Filius cum substantiae imago sit, consubstantialis Patris

15 Ibid., p. 2(2) P.
In summary, God knows himself altogether, at all times and perfectly. "Solus enim Deus est sibi soli naturaliter notus." 18

Ectypal theology is the wisdom of the divine essence (sapientia rerum divinarum) by which God the exemplar expresses himself, communicating his grace and expressing his glory. John Damascene associates God's form with the activity and freedom of His Being. God's form is not contained as a finite body is. God has his own place in which he fills all things, yet is above all things. "He penetrates everything," John Damascene says, "without mixing with it, and imparts to all His energy in proportion to the fitness and receptive power of each...." 19

God's communication, what he has revealed and what he shall yet reveal, remains his own. 20 In this sense theology remains secondary and subordinate. The theologian,

18 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber I, 3(1)A.
20 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber I, 3(1)E-F.
with his traditions, propositions and arguments, awaits the grace of God, to pour forth spiritual understanding from God's own inexhaustible plentitude. Ectypal theology must await the grace of revelation, so that the intellect itself may be fitted for comprehension.

Lest we belabor this point, it might be helpful to review the fundamental dichotomies in Polanus' conception of theology. The first dichotomy is between God and man, God's truth and man's truth. The second dichotomy is between God's word, Jesus Christ, and man's rationality. Just as Jesus is the image of the archetype, so is man's rationality ectypal to God's revelation of his archetypal reality, expressed in Jesus Christ. Just as Jesus Christ is united by nature through a personal union with the Father, man is united by grace through faith to Christ himself. Yet even the disciples live according to a fundamental dichotomy, between those who are blessed and live in heavenly beatitude and those who are elect and still live in the pilgrimage of faith. The knowledge of those who have received the gift of eternal blessing is intuitive, the clear vision of those who by Christ through the Holy Spirit comprehend the glory of God. The knowledge of those who live by their faith in Christ, through the gift of the Spirit, grows from the life of worship and praise and still
must employ abstractive reason to describe the full dimension of the object of their contemplation.

These fundamental divisions are expressions of the chief division between archetypal and ectypal modes of reality.

The distinction between archetypal and ectypal is fundamental in the Greek Patristic tradition. Irenaeus and Origen both were concerned by the Platonic belief in the existence of an ideal world which serves as a pattern and figure of our own world. Indeed Irenaeus seemed to attribute to Platonism the origin of the Gnostic concept of aeons, subordinate powers contributing of their own right in the creation of subordinate matter. Yet Irenaeus holds the view that God created from nothing, hence there is no ideal world which has had eternal existence. Only the Logos was generated directly from the essence of God. Everything else, he holds, was made by God through

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Concerning Irenaeus - "Describing these Gnostic Aeons as constituting a sort of ideal world, which served as 'figure' (figura, figuratio) or 'pattern' (exemplum) or 'image' (imago) of this sensible world of ours, he challenges the Gnostics to tell him, with regard to this ideal world, whether God "made it out of himself" or whether He "received (acceptit) it from "some other power above Him." pp. 261-262.
the Logos.  

The archetype of rationality then is the mind of God, comprehended in the unity of Creator and Logos.

The co-eternity of Father and Son becomes the orthodox theological lineage. The Son himself, Athanasius claimed, rather than being an image, derived and thereby subordinate, was himself the very seal of God's own nature. The subsistence of the Son and the subsistence of the Creator were identical in their essential nature. The crucial matter in the archetypal-ectypal scheme is the knowledge which the Son has by nature of the Father and the archetypal reality of that knowledge for anyone who would presume to think or speak of God.

Polanus develops this relation between Christ the Logos and the Creator. The perfect realization of a clear vision of God is effected in the soul of Christ the Word. "Eaque in Christi anima est apertissima & perfectissima quanta & qualis in creaturam rationalem

22 Ibid., p. 262-263.

23 Athanasius, St., "Incarnation of the Word" (De Incarnatione Verbi Dei), Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Vol. IV. Schaff-Wall, Editors. Eerdmans: GrandRapids, 1975. "He gives them a share in His own image and likeness: so that by such grace perceiving the Image, that is, the Word of the Father, they may be able through Him to get an idea of the Father, and knowing their Maker, live the happy and truly blessed life." p. 42.
The full intention for the creature's appropriation of this ineffable knowledge is realized in Christ. Yet the uncreated grandeur of God is not simply identified with Christ's humanity. His own 'visio Dei' derives from his personal unity with the Father. His incarnation, therefore, was a realization of God's goodness, his wish for fellowship with man, but not a containment of everything within God.

Logos Mysticism:

Polanus demonstrates in chapters 1-4 of this First Book the intellectual basis for theology. The objective character of theology stands upon the truth, goodness, and self-communicating will and power of God in the Word Jesus Christ, through the gift of the Holy Spirit. Polanus begins with the ontological priority of the Word; yet he continues his analysis of the science of theology by describing the soteriological activity of the Trinity.

Chapters 5-7 hold together as a development of logos mysticism and its implications for theological knowledge. It is not simply the character of man's mind, ectypal to God's perfection, which is crucial to a theological system.

Polanus, Syntagma, Liber I, 9(1)D.
Rather, God in his goodness, is both the beginning and final purpose of man himself. The movement of God toward man is to establish fellowship, to guarantee to man a final destiny of blessedness. Through freedom from all evil, and being possessed by the goodness of God himself, man is given a visionary power through the supernatural light of the Holy Spirit to see God. Man sees God, first, through the enigma of faith, then afterwards through the clear vision of the resurrected believer. This 'visio Dei' only occurs after the soul is separated from the body and the universal resurrection has united the elect to God.

Creaturally acknowledgement yields to a full understanding of God's triune majesty. Furthermore, the creature is in conformity with God, in proportional similitude to God's true wisdom, justice, and holiness. The creature acknowledges God's sufficiency in being content with God's plenitude and desiring nothing more than God himself. At last the creature is content in certain

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25 Ibid., p. 3(1)D.
26 Ibid., p. 9(2)D.
27 Ibid., p. 9(2)E.
knowledge of his everlasting happiness.

The Science of Theology:

Polanus tried to demonstrate the scientific principles of theology in order to establish the proper relationship between faith and reason. In addition to demonstrating the veracity of theological truth and its relation to propositional language, Polanus points to the proper end purpose of theology as a way of showing the proper activity of the theologian and his systematic approach to his subject matter. Medieval scholasticism clarified the relation between theology and other disciplines by discussing the subordination of the sciences (de subalternatione scientiarum). If one describes theology as a "superior science," one must not claim theology as the basis for other kinds of scientific activity. Just as one does not wait upon metaphysics for the principles of Christian knowledge, neither does one use a crypto-theological principle for the development of natural history or metaphysics. The 'superiority' of the theological discipline is its uniqueness in its own sphere. One calls it a 'superior science' as a description of the majesty of revelation; it is supernatural in being a demonstration of absolute
certainty in the light of faith. Other sciences are "natural" because they can be deduced from principles applied in a purely natural manner.  

One science may be said to be subordinate to another by its purpose, its subject matter or in its principles. The purpose of military science, let us say, is subordinated to the purposes of statesmanship or that of arithmetic to its use in music. Such is the subordination of a discipline according to its purpose. One inquiry or science may be subordinate to a proper field of inquiry, such as the relation between botany and biology. The principles which are used in botany, though they apply in a special way to this inquiry itself, also find a wider, more general use in the wider reaches of life sciences generally. Subordination by principle is found when an 'inferior' science establishes the precondition for knowledge in the 'superior' science. In this application, one finds that musical theory depends upon arithmetic for its internal development.  

The science of theology rests

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upon the 'knowledge' of faith; yet this knowledge itself resides in God and in a special sense in the beatified saints of God.

Faith and Principles: Revelation and Reason:

Polanus asserts the mediative character of theology throughout this chapter on theological principles. Theology is both visionary and auditive, realized in the perfect vision of Christ in his union with God's own glory, granted through the resurrection to the saints, and grasped through the enigmatic vision of faith in Jesus Christ, by those in the pilgrimage of discipleship. It is both an intuitive knowledge through the Holy Spirit as a gift to the blessed and an abstractive knowledge by which the mind through grace falls under the superior light of the intellect as a gift from God.\textsuperscript{30} (ch. viii–ix) The cause or origin of theology is grace or the light of the Holy Spirit through faith (lumen naturale Spiritus sancti). The difference between natural theology and theological science, properly understood, is between the light of the intellect and the superior light granted to the intellect.

\textsuperscript{30} Polanus, \textit{Syntagma}, Liber I, pp. 11-12.
by the Holy Spirit. The final purpose of supernatural theology is its threefold profitability: 1. the knowledge of God which we are not able to know (quae non possimus scire per humannam investigationem) through human reason; but altogether known through the revelation of God in Holy Scripture; 2. the moving of our affections in desire for and love of God; 3. the avoidance of all human error. Polanus claims, parenthetically here, that whoever ignores scripture, ignores Christ and will be ignored by Christ ("Qui scripturas ignorat, Christum ignorat & a Christ ignorabitur.")

The brings the reader to an important conjunction in theological reasoning. Polanus asserts in view of this understanding of faith and reason that theological language is both infusa (communicated or imparted) and acquired (acquisita). Theology is the conjunction of the gift of God's revelation and the sound propositional knowledge developed through the discursive power of syllogistic reasoning. He speaks first of God's communication: 

Theologia nostra infusa est, quatenus est salvifica Dei cognitio & Servatoris nostri Christi aliarumq. rerum divinarum ad salutem necessariarum, ac proinde etiam quo ad salutarem intelligentiam principiorum fidei & bonorum operum, a solo interno lumine

31Ibid., Liber I, p. 12(2)B.
Spiritus sancti manantem, quae principia fide justificante creduntur esse a Deo nosib revelata, ut sint potentia Dei instrumenta ad salutem cuivis credenti. Illa principia sub rationis humanae disciplinam minime cadunt, neque percipi possunt salutariter, neque in actum deduci fine interno lumine Spiritus Sancti mentes nostras illustrantis." 32

Reason, for Polanus, does not operate alone. Reason is not self sufficient. Reason is not speculation alone. Reason itself is directed upon the meanings, both simple and complex, of Scripture. Reason as applied to Scripture is both analytic and synthetic, both intensive and extensive, in laying out the true and necessary meaning of each scriptural place and the full and orderly meaning of the places as a whole.

Polanus acknowledges his indebtedness to Duns Scotus in this understanding of theology. Duns Scotus in the first question of his Prologue to the Sentences, claims that all wisdom and understanding in man has this character, knowledge of God through the Spirit, understanding acquired through the study of Scripture and the light of blessedness in the gift of eternal life. Duns Scotus claims that this threefold wisdom and understanding,

32 Ibid., p. 15(1)A-B.
'beata', 'infusa', and 'acquisita' is realized in anima Christi. 33

This logos mysticism is a persistent theme in Polanus' presentation on theological principles. In addition to his description of Christ's personal union with the Word, Polanus further alludes to this at another place in the Syntagma. 34 The grace of Christ, realized in his person, is of three modes: 1. the grace of personal union with the Word. 2. a 'gratia habitualis seu donorum', in which he receives the Spirit in plentitude of both measure and quality. 3. the grace of his office as Savior.

Theology: Speculative and Practical:

The purpose of theology is both speculative and practical. It does not depart from a reflection upon the supreme datum of God in his triune nature. Yet theological science is a moral endeavor, in bringing man to an acknowledgment of his own blessedness in the Gospel. Theology is both hearing and doing the word (James 1:21);

33 Ibid., p. 15(1)E.

34 Polanus, Syntagma, p. 378(1)C-D.
its final purpose consists not just in word, but in deed and in truth (1 John 3:8). "Theologia inquam nostra non tantum speculativa est, sed etiam practica, *primo*, quia finis eius est non theoria, sed praxis seu operatio, neque gloriificatio Dei & beatitudo nostra, *secundo*, quia Theologia etiam explica legis doctrinam, quae proiecto sit practica, sicquidem notitia Dei non est posita in frigida speculatione, sed secum trahit eius cultum, *tertio*, quia cognitio practica circa finem est nobilior omni speculatione." 35 Polanus finds concurrence with this viewpoint in Justin Martyr, Augustine, Aquinas and Duns Scotus. Scotus points out that belief is not a speculative act or vision. Polanus gives this application to a theoretico-practical theological system: "Proinde quum doceat Theologia, Deum esse summe bonum, esse ultimum finem omnium, esse primam veritatem: demonstrat hac ratione, Deum esse super omnia diligendum. Rursus quum doceat Theologia, Deum esse sapientissimum & justissimum & omnium habere providentiam, consequenter etiam docet, eum esse timendum, illi esse fidendum & similia, quae omnia ad praxim spectant." 36

35 Ibid., p. 15(1)G.
36 Ibid., p. 15(2)D.
Rhetoric & Theology
Rhetoric and Theology:

Polanus inherited a tradition of rhetoric from his immediate predecessors of the sixteenth century. This tradition was drawn from classical and theological sources. From the assumptions of this rhetorical tradition, Polanus developed an exegetical method based on sound literary principles. Through this analysis of language, he demonstrated the power of the Divine Logos, in and through the inherent meanings of words, to draw such analysis into a cohesive whole. The logical form of this theological system derives from a systematic application of literary analysis. One finds the word 'invention' sometimes applied to part of the process. Yet, one must not assume that 'invention' in this case is a contrivance or an aspect of personal creativity on behalf of the theologian. On the contrary, Polanus' logical system is a developed and disciplined means of interrogating and discovering the real intent of the words of the Bible.

Calvin is Polanus' teacher in several important ways. Polanus does not attribute his work in logic to Calvin, in a direct, historical sense. Yet the advances in theological method, won in the Protestant reassessment of Medieval law and theological formulations, remain apparent in
Polanus. Calvin led the Reformed theologians to a re-viewed evaluation of classical learning in Cicero. Secondly, Calvin's theology of the word, the inheritance of the Reformed scholastics, searched for the logical connections of theological doctrines within the structures, rules and meanings of the word itself. Theology is the language of prayer and preaching. Polanus develops the logic intrinsic to the apostolic preaching. The harmony and coherence of theology is more a result of the unified and integrated themes of Scripture than a scheme of metaphysical or logical speculation adjoined to Scripture. Both Polanus and Calvin use scripture as the language of God, the form through which God's self-evident truth shines. In the third place, Polanus and Calvin depend on strict adherence to the text of Scripture as the rule for dogmatic reasoning. The practical and straightforward task of Christian theology is found in its faithful and critical use of literary analysis. Polanus' strenuous defense of logic, found in "De Ratione Legendi," is to purge theological thinking from drawing faulty implications based on poor literary analysis. This involves determining the proper intent of the text so that the true power of signification may be translated from words and phrases, into broader meanings. Polanus has explicitly developed this
literary-logical inventiveness into a system. The 'system' is a direct expression of hermeneutical principles, both in origin and development. His necessary concepts are less the result of Aristotelian metaphysics than the principles of rhetoric from Cicero and the Biblical exegetical tradition of Calvin.

Background of Calvin: ¹

Calvin's assessment of rhetoric's importance was derived from his training in the law. In the law studies of the late Middle Ages, questions became formalistic. Countless questions (quaestiones) and distinctions (distinctiones), based on the "Sic et Non" procedure, provided the acceptable form of legal argumentation. Lorenzo Valla, in the fifteenth century, attacked this formal procedure of Aristotelianism for dealing only with predicables. He wished to pass to transcendentia by developing a method of rhetoric in which logic and language go together from their very source. The logician who tests only the truth or falsity of statements restricts himself to the syllogistic means of argumentation. Valla

¹The following background material was drawn from an unpublished essay on 16th century hermeneutics by Dr. Thomas F. Torrance.
believed that this restriction prevented a speaker from moving from what one knows, to acts of fresh apprehension. The ultimate source of knowledge is not discovered only as a form of inferential reasoning. Conclusions derived from logical necessity, or by way of excluding all elements inconsistent with logical inference left only a formal system of inquiry. Valla pressed for an empirical mode of inquiry in which one passed through the strictly logical connections of words in order to acknowledge things in themselves. The Reformers found this art of language useful in developing the connections of biblical words to the reality of God himself.

Rudolf Agricola also contributed to this tradition of rhetoric in observing that logic is a mode of investigation and explanation, rather than a theory of the 'what' of things. Language expresses the thoughts of our mind. The role of speech, therefore, is to teach those who hear. Teaching consists both of exposition, or an unfolding of the mind of the speaker to the listener, and argumentation, an adducing to faith through a conviction of what is spoken. Language consists of grammar (a proper definition of words and their relations), rhetoric (a masterful and convincing construct of judgments) and dialectic (a marshalling of arguments in a persuasive way). The perspicacity of words
when the rules of speech are observed and set forth in an orderly fashion, leads the hearer to discover through speech an explanation of that which is intended. Teaching through the proper use of language, should move and delight the hearer, leaving him with understanding.

The rhetoric of Cicero suggested to Valla and Agricola, and subsequently to Calvin the use of language as dialogue, interrogation and persuasive speech. To convey the persuasive power and cognitive intent within words, and by means of speech, was not a natural talent. Cicero commended to the orator the developed and disciplined skills of the logician, the thoughts of the philosopher, the language of a poet, the memory of the lawyer, the voice of the tragedian and the gestures of the actor.

The first purpose of the speech is to gather under the proper topic, all the disconnected, chaotic matters pertaining to the subject under consideration. Hence, if one is to deliver a speech upon the subject 'music', one must consider rhythm, sounds, and tunes as proper to that inquiry. The importance of a rhetoric method is to establish the matter under consideration and through a series of definitions and classifications, to bring discovery

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and judgment into a coherent scheme. Invention for Cicero is the search for true things and the way of presenting them so that they become cogent arguments.

Only through allowing the symbols of reality (words) to be the indication by which reality forces its way upon us, does one find in language a genuine means of discovery.

Calvin found in Cicero one who appreciated the innate force of language and the intrinsic sense in which evidence or argument was inherent in the subject matter. It is speech which induces one to belief, which grasps the emotions of the hearer, and so persuades the hearer of the truth, claimed Cicero. The intrinsic arguments of words set the reader or hearer before the evidence and appeals directly to his judgment for a decision. Speech about God, therefore, is not based upon probable conclusions, or speculative logic but upon the trustworthy sense in which the word of God reveals the real and evident nature of God through the honest intent of Scripture.

If, then, one uses Scripture in the process of interrogation and debate, one must develop critical acumen for this document. A fair reading of the text, an examination of opposing views, a systematic effort in dealing with inconsistency, ambiguity and faulty implications,
are all necessary means of giving proper analytical use to Scripture. Judgment must be applied to the actual words of Scripture to determine their most likely meanings. The interrogative aim of exegesis and linguistic method is to clarify the relation between scripture and the manifest intention of the author. The abstract order of the pre-Reformation scheme is set aside by the Cicero-nian tradition of rhetoric. No longer are abstract questions (an sit, quid sit) put to Scripture, to elicit from it the necessity dictated by logic. Rather logic is used to set out the rational scope of Scripture so that Scripture itself may disclose its reality. Exposition of Scripture is accommodated, subsequently, to the thing it expounds. The hearer of the word, preacher, theologian or ordinary listener, is persuaded of its truth through dealing with the reality of words and their signifying power.

Polanus' Relation to Ramus and Medieval Aristotelian Analysis:

Walter Ong, in his study of Peter Ramus, lists Polanus as one of Ramus' disciples. Yet, Ong is perceptive in labelling Polanus a 'semi-Ramist'. Polanus follows the

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Ramus's scheme of rhetoric but incorporates more of Aristotle into his method than did Ramus. Polanus' understanding of Aristotelian categories came from his study of the Italian scholar, Jacob Zabarella. His immediate teachers of logic and rhetoric were Hieronymous (Jerome) Zanchius and Francis Junius. Polanus believed that a combination

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of the analytic and synthetic approach to literary documents was the most fruitful means to understanding.  

Aristotle, in The Organon, proposed a tripartite division of logic: generic logic, or reasoning in general, whether the results were Opinion or Science; specific logic, which treats of reasoning inductively or deductively and leads to scientific formulations; and a third form of specific logic, which treats of dialectical reasoning. In the Prior Analytics, Aristotle developed the rules for formulation of sound syllogisms through carefully constructed propositions and terms. The principle of the syllogism, he held, is that its axioms shall determine the conditions under which the axiom is applicable. Every science, he pointed out, has its own modality of logic. Though the syllogism seems soundly constructed, nonetheless, false premisses may give a true conclusion. So, synthetical reasoning and a test of hypotheses must test the construction of the syllogism. This is to establish true and proper application of the axiom itself.

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5 Keckermann, Bartolamaeus, Systematis Systematum, Tom. II. "Eodem anno Herbornae recusi sunt doctissimi Thologeti Amandi Polani a Polansdorff Logicae libri duo, quibus Rami praecipita methodum sequitur; sed ita tamen, ut Aristotelica subinde interferat exempla ubique illustria: ob quae gratum merito Logicum hanc habent Logicae studiosi." p. 42 (col. 1)

In deductive logic, Aristotle sought to relate the laws of phenomena to their causes. The basis of deductive reasoning is establishing the end to be attained. The end purpose of logic is science; the two test questions applied to any scientific statement are these: is a higher end practicable and is there no insurmountable obstacle to the attainment of that end. Deductive logic, in Aristotle's scheme, tries to link the notion of causation to that of intelligible necessity.

Definitions are required of the subject and its attributes, hypotheses must be established and tested, to assert the real existence of the subject in which the attributes adheres, and axioms must be established syllogistically to constitute the principle of the reasoning faculty.

The self-evidence of reason through logical necessity is the principle of the Aristotelian scheme. Polanus tries to integrate this scheme of reason with that of the preceding Protestant breakthrough so that the self-evident reasonableness of Christian truth may be demonstrated through the intelligibility of Scripture. He uses the formal, rhetorical scheme of Peter Ramus as his vehicle for this demonstration. Ramus believed he incorporated the logical power of Aristotle with the real and apparent
skills of rhetorical analysis to form a system better adopted to the schools and a noted improvement as a teaching method. Ramus' method was a kind of shortened form of rhetorical analysis by which logic served as an incentive tool for the arguments inherent in a literary source.

Ramus, in his *Port Royal Logic* of 1574 establishes three rules for all arts and sciences: (1) one gathers together only that which pertains to the art under consideration, (2) all the rules and precepts of this art must be true, by necessity, (3) one must treat general rules generally and special rules specially, so that everything is disputed according to its nature. Ramus' system of logic begins with that which is clearest and most evident. The definition of the matter or thing under consideration comes first. If one is a minister of the Word, Ramus reminds his readers, then the sum of the text becomes this simple definition. Next, one moves to a division of the text. Every aspect of the subject is treated under the ten places of invention. The causes, effects and circumstances attendant to the subject are explored. Comparisons with other similar and dissimilar places (in Scripture) are brought out and finally, the matter is made plain and manifest with familiar examples.
and authorities out of the Scripture. In the foreword to Ramus' *Logic*, one finds an analogy which must have provided a powerful appeal to those in search of a clear method of teaching. When a physician treats a patient, he must begin by asking what a fever is. Then he must question himself as to the sort of fever that he is proposing to treat. Then, by way of invention, he must search for the causes of the fever, whether efficient, material, formal, or final. He must ask whether this is a fever which causes death or not; whether the 'subject' of the fever is in veins, arteries or elsewhere; whether the 'signs' of the fever point to life or death; finally, whether the foregoing analysis, is confirmed by examples, authorities from other medical histories or by his long experience. Every man of science, Ramus held, both in pulpit and surgery could employ the benefits of logic.

Logic or dialectic is an art which teaches anyone to dispute well. The purpose of definition and division is to use them in a pattern of orderly arrangement, so that arguments may be established on the pattern of the true meaning inherent in the words. The beginning point toward further definition is the first and simple definition of the thing itself. Other words, and their use as building blocks in establishing arguments, are considered
either in their agreement or disagreement with the original definition. So, efficient causality is the "first place of invention." That matter is known perfectly whose cause is understood, claims Ramus. Ong offers a telling criticism as an Aristotelian, when he observes that, for Ramus, to demonstrate something is to define it. 7

Definition and division give Ramus' system a coherent purpose. In this respect, Ramus offered a formal system to early Reformed orthodoxy which in many ways circumvented the intent of a Protestant word of God theology. Even Ramus, who disavowed his Aristotelian training, incorporated a scheme of causality which gained a victory for words through axiomatic certainty. The use of words for discovery and persuasion slips backward toward abstraction. Reasoning tends to become lodged within the natural propriety of words. The search for true proposition, likewise, tends to become only the finding and manipulation of arguments. The question of the content of words which in an empirical approach to words tends to gather their meanings as they focus themselves on the mind of the reader, tends under Ramus' analytic method, to impose an order of regularity

subservient to the necessities of logic.

When one looks for important influences upon Polanus' logical framework, one must include Philip Melanchthon. Melanchthon was instrumental in shaping the evangelical theology of Luther in terms of scholastic logic. He was instrumental too in formulating the basis of a gymnasium tradition in Germany. This tradition of logic and rhetoric was taught to Amandus Polanus at the Elisabethschule in Breslau, where several of the faculty were pupils of Melanchthon. In Melanchthon's "De Elementis Rhetorici", one finds a logic-rhetoric system of literary analysis which bears organic relations with that of Polanus.

Melanchthon divided his analytical system into three parts: rhetoric, elocution and dialectics. The power of rhetoric is to teach men the true way of reason, by explicating both obscure and quite clear causes. Eloquence of speech depends upon a developed faculty for speaking wisely and clearly (sapienter et orate dicendi). The speaker must have perfected a knowledge of that which he

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"Faulenbach, Heinrich, Die Struktur der Theologie des Amandus Polanus von Polansforf, Zurich: SVZ-Verlag." Faulenbach cites P. own explanation of this combination: "Praecepta Aristotelica et Ramsea ita conium: i, ut ordinem preceptorum didascalium ab universaliibus ad particularia... seriem exprimere contra sum." p. 27
describes in speech. He does this through a proper employ-
ment of the offices of oration (officia orationis), invention, 
disposition (dispositis), elocution, memory and judgment.
One explores the genera of causality by means of demonstra-
tion, deliberation, and judicial or forensic judgment.
Proper identification of the genus or matter under discus-
sion, is based upon its proper causes and a judgment of 
the purpose for which the discourse is proposed. Dialectic 
contributes to the refinement of rhetorical excellence as 
it is the act of proper teaching (...dialectica proprie ars 
est recte docendi...). Dialectic defines, divides, dis-
covers connective arguments and presents a coherent case 
for the truth or falsity of a matter. Explication of 
a matter proceeds through definition, division, and the 
rigorous internal use of syllogistically constructed argu-
ments.

This process is analogous to arithmetic. The know-
ledge of number and the knowledge of the theological 
article 'Deum esse', both possess a demonstrative axiomatic 

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10 Ibid. "Partes autem Lucius operis sere officii 
sunt quatuo: definer, dividere argumenta vere connectere, 
et male cohaeratia seu falsa dissolves, et falsitus causa 
monstrato, errantem deducere ad normas certitudinis, quae 
vocantur de quibus infra dicemus, ubi convictus audit se 
divina voce condemnari." 514 (1).
certainty which compels the acknowledgment of reason. The conceptuality of God tends to be assimilated under the powerful necessities of universal and logical truth. The universal category of Being orders the ranking of genera and species and leaves the suggestion that the Thomist natural theology has replaced the revealed power of the Word. This takes place only as the pressures of logical necessity are established by the universal necessity of a supreme, necessary and supernatural order of Being.

In explicating Polanus' system of rhetoric, one should bring forth three aspects for the reader's consideration. In the first place, we shall discuss the basic framework of this method. Then we shall explore the means by which logic becomes an analytical tool for the theologian. Finally, we shall deal with several specific applications of this method in exploring theological concepts.

1. Logic may be applied to anything commended to the mind. The subject matter under consideration (quod menti cogitari) 11 and the discourse within which it is found determine the theme under discussion. Both

11 Polanus, Logica, Bk. I. pp. 4(2) ff.
logical priority and literary ordering are determined in this manner. The smallest unit of discourse is the word; the elemental beginning point is the subject (of the sentence). The analysis of thought begins with nouns and pronouns and proceeds toward other organic forms of literary expression (i.e. verbs, adjectives). One must determine whether the theme is simple or conjoined. A connected theme may contain a general purpose or a special purpose. The first kind of theme is simple; the next kind of theme complexum is either 'hypothesis' or 'thesis'. Further, the theme may be 'true' or 'false.' A true theme truly arises by the very nature of the matter (quod revers existit in rerum natura); a fictitious theme does not express the true nature of the subject.

When one has established the theme under discussion, then one proceeds to explicate the theme through supporting arguments. The arguments are of two kinds: declarative and demonstrative. A declarative argument exhibits through cause, effect, etc., a simple teaching or narration. A demonstrative argument is established by means of invention and disposition. Invention perceives arguments ex se from the generic analy-
sis of the subject or aliunde, in comparison with several causes (first cause, efficient cause or material cause) found in the compound theme. A single theme, either negative or affirmative, establishes the axioms for the matter under discussions.

Invention on the basis of multiple or conjoined theme must be established through proper syllogisms.

Grammar, rhetoric and logic all play a part in this method. Grammar, or the art of correct speech, forms the basis for rhetoric, the art of correct judgment. Logic is the integrative crafting of these two disciples, for logic is the art of correct use. In the order of analysis, Polanus places the most universal meaning before all its particular expressions, the simple before the complex. Polanus believes this is the proper method for the art of speech. 12 An adequate method for the study of theology must be

analytical, the reasoned statement of the theme and the arguments by which the author develops his intended purpose and synthetic, or a properly constructed skein of connections which induce a true conclusion. Definition, the development of the theme, and the reasoned construction of arguments bring the reader of a literary document to the real intent of the author in the use of these words.

2. Polanus has a larger philosophical interest in the use of logic. God as the Divine Logos ordains logic as an effulgence of his goodness. All the human arts serving the artifice of beauty; sculpture, painting, writing, or speech, reflect the goodness of the Creator. The real purpose of the human arts is to express, as rivulets of a stream, the overflow of divine goodness and beauty. The light of nature participates in the Divine Light of the Logos.

Polanus does not believe, however, that logic represents a simple identification of mind with Divine mind. Logic is a developed skill, not a "natural" ability. 13

13 Polanus, Logica, dedication foreword, p. (v). "Logica docet discret res proponere, propositas judicare."
Logic does not become wisdom (sapientia) except as it represents the subject matter clearly and judges correctly the form and content of propositions. Indeed, dialectic must question the nature of every subject and its coherent relations to other reasoned units of speech. The author employs logic and the forms of reasoning as a way of honouring an authority. The total process of proper linguistic analysis fixes on the authority of the word. Logic supplies one good counsel for public tasks, such as governance. The word becomes the mark of the public bond between the governed and those in public power.

Indeed, a careful approach to words, provides a proper relation to their subject matter for each of the scientific disciplines. With the construct of logic, Polanus believes, one may discourse clearly and teach differently. One finds here, without doubt, a trust in the power of words derived from Cicero's insights and the reasoned constructs of Aristotelian logical science.

3. The task remains of relating the procedures of logic to the message of Scripture and the formulation of dogma. The exegetes of theologian applies and same
literary rules as any other man of learning. Judgment of scripture begins with determining the true and actual sense of the words under consideration. Yet judgment in the broader sense, depends upon the truth or falsity established by the sound use of syllogism. The first norm of judgment is supplied by proper definition and division of the subject itself, or drawn from a demonstrated or reasoned sense of the thing (the word) itself. A second form provides a norm of judgment. Judgment may address itself to the testimony of a person or witness. Such an affirmation or declaration of reality may consist of something seen, heard or told, affirmed by men or angels through word and deed and left as a written witness. The norm of natural truth, through the 'experientia universalis' of Aristotle acknowledges only the senses, the power of observation, the scientific rules (experientia) and the use of reason (inductio) to form its judgments. The proverbs, precepts and principles through verbal and written witness (testimonium) may themselves serve as necessary truth.

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1. Polanus, Logica, Liber II, "De Judice," "De re judicandi de verbis, est verus, germanus, & receptus ab omnibus bene loquentibus, unus locuendi, ad quem exigenda est oratio, qua propositionem exprimitur."
for the theologian. Polanus finds no conflict between philosophical and literary theological analysis. Linguistic analysis and philosophical reasonings, however, do not form the only mode of theological truth. Aristotle had held that demonstrative science should be from things true, first and immediate; that one must proceed from the things more certainly known to those less clear, more obscure. Polanus believes that the norm of judgment, however, may be both natural and supernatural. Holy Scripture, claims Polanus, is the rule of God's manifestation. Truth for the theologian consists in the congruence with what is found in Scripture. Divine testimony through the words of Scripture is instigated and informed by God alone. Such a truth is immediate to God, in and of himself; yet its mediated truth is established through the words of God's ministry. Human authors in dealing with non-divine sources attend more to what is said than the one who said it. Yet the 'necessary' truth of Scripture joins the witness and the words and deeds of the written source, in an inseparable relation. Polanus quotes Ursinus' view of Scriptural authority in support of this view. "Non necesse est credi docentibus, propter ipsorum
asservationum; sed propter eas, quas offerunt sua doctrina probationes." 15 This approach has the advantage of giving logical analysis and theological thinking a complementary role. Faulenbach extends premature congratulations to Polanus, however, on his conclusion that truth is inseparable and unites philosophy and theology in one ultimate Sola Veritas. 16

Some doubt remains whether Polanus establishes the 'necessity' of God's truth from the revealed word or from the strict canons of logical induction. He contrasts the mode in which God exists as absolute, non-contingent and possessing a perfection and fullness of Being, with the contingent mode in which the creature exists. Just as God is absolutely uncaused, just so is his nature completely immutable. Polanus postulates the 'necessarily' uncaused nature of God and moves toward the necessity of Providence and man's creaturely nature through speculative induction between cause and effect. The tendency of such an axiomatic argumentation is perceived by Anders Nygren in his study, *Meaning and Method*. The basic form of axiomatic


16 Faulenbach, *Die Struktur*, etc. p. 32.
argumentation is framed in the hypothetical statement "if...then." In such argumentation, Nygren points out, nothing matters but logical conviction and logical consistency. In this same view, we would suggest that Polanus, by introducing a logical construct of cause and effect, sets for his theological system a very confusing agenda. Does he propose to explicate God's nature and work, from the revealed testimony of the word or from the speculative axioms of Perfect Being? This axiomatic soundness threatens to govern the manner in which he must empirically construct the revealed truths of Scripture's witness. The formal demands of logic strive to become a separate noetic principle.

An Assessment:

One can recognize in Polanus the motive and power within his systematic theology. Karl Barth has an adequate definition of a 'system' of dogmatics. "A system," he claims, "means a structure of principles and their consequences, founded on the presupposition of a basic view of things, constructed with the help of various sources of knowledge and axioms, and self-contained and
complete in itself." 17 Systematic development, according to this view, proceeds according to an exposition of the law of analysis. The autonomy of obedience and freedom, therefore, is lost to the need for thoroughness. Whether it is the development of principles or biblical-dogmatic themes, the same arbitrary decisions prevail. The eschatological reality of all theological knowledge is denied implicitly. The movement of dogmatics from Polanus' system to the fundamental articles finally evolved, Barth holds, into the essence-of-Christianity mode. 18 The Word of God, its freedom and its claim for the theologian's obedience only to that Word, is set aside for a humanly grounded choice. Though theological method may have been an arbitrary choice, nevertheless, the arbiter of such a method is not free to ignore the "choice from within" which Biblical religion requires. Polanus' use of Aristotle and Ramist techniques must not impose from without a structure of principles and axioms which leave the Word of God less free to determine the scope of theological reflection. A real danger of this can clearly

17 Barth, K. Church Dogmatics I, 2, p. 861.

18 Ibid., pp. 864-866.
be seen in Polanus' rhetorical and philosophical analysis. The question remains, in this exposition of Polanus' work, whether principles, axioms or themes control and constrict the theological truth or whether they bring forth the coherent wholeness of theological knowledge.
The Doctrine of Scripture
Polanus' view of scripture is so comprehensive that we must choose the fundamental themes in order to understand his basic directions. In each theological issue, Polanus marshalls a great wealth of detail, of reason and counter-reason. Yet he remains clear about his fundamental direction.

Polanus affirms several basic propositions about the nature of scripture. (1) Scripture is true and authoritative for Christian theology. (2) Scripture is understandable to the reader. It is not esoteric or even so complex in its message, that it cannot be understood by every lay Christian reader. (3) Scripture is necessary, appointed by God as the sourcebook of His own self-revelation. Neither piety nor churchly wisdom have supplanted the central role of Scripture for the Christian. (4) Scripture is the chief guide for Christian doctrine. The exposition of Scripture provides critical guidelines for the presentation of the Christian dogma. (5) Finally, Scripture yields its meaning when the interpreter employs the tools of literary and linguistic analysis.

**Scripture is True and Authoritative:**

The character of scripture itself is the guarantor
of its truth. In our preceding discussion of Polanus' method of rhetoric, we pointed out that the explication of a theme was sustained through two kinds of supporting arguments: declarative and demonstrative. The declarative argument exhibits a teaching through cause and effect. A demonstrative argument uses invention and disposition. Invention, we claimed, perceives arguments ex se from the generic analysis of the subject.

Scripture is true because it is given by God. It is the testament of God himself (quia testamentum eius est). 1 It is the Word of God, the revelation of God's own nature. It is true, in the first place, because of its divine origin. The truth of scripture is never measured only in terms of itself. Its truth does not terminate in the words of scripture. Its message bears the indubitable soundness of the truth, claiming the mind of the hearer as the speaking of God himself. Polanus denies however that this speaking by God is itself bound to any necessity. The giving of Scripture depends only upon the gracious good will of God. 2

Scripture is true, secondly, because it is inspired.

1 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber I, 17(1)K.
2 Polanus, Syntagma, 17(1)G. "Scriptura autem nobis est necessaria necessitate ex hypothese."
It is God himself speaking to prophets and apostles. The books of Scripture are letters sent from God to man. Scripture is the instrumentality of the Divine discourse. The prophets and apostles had their wills changed and their minds shaped by the Word of God so that they knew and wrote the certain truth of God. Polanus is true to Aristotelian logic here, in asserting the inseparability of cause and effect: "Actio in unum coniuncta est, principales causae atque instrumenti, re effectu eadem, sed ratione differens." ³

Polanus follows the patristic tradition in basing the truth of Scripture upon the reliability and inspiration of the apostles. Irenaeus asserted that the same grace of God inspired the writers of both the Old and New Covenants, to pass along a tradition which was altogether faithful to God's truth. ⁴

Scripture is true, in the third case, because it is the exhibition and narration of God's deeds, totally exceeding all human thoughts and totally free of man's control over it. Only in Scripture does one gain any true

³ Polanus, Syntagma, Liber I, 21(1) E.

knowledge of God. Only in scripture does one know the grace of God through the remission of sin. So the substance of scripture itself witnesses to the supreme truth of God's saving action.

The truth of scripture is guaranteed, finally, because it is the witness to Christ. The 'sermo' of Scripture is Christ. So the message and truth of Christ is joined to the discourse of Scripture that belief in Christ cannot be separated from the discourse of Scripture itself. The cause for believing Christ is identified with the preaching of the apostles. To believe that Scripture is true is to believe the claims of Christ himself. "Qui Scripturae Sacrae non credit, is nec Christo ipsi coram praedicanti crederet." ⁵

The truth of Scripture is ensured because Christ himself teaches through the narration of Scripture. "Christus est Magister noster, quia docet nos, sed non tantum foris coram viva voce sua ut fecit versans in terra, nec tantum Spiritu suo intus, sed etiam per Scriptural S. & per ministros suos, ex Scripturis S. loquentes." ⁶

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⁵ Polanus, Syntagma, Liber I, 18(1)K.
⁶ Polanus, Syntagma, Liber I, 71(1)G.
Scripture is to be obeyed not simply as the law, but in obedience to Christ. Christ is the subject of Scripture's message and in the freedom of his person and the power of his work one finds the sovereign claim of Scripture. Christ is the Lord proclaimed by Scripture but is lord over scripture as well. He is subject to Scripture according to the economy of the Divine will; the economy of Scripture is analogous to the economy of Christ's humanity. But scripture is controlled by the divine power so that according to the enhypostatic unity of Christ as the Divine logos he exercises a supremely coherent and unifying effect. The form of scripture is comprehended, just as Philippians 2 describes Christ, according to the absolute power of God and the narrative scope of Christ's humanity.

Is Scripture clear and understandable?

Polanus affirms not only the truth of Scripture but its perspicuity as well. Scripture is intelligible,

\[7\] Polanus, Syntagma, Liber I, 33(1)G-H.

\[8\] Polanus, Syntagma, Liber I, 33(1)I.
plain, explicit; scripture is not obscure and indistinct. ⁹

Roman theologians suggested that scripture was not clear per se and needed the insight of the Church Fathers through the magisterium of the Church. ¹⁰

Polanus believes this suggestion is mischievous, in suggesting that the meaning of the revelation does not rest fully within scripture. The true nature of scripture is to convey and to teach the complete doctrine of faith and good works which is necessary for all the faithful. ¹¹

Essential doctrines are not developed alongside scripture, so that it might become clearer. Rather the word and the Spirit are lodged together. Scripture is the domicile of the Spirit. ¹²

At issue is a problem for the whole Christian community. Can the scriptures be read profitably and under-

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⁹ "Perspicuity and perspicacity are not properly synonyms, but for several centuries the first has been confused with the second. Both are derived from a Latin word meaning to see through clearly. Perspicacity refers to the power of seeing clearly, to clearness of insight or judgment; a man of acute perspicacity; the perspicacity of his judgment. Perspicuity refers to that which can be seen through, i.e. to lucidity, clearness of style or exposition, freedom from obscurity; the perspicuity of his argument.

¹⁰ Polanus, Syntagma, Liber I, cxliv(1)D, p. 93.

¹¹ Polanus, Syntagma, Liber I, c. xliv(1)K, p. 93.

¹² Polanus, Syntagma, c xliv(2)B, p. 93: "ita constat S. Scriptura ex litera & spiritu, ita ut sit litera quoddam quasi spiritus domicilium."
standably by laymen? If an assiduous attention is given to the words themselves, anyone can discern the lucidity of Scripture for himself. Augustine had been certain that even though a great speaker or writer dealt with profound matters, nonetheless the profundity of the material did not make it unclear. The greatest impediment to clear understanding is resistance to the Spirit by which it was written. Ignorance of the languages may be an impediment, but the failure or unwillingness to see the Spirit within the letter of Scripture leaves one only with the bare letter and results in a failure to perceive the inspired speech of scripture as revealing the mind and nature of God.

In claiming that scripture is unclear, one not only rejects the Spirit within these words, but denies that scripture is light from light, and denies the inspiration of Scripture. Scripture cannot be obscure and given by God for the inspiration of his people.


14 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber I, c xliv(2)E, p. 95: "Verum fallacia est a non causa, ut loquentur: quod enim sunt dissidia & controversiae, non accidit obscuritate Scripturae, sed caligine & malitia mentis humanis."

15 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber I, c xliv(1)E, p. 96.
Polanus will not be drawn into a scripture nominalism in which the 'res divina' becomes the 'res scriptura'. The Scriptures can be understood clearly according to what they say (oratione). Yet this is not to make a simple identity between scripture and the complete fullness of God's mystery. Even the gift of scripture itself is an accommodation, so that the mind of man might be prepared for so sublime understanding.

Is Scripture Necessary?

Scripture retains its canonic authority in the church because it continues to be essential to God's revelation. It contains the indubitable soundness of truth, the narration of God's own acts and deeds, clarity of revelation within the words themselves, and the perpetual ordination by God for Christian doctrine.

Early in his statement of Scripture's importance,

Polanus affirms its necessity for every theologian. The authority of scripture perpetually and constantly (perpetuus) keeps doctrine on its proper course.

The causes of Scripture's necessity for Polanus are these: (1) the people are commanded by God to study the scriptures. To rebel against that command is to rebel against God himself. (2) The Scriptures are necessary because they contain necessary doctrines. (3) The Scriptures are necessary as the very cause of faith. (4) The scriptures are necessary as the means of divine knowledge. As Jerome said, 'To ignore Scripture is to ignore Christ'. The Scriptures are appointed until the end of time for teaching the truth, and providing right judgment concerning all dogmas.

Polanus' reasons for scriptural necessity have a parallel in Lutheran orthodoxy. Quenstedt lists four

17 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber I, 17(1)G: "Scriptura autem nobis est necessaria necessitate ex hypothesese."

18 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber I, 39(2)D: "Quem ad modum enim architecti qui exstruunt aedificia ad normam exigunt, ut singulae partes justa symmetria ac proportione inter se cohaeraent: sic docentes atque aedificantes Ecclesiam Dei ad Sacram Scripturam omnia quae docent exigere eique insis-tere debent, ut certus & perpetuus doctrinae tenor conservetur."

19 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber I, 70(1)F-I.
reasons for the use of Scripture as evidence in the church: (1) scripture distinguishes true from false doctrine; (2) through the promises and their fulfillments, we are brought to faith in Christ; (3) the promises of scripture strengthen and confirm our faith; (4) through scripture men are called and saved. 20

Preus lists a number of causes suggested by the Lutheran orthodox, for God committing the Word to writing (brevity of life after the patriarchs, poor human memory, diffusion of the human race, the possibility of doctrinal corruption). 21 Polanus does not advance speculative reasons for scripture's necessity. As a Scotist he is aware of the practical character of theological science and remains fixed on the witness of scripture concerning itself. (2 Timothy 3:16) Its rationale is bound inseparably with that which it effects as a result of its message. Scripture is doctrinal in teaching what is to be believed and judicial in its regulative and directive character, that heresy may not cloud an adequate understanding of God's word.

Both the Anabaptists and the Roman Catholics denied


21 ibid.
that scripture's necessity was absolutely binding. The Anabaptists claimed, on the one hand, that the Holy Spirit was the internal or appropriated word of God, setting them free from the external words of scripture (externa verba). Polanus denies however that having the Spirit is arcane, liberating one from the words of Scripture. It is within the words that one encounters the Spirit and within the words too that the Spirit works and lives. Polanus comments: "Spiritus enim Sanctus Scripturam Sacram mentibus nostris obsignat: Scriptura vero Acra est lapis Lydianus quo exploratur an cogitata interna animi sint vere a Spiritu Sancto profecta." \(^{22}\)

In the second place, the Anabaptists denied that the Old Testament was 'necessary', because Christ came as a deliverance from the Law. They claimed that Christ had become the sense of scripture in such a definite manner, that the Christian comes to Christ and learns from him exactly as the original apostles. Polanus holds that Christ is the master of scripture but precisely within

\(^{22}\)Polanus, *Syntagma*, Liber I, 70(2)G.
The anabaptists tended to deny the Old Testament as now superfluous and no longer useful. Yet Polanus holds that Moses was the true type of Christ himself. To believe what Moses wrote was to believe Christ. The promise and fulfillment of the Incarnation dictates that the full impact of the Old Testament be retained as essential to understanding Christ or the purpose of the Law (Romans 10:4).

The Jesuit position is more subtle than that of the sectarians. They argued against Scripture being simply necessary. Since Scripture itself is a product of church tradition, then it must continue to be evaluated alongside the teaching of the catholic church. The Jesuits did not argue that Scripture could or should be set aside. Their position was a 'progressive' one in which Scripture is incorporated into the church. Since the word of God was

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not written before Moses, then scripture-as-written must not carry an absolute necessity. Polanus reasons by ex-
tension, if scripture was not then necessary, it is not now necessary. Scripture is 'necessary' both before writing and after writing on the basis of God's free act. Scripture is revelation for Polanus. To think of revela-
tion without scripture is impossible. Similarly to think of revelation without words leaves one only with empty speculation.

Polanus can only infer from the Jesuit's position that Scripture is not for them the one definitive, regula-
tive rule for all the church's works and ways. It is not absolutely necessary; it is only useful as a guide to the continuous work of the ecclesial magisterium.

Is Scripture a Guide for Christian Doctrine?

The interpretation of Scripture is the explication of the true sense (verus sensus) and usage in the institu-
ted words of Scripture to God's glory and the edification of the church. Interpretation is necessary because

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24 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber I,(2)E, p. 98: "Interpre-
tatio Sacra Scriptura, est explicatio veri sensus & usus illius, verbis perspicuis instituta, ad gloriam Dei & addificatimem Ecclesiam."
Christ himself commended it (John 5:39, 1 Cor. 14:1), has given scripture to the faithful (1 Thess. 5:19, 20) for the edification of the church (1 Cor. 14:3). 25 The message of Scripture is necessary as a narration and clarification of God's fulfilled promises in Christ. Any obscurity and difficulty one encounters in Scripture can be clarified by a unified and intensive study of Scripture itself. Indeed it is the ignorance of scripture which is the source of all heresies.

The arguments for the purpose of Scripture which we have encountered to this point have been ontological, Christological and soteriological. Scripture is the word of God, inspired immediately in the mind and work of the apostle and inspired by the Holy Spirit for the reader and interpreter of Scripture. Scripture is holy and unique in its witness to Jesus Christ. Christ is the master of scripture and gives thematic coherence to both Old and New Testament. Scripture is soteriological as well, for it is the mediation of eternal life and blessedness to the believers. Yet scripture has a rhetorical meaning as well. The promise and meaning of God's revelation finds

its expression within the literary form of Holy Scripture. In attention to the details of its literary form, and in exposition of these skeins of meaning, one encounters God's revelation.

Interpretation of scripture consists of two parts: an exposition of its true and literal sense (enarratio veri sensus Scriptura) and a discovery of its use in the church (accomodiatio ad usum). The interpreter of Scripture begins by identifying the theme or 'scopus' of the text. Polanus calls this central intention of the text, 'literalis', or 'grammaticus' or 'historicus sensus'. This means that the interpreter must find the main subject before him in the text. He does not search for a 'spiritual' meaning while rejecting the central import of the text. The theme may be simple or composite; the interpreter may begin with the essential meaning of the


27 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber I, (2)D–G, p. 99: Polanus uses the same typologies found in St. Thomas, derived from ancient usage, literal, allegorical, tropological and anagogic. Yet each of these most return to the central and literal words of the text: "Revera autem usiuscujusque loci Scripturae Sacrae sensus verus & genuinus, est tantum unicus, isque literalis, (dictus etiam Grammaticus, item Historicus sensus, ) hoc est, qui ex literae seu textus qui explicatur, verbis consueta significatione usurpatis, iuxta mentem Spiritus Sancti colligitur."
words themselves or move from the explicit sense of the
writer's words to the implicit meaning of those words as
they are used figuratively. In each case, the true mean-
ing of the words is adhered to. Signification is not a
simple matter of definition but a broader literary analy-
sis of the word in light of its context and essential
intent.

Interpretation, therefore, is the explication of what
Scripture says and, in terms of all that it says on a
given matter, what it means. The meaning of each word,
comparison of words according to their several places of
use, and a clarification of each particular use (ad re
consonant) stretches the interpreter to discover the in-
ternal harmony of Scripture. The task of interpreta-
tion depends upon the rules of sound literary analysis.
One cannot interpret the text of Scripture if the words
are unclear, and their fundamental sense, doubtful and
uncertain. Words have a grammatical sense and an exposi-

Polanust SyntagMat Liber 1,, 99(2)I. "Hoc est fedus
(sic) meum inter me & vos: figurata oratione utitur. Est
enim Synecdoche in pronomine Hoc, quod in hac oratione
restringendum ad circumcisionem, & praedicatum, & praedica-
tum de subjecto dicture metonymice. Sensus autem verus est,
circumcisionem externam praeputii esse sacramentum seu sym-
bolum federis inter Deum & fideles Veteris Testamenti.
Hicque sensus literalis est, quem litera seu textu Spiritus
Sanctus intendit."
tory sense. The grammatical sense embodies the fundamental rules of grammar and provides a kind of skeletal picture of the text. Words have an expository sense in which they identify the speaked, describe an action, or give demonstrative effect either to the actor or the one acted upon. An expository sense is necessary to deal with the complex sentence. The rules for exposition help the interpreter extrapolate the wider sense of the text in an applied literary sense.

We have pointed out in Chapter Two of this thesis, the debt of Polanus to Peter Ramus. Yet it is apparent that his rhetorical theory had its origin in the Ciceronianism of St. Augustine. Words may be proper or obvious signs and figurative signs, which have a double significance. In order to remove ignorance of the true reference of signs the interpreter must have a good knowledge of the original languages, and be able to render an adequate translation. Augustine believes that literary analysis will render figurative expressions in the sense which is intended and indicative expressives in the simple manner.

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29 Polanus, *Syntagma*, Liber I, 100(1)J.

called for. The chief thing, says Augustine, is whether an expression is literal or figurative. In his differentiation of Scripture's words, literal and figurative, intended or unintended sense, Augustine devises a number of rules for interpretation. These rules of rhetoric are the same ones used by Augustine in his guide to interpretation. 31

How does Scripture become doctrine?

Polanus uses the principles of rhetoric to establish the theme or scope of the text. In the method, as we have demonstrated, the skeletal structure of scripture in its literary form is revealed. Yet, interpretation also de-

31 Augustine, St., On Christian Doctrines, edited by Marcus Dodd. (Extract Retractions Liber III, chapters xxiv–xxxvii), pp. 101-118:
One finds these parallels between Augustine and Polanus:
(1) the same word does not always signify the same thing, because it may signify now one thing, now another; or it may signify things contrary. See, Polanus, p. 100(1)I.
(2) One passage may have several interpretations Polanus 100(1)K, not a very clear parallel.
(3) Obscure passages are to be interpreted by those which are clearer, Polanus 100(1)K, 100(2)K.
(4) Explain doubtful passage by Scripture itself, not reason. Polanus 100(2)K.
(5) Knowledge of tropes (literary figures) are necessary in dealing with allegory, enigma, parable, and irony. Polanus 100(2)A,D.
(6) The rule of the Head and body--some statements may refer to one person (Abrahams seed, e.g.) when the Person of Christ is intended Polanus, 101(1)K.
pends upon a full exposition of what scripture says on a given matter, and the reasons which are intrinsic to a whole argument. Interpretation, therefore, is both rhetoric and reason, both analysis and judgment. The construction of sound syllogisms establishes the truth or falsity of a particular proposition. Yet it is the higher norm of judgment which leads the interpreter to rest judgment upon the reliability of the witnesses and in the final analysis to find the truth of Scripture in its own testimony to God's action. The veracity of propositions yields to the veracity of what the document claims concerning itself, i.e. this is God's speech concerning his will and his way.

Polanus' method is both analytic and synthetic. In the analytic approach, the interpreter proceeds from the end purpose of Scripture to certain principles (a fine ad principia procedit). The whole scope or overall theme of scripture is shown and each text or explication is used as a confirmation of the whole proposition. The method was used widely by the Schoolmen of the Middle Ages, provoking Polanus ironic assessment "...sermonem requirit pressum sine ornatu atque affectum concitacione." 32

32 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber I, 104(1)K.
The synthetic method moves from principles to an end purpose (a principiis ad finem contendit). The interpreter begins with the text and only through a careful process of comparison and collation does he reach a distinct dogmatic statement.

Polanus wishes to combine these two methods into one. Analysis and synthesis, dogmatic principles themselves developed through reasoned judgments concerning many texts. Yet he seems to move from rhetorical method, i.e. scriptural exegesis, through comparative collation, to the development of sound theological principles. The interpretative purpose of Scripture is the development of doctrine, the refutation of errors, the comprehensive guide to instruction and the source for Christian consolation. Polanus believes that all interpretation follows the classical source set down in II Timothy 3:16: "All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness. (RSV)

The Development of Doctrine:

Polanus shows through a study of the prayers of scripture the way in which certain broader ideas of doctrine are formed and then built up (exstruendere) into
doctrinal teachings. The prayers are considered according to that which is sought from God by the one praying, according to the ones who are making their petitions, and from a consideration of God in his essential attributes as the one who is implored. God is the source of all goodness and is fundamentally in his own nature, wisdom, goodness, and mercy. The prophets, kings, and psalmists would not ask of God what he did not have (to give) or believe that He could give what is not within his nature or essential will. The petitioner asks for vindication, strength, wisdom, only as one who knows that each is a gift of God, that the goodness of the creature is from the generosity of God himself. Each text, as it is gathered with the other texts, contributes to some insight concerning what is asked, who is asking, and how God is himself understood as the source of the gift.

The second purpose of doctrine is to see the scriptural narrative in explication of the events of world history. The world is the theatre of operation in which God acts from the beginning and within which the church, by the light of grace, sees his providence, care, goodness and mercy in the governance both of the world and of the church. The doctrinal formation of church teaching is the consideration of sacred history as the enduring and central
purpose of human life.

**Exposition and the Power of Correction:**

Scripture itself corrects the interpreter himself as sinful before God, unless he is converted by the word of God himself, to the truth. One cannot interpret Scripture at all, unless one first applies its evangelical message to the correction of his own precepts (correctio morum). The reproof of sin is the basis of the evangelical about-face, without which the full and proper claim of God's word is not recognized. The scriptural account of the Fall is the first occasion in which man lives according to the 'suggestions' of a fellow creature, and not by the Word of God himself. To teach and preach the Word of God, one must be questioned by Scripture.

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33 Polanus, *Syntagma*, Liber I, 103(1)C. "Deinde historia sacra docet, qui status fuerit negotiorum hamanorum quot & quae formae Rerum publicarum fuerunt, quae causae felicitatis vel infelicatatis earum: quae sint officia gubernatorum, quae dubditorum; atque; adeo singulorum statum: quae res non tantum homines singulos sive Regis. Principes & in Magistrater constitutos, sive privatos; sed etiam Republicas, regna Principatur civitates & communiter mundum conservent vel perdant."

34 Polanus, *Syntagma*, Liber I, 103(2)G: "...communicatione qua auditores interrogentur, annon ipsimet fateri cogantur, peccata talia vel talia passim invalescere? annon fateri cogantur, esse ministerorum (?) verbi Dei officium ut illa publice privatimque reprehendant?"
Consolation and the Interpreter:

Scripture's message takes possession of the one who would interpret its message. One is not only accused or reprimanded. John Chrysostum, in his third homily on the Book of Acts, warns against the interpreter seeking to purchase the gift of God by human intrigue. This is the insight of Polanus as well. It is the mystery of salvation which draws the interpreter further into Scripture; it is the extent of the Divine mystery which leads the interpreter deeper and deeper into the Mystery of his teaching. The interpreter must accept the abundance of the Divine goodness in order to order the consoling effect of Scripture.

Interpretation and the Holy Trinity:

The highest power of interpretation of Holy Scripture rests with God, or to be more precise, the whole Trinity of the persons. This is the most important point in understanding Polanus' doctrine of scripture. Hearing Scripture is Hearing Christ. Further, to hear Christ is to learn the wisdom and goodness of the Father, who sent Christ. Finally, one cannot understand Scripture except the Spirit teaches him. Each person of the Holy Trinity exercises some
office in relation to Scripture; the Father as the gracious giver of the Son, the Son as himself the reality and judge of scripture, the Spirit as the teacher of God's truth. The interpreter meditates upon Scripture not in order to invent an argument from it or even an argument in its behalf, but because of a firm persuasion that in the Holy Spirit he discovers in Christ the Word, the actual sense and use of scripture's words. In prayer to God, from true faith, he asks for a pure and humble heart and good conscience in understanding the sense of Scripture. Also, the interpreter must be converted, must have a love and desire for truth and be instructed by the confessions of faith concerning faith and good words. In summary, he must believe in faith so that he might understand the full significance of God speaking.  

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35 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber I, 106(2)A-K.
The Doctrine of God
Orderly Thinking and the Doctrine of God:

Amandus Polanus is devoted to orderly thinking. The question about his use of semi-Ramist methodology is whether this scheme simply organizes the articles of theology or forces the material into a tightly locked series of logically compelling propositions.

In the first book of the *Syntagma* Polanus explores the basic principles of sound theology and the central role of scripture for theological statement. In the second book of the *Syntagma* he discusses the attributes and essence of God. After sound definition, one expects from the Ramist method a distribution of the parts which constitute the definition. Christian theology consists of two parts: faith and good works. One must consider what must be believed and subsequently what must be done. This division is not arbitrary. It is biblical, it is in keeping with sound principles of rhetoric, and de-

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1 Polanus, *Syntagma*, Liber II, 130(1)B.


3 Polanus, *Syntagma*, Liber II, 130(2)C: "Tum quia theologioa est exorum, qua in Verbo Dei scripto lati sunt fusa & frequenter iterata, methodica collectio, dispositio, systema, syntagma, interpretatio & explicatio; certi de nullis aliis rebus tractare debet...."
scriptive of theology's fundamental purpose. 4

This division could as well be called acknowledgment and worship, or doctrine and good works. In calling the first part of theology 'de fide' Polanus comments: "Haec pars jure prima est, quia prius est Deum nosse; consequens, colere. Deinde ut fides bona opera antecedit, ita etiam doctrina fidei antecedit doctrinam bonorum operum. Praterea ex Dei cognitione pendet judicium rectum de agendis. 5

The doctrine of faith consists in examining God (de Deo) and the church (de Ecclesia). Polanus finds this pattern of theological division widespread in the Christian tradition. His list of witnesses run from the Fourth Council of Toledo, Ignatius, Irenaeus Martyr, Lactantius, Augustine and the Reformed theologians Theodore Beza, Ursinus, and Zanchius. 6 The most important Patristic source is Gregory the Great, for the essence of his viewpoint is

4 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 130(2)D: "Omnium autem practicarum disciplinarum finis est non sola cognitio, sed operatio: ita etiam Theologiae finis non est nuda & ociosa speculatio, sed praxis, sed operatio ad quam homo est a Deo conditur, ad quam a Christo redemptus, ad quam a Spiritu Sancto sanctificatur, nempe glorificatio Dei & beatitudo hominis senpeterna; illa quidem ut finis summus, principalis, ultimus; haec vero ut finis subordinatus, secundarius, subalternus."

5 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 131(1)E.

6 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 131(1-2)A-K.
echoed in Polanus' chapter on theological principles (chapters vi, vii) and throughout the *Syntagma*. "Nam cum beatitudo nostra sit communio cum Deo, fide ad eam pervenimus, & bona opera nostra testimonia sunt nos habere communionem cum Deo. Ergo etiam duae erunt partes, de fide & operibus constituendae disciplinae illius quae nos ad Deum ducit."  

The Ramist method gives Polanus a framework for orderly thinking which is consistent with the biblical material as Polanus understands it. The analytic character of the Ramist logic, however, carries the stern rationalism associated with Protestant orthodoxy. The problem is not with 'division' as such, but with the logical constraints which one proposition places upon the emergence of subsequent propositions. 

7 Polanus, *Syntagma*, Liber II, 131(1)C.  

8 Nygren, Anders, *Meaning and Method*. Trans. Philip S. Watson. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972. "...rightness in axiomatic argumentation is decided solely by consistency, and consistency has to do exclusively with the relation that obtains between axioms and inferences. In other words, we remain within the system and have therefore no possibility of judging it as a whole with respect to its relation to others that are formally of equal standing." p. 191.
God and His Aseity:

The form of God's existence is unique and self-generating, subsisting in the three persons of the Trinity, but never divided and composed of parts. Polanus believes such a definition of God is biblical and the expression of revelation. He is certain that one describes God only insofar as God manifests himself (quatenus nobis est patefactus). One cannot define God but can give an accounting of the logic of God's work (Dei ipsius Logica opus fuerit).

Polanus rejects the Aristotelian method of predication in regard to the name of God. One does not conceive of God as a universal idea or general notion. The subjecthood of God is neither genus or species but 'individuum tantum', alone indivisible, altogether one.

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9 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 134(1)F: "Deus, est Spiritus increatus, exsistens a supso, unus essentia, ac triuus (sic) personis, Pater, Filius & Spiritus Sanctus."

10 Ibid.

11 Gilby, Thomas, glossary definitions, Summa Theologiae (Aquinas), vol. 2, 1a, 2-11, p. 233. A predicable is defined as one of five types of universal ideas, viz. genus, species or definition, difference, property, and accident; one of five ways, therefore, in which predicates can be related to a subject.
When God is called 'spiritus', it is not as a 'locum generis praedicabilis'. 12

God is not composite. His essence is not differentiated as we differentiate the essence of one man from the class 'man'. Rather, God's essence is the singularity of his form of existence. Both Athanasius and Tertullian are used by Polanus to emphasize this orthodox teaching. The oneness of God's essence is expressed in his three persons (tresformae). 13

God is the substantial or essential Form for all theological discourse. God's person and his work, God's intertrinitarian activity, all derive from his simplicity and pure form. The coherence and integrity of revelation are grounded on this archetypal reality. "Deus enim proprie loquendo formam quidam essentialem seu substantialem formam, hoc est, essentiam divinam notat, non officium, non finem, non adjunctum. Est Deus forma, sed non in materia; verum simplicissima ac purissima forma, ab omni materia segregata." 14

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12 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 134(2)D.
13 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 134(2)E.
14 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 134(2)F.
God is pure activity (purissimus actus), existing out of himself, willing to duplicate his own life (autousia). This majestic conception of God's aseity forms the basis for Polanus' description of God's primary essential properties.

In God's perfect form of being one finds no difference between essence and existence. God is the ens perfectissimum. God is the first being as well as the most perfect being (summum ens). His form of being always differs from that of the creature. "Essentia & substantia similiter different in creaturis, quia in substantia essentia continetur & praeter essentiam epsam quacunque naturaliter inharent essentia, at in divinis pro eodem usurpantur." 15

This absolute difference in being continually distinguishes the creator from the creature, establishes the basis for considering the act of creation extra se from the being of the Creator. The plenitude of God's being is the gift bestowed in grace through faith upon the creature. The hypostatic union between Creator and Redeemer effects and forms the basis for communion, in goodness (Bk I, chapter V) and in plenitude of being, between Creator and creature. 16

15 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 135(2)1.
16 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber I, 9(1)K.
On the Names of God and Guidelines of the Essential Properties:

Polanus' discussion of essential attribution is mediated by a set of axioms. The axioms are a common guideline to what is true both of the Divine Names and those perfections of being assimilated to God.

The attributes of God are those statements of witness in Holy Scripture by which God himself manifests himself to mankind.\textsuperscript{17} In Scripture one finds the Divine Mind. In response to this witness to God's self-revelation, all intellectual conceptions are molded, guided and informed. Yet Polanus discovers in John Damascene a necessary warning: God is ineffable and incomprehensible. No one has ever known God in his nature, except he to whom God reveals himself.\textsuperscript{18} Any talk about the essential properties of God must remain aware of the gracious accommodations of God to finite and human capacity for speech

\textsuperscript{17} Polanus, \textit{Syntagma}, Liber II, 137(2)F, 140(1)E, 140(2)D-H: The Old Testament Names for God are El, Elohim, Shaddai, Adonai, Helim.

and understanding. 19

Polanus holds that the divine properties may be either affirmative or negative. The affirmative attributes are those which point to God's perfect being, "...in se & autorem omnium perfectionum in creaturis...." 20

Speaking of God as 'Yahweh', as 'wise' or 'good' or 'powerful' is affirmative attribution. One may also use negative attribution, through which the imperfections of the creature are removed from God (a Deo removet) and God is described as in-finite, im-mense, in-corrutable, or im-mortal.

A certain attribute may refer to God alone (attributa divina propria) and may be referred to God kata analogian, in which a shared term may have analogical meaning.

Polanus provides a set of axioms as a guide to understanding the process of attribution.

(1) The essential attributes are most truly (realiter) the essence of God himself. They cannot be described as being ab essentia (God being only their source) or inter se (God possessing a kind of internal conflict). Differentiation of the tributes is congruent with God's unity.

19 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 137(2)I. "Vox qualibet finita est & humano captui accomodata: qualibet quatem proprietas Dei essentialis est infinita & omnium creaturum captum prorsus exedit."

20 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 137(2)H.
(2) Nothing, therefore, in God can be distinguished within his essence because everything which is in God is one, indivisible, and simple.

(3) One must not confuse the attribute as it exists in re from that which is "nostra conceptione et comprehensione...." Gabriel Biel and Aquinas both recognize a differential between the reality of the attribute as such and its reality in our conception and understanding.

(4) The qualities of God are not 'parts' of the divine essence but are 'tota et integra' to his nature. God's essence and his attributes (essentiales Dei proprietatis) are not divided but one and the same.

(5) The attributes are themselves inseparable, in reality.

(6) God's essence cannot be separated from his work. God's essence is actus simplex, the simple act by which God lives, understands, wills and loves.

(7) The separation of time and eternity is not a sign of disjunction between God's being and activity. If God is 'patient' then it must be seen in connection with the eternal reality of God. "Sic patientia Dei in aeternum, quia perpetua sic moderabitur iram suam adversus diabolos & homines reprobatos, ut illam nunquam sit effusurus omnem in ipsos, ne in nihilum rediguntur. 21

(8) The attributes are not "posteriores to God's essence.

(9) The essential attributes are not present within God as an arbitrary happening (formae accidentales) but as a fundamental and archetypal form (idea & formae essentiales). God is good is a statement about God's very nature (qualis est

21 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 141(11)1.
Deus, sua essentia talis est")

(10) Essential attributes are constituted by their complete participation in the divine nature, as "actus purissimus & simplicissimus."

(11) These attributes are qualities by which God is himself. God is goodness and power because they derive from the reality of God himself.

The Essential Properties: Simplicity, Perfection, Infinity, Immutability:

The essential properties of the first order are those declarations of God's essence which belong absolutely and as such to God alone. They are called incommunicable attributes in being qualities which are not shared in any way with the creation.

Our discussion of these properties will be limited to those items which sustain our basic hypothesis. Yet we believe that this doctrine of God's essential properties points to weaknesses in Polanus' conception of a theological system.

22Ibid.

23Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 141(2)D: "Proprietates Dei essentiales primi ordinis, sunt quae de Deo velut a Priori decurtur ut est, hoc est, quae essentiam Dei declarant ut est in se absolute, eiq; soli insunt & tribuuntur secundam essentiam, actum & vim; ac proinde sunt simpliciter incommunicabilis."
(1) In the first place, Polanus shows great difficulty in integrating philosophical reasoning with the biblical material. These attributes in philosophical garb may develop from contemplations about the revealed Divine name (chapter vi). Yet in supporting biblical evidence for a discussion of simplicity, for an example, is very limited. John 4:24 is cited in support of God's spiritual nature, a nature not limited by corporeality. Polanus' practical application of the doctrine for the Christian life is very limited, even exegetically trite. Because God is simple he loves simplicity, sincerity and a just heart. Because God is simple he is sincere about his promises; he is not a fraud. The simplicity of God is supported by Aristotelian philosophy rather than scripture. God is simple, not composite, integral in form and substance. To interpret God's simplicity, Polanus must introduce an Aristotelian philosophical problem, i.e., the struggle between potentia activa and potentia passiva. He concludes that God's nature is always pure activity (actus purissimus).

(2) The essential attributes are abstract and formal rather

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24 Polanus, *Syntagma*, Liber II, 142(2)I.
25 Polanus, *Syntagma*, Liber II, 142(1)B-I.
than sufficiently dynamic. They fulfill the logical need for the absolute metaphysical priority of God. Further, they still carry the shadow of the Reformed insight into the majesty and sovereignty of God. The formal-ontological constitute a vital part of God's nature. The question which these attributes raise however is whether they are as dynamic as the revelation of God himself demands. The discussion of these attributes tend to separate God in his Being from God in his Acts. Certainly Polanus treats both these aspects of God's indivisible nature. Yet the semi-Ramist method and the Aristotelian philosophy tend to create a division between being and act. The essential attributes are creations of the Platonic-Aristotelian idea of perfect being and are fairly subject to Barth's criticism that Polanus' conception of essential attribution is semi-nominalist. 26

(3) The essential properties establish a philosophical substratum which runs through systematic theology. God's

26 Barth, Karl, Church Dogmatics, II, 1, p. 334-5; Barth characterizes Polanus' essential attribution as semi-nominalist. "The fiction which is concealed behind this consideration consists in the fact that, owing to the dazzling effect of the Platonic-Aristotelian idea of being, in which men thought they had attained knowledge of God, it was felt necessary to ascribe a much higher dignity to the idea of the one as against that of the many—so much higher, in fact, that in the application of this idea of the one it was thought possible to speak of God proprie, as though even in this case God is not spoken of respectu nostri, pro nostri captus ratione..."
immensity is the substratum for describing ubiquity. Ubiquity itself is essential to Polanus' understanding of the sacraments and the role of Christology. 27 The perfection of God tends to form a substratum for the whole doctrine of creation. 28 The sufficiency and perfection of God underwrites creation itself through a theory of primary causality. All things are contained within the perfection of God's full and sufficient creative being. If theology, however, is not to become another expression of metaphysics then a great effort must center upon integrating the nature of the hypostatic union between Creator and Redeemer with the whole discussion of theological items. The Being of God cannot be described within the constraints of ontology. The Being of God must be known and described as an expression of Christ's own being. The being of God in the essential properties is not the general case and the being of Christ, the specific fulfillment. If creation is always the work of the Logos, then a case for underwriting its integrity and meaning becomes a Trinitarian exercise.

27 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 146(2)G-151(1)A.  
28 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 144(1)C.
These introductory comments to the essential properties of God will prepare the reader to evaluate the impact of the doctrine of God upon the development of a theological system and raise some critical issues for the internal coherence of several other theological items.

The Simplicity of God:

Simplicity is a description of God's uniqueness and singularity. God is not composite, divided or multiple or does anything as a matter of chance (accidence). God is 'tota et integra', not moved, changed or affected by anything outside his essence. 29

The simplicity of God is, first, God's pure activity. There is no unrealized potency within God's nature. Everything is contained in God's nature, eternally and infinitely.

Secondly, the simplicity of God is the integrating power between the abstract and the concrete reality. Whatever is predicated of God, formally and abstractly, such as God being called 'goodness' or 'life' is completely integrated with what is said in concreto, God is good and God is life. The very nature of God is to be active in expres-

29 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 141(2)E.
singing and living, as it were, who he is. "Quia non tantum vivens, lucidus, plenus charitate est, sed etiam vita, lux & charitas ipsa, hoc est, non constat vita, luce, charitate, per quam vivat, lucidus sit, diligat; sed de ipso seu sua essentia vivit, lux est & charitas." 30

Third, the simplicity of God is the ground for the integrity of His subsistence. Polanus uses Tertullian to describe the way in which God as actus purissimus is constituted by his own quiddity. 31 Polanus uses John Damascene in confirmation of this viewpoint, but passes over the reference without full development. Damascene asserts, in a complex passage, that the essence of Christ is itself simple, though his subsistence as the incarnate son is compound. We say that it is essential, moreover, not in the sense of two natures resulting in one compound nature, but in the sense of a true union of them in one compound subsistence of the Son of God, and we hold that their

30 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 141(2)H.

essential difference is preserved." 32

Polanus certainly seems to argue that God's being what he is, i.e. loving or living, is an expression of who he is in his subsistence. God lives out of his essence, through his subsistence, rather than living through other powers or purposes. His essence is all encompassing but an ontologically simple reality. This view of God's simplicity provides Polanus the ground for claiming no division between the undivided essence and unity of God and the subsistence within which the Three Persons live.

In summary, God is simple in se, in personis, and in operationibus. 33

The Perfection of God:

God is the exemplar of all goodness. As the exemplar, he is the cause of all perfections both of nature and of


33 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 142(2)D. Polanus concurs with Justin Martyr (ad Orthodoxos): "Iam Deus est timas non compositione partiam, sed coexistentia personarum."
He effects the perfection of everything, in Himself.

God is perfect, in being completely sufficient. His sufficiency is expressed through his communicative power ("...quod potest seipsum communicare...") and in his freedom for creation ("...alia sibi similia facere...").

God is perfect from all eternity (ab aeterno), in se; this is not a sterile or abstract fact. The work of redemption and the work of creation are not addenda to God's essence. They are an integral part of God's nature.

One finds in the process of primary causality (creation ex nihilo) and secondary causality (provid via media) God's perfection moving outside the ordinary causal nexus. Everything which one might find in the perfections of natural things, can be found a priori in God. Even all perfect possibilities are contained in God's nature. God has in his possession this perfect

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34 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 143(1)D: "Perfectio Dei, est essentialis Dei proprietas, per quam intelligitur, essentiae divinae plane nihil deesse, sed omnia ipsam integerrimo modo ab aeterno in aeternum atque etiam perfectiones omnium rerum in se habere, atque aliis esse exemplar ac causam omnis perfectionis, Naturae & Gratiae."

35 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 143(1)E.

36 Ibid.

37 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 143(1)I.
creative power. "Deus ratione suae perfectionis eminenter continet perfectiones creaturarum... Omnes enim effectus sunt in causis efficientibus vertute, qua sit ut causae tales esse dicantur, quales ipsarum effectus...." 38

Polanus points out that the perfection of God elicits our worship, for in God's perfection is His claim to be the true God. Yet the truth of God is not sterile or monolithic. The generation of the Son, and the procession of the Spirit are essential aspects of God's perfection. This self originating intention for communication forms the basis of relation between God and man. This 'similiter relatio in divinis' is God's gift, 'maximae perfectionis in nobis'. The perfection of God in his own nature, becomes the occasion for relation between the persons of the Trinity and the creation.

The Infinity of God:

God is infinite in his eternity and immensity, in his freedom from time and space. Infinity is a property of the first order because nothing comparable can be said of creatures. 39 In being without beginning and end in

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38 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 144(1) C.
39 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 144(2) I.
time, God is eternal. In being undefined or limited by place, God is omnipresent. In being incomparable in power or understanding, God is omnipotent and omniscient.

Polanus uses Aristotelian philosophy to establish the absolute and infinite difference in quantity, quality and individuality between the supreme being and all creaturely beings. The only interesting observation in his lists of reasons for God's infinity deals with the infinite merit of Jesus Christ, per se. 40

God's nature has no beginning nor end. God is before time (omni tempori antiquior) and after time (omni fine posterior) and cannot be described by any process of succession but only as totus simul. 41 Eternity is a true description of God's time while temporality limits and defines man's life. Polanus reminds us, when speaking of God, "Deum nullo tempore finiri." 42

So far as the Divine nature is concerned, there is

40 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 145(1)F: "Quomodo vero infinitae est virtutis? Non per & propter humanitatem, sed per & propter infinitam Deitatem, cui humanitas Christi est hypostaticae unita. Sic non sentimus Deum esse infinitium, sed per se & suapte natura est infinitus: quia est primum principiunt univoce, effectivum rerum omnium...."

41 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 145(2)H.

42 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 145(2)A.
a principium ordinis, in which the Son is generated from the Father. The reality cannot be described as excluding or opposing eternity: "Principium vero temporis seu secundum tempus competit aliis rebus creatis, quae cum tempore & in tempore existere coeperunt." 43 Polanus' contrast is between the principium ordinis (descriptive of God's mode of existence but not of time as a mode of duration and succession) and a principium temporis (a mode of flux, interminability, and lack of duration). 44 Boethius' conception of eternity suffices Polanus: "...ea duratio infinite & interminabilis, qua tota simul est fine ulla innovatione & successione..." 45

God's mode of existence, therefore, is a) continua, simul tota, nullam habens in se successionem and b) semper existens. 46 God is the first mover, who moves all others while Himself being unmoved, and as such is the Prime Cause of all.

In a positive sense, Polanus' discussion of God's eternity is an effort to describe complete otherness, in

43 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 145(2)C.
44 Ibid.
45 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 145(2)E.
46 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II 145(2)H.
living without beginning, end or change. Yet his dependence upon Aristotelian physics tends to make of God's relation to the world a static matter, in which causality is the major mediating force. The lack of Trinitarian interpretation creates a kind of hiatus within Polanus' theological system.

The Immensity of God:

The primary property of immensity has the greatest impact upon the theological system of Amandus Polanus. This property describes God's presence and God's mastery of time and space. God's ubiquity is central to the hypostatic union between Father and Son and crucial to the meaning of the Eucharist. God's immensity raises the greatest question about the Aristotelian philosophy which must find in the world some 'container' for God's nature. The contribution of Athanasius and Hilary is most apparent in the formation of this doctrine. The word, claims Athanasius, is not contained by the body of Christ. It is the word which claims and contains the body. 47

The clear dichotomy between time and eternity is not present in Polanus' discussion of ubiquity. Polanus' dia-

47 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 149(2)D.
lectic between time and eternity is largely negative; his dialectic between God's immensity and the limitations of space and location is affirmative, largely because of the strong Christological emphasis. The first presentation, though an important theological problem, is framed in the theoretical language of Boethius and Aristotle. The presentation on immensity by contrast, is guided by Athanasius, John Damascene, Justin Martyr and has a strong Christological interest.

Polanus' views of God's immensity can be summarized in several summarizing paragraphs.

(1) God is ubiquitous. His essence is being altogether who he is, completely who he is in one place and in all places. The magnitude of his essential nature is not defined by extension, division or multiplication. God's lordship over space is an expression of his simple and undivided essential nature. Polanus central slogan for God's ubiquity belongs to the Greek Patristic tradition: "...omnia continens, a nulla contenta..." 48

(2) Ubiquity is an incommunicable property of God's essence and as such is a full expression of his simplicity. Polanus calls ubiquity the "...repletivo essendi modo..." 49 God is in all places fully as who he is: "...totus in

48 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 146(2)H.
49 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 146(2)K.
(3) Polanus believes that the ubiquity of God's nature is not transferred in a generalized way in our understanding of Christ. The substance-accidence sacramental scheme in the late Medieval Roman church was based upon a distinction between God's essence and his operation. Just as the soul, as an illustration, is not more a soul 'in toto corpore' than it is in the several parts of the body such as the heart, head or feet, neither is God in his essence more in heaven than on earth. 51 The Lutheran ubiquitous err, Polanus thought, in confusing the two natures of Christ, divine and human. They tend to transfer ubiquity to the humanity of Christ, thereby dividing the full reality of Christ's divinity and humanity. The principle for interpreting ubiquity is based on the essential nature of God. Statements about Christ's body which try to identify his temporal body as ubiquitous rest upon the assumption that statements about his body can be made interchangeable with statements about Christ's person. 52

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50 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 147(1)A.

51 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 147(1)D.

52 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 148(2)B.
Polanus' most revealing argument about ubiquity is in his reflection on the hypostatic union. Some argued that the hypostatic union gave ubiquity to Christ in the flesh. From the very moment of his conception in the womb of Mary, Christ was ubiquitous according to this account. Polanus believes this is absurd and the emphasis misplaced. This view does violence against the gospel narrative.

Quod cum viderant quidam adversarii, non solum id absurdum concesserunt, sed etiam verissimum esse contenderunt, tota historia sacra de Christo, & symbolo fidei repugnante. Nam historia sacra de Christo docet, corpus Christi conceptu esse, non ubique, sed in utero virginus Mariae: natum esse, non ubique, sed Bethlehem in stabulo....

Polanus believes that the personal union within which one understands the body of Christ is a 'factum simplicissimum', a reality completely spiritual and infinite in its scope. The complete human nature of Christ is united with the complete persona in the Logos but as a reality extra humanitatem. This is the orthodoxy of Athanasius and the Nicene settlement.

53 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 149(1)C.

54 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 149(2); For an interesting concurrence see one of the following: Calvin, Institutes, II, 13,4; Heidelberg Catechism, Q. 48; Augustine, City of God, Bk IX; Aquinas, Summa, III, q 5 a 2
Polanus resumes the strenuous debate between Lutheran and Reformed theologians about the nature of the enhypostatic union. The Lutherans accused the Reformed theologians of an 'extra calvinisticum', beyond and outside the humanity of Christ. As Barth describes it, the Calvinists with their extra, "...did not want the reality of the logos asarkos abolished or suppressed in the reality of the logos ensarkos." 55 The Lutherans had argued for the existence of the Word solely in the human existence of Christ, raising the question not only as to whether the 'enfleshment' of the word could be advanced in an exclusive sense, but whether there is a 'perichoreis' between the Word of God and the human being of Christ. They questioned whether a reversal of the enhypostatic

Esp. Athanasius, De Incarnatione: "But what is most wonderful is that, being the Word, he was not contained by anyone, but rather himself contained everything. And as he is in all creation, he is in essence outside the universe but in everything by his power, ordering everything and extending his providence over everything. And giving life to all, separately and together, he contains the universe and is not contained, but in his Father only he is complete in everything. So also being in a human body and giving it life himself, he accordingly gives life to everything, and was both in all and outside all. And although he was known by his body through his works, yet he was not invisible by his action on the universe." Athanasius, De Incarnatione, ed and trans. by Robert W. Thompson, p. 175.

55 Barth, Karl, Church Dogmatics, I, 2, p. 168.
statement is proper, that is, if the humanity only has reality in and through Christ's human nature. 56

(4) Polanus discovers three guidelines toward understanding the Divine presence in the Eucharist.

(a) One has to do with the spiritual or heavenly body of Christ in the eucharist. Attention is centered on the risen Lord, not on the elements themselves. 57

(b) The spiritual benefits of the sacraments, forgiveness of sins, justification and regeneration to life eternal, are received in union through faith with the Risen Christ. 58

(c) One does not worship the body present in the sacrament but dwells upon the grace of God in Christ's crucifixion and the benefits it bestows. 59

56 Barth, I, 2, p. 162: "The unity of God and man in Christ is, then, the act of the Logos in assuming human being. His becoming and therefore the thing that human being encounters in this becoming of the Logos, is an act of God in the person of the Word.... It is the same with God's gracious presence in the word preached and in the sacrament (so far as by that is meant the outward creaturely sign of word and elements), and with God's gracious presence in the hearts of those chosen and called by faith. Unity with God in the former case means that man's speech that water, bread and wine, are real not only through God, but as inseparably bound to God, and similarly in the latter case, that believing man may live not only through God but inseparably bound to God.... Therefore He (Jesus Christ) does not only live through God and with God. He is Himself God. Nor is He autonomous and self-existent. His reality, existence and being is wholly and absolutely that of God himself, the God who acts in His Word. His manhood is only the predicate of His Godhead, or better and more concretely, it is only the predicate, assumed in inconceivable condescension, of the Word acting upon us, the Word who is the Lord."

57 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 150(1)D.
58 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 150(1)E.
59 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 150(1)I.
The Immutability of God:

God's essential nature is unchangeable in respect to his decrees and promises. Nothing apart from his own nature is able to change or transform his purposes. No passion or corruption can effect God's nature. Decrees and promises are guaranteed because God is constant and does not change his eternal will. 60 (Romans 11, Hebrews 6:17, 18)

Polanus deals with two aspects of God's nature which recur in other places. The first concerns the nature of God's fundamental intention concerning his world. Does not the work of Divine mercy conflict with the precepts and decrees, suggesting a real cleavage in God's nature? Do not general conditions of change effect a change in God's basic decision about the world. Polanus believes not: "Deus enim non pendet ex conditione mutabili: nam etsi conditio annexa promissionibus et comminationibus

60 Polanus, Partitiones Theologicae, Liber Primus, p. 29. The decree of God is defined as follows: "...opus essentiale internum, nempe divinae voluntatis propositum, quo ab aeterno apud se tum constituit, ut fierent quae-cunque facta sunt & fiunt & adhuc fient: tum singula ordinavit in suum finem & (sic!) media ipsa per quae ad eum est perveniendum." The general decree pertains to all created things, in the maintenance of their being while the special decree pertains specially to those ordained from all creation to a determined end or standing, extra naturalem vitam.
(a threatening) divinis quam maxime sit mutabilis respectu naturae, voluntatis, judicii sensusque himinum: tamen eadem immutabilis, certissima atque immota est respectu consilii & decreti divini, quo ut omnia futura certo sunt determinata, ita etiam conditio illa." 61

The difference between law and gospel, between old and new covenant communities is not in respect to the changing counsels of the Divine mind: "Qua propter illorum mutatio non est consilii divini mutatio, sed executio." 62

The second issue of immutability involves the nature of the Incarnation. Did God change in the event of the Incarnation? If being a creature involves changes, then in the event of incarnation, God must have become subject to change. The enfleshment of the Son of God was not a divine mutation, claims Polanus, but a condescension in which God, remaining what He was, assumed what he was not.

Nam Deus manifestatus in carne, mansit quod erat, & assumsit quod non habebat; non mutatione divinae naturae suae in humanam, nec transfusione proprietatum humanitatis in Deitatem, aut proprietatem Deitatis in human-

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61 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 152(1)G.
62 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 152(1)K.
tatem; sed copulatione humanae naturae nostrae cum divina sua in unitatem personae. 63

Barth believes that the older orthodox fathers were right in stressing that the Incarnation could not mean an alternation in the divine being, a self-declension by God, or a transformation of the Divine nature into another nature. 64

Polanus believes that God's unchangeableness in his constancy in regard to his promises and counsel, his constancy in his role as Creator and maintainer of creation. 65

The Properties of the Second Order: Life, Immortality, Beatitude and Glory:

The essential properties of the second order differ from those of the first (infinity, simplicity, etc.) in several important ways. These second order properties are derived a posteriori, those of the first order are spoken of God, per se; the secondary attributes are incommunicable as they are in God and communicable according to analogy as they are found in similitudes of creaturely

63 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 153(1)H.
64 Barth, Karl, Church Dogmatics, II, 1, pp. 515-516.
65 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 153(2)G.
perfections. The basis of the analogy is the absolute priority of God as Perfect Being. Both creature and Creator may have life or beatitude but the Creator possesses these in absolute perfection.

The secondary attributes are found in God essentially, whereas they only describe a derivative reality in the creature. In God they are real according to his nature, in the creature only through participation in the Supreme source of being. The creature may be called "living" or "wise" but God is in himself Life and Wisdom. These attributes, in short, are archetypal to God and ectypal to man.

We have chosen four secondary attributes—God's beatitude, will, truth and freedom—in order to show the comprehensive impact which this doctrine has upon Polanus' theological system. God's beatitude is an occasion for developing the summum bonum concept propounded in the chapter on theological principles. The will of God provides the undergirding for Polanus' discussion of the decrees and predestination. God's truth establishes Polanus' indebtedness to Scotus and gives a good picture

66 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 154(1)B.

67 Ibid.
of Polanus' epistemology. Finally, God's freedom describes the fundamental importance of the sovereign and transcendent God to every aspect of doctrinal development.

The Beatitude of God:

The happiness or beatitude of God is an attribution by which one links God's essential nature to the 'gifting' of human nature, in and through the Holy Spirit. For God's beatitude is the exemplar of man's beatitude; the fount of grace from which man receives the gift of communion with God and thereby finds realization of his own fundamental nature. God is the source and possessor of all Good, but free from all that is evil; sufficient in Himself, content with an altogether full, original and good Being. 68

68 For the integrative scope of the concept of beatitude or beatification, please refer to the following in the Syntagma: beatification of the elect, pp. 518-519, the beatitude of the rational creatures, p. 7, and in relation to the Summum Bonum, p. 3; the theologia beatorum as a fundamental distinction, p. 11f; and beatification after this life, p. 518; please note also, discussion of the Summum bonum in Chapter II of this thesis.

"Beatitudo Dei, est essentialis eius proprietatis, per quam per se quaque natura, semper ab omnibus malis liber, omnibus bonis affluens, ea perfectissime cognoscens, sibi-que sufficiens & seipso contentus esse & nostris bonis non eque neque ea appeteu significatur." Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 135(2)I.
God's blessedness has a true, perfect underived quality by which it is not compared etymologically with beatitude or happiness by the same kind of process used by Aristotle in the *Nicomachean Ethics* (Book VII). Neither is God's beatitude according to 'habitus' but altogether in actu. Aristotle is used again for this comparison when he defines beatitude as "...anima actionem secundum virtutem perfectam, hoc est, virtute undique absolute congruentem...." 69 God's beatitude is only understood as fundamental to his nature for God is 'ipse sua beatitude'.

Man's blessedness, therefore, is derived from this archetypum of every happiness. In communion with God man finds his own greatest good. "Deus etiam dicitur beatitudo nostra: quia est objectum cujus fruizione beati sumus, quia est autor & conservator beatitudines, & quia in ipso sumus, in quo etiam fruimur ipso." 70

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69 Polanus, *Syntagma*, Liber II, 156(1)C.
70 Polanus, *Syntagma*, Liber II, 156(1)G.
The Will of God:

If one were speaking generally of the 'will', then one could divide that phenomenological inquiry into three parts: the faculty of willing, the act of the faculty of willing (appetitionem intellectualem), and the object of the will or what is willed. 71 This approach is not useful in describing the fundamental essence of God because it suggests that God is composite, that such a faculty (willing) may be separated from his own nature. The will of God, however, is a fundamental action or expression of God's own nature, an act or attribution which is altogether one (unica), through which he wills the good as the purpose of creation. It is an expression of God's being from all eternity; indeed, it is the one continuous activity of God. God's willing is an expression of His freedom, a freedom which knows no constraint or compulsion. Though God's willing is the cause of all that is, God is not moved by any purpose outside of that which is fundamental to his own nature. It is God's will however that is itself the very expression or norm of justice. The will of God, also, is an expression of God's undivided activity,

71 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 160(2)C.
that by which who He is, is continually conjoined with what He does; the works of creation and redemption are identified from all eternity with what is fundamental to God's nature. 72 Most importantly, for one's understanding of the Holy Trinity, God's will is equally operative in all three persons of the Trinity.

Willing in God is an expression of His inter-personal relationship, that activity in which the Divine persons all may be said to 'know', or to 'do', or to 'be' substantive expressions of the Divine will. This communication ad intra is the basis of a clearer understanding of many problems in Christian theology; for it describes the sense in which God's will is active in Jesus, and in which Jesus may be said to share or participate ontologically in the Father's will (John 6:38-40, Matthew 26:39).

"Tum in Christi persona voluntas divina quae eadem est cum Patris voluntate est discernendu a voluntate humana." 73

God's willing may either be an efficient or effecting activity, that is, the way in which He accomplishes

72 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 160(2)G: "Voluntas Dei non praecedet opera Dei interna, velut generationem, spirationem, cognoscere, velle, amare: at opera externa velut creatione, redemptione nostram & alia, praecessit ab aeterno."

73 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 160(2)K.
or works out the good; or it may be a **permissive** activity, an indulgence (Tertullian), as Polanus describes it:

"...secundum quam (appointed) finit Deus Aliquid a creaturis fieri, sive bonum aut indifferentis sit, sive malum culpae seu peccatum." 74

The will of God may be considered **absolutely** or **conditionally**. The will of God absolutely speaking is that Divine fiat, at once simple and absolute, in which God is the supreme and first cause of everything. God's absolute will comprehends in one act both 'velle' and 'nolle', willing and not willing, in the sense of not wishing something to be the case. It is either from the word of God or from his works that one draws this absolute conclusion: that God's willing is sovereign, giving to things their necessity: (Hac omnia fiunt necessario: sic ut haec voluntas sit rerum necessitas." 75 It is a willing in which he predestines to eternal life or to death "...quoa voluit...", whosoever he wishes.

The conditional will of God results from the adjoining a set of conditions to this absolute will. In these conditions God sets forth what is pleasing, what is forbidden,

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74 Polanus, *Syntagma*, Liber II, 161(1)A.

75 Polanus, *Syntagma*, Liber II, 161(1)D.
what is to be done, what is to be omitted by man. These conditions are signs of God's will, his action in commanding, prohibiting, permitting, determining and completing (executing).

The will of God may be revealed or concealed (occulta), claims Polanus. 76 When God's will is revealed, it is rendered visible either by the word of God or as the result of an action. The antecedent will of God is the theoretic or speculative sense in which God wills to serve everyone and establish a kingly claim over all creation. The consequent rule of God, on the other hand, is established in God's imparting recompense or inflicting penalties on those who thwart or rebel against His will.

The antecedent-consequent division (in the Ramist sense) finds a parallel in the second expression of God's revealed will: the law and Gospel. In its explication one finds one of the least satisfying aspects of the older

76 Cf. comparison to Damascene, John, On The Orthodox Faith, Book 2: "One should also bear in mind that God antecedently wills all to be saved and to attain to His kingdom. For he did not form us to be chastised, but, because He is good, that we might share in His goodness. Yet because He is just, He does not wish to punish sinners. So, the first is called antecedent will and approval, and it has Him as its cause; the second is called consequent will and permission, and it has ourselves as its cause. This last is twofold: that which is by dispensation and for our instruction and salvation, and that which is abandonment to absolute chastisement, as we have said...." The Fathers of the Church, vol. 37, 262-3.
orthodox theology: the doctrine of the decrees. For the Scriptures reveal, says Polanus, what God has decreed from all eternity, and what he required of us (cf. John 6:29, 40). One finds here a tendency to divide God's saving activity from God's redeeming grace, or to put it in a different way, a tendency to set a general scheme of activity by an absolute and perfect Being against the triune, revealed, gracious activity of the Father toward the Son through the Holy Spirit. The doctrine of the decrees threatens the older orthodox systematicians with the restrictions of the formal requirements of metaphysics, rather than the more suggestive but multi-relational model of the Holy Trinity.

The will of God, continuing with Polanus' axioms, is an activity deriving necessarily from God's own nature, the very expression of His own goodness and glory. But this is a free willing, fundamentally by which the Spirit is sent in grace, so, too, expressive of every aspect of God's being. The Scriptures therefore, are the freedom of God in manifesting Himself and are the embodiment of what is in fact God's decision 'erga nos', toward us, and 'de nobis', concerning us.

Finally, in the decrees and promises of Scripture, God does not will to create evil. God Himself is the sum-
mum bonum, who loves and approves of man his creature. He is not the God who wills evil but the God who judges the world and punishes man's sin. This derives not from an abstraction as much as from God's fundamental intention to bring man to the goodness for which he is created and of whom God is the Highest Reality. "Quapropter voluntas Dei est primaria infligens causa omnis poenae: & omne malum poene est a Deo summo bono: unde etiam mors peccatoris est a Deo volente & juste infligente eam." 77

The negative purpose of punishment and the positive vision of the Good, causes one to conclude that Polanus wishes to use the basic Augustinian metaphysic of good and evil to the end that God's will be a restoration of the creatures subjecthood. 78

The Truth of God:

St. Thomas poses the question, whether God is truth? So far as truth is a matter of joining and separating,

77 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 161(2)H.

78 See the influence of Bernard on Calvinist theology, "Deus non ¿ult, quod non potest", John Calvin, the Church and the Eucharist, McDonald, pp. 7-39.
however, he wonders if it is possible to describe God as 'truth'. Also, if one identifies truth as likeness to source and God has no 'source', then the truth is not in God.

Yet as Thomas reasons, he discovers the sense in which God is truth. Truth in the mind is apprehending a thing as it is and truth in the thing is when it possesses being conformable to the mind. This is, he claims, precisely and fully true of God, for His Being is not only in conformity with His mind but with His very act of knowing. As the supreme and original truth, he is a whole being both in being and knowing. God cannot be said to "join and separate" as man does in his process of knowledge; for God knows by virtue of his simple understanding and thereby, even in knowledge of composite things, God's intellect contains all truth.

What then remains, Thomas asks, of identifying God's truth as likeness to source? Such a process may be true in describing the 'appropriation' of God's essence or truth by the Son. But because God is 'not from any other' then this likeness to source is comprehended within the identity between God's being and His intellect. 79

79 Thomas, Summa, vol. IV, la q 16, a 5.
Truth is in God, claims Polanus similarly, not as an inherent quality but as an expression of God's very essence. It is the exemplar of all man's truth, the source of all understanding in men. Polanus develops his understanding of God's truth as it is in God, in seipso and truth in respect to the creatures or extra se to God's nature.

God's truth (in seipso) is of three modes: He is what he is in virtue of his own mode of subsistence. Whatever God is he is thus, necessarily; whatever created things may be, they are known according to this comprehending reality of Being and truth. As Polanus describes this perfect reality of God, he puts it in this manner: "Uno modo essentia sua, qua vere est: & vere talis est, qualis esse dicitur: Sicut enim falsum est, quod videtur esse, sed non est, verum est: & contra, quicquid verum est, eo ipso est, quo verum est...." 80

Secondly, God is truth in Himself, inasmuch as He is increatus, the very greatest and maximal truth, the exemplar and pure idea in himself. As exemplar He is the model or archetypum for the truth residing in created things. In his being God, therefore, conceives all things

80 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 183(2)E.
in mente divina and remains as the cause of all things the 'mensura omnis veritatis'.

Thirdly, God's mode of truth is comprehended in the personal relationships of the Trinity and extra se, in his work of creation. Within the Godhead, there is a perfect knowledge in which the Son is begotten of the Father and the Father generates the Son; similarly the knowledge and Divine truth constitute the procession and emanation of the Spirit from the Father and the Son.

The decrees of God are truth, for there is no variation between God's person and his truth. As they signify God's eternal decision and his willingness and capacity to execute them, they are true, also in execution. God's action in the creation, conservation and the governance of the created order is true; it is not false, fictitious or simulated, not empty of His truth. True, as well, is his work of redemption in the Incarnation. 81

The Old Testament injunctions remain as the justitia dicti; for they are the words of a faithful and unchanging God and retain their truth from his truth (in giving them). "Mandata Igitur Dei vera sunt: velut mandatum primis parentibus nostris in Paradiso datum verum fuit, non simul-

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81 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 184(1)C.
Two things remain to be said concerning God's 'truth', both important, both consonant with what has been said to this point. The first has been said generally but should be brought forward for specific attention. All things are true according to their similitude to God's truth. Man knows something according to some intrinsic quality of what it is and according to a multiple pattern of reasons. God's knowledge however encompasses all the forms of truth, for his knowledge is exemplaristic and causative of all truth. God knows something so to speak, not only for its qualities or actions but as well according to its 'whence' and 'why'.

The second thing which must be said of God's 'truth', concerns its 'effect' on all human truth. At this point one can see very clearly the collation of the Summum Bonum doctrine and the Scotist epistemology discussed in our chapter on theological first principles. The structure

82 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 184(1)D.

83 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 184(2): "Una tantum est veritas efficiens & exemplaris, quae est epse Deus: formalis autem quae humanum menti est intrinseca, est multiplex, ac proinde formaliter multi sunt veritates."
of human knowledge is based upon the mode of knowledge which is in God. There is an archetypal-ectypal pattern in which one finds all truth first in the divine mind, then in the created mind, then in the word. That is the direction from the archetypal to the ectypal mind. Ectypally, however, truth moves from a consideration of what is in the thing itself (in rebus ipsis) to the created intellect (intellectu creato) and finally, what is in the word (in verbis). Archetypally, truth moves downward as it were, from the increate to the create, from infinite to finite, from absolute comprehensiveness toward complete specification; ectypally, the pattern is reversed, moving from the object of perception to the true source of being, in the divine mind.

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Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 184(1): "Veritas in rebus, est exaequatio rerum intellectarum ad mentem divina intelligentem. Veritas in intellectu creato, est exaequatio mentis Angelicae vel humanae intelligentis, ac rei intellectae. Veritas in verbis est exaequatio verborum seu orationes cum mente intelligente & re intellecta: nam oratio vera est quae non aliud dicit quam est in mente dicatis, in re, de qua dicit."

This bears, as it seems to the writer, a close resemblance to Scotus' discussion "De Veritate", Quaestio XCI, Articuli 1-8, Summa Theologica.
The Freedom of God:

In his explication of God's freedom and glory, the last of the attributes, Polanus finds a lighter touch. Missing in these discussions is that note of severity or formality; present is a quality of gracefulness, an almost lyrical sense of God in his eternal and sovereign Goodness. Indeed it is in freedom that God knows, wills and renders judgments. In none of these activities, however, is God debtor. He is obligated in nothing; more positively, He is free within, to Himself.

The freedom of God, as one might use ordinary terminology, is threefold: freedom from constraint, freedom from subjection or servitude, freedom to show mercy without any juridical constraints.

He is free from constraint because, in His creating, conserving and governing of creation, He recognizes no obligation to secondary causes. Nothing binds the Creator to his creation but His own rectitude. He is free, furthermore, from servitude. He has no indebtedness to any principality or power. Neither must God suffer reproval or punishment for wrong doing. 85

85 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 188(2)H.
God's freedom, which is shared in communion with mankind, and finds its expression as the image in man's creaturely rationality, consists in a freedom of intellect, a freedom of will and in the event, also, of their conjunction. The creature, man, knows only by participation or engrafting into this Divine freedom. For the creature's freedom does not come forth, *ex se*: neither is his comprehension of God's ways perfect. He stands as one waiting for divine revelation; one whose mind is not liberated until he encounters God's perfect will and counsel in Divine revelation.

God is most free in what He wills; He is neither directed nor deflected from His eternal will. In his understanding and his willing, in the *ratio* by which they are conjoined, God is free in a way that man is not. 86

The pinnacle of God's freedom is understood when one reflects on His goodness. For Polanus, this seems the final mystery and in a real sense, the fundamental meaning of God; that His goodness is his freedom, his freedom his goodness. The divine fiat of will, the sheer skill of God's activity, is always an expression of His eternal Goodness. "Etiamsi Deus natura, hoc (sic!) est, summa

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86 Polanus, *Syntagma*, Liber II, 189(1)C.
& absoluta necessitate bonus est, & Filium genuit & Spiritum Sanctum spiravit ab aeterno: tamen non coacta, sed liberissima voluntate existis; vivit, est beatus & bonus, Filium & Spiritum Sanctum habet, & omnia sua consilia atque opera bona & justa esse vult; quantum vis impossible sit, eum his contraria velle. 87

God's Properties: The Emerging Significance:

Our thesis concerning Polanus' methodology for systematic theology comes into a much clearer focus with this presentation of the attributes. It should be pointed out that in this discussion on the properties, one encounters the theological importance of the Ramist formalism. Barth's insight, however general, is basically true. This teaching on the proper attributes of God, threatens always to stand upon its own feet; it threatens to become an 'ontologism' of God, derived from a deductive Platonism, in which the perfection of God is aligned with an insight about His infinity, eternity and the like.

Polanus' theological thinking, though professedly trinitarian in origin, seems governed by the analytic and

87 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 189(1)C.
deductive character of his logic in the service of a fundamentally Augustinian metaphysical scheme. This analytic process leaves the Trinity as a 'problem' for the doctrine of God and his perfect attributes. One could as well contend that unless the triune nature of God's revelation is explored from the very outset, one has sought for axioms and principles at the periphery of the Christian revelation. The dynamic character of Christian theology is in the coordination between God's Being in His Acts and the dynamic character of His acts in Being. We would be premature to say that Polanus' does not coordinate these matters. Yet it is our contention that the static and formal threaten the very content of his theological thinking. The question which he brings to his treatment of the Trinity is whether or in what manner does he account for the Being of God in the Lord Jesus Christ, in and through the Holy Spirit, in governance and creation, in redemption and eternal intercession, and in the Church. The most severe test of his ontological formalism will be found in his understanding of the Holy Trinity.
The Doctrine of the Trinity
Polanus' introduction to the doctrine of the Trinity begins with a prayer. This is not unusual within the literature of Christian thought on this doctrine. Yet the content of this prayer should give significant insight into the significance of conceptual reasoning on this subject. The Christian is baptized into the name of the Triune God; Christian belief is centered therefore, on Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Polanus prays that explanation of this mystery be given by God Himself, through the supernatural light of grace. The knowledge of the Trinity therefore is a knowledge within God's grace. This is a knowledge as well, which finds its consummation in the glory of God. The believer must await this face to face encounter. Reasoning must proceed, therefore, in a spirit of openness to the full splendour of God, which remains His own to reveal. Yet reasoning proceeds in an attitude of responsiveness to God's manifestation of Himself, in his graciousness, to the mind of man. The intention of the theologian, then, is not simply metaphysical or speculative. The priority and initiative for this doctrine remains ontically with God; the revealed character of this teaching is based firmly on God's real manifestation of Himself, even though accommodated to the conceptual

*Polanus, Sententiae, Libri III, 198(1)B.
constructs of the theologian. The prayer of Polanus does not suggest that the truth of the verbal, logical and metaphysical constructs to follow, will be based upon the power of Reason alone. Such power is referred to God alone.

The Literary Structure of this Doctrine:

The structure of theology is divided several ways by Polanus: faith and good works, God and the church, the essence and the works of God. In discussing the one essence of God, Polanus divides his work into two parts, for the practical and orderly purpose of teaching. The articles concerning the properties of God and these concerning the persons of the Godhead, are separated only for the purposes of orderly teaching. Karl Rahner raises a contemporary question about this division. He questions whether the treatise on the Trinity did not become in the high Middle Ages, something in splendid isolation, appended to the absolute monotheist articles on God and His attributes. This approach was justified by the unity of the divine essence, but tended toward the philosophical and abstract. "It speaks," says Rahner, "of the necessary metaphysical properties of God, and not
very explicitly of God as experienced in salvation history in his free relations to his creatures. For should one make use of salvation history, it would soon become apparent that one speaks always of him whom Scripture and Jesus himself calls the Father, Jesus' Father, who sends the Son and who gives himself to us in the Spirit, in his Spirit."

This is the critical issue in Polanus' systematization of doctrine. Is this division between God's attributes and persons, real or rhetorical? Does he propose an economic trinity or an ontological hierarchy, in which God is more of a platonic idea than a three-fold realization of activity within a single, unified essence?

The Problem of Person:

Polanus inquires, in accordance with his method of rhetoric, as to the meaning of 'person' for God's fundamental nature. His rationale for this arrangement is drawn from his commitment to Ramist method. It does not rest upon the conflict between an 'economic' and an ontological viewpoint of God's nature. Indeed, Polanus makes a strong case in the development of the doctrine,

1Rahner, The Trinity, p. 18.
for an economic view of God's triunity. Why, then, one
must ask, does he not incorporate this substantive con-
viction into the methodological framework of his system?
Why is he content to let the development of God's prop-
erties, comprehended in their ontological perfection,
precede his reflection upon the Trinity? The logic of
the Ramist method begins with the simple thing under con-
sideration, establishes its simple truth or falsity, and
moves forward to those matters in which the theme is ex-
plicated. A serious question is raised by Polanus' com-
mitment to this analytical method. Is the article on
'God' proposed as the single and preeminent theme for
theological reflection; further, do the 'persons' of
the Godhead explicate the simple substance of 'God' or
are they the very form of theological knowledge itself.

Karl Rahner believes the fault lay with the medieval
Latin scheme of arrangement, by which the article of
"God" was fundamentally a-Trinitarian. "In this event," he reasons, "the theology of the Trinity must produce
the impression that it can make only purely formal state-
ments about the three divine persons, with the help of
concepts about the two processions and about the rela-
tions." 2

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2 Ibid.
The question must form, therefore, the background of our examination of Polanus. To what extent does his method determine his treatment of the theological material? Further, does Polanus use the Latin medieval presentation of the Trinity or is his treatment of the Trinity more in the Greek, hypostatic mode of presentation?

The Vindication of a Term:

The Latin term, persona, is a transliteration of the biblical word 'hypostasis'. Some argued against the use of 'persona' because it does not appear in the Bible. Polanus is sharp in his rebuttal of this approach. The word 'persona', especially in Hebrews 1:3, is synonymous with the Greek word, hypostaseos ("...effulgentia gloria und character hypostaseos Patris...." Polanus' rendering). Indeed, this literalistic hermeneutical method comes under sharp attack from Polanus. He uses a suggestive term for interpretation, analogia fidei. He searches for what is contained in scripture and what is deduced from it. He concludes: "Ita scire Scripturas, non est earum verba, sed mentem tenere." 3 The role of interpretation,

3 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber III, 198(2)D.
in this case as in others, is to comprehend (tenere) what is evident to be grasped. In several other places in Scripture, II Corinthians 1:11, Acts 10, Romans 2, 'persona' signifies the individual humanity of a person. 'Person' is not used in the sense found in the Roman theatre, an assumed personage, a role acted out. Person must not convey the sense of a fictitious character. Person describes the fundamental being and agency of an individual, not just an appended quality (non qualitates intelligunt).

Some held that hypostasis should be properly translated 'substantia'. Polanus reserves for hypostasis and persona the self-contained, intelligent, individual expression of a rational nature. In metaphysical analysis, for something to be, it exists (existet) or it subsists (subsistere). Existence may be of the substance or by accident. The substantiality of a thing may be primary to its nature, or secondary to that nature. Two modes of being, therefore, may describe the essential being of something. The stone-ness of a stone may be an existence shared by all stones, in short, its 'substantia'. The stone-ness of this stone, its singularity, is its 'substantia'. Polanus describes this analysis: "Subsistentia vero semper habet substantiam, cum accidentibus sin-
gularibus quae in subjecto sunt, nec de subjecto dicuntur: subsistit in seipsa: & acta consideratur, & (si corporae est) sensu. Atq' haec illo subsistia seu ὑπόστασις est, quam in rationalibus substantiis, ἡρώσωμαν Graeci, personam Latini appelarunt." 4

The term 'substantia' is inappropriate for Polanus because God lives completely, totally and perfectly within his three persons. The otherness of God's persons is not an unlikeness of fundamental Being within the Godhead. Yet Polanus makes a relative distinction, even in this early part of his discourse, between ousia and hypostasis. He recapitulates the arguments of John Damascene, Liberius and Athanasius that "...όυσία significat substantiam absolutam & communem: ὑπόστασις autem singularem & relatam." 5

This brings us to a difficulty in Polanus' explication. His reiteration of the Greek patristic distinction is understandable. In his elaboration of its meaning, however, he appropriates the speculative problems of the Middle Ages into his discourse. The persons of the Godhead subsist in the Divine essence, each having altogether

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4 Ibid.

5 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber II, 199(1)K.
whole essence of the Godhead, but each having a distinctive and incommunicable mode of individuality. The distinctiveness of each person is not compounded (persona non componitus ex essentia & ex modi subsistendi...) of the essence and the mode of individual activity. Rather they have a common essence, per se and in sese, as well as a proprietas characteristica.

The unity and distinctiveness of God's person is described in this way by Victorinus (d. c 362); "...In substance Thou art God, in form Word, in knowledge Holy Spirit; Being, Life, Knowledge; Fixity, Progress, Regress; First Entity, Second Entity, Third Entity; yet the three but one?" The indwelling of persons, therefore, is a mutuality of being, life and intelligence. Polanus agrees with Richard of St. Victor on a distinction between the mode of the essence, (modum essendi) to account for unity, and a mode of existence (modum existendi), to account for plurality. Why, then, should not

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6 Fortman, Edmund J., The Triune God, citing Victorinus Hymn.3, pp. 136-137. Polanus, Syntagma, Liber III, 199(2)F; "In genere autem persona definitor, quod sit natura intelligentis subsistens individuum. In hoc definitione individuum oportet substantive accipi pro supposito, non adjective. Deinde non est necesse addi vivum: nam in eo quod dicitur intelligens, necessario inest vitae and viventis praedicatio quid enim non vivum intelligit?"
Polanus face, along with Peter Lombard, the criticism of Joachim de Fiore, that we have a quaternity of persons, consisting of the three persons and a common essence as a fourth?

In his summarizing axioms on the nature of the Divine persons, he tries to avoid such a distinction. The persons of God are not, he emphasizes, the same (pars) as the divine essence. Yet they are each "tota essentia", possessing all there is of God's perfect being. The perfection of the essence comprehends the rationale of the persons. Their distinctiveness is in the mode of their subsistence. The quality of each person is not abstract or separate from the essence. To express it somewhat clumsily; what each person is in subsistence, is the same as what the unified Godhead is in essence. The persons of God are not themselves divided or separated from the essence but reside (residet) and subsist (subsistit) within the Godhead. The reality of God in his essence is not, furthermore, either anterior or exterior to God in his persons. The persons are not a species of the greater genus, God; or

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Polanus, Syntagma, Liber III, 199(2)F-K.
simply a representational form. Whatever is said of God's perfect essence, furthermore, must be said of the persons. To speak of God's perfect being as most simple, perfect, infinite and unchangeable entails saying the same of the persons. The only difference among the persons is one of relationship, not of essential being. 8 One final mention should be made of the opposite quality of 'Divine' and 'human' person. The divine 'person' exists from all eternity; the human person comes to being only in time. Each divine person does not differ from the other in essence; human persons, on the other hand, do differ essentially. The essence of God's being is infinite; the human being is finite.

In summary, therefore, Polanus wishes to find an inseparable unity of being between God in His essence, and the persons in their distinctiveness. 'Polanus shares the definition of Richard of St. Victor (De Trin. IV, 22) that "a divine person is an incommunicable existence of the divine nature." 9

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8 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber III, 200(1)A.
9 Fortman, op. cit., 191.
The Subsistence of God the Father:

Though there is only one essence of God, that essence subsists in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

God the Father is the first person, in having his origin from no one but himself (a se), in generating himself (ex se) from all eternity, the Son, and together with the Son, his selfsame image, breathes (spirans) the Holy Spirit.

The scriptural discourse about God the Father is of two modes: \( \sigma\nu\tau\iota\omicron\nu\delta\acute{\iota} \), or essentially, and \( \Upsilon\pi\varphi\omicron\sigma\tau\lambda\tau\iota\kappa\omicron\nu\acute{\iota} \) or personally. The first mode is said of God in respect to the creatures, whom he either creates or regenerates, as He is God of one essence, in three persons. As Polanus adds: "...ac proinde hac significacione etiam Filius & Spiritus Sanctus appellacione Patris continentur, ut Matth. 6, v. 26." ¹⁰

The second mode of the Scriptural discourse, the personal or hypostatic, is clarified in this way: "...Pater, dicitur una certa persona Deitatis, secundum relationem quam habet ad personam Filii aeternum geniti ab ipso in unitate essentiae Joh. 1:18." ¹¹

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¹⁰ Polanus, Syntagma, Liber III, 201(2)Α.

¹¹ Ibid.
The name "Father", in the second mode, signifies, not his relations to the creatures, but his eternal relationship to the Son. The first person in the Godhead is called 'father', univocally and most properly, because he has generated the Son (quia Filium genuit).

The relationship of the Father to the Son, and that which is said specifically of the first person of the Godhead, derives not from his superiority in dignity or grade, or his priority in time. He is 'father' according to order (ordine) and cause (cause). He is the beginning and the cause of the Son. "Father" is a designation as well for the economic order of the divine work: "Est etiam Pater prima persona ratione ordinis in operationibus divinis: id ordo secundum Oeconomiam exigit necessario." 12

Polanus makes the distinction, in describing the uniqueness of the Father in the Godhead, between the origin and order in which the Father exercises priority, and act, time and essence in which this description does not prevail. This person with no beginning is both an absolute description of his person, because he subsists in himself and through himself from all eternity; and a

12 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber III, 201(2)F.
relational description, describing the relationship which he has to the other persons in the Trinity.

One should be very clear however, that 'Father' is not simply a relational term. It is the absolute reality of the first person to have Being from no other, hence, to have Being, a seipso. This reality is not interchangeable. It is not something which might as well be said of the Son as Son or the Spirit as Spirit. Gregory of Nyssa believed, and this is the basis of this dogmatic distinction, that the title 'Father' suggested the meaning of 'not having been generated'. He is Father in being the author of all things. So Gregory of Nyssa must conclude: "But if He Himself is that Cause from which all comes, as the Apostle says, it is plain that nothing can be thought of beyond His existence. But this is to believe in that existence not having been generated." 13

The basic reality of the Father, the first person, in relation to the Son, the second Person, is begetting (generation). In relation to the Son the Father is unbegotten, whereas the Son is begotten from all eternity

of the Father. Polanus makes a distinction between 'generatio', 'productio', and 'gignitur'. The act of creation differs from all these, in that it is not a simple production of God's self-image but an activity productive of a wholly dissimilar object (id est dissimilis disimilem). Generation, as it is described in a corporeal sense, remains within the realm of the physical, material or logical. One must use the referents of metaphysics in order to understand generation. This is a fitting place to set the incorruptible against the corruptible and to claim, with Aristotle, the language and judgments of a higher science.

A 'generatio spiritualis' is a begetting in which spirit begets itself not outside itself (extra se) but within itself, not through potency but through its own nature (per naturam). This generation is forever activity, not changing from one mode to another; it is, as well, pure activity, not subject to being acted upon, as phys-

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14 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber III, 202(1)D: "Generatio, est productio qua gignens e sua substantia prolem sibi similem generat. Productio, tenquam genus generationis latius patet quam generatio: nam omne quod gignitur, producitur & procedit: sed non omne quod producitur seu procedit, gignitur, ut ranae procedant ex aere, mures in Aegypto ex limo terrae...."

15 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber III, 202(2)A.
cal substance in a passive mode may be. Further, this generation is unchangeable, not described as an act of potentiality; the 'generatio spiritualis' subsists "in generante".

In this realm of metaphysics, Polanus places the eternal generation which is appropriate to the Father, at the very pinnacle. It is a 'generatio hyperphysica' and is "...suprem ac singularis, quae & divina appellatur, sicuti revera est: qua nemp Deus Pater aeternus gignit Filium coaeternum, sibit non node similum, sed etiam, equalem, & unius ejusdemque essentiae; name generans & generatus sunt ejusdem substantiae." 16

This begetting is not a work of the will but one of essential nature of God. Such an observation and its prior analysis gives rise, and credence to the remark of Faulenbach, that the doctrine of the Trinity is located within the broader context of God's simplicity and oneness. 17

16 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber III, 203(1)A.

The Subsistence of the Son: The Form of the Argument

The central concern for Polanus in describing the second subsistence of God, centers on the dispute between the catholics and the Arians. In a general sense, that debate centered on the eternal reality of Christ as the Logos. As far as it had a philosophical issue at its root, it was a debate about the eternal generation of the Son. In appropriating that tradition, it is the orthodox position of Athanasius which comes to the fore. But that tradition is not simply repeated for its own sake. Polanus uses its arguments against the 'new' Arianism which he thought was represented in the Socinian and Arminian developments in Reformed theology.

As one considers the essential substance of the arguments, one should recognize the Aristotelian form which the order of question assumes. Four proofs are given in support of the eternal deity of Christ. They correspond in each case to the Thomistic and Aristotelian notion of causality. Causality, broadly speaking, is that on which something depends in some way for its existence. In the Aristotelian frame of reference, causality is described in four ways. It is described in terms of matter, the material from which something is made; in terms of form, or the structure of a thing which is the foundation for
its definition; in terms of the agent, who gives the matter its form; finally, in terms of purpose or end, that for which the agent acts. These are not understood in isolation from one another but work in concert as the factors involved in causality.

Polanus' first argument is a discussion of generation by which he wants to point out that within the 'matter' of the Godhead, Christ the Logos is an essential and eternal part. His polemical interest derives from his observation that the second person of the Godhead is "semper generante" and as such the substance (matter) of the Godhead must not exclude from the fundamental nature of God, the central idea of His eternal generation of the Son. The second argument is an analysis of Philippians 2:5, 6 in which Christ is identified with the form of God, rather than in any way being considered 'accidental' to God's fundamental nature. This argument seems to satisfy an interpretation of 'form' as the structure of a thing which is the foundation for its definition.

The third argument proceeds "...ex effectis propriis solius Dei." It is an attempt to identify the Logos

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19 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber III, 205-215(1)A-(2)K.
Christ, with the one who creates heaven and earth. His arguments concern the miracles of Christ, forgiveness, providence and divine governance, all of which establishes kerygmatic grounds for the identity of Christ as the Logos in creation and divine governance.

Finally, the arguments of purpose or end, are the least clear parallel with Polanus' fourth argument. In the fourth argument, one finds an identity postulated between the attributes of God, such as eternity, omnipotence, ubiquity, omniscience, and the person of Christ. The only close parallel seems to come in a bit of biblical evidence which is put forward. Christ is called the Alpha and Omega (Revelation 1:8) and tellingly, in the Vulgate translation, the "principium et finis".

One could well consider Faulenbach's more general criticism of Polanus' doctrine of the Trinity at this point. Faulenbach believes that its shape is determined by a kind of syllogistic construction based upon this Aristotelian principle. For in practice it is this Aristotelian concept of epistemology which provides the basic deductive pattern for our knowledge of God and the subsequent shaping of theological knowledge. The basis of this causal principle is a God who can be known and perceived through an 'a posteriori' method of demonstration, from
the effect of his simple and perfect Being. 20

So one finds at this particular place, both the immediate and the more general effect of the Aristotelian scheme on this presentation of orthodox Reform teaching.

The Subsistence of the Son: The Eternal Generation:

Polanus believes that orthodox teaching is a faithful exposition of biblical teaching. The extent to which that is true is seen in his incorporation of Athanasius' teaching into his understanding of the hypostasis of the Son. Athanasius' teaching was fundamentally an attempt to clarify and interpret the meaning of Holy Scripture. His conclusions satisfied the Reformed orthodox, that he had been faithful in exploring the full meaning of Scripture. His controversy with the Arians concerns the proper implications of Scriptural teaching.

Polanus suggests the problem of 'generation' even in his opening definition of the second person of the Godhead: "Filius Dei, est persona Deitatis secunda, a Patre semper generate, non quidem secundum essentiale, sed secundum personale esse, & cum Patre Spiritum Sanctum spirans." 21

20 Faulenbach, op. cit., p. 152.
21 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber III, 204(2)H.
As usual in his search for the proper definition, Polanus tries several possibilities for the term 'Son of God': he suggests that he may be a son 'per naturam', or a son through creation in the image of God, as Adam, or through grace or personal union with the Logos, as Christ according to his human nature or through adoption, such as those elected in Jesus Christ. He suggests that when one describes the Son there are several senses which are not true, i.e., he is not the Son because he was created or made so, not the Son from grace, or 'made' the Son through his merits. Rather he is the Son, per naturam, in his own proper and essential right. 22

The major source for understanding the Son's reality is in the proclamation of the Johannine prologue (John 1: 1-14). The son is the 'sermo' (word) of God. This is the beginning and very important basis for understanding the second person of the Godhead. It is from Athanasius that Polanus derives his orthodox teaching: 23 that the Logos of the Father is altogether one, not many as the


23 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber III, 205(1)B. Polanus cites Athanasius, Contra Arianos, Discourse 1.
Arians taught, nor is that Logos the same as the Father, as the Sabellians taught. If one is to understand the significance of generation for Polaeus, then one must understand the major emphasis of Athanasius.

Athenasius holds that the first implication for understanding the relation of Son to Father must be rooted in the Divine Monarchy. Christ is God from God, God's Wisdom, Word, Son and Power: "For the Word, being Son of the One God, is referred to Him of whom also He is; so that the Father and the Son are two, yet the Monad of the Godhead is indivisible and inseparable." 24 The Godhead is strictly a monarchy, he argues, and it is not appropriate to speak of more than One Beginning. It is "of this beginning" that the Word (the Son) is by nature. The son did not have another beginning, subsisting as it were by Himself; nor did the Son come into being external to this Godhead. Athanasius can only conclude that the Logos of God is of this One Beginning, He (Logos) is His own Son, own Wisdom, own word existing from it.

This monarchy, though undivided in essence, lives in the hypostasis of the Son (as Word) with its particu-

lar characteristics. "And as there is not another essence, lest there be two Beginnings, so the Word which is from that One Essence has no dissolution, not is a sound significative, but is an essential Word and essential Wisdom, which is the true Son." 25

The nature of the coinherence of the Father and the Son is clearer in Discourse II ("Against the Arians"), where he clarifies the distinction between 'begetting' and 'creating', as they apply to the Son of God. Athanasius points out to the Arians the fundamental difference between an 'Offspring' and things made, for they were eager to confuse the two, since they held that Christ was 'made' or came to be from the Father. The Son is an eternal and internal begetting of the Divine Logos, but creation is both finite and fabricated, as something external to the Divine Logos. Once again Athanasius chooses the Johannine theme in commenting, "...John therefore delivering divine doctrine about the Son and knowing the difference of the phrases, said not, 'In the beginning had become' or 'been made', but 'In the beginning was the Word'; that we might understand 'Offspring' by 'was', and not account of Him by internals, but believe the Son always and eter-

25 Ibid.
nally to exist." 26

Begetting, he holds, is what the Father does of his own nature or essence; creating, is what the Father does in time and in respect to his divine will. When in the famous Arian text (Proverbs 8:22) interpreted as a Christological text, it claims, "The Lord begat me... before all He begat me", one is not to interpret before all in a temporal or sequential sense. For he who is before all is not a 'beginning' of all, so much as he is more especially other than all. It becomes clear, according to Athanasius' exegesis, that the Word, being both other than and before all things is created a Beginning in becoming man. In regard to those who are created, God is creator first and then 'becomes' the Father of men because of His Word dwelling in them. But the reverse is true for the Divine Word: for since God is His Father by nature, He 'becomes' afterward His Creator and Maker when the Word puts on flesh and becomes man. 27

26 Athanasius, St., "Discourse Against the Arians" (II), chapter 58, vol IV, p. 380.

27 This polemic is carried on by Gregory Nyssa ("Against Eunomius") who regarded the "making" of the Son as alienating from the Father, cf. "Against Eunomius." Book IV, p. 170; also pp. 78, 223, 256. In describing the process of generation, Polanus makes use of Augustine, Epistle 66, in distinguishing between 'alienare' and 'communicare'. The 'dare' or giving of the Father in the Word is communication, a sharing of the community of essence which binds the Father to His Logos.
The Son is eternal and is not an 'inferior' substance as the Arians claimed. Athanasius has an admirably appropriate summary: "for though it was after us that He was made man for us, and our brother by similitude of body, still He is therefore called and is the 'Firstborn' of us, because, all men being lost, according to the transgression of Adam, His flesh before all others was saved and liberated, as being the Word's body; and henceforth we, becoming incorporate with It, are saved after Its pattern." 28

Athenasius Redivivus (Renewed): Polanus on Christ the Word of God:

Polanus understands the reality of the Son as 'Sermo' or Word of God. That Logos, however, cannot be divided between 'person' and 'office'. The Logos of God finds its reality in being 'ex mente' the very image of God's mind. As the image of the Begetter (imago Genitoris) the Logos is completely in itself the representation and disclosure of the Begetter. Similarly, the Logos is itself the very office of the Creator, for through the Word is everything made which is made. This second person of the Godhead

28 Athanasius, ibid., p. 381.
then in being called the Power and Wisdom of God must be understood as existing completely in the divine essence.

The error of the Samosateans is their belief that Christ, in being called 'God' has derived that title; as derivative it is not per se descriptive of His person but a name "given" by which the authority, dignity and benefits of God the Father is conferred on the Son. Their mistake is in dividing the person of Christ as the Logos from a 'divine' office. 29 The basic norm for understanding the subsistence of the Son is the Johannine proclamation. As Polanus paraphrases it: "Nam qui Sermo erat in principio, erat apud Deum, erat Deus, is Sermo Dei essentialis est: Christus est Sermo ille qui erat in principio, erat apud Deum, erat Deus: Ergo est essentialis Sermo." 30

There is yet another ambiguity by which Christ is subordinate to the Logos of the Father. There are those who in referring to the Father or the first person, tend to identify that person as "god" and the second person as Son. But the divine actuality does not give a priority or unique actuality to the Father which is not always

29 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber III, 205(2)B: "Falsum etiam est, quod asservat, Christum dici Sermonem, non ratione personae aut subsistentiae sed solum officii respectu, Atqui & personae hypostasesqu divinae & officii ratione dicitur Sermo."

30 Ibid.
the essence of a divine community of persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Polanus does not deny that there is a unique sense in which the Father is not the son; but the father is father to the son, not "God" to the Son. 31

**Christ: The Form of God:**

The second argument concerning the subsistence of the second person is shaped around the biblical proclamation in Philippians 2 ("For the divine nature was his from the first; yet he did not think to snatch at equality with God, but made himself nothing, assuming the nature of a slave. NEB) The major premise of the syllogism is that whoever is in the form of God, is of the true nature of God; Christ is the form of God, Ergo. 32

In demonstration of its proof, however, Polanus devises an Aristotelian metaphysical observation which carries with it an inbuilt justification for advancing

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31 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber III, 205(2)F: "Nam ut particulare non dilatat, nec dimunuit rationem communis: sic personae unius ratio non immutat essentiae rationem. Respectu vero personae & notionalis actus quem operatur Pater in gignendo Filio, Pater non primo & per se Deus descendus est, est Pater: hoc enim relationis natura requirit: nam relate sunt Pater & Filius: non autem, Deus & Filius.

32 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber III, 207(1)G.
the whole of this second argument. According to this Aristotelian analysis, whatsoever God is, he is a form most simple and essential, not composite, not accidental; for in God nothing is composite or accidental. Inasmuch as something is in the form of God, that form is God's essence most simply.

The error of the Samosateans is again pointed out, that in claiming no more for Christ than a status as 'accidentarium formam', they can find no equal place for Christ in the Godhead. But Christ, argues Polanus, in being the form of God is not simply a figure or simile of God, but is the expression of the one unified essence of God.

The use of this argument is especially interesting, as one traces the 'catholic' tradition of dogma which Polanus is using. In this connection he only credits Tertullian("Adversus Marcion") with a contribution in the development of the argument. One must wonder, however, how such an argument could be framed without recognition of the valuable insight of Hilary of Poitiers in this matter. For as J.N.D. Kelly points out, 33 it is Hilary's

contribution to the Christological debate in observing, "...evacuatio formae non est abolitio naturae." Though Hilary is describing the relationship of the two natures, he nevertheless places that concern within the observation that the person of the Son (the servant) is nonetheless the Form of God. A change of 'fashion' for the Divine Logos, the eternal Son, did not deprive the body of the Son from its unique place in the Godhead. Hilary is insistent in his claim: "Yet it was not another and a different Person Who emptied Himself and Who took the form of a servant. To take anything cannot be predicated of some one who is not, for he only can take who exists. The emptying of the form does not then imply the abolition of the nature: He emptied Himself, but did not lose His self: He took a new form, but remained what He was. Again, whether emptying or taking, He was the same Person: there is, therefore, a mystery, in that He emptied Himself, and took the form of a servant, but He does not come to an end, so as to cease to exist in emptying Himself, and to be non-existent when He took. The emptying availed to bring about the taking of the servant's form, but not to prevent Christ, Who was in the form of God, from continuing to be Christ, for it was in very deed Christ Who
took the form of a servant." 34

The implications here seem both richer and more explicit than Polanus employs in his argumentation. Indeed, Hilary's argument both described the fundamental economy in the Godhead assuming flesh, as well as the essentially integrated sense in which Christ is both God and man in that Incarnate Word. Polanus employs the argument only to demonstrate the basic reality of the Godhead by which the Second Person is to be understood.

The Eternal Logos: Creation and the Perfection of God's Properties:

The final two arguments for the eternal reality of Christ are less central to his case but more illustrative of an important aspect of Trinitarian teaching. The third argument, from effect, contends that whoever created heaven and earth and all things visible and invisible, whoever governs the universe in providence and conserves everything in being, whoever forgives sins, sends the Spirit to prophet and apostles; calls, saves and regenerates the elect, is truly God; the Son of God creates

heaven and earth and everything which is in them, Ergo. 35

The fourth argument, the attributional argument, postulates that whoever is eternal, omnipotent, ubiquitous and omniscient is truly God, Christ is all these, therefore he bears the true nature of God. Of the many reasons he discusses, the most striking is his conclusion that the nature of the Mediator and the very reality of the mediation between God and man depend upon this fundamental identity between Creator and Redeemer, between the essence and the subsistence. 36 Such is the nature of the 'hypostatic union' that the theologian must describe the fundamental hypostasis-in-unity throughout every aspect of theological thinking. 37

35 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber III, 207(2)G; his major sources are as follows: Justin Martyr, "Paraenetica ad Graecos," Tertullian, "Apologetic Against the Gentiles", and Irenaeus, "Adversus Haereses."

36 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber III, 211(1)H.

37 These two arguments confront the reader with a fundamental aspect of Trinitarian teaching, discussed by Polanus in his axioms on the Holy Trinity. There is, especially from St. Basil, the concept of the "idiomata"; the identity of essence between Father and Son is complemented by that which distinguishes them as persons. Also the Greek doctrine of "perichoresis" allows for an exchange between the persons so that whatever was the particular activity or mode of one may be shared fully by all. For a discussion of the "idiotes" doctrine cf., Prestige, G.L., God in Patristic Thought, London: SPCK, pp. 231-232. (continued next page)
The Holy Spirit: Eternal Spiration:

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Godhead who proceeds in one spiration from all eternity from the Father and the Son. 38

The introduction of the latinized word 'spiration' should be the occasion for introducing a Thomistic mnemonic for Trinitarian thinking. 'Spiration', in short, is that procession from the Godhead which characterizes the Spirit in the way in which 'generation' characterizes the Son. Procession is the characteristic peculiar to the third person. The mnemonic pattern which is to be remembered is this: 5, 4, 4, 3, 2, 1. There are five characteristics or 'notiones', four properties, four relations, three persons, three personal 'notiones', two processions and

37(continued) John Damascene, however, was the fount for the scholastics of the Middle Ages, mediated by Lombard's Sentences. Damascene observes that "...We confess that in two perfect natures there is but one subsistence of the Son of God incarnate, holding that there is one and the same subsistence belonging to His divinity and His humanity, and granting that the two natures are preserved in Him after the union, but we do not hold that each is separate and by itself, but that they are united to each other in one compound subsistence... For He (the Word) imparts to the flesh His own attributes by way of communication in virtue of the interpenetration of the parts one with another, and the oneness according to subsistence, and inasmuch as He who lived and acted both as God and as man, taking to Himself either form and holding intercourse with the other form, was one and the same." John, St., of Damascus, Exposition of the Orthodox Faith, trans. S.D.F. Salmond: Book III, chapter iii, 47-48. Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers, vol. IX.

38Bonanus, Syntagm. Liber III, 215(2)I.
one nature. The five characteristics are related by intention with the Greek word 'idioma'; these characteristics are the total of characteristics of the Triune persons and are 'unbegottenness' (innascibilitas) fatherhood (paternitas), sonship (filiatio), procession (processio) and common spiration (communis spiratio).

The four properties are those characteristics which are proper to one person only, such as sonship to the eternal Word. But there are four relations as well; for it is fatherhood, sonship, spiration and procession within which the one essence of God operates in its trinity of persons. There are three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit; and three personal characteristics (notiones) which describe them each in a unique way. The two processions follow the Augustinian pattern in which there is a procession of the Word (generation) and a procession of Love (spiration). But there is nonetheless, among all the distinctions set forth, only one nature or essence of God. 39

Such a schema is helpful in understanding the context in which spiration is applied. Polanus does not use

39 Aquinas, S. Thomas, Summa Theologiae, Prima Pars Q, 27-32, esp Q 27, 28 on Processions Relation; see Appendix 9 (Velecky) for above summary, pp. 151-153, vol. VI.
such a word to denote a monolithic reality. Rather, when he understands the spirit he does so as an *essential* reality, that way in which the Scripture says that God is Spirit; his second usage designates a *personal* reality, the uniqueness of the third person of the Trinity. Finally, he understands the Holy Spirit as God's agency, in which the subject of the Spirit is present in the sanctification of the elect of God.

The evidence of the Spirit's subsistence is framed in Aristotelian terms. Polanus examines the materiality or substance of the Spirit, concluding that as an hypostasis of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit is an 'individuum per se subsistens'. The subsistence of the Spirit is a person of the Godhead for its very nature has altogether the whole of the Divine essence. But that subsistence has an incommunicable property which is not held by another person, nor is the same as any other person. Along the same lines of argument advanced against the Samosatians and Macedonians in their views about the eternal generation of the Son, so one cannot hold that the person of the Spirit is only a 'power' kindled (excitata) in man, or given to man.  

40 The objection was raised, that a

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40 Polanus, *Syntagma*, Liber III, 216(1)E.
gift of God is not a person: the Holy Spirit is a gift of God, therefore, the Spirit is not the person of God. But the major premise, in this case is not universally valid if one remembers that the Son of God is referred to as the gift of God (John 3). Just as the Son of God in being the gift is himself of the Godhead the same must be said of the Spirit.

Polanus points out in his polemic against the Samosateans that by calling the Spirit a 'power' they are intent on driving a wedge between God's power and His essence; he is convinced however that the subject-hood of God cannot operate in anything but the strictest indivisibility. 41 They believe that the person of the Son, or the person of the Spirit is an 'aliud'; Polanus and orthodox teaching hold however that the person of both Son and Spirit is 'alius et alius' within the Godhead.

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41 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber III, 216(2)D.
The Agency of the Spirit:

God's work is done through the agency of the Holy Spirit. The work of the Spirit is an expression of his essential nature. The cause of the Spirit's work, therefore, is rooted in God's own nature.

The following is an outline of the Spirit's work:

1. The Spirit creates. (Job 26:13, 33:4)
2. The work of the Holy Spirit is the providence in which all things are animated (fovens) and conserved. (Gen. 1:2)
3. The work of the Holy Spirit is the work of miracles (operatio miraculorum).
4. The Spirit's work is the calling and sending forth of prophets, and even the Apostles and Bishops (Episcoporum), that is, the Pastors and Doctors of the Church. (Luke 4:18).
5. The work of the Spirit is the sending of Christ himself. (Luke 4:18)
6. The work of the Spirit is the contribution of gifts necessary to the ministry of the Church. (John 14:26)
7. The work of the Holy Spirit is the causal principle in the revealing of doctrine to the prophets and apostles. (2 Sam. 23:2)
8. His work is the revealing of the future. (John 16:13, Acts 11:29)
9. The Holy Spirit is responsible for the calling and unifying of the Church of God. (Ephesians 2:22, 1 Cor. 12:33)
10. The Spirit gives the illumination of the mind and institutes faith both in the Old Testament and in the new Testament community. (Heb. 3:7)
11. Our justification is the Spirit's work. (2 Cor. 3:17)
12. Our regeneration is the work of the Spirit. (John 3:5, Gal. 5:22)
13. The Holy Spirit governs the action and life of the pious. (Psalm 143:10)
14. His work is the consolation of the suffering (John 14:28)
15. The Holy Spirit confirms and conserves the reborn in grace against temptation. (John 14:16)
16. It is the work of the Spirit which is the internal testimony in the hearts of the elect that they are Sons of God. (Romans 8:16)
17. The work of the Holy Spirit is the gift of life and eternal salvation. (Romans 8:11)
18. The Spirit's work is as a judge against sin. (John 16:8) 42

Such is the catalogue of the Spirit's activity by which his unique subjecthood is known; but since none of these could be done except by the true God, Polanus holds that thereby the subject of the Spirit is fundamentally rooted in the true nature of God.

Procession: The Self-Communication of the Spirit:

The distinctive role of the Spirit within the whole Trinity is in procession or spiration. According to its order, the Spirit is not a se, but is from the Father and from the Son. 43 As one has seen earlier in this discussion of the subsistence of the persons, the fundamental going forth of the Godhead is that in which the Father

42 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber III, 217(1)D-(2)I.

43 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber III, 218(2)D: "Unde Spiritus sanctus ortu (qui relationis est) non est a se, sed a Patre & Filio: actu vero (qui personae in se est) a se est, quia in se a per se subsistit..."
begets the Son. But there is another communication of the Divine nature, procession; just as there was a 'hyperphysica generatio', there is also a 'hyperphysica processio' in which whatever is in the mind and will of Father and Son is communicated (shared with) integrally and wholly with that which exists solely in this mode (procession). Such a relationship is a communication of Father and Son, not a going forth (procedit). It is a breathing (spirans) through which eternally the Godhead sends forth His intelligence and will. 44

Augustine has a fitting way of describing this 'missio' of the Spirit. He observes: "If, therefore, He is said to be sent insofar as He appeared outwardly in a bodily creature, who has always been concealed inwardly in His spiritual nature from the eyes of mortals, then it also becomes easy to understand about the Holy Spirit, why He, too, is spoken of as being sent." 45

The general framework of Augustine (Book XV, Chapter 26 "On the Trinity") is transformed by Thomas into a fully

44 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber III, 219(1)A-B.

developed notion of procession. The first procession, that of the Son, was the procession of the Word and as such is identified with the intellect. But the second procession is that of Love, which more resembles an activity identified with the will. He is very clear, however, even with this distinction in mind, that the procession of the love and the procession of the Word are not unlike; for, as he points out, "...there is no procession of love except in connection with the procession of the word conceived by the mind, since nothing can be loved by will unless it be conceived in mind." 46

He seems vague, however, when he tries to describe why the procession of love should not be identified as 'generation'. That which is identified with the intellect, he holds, tends to produce in the understanding a likeness of what is in the mind. Yet where the will is involved, one finds that the will tends in some way toward what is willed. Since the Spirit is associated with the breathing of God it signifies a living motion and impulse, as when, in Thomas' chosen metaphor, one is impelled by love to do something. 47

46 Aquinas, S. Thomas, Summa Theologiae, Prima Pars Q 27 a 4, p. 15.

47 Aquinas, ibid., p. 17.
Polanus disagrees with Thomas in this respect for he thinks that to introduce such a distinction when talking about procession, suggests ambiguity. The Spirit does not proceed from the 'will' of the Father and the Son but from the very necessity which its own subsistence in the Godhead brings with it (natura seu necessitate naturae). To distinguish between the will and the intellect, Polanus believes, would be to ignore that the subsistence of the Spirit is itself a 'ratio' of the Godhead. 48

Considering the Holy Spirit then, as proceeding from the Father and the Son, considered singularly it must be thought of as a relation ad intra, among the persons and relations of the Trinity itself. 49

This procession of the Holy Spirit, claims Polanus, is from the nature of the Father and Son, even if secon-


49 Ibid., 219(1)H: "Voluntas autem personae, quae numero una est in essentia, duobus modis consideratur in persona, communita secundum essentiam, singulariter secundum personam & relationem ad intra.?
darily according to the mode of their will. It is a procession which proceeds from the Father and the Son in the unity of their essence.

Such a procession finds its meaning in the enhypostatic reality of the person of the Spirit within the Godhead. The Spirit is consubstantial, coequal and coeternal within the Godhead; so that, when one describes the going forth of the Spirit, one may be assured that the Spirit is the true and faithful image of the Father and the Son.

The Trinity and the Biblical Witness:

Polanus believes the witness of Holy Scripture and the dogmas of catholic teaching agree about the Triune nature of God. He rejects those radical 'protestants' who rejected the Trinity as unwarranted from the standpoint of Scripture.

The unity of Scripture's testimony about the action of God justifies speaking of three subsistences, Father, Son and Spirit, comprising the one unity of God. Polanus has in mind the scriptural witness of the First Epistle of John: "For there are three witnesses, the Spirit, the water, and the blood, and these three are in agreement. We accept human testimony, but surely divine testimony is
stronger, and this threefold testimony is indeed that of God himself, the witness he has borne to his Son."

(1 John 5:8, 9)

The 'action' of God, the complete meaning of the Scriptural witness, is a disclosure (patefactio); and that disclosure of God, in the baptismal narrative (Matt. 3:16, 17), in the divine commissioning of the disciples (Matt. 28:19, 20) demonstrate that the true God is the reality of the three persons.

The name of God is enjoyed absolutely by the three persons (Hosea 1:4, Acts 28:25), just as each of the three persons participate in the selfsame divine work (John 5:17). Also there is a synecdochic manner of speaking in the Old Testament, Polanus claims, in which the full reality of the Son and Spirit is intended. 50

Polanus concludes that the Trinity represents the true principles of Scripture; salvation and the true knowledge of God, and everything which man is able to say of God depends upon this triunity of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

50 Polanus, *Syntagma*, Liber III, 220(1)C. He concludes from an examination of Isa. 63:7, the following: "In hoc prophetico testimonio tres personae distinguuntur in una Deitate: Pater qui Jehova dicitur Synecdochice, Filius qui angelus faciei Jehovae appelatur, & Spiritus sanctitatis Jehovae seu Spiritus Sanctus."
The rationality of the Holy Trinity is 'supra naturalem'; it is not a doctrine which can be reasoned from within the structures of human rationality. To conceive of the blessed Trinity in this way is to derogate faith; for faith concerns the invisible which is beyond human reason. To equate the mystery of the Holy Trinity with human rationality, therefore, is to make derision of the Christian faith. 51

However stylized it may seem, it is worth pointing out that Polanus begins and ends his explication of the Trinity with a prayer. Though faith is not simply piety nor theological reasoning an advanced form of prayer, yet it is important to Polanus' work that one points out his fundamental commitment to the Christian faith which finds expression in an utterance of ecstatic praise. Just as one would not seek to understand Anselm's Proslogion without its invocation of God's truth, neither should Polanus' work be left outside the forms of prayer and praise. It is this supranatural reality which informs

51 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber III, 220(2)A. This is a direct comparison with Thomas' view, cf, Summa, Prima Secundae, Question 32.
all that one says of the mysterious reality of the Holy Trinity.

Quum tam sublime tamque ab humana ratione remotum sit Sacrocanctae Trinitatis mysterium, ut nullibi aut periculosius erretur, aut laboriosius quaeratur, aut fructuosius aliquid inveniatur: a votis ex animo conceptis exordiri necessarium est. Tu igitur unice Deus, Pater, Fili, & Spiritus Sante, in cujus nomen baptisati sumus, in quem credimus, cui uniri permanere expetimus, tribue nobis clarum ac salutare intelligentiae lumen, intellecta explicandi dexteri- tatem, veritatis fيدem: & praesta ut quod credimus, id loquamur ad tui nominis laudem sempiternam, & ut qui te in hac vita ex gratia in Gloria de cadie ad faciem cernamus. 52

Axioms on the Trinity:

That which one may say, on the basis of Holy Scripture and orthodox teaching concerning the divine relations is comprehended in a number of axioms. (1) The Holy Trinity is God. "Trinity" is not a numerative by which the absolute unity of God is parcelled out but a description of those persons or hypostases which constitute the unity of God's essence. There is no deity, therefore, which is 'extra Trinitatem'; neither is there a God outside or before 'father' to which the persons in turn may be referred. Rather the three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, are the subsistence of God's essence. No one

52 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber III, 198(1)B.
alone is the divine essence, nor is any one anything which is not God's essence absolutely. Polanus puts it in this summary observation: "...Tres personae sunt una & eadem divina essentia, praeter quam nulla alia est divina essentia. Ita tres personae sunt una res absoluta...." 53

(2) There is a trinity of persons, not of essence. Tertullian observed 'unitatem Monarchiae esse Trinitatem Oeconomiae'. 54 God is not multiplex or triplex but most simple in the rationality of His essence. But in respect to the rationale of the persons (ratione personarum) God is always a Trinity.

(3) The persons of the Godhead are not unlike (ἀνόμοιοι); that is, they are not dissimilar in respect to their essence (as the Anomians and Aetians wished to claim) but 'homoousia', altogether alike in essence. Indeed the persons are, as the Latins paraphrased it, 'consubstantial'.

(4) The persons of the Trinity share a community of essence; each of the persons is not 'ἐφερωσίον', different or otherwise, from one another in essence. Their sharing is not 'συμοοσίον' or conjunctive but the same (eadem) essence; neither is the essence of any person

53 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber III, 224(1)α.

54 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber III, 214(2)C, citing Tertullian, Adversus Praxeas, cap. 2, 3.
solitary and possessed of something which the other does not have. The persons in relation to one another are 'ἐνούσιον', or as Polanus paraphrases it, "...quaelibet persona subsistit in essentia..." As we have pointed out in another axiom, this community of essence is homoousion or consubstantial "...quorum unus est ab altero, illo accipit eandem essentiam." 55

(5) The persons of the Godhead, with their essence one, are in respect of one another inter se, equal. Whatever is in the whole reality of God's essence is to be found in the single person; "...tota est in omnibus, tota in singulis personis..." 56

(6) The persons of the Godhead are to be distinguished then, not in Esse but in realiter. That distinction is necessary because as Polanus points out, one person is produced from the other (...una persona ab alia producitur). The subsistence by which one recognizes personal difference among the persons finds its aetiology within the Trinity itself. This is to say, when one says that

55 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber III, 224(2)G. Catholic teaching established this dogma at the Council of Antioch against Paul of Samosatae. See Denzinger, Enchiridion Symbolarum, Documents 233, 710.

56 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber III, 224(2)H.
the Father is the 'principium' then one does not say, in respect of the Son and the Spirit that they are 'principium'. The beginning (principium) and that which is begun (principiatum re) are not the same. So far then as the Son receives his being from the Father, he is said to be not the same thing, \( \text{inter se} \), as the Father. "Sed Filius accipit Esse a Patre, & Spiritus sanctus a Patre & Filio: Ergo distinguuntur reipsa inter se, sicut alia res sit Pater, alia res sit Filius, alia res sit Spiritus sanctus: & nequaquam eadem est Patris & Filii & Spiritus sancti, neque eadem est Filii & Spiritus sancti persona." 57

The rule which prevails in speaking of the persons is that they are 'alius et alius', not 'aliud et aliud'. To be of the Father (Patris) is to be of the Son and the Holy Spirit; but to be Father (Patrem) is not to be Son or Holy Spirit. There is nothing of the Divine nature which each of the Persons does not possess; but that expression, of the Divine nature, is always considered in respect to the person. This is to say that the Divine nature of the Father is the Father, the divine nature of the Son is the Son, the divine nature of the Spirit, is the Spirit. 'Alius et Alius' as a guideline tries to protect both the commu-

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57 Polanus, *Syntagma*, Liber III, 224(2) I.
(10) It should be emphasized, therefore, as an important principle that 'relatio' and the divine essence of God are the same. Paternity, filiation, procession are all of the same essence.

(11) Considered inter se, the relational characteristics are real, for by mode and form they differ from a consideration of God's essence. The distinction which he wishes to establish here is that put forth by Gabriel Biel in his Sentences: "In Deo nihil est realiter nisi essentia: Relatio & persona ex essentia & relatione constituta: & constitutum ex essentia & spiratione activa: & hac omnia identificantur essentia. Ideo nulla in Deo distinguuntur essentialiter: quia omnia qua sunt in Deo, sunt una & indivisibilis & simplicissima essentia. Relationes opposita distinguuntur realiter inter se non ab essentia." 59

(12) The relations are not compounded but the person of each member of the Trinity is altogether (proprie) what it is.

(13) Just as the divine persons are distinct and not compounded, even so in their person-hood they are not

58 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber III, 225(1)G. Thomas, Quaestiones Disputatae Par 1, Q 2. Art. 1.

59 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber III, 225(1)H.
separated from each other.

(14) Polanus believes that the persons of the Trinity may be considered either according to that which they hold in common (communiter), the one and selfsame Essence which subsists in all the persons; and that which each person is, singularly (singulariter).

The singularity of the person may be considered absolutely; looked at in this way, the person is who he is in se or ad se. The divine essence exists altogether by itself and through itself and does not receive its essence either from or through another. In speaking of God as Wise, or the Son as the Wisdom of God or the Spirit as comprehending the wisdom of God, one finds the indivisibility of the person in their essential subsistence. 60

The relation of the persons is described in relational terms, as well. Polanus claims the distinction which he finds in Thomas, Occam and Gabriel Biel in contrasting the divine nature according to its essence, and the relation by which one describes the divine persons. Essence describes the substance of the Godhead, relationship describes the persons of the Trinity. Secondly, the divine essence is communicable, the reality of the person is truly incom-

60 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber III, 225(2)C.
municable. The essence is a 'quiddam non distributum' while the divine person is characterized by a relative opposition in which the Father is the Father and not the Son, etc. So, Polanus believes that it is best to make a verbal distinction between essence and person when describing what is constitutive of 'person'.

One thinks comparatively of the persons in three ways. They are considered 'communio', or in respect to the consubstantiality by which the Son and Spirit are, with the Father, *autotheous*. The persons are equal (ισότης) considered *inter se*, and must in every word describing their relation be considered equal in dignity, honour and operation. Finally, they are considered according to their mutual properties: whatever is in one attains to the others. Their relation is a *circuminsessio*, as Hilary (*De Trinitate*, Book IV) described it.

In this extensive axiom one finds the schematic pattern by which Polanus arranges his theological words and propositions. For that which makes the first person distinctive is 'origio', while the second person must always be described according to the 'ordo' in which that person finds his divine causality. The third person finds its distinctiveness in comprehending the 'operatio' or agency in which the person and work of the other two persons is
made known.  Though there is an operation peculiar to each person, there is an internal exchange, inter se, within the Trinity and a distinctive person and office externally (missio) by which both unity and distinctiveness are shared.

(15) The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are 'tria Entia', they are enhypostatic, dwelling each in the other.

(16) God is three persons but simple and uncomposite in Essence.

(17) God's essence is infinite and as such consists in an eternal co-existence of the persons.

(18) The Incarnation does not involve a quaternity. Christ is the Word of God and as such the subsistence of the Divine personality.

Comments on the Trinitarian Axioms:

The axioms concerning the Trinity are a synthetic construct. In Polanus' presentation, the axioms explicate an economic trinity. Each person of the Trinity is a distinctive, active manner of God's being. The problems of Trinitarian vocabulary, concerning 'person', 'hypostasis', 'substance' and 'subsistence' originate in the economic unfolding of God's triune nature. The concrete manner
of God's own life is discovered in the being-thus-toward-us, in the revelation of God the Father, the Son and the Spirit. Yet the real problem of Trinitarian language is its power of reference. Theological reflection on the Trinity is not simply a matter of speaking or even a matter of perception. The person to which we refer as being thus as God (the Son or Spirit) has the power to point to another being which remains permanently distinct but as well always exists as being thus and not otherwise. Polanus' development of Trinitarian doctrine begins with this exploration of Essence in Person. His doctrine begins with the economic Trinity, with the manifestation of God's being in three persons, but is developed through Reason, to account for unity and corporate integrity.

His axioms on the Trinity rest on the judgments and reasoned opinions developed from the three-fold revelation of God's being as Father, Son and Spirit. The axioms do not control the logic of the revelation; rather, the axioms develop, reason and explore the manifestation of God's nature in revelation. Axioms in Polanus' system are developed from simple definitions of what a thing is and from

reasoned inferences based on reliable witnesses, as to the essential meaning of a matter, however complex its presentation. In other words, axioms derive from the most simple observable datum and from the most rigorous probing of arguments and reasons into a resultant principle. Axioms on the Trinity, therefore, have developed from the simple statement of a fundamental reality:

"Persona Deitatis, est subsistentia in divina essentia, totam illam divinam essentiam in se habens, sed proprietate sua incommunicabili ab aliis personis ad quas deferitur distincta." 62

Axioms emerge from the biblical and confessional 'necessity' to speak of God only as Father, Son and Spirit. Each testimony or witness, such as Biblical references, Patristic observations and confessional symbols, is explored for its true and evident meaning before one is able to construct axiomatic statements concerning the Trinity.

Furthermore, the literary place of these axioms is worth noting. Just after the axioms, Polanus arranges three dialectical chapters as a test of the axioms' strength. The first chapter deals with all the objections to the consubstantiality and equality of the persons; the second

62 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber III, 199(2)C.
deals with objections to the equality of the persons; the third with the distinctiveness of the persons. Polanus' use of logic is not only analytical; it is also deductive.

Polanus' work still bears marks of the Medieval scholastic method, partly 'expositio', partly 'disputatio'. Indeed, the general form of his Trinitarian discussion resembles Thomas' Summa. In the Summa (Prima Pars, Q. 33-43) one finds first the article on the Father, followed by articles on the Son as Word and Image, then articles on the Holy Spirit and its reality as love and gift. Thomas then compares the persons to the essence, the person in relationship to the relations or properties, and the persons compared to the characteristic acts. Finally, the co-equality and likeness of the Persons is established and the mission of the Divine persons is discussed.

Similarly, Polanus moves from clarification of terminology concerning the personhood of God, toward some vindication of multiple number within the Godhead. Next, he discusses the being, activity and relations of each person in turn. Only after an exhaustive exploration of each hypostasis does Polanus turn to the biblical, Patristic and confessional claims for the Trinity.

There is a certain interplay here, between dogmatic
and methodological considerations: Polanus is convinced that the economy of Divine revelation gives a three-personed economy of Salvation; that the shape of the Gospel itself participates in this unfolding of the persons of the Godhead. Yet he believes that the analytic-synthetic method is adequate to the task of theological development. 63 He begins with essential words, their definite meanings and a syllogistic method of exploring the theme. From the universal to the particular to its parts is one way of expressing it. When he reaches the latter development of his method, the disposing or ordering of arguments, he plans the less dubitable arguments first, the more manifest arguments following. Even the arrangement of arguments results, as he believes, in the 'demonstrationem propter quid'; each word contributes to a sound and truthful sentence, each sentence composes irrefutable skeins of meaning, each set of truthful arguments point to the truth of the whole.

The strength of the whole doctrine, therefore, is composed of the strength of its parts. Yet the axiomatic principles derived, tend in themselves, to throw light back upon the necessary development of any given part.

63 Polanus, Amandus, Symagma Logicum Aristotelico-Ramaeum, Basil: Conrad Waldkirche, 1611.
Conclusion:

The difficulty of assessing Polanus' doctrine of the Trinity derives from its very comprehensiveness.

One sees more clearly now, the function and importance of Holy Scripture in this architectonic system. Polanus finds an identity between the teaching of Holy Scripture and the teaching of the 'orthodox' faith. The basis of the church's teaching on the Holy Trinity is justified by a complete reading of Scripture.

In exploring the meaning of Christian dogma, the protestant scholastics used Scripture as a kind of logic textbook. As we have shown in discussing the Ramist method, a theologian such as Polanus, tried to "read off" in a rhetorical way the obvious meaning of Scripture. It becomes apparent by the time one reaches the third book of the Syntagma, that the Scripture has become the sourcebook for the construction of innumerable syllogisms.

When one looks also at the meaning of the Trinity alongside the attributes of God, one finds that the requirements of the Perfect Being of God take both formal and methodological priority. The analytic-deductive scheme drives a wedge between God's attributes and the reality of His person in the Holy Trinity. This analytic system pro-
vides Polanus with a free standing doctrine of God in His perfections; for it tends to establish through independent philosophical analysis a well developed series of inferences from the basis of God's aseity and His fundamental oneness. The datum of revelation tends to become no more than a perfect idea of a perfect Being. In light of this tendency the Trinity stands as an appendage to the science of a perfect, infinite and absolute God. Rather than move from the reality of God known always and at every place in His triune subsistence, this moves formally and deductively from the datum of Being.

It is apparent at this point, too, that the summum bonum introduced as the fundamental structure of theological thinking (Liber I) provides the architectonic character of Polanus' theological system. The formal requirements of Being and the ectypal structures of human rationality become coordinates for thinking through theological knowledge.

The lack of integration between the ontological and the dynamic or economic derives, we believe, from Polanus' effort to retain both the abstractive and the intuitive models for theological knowledge (Cf. Liber I, caput v). In this way the formal requirements of God as perfect
being constitute the ground of Christian knowledge in such a way as to suggest a contrast to the immediate and intuitive comprehending of God in the Incarnate Word. The clarification of Christian cognition, gained by the Reformers such as Calvin, is threatened by this reversion to the older, Medieval pattern of understanding.

Finally this is an effort to go beyond the basic reality of the hypostatic union, in order to resolve in a logical and rational way the Being of God; but the very reality of the hypostatic union suggests that it is only in the Incarnate Word, in and through the Holy Spirit, that one understands anything about God and his majesty.

We are suggesting that Polanus attempts to say too much, and that, of the wrong sort of thing; for in operating outside the reality of the Trinity, he must finally use Aristotelian philosophy as the very basis of his theological knowledge.
The Decrees of God and the Doctrine of Predestination
When one reaches Polanus' developed statement on the works of God, then the full intent of his theological principles is apparent. The significance of the theological principles put forward in Book I move toward a systematic climax in the doctrine of the decrees and predestination.

The fundamental principle of all theological reflection is that the glory of God is the beginning and end of theology. This glory is the 'principium' of all theological statements. But it is as well the theological principle which moves every statement toward its consummation within the Divine glory. This principle serves Polanus' system in both an analytic and synthetic fashion.

The work of God is fundamentally, whatever God does by reason of (propter) his glory. The work itself is effected (causa efficiens) by God, guided by causal modes ordained by God and perfected according to His final purposes. It is this glory of God "...ad quam omnia pertinent & diriguntur...." ¹

This is again a reaffirmation of that platonic-Augus-

¹Polanus, Syntagma, Liber IV, 236(1)D; for comparison see, Liber I, caput iv.
tinian framework within which the Perfect being of God creates its corresponding reality, contingent being; and in terms of which there is a mutual, even if differential, development.

The work of God is expressed in the means by which creation is preserved in being. When one speaks of God "conserving" or "governing" creation, then one refers to those ends or causes by which God's purpose is served. God's work is both axiological and teleological. His glory is seen not only within his creation of what something is, but the saving purpose to which his will operates through other created things. But that saving purpose ends only in the Divine purpose of the Creator himself. God is the end of all his works. The strength of the teleological nevertheless remains. "Alimentum, somnus, & alia multa, quia sunt media ad vitam presentem conservandam: ideo haec persicitur in nobis per illa. Non ita se habet res in Deo, sed contra: nam omnia media ordinantur ad hunc finem, hoc est, a Deo persiciantur." ²

The second expression of Polanus' theological principles in the doctrine of the decrees is in the archetypal-ectypal division. All which is done by God, ad extra,

²Ibid.
bears the stamp of his perfection. Polanus' general principle may be stated in this way: all things which become in time have been in God from eternity.  

God's decree, according to other Reformed scholastics, is the "...sort of idea of all works outside Himself, in accordance with which as archetype the remainder are expressed as ectypes." 4 Riisen concurs with this observation by Hottinger, by himself claiming that God possesses archetypally, "...the idea of all things outside Himself...." 5

The final recurrent theme which one finds in this doctrine is the place of God's perfections in theological reasoning. Polanus' theological system tends toward abstraction, in arranging the development of theological doctrines under the absolute authority and perfection of God. The tendency toward making the decrees of God an ab-

3Something of this sort emerges quite clearly, a bit later on (1642), in the English puritan William Ames. He holds that the creature is conceived within the intellectual perfections of the Creator and that the creature, thereby, is an image of that Divine perfection. "The platforme of all things is the Divine essence, as it is understood of God himselfe as imitable by the Creatures, or so in some sort the Image of that perfection or some footstep thereof may be expressed in the Creatures: that is, the creatures themselves, as they are conceived in the Mind of God, are the platforme or image of that nature which they have in themselves." The Marrow of Sacred Divinity, 1st Book, London: Edward Griffin, 1642.

4Heppe, (Hottinger, p. 76), Reformed Dogmatics, p. 141.

5Ibid.
stract plan emanating from a perfect Being is not as great in Polanus as in some of the other Reformed theologians of the period. To take only a brief but revealing example, Polanus contends that the decree of God is most just (justissimum) "...quia ejus causa est voluntas divina, quae est suprema regula omnis justitiae & rectitudinis...." The decree of God is eternal furthermore because "...Deus ab aeterno apud se constituit." On the face of it, this argument seems to proceed from an analysis of God's aseity and serves to bypass the incarnate Word, in and through the Spirit.

It is the nature of the Trinitarian relationship

6Beardslee, John W., III, Reformed Dogmatics, Turretin, Francis, Institutio Theologiae Elenticae, Locus IV, Question 1: "Reason clearly demonstrates this conclusion from God's supreme perfection, which implies that nothing may happen apart from his will; from his omniscience, by which he knows from eternity all his works, not only those that are possible, but those that are going to take place, which would not be possible except by his decree, and from the dependence of secondary causes upon primary, and of all things and happenings upon a supreme being and maker." p. 337.

7Polanus, Syntagma, Liber IV, 241(1)F.

8One can find a more advanced form of this tendency in Turrentin, Locus Quartus, "De Decretis Dei" (341-353) where he points out: "Ut Deus est Ens absolute necessarium: Ita Decretum est necessarium intrinsecum a parte principii, sed non obstat quominus sit liberum extrinsecum & terminative; neque hoc illum discrimen real infert in Deum, quia est mera & relatio ad extra, quae modificat, non componit." p. 344.
within the Godhead which makes suspect our generalization about this last mark of continuity. Though there is a tendency by Polanus to let the perfections of God stand in abstract isolation from the Triune persons, he at least seems to anticipate his difficulty when he discusses the work of God.

The Works of God and the Holy Trinity:

Polanus holds that God's work must be related to the reality of the triune personhood of God. The pattern for understanding God's work of creation and governance is found within the relations among the persons of the Trinity. The particular difficulty which he has in using this observation in an integrated way is found in that distinction which he makes between the terminus a quo and the terminus ad quem. He tries to find the division 'ex causa efficientibus' between that 'principium' which is the singular or personal terminus and the 'principium' which is 'communis terminus,' or associated with the commutitive purpose of the triune unity.

In a general sense, the works of God are either personal or essential. The personal works of God are the works by which the singularity, the agency, the fundamental
reality and rationale for each person is established. The basis then of all God's activity is viewed in light of this personal economy; this dispensation is the origin of all one understands of God's work. The work of God which is simply personal, however, is that which resides uniquely in an individual person of the Trinity.  

The uniqueness of each person, such as generation by the Father, is the work ab intra within which both the reality of the particular person and the basis of the relation between the persons is established. But there is within the tritheistic persons the particular mode, the works ab extra, which characterizes the specific operation of each person. This relational distinction does not divide the essential activity of God. Rather it is the economy of action which is assigned to a specific person and as such has a 'terminus' within itself. As an example, the work of the Son is to become incarnate, to be the mediator between God and men, to offer satisfaction for those elected by God. From one perspective this work is a work of the whole Trinity; yet,

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9Polanus, Syntagma, Liber IV, 236(2)E: "Opera Dei simpliciter personalia, sunt quae terminum utrumq; nempe a quo & ad quem, singularem habent, (terminus autem singularis est persona una:) seu, quae persona una Deitatis in essentia divina operature in alteram secundum relationem...."
judged as the work of one person of the Trinity a termination, perfection and consummation specially in the Son. The personal work of each person of the Trinity is incommunicable, distinct in itself. The work of the Father is as Creator, just as that of the Son is Redeemer and the Spirit that of sanctifier. This economic view of God's work by which one might judge all the works, both ad intra and ad extra, as essentially part of God's unity-in-trinity. Polanus holds that it is necessary, in view of the Samosatean heresy, to remember that there is no conflict between God's essence and God's operation or work. "Recte quidem a Patribus Orthodoxis dictum est, quorum eadem est essentia, quorum eadem est operatio: sed non ex eo sequitur, Ergo quorum eadem essentia, eorum nullam operationem, nisi communem esse." 10

The essential works of God originate in that divine essence and are an expression of the Divine power. The divine essence which works (operans) in the absolute power of its divinity is the basis of the essential works of God; the personal work is personal as it is the characteristic working (operans) of a specific person. The most important part of this discussion, however, is the principle

10 Ibid., 237(1)F.
which emerges as the very basis of all God's works: the whole work of the Trinity is indivisible.

The application of this principle is especially difficult for Polanus. The first difficulty is the basic relationship of God's work, ad intra, within himself as it were, to the world, that which is ad extra, outside God. The relationship between these two kinds of work, the fundamental understanding, rationality and thought within the Trinity and the reflection, deliberation and determining which prompted the work of creation is 'similis'. This resemblance or similarity is described as not the same (non eadem) and not equal (non aequalis). Yet the question remains, to our mind, whether an analogia entis, subtly used by the late Middle Ages scholastics, is being proposed here in understanding the relation between God and the world.

One needs to look widely in Polanus' many works to determine the type of relationship which he proposes. At this place one can only find a kind of Platonic framework in which the archetype of all the works, extra Deum, is to be found in God's very own willing and working. "Utramque in Deo etiam statuamus oportet: Semper enim & ab aeterno in seipso intelligit, cult, amat, providet, praedestinat: in tempore autem extra se produxit mundum, regit, operatur
omnia in omnibus, justificat, regenerat, punit peccata, &c." 11

The Work of God, His Counsel and His Decree:

The relation of God to the world in his work of creation and governance of the world and his electing of his creatures to eternal life is based upon the decision and determination within the mind of God and his exercise of will in bringing such work to the good end which he proposes. 12 Polanus reports the debate between two of his contemporaries, Johannes Vives and J. C. Scalinger, as to whether such a term is appropriate as a way of speaking of God's activity. Vives believed that such an idea suggested a division between God's fundamental activity which is indivisible and some standard apart from God's own nature and activity. So he rejected the use of such a term. Scalinger, however, believed that Scripture gave warrant for speaking in such a way; he cited Psalm 33:11, Isaiah 46:10, Acts 2:23, 4:28, Hebrews 6:17 in support of his view that God's work is an expression of his counsel.

Polanus concurs in this judgment and concludes for himself: "In his & aliis locis consilium Deo tribuitur, sed absque ratiocinatione, absque consultatione, quae in Deum perfec-

12 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber IV, 238(1)G.
Deo consiliwm tribuit: ita & Johannes Ludovicus Vives; ita & nos hoc loco." 13

The decree of God is the expression of the mind and willing of God, in bringing into being whatever was or is or will be, in ordaining creation to a good end, in providing the means by which God's will is to effect the end, and subsequently how the circumstances of His creation shall be ordered. Peter Mastricht summarizes the "decrees" as they were understood in most of the Reformed Orthodox fathers. They are an effort to proclaim God's sufficiency, "...qua potest nobis praestare omnia, ad salutem proficua...;" and God's efficiency in his work, "...qua praestat quod potest...." 14

God's Good Pleasure and the Ordinance of Things in Themselves:

The decree of God may be described in two ways: either as an expression of God's good pleasure or according to the signs which he has ordained (Decretum signi). God constitutes everything from eternity. The basic reality of everything

13Polanus, Syntagma, Liber IV, 238(1)K.

then is an expression of God's willingness to create from all eternity a creation and creatures. As Barth has expressed it, this divine decree, the will of God himself, "...knows no Wherefore? It is the ultimate Therefore of all." 15 Everything which is created is constituted to accomplish the good either per se or per alios. The agency of God himself, Deus potens, is expressed through his creation. The power by which God is who he is within himself is the same power by which he creates that which is not himself. God creates all things by the counsel of his own will. 16

This decree of God's good pleasure (decretum beneplaciti Dei) exercises its operation in two ways. In the first place, God's good pleasure makes the creaturely thing what it is. Through God's will, that which is created is given the 'substance' to be what it is. The second expression of God's good pleasure is in his willing to direct and govern that which was created to the end which he proposed. God is Creator and governor of what is and

15Barth, Karl, Church Dogmatics, II, 2, p. 20.

16William Ames puts a forthright observation to such a line of thought: "this will is truly free: because whatsoever it willeth, it willeth it not by any necessity of nature, but by Counsell." Ames, The Marrow of Sacred Divinity, London: Edward Griffin, p. 27.
the One who brings the creation to its consummation.

The second decree is the 'decretum signi'. 17 The God who created all things according to his own good pleasure, also knew those things beforehand (decretum praecipiens); and in knowing things beforehand also governed and ruled them with permission (decretum permittens). The basis of his rule was simply constituted according to that which he approved, or that of which he disapproved. But Polanus adds a rejoinder when he describes that means by which God governs creation, within his permissive will. 18 He warns that if sin falls within the permissive will of God's counsel, then it does so, not through his agency or foreknowledge as a primary causality but through a kind of adjunctive permission. "Quadvis autem Deus decrevit permettere peccatum: tamen id a nullo decreto Dei est, nec efficiente, nec praecipiente, nec permittente, etsi fiat decreto permittente seu secundum decretum permittens. Aliud enim est esse a decreto, aliud esse secundum decre-tum: illud enim causam: hic vero antecedens notat, etiamsi

17 Beardslee, Reformed Dogmatics, New York: Oxford Press, p. 47: Wollebius claims this distinction between the 'voluntas beneplaciti' and the 'signi': the one is what God intends to do, the other signifies what he wants us to do.

18 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber IV, 240(1) F-G.
The Decrees and the Perfection of God:

Among the axioms which Polanus develops concerning the decrees of God, several identify God's willing with his essence and perfection. The decree of God is most wise; because God discloses his works from his own wisdom (sapientia) and understanding then the decrees are incomprehensible to the mind of man. Similarly, the decree of God is the supreme rule of all justice and righteousness. The decree of God, just as one perceives the perfection of God, is immutable. He does not err, or fluctuate in his basic determinations. There is nothing within his creatures, neither within their planning or causality which changes or moves the basic determination of the Creator God.

The Socinians held that the decrees of God were something accidental to God's nature. The determination to create something outside himself was arbitrary, the Socinians claimed, for since God is simple and immutable such an activity must always be accidental to God's nature.

19 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber IV, 240(1)G.
The decrees, the orthodox contended, were in God by relation, not by accident. God's action was "...tantum discriminans, non commens: si vero decreta intelligas actum decernentem...." 20

God's work of creating and determining all that is, is in God freely. God's free activity is under no constraint. The freedom which God determines for the creatures is grounded necessarily in that divine determining within which whoever or whatever he determines receives fundamental and unchangeable mandate as God's creation. As Mastricht points out: "...nec tendentia actus in objectum aliquod, libera est in Deo, sed necessaria, quia non potest decernere, nisi sit aliquid quod decernat: quamvis tendentia actus decernentus, in hoc objectum prae illo, sit libera & liberrima...." 21

The Decrees and Causality:

The doctrine of the decrees in Reformed doctrine bears some comparison with St. Thomas proofs for the existence of God. Present in both is the strong conception of God as the primal cause.

20Mastricht, op. cit., 277/1.
21Ibid., 277/2.
The decree of God precedes all secondary cause and all means (media) by which God's plan is effected. God's decree is completely the efficient cause of all that is. It is the most free activity of God, conditioned by no one or any condition. "Extra Deum autem causa ejus efficiens nulla prorsus est, nulla esse potuit." 22

God's decree is the actualization of God's sign and purpose (Propositum) without respect to persons and work. In the subsequent development of Reformed thought there was insistence against the Socinians, Remonstrants and Jesuits that there were no conditional decrees. No self-contained and undetermined conditions operated outside God. Every decree of God is eternal and cannot depend on the conditions which are only temporal. The decrees of God depend only on his good pleasure. If one is to speak of the conditions attendant upon the decree of God, then one must distinguish between the "conditions" or means which are legitimated by God's activity and the "consition" which seeks to relativize or cast into doubt what has been established. God is the primal cause of creation, just as in his plan he is the cause of man's salvation. Polanus points out, "Deum ut ab aeterno decre-
vit nos amare & servare & sic amare & benedicere nobis in Christo, vocare ad Christum, justificare & servare per Christum fide apprehensum." 23 The certainty of salvation is grounded then, not upon the 'condition' of faith (though that is the means) but upon the eternal determination of God and his saving purposes for mankind.

The primal causality of God insures, furthermore, that even the contingency of temporal events is determined by God's decree. God's foreknowledge of all events does not remove the contingency of events, for they are bound within a pattern of contingent or secondary causality. Whatever exists, as it exists, does so necessarily from God's decree. But the necessity of their existence is a contingent necessity. The individual effects of events within the world of creatures and created things are known by God ex hypothesi or consequentially. One concludes from Polanus that just as God is bound as primal cause to the fundamental reality of creation, so is he bound by consequential causality through his foreknowledge of all that is.

This seems to imply that the necessity of the decree does not deprive creatures or events in time and history

23 Ibid., 240/2.
from their own form of spontaneity. Polanus specifically
denies that the doctrine of the decrees is in any manner
like the Fate of the Stoics. He does not identify God as
bound within a perpetual causal nexus. 24

Similarly, he holds that the decree of God precludes
fortune and fortuitous causes. The counsel of God and his
subsequent decree, comprehend the 'ordo', 'ratio', 'finis',
and 'necessitas' of all things.

There is one final axiom which gives a broader under-
standing to causality in its relation to the decree of God.
Whatever God decrees, he does so in virtue of his will,
not as a simple effect of his nature. In this axiom, Po-
lanus gives a very good summary as to the meaning of the
decrees and the function they play in his theological scheme.

Deus enim vult principaliter seipsum, hoc est,
suam essentiam, sapientiam, bonitatem, justitiam,
potentiam, gloriam, aliasque suas essentiale\nproprititates & haec non potest non velle neces-
sitate naturae, liberrima tamen ab omni coactione:
deinde vult opera sua interna & externa, person-
alia quidem opera interna, necessitate itidem
naturae, interna vero essentialia & omnia externa

24 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber IV, 242(2)H: "Dogma Stoi-
corum spoliat Deum sua libertate & omnipotentia & ordinem
ac modum agendi in causis secundis divina sapientia insti-
tutum aboleat, nam Deum causis secundis alligat, ut sicut
fert eam natura, sic necesse sit Deum per eas agere: at
Ecclesia Christi\yx1c docet, non Deum ex causis secundarum,
sec causas secundas agere ex Dei tanquam summi & liberrimi
gubernatoris ac Domini praescripto, & ipsius arbitrio sub-
jectas atque alligatur esse."
The importance of the decree becomes more apparent. The decree of God is his will which is grounded in his good pleasure, determining his fundamental relationship to the world. As he wills to create the world, just so does he understand his creation. God does not hold a concept of creation or salvation as "possible" to his understanding only or preeminently. Rather he directs his understanding to that which he determines by his will (decree). For this reason, the foreknowledge of God depends upon the antecedent decision and determination by God, in the freedom of his will, to create, govern and save the world.

Foreknowledge and the Decrees:

Polanus holds that God, by virtue of his willing of all things, foreknew the future. Pelagians and the Jesuits were insistent that this aspect of the decrees is most suspect. For if God in determining his plans

25Polanus, *Syntagma*, Liber IV, 242(2)C.
knew what was to come, then has he not deprived man of his autonomy and cannot God be held responsible, ultimately, for the existence of sin?

The decree forms a rank of understanding God's activity: first, that it is a will to create all that is, was and will be; second, that the ordering power of the decree includes all secondary causes, along with all the means and circumstances of human activity; third, that the decree includes God's knowledge and determination of both substance and created 'accidents' but does not extend to sin, because it is not a thing (Res). 26 The order within which God foreknows his creation is determined solely by that which God himself instituted. The question may still be posed: but does that governance over the 'principium' of all things necessarily include sin? Polanus will only agree that God's creation of all things was altogether good. God knows evil within his permissive will. In that sense he knows evil or sin within the context of the Law and those 'negative' provisions which he has determined. However negative they may be, they serve as a kind of 'antitype' of God's love and election of man.

26 Riisen-Turretin, Compendium Theolgieae, 1703, pp. 192-200; on the locus "De Providentia Dei" both these matters are discussed in a way very similar to that of Polanus.
Wollebius uses a popular jingle (sounding very much like a student's summary of his Basel predecessor, Polanus) which is easily illustrative of this: "He commands and he forbids, permits, advises, and fulfills." 27 As Polanus himself summarizes his position: "Deum enim creator omnium naturam, bonas voluntates remunerat, malas judicat, utrasque ordinat." 28

The decree of God is antecedent to sin, not as its efficient cause, but because it is a singular and necessary order both in time and eternity.

The Significance of the Doctrine of Election:

We have argued, to this point in our thesis, that the development of God's essential attributes was the fountainhead of Polanus' theological system. In an important sense, we must still continue with that view; even in face of his doctrine of the Trinity, the ontological priority and perfection of God as First Cause and Perfect Being form the substantive basis of everything which follows. This arrangement owes its origin to the Ramist method; but

27 Beardalee, Reformed Dogmatics, p. 48.

28 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber IV, 240(2)H.
"the method" threatens the development of doctrine by the need for formal and deductive priority. Its visualization of a causal pattern assigns every doctrine and each internal pattern of development within that doctrine to a hierarchical place, in which one statement follows from the analysis of several words and moves forward toward a greater and greater comprehensiveness.

Within the development of the doctrine of predestination one finds the real use of Polanus' architectonic key. As he noted in his chapter on theological first principles, all the movement of theology may be measured either according to the Glory of God Himself or the end of man which God has purposed, man's eternal salvation. In the development of this doctrine, one finds that transition between the formal ontological requirements of God's own nature to the effects which that nature has upon the world in general and those elected to salvation in particular. Polanus himself professes the view that the

29 Keckermann, Barthol., Systema Theologiae, Hanover, 1605, 2nd edition.: Guiliel Antonius, p. 296; Election marks an interesting division in Keckermann's theology, for just as in the Heidelberg catechism, the first part of theology describes our misery, the second, the means of our salvation. Election, therefore, is an aspect of that 'remedia miseria' by which man is delivered from sin and is redeemed and justified.
doctrine of predestination is "...the foundation and
principle part of the Gospel..." 30

This doctrine fits admirably with the doctrine of the
decrees, for predestination involves broadly speaking,
both matters and men. The doctrine of predestination
describes God's activity in ordaining everything and
everyone to their proper end. One cannot fail to recog-
nize how this comprehensiveness follows the pattern set
by Thomas. When he questions whether one should think
of providence in connection with God (Question 22, art 1),
he tries to establish the goodness of things and the pur-
pose and cause of things as within God's ordaining and
disposing. Thomas points out:

It is not only in the substance of created things
that goodness lies, but also in their being or-
dained to an end, above all to their final end,
which, as we have seen, is the divine goodness.
This good order existing in created things is it-
self part of God's creation. Since he is the cause of
things through his mind, and, as we have already
made clear, the idea of each and every effect must
pre-exist him, the divine mind must preconceive
the whole pattern of things moving to their end.
This exemplar of things ordained to their purpose
is exactly what Providence is. 31

30 Polanus, A Treatise Concerning Gods Eternal Predest-
nination, Printed by John Legat: Cambridge, 1599, trans.
by Roger Gostwyke, p. 1.

31 Aquinas, S Thomas, Summa Theologiae, 1a 19-26, vol.
v. p. 89.
One must conclude, in light of the doctrine of the decrees, that predestination tends to move toward a complementary place alongside a general view of providence. As Heppe points out from Polanus’ work: "There is providence in God, predestination is a part of providence, therefore, etc...." 32

Already one finds in Polanus a tendency which was developed among the later Orthodox fathers to discuss causality, 33 the reality of evil, the concurrence of man’s willing within the framework of general providence. This provided a general framework for understanding the decrees of God and the reality of creation; while predestination was specific in discussing the effects of Christ’s eternal election upon mankind.

This is the sense then in which the chapter on the decrees, election and predestination provides the synthesizing effect for all of Polanus’ theological system. Pre-

32 Heppe, Reformed Dogmatics, p. 152. There is further proof of Polanus’ use of Aquinas in his principle: “He who is all-wise predestinates all his res, before they come into being, not to an uncertain issue, but to a fixed end, and accordingly His rational creatures also....” (p. 151)

33 cf. Alsted, J.H., Synopsis Theologiae, Hanover: MDCCXVII, Conrad Eyfridi; he suggests a consideration of election a priori, by which one descends from cause to effect, and a consideration a posteriori, or an ascent from effects to the causes, pp. 219, 220.
destination and the decrees become mediating articles for understanding God's work and will in creation in its relation to His work and will in the eternal election of Jesus Christ.

It is the "effect" of his doctrine of election to describe the remaining scope of theology: the mediation of Christ, adoption, effectual vocation, saving faith, justification and glorification. Furthermore, election is the key for discussing the nature of the church.

The theme of union with God in Christ, so important in the work of Calvin, comes strongly to the fore in Polanus as well. But that remains for us to develop further along.

Our contention is that election and predestination serve as the groundwork of all God's saving benefits. It seems no small coincidence that Polanus, so early a student of Melancthon should divide the reality of all theological knowledge between the knowledge of God and our knowledge of his benefits toward us. And it is not a coincidence that the classical place for Reformed theology which Polanus learned from Beza, the doctrine of predestination, becomes the source of synthesis and the occasion for his most comprehensive understanding of the Christian message.
Predestination: Grounded on God's Love:

Polanus' definition of predestination, taken alone, shows the weakness of his definitional approach to theological problems. Many of his definitions are thorough and complete; but his exploration into the rationale behind the definition extends understanding in a much more comprehensive manner than through attention to definition alone. This is especially true in his treatise on predestination. This is significant because it shows that the Ramist method, though obviously important to Polanus, does not simply dictate a movement from word and its definition through discursive thought to understanding. One cannot charge Polanus with an axiomatic system which is simply atomistic. His is a theology of the word and becomes a rhetorical system; yet his analysis of the Word extends further than a termination in word or concept as wholly sufficient.

Predestination, he claims, is "God's holy, wise, just and immutable decree, whereby he hath preordained all things from everlasting with himselfe, to such endes as whereby he may be glorified." 34 Such a general definition

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34 Polanus, A Treatise concerning Gods Eternall Predestination, P. 5.
gives the impression that predestination is simply an expression of God's ordination in the decrees. But this is not an adequate representation of Polanus' doctrine. He holds that election is grounded in the love of God. As a doctrine, predestination will not be sound until it is shown what manner of love it is, wherewith God loved the world. This doctrine is the foundation of the gospel because it is based upon God giving his only Son, fore-known before the foundations of the world, for the salvation of the elect. This free election forms the basis of faith for as he describes it, "...In brefe the doctrine of justification regeneration, and eternall life, I will not stand unles the ground worke thereof be sought for and shewed in the free election...." 35

Polanus insists, therefore, that ignoring or renouncing the doctrine of predestination is a denial of God and Christ and the Gospel. His praise is eloquent in describing the 'sweetness' of the grace of election.

As a vindication of God's love in Jesus Christ, the doctrine has several uses: It is confirmation of our 'affiance' concerning the certainty of salvation in Christ, against all distrust and despair. It is a strengthening

against pride and carnal security, in that all salvation is ascribed to God rather than to ourselves. Furthermore, this free election proves the deity and godhead of Christ, as he who elects us to eternal life, must himself be the true and eternal God. This doctrine then is a refutation of the Papists and other sorts of pelagians and their view of God's grace. As a matter of personal significance too, this doctrine stirs up in us a lively sense of God's love for us, and kindles in us a love for God and a love toward neighbor.

The Eternal Election of Christ:

Election is predestination to a gratuitous and blessed end; so it is first said of Christ and then of those united to him through his person and work. From all eternity God has designed his own only Son, to be the head of men and of angels (Isa. 42:1, Matt. 12:18). Such an election is a gratuitous act of God, not deriving in any sense from human merit. Such an election is for the glory of God the Father and the salvation of mankind. As God's elect, Christ is head and mediator over angels and men; in his incarnation, passion and resurrection he is known to men as Redeemer, Liberator and Reconciler. The angels
are those beings established by God in grace to enjoy the eternal bliss and live within the security of their good which is created by God. Christ then is set as their head, not as a mediator in a manner similar to the Incarnation and the Passion, but as that One to whom they hold fast, who preserves them in their good and guarantees their certainty in innocence.

By virtue of his eternal election, Christ is established the mediator before God and men; in accordance with God's eternal decree he is elected in respect of his human nature the Son of God. Polanus holds that this eternal election forms the basis for our confident reliance upon Christ, that our salvation always was and is in him. What then does Polanus reply to the question as to whether, seeing Adam did not fall before creation, one can claim that Christ's role as mediator and saviour was established from all eternity? The answer, he holds, has to do with God's foreknowledge. "For doubtles God before he made man, foresaw that he would not stand long in his innocencie: therefore in his great wisdom and goodness, he ordained his onely sonne the Redeemer, to deliver from destruction mankind that should be lost. For in this doth the infinite goodness of God more fully appeare, in preventing our wretchednes with his grace, and
Faith and Predestination:

The grace and sovereignty of God form the basis of the Christian faith. God's free love for creation is the basis for 'faith'. Faith cannot be understood as a kind of human instrumentality to which God responds with his grace. For faith, on the contrary, is grounded in the prior and unmerited grace of God; its whole beginning is rooted on the act of God.

Polanus believes that there are several key misunderstandings of the cause of predestination. In their essence, they correlate God's activity and man's activity in such a way as to compromise the freedom of God's grace. He points out: "The cause whereby god was moved to choose us or for which election was made, is not mans will, nor faith forseen, nor merits of men foreknown, nor nobilitie of birth, nor any other prerogatives, nor yet the merit of Christ, nor lastly the ende it selfe of election, but onely that good pleasure of God founded and grounded upon

36 Ibid., p. 8.
Within this sifting of false causes of election, one finds a strong polemic against the Roman notion of instrumental faith. Polanus rejects the idea that foreseen faith is the occasion of God's election. His Pelagian opponents argued that the very problem of election emerges from the observation that some men seem to have an excellency which makes them different from those about them. Further they contended that their worth and belief had been foreseen by God and had been rewarded by 'election'. This became the rationale in understanding that God 'chose' some and rejected others. But this is repugnant to Polanus, that anyone should search for grounds of excusing God his own free activity. At the basis of this argument, too, is the view that man shares in this activity of election. The Pelagians made a subtle displacement in their use of 'faith': for in arguing that God has chosen in eternity and in time to save us "by faith", he has thereby chosen us "for faith". Yet these carry quite different meanings. We are justified "by faith", not for faith's sake. It is a fallacious

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37Polanus, A Treatise Concerning God's Eternall Predestination, p. 5.
process to convert the antecedent statement into a consequent statement. God's prescience, claims Polanus, is not the cause of things. Simply that God foresaw who would do good works, is not to say that he chose them for good works.

In a positive manner Polanus concluded several things about faith: it is the gift of God; that the grace of election goes before faith; that faith is the 'effect' of election. What seems important is his insight into the fact that faith is not the cause of calling, nor even of the word and sacraments; neither is faith the 'cause' of the farther remote or first grace, election. If faith was indeed the 'cause', it should mean that election would not be grace, that man would be given the first part and God the second and most inevitably force the conclusion that the grace of election depends on man and not on God.

Christ and the Priority of Election:

The other significant polemic against the false causes of election has to do with the merits of Christ. Polanus does not intend raising doubts about the centrality of Jesus Christ for the salvation of man. Rather, he wishes to distinguish between the eternal decree of
God in eternity and the decree by which Christ is the mediator in time of that which is beneficial to man for salvation.

The cause of eternal election is eternal and since Christ was elect from eternity then it must be his election, not his merits, which are the efficient cause of election. For as Polanus points out, God did not choose us because Christ was to die for us but Christ died because God had chosen us in him. His adversaries argued that "We are elected in Christ, therefore for his merit. But this is a misreading of Ephesians 1:4; ‘...then here,’ as Polanus contends, "Paul doth not shewe the cause for which we are elected, but the means or subject in whom. Christ indeed is the meane in whom we are elected, in whom we are joyned and united with God that chose us: he is the head in whom the election of the members is sure and so the order of election is laid out, 1. the head is shose, 2. the members in the head.

Polanus continues: "Because the heavenly Father found no worth in all the seede of Adam, he cast his eies upon Christ, to choose members as it were out of his bodie, whome he would take up into the participation of life. Therefore we are elect in Christ, because we were
no way capable of such excellencie in our selves." 38

By comparison one should consider the true causes of election, as opposed to the false causes. God chooses by virtue of his grace and it is this grace and free will which is the basic reality of the divine election. This election is his free election in Jesus Christ of those whom he willed to save from destruction and as a means of giving praise to his glory.

The very matter of election (material cause) is the purpose and counsel of God in the judgment of the divine mind of those that shall be saved. The form (formal cause) of this activity is the ordination of some from the general mass of humanity to be saved from the general perishing of the many.

The final purpose of election gives purpose to the whole of Polanus' systematic scheme of connections in the Syntagma. The purpose of election is the glory of God, manifested and celebrated in the Church; and the glory of the elected ones, who know the benefits of God's deliverance in Jesus Christ.

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38 Polanus, Ibid., pp. 44-45.
The Effects of Election:

It is the effects of election in which Polanus finds the systematic power for gathering the articles of Christian belief. As one simply recites those effects, the mediation of Christ, adoption as sons of God, the effective calling to a life of grace, saving faith, justification, and glorification, one clearly sees the implications of this for an understanding of theology, as systematically set forth. For it is eternal predestination which is the groundwork and fountain of all God's saving benefits. Indeed, it is even the measure of the church; for the church, catholic and invisible is the "company of those predestinate to eternal life".

Election forms the basis too for an understanding of the person and work of Jesus Christ. He is the subject of election, not only as God the Word or as a man unlike any other: but as he is the everlasting Mediator. We are joined in union to him with God. By his imputed righteousness effected in his very person, His excellence constitutes a "fit means" for our union with God.

Polanus specifically denies, however, any idea of universal salvation: "The promise of salvation is not made generally to all, no not by preaching or declaration,
but only to those to whom the preaching or declaring of the promise is from everlasting predestinate, and therefore to such as indeed it is preached and declared." 39 Effectual application seems left only to the elect by Polanus. Indeed, he argues that even baptism does not make one regenerate; rather it is inner regeneration which brings one to baptism.

Yet one is not left without the marks of election, those effects of calling which give reality to the Christian life. One possesses a lively sense of vocation, the ardency and joy of saving faith, a quiet conscience which proceeds to justification, the earnest and constant desire of a new life, the witness of one's own spirit, and the inward testimony of the Holy Spirit. But the separation of the elect from the non-elect is not a matter of that virtue which is one's own possession of development; rather, it is a free gift of God.

Parenthetically, the marks of election help one to identify those characters in the Old Testament who were adopted by God's grace and love, even before the Incarnation and Passion of Christ. He mentions Adam, Eve, Abel, Seth, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as the types of the elect in the Old Testament.

39 Polanus, Ibid., pp. 52-53.
Summary:

In review of Polanus' doctrine of election and the decrees, several things have been demonstrated:

(1) The relation of Being and causality. The effect of the decrees doctrine for theological reflection is a tendency toward making abstract, generalized and formal the work of God. The decrees are the foundation for a doctrine of creation and providence, but fail to establish contact with Christology and pneumatology. It is not an adequate representation of the Trinity to claim, only by way of summary, that there is an exchange of attributes and an indivisibility of the Triune works. The doctrine of the decrees is a doctrinal expression of that tendency to assign priority of God's relationship to the world to his primal causality; and subsequently, to search for a point of contact between God's Being and contingent being (the creature) in a formal scheme of primary and secondary causality.

(2) On the other hand, we have seen the positive strength of anchoring predestination in the eternal election of Jesus Christ. If this could be put at the beginning of the discussion of God's work, then one
would not have the decrees to contend with, as a system of causality in its own frame of reference. When predestination is discussed alone, without the decrees, it is admirably Christological; but in view of the Ramist method, it follows that which is more general and more universal.

(3) The final distinct problem of the decrees and election is the manner in which the "method", in its preference for the general and universal, and then the special or particular, gets in the way of theological exposition. Indeed, the "method" tends to govern the exposition in the case of this doctrine. Providence as a general and universal decree of God's perfect will tends to stand apart from the election of Christ, as only a particular expression of God's will. The metaphysical problem of Aristotelianism seems to mark this doctrine: here again is the dualism between universal and particular, between substance and accidence, between time and eternity.
Conclusion

The difficulty of Amandus Polanus' theological system is the persistent struggle between form and doctrinal substance. His masterful presentation of Christian doctrine is threatened by his dedication to the demands and necessities of logic. The form of theology, the establishment of axiomatic propositions, the construction of syllogistic arguments tend to dictate the major concern of the theological system. The coherence of theological statement cannot be measured only as purely logical or theoretic constructs. The meaning of theological statement derives from a truth essentially extrinsic to the formal propositions themselves. The theologian works with existence-statements and coherence statements. Existence statements are denotative, in pointing toward and corresponding with a truth which manifests itself in an empirical fashion. Such statements are not subject to theoretic demonstration. Coherence-statements on the other hand are based on the truths of connections.

Polanus' theological system contains both kinds of statements. He does not intend logic to carry a natural power independent of revelation. He does not intend man's rationality as an antecedent, equal or co-operating power
in theological statement. He does not propose the church as the mediator of true theological concepts.

The tension in Polanus' theological system is between the undeniably vertical, transcendent existence-statements of God's truth and the reasoned skein of propositions and inferences which constitute the rule of coherence statements.

Theology is founded on certain principles which constitute the norm of every theological system. (1) Theology is the science of revelation. The Word of God is the disclosure and manifestation of God in the economy of His persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The subject of every theological proposition is the 'res divina'. God is the source and origin of every theological assertion: always the absolutely prior analogatum of theological statement. (2) Theological science depends on the absolute and prior initiative of God. The archetype of theology is in God in a primary sense, in the theologian only in an ectypal and derivative manner. Intelligibility in theological statement remains open, both in principle and in fact, to the initiative and wisdom of God.

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1 Polanus, Syntagma, Liber I, 2(1)H: "Illud sunt res divina, hoc est, Deus, & quicquid est Dei, quatenus illud ordinatur & refertur ad Deum, veluti pertineas ad cognitionem & cultum eius, nimirum omne bonum a Deo ortum in natura, sumones, & actiones operaque Dei."
Without an acknowledgement of worship and adoration the concepts of the theologians remain sterile and detached speculations.  

(3) Theological science is a practical science. It is not simply discursive or solely speculative. It is always ordered to the glorification of God and to the blessedness of man himself. Theological reflection involves the will and the intellect, not in a servile or mechanical fashion, but in the service of the Supreme Truth of God's reality and man's true end. (4) Theology begins and ends as a profound reflection upon God's nature, supremely Good, and man's true purpose, the service of God's purpose through the acknowledgement of his mind and the uncompromising testing of God's truth. (5) Rationality in theological statement is rooted in God's majestic ineffability and the goodness in which he centers the structures of man's thinking upon the nature of Truth itself. False theology may be untrue because it is not fixed on the absolute and prior reality of the one true God or because it confuses, ignores or distorts the rationality of that claim upon man's mind. For this reason, Polanus maintains the tension between existence-statements and coherence-statements. They are related as archetype to ectype; their relationship is only maintained in dialectical

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2 Polanus, *Syntagma*, Liber I, 15(1)F.
Finally, the theological endeavor does not fall under the control of church or theologian. Po-
lanus makes the daring assertion that Christ himself is the Theologian. Christ the mediator unites in himself the auditive and visionary modes of knowledge and realizes in himself what the theologian only acknowledges through the enigma of faith. Theological knowledge retains its eschatological character in being under the control of the Resurrected Christ.

The orderly patterns of coherence-statements depend upon the objective reference of the existence-statements' as they come under the power of the Divine Logos. Implication, therefore, is determined by the nature of God himself. The formation of propositions and logical constructs depends on the economic manifestation of God himself.

The difficulty of this procedure is its inability to state in statements how statements are related to existence. Polanus tries to establish the relation of thought to existence through the mediating power of the Word. He conceives theology as a radical downward movement of Truth to its ectypal form, the mind of man. The initiative for theological thought begins in the Logos, Jesus Christ, and in and through Christ, the Holy Spirit. Yet to prevent a
disjunction between Being and statement, Polanus tends to identify the words of Scripture as the end-point for both Reason and Being.

The causation of God is joined with the 'effects' of words. Therefore, an abstractive process is necessary to extract the meaning of words relation to Being. Polanus tends to fall back on the Medieval synthesis, even to appropriate many of the difficulties of nominalism. He assumes an inherent relation between the forms of thought and the forms of being. Thought itself, if rigorous enough in following the demands of logic (Aristotelian logic!), can discover through the natural characteristics of words, the truth itself. Polanus does not seem to believe as strongly as Calvin in the intuitive and self-evident power of the Word to persuade the mind and convey the truth's meaning. Only after an analysis of syntax, cause and effect, and a judgment of the proper subject under discussion, can one "invent" the arguments which words in their narrative form convey. Words as recognition-statements, deriving their truth from outside themselves and dependent upon an objective reality, tend to be neglected or changed in the intention procedures. Words must be shaped, managed, filed and classified; finally definition, division and invention is subject to the strictures of logic and
becomes something less than a belief in the propriety of the words. The perspicuity of Scriptures, interpreted by terminist logic, becomes a theory of language and a quality inherent in Scripture itself rather than the action of God's Spirit Himself.

Amandus Polanus' theological system is a theology of the Word. It is Christological, biblical in origin, and is informed by a strong Trinitarian doctrine. The weakness of the system is its nominalism, its hidden assumptions about the relation between word and Being, its dependence, in short, upon the older Medieval forms of thought. The break-through of the Reformation is systematized in terms of the medieval synthesis; restoring the cause-effect scheme, reviewing the dualism between Substance and its accidents, making the distinction too clear between the ontological and soteriological, giving greater prominence to the nature of God than to the economic activity of God. Polanus tends to leave unanswered the dynamic role of Eternal Truth to historical fact. He searches for the relation between God and man as postulated, at least in principle, in the dualism of definite and finite being. The form of Being tends to bear traces, in Polanus' thought, as the timeless reflection of a changeless, eternal God.
In the development of doctrine, there is a formalism in his treatment of God's essence (the essential properties) and God's economy (the persons of the Trinity). He tends to give priority to God's Being as opposed to God's Economy in the Trinity. The doctrine of God's essential Being stands at the head of other doctrinal development; even though Polanus has a very well developed doctrine of the Trinity, the formal requirements of the "system" give priority to God's Being. The Ramist order of analysis tends toward the formalistic and abstract, placing the development of doctrine into formal requirements and doing violence to the substantive doctrine. The idea of Being, considered prior to a real consideration of the Incarnate and eternal Logos, tends to stand alone and impose a static and ontic structure on both doctrines of essential properties and the Trinity of God's persons. The purely theoretic claims of absolute Being suggest that the doctrine of God's essential properties have priority to the economic activity of God in his persons. The Ramist order of analysis is used by Polanus to resolve the tension between Being and thought in a semi-nominalist manner.

We must add, in fairness and tribute to Polanus,
that his doctrinal formulations show a strong concern with the Patristic insight into God's nature. "The fathers in the Early Church were concerned in the **homoousion** to affirm their faith in the deity of Christ, believing that what God is to us in the saving acts of Christ he is eternally in his own divine Being. They thus stressed the ontology, the being and nature of the person of the incarnate Son." ³

The same must be said of Polanus' theological thought. The major polemic in his teaching career is against the new Arianism. He is more concerned for Christ's identity as the eternal Logos, the eternal revelation of God's supreme and perfect Being, than for exploring the dynamic work of Christ. Polanus' careful examination of the homoousion and settlement of Nicaea is the driving force within his theological programme. Our contention, in our criticism, is that his use of Ramist and Aristotelian methodology and logic tend to obstruct his chief purpose. His gathering and arrangement of theological propositions arguments and his ordering of the theological topics tends to impose a sys-

tematic structure which is neither necessary to an understanding of the subject matter nor necessarily helpful in explicating the Trinitarian nature of Christian theology.
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