

Wednesday 20 November, 6th Week, 6pm (Note the later start)
'Love and Cambridge Platonism at the Origins of C.S. Lewis' Moral Vision'
It's all in Plato, all in Plato: bless me, what do they teach them at these schools!'"-Lord Digory,
The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle

At a crucial moment in his intellectual formation, C.S. Lewis began doctoral work on the Cambridge Platonist Henry More (1614-1687). This research did not lead to degree but Lewis' encounter with Cambridge Platonism at the early stages of his philosophical and religious development exercised an important and lasting influence on his thought. His Augustinian conversion to Christianity, like the Bishop of Hippo before him, involved a series of moments but ultimately turned on an encounter with the 'books of the Platonists', books in this case composed, not in ancient Rome, Greece or Egypt, but in Cambridge in the seventeenth century. Lewis' conversion, in his words, 'from "popular realism" to Philosophical Idealism; from Idealism to Pantheism; from Pantheism to Theism; and from Theism to Christianity' was made possible by a Platonising vision of the moral life, a vision that insisted upon an objective and transcendent moral good, reflected in the human soul and seen most clearly in the co-inherence of Imagination and Reason. Moral insight and the spiritual action that follows from it ultimately depend on love, for Lewis, a topic and theme that motivates all of his major scholarly, apologetic, philosophical, and literary writings. This paper will argue that his debt to the Cambridge Platonists and the tradition of Christian Platonism more broadly comes out most clearly in the way he thinks about the unifying nature and particular forms of love.

Dr. James Bryson, Research Associate, Sidney Sussex College; Visiting Fellow of the Cambridge

See inside for the information regarding the Lectures on 23 Oct, 30 Oct, 4 Dec.



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THE MNEMOSYNE PROJECT AT PUSEY HOUSE

This Series is open to all students, clergy, and members of the public.
The aim of the series is to provide an intensive introduction to some of
the key periods, characters, and ideas of Christian history.

Recollection Lectures - Michaelmas
 2019

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RECOLLECTION LECTURES 2019 MICHAELMAS

Intensive introductions to some of the key periods, characters & ideas of Christian history.

Wednesday 23 October, 2nd Week, 4pm

Reading the Psalms Literally or Allegorically?

Reading Psalms One and Two with some of the Church Fathers

In the first six centuries of the Christian Era both Jews and Christians used the psalms in their liturgies and interpreted them in their different commentary traditions. This lecture seeks to place the use of the psalms by the early Church Fathers in this broader setting; it will also seek to explain how the so-called 'schools' of Antiochene and Alexandrian commentators started to read the psalms in such different ways, sometimes mirroring the different Jewish approaches in their focus on both a 'literal' and an 'allegorical' reading. Having established a context for these different ways of reading the psalms, the paper will then apply this to the ways Psalms 1 and 2 were read by the church fathers, first, however, with an eye to Jewish exegesis, and then, more specifically, looking at the different forms of Christian exegesis. It will become evident that there are many ways in which just one psalm text can be understood, dependent upon the cultural context of the interpreter. The paper will end by raising questions about the significance of multivalent readings for the ways we use the psalms both liturgically and in our own commentary tradition today.

The Revd. Canon Professor Sue Gillingham is Emeritus Prof. of the Hebrew Bible at the University of Oxford, Director of the TORCH Psalms Network, and a Senior Research Fellow at Worcester College. She is also ordained to the Permanent Diaconate and serves at St Barnabas Church, Jericho.

All are warmly invited for tea and coffee before the lectures, at 3:30.

Wednesday 30 October, 3rd Week, 4pm

Recollection and Reality: Reflections on Homer and Boethius

Are our personalities intrinsically connected with the divine life, and how might we understand them to be so? This lecture will consider the relation between self-knowledge and reality as it is presented in Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*, with reflections from Homer and Plato. Boethius (c 480-524 A.D.) was a Roman statesman, poet, and philosopher who wrote the *Consolation* while he was awaiting execution after being unjustly condemned for treason. The *Consolation* is written as a dialogue between a prisoner and a woman named Philosophy, and focuses on the question of whether there is any justice, any sovereign order, in the realm of time and change-amidst the suffering and wrongdoing of the world. The *Consolation* is above all a work of recollection, in the Platonic sense of the word-that is, it aims to bring the prisoner (and indeed the reader) to an inward self-knowledge in relation to intelligible, eternal reality. In this context, Dr Blackwood will consider the concept of recollection in its theological, psychological, and liturgical dimensions.

Dr Stephen Blackwood, founding President of Ralston College, Savannah, Georgia, and Visiting Fellow in the Cambridge Divinity Faculty.

Wednesday 4 December 8th Week, 4pm

Pneumatology in the pre-Nicene Church

Angels and demons, prophecies and visions, deliverance and exorcisms. From the closing of the Apostolic Age, the soteriological aspects of the power and presence of the Holy Spirit driving the expansion of the nascent Church are powerfully attested to in the Fathers of the late second and early third centuries. This lecture will consider the emergence of the theology of the Holy Spirit, the signs of His presence, and how pre-Nicene pneumatology can inform contemporary evangelical and charismatic renewal movements.

Fr Joseph Hamilton, DPhil student in Patristics at Christ Church, and a priest of the Archdiocese of Sydney.

See overleaf for the information regarding the Lecture on the 20th of November.

