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Justin Martyr and the Fatherhood of God

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AND THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD

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RÉSUMÉ : La description de Dieu comme Père est un lieu commun du vocabulaire théologique de Justin. Il décrit Dieu tout à la fois avec l'expression platonicienne « Père du tout » et avec la simple expression biblique « le Père », sans faire de différence entre les deux. La description de Dieu comme Père semble n'avoir eu aucune signification conceptuelle pour sa doctrine de Dieu. On remarque cependant une certaine règle dans son usage des termes : l'expression absolue (« Père ») prédomine dans sa présentation de la relation de Dieu au Fils incarné. Les récits des évangiles, avec leur langage de la paternité divine, ont donc laissé leur marque sur la façon dont Justin parle de Dieu.

ABSTRACT : The description of God as Father is a commonplace of Justin's theological vocabulary. He describes God with both the Platonic phrase "Father of all" and the absolute phrase "the Father" of the Bible, and makes no distinction between them. The description of God as Father appears to have had no conceptual significance for his doctrine of God. There is, however, a discernable pattern in his usage : the absolute predominates in his presentation of God's relation to the incarnate Son. The historical narrative of the Gospels and its language of fatherhood have left their mark on the manner in which Justin describes God.

T he description of God as Father is a commonplace of Justin Martyr's theological vocabulary. He describes God with both the Platonic phrase "Father of all" and the absolute phrase "the Father," the latter a phrase characteristic of the Bible, and he does so throughout his writings. But quite what status Justin attributed to the word Father when used of God and what, if any, particular theological significance it had for him is uncertain. The idea of the fatherhood of God has, of course, been a topic much discussed in both scholarly and popular literature in recent years. But, while considerable attention has been given to the biblical background of the idea, little attention has been given to its use in the Patristic era, the formative period for the development of its doctrinal significance.[1] From the fourth century onward, with the writings of Athanasius, the idea that God was Father came to be seen as fundamental to the Christian understanding of God as Trinity and to the way in which God acted to bring about salvation. That God was Father came to be seen as descriptive of rela-

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1. But now see Peter WIDDICOMBE, *The Fatherhood of God from Origen to Athanasius*, Oxford, The Clarendon Press, 1994.

tions intrinsic to the divine nature : God was Father of the Son by nature and, by adoption, Father of those who believed in the Son. The evidence for the use of the word Father for God in the second century, however, suggests something rather different from this later understanding.

We might, perhaps, be inclined to read Justin (with hindsight) as the first in a series of Greek Fathers, whose thinking about divine fatherhood would culminate in the post-Nicene view of its significance. But the hallmarks of post-Nicene orthodoxy are not to be found in Justin's writings.[2] Justin wrote and worshipped in a world in which for Greek, Jew, and Christian alike the fatherhood of God was taken for granted but not much developed. Justin was used to the occurrence of the word in Plato as a title for God, and, as he sought to integrate Greek culture and the Christian faith, the Greek usage linked usefully for his purposes with the biblical tradition of referring to God as Father. The neutrality of the word helped make the link the more secure. There has been a tendency amongst Justin scholars to see Justin's use of the word Father for God as evidence for a distinctive emphasis in early Christian thinking about the doctrine of God, an emphasis that highlights the compassionate, immanent nature of the divine and is reflective of the biblical tradition,[3] but such a conclusion is not warranted by the evidence. That evidence, however, is difficult to interpret : Justin does not make divine fatherhood a topic of analysis and he uses the word Father for God unselfconsciously. Apart from the word God itself, the word Father is his favourite term for referring to God and he seems to have felt no need to explain the meaning of the word or to justify its application to God. It is only through a detailed examination of each occurrence of the word Father in Justin's writings, the phrases with which he associates it, and the contexts in which it appears, that one can hope to avoid making anachronistic assumptions about its significance for Justin.

Such an examination suggests that although it is not possible to conclude that Justin had a deliberate sense of what the word Father meant when used of God, there is nonetheless a discernible pattern in Justin's usage of the word, a pattern that reflects the influence of the biblical language of Father and Son. As we shall see, in those passages where Justin's attention is focused on the Father-Son relation as that relation is testified to in the historical narrative of the life of Christ, and particularly the passion narrative — passages which occur mainly in the *Dialogue with Trypho* — his fatherhood vocabulary clearly reflects the influence of biblical usage. In these passages, Justin refers to God as Father predominantly with the absolute usage "the Father" or "his Father," and the "Father of all" phrase seldom occurs. The way in which Justin works with the philosophical and biblical material suggests the potential in the second century for the development of what was to come in the later Christian tradition : the focusing of the idea of the fatherhood of God in the Father-Son relation

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2. Thus, for instance, while Justin distinguished between God's relation to the created order and his relation to the Son, he did so without employing the description of God as Father to make the distinction.

3. See for instance the discussion in L.W. BARNARD, *Justin Martyr : His Life and Thought*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1967, p. 76-84. He concludes that two conceptions of God existed unreconciled in Justin's mind : the biblical idea of a God as "a living Creator, a compassionate Father," and the Middle Platonist emphasis on God as "the unknowable and transcendent Cause" (p. 83).

and the development of a distinctive way of referring to God as Father, when (as with Origen's Commentaries and Homilies) the biblical texts, and especially the Gospel of John, become the subject of much more extensive reflection for their own sake. In what follows, I shall look at how Justin uses the word Father for God in three main contexts : in his discussions of the capacity of language to describe the divine, in his descriptions of God as transcendent and as creator, and in his portrayal of the Father-Son relation. I shall also comment on the role fatherhood language plays in his soteriology and in his depictions of liturgical practice.

GREEK AND BIBLICAL LITERATURE
AND JUSTIN'S REFERENCES TO GOD AS FATHER

Justin was heir to what earlier studies on the fatherhood of God in Western thought tended to regard as two distinct traditions of referring to God as Father. Schrenk and Quell, in their well-known entries on πατήρ and related words in the *TWNT*,[4] and Jeremias, in various studies,[5] identified two families of traditions of referring to God as Father — the Greek and the Judeo-Christian — which they sharply contrasted with each other. The Greek conception they characterized as cosmic and genealogical and the biblical as historical and elective. The presence of the former they thought indicated in Greek literature by the occurrence of some form of the phrase "Father of all,"[6] the provenance of which was *Timaeus* 28C, "Now to discover the Creator and Father of all (ποιητὴν καὶ πατέρα τοῦδε τοῦ παντός) is indeed a hard task, and having discovered him, to declare him to all men is quite impossible," a passage cited frequently in Greek, Jewish, and Christian literature subsequent to Plato, and of particular importance for our study. The latter — the biblical — they thought indicated by the occurrence of some form of the absolute phrase "the Father,"[7] which, along with the phrases, "my Father," and "your Father," they regarded as typical of New Testament usage.[8]

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4. See the lengthy article by Gottlob SCHRENK and Gottfried QUELL on πατήρ, πατρῷος, πατρία, ἀπάτωρ, πατρικός, TWNT, 5 (1954), p. 946-1024 ; English version in TDNT, 5 (1967), p. 945-1022. References are to TDNT.

5. Joachim JEREMIAS, Abba : Studien zur neutestamentlichen Theologie und Zeitgeschichte, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966 ; selected articles translated by John Bowen and others in The Prayers of Jesus, London, SCM Press, 1967. References are to The Prayers of Jesus.

6. SCHRENK, TDNT, p. 955.

7. The absolute occurs in Philo as well. See the discussion in SCHRENK, TDNT, p. 956-958. On the question of Philo's influence on Justin, see the review of scholarly opinion by D.T. RUNIA, Philo in Early Christian Literature : A Survey, Assen, Van Gorcum, 1993, p. 97-105, where he concludes that in recent years scholars have tended to postulate that while Justin was acquainted with themes from Hellenistic Judaism, his knowledge came through channels which differ from Philo. See also Oscar SKARSAUNE, The Proof from Prophecy. A Study in Justin Martyr's Proof-Text Tradition : Text-Type, Provenance, Theological Profile, Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1987, especially p. 425-434 ; and Mark EDWARDS, "Justin's Logos and the Word of God," JECS, 3 (1995), p. 262-267.

8. JEREMIAS, The Prayers of Jesus, p. 29ff. ; SCHRENK, TDNT, p. 982ff. The phrase "Father of all" occurs once in the New Testament, at Eph. 4.6. While it is probable that Justin knew the epistle (SKARSAUNE, The Proof from Prophecy, p. 100), he makes no reference to the verse. How the biblical evidence is to be interpreted, of course, has been a matter of great controversy. Jeremias' famous contention that the use of the word abba to address God in prayer was original with Jesus and that its use conveys the sense of a

When we turn to Justin, we find that he uses the word Father to refer to God 110 times : 31 times in the *First* and *Second Apologies*[9] and 80 times in the *Dialogue with Trypho*.[10] Phrases in which the word "Father" is conjoined with the words "of all" occur 16 times in the *Apologies*, while those in which God is referred to as "the Father" or "his Father" occur 12 times.[11] In the *Dialogue*, the figures are in almost a directly reverse ratio : "Father of all" phrases occurs 24 times, "the Father," and variants, 56 times.[12] The "Father of all" usage almost always occurs in one of three forms : "(God),[13] the Father and Creator (usually δημιουργός or ποιητής) of all (πάντων or ὅλων),"[14] or "(God), the Father and Lord (δεσπότης or κύριος) of all,"[15] or, more simply, "(God), the Father of all." In the absolute usage, the word "will" (usually θέλημα or βουλή) appears with such frequency that "the (or his) Father's will" becomes a set phrase.

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unique relation of intimacy and obedience of the Son with the Father (*The Prayers of Jesus*, p. 54-65) has been seriously questioned by James BARR, "'Abba' isn't 'Daddy'," *JTS*, 39 (1988), p. 29-47, and others. For a survey of recent scholarship on the subject, see Mary Rose D'ANGELO, "*Abba* and 'Father' : Imperial Theology and the Jesus Traditions," *JBL*, 111 (1992), p. 611-630 ; and her "Theology in Mark and Q : Abba and 'Father' in Context," *HTR*, 85 (1992), p. 149-174. On the evidence of the Qumran documents, see Eileen SCHULLER, "The Psalm of 4Q372 1 Within the Context of Second Temple Prayer," *CBQ*, 54 (1992), p. 67-79. Robert HAMERTON-KELLY, *God the Father : Theology and Patriarchy in the Teachings of Jesus*, Philadelphia, Fortress (coll. "Overtures to Biblical Theology," 4), 1979, provides a survey of the biblical literature following the lines of Jeremias' argument ; he reaffirms and defends his interpretation in "God the Father in the Bible," in Johannes-Baptist METZ and Edward SCHILLEBEECKX, ed., *God as Father ?*, English edition Marcus Lefébure, *Concilium*, 143, Edinburgh, T&T Clark and New York, Seabury, 1981, p. 95-102. In her two articles, D'Angelo sharply contests Hamerton-Kelly's argument and contends that it would be better to think of fatherhood in the Bible as a reflection of the idea that the emperor's relation to the empire was that of a father to a household. As this study will show, neither Hamerton-Kelly's thesis nor D'Angelo's is true of Justin's writings.

9. The edition cited throughout is *Iustini Martyris apologiae pro Christianis*, edited by Miroslav Marcovich, Berlin and New York, de Gruyter, 1994. On the question of the relation between the *First* and *Second Apologies*, see Charles MUNIER, *L'Apologie de Saint Justin Philosophe et Martyr*, Fribourg, Éditions Universitaires Fribourg Suisse (coll. "Paradosis," XXXVIII), 1994, p. 14-18, who concludes in favour of the literary unity of the two, the position adopted here. There is no discernible difference in the use of the word Father for God between the *First* and *Second Apologies*. I presuppose the current dating : for the *Apologies*, 150-155 CE (MUNIER, *L'Apologie*, p. 18-20), and for the *Dialogue*, 160 CE (BARNARD, *Justin*, p. 23ff. ; and Eric OSBORN, *Justin Martyr*, Tübingen, Mohr [coll. "Beiträge zur historischen Theologie," 47], 1973, p. 8).

10. The edition cited throughout is *Die ältesten Apologeten*, edited by Edgar Goodspeed, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984.

11. There are three occurrences where the words "of all" do not occur. For instance, in 1 *apol*. 6.1, Justin refers to "the Father of righteousness and temperance and the other virtues." (Righteousness and temperance are two of Plato's four cardinal virtues, discussed in the *Protagoras* and elsewhere.) Included in the number of absolute usages are a few instance where the phrase is slightly more elaborate. In 1 *apol*. 15.8, for example, Justin refers to God as "the heavenly Father," a construction that reflects the influence of Matt. 6.1 and 32, verses which he quotes a few lines later.

12. *Contra* Eric OSBORN, *Justin Martyr*, p. 19-20, whose discussion of Justin's idea of fatherhood is based on the claim that "Justin's most frequent description of God is as father and maker of all things, terms which link fatherhood with creation" (p. 19). As we shall see when we consider Justin's comments about Marcion, Osborn's assertion skews his interpretation of the significance for Justin of the description of God as Father.

13. The word God often, but not invariably, begins the phrase.

14. Combinations which are found in earlier Greek literature ; see SCHRENK, *TDNT*, p. 955.

15. A phrase found in later Judaism and Stoicism, and in Gnosticism ; for examples, see SCHRENK, *TDNT*, p. 979.

Justin quotes passages from both Greek and biblical literature in which God is called Father and he makes no distinction between either the provenance or the meaning of the two styles of reference. The word Father occurs once in a quotation of Homer's description of Zeus as "Father of men and gods"[16] and once in a quotation of *Timaeus* 28C.[17] It occurs 20 times in (Justin's versions of) biblical quotations, 4 of which are from the Old Testament,[18] and 16 of which are from the Synoptic Gospels.[19] Among the latter, he most frequently quotes Matt. 11.27 (7 times).

GOD AND LANGUAGE

Justin's doctrine of God bears the hallmarks of Middle Platonist speculation about the nature of the divine. Like that of his Middle Platonist contemporaries Alcinous and Numenius, Justin's doctrine is characterized by a high view of the transcendence of God, and by the idea that there is a supreme God or principle, and one or two subordinate gods. Justin, like Numenius (but unlike Alcinous), employs the lan-

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16. 1 *apol.* 22.1.
17. 2 *apol.* 10.6. Although Justin does not mention the *Timaeus* when he quotes the phrase, he does ascribe it to Socrates. The form in which he quotes it is different from *Timaeus* 28C. His version reads, "It is neither easy to find the Father and Maker of all, nor, having found him, is it safe to declare him to all" (Τὸν δὲ πατέρα καὶ δημιουργὸν πάντων οὔθ' εὑρεῖν ῥᾴδιον, οὔθ' εὑρόντα εἰς πάντας εἰπεῖν ἀσφαλές), whereas the *Timaeus* reads ποιητὴν καὶ πατέρα, and has ἀδύνατον, rather than ἀσφαλές. ALCINOUS, *Didaskalikos* 27.1 (ALCINOOS, *Enseignement des doctrines de Platon*, edited by John Whittaker, translated by Pierre Louis, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1990), similarly alters the phrase (although he omits the word Father), which suggests that Justin's and Alcinous' wording may have been taken from a text current in the Middle Platonist tradition and not directly from the *Timaeus* itself. See the discussion in Carl ANDRESEN, "Justin und der mittlere Platonismus," *ZNTW*, 44 (1952-1953), p. 167-168. The changes in Justin's quotation do not have a significant bearing on how he employs the word Father for God. He does not quote the *Timaeus* phrase as an authoritative statement in relation to the use of the word Father for God, but rather as proof of the risks that first Socrates, and then, even more, Jesus, took in making God known.
18. 2 Sam. 7.14, Ps. 96.7, Prov. 10.1, and Is. 63.16. On Justin's sources for quotations from the Hebrew Bible, see Oscar SKARSAUNE, *The Proof from Prophecy*, throughout. Skarsaune concludes that Justin had two sources for his quotations from the Hebrew Bible : testimony sources and LXX MSS (*The Proof from Prophecy*, p. 90). See also W.A. SHOTWELL, *The Biblical Exegesis of Justin Martyr*, London, S.P.C.K., 1965.
19. Lk. 6.36 (par. Matt. 5.45) twice, Matt. 5.16, Matt. 6.1, Matt. 6.32 (par. Lk. 12.30) Matt. 7.21, Matt. 11.27, Matt. 19.17, Matt. 26.39, and Lk. 23.46. On Justin's relationship to the gospels see the summary remarks of Arthur BELLINZONI, "The Gospel of Matthew in the Second Century," *The Second Century*, 9 (1992), p. 239-242, where he summarizes the conclusion of his earlier work, *The Sayings of Jesus in the Writings of Justin Martyr*, Leiden, E.J. Brill (coll. "Supplements to Novum Testamentum," XVII), 1967 : "Justin's quotations are based on a systematic harmonization of written Gospels, certainly Matthew and Luke and possibly also Mark." See also the several responses in *The Second Century*, 9 (1992), to Bellinzoni's article, and also SKARSAUNE, *The Proof from Prophecy*, especially p. 92-113. Whether and to what effect Justin knew the Gospel of John remain disputed questions. BELLINZONI, "The Gospel of Matthew," p. 240, maintains that Justin shows no dependency on John. For a review of the issue, see J.W. PRYOR, "Justin Martyr and the Fourth Gospel," *The Second Century*, 9 (1992), p. 153-169. Pryor concludes that Justin "does appear to be familiar with a document which we know as John's Gospel," but that "he does not (apart from I *Apol.* 61.4-5) quote from it or reproduce a saying of the Lord from it in the same way that he does with the synoptics," and that he did not "regard it as scripture or the work of an apostle" (p. 169). Whatever Justin's knowledge of the Gospel, it has left no discernible mark on his description of God as Father.

guage of three Gods.[20] This first god is referred to by all three as Father,[21] although, in contrast to Justin, neither Alcinous nor Numenius refers to God as Father with any frequency. But like Justin, neither feels a need to explain exactly what constitutes this ascription and why it is appropriate to apply it to God.[22] The attributes Justin assigns to the first God were those commonly used by Middle Platonists to characterize divine transcendence.[23] God, according to Justin, is ingenerate,[24] ineffable,[25] unnamable, incorruptible, immutable, and impassible.

Justin regarded the capacity of language to describe God as strictly limited, and this limitation extended to the divine titles, including the word Father. His comments about the baptismal formula illustrate well the strength of his feeling on the issue. In *First Apology* 61, he warns that the words pronounced at baptism — "in the name of God, the Father and Lord of all" — should not be taken to mean that God has a name. "For," he explains, "no one can name the ineffable God ; and if anyone dares to say there is a name, he raves with a hopeless madness."[26] As his discussion in the succeeding two chapters makes clear, Justin was afraid that to suggest in any way that God was describable would be seriously to undermine the idea of God's transcendence. Justin explains that it was not the "nameless God"[27] (whom he describes in the passage as both the Father of all and Father of the Son), who appeared to Moses in the burning bush, as the Jews mistakenly think, but rather the Logos, for, as he says in the parallel passage in *Dialogue* 59-60, anyone "with the smallest intelligence will not venture to assert that the Maker and Father of all things, having left all supercelestial matters, was visible on a little portion of the earth."[28]

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20. In 1 *apol.* 60.5-7, he explains that an (inaccurate) version of the idea of three gods is to be found in the *Timaeus*, Plato having borrowed it from Moses. In the passage, Justin describes the God of Genesis 1.1 as "the first God," the Logos as "the power next to the first God," to whom Plato assigned "second place," and the Holy Spirit as a "third," who was assigned "the third place."

21. *Didaskalikos* 10.3 ; for Numenius see NUMÉNIUS, *Fragments*, edited and translated by Édouard Des Places, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1973, Fr. 12. According to Proclus, Numenius named his three gods grandfather, father, and son (in *Tim.* 1303, 27ff. = Fr. 21). On the thought of Alcinous, see ALCINOUS, *The Handbook of Platonism*, translated and commentary by John Dillon, Oxford, The Clarendon Press, 1993 ; on Numenius, see M. FREDE, "Numenius," *ANRW*, 36, 2 (1987), p. 1054-1070 ; and on both, see John DILLON, *The Middle Platonists : A Study of Platonism 80 B. C. to A. D. 220*, London, Duckworth, 1977, p. 267-306 and 361-379.

22. In the one passage where Alcinous comments on the term, *Didaskalikos* 10.3, he associates the title Father with the idea that God is "cause of all things" and "bestower of order on the heavenly Intellect and the soul of the world."

23. Albinus, for instance, lists a number of these terms in *Didaskalikos* 10.3-4, and 7-8.

24. His favourite attribute, which he employs eleven times, throughout both the *Apologies* and the *Dialogue*.

25. He uses the term ten times.

26. 1 *apol.* 61.10-11. I shall return to this passage below when I discuss Justin's descriptions of second century liturgy.

27. 1 *apol.* 63.1.

28. *Dial.* 60.2. In passing, we may observe an oddity in Justin's treatment of the ineffability of God : although Justin quotes Exodus 3.14 in 1 *apol.* 63, he does not exploit the verse to substantiate his claim that God was nameless, something Philo frequently had done. For Philo on this, see Joseph MCLELLAND, *God the Anonymous : A Study in Alexandrian Philosophical Theology*, Cambridge, Mass., Philadelphia Patristic Foundation (coll. "Patristic Monograph Series," 4), 1976, p. 32-34.

Justin does not discuss the relation between divine transcendence and ineffability systematically, but in the two places where he comments explicitly on the question of ineffability, it is clear enough that one of the main influences on his thinking was Middle Platonist speculation about the relation between God, being, and language.[29] In the first passage, *Dialogue* 4.1, in the course of describing the refined nature of the Platonic understanding of how human beings come to a knowledge of God, Justin alludes to a collage of the Platonic texts commonly referred to by Middle Platonists in their discussions of divine ineffability. He refers to God as τὸ ὄν (*Timaeus* 27D)[30] and says that God is described by Plato as having no colour, form, or greatness, and is perceivable only by the purified mind. He goes on to explain that this "being is beyond all being, unutterable and inexplicable (ὂν ἐπέκεινα πάσης οὐσίας, οὔτε ῥητὸν οὔτε ἀγορευτόν) but alone honourable and good, coming suddenly into souls well disposed, on account of their affinity to and desire of seeing him."[31] The first phrase, "beyond all being," recalls *Republic* 509B ; the second, "unutterable and inexplicable," recalls *Timaeus* 28C, and, possibly, *Parmenides* 142A as well ; and the second and concluding phrases recall the *Seventh Letter* 341C-D.[32] Justin, however, does not draw out the implications of his statement for the status of religious language, but rather continues on in the passage with the question of the (supposed) affinity between the created soul and the ingenerate (ἀγέννητος) first God and the epistemological implications of this affinity.[33]

The second passage, *Second Apology* 6, is of particular interest for our study, as the word Father is among the terms to which Justin specifically refers in the course of

29. Justin's apophaticism also reflects the influence of biblical and Jewish understandings of divine transcendence and unnameability, as is evident in his comment that "all the Jews even now teach that the nameless God spoke to Moses" (1 apol. 63.1). But when he discusses the matter explicitly, it is the Middle Platonist flavour that is apparent. Frances Young, "The God of the Greeks and the Nature of Religious Language," in *Early Christian Literature and the Classical Intellectual Tradition : In Honorem Robert M. Grant*, edited by William R. Shoedel and Robert L. Wilken, Paris, Éditions Beauchesne (coll. "Théologie Historique," 54), 1979, p. 52-53, comments on the influence "negative" Jewish theology had on early Christianity. For a brief survey of the issue of religious language in Greek thought, see the whole of YOUNG's essay "The God of the Greeks," p. 45-74, and see also MCLELLAND, *God the Anonymous.* For an extensive survey of apophaticism in Antiquity, see Raoul MORTLEY, *From Word to Silence*, 2 vol., Bonn, Hanstein (coll. "Theophaneia," 30-31), 1986.

30. In the Alexandrian tradition from Philo onwards the phrase τὸ ὄν of *Timaeus* 27D was associated with the description of God as ὁ ὤν. John WHITTAKER, "Moses Atticizing," *Phoenix*, 21 (1967), p. 196-201, reprinted in his *Studies in Platonism and Patristic Thought*, London, Variorum Reprints, 1984, outlines the history of the relation between the two terms from Philo to Numenius.

31. E.P. MEIJERING, *Orthodoxy and Platonism in Athanasius : Synthesis or Antithesis ?*, Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1968, p. 7, suggests that Justin's statement is not quite such a definite statement of divine transcendence as might at first appear ; in as much as Justin calls the highest reality τὸ ὄν, according to Meijering, he can only state that it is "beyond being" if "being" has the restricted sense of "created being."

32. On these texts and their apophatic significance, see the various articles by Whittaker, reprinted in his *Studies in Platonism and Patristic Thought.*

33. An affinity which was the basis for the Middle Platonist confidence that while God was indescribable, he could be perceived by the mind. See the discussion in YOUNG, "The God of the Greeks," p. 48-53 ; and EDWARDS, "Justin's Logos," p. 273. Justin rejected the idea of such an affinity after his conversion. Under the tutelage of the old man who was instrumental in bringing him to a belief in the Christian faith, Justin abandons his Platonic conception of God, and accepts that unaided the human mind is incapable of seeing God and can only do so through the agency of the Holy Spirit, speaking through the prophets (*Dial.* 7.1).

his discussion. His starting-point is an apologetic concern to demonstrate that the many names for the gods in Greek mythology do not establish the *existence* of many gods. Indeed, the very occurrence of the names is proof of the inadequacy of the Greek conception of God, because it shows that the Greeks do not have a proper grasp of the idea of divine transcendence. The Christian understanding, by contrast, is superior because it affirms a God who lies beyond names. It is not surprising, then, that Justin should feel constrained to explain the status of the names Christians commonly ascribe to the one God, lest anyone mistakenly confuse the Christian practice with that of the Greeks : "But to the Father of all, who is ingenerate, there is no name (ὄνομα) given. For by whatever name he might be called (προσαγορεύηται), he would have as his superior (πρεσβύτερον) the one who gives him the name." The names he lists are Father, God, Creator, Lord, and Master. These, he concludes, "are not names, but designations (προσρήσεις) derived from his good deeds and works (ἐκ τῶν εὐποιϊῶν καὶ ἔργων)."[34] Central to the logic of his argument is his belief that God's unnameability follows directly from his ingenerateness.[35] In *Dialogue* 5.5-6, using the third man argument,[36] Justin explains that as the ingenerate cause of all, the first God, by definition, can have nothing before him. But, according to Justin, naming presupposes the priority of the one who does the naming. Thus, for God to be who he is, it is necessary that he be ineffable.

Accordingly, the titles we assign to God, as Justin says, cannot refer to his essence but can only be derived from his activities, a contention that appears elsewhere among second century writers. Theophilus, for instance, makes much the same point as Justin with a rather longer list of thirteen titles.[37] The view may reflect the influence of the analogical principle formulated by Alcinous.[38] The principle states that some things may be predicated of God in as much as he is their source and cause. Theophilus attempts to specify what the activities are that give rise to each, though his explanations are less than illuminating. He comments on the title "Father" twice, explaining that when one speaks of God as "Father," one speaks "of him as all things (τὰ πάντα αὐτὸν),"[39] and that God is "Father because he is before all things (πρὸ τῶν ὅλων)."[40] Justin, however, gives no explanation of what he thinks gives rise to the predications for any of the divine names he lists, and the question of why he thinks it appropriate to call God Father remains unanswered. And however important it may have been for Justin to stress the ineffability of God, when we turn to Justin's actual

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34. *2 apol.* 6.1-2.

35. According to MORTLEY, *From Word to Silence*, vol. 2, p. 34, a view typical of the period.

36. A form of the Aristotelian *argumentum ex gradibus* ; see J.C.M. VAN WINDEN, *An Early Christian Philosopher : Justin Martyr's Dialogue with Trypho Chapters One to Nine*, Leiden, E.J. Brill (coll. "Philosophia Patrum," 1), 1971, p. 98.

37. *Theophilus of Antioch : Ad Autolycum*, edited and translated by Robert Grant, Oxford, The Clarendon Press, 1970, I. 3.

38. One of three ways to approach a conception of God set out by Alcinous in *Didaskalikos* 10.5-6. On this passage, see DILLON's commentary in *The Handbook*, p. 109-111. He notes, p. 109, that Celsus also made such a synthesis of the three ways (*ap.* Origen, *Contra Celsum* 7. 42), something Justin does not do.

39. *Ad Autolycum* I. 3.

40. *Ad Autolycum* I. 4.

usage of divine titles, the apophatic tendency of his thought does not appear to have had any obvious effect.

GOD AS TRANSCENDENT AND CREATOR

In the passages where Justin discusses divine transcendence, we find that Father is one of the words he commonly uses of God. The references most often are in a "Father of all" form, but he also employs the absolute form. We have already seen Justin observe in *Dialogue* 60.2 that anyone "with the smallest intelligence will not venture to assert that the Maker and Father of all things, having left all supercelestial matters, was visible on a little portion of the earth." In *Dialogue* 127.2, he says that it is not to be imagined that "the ineffable Father and Lord of all" who existed before the world was made, appeared on some slight part of the earth. In a similar passage in *Dialogue* 114.3, Justin refers to the transcendence of God using both a "Father of all" phrase and the absolute "the Father" in the same sentence. The factors that influence him to use one rather than the other in any given passage are not patient of analysis. As well, although Justin uses the word Father in the context of describing divine transcendence, he also commonly refers to God as "God" and as Creator without reference to the word Father, and there is no discernible difference in meaning. It does not appear that the designation of God as Father in these and similar instances has any particular significance for Justin.

One of Justin's principle concerns is to maintain, in contradistinction to Marcion, that this first transcendent God is also the creator God. Given that Marcion pitted the Old Testament God of creation against the New Testament Father of Jesus, it might seem reasonable to conclude, as Osborn does,[41] that Justin's description of God as Father plays a role in his anti-Marcionism. Justin twice explicitly rejects the teaching of Marcion,[42] and he may have had Marcion in mind when he tells his readers that God, because of his goodness, created all things out of nothing for the sake of humanity.[43] It is also possible that he was thinking of Marcion in *First Apology* 16.6 and 7. In 16.6 he quotes a version of Matt. 22.36f. (and parallels): the greatest commandment is to serve "the Lord *who made you*"[44]; in 16.7, he quotes a version of Matt. 19:16 (and parallels) in which, to the words "Good Master," Christ replies, "There is none good but God alone, *who made all things*."[45]

Osborn is inclined to think that Justin saw in the *Timaeus* 28C combination of "Father and Creator" an authoritative riposte to the Marcionite position, and that his

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41. OSBORN, *Justin Martyr*, p. 20.
42. 1 *apol.* 26.5 ; 1 *apol.* 58.1.
43. 1 *apol.* 10.2.
44. The clause in italic does not appear in any of the gospel parallels. BELLINZONI, *The Sayings of Jesus*, p. 42, notes that the clause is also found in *Barnabas* 19.2 and the *Didache* 1.2, and concludes that Justin may have found it in his source.
45. Again, the clause in italic does not appear in the gospel parallels. BELLINZONI, *The Sayings of Jesus*, p. 42, thinks that Justin added the phrase to his source.

own frequent use of the phrase was a recurring intimation of the correct position.[46] But the evidence does not support this supposition. Justin does not make particular use of the phrase "Father and Creator of all" when he is discussing the theme of creation. Furthermore, he makes no reference to God as Father in any of the anti-Marcionite instances just cited. Of particular interest is his failure to refer to God as Father in 16.7, though he knew a textual variant in which the word "Father" occurs ; moreover, when he does quote the variant, in *Dialogue* 101.2, he does not include the reference to creation.[47] It is not possible to conclude that Justin thought the description of God as Father especially had to do with the Marcionite doctrine of God and creation. Insofar as the words "Father" and "Creator" both refer to the same entity, namely the first God, one and the same God is both, but Justin does not explore what the substance of that conjunction might be and he does not make a theological point out of it, either in relation to Marcion or otherwise.

THE RELATION OF FATHER AND SON

The reference to God as Father is frequent in Justin's descriptions of the God-Son relation, as it is expressed in both the Son's pre-incarnate and his incarnate existence. Part of Justin's apology for the Christian faith was the demonstration that the Son was both divine, and, in contrast to the many sons of the gods recounted in Greek mythology, uniquely so. It is in the course of arguing for this in *First Apology* 22, that he makes his one reference to the Homeric statement that God is the "Father of men and Gods." The phrase, he observes, is accepted by all writers, and he goes on to conclude that the idea that God has a Son should not therefore be strange to the Greeks, though Justin, of course, intends it to be understood that the Logos is the true Son. But apart from this play on the parallel between the Greek and Christian reference to God, he makes no remarks on the description of God as Father. His attention is on the Son, and not on the idea of God as Father, and he goes on to maintain that since there are precedents in Greek mythology for the idea of a virgin birth, and a crucifixion as well, these too should be seen as credible.[48]

The God who can be called Father, then, has a Son. The Son's divinity, as Justin perceives it, derives from his closeness to the Father, but Justin does not employ the idea of divine fatherhood, either ontologically or affectively, as later Christian writers were to do. The recurring images Justin uses to characterize the Son's relationship to the Father are "first born" ($\pi\rho\omega\tau\acute{o}\tau\omega\kappa\omega\varsigma$),[49] an allusion to Colossians 1.15, and his being "generated ($\gamma\epsilon\gamma\epsilon\nu\nu\tilde{\eta}\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$) from God,"[50] an idea for which he also finds support

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46. OSBORN, *Justin Martyr*, p. 20.
47. Osborn, who cites Justin's quotations of the verses as evidence of the anti-Marcion significance of Justin's fatherhood usage, fails to note this distinction in the wording of the quotations (*Justin Martyr*, p. 20).
48. 1 *apol.* 22.1.
49. *Dial.* 85.2. In 1 *apol.* 63.15, he observes that the Son "being first-born Word of God, is also God."
50. E. g. 1 *apol.* 22.2.

in scripture (Ps. 2.7,[51] and Prov. 8.25[52]). Justin can also refer to creation as generated,[53] but he clearly distinguishes between the Father-Son relation and the Father-creation relation, and he generally applies the language of generating to the Son and that of making to creation.[54]

The word Father is not given a particular place in these descriptions of the Son. He refers to God indiscriminately as "God"[55] and as "Father," the latter either in a "Father of all" form,[56] or in the absolute form.[57] He makes no play on the idea of Father and Son as inherently related concepts to establish the sense of a special relation between God and the Son, which would help distinguish it from the relation between God and the creatures, as both Origen and Athanasius were later to do.[58] Nor does he make any suggestion that the terms Father and Son themselves might imply the idea of generation, as Athanasius was to do.

Nor, in contrast to subsequent Christian tradition, does Justin attribute affective qualities to the pre-existent Father-Son relation or suggest that that relation exists for its own sake. Origen and Athanasius were to interpret the words of Proverbs 8.30 "and I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him always" to mean that the Father-Son relation was one of mutual happiness. But there is none of this in Justin's thinking.[59] In Justin's portrayal, the pre-existent relation of Father and Son does not exist for its own sake. Rather, the Son, whose origin lies in the first God's will, is subject to that will, and his role is functionally oriented to effecting that will for creation.[60] When Justin refers to the passage from Proverbs, it is to demonstrate that scripture attests that there is a worthy interlocutor for the first God, one who is generated and not made like the created order. But there is no suggestion here of mutual delight.

51. E. g. *Dial.* 88.8.

52. *Dial.* 61.4.

53. *Dial.* 5.2.

54. Commenting on Prov. 8.22-25 in *Dial.* 62.4, Justin maintains that the passage demonstrates that the Son as γέννημα is prior to the creatures as ποιήματα : he was "generated as a beginning before all the things made, and as an offspring, by God" ; he makes a similar remark about the passage in *Dial.* 129.4. In both instances, Justin ignores the fact that Wisdom too is described in Prov. 8.22 as "created" (ἔκτισε) by God. He appears to have been unwilling to use "making" language of the Son.

55. E. g. 1 *apol.* 23.2.

56. E. g. *Dial.* 61.3.

57. E. g. *Dial.* 102.2.

58. Partly on the ground that the two terms are correlatives. For this, see WIDDICOMBE, *The Fatherhood of God*, p. 69-76, 130-132, 143-144, and 163-169.

59. Demetrius TRAKATELLIS, *The Pre-existence of Christ in the Writings of Justin Martyr : An Exegetical Study with Reference to the Humiliation and Exaltation Christology*, Missoula, Montana, Scholars Press (coll. "Harvard Dissertations in Religion," 6), 1976, p. 179, remarks that Justin does not enter into "any speculation pertaining to the life of and the relations within the deity."

60. As is well known, Justin does not pose the question of the eternal generation of the Son. It would appear that for Justin the Son was generated as a "preparatory step before the creation of the universe" (BARNARD, *Justin Martyr*, p. 90). But Justin rarely describes the Son as an instrumental agent in the creation of the world and he does not make use of the distinction between the λόγος ἐνδιάθετος and the λόγος προφορικός. See Demetrius TRAKATELLIS, *The Pre-existence of Christ*, p. 24-27. On the subordination of the Son to the will of God, see Dennis MINNS, "The Will of the Father and the Obedience of the Son in the Writings of Justin Martyr and Irenaeus" (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 1984), p. 30ff. ; and BARNARD, *Justin Martyr*, p. 90-91.

While the description of God as Father allows us to conclude that God has a Son, it would seem that it does not in itself allow us to conclude that God's relationship to the Son is distinct from that which he has with the rest of the created order.

When we turn to Justin's portrayal of the Father-Son relation and the incarnate life of the Son, especially the passages where Justin gives a close reading of the Gospel narratives of the incarnation and life and death of Christ, we see that Justin's use of the word Father for God takes on the colouration of the biblical usage : the absolute "the Father" and "his Father," often in conjunction with the word "will," is a pronounced feature of such discussions. Justin's most concerted use of the absolute form occurs in his account of the life of Christ, which runs from chapter 88 of the *Dialogue*, where he recounts the birth and baptism of Christ, to chapter 106, where he refers to the resurrection and the post-resurrection appearances of Christ. Much of this material takes the form of a discussion of the passion narrative and the demonstration that that narrative is the fulfillment of Psalm 22. In these chapters, Justin refers to God with the word Father 15 times : 13 of these as either "the Father" (8) or "his Father" (5) and 2 as "Father of all." The word Father occurs 5 times in scriptural quotations, all from the Synoptic Gospels.

One of Justin's main concerns in this section of the *Dialogue* is to demonstrate that Christ's life and death were the expression of God's care for humankind. As part of this demonstration, he was also concerned to make it clear the Son acted in complete accord with God's will. The theme of will and obedience, of course, is basic to the Gospel narratives of the passion and death of Christ, and Justin's sensitivity to this is reflected in the frequency with which he comments on the theme, a theme which for him is summed up in the words of Matthew 26:39 : "Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me ; [nevertheless], not as I will, but as thou wilt."[61] The birth of the Word from the Virgin, the Word's incarnate life, and his suffering and death are all described by Justin in terms of the Father's will and the Son's obedience. He refers to the birth of the Son from the virgin, using such phrases as "according to the will of the Father" (κατὰ τὴν τοῦ πατρὸς βουλήν)[62] ; "according to the will of the Father and Lord of all"[63] ; or, less commonly, "according to the will of God."[64] Correspondingly, "Christ the Son of God, who was before the morning star and the moon, submitted (ὑπέμεινε) to become incarnate."[65] Justin's commitment to the idea of God's compassionate involvement in humankind's redemption is plainly shown in the intensity with which he characterizes God's intentionality in bringing about the suffering and death of Christ. In *Dialogue* 103.8, having outlined the sufferings of the passion as the fulfillment of Psalm 22, Justin tells us that "the Father willed his Son really to undergo such sufferings for our sake." Earlier, in *Dialogue* 95.3, he had observed that "his Father willed" the Son's physical sufferings "that by

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61. *Dial.* 99.2.
62. E. g. 1 *apol.* 63.16.
63. E. g. 1 *apol.* 46.5.
64. *Dial.* 23. 3.
65. *Dial.* 45. 4.

his stripes the human race might be healed." The Son, in obedience, "does not boast in accomplishing anything through his own will or might,"[66] and "having become man for our sake he endured (ὑπέμεινε) to suffer and to die."[67]

We may note that while Justin places the Father-Son relationship as it is expressed in the created economy at the centre of his exegetical treatment of the biblical texts, that relationship is described in functional terms, just as the pre-existent relationship was. The salvation effected through the life and death of the Son is preeminently the work of the Father. The Son "appears to be little more than the Father's instrument"[68] and Justin has little interest in the Son as the active, willing subject of the Gospel narrative. As Justin portrays it, the Father-Son relationship, as it appears in the historical narrative of the gospels, is, like the pre-existent relationship, devoid of affective qualities. The intimacy that Schrenk and Quell, Jeremias, and others see as characteristic of the biblical Son's relation to the Father has left no discernible trace in Justin's portrayal of the Son's relation to the Father.

What has left its trace in this material is scriptural usage. There is no evidence that Justin deliberately adopted the scriptural usage — it seems unwitting. But the preponderance of the absolute form in the pattern of usage in this part of the *Dialogue* reflects the usage in the Gospels and the nature of the subject matter as historical narrative. There are no references in *Dialogue* 88-106 to the Son as the pre-existent "second God," "Word," "Power," and "Wisdom." Instead, the references are to "the Son" or "his Son," "Christ," and "Jesus," and there is a corresponding balance in the structure of the references to God as "the Father" or "his Father."

The *Ad Autolycum* of Justin's more philosophically oriented younger contemporary Theophilus provides us with a contrasting example. Theophilus refers to God with the word Father 8 times.[69] He makes a direct allusion to *Timaeus* 28C once.[70] He cites no biblical text in which God is called Father. "Father" is linked with "of all" in 7 of the 8 instances.[71] The absolute does not occur. We find frequent references to "the Logos" and "Wisdom," but seldom to "the Son"[72] and the word Father does not

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66. *Dial.* 101.1.

67. 1 *apol.* 50.1. The idea that the Son of God is ὁμοιοπαθής with us (*Dial.* 48.3), subject to the same feelings and temptations as us, is one of the main emphases in Justin's understanding of the incarnation : "he became a man for our sakes so that becoming a partaker of our sufferings, he might also bring us healing" (2 *apol.* 13.4). The conflict between what Christ knows to be the will of God and his own desire, seen in the prayer in Gesthemane, demonstrates that he is human and so subject to suffering, for, as Justin observes in *Dial.* 99.2, it is "made plain by this that he truly had become a suffering man (παθητὸς ἄνθρωπος)."

68. MINNS, "The Will of the Father," p. 53.

69. He otherwise most commonly refers to God with the word God.

70. *Ad Autolycum* II. 4.

71. In the remaining instance, God is described as the "Father of the righteous" (*Ad Autolycum* I. 3).

72. There is a reference to "Son" at *Ad Autolycum* II. 22, where Theophilus explains that the Logos is "also his [God's] Son." He immediately goes on to make it clear that the idea of the Logos as Son should not be confused with the ideas of the poets and mythologists, who describe the sons of the gods as generated through sexual union. Rather, the Logos as Son is to be thought of in terms of the counsel, mind, and intelligence of God.

occur together with the word Son.[73] Quite how we should account for the difference in the use of the word Father for God between Theophilus and Justin is uncertain, but it is notable that *Ad Autolycum* deals mainly with the Christian ideas of God and of creation and, in contrast to Justin's writings, is silent concerning Christ, the incarnation, and the atonement.[74]

JUSTIN'S SOTERIOLOGY

The description of God as Father has no discernible significance in Justin's soteriology.[75] While he describes the Christian's coming to faith as an "illumination" (φωτισμός)[76] and a "regeneration" (ἀναγέννησις), preceded by repentance for sins, and effected in baptism,[77] he does not speak of the Father as the agent of this regeneration, though he so describes the Son,[78] and the Holy Spirit.[79] The theme of the sonship of believers he mentions a few times, but has little to say about it. The theme is presented in terms of the Christians' taking over God's promises to the Jews. Through the generative agency of the Son, Christians "are called and are the true (ἀληθινά) children of God" in contrast to the Jews, because, unlike them, Christians "keep the commandments of Christ."[80] He once employs the imagery of inheritance, saying that Christ is to have the "children" of the Gentiles as "fellow-heirs" (τέκνα συγκληρονόμα) — a possible allusion to Romans 8.17 — with the children of Jacob.[81] But he does not refer to Paul's idea of adoption as sons and as fellow-heirs of Christ. He makes no reference to adoptive sonship in relation to the sonship of the Son. The ideas of the comparison and contrast between the Son by nature and sons by adoption, and of the dependency of the latter on the former, which were to be important for Origen and Athanasius, do not occur in Justin.

Justin's conception of the Christian life is dominated by his belief that it is through obedience to the will of God, a will revealed in the life and death of the incarnate Logos, that believers may live virtuous lives acceptable to God and so inherit eternal life and avoid eternal punishment.[82] The affective dimension, not found in the Father-Son relation, is present in the God-Christian relation, but the description of God as Father does not appear to have a particular place in this. Justin implies that the life of obedience into which Christians are called will be characterized by fellow-

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73. I shall give a fuller account of Theophilus' use of the word Father for God and of the Apologists' use in a subsequent study.

74. Robert GRANT, *Greek Apologists of the Second Century*, London, SCM, 1988, p. 165.

75. On Justin's anthropology and his understanding of the process of salvation, see MUNIER, *L'Apologie*, p. 114ff.

76. 1 *apol.* 61.12.

77. 1 *apol.* 61.3.

78. E. g. *Dial.* 123.9.

79. *Dial.* 135.6.

80. *Dial.* 123.9. For a discussion of Justin's idea of the new Israel, see OSBORN, *Justin Martyr*, p. 175ff.

81. *Dial.* 140.1.

82. See MUNIER, *L'Apologie*, p. 124-127 ; and BARNARD, *Justin*, p. 154-156.

ship with God, a fellowship grounded on love. In *Dialogue* 114.4, he tells us that Christ "causes living water to burst forth in the hearts of those who by him have loved (ἀγαπησάντων) the Father of all." Elsewhere, he observes that "after God" the Christians "worship and love (ἀγαπῶμεν) the Word."[83] The problem with the Jews was that they did not possess "friendship or love (φιλίαν ἢ ἀγάπην)" for "God."[84] He describes the righteous life of the Christians as "delighting the Father"[85] ; faith in Christ brings "joy."[86] In a phrase which suggests that those who believe may have trust and confidence in God, Justin says that the true Israel is all of those, who, through Christ, "have fled for refuge to the Father."[87] But, while references to God as Father occur in several of these statements, they do not do so exclusively ; the word God is used as well. The statements are scattered and not developed. If there is a sense of intimacy conveyed by the presence of the word Father, Justin nowhere draws it out.[88]

JUSTIN'S DESCRIPTIONS OF BAPTISM AND THE EUCHARIST

One final aspect of Justin's use of the word Father for God remains to be examined. Justin refers to God as Father in the context of describing liturgical practice in Rome.[89] He does so twice in relation to baptism and once in relation to the eucharist.[90] In each of the three instances, he uses a "Father of all" phrase. Twice in *First Apology* 61, Justin says that baptism is performed in "the name of God, the Father and Lord of all."[91] In the first instance, the sentence continues : "and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit"[92] ; in the second instance, the reference to God

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83. 2 *apol.* 13.4.

84. *Dial.* 93.4.

85. *Dial.* 119.6.

86. 1 *apol.* 49.5.

87. *Dial.* 125.5.

88. In contrast, for instance, with Origen, for whom the intimacy and confidence that Christians can have with God through coming to know him as Father, is of central importance for their relationship with God. See WIDDICOMBE, *The Fatherhood of God*, p. 93ff.

89. H. Benedict GREEN, "Matthew 28:19, Eusebius, and the *lex orandi*," in *The Making of Orthodoxy : Essays in Honour of Henry Chadwick*, edited by Rowan Williams, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1989, p. 136, speculates that Justin was defending the church of Rome against charges of innovation in its baptismal practices by, in effect, saying that the trinitarian profession of faith that now accompanies the immersion is the Roman equivalent of the Syriac formula, in which he himself probably was baptised.

90. His descriptions of liturgical practice have been much discussed. For a recent survey of the issues and the scholarly literature see MUNIER, *L'Apologie*, p. 127-141. On Justin's account of the baptismal liturgy, see especially C.I.K. STORY, "Justin's Apology 1. 62-64 : its importance for the author's treatment of Christian baptism," *VC*, 16 (1962), p. 172-178 ; on his account of the eucharistic liturgy, see M. JOURJON, "Justin," in *L'eucharistie des premiers chrétiens*, edited by Willy Rordorf *et al.*, Paris, Éditions Beauchesne (coll. "Le point théologique," 17), 1976, p. 76-88. See also J.N.D. KELLY, *Early Christian Creeds*, Harlow, Longman, 1972³, p. 42-44 and 70-76.

91. The use of a variation of the baptismal formula would have been inconceivable for a later theologian such as Athanasius, for whom the words as they occur in Matthew 28.19 signified the orthodox understanding of the divinity of the Son, and thus necessarily were to be reproduced exactly in the act of initiation into the faith. See the discussion in WIDDICOMBE, *The Fatherhood of God*, p. 170-171.

92. 1 *apol.* 61.3.

"Father and Lord of all" is followed a few lines later with the words in "the name of Jesus Christ, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and in the name of the Holy Spirit, who through the prophets foretold all things about Jesus."[93] The threefold structure is similar, of course, to the baptismal formula of Matthew 28.19.[94] But if Justin knew the formula and is here alluding to it, he has felt free to paraphrase it.[95] In a recent article, Luise Abramowski has postulated that the elaboration in both the reference to the Son and that to the Father is to be explained by Justin's concern to be intelligible to his pagan audience.[96] But however suggestive Abramowski's hypothesis may be, there is no way to establish whether it is true. As we have seen, Justin is happy enough to use the absolute phrase when he refers to the transcendence of God and in other contexts where he appears to be as concerned to speak to his pagan audience as he is here, and her claim presupposes that Justin made a deliberate distinction between the absolute and the "Father of all" usage — something this study shows to be highly doubtful.

In his description of the eucharist in *First Apology* 65, Justin explains that the president takes the bread and the cup and "gives praise and glory to the Father of all, through the name of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,"[97] a phrase which possibly is a summary of prayers from the service.[98] But Justin refers to God in other ways than as Father in this context ; he also says that "we bless the Maker of all through his Son Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit."[99] We are once again left not being able to attribute particular significance to the occurrence of the word Father.

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93. 1 *apol.* 61.13.

94. Commentators have long puzzled over the genesis of the Matthean formula. Jane SCHABERG, *The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit : The Triadic Phrase in Matt. 28:19b*, Chico, Calif., Scholars Press (coll. "SBL Dissertation Series," 61), 1982, has argued that Daniel 7 is the source for the development of a threefold formula for use in baptism. Luise ABRAMOWSKI, "Die Entstehung der dreigliedrigen Tauformmel — ein Versuch," *ZThK*, 81 (1984), p. 417-446, has contested Schaberg's argument, suggesting that the threefold Aaronic blessing of Numbers 6:22-27 is a more promising place to look.

95. Édouard MASSAUX, *Influence de l'Évangile de Saint Matthieu sur la littérature chrétienne avant Saint Irénée*, Leuven, Leuven University Press (coll. "Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium," LXXV), 1986, p. 408, concluded that the description showed literary dependence on Matthew, but he has not been followed in this by more recent commentators. A.J. BELLINZONI does not discuss Matthew 28:19 in his *The Sayings of Jesus* and GREEN, "Matthew 28:19," p. 136, concludes that there is no citation here of Mathew 28:19, either explicitly or implicitly, and he notes that Justin does not justify the baptismal liturgy by reference to scripture but by reference to the experience of earlier initiates. See also J.N.D. KELLY, *Early Christian Creeds*, p. 42-44, who thinks that Justin may be reflecting a threefold baptismal interrogation. The Matthean formula is more closely reproduced in the *Didache* 7.1 and 3 (*La Doctrine des Douze Apôtres [Didachē]*, edited and translated by Willy Rordorf and André Tuilier, Paris, Les Éditions du Cerf [coll. "Sources Chrétiennes," 248], 1978), where God is referred to with the words "the Father."

96. ABRAMOWSKI, "Die Entstehung," p. 430.

97. 1 *apol.* 65.3. In its eucharistic prayers, the *Didache* 9.2 and 3 enjoins that thanks be given to "our Father" and, in 10.1, once the meal is over, the community is to give thanks, addressing God as "holy Father."

98. KELLY, *Early Christian Creeds*, p. 71-72. MUNIER, *L'Apologie*, p. 136, observes that not having a fixed eucharistic prayer was a characteristic the church at Rome shared with liturgies from the Hellenistic milieu.

99. 1 *apol.* 67.2.

CONCLUSION

In the second century the idea that God is Father and known to be so was a self-evident truth accepted by Greeks, Jews, and Christians. It was not a problematic concept addressed by either Justin or his contemporaries. The distinction that Quell and Schrenk, Jeremias, and others make between the Greek and the biblical traditions finds no place in Justin's thought. The common occurrence of the language of divine fatherhood in the two traditions of literature was accepted by him without remark. While it allowed him explicitly at one point — in his citation of *Timaeus* 28C — to argue for the inherent rationality of the idea of God having a Son, the description of God as Father played no role in his argument for the philosophical sophistication of Christianity, and its superiority to Greek thought and ethics. The description of God as Father, in both the "Father of all" form and the absolute form, was for him a commonplace of his religious culture. That the description of God as Father was taken for granted by Justin is underlined by the fact that although the focus of his apologetic was the distinctiveness of the Christian understanding of the Son's divine status, Justin did not go on to consider the possibility that this view of the Son might have implications for the way in which the nature of God's fatherhood was to be considered. Only later in the third and fourth centuries did this occur ; only then did divine fatherhood become a theological *topos*. Justin's tendency to use language of generation when speaking of God's relation to the pre-existent Son and language making when speaking of God's relation to creation is evidence that he perceived a difference between the two relations, even if he did not have a conscious sense of what that difference consisted in. This tendency, however, is not co-ordinate with the pattern we have seen in the phrases Justin uses to describe God as Father.

As we have seen, Justin's use of the word Father for God in either form appears not to have any determinable conceptual significance for his doctrine of God, for his understanding of divine transcendence, for his understanding of God as creator. There is no evidence that the description of God as Father had particular soteriological or liturgical significance for him. It can neither be said that his use of the word Father for God signified a heightened, and so distinctively Christian, conception of God as compassionate and immanent to the creation, nor that it signified a deliberate linking of God as Father with the idea of God as creator in contradistinction to Marcion. What we do see in Justin's language is the predominance of the absolute phrase "the Father" and "his Father" in his presentation of God's relation to the *incarnate* Son. Justin, concerned to demonstrate that the incarnation and the life and death of Christ were the expression of God's will for the care of his creation, does not have a sense of the biblical portrayal of the relation between the Son and the Father as one of intimate closeness. But, however unaware Justin may have been that the absolute form was characteristic of biblical usage, the attention he gives to the historical narrative of the Gospels, with its focus on the Father-Son relation, has left its mark on the manner in which he describes God as Father. While more extensive and intensive reflection on the biblical texts was to be taken up later in the Christian tradition by Origen, Athanasius, and others, a reflection that would bring with it the development

of a highly distinctive understanding of the nature of God, we can see here with Justin in the second century that those texts already have begun to shape the way in which the Christian tradition would use language to refer to God.