The Influence of St John Chrysostom in the West

Dr Marcus Plested: Constantinople 13-18th September 2007

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Before speaking of the influence of St John Chrysostom in the West, we should first acknowledge the obvious fact that for St John, East and West formed parts of the undivided Church.[1] While he never visited the West, his great love for St Paul made him long to visit the tomb of the Apostle in Rome and to kiss the very dust of his corpse. In a famous passage from his homilies on Romans, Chrysostom heaps praise on Rome – for its greatness, antiquity, beauty, power, wealth, and prowess. 'But', he says, 'I let all this pass, and esteem it blessed on this account, that both in Paul's lifetime he wrote to them, and loved them so, and talked with them while he was with us, and brought his life to a close there. Because of this the city is more notable upon this ground, than upon all others together. And as a body great and strong, it has as two shining eyes the bodies of these Saints [Peter and Paul]. The sky is not so bright, when the sun sends forth its rays, as is the city of Rome, sending out these two lights into all parts of the world.'[2]

Chrysostom also sought help from Rome in his troubled time as Archbishop of Constantinople – and Rome was unwavering in her support. Between Easter and Pentecost 404 he wrote to Pope Innocent requesting, and getting, support (albeit help that came too late to prevent his final exile). But there is no indication that he recognised any appellate jurisdiction, as is witnessed by the fact that he wrote in similar terms to the other patriarchs of the West, Chromatius of Aquileia and Venerius of Milan. The West, including the Western Emperor Honorius, gave her full backing to St John, support that contributed to his posthumous rehabilitation in the East.

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[1] First among my acknowledgements, I must mention the indispensable work of Chrysostomus Baur, *Saint Jean Chrysostome et ses oeuvres dans l'histoire littéraire* (Louvain / Paris 1907). I am much indebted to that work for much of the material in the section on the medieval west.

[2] *Homilies on Romans* 32.2-4.

Indeed it is a striking fact that it is in the West that St John's stature and authority are first recognised and proclaimed. It is in the West that he is first appealed to as a theological authority and by Western writers that the formal cognomen 'Chrysostomus' is first recorded. Let us now turn to our survey of his influence.

Already in 392 AD, some years before St John's election to the see of Constantinople, St Jerome includes him in his *De viris illustribus* immediately following the entry on St Gregory of Nyssa: 'John, presbyter of the church at Antioch, a follower of Eusebius of Emesa and Diodorus, is said to have composed many books, but of these I have only read his *peri ierosynes* (*On the priesthood*).'[3] The fact that he gives the title in Greek suggests that Jerome read this work in the original Greek – no difficulty for such an accomplished linguist. In 404 – the very year of the exile – Jerome draws on Chrysostom to support his polemic against St Augustine concerning Galatians 2:11 ('But when Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face'). Jerome maintains that neither Paul nor Peter have sinned here, contrary to Augustine's assertion that Paul rightly rebuked Peter for his adherence to the Law. In seeing this as a diplomatic and deliberate dissimulation on Peter's part, Jerome appeals in the first instance to Origen (whom he still, at that time, held in high regard). He then adds:

> What shall I say also of John, who has long governed the Church of Constantinople, and holding pontifical rank, who has composed a very large book upon this paragraph, and has followed the opinion of Origen and of the old expositors? If, therefore, you censure me as in the wrong, suffer me, I pray you, to be mistaken in company with such men.[4]

It is at about this time that Latin translations of John's works began to appear. The first were made in Italy between 415 and 419 by the Pelagian deacon Anianus of Celeda. He translated seven of Chrysostom's homilies on St Paul, various other homilies (including the *Homily to Neophytos*), and the first twenty-five homilies on Matthew. The Pelagians were quick to claim the support of St John for their

[3] PL 23 754.

[4] Augustine, Letter 75 (CSEL 34.2 280f). Presumably Jerome is referring to Chrysostom's *Commentary on Galatians*, Chapter 2. Jerome goes on to cite scripture 'Lest, however, I should seem to rest my answer to your reasoning wholly on the number of witnesses who are on my side, and to use the names of illustrious men as a means of escaping from the truth, not daring to meet you in argument, I shall briefly bring forward some examples from the Scriptures […].' In respect of Jerome's clain that wrongness is mitigated by illustrious company, one cannot fail but be reminded of St Vincent of Lérins remark that he 'would rather be wrong with Origen, than be right with others'. The irony here is that the 'others' surely include Jerome, who famously turned bitterly against Origen in his later years.

understanding of grace, sin, and human freedom. Thus from the very earliest witnesses, one sees Chrysostom being manipulated to support a particular theological or ecclesiastical position. This is a pattern we shall see repeated in our survey of his influence in the West.

In 415 Pelagius himself cited St John against St Augustine, implying that John held freedom of will to be a sufficient weapon against sin. Augustine was not convinced that the citation from John in any way supported such a position.[5] By 418, Augustine had reached the point where he felt it necessary to claim John not only as an authority who did not support the Pelagians but one who positively refuted their doctrine. He makes this quite explicit in his fierce attack on the Pelagian polemicist Julian of Eclanum. Augustine, by this time, had read as many of John's works as he could find – including a number of inauthentic works already circulating under John's name, something that provides further to testimony to the power and authority of his name in the West at this time. Augustine was able to correct the mistranslations of his adversaries and throw other citations back at them. He also refutes in detail Julian's claim that John opposed the baptism of infants: 'Let no-one ever say such a thing of such a great man!' On the contrary, John is to be included among the saints who have taught infant baptism: with Saints Innocent, Cyprian, Basil, Hilary, Ambrose. These Augustine takes as his witnesses against Julian, 'or rather as our judges'. He ends, having produced copious citations from St John, by exclaiming: 'See then to what kind of man, to what great defender of the Christian faith and of this catholic teaching [on the baptism of infants], you have presumed to impute your doctrine!'[6]

St John Cassian – no stranger to the Pelagian Controversy – was of course one of Chrysostom's foremost ambassadors in the West. After his famous sojourn in the Egyptian desert, he and his companion Germanos joined John in Constantinople.

[5] *On nature and grace* 76 (PL44 285): 'He quotes also John, bishop of Constantinople, as saying "that sin is not a substance, but a wicked act." Who denies this? "And because it is not natural, therefore the law was given against it, and because it proceeds from the liberty of our will." Who, too, denies this? However, the present question concerns our human nature in its corrupted state; it is a further question also concerning that grace of God whereby our nature is healed by the great Physician, Christ, whose remedy it would not need if it were only whole. And yet your author defends it as capable of not sinning, as if it were sound, or as if its freedom of will were self-sufficient.' Baur remarks laconically that Augustine must have been 'sans doute un peu étonné d'un tel adversaire, qu'il ne connaît pas encore très bien'.

[6] *Against Julian* 1.1.6 (PL 44 654-65). Baur remarks: 'Jamais homage plus éclatant ne fut rendu à un grand homme par un meilleur panégyriste'.

These Latin brothers were entrusted by John with the vital task of managing the cathedral treasury, a task they performed with great efficiency and integrity. Cassian was ordained deacon by John and went with Germanus to Rome to plead John's case shortly after his exile.[7] Cassian kept John's memory and authority alive in his writings against Nestorius, the next native of Antioch to occupy the throne of Constantinople. In his *On the Incarnation of Christ* written shortly before the Council of Ephesus, Cassian bids Nestorius to pay heed to what John has written on the person of Christ, John who is 'the honour of the bishops of Constantinople, whose holy life obtained the reward of martyrdom without the persecution of pagans'. He also reminds Nestorius that he owes his election to the enduring love for John of the people of Constantinople and exhorts them to hold fast to:

> that John who like John the Evangelist was indeed a disciple of Jesus and an Apostle; and so to speak ever reclined on the breast and heart of the Lord. Remember him, I say. Follow him. Think of his purity, his faith, his doctrine, and holiness. Remember him ever as your teacher and nurse, in whose bosom and embraces you, as it were, grew up. Who was the teacher in common both of you and of me: whose disciples and pupils we are. Read his writings. Hold fast his instruction. Embrace his faith and merits. For though to attain this is a hard and magnificent thing: yet even to follow is beautiful and sublime. For in the highest matters, not merely the attainment, but even the attempt to copy is worthy of praise. He then should ever be in your minds and almost in your sight: he should live in your hearts and in your thoughts.[8]

Perhaps the most important thing to note about all this is that it was quite unparalleled in the East. Chrysostom is a universally acknowledged theological authority in the West long before the same can be said of the East. We have nothing like the same intensity of interest in Chrysostom in the Greek East at this time – doubtless for political reasons. It is also very significant that it is Latin writers who first record the formal cognomen 'Chrysostomus'. This had, of course, of course, been one of the many terms applied to John and other great rhetors, but it is Facundus of Hermiane (North Africa) who is the first to use it as a fixed title. Writing in Constantinople shortly before the Ecumenical Council of 553 AD, he speaks of 'illud os aureum Constantinopolitani Joannis' ('os aureum' being 'golden mouth').[9] Shortly afterwards, Pope Vigilius, also writing in Constantinople, speaks of 'John, Bishop of

[7] Palladius, *Dialogue* 3.
[8] *On the Incarnation of Christ* 7.30-31.
[9] *Pro defensione trium capitulorum* 1.4.2 (PL 67 615).

Constantinople, whom they call Chrysostomus'.[10] The cognomen is also used by Cassiodorus, who had been a high official of Theodoric, in Gothic Italy around 563 AD. Cassiodorus, who had spent some twenty years in Constantinople, devoted great energy to attempting to hold together the increasingly divergent Greek and Latin worlds. One sign of this effort is his commissioning of several translations of Chrysostom's works. A little later (c.615 AD), St Isidore of Seville refers to 'St John of Constantinople, surnamed Chrysostom'. The Latins seem to have pre-empted the Greeks in making the cognomen the standard appellation of the saint.

In the difficult times of the so-called 'Dark Ages', references to Chrysostom understandably diminish markedly. There are no further translations recorded between those commissioned by Cassiodorus and the C12. The vigorous struggle for the legacy of Chrysostom during the Pelagian Controversy had no obvious sequel. But Chrysostom was not forgotten. Manuscripts continued to be kept and copied in the monasteries – as Baur's survey of monastic libraries has indicated (he found some 485 MSS (C7-C15) in medieval monastic libraries – more than any other Greek Father). The great Anglo-Saxon theologian Alcuin of York (d.804) wrote a Commentary on Hebrews almost entirely based on Chrysostom's commentary.[11] Hincmar of Rheims (d. 882) cites John frequently on the subject of free will in his treatise *De Prædestinatione* (857-8).[12] Rathier of Verona (d.974), for his part, draws on St John's teaching on wealth and poverty.

We see here that it is in the Carolingian period that knowledge of and interest in Chrysostom begins to revive. This revival is reflected in the translation work of Burgundio of Pisa. This very well-educated individual accompanied Anslem of Havelberg to Constantinople in 1136 and took part in the famous dialogue between Anselm and Nicetas of Nicomedeia. A contemporary chronicler tells us that he had translated many works of St John Chrysostom and that he brought with him to the Third Lateran Council (1179) translations of the commentary on John. At that time Burgundio reported that he had also translated part of the commentary on Genesis.[13]

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[10] *Constitutum de tribus capitulis* 60.217 (CSEL 35 291).
[11] PL 100 1031-84.
[12] PL 125 217f.
[13] Robert of Mons, *Continuation of the Chronicle of Sigebert*.

These translations were evidently very popular, and are the basis of many of the medieval Latin manuscripts of Chrysostom.

Thomas Aquinas cited Chrysostom frequently, especially (as one would expect) in his *Catena Aurea* or *Golden Chain* (his collection of patristic commentaries on the Gospels). Thomas is also said to have declared that he would prefer Chrysostom's *Commentary on Matthew* (in Burgundio's translation) to the whole city of Paris. For the Franciscans, Bonaventure loses nothing to Thomas in his respect for Chrysostom, citing him some 326 times in his works – as Baur reports.

Thus by the High Middle Ages, Chrysostom is firmly established as a towering authority in the Latin world. Note that he is appealed to primarily as an exegete and as a witness to orthodox doctrine – rather than as an exemplary preacher. Knowledge of Chrysostom was deepened by the influx of Greek scholars into the West following the Fall of Constantinople in 1453, many of whom undertook or inspired further translation work. In this situation, it was inevitable that the legacy of Chrysostom would be disputed between the Reformers and the Roman Catholic Church.

The Protestant reformers lagged very little behind the medieval Latins in their admiration for Chrysostom. What is noticeably different is the way in which they receive Chrysostom – not within the context of a Church tradition but as providing backing for their own interpretations, and guidance for the correct reading of Scripture. Martin Luther certainly valued Chrysostom very highly, and quotes him repeatedly. However, one always gets the impression that Chrysostom is being commended for agreeing with Luther, rather than *vice versa*. Luther was certainly very ready to correct the great doctor when he felt it necessary – where he finds Chrysostom has misunderstood Paul, for example. On the more general question of patristic authority, Luther attacks those who rely on either on their own reasonings or on the Fathers: both of these, he says, can impede our direct access to the word of God in scripture – which contains everything necessary for salvation. Scripture does not tell us we must believe the Fathers[14] and in any case Luther's enemies, so he claims, do not believe the Fathers but rather seek 'to foist their own views onto the

[14] *Answer to Latomus* 8.98.27.

words of the Fathers' – a fault Luther is not free from.[15] The Fathers, moreover, can often get things wrong, says Luther. In one passage, he goes so far as to speak of Chrysostom as one who (with Jerome and Origen) as one of those 'scornful and frivolous saints who are caught up in their own speculations'.[16]

John Calvin displays, I think, a more profound approach to John's work than does Luther. Calvin gives us some of his most valuable reflections on the way to read Scripture in his *Preface to the Homilies of Chrysostom*. Here, Calvin affirms that the reading of the Fathers confers great benefits, especially in indicating the right way to read scripture, providing moral guidance, and offering an insight into the (relatively) pure life of the Early Church. One must not read the Fathers uncritically, but to reject them would be an act of considerable ingratitude. *Sola scriptura* does not, for Calvin, mean divorcing oneself wholly from the patristic tradition. And among the Fathers, Calvin singles out St John above all other exegetes, a mark of favour doubtless due to John's eschewal of the allegorical method of interpretation and preference for the so-called 'literal' method of exegesis. Here Calvin is concurring in the judgement of the early reformer Martin Bucer who similarly described Chrysostom as 'the most distinguished of biblical commentators of the Early Church'.[17] Calvin is more cautious on Chrysostom as a theologian. Here, especially on the issue of grace and human freedom, Augustine is much preferred.[18] But Calvin does draw on Chrysostom to support his understanding of the Eucharist.[19] He is also unwilling to see in Chrysostom the erroneous understanding of the Roman Catholics concerning the 'real presence' of Christ in consecrated elements of bread and wine. For Calvin, Chrysostom is guilty only of immoderate language when he speaks in very graphic terms of the reality of the sacrifice upon the altar in his *On the Priesthood*.

In the course of the English Reformation the legacy of St John Chrysostom is often appealed to. Thomas Cramner, the reforming Archbishop of Canterbury, was excited to come across a manuscript of the *Letter to the Monk Caesarius*, ascribed to St John.

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[15] *Answer to Latomus* 8.57.20.
[16] *Luther's Works* 29 86. In his *Table Talk*, he is said to have referred to St John as 'nur ein Weffcher (only a gossip)': *Luther's Works* 54 34 (cited Mitchell, 'The Archetypal Image'*, Journal of Religion* 75 (1995), 15-43.
[17] *Metaphrasis.*
[18] He is 'the best and most reliable witness of antiquity'.
[19] E.g. *Institutes* IV.17.

In this manuscript, the author speaks of the nature of the bread remaining after consecration – a statement Cramner immediately leapt on to support his own non-realist conception of the Eucharist. He uses it in his *Defence*, a work which seeks to demonstrate that Cramner's case is grounded on Scripture 'and approved by the consent of the most ancient doctors of the Church'. Again it is the Fathers who are to agree with Cramner and not *vice versa*. The *Letter* is, however, spurious, and in any case the sentence that so interested Cramner was absent from versions of the same text possessed by his adversaries. Cramner did, however, perpetuate the memory of Chrysostom in the Church of England by including the 'Prayer of St Chrysostom' in the first ever English liturgy (1544). This prayer is included at the end of the Litany and later found its way into the text for Morning Prayer of the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer* (still the official service book of the Church of England) In its 1662 format the prayer runs as follows:

> **ALMIGHTY** God, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplications unto thee; and dost promise, that when two or three are gathered together in thy Name thou wilt grant their requests; Fulfil now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of thy servants, as may be most expedient for them; granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting. *Amen*[20]

This is, of course, taken form the third antiphon of the Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom. It is a quite remarkable testament to John's influence that he should have such pride of place in the Anglican service-books.

For the sake of time, I shall restrict the remainder of my survey of the influence of St John in the West to England. There is some justice to this restriction (besides the fact that I am English myself, and therefore biased), since it was in England that the complete works of Chrysostom were first edited and published. This was the work of Sir Henry Savile, who was, in his time, tutor in Greek to Queen Elisabeth I, Provost of

[20] The 1544 version reads as follows: ALmighty god, which haste given us grace at this tyme with one accorde to make our commune supplications unto the, and doost promise, that whan two or thre be gathered in thy name, thou wilt graunt their requestes: fulfil nowe, o lord, the desires and petytions of thy servauntes, as maye be mooste expedient for them, graunting us in this world knowledge of thy thruthe, & in the wordle to come lyfe everlastynge. Amen. In the Divine Liturgy (tr. Archimandrite Ephrem Lash) the prayer is rendered: 'You have given us grace to make these common and united prayers, and have promised that when two or three agree in your name you will grant their requests; fulfil now the petitions of your servants as is expedient, granting us in this present age the knowledge of your truth and in the age to come eternal life.'

Eton College and Warden of Merton College, Oxford (my own College, I am happy to say). As a student at Merton, I was often struck by the statue of St John Chrysostom in the chapel, adorning the memorial to Sir Henry. It is only more recently I have realised quite what an astonishing labour he undertook. Sir Henry was a learned, rich, and well-connected man. He made full use of all these qualities in preparing his eight volume edition of *ta euriskomena panta*, published at Eton in 1612. Sir Henry scoured Europe for copies of manuscripts and proved himself a fine judge of variant and difficult readings. He spent prodigous sums on the enterprise: the sources speak of between 8 and 25,000 gold pieces – a vast amount. The achievement is magnificent and seems to have had no other object than the advancement of learning in general and of the knowledge of Chrysostom in particular. 'There is', says Savile in his preface, 'none of the Greek Fathers so devout, none better, none of superior judgement'. And, he adds, there is 'nothing he need say concerning the splendour of John's oratory, from which golden stream comes his name'. Sir Henry's wife was, it seems, less enamoured of John than was her husband. Indeed we are told that at one point she threatened to burn his manuscripts if he did not pay more attention to her.

Apart from the Greek edition of Savile, many English translations were made and published from the mid sixteenth century onwards. I shall mention only two, for the sake of illustration. The first is a translation made by the seventeenth-century scholar and diarist John Evelyn and published in 1659 (thus during England's brief period as a republic). The book is entitled the *Golden Book of St John Chrysostom Concerning the Education of Children* and is translated from a manuscript discovered by Combefis in 1656. The purpose of the translation appears perfectly innocent, merely to make available a work containing much wisdom on the proper pedagogy of children. More obviously polemical is an eighteenth-century translation of the six books *On the Priesthood* by Henry Hollier (1728). In his prologue, the translator begins by affirming 'the unanimous suffrage [opinion] of the learned, that as [John] was the most eloquent of all the Fathers of the Greek Church, so his treatise of the priesthood is the most eloquent of all his numerous works'. Speaking quite frankly, Hollier admits that his purpose in making this translation is to uphold 'the excellency of the episcopal commission' (that is, the office of bishop) against certain 'wretches' who would deny it. Fathers such as John demonstrate the antiquity of the episcopal ministry, as maintained in the Church of England. The 'primitive church', he argues

comes second only to scripture in the guidance it provides for church life and governance. Indeed, it is Hollier's view that, 'the more the members of this church are made acquainted with the writings of the Ancients, the higher value they must place on their happiness in their communion […] I am persuaded that if, at the first, the most valuable monuments of antiquity had been set forth in the vulgar tongue, it [would] had been an ample defence of the Reformation'. The Fathers, in other words, expose the novelty of Roman doctrines and the unprecedented nature of the governance of the Reformed Church of Geneva. Chrysostom is thus something of a 'proto-Anglican', a forerunner of the Church of England which is, 'The envy of Rome, the glory of the Reformation'.

It is indeed noteworthy just how far the Church of England adopted Chrysostom as a kind of unofficial patron. The Second Book of Homilies, appointed to be read in churches from the sixteenth century, refers to John as 'the great Clerk and godly Preacher' – an unusually warm description of a Church Father in that very sober collection of sermons For many Anglicans, Chrysostom represented a perfect counterweight to both Rome and the radical reformers, a vindication of the *via media* (middle way) pursued by the Church of England. This was also the case for John Wesley who much valued Chrysostom for his teaching on holiness and perfection and thus as a support against Calvinism.[21]

The idea of the *via media* was, however, always a difficult line to tread. Many Anglicans found themselves dissatisfied with the 'Broad Church', the church of compromise that was neither fully reformed nor fully catholic. Many left it altogether, for Rome and the Reform, but still more remained within it, pressing it to its limits on both sides, 'high' (i.e. catholic) and 'low' (i.e. protestant). One notable figure in this respect – and I shall end my survey with him – is Cardinal John Henry Newman (1801-1890). For many years, Newman had been a firm advocate of the *via media* and had struggled to affirm the catholic character of the Church of England. Like many

[21] In his *Advice to Clergy* (1756) he asks: 'Can any who spend several years in those seats of learning [Oxford and Cambridge], be excused if they do not add to that reading of the Fathers? the most authentic commentators on Scripture, as being both nearest the fountain, eminently endued with that Spirit by whom all Scripture was given. It will be easily perceived, I speak chiefly of those who wrote before the council of Nicea. But who could not likewise desire to have some acquaintance with those that followed them? with St. Chrysostom, Basil, Austin, and above all, the man of a broken heart, Ephraim Syrus.'

before him, he looked back to the Fathers as buttresses of his position. Looking back in this way, deeply immersed in the Early Church, he began to realise that it was not the Fathers that should be supporting him, but rather he that should allow himself to be shaped by them. For Newman, this change of direction led him to embrace the Church of Rome – but that is another story. What is most important for our purposes is to note the sheer depth of Newman's attachment to St John, an attachment that exceeds that which he displays for any other Father:

> Whence is this devotion to St. John Chrysostom, which leads me to dwell upon the thought of him, and makes me kindle at his name, when so many other great Saints […] command indeed my veneration, but exert no personal claim upon my heart? Many holy men have died in exile, many holy men have been successful preachers; and what more can we write upon St. Chrysostom's monument than this, that he was eloquent and that he suffered persecution? He is not an Athanasius, expounding a sacred dogma with a luminousness which is almost an inspiration […] Nor is he Gregory or Basil, rich in the literature and philosophy of Greece, and embellishing the Church with the spoils of heathenism. Again, he is not an Augustine, devoting long years to one masterpiece of thought […] He has not trampled upon heresy, nor smitten emperors, […] nor knit together the portions of Christendom, nor founded a religious order, nor built up the framework of doctrine, nor expounded the science of the Saints; yet I love him, as I love David or St. Paul.
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> How am I to account for it? […] It is not force of words, nor cogency of argument, nor harmony of composition, nor depth or richness of thought, which constitutes his power,—whence, then, has he this influence, so mysterious, yet so strong?
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> I consider St. Chrysostom's charm to lie in his intimate sympathy and compassionateness for the whole world, not only in its strength, but in its weakness; in the lively regard with which he views every thing that comes before him, taken in the concrete […] Possessed though he be by the fire of divine charity, he has not lost one fibre, he does not miss one vibration, of the complicated whole of human sentiment and affection […] It is this observant benevolence which gives to his exposition of Scripture its chief characteristic. He is known in ecclesiastical literature as the expounder, above all others, of its literal sense […] there have been many literal expositors, but only one Chrysostom. It is St. Chrysostom who is the charm of the method, not the method that is the charm of St. Chrysostom.[22]

The history of St John's influence in the west is a long and varied one. I trust I have given some sense, at least, of the scope and richness of that influence. In the west

[22] *Historical Sketches* II.2.

John was celebrated as a teacher of doctrine, exegete, and preacher (in that order). As we have seen, he had (and has) a remarkable ability to speak directly and freshly across the centuries to many and varied Christian souls. The West has ceded nothing to the East in her admiration of the great John. In this respect he has indeed, as his Troparion puts it, ‘illumined the universe’.

And to God the Glory!