

The *social* soteriology of John Wesley and its comunitarian, arminian and public elements: comments on its development, purpose, inspirations, and spirituality

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The intention of using the term *social* soteriology is an attempt to combine a common concept in Wesleyan studies – that John Wesley is best understood as primarily concerned with soteriology – with a fresh look at the wide range of the meaning of the word “social”. This is done because the major agreement regarding the centrality of soteriology in Wesley has been unable to relate the different perspectives toward a united effort to promote and proclaim salvation in an integral way. Without a doubt, for many the use of the adjective “social” may simply indicate that the author of this article is putting emphasis on diacony or public religion. Although the word “social” includes these meanings, it is much richer than this and has been used in Wesleyan and Methodist history in different moments to mark a certain type of Wesleyan imagery.² As such, it seems appropriate to rethink this tradition and offer a re-reading of those aspects that we can easily combine with the metaphor of “social” and study their contributions to Wesleyan soteriology.³

To do so, we shall challenge some customary reading of Wesleyan, in the first place, the popular biographic method of periodization which emerges more from a type of biographic reinterpretation and reconfirmation of contemporary theologies than from a historic hermeneutic. Differently we shall re-link certain periods of his life by its understanding as sedimentation of experience as a more appropriate way to understand the continuous construction of Wesleyan soteriology as *social* soteriology. We believe that in Wesley this is represented by his continuous use of the metaphor of the “way”.⁴ I suggest

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² Social religion, social sanctification, social creed.

³ This paper shares some of the issues discussed in my Ph. D. thesis on *social* soteriology in Wesley, orientated by Dr. Rui Josgrilberg. I'd like to use this opportunity to thank for his inspiring orientation without this thesis would't exist. Also I'd like to thank Dr. James Reaves Farris for the revision of the English text.

⁴ The general use of the *theologia viatorum* for example as theology of pilgrimage (Walter KLAIBER & Manfred MARQUARDT. *Living Grace* is known. Rui Josgrilberg stresses the use as a metaphor (see his

in this paper that this metaphor should be seen as the intertwining of an ongoing learning process that includes three essential elements: communitarian life, arminian understanding of the dynamic relation between God and humankind, and the vocation of public involvement and participation for the sake of the reform of Church and nation.

Second we propose a rereading of the Wesleyan image of the world. It is our strong conviction that the lust for periodization, or locating within a historical period, is an expression of a typical modern or post-modern fragmentation. This results in readings which distinguish between a harsh conservative – medieval and progressive - modern spiritual leader and theological thinker. Both readings are in danger of missing his real contribution, which is the ability to connect not only different traditions but époques. In other words, Wesley does not promote a closed perspective, but tries to build an effective alliance that promotes a *social* soteriology. Wesley knew that a broad vision requires many helping hands, and that there is a real danger of the idolization of religion expressed in life as forms of service, understanding that sacraments and ministry would hinder and not promote this process.

The combination of ancient, medieval and modern understandings of the world, its inhabitants and God, again, seems to follow the same interesting pattern, but has to be seen in combination with special interest in poor and common people. Wesley understands the effects of closed systems, societies, philosophies, theologies, economic theories etc., closed in the sense of exclusive of those without voice and vote. We shall investigate the connectedness of looking at his use of the theological and cardinal virtues, opened nevertheless, by the emphasis on liberty as religious liberty and liberation from sin and slavery. Many static reading do not recognize that Wesley's use of "balance" – equilibrium, a concept which has been much more used to oppress than to enrich and works as a wonderful commonplace of middle class religion – is extremely cautious and never introduced in a political or economic sense, but in a medical, anthropological and theological sense. It would have been very strange to promote a *social* soteriology and to be a man of the middle way at any cost.

paper on this conference) and our colleagues at the center for Wesleyan Studies, José Carlos de Souza and Paulo Ayres its implication for a Wesleyan ecclesiology (see their papers at this conference).

Thirdly, we investigate the spirituality that is in the background of all of this. Again it is connecting what we introduce as the integration of personal-relational, social-communitarian and public-utopist aspects. This kind of spirituality reflects – and sustains – Wesley’s *social* soteriology and its communitarian framework, arminian dynamics and public involvement.⁵

1. Development - the concept of the sedimentation of experience and the social soteriology of John Wesley: overcoming the exclusive effects of biography as periodization

We have already mentioned that the multiple and parallel exploration of the social metaphor is inspired in its distinguished use in Wesley and opens our minds to the fact that in Wesley salvation involves all life, the whole human being, and everyone in the process of salvation, its maintenance, its qualification and amplification.

1.1 The dead-end of periodization: loosing the world perspective

In Wesley, “social” describes a lively and multidimensional perspective in a time where the public-private split had not yet been influenced by wider sectors of society and when enlightenment and faith were not considered *per definitionem* issues totally opposed to one another. Reflecting on this, Methodism started as a public religion, was built up in a communitarian mode and in dialogue with the world, and was strongly represented in its Anglican leaders.

To understand this better it is necessary to understand the diversity of languages used by Wesley, (puritan, Anglican, pietistic and mystic - as metaphors and keywords). At first glance – and not the least because of manifold biblical citations – Wesley cultivates puritan language. But there is also a totally non-puritan latitudinarian, universal and inclusive aspect and, not to be forgotten, a more academic accent, which appears in a very classical

⁵ This article shall stop at this point. In my doctorate thesis I went on to investigate up to which point Wesley’s re-readings of the ancient and contemporaneous theology as his accents in the doctrine of God, christology, pneumatology, anthropology, eschatology and in consequence, ecclesiology can be understood as seeking the same pattern. We believe so: his re-reading and his re-constructing of theology is understood best in its objective to promote his *social* soteriology.

use of words such as catholic, ecumenical, and tolerance, for example. On the other hand, we have a kind of an enriched use of metaphors as “the way” in which Wesley combines puritan, catholic and mystic senses.⁶

His *social* soteriology incorporates a potential to overcome this conceptual opposition when they become inefficient and not productive, which occurs in the soteriologies of the 19th century and is reproduced in the soteriologies of the 20th century. So a *social* soteriology reading seeks to do what Wesley did in his days: re-read contemporary theology considering soteriological tasks.

In the 19th century, the understanding of historicity as truth expresses itself in the focus on biography. There are many Wesley biographies, and they are in general criticized as hagiographies. This is certainly true, but we want to value them because of their accent on life, on narrative, and not on concepts and deductive theology. But parallel to the ongoing discussion regarding the historical Jesus, biography has never been only a report of what “really happened”. But quite different than in New Testament theology, Methodist theologians are still quite quick to defend their thesis by their use of periodization in their biographic reading. On the one hand biographic method may help us not to lose ourselves in the complexity of life, in this case the life of John Wesley: we need models, but models are simplifications and behind these are decisions. Actually there are not only heroic, but idealistic, romantic, dramatic, tragic or ironic (in the sense of deconstruction)⁷ readings, and the method that all use is periodization, which becomes clear when the different authors declare the early, or middle or late Wesley to be “the” real Wesley where the most or only important events took place. But the cuts of periodization, theologians and historians configure, point out and, also, ignore and allow to disappear and disintegrate what does not fit in his particular view, including – which is our focus – soteriological aspects.

So it is no wonder that there are today quite a number of different periodizations of the life

⁶ The typical puritan distinction between the wide and the narrow way is quite absent in Wesley, although not totally. Here comes through his objection of moralism as one of his major challenges.

⁷ James W. FOWLER. *Weaving the new creation: stages of faith and public church*. New York: Harper Collins, 1991, p. 33-36.

of John Wesley which propose distinguishing two (1703-1738, 1738-1791⁸), three (1703-1738, 1738-1760, 1760-1791⁹; 1725-1735, 1735-1740, 1740-1791¹⁰; 1733-1738, 1738-1765, 1765-1791¹¹) and four major periods (1725-1738, 1738-1750, 1750-1770 e 1770-1791)¹².¹³ But what appears at first glance as a connecting vision, is very often the framework of particular emphases. In a Freudian perspective, Grace Harrison,¹⁴ stresses Wesley's early life time as important; Melton¹⁵, reminds that Maximim Piette¹⁶ underlines his early "catholic" phase as formative,¹⁷ Theodore Jennings understands 1725 as the real beginning of Methodism because of his gaze of friends;¹⁸ 1729 is an important year in the memory of a "serious man" counseling Wesley to give up solitary religion, a story which has no reference in the writings of John Wesley and appears, first, in the biography of Coke and Moore.¹⁹ What appears here in a negative form – no solitary religion – appears in Wesley's writing 10 years later in a positive way – no religion other than

⁸ Martin SCHMIDT. *John Wesley: Die Zeit vom 17. Juni 1703 bis zum 24 Mai 1738* (vol I). Gotthelf-Verlag: Zürich / Frankfurt am Main, 1953; Martin SCHMIDT. *John Wesley: Das Lebenswerk John Wesleys* (vol II). Gotthelf-Verlag: Zürich / Frankfurt am Main, 1966. In the English translation with its three volumes this is a little more hidden.

⁹ Henry D. RACK. *Henry D. RACK. Reasonable enthusiast: John Wesley and the rise of Methodism*. London: Epworth Press, 1992.

¹⁰ Isabel RIVERS. *Reason, grace and sentiment: a study of the language of religion and ethics in England, 1660-1780*. Vol. 1 Whichcote to Wesley. Cambridge / New York / Port Chester / Melbourne / Sidney: Cambridge University Press, 1991, p. 208-210.

¹¹ John B. COBB, Jr. *Grace and responsibility: a Wesleyan theology for today*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1995, p. 9.

¹² Tore MEISTAD. Systematic theology and ethics in the Wesleyan tradition: some methodological reflections. *Quarterly Review*, vol. 19, n. 1. Nashville, TN: The United Methodist Board of Higher Education, primavera 1999, p. 60-62.

¹³ James W. FOWLER. John Wesley's development in faith. *The future of the Methodist theological tradition*. MEEKS, M. Douglas (ed.). Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1985, 172-193. [Paper on the 7th Oxford Institute 1982].

¹⁴ Grace Elisabeth Simon (Elsie) HARRISON. *Son to Susanna: the private life of John Wesley*. Nashville, TN: Cokesbury Press, 1938.

¹⁵ J. Gordon MELTON. An annotated bibliography of publications about the life and work of John Wesley, 1791-1966. *Methodist History*, vol. 7, n. 4, Lake Junaluska, NC: Association of Methodist Historical Societies, jul. 1969, p. 45.

¹⁶ Maximim PIETTE. *John Wesley in the evolution of Protestantism*. New York: Sheed and Ward, 1937.

¹⁷ See also John Murray TODD. *John Wesley and the Catholic Church*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1958. Roland A. KNOX. *Enthusiasm*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1950. In a more recent catholic readings as Thomas RIGL. *Die Gnade wirken lassen: Methodistische Soteriologie im ökumenischen Dialog*. Paderborn: Bonifazius, 2001, there is only a certain tendency to read Wesley in the line of irresistible grace.

¹⁸ Theodore W. JENNINGS. John Wesley on the origin of Methodism. *Methodist History*, vol. 29, n. 2, jan. 1991, p. 79.

¹⁹ Thomas Coke. Thomas COKE e Henry MOORE. *The life of the Rev. John Wesley, A. M., including an account of the great revival of religion in Europe and America*. Philadelphia: Printed by Parry Hall. 1793. (1a edição americana). London: printed by G. Paramore, 1792 p. E. 4 ou p. 55.

social religion²⁰. Although the work of Coke and Moore is seen as not particularly original, and heavily dependent on Hampton, with a focus on 1729, too,²¹ the incident reappears in the writings of Tuttle²², Rack – mentioning him as a spiritual friend –,²³ Zehrer, depending directly on Nuelson and he on Stevens²⁴ repeats it as a historic fact and Josgrilberg retakes it as formative, also²⁵; whereas Heitzenrater, Ayling²⁶ Schmidt²⁷, Telford²⁸, Lelievre²⁹, Watson³⁰ e Tyerman³¹ – or the more classic historians – do not include the incident. Behind the periodization of Martin Schmidt – and many others – appears a stress on the centrality on “conversation” and Aldersgate, or the central phase of life,³² but on the other hand, Schmidt reminds us that the stress on creation in Wesley may be-

²⁰ WESLEY e John WESLEY (eds.). *Hymns and sacred poems*. S.l., 1739, p. 223.

²¹ John HAMPSON. *Memories of the late rev. John Wesley A. M.*: with a review of his life and writings; and a history of Methodism from its commencement in 1729 to the present time. 3. vol. Sunderland: printed for the Author by James Graham, 1791. About the depends see Frederick E. MASER. The early biographers of John Wesley. *Methodist History*, vol. 1, n. 2 (nova série) [vol. 40, n. 1 (série completa)]. Lake Junaluska, NC: Association of Methodist Historical Societies, jan. 1963, p. 33.

²² Robert G. TUTTLE, Jr. *Mysticism in the Wesleyan Tradition*. Grand Raids, Michigan: Francis Asbury Press of Zondervan Publishing House, 1989, p. 74.

²³ Henry D. RACK. *Reasonable enthusiast: John Wesley and the rise of Methodism*. London: Epworth Press, 1992 (2ª edição), p. 73.

²⁴ Karl ZEHREER. *Mit ruhigem Herzen vertraute er Gott: John Wesleys Leben und Wirken (1703-1791)*. Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2003, p. 52, cites John NUELSEN; Theophil MANN; J. J. SOMMER. *Kurzgefaßte Geschichte des Methodismus von seinen Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart*. Bremen: Buchhandlung und Verlag des Traktathauses, [s. a.], p. 28 which is based on STEVENS, *History of Methodism* I, p. 71.

²⁵ Rui de Souza JOSGRILBERG. O “caminho da salvação”: a teologia peregrina de John Wesley em nossos caminhos. *Teologia e prática na tradição wesleyana: uma leitura a partir da América Latina e Caribe*. Cláudio de Oliveira Ribeiro, Helmut Renders, José Carlos de Souza, Rui de Souza Josgrilberg (org.). São Bernardo do Campo, SP: Editeo, 2005, p. 37-55.

²⁶ Stanley AYLING. *John Wesley*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press. 1979, p. 42-43.

²⁷ Martin SCHMIDT. *John Wesley*. Vol. I. Die Zeit vom 17 Juni 1703 bis zum 24 Mai 1738. Zürich / Frankfurt am Main: Gotthelf-Verlag / Christliches Verlagshaus, 1953, p. 85.

²⁸ John TELFORD. *The Life of John Wesley*. New York / Cincinnati: Mains / Curts & Jennings, s.a., p. 54.

²⁹ Mathew LELIÈVRE. *John Wesley: his life and his work*. Tradução A. J. French. London: Wesleyan Conference Office, 1871. Essa obra [e importante na América Latina pelas suas traduções para o espanhol (1988) e o português (2005)].

³⁰ Richard WATSON. *The life of the rev. John Wesley*. Nashville, TN: Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1876, p. 19.

³¹ L. TYERMAN. *The life and times of the rev. John Wesley M.A., founder of Methodism*, 3 vol. London: Hodder & Staughton, 1870.

³² Outler comments that Schmidt has transformed Wesley in a Moravian, and Baker agrees to it. Frank BAKER. *Unfolding John Wesley: a survey of twenty year's studies in Wesley's thought*. *Quarterly Review*, n. 1. Nashville, TN: The United Methodist Board of Higher Education, outono 1980, p. 47. There is kind of ongoing influence of this in German writing. See, for example, the exclusion of perfection in Walter KLAIBER. *Wo Leben wieder Leben ist: Bekehrung, Wiedergeburt, Rechtfertigung, Heiligung: Dimensionen eines Lebens mit Gott*, Christliches Verlagshaus, 1991, 2ª edição (1ª edição: 1984). Albert OUTLER (ed.). *John Wesley*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1964, p. 18 rodapé 61.

gin with his readings of James Taylor³³, and that in his family and at school the communitarian aspect of life is strongly present.³⁴ Heitzenrater takes a more transversal stand and speaks of a triple beginning in Oxford – reflecting the contribution of Telford³⁵ –, Georgia and London,³⁶ although Aldersgate maintains a certain centrality³⁷ because Oxford and Georgia are interrupted beginnings.³⁸ Jennings links this triple beginning more and understands it as a learning process in which Wesley is challenged more by an academic surrounding (Oxford), than by a lay environment (Georgia) what leads, last but not least, to a kind of ecumenical openness including more than Anglicans in his societies.³⁹ John Cobb, jr. highlights the special significance of the central and the last phase and Wesley's fight against antinomism and enthusiasm.⁴⁰ Others, such as William Shontz, recover Wesley on the same basis as “synthetic” Anglican,⁴¹ which may be seen also in Baker and Wainright and that corresponds to the Wesley appreciation among Anglican historians between the twenties and the sixties.⁴² The importance of the late phase is pro-

³³ Martin SCHMIDT. *John Wesley*. Vol. I. Die Zeit vom 17 Juni 1703 bis zum 24 Mai 1738. Zürich / Frankfurt am Main: Gotthelf-Verlag / Christliches Verlagshaus, 1953, p. 69-71.

³⁴ He introduced the expression “Oxford Methodism”. John TELFORD. *The life of John Wesley*. Popular revised edition. London: Charles H. Kelly, [without a year], p. 55.

³⁶ Richard P. HEITZENRATER. The Oxford diaries and the first rise of Methodism. *Methodist History*, jul. 1974, p. 110-135. Richard P. HEITZENRATER. *John Wesley e o povo chamado Metodista*. São Bernardo do Campo & Rio de Janeiro: Editeo & Bennett, 1998, p. 33-95.

³⁷ Very clear in Richard P. HEITZENRATER. Great expectations: Aldersgate and the evidences of genuine Christianity. *Aldersgate reconsidered*. MADDUX, Randy L. (ed.). Nashville, TN: Kingswood Books, 1990, p. 91.

³⁸ Stoeffler has shown how interdependent English Puritanism, Hollandaise reformed “pietism” and German pietism have been; F. Ernest STOEFFLER. Religious roots of the early Moravian and Methodist movements. *Methodist History*, vol. 14, n. 3, Madison, NJ: General Commission on Archives and History of the UMC, abril 1986, p. 132-140. We suggest a more combined view but believe that Bengel is a little subestimated (Gnomon). See also the idea of a more synthetic understanding in Richard B. STEELE. John Wesley's synthesis of the revival practices of Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield, Nicholas von Zinzendorf. *Wesleyan Theological Journal*, vol. 30, n. 1, primavera, 1995. < http://wesley.nnu.edu/wesleyan_theology/theojrnl/26-30/30-1-07.htm >. Access in: 26th may 2004.

³⁹ Theodore W. JENNINGS. John Wesley on the origin of Methodism. *Methodist History*, vol. 29, n. 2, jan. 1991, p. 89.

⁴⁰ John B. COBB, Jr. *Grace and responsibility: a Wesleyan theology for today*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1995, p. 9.

⁴¹ William H. SHONTZ. Anglican influence on John Wesley's soteriology. *Wesleyan Theological Journal*, vol. 33, n. 1, 1998. Disponível em: < http://wesley.nnu.edu/wesleyan_theology/theojrnl/31-35/32-1-3.htm >. Acesso em: 13 jun. 2004.

⁴² M. W. PATTERSON, *A history of the Church of England*. London / New York / Toronto / Bombay / Calcutta / Madras: Longmans, Green & Co.: 1925, 391. John R. H. MOORMAN. *A history of the Church of England*. London: Adam e Charles Black, 1961, p. 293-314: “The age of Wesley (1738-1791)”.

nounced in Outler,⁴³ and stands behind the emphasis on new creation in Cobb⁴⁴ and Runyon⁴⁵. Authors interested in ethics defend especially the importance of the years after 1770, but in the case of Marquardt⁴⁶ and, more recently, Meistad⁴⁷ without making it the main period.

Why do we mention all of this? Because it is relevant to soteriology which involves personal and communitarian, private, public, and cosmic aspects. Periodization means all too often, cutting something off or (dis)qualifying it, and leads, on the other hand, to universalizing some aspects, for example, Wesley the evangelist⁴⁸ and the organizer, Wesley the last great reformer⁴⁹ of the Church, theologian⁵⁰, and ecumenical predecessor⁵¹ as the revolutionary and liberator⁵² which are in themselves important perspectives, but isolated, not able to represent the real legacy. In my opinion, this discussion led to certain side ef-

⁴³ Albert OUTLER. *Wesley Works*, vol. 1, p. 35-37, apud Frank BAKER. *Unfolding John Wesley: a survey of twenty year's studies in Wesley's thought. Quarterly Review*, n. 1. Nashville, TN: The United Methodist Board of Higher Education, autumn 1980, p. 49.

⁴⁴ John B. COBB, Jr. *Grace and responsibility: a Wesleyan theology for today*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1995, p. 19.

⁴⁵ Theodore RUNYON. *The new creation: John Wesley's theology today*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1998. See also the book title by his colleague at Emory, James W. FOWLER. *Weaving the New Creation*. San Francisco: Harper, 1991.

⁴⁶ Manfred MARQUARDT. *Praxis und Prinzipien der Sozialethik John Wesleys*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1977, p. 67.

⁴⁷ Tore MEISTAD. Systematic theology and ethics in the Wesleyan tradition: some methodological reflections. *Quarterly Review*, vol. 19, n. 1. Nashville, TN: The United Methodist Board of Higher Education, primavera 1999, p. 62.

⁴⁸ Arthur Skevington WOOD. *The burning heart: John Wesley, Evangelist*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1967.

⁴⁹ John B. COBB, Jr. *Grace and responsibility: a Wesleyan theology for today*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1995, p. 21.

⁵⁰ George Croft CELL. *The rediscovery of John Wesley*. New York: Henry Holt and Co. 1935 and recently, Randy L. MADDOX. *Responsible grace: John Wesley's practical theology*. Nashville, TN: Kingswood Books, 1994, p. 15.

⁵¹ Martin SCHMIDT. *John Wesley: Die Zeit vom 17. Juni 1703 bis zum 24 Mai 1738 (vol I)*. Gotthelf-Verlag: Zürich / Frankfurt am Main, 1953, p. 9. Colin Wilbur WILLIAMS. *John Wesley's theology today*. New York: Abingdon Press, 1960; Albert OUTLER. *Methodist theological heritage: a study in perspective. Methodist destiny in an ecumenical age*. MINUS, Paul (ed.). Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1969, p. 49-66.

⁵² Theodore RUNYON. *Sanctification and liberation: liberation theology in the light of the Wesleyan tradition*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1981. Theodore W. JENNINGS. *Good news to the poor: John Wesley's Evangelical Economics*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1990. Douglas MEEKS (ed.). *The portion of the poor: good news to the poor in the Wesleyan tradition*. Nashville, TN: Kingswood Books, 1995. Jörg RIEGER, John J. VINCENT (eds.). *Methodist and radical: rejuvenating a tradition*. Nashville, TN: Kingswood Books, 2003; Jörg RIEGER. *God and the excluded: visions and blind spots in contemporary theology*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001; Jörg RIEGER. *Remember the poor: the challenge to theology in the twenty-first-century*. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Trinity Press International, 1998. José Míguez BONINO. "The poor will always be with you": can Wesley help us discover how best to serve "our poor" today? *The poor and the people called Methodists*. HEITZENRATER, Richard (ed.). Nashville, TN: Kingswood Books, 2002, p. 187-192.

fect: Methodist theology is in danger of becoming more and more an intra-ecclesiological issue – at least in the surroundings where I work and live. There is no doubt that theology has an educational function within the Church, but this cannot be its only expression. In the heritage of *social* soteriology, theology must serve humankind and creation and be one of the links between world and Church. There is a real danger that the dead-end of periodization involves us so much in discussions between different fractions, if there is still a qualified discussion, that we lose the world perspective, the focus on humankind and creation.

1.2 Sedimentation of experience: a lifetime and ongoing re-reading

Instead of this, we propose as an alternative imaginary of the idea of the sedimentation of experience, not only understood as simple addition, but as a kind of potential presence although not always visible in life – nor in the life of Wesley, nor in the life of primitive Methodism and afterwards. The metaphor of sedimentation describes a type continuous intersubjective signification. In this sense, cultural transmission is not only the repetition of tradition, but a continuous reinterpretation, recomposition and reconstruction of tradition(s).⁵³ The new never neglects the past and the old does not explain the new in every aspect. Issues can disappear and reappear depending on contemporary aspects. For example, the appearance of creation in 1725 (Jeremy Taylor) culminates in an emphasis on new creation in the sermon in 1775. In the same way, the possible rejection of a solitary religion (1729), the communitarian aspect of social religion (Oxford, Georgia and 1741 onwards), and the growing awareness that the combat against social injustice is not only a diaconal challenge (1729, Oxford) but needs public involvement with commissions of Parliament (Oglethorpe, reform of the prisons; Wilberforce, abolition of slave trade). The challenge is also to not isolate certain expressions of spirituality and “confessionality” as exclusive, but to recognize that there are multiple influences all expressed in the works and their linguistic complexity.

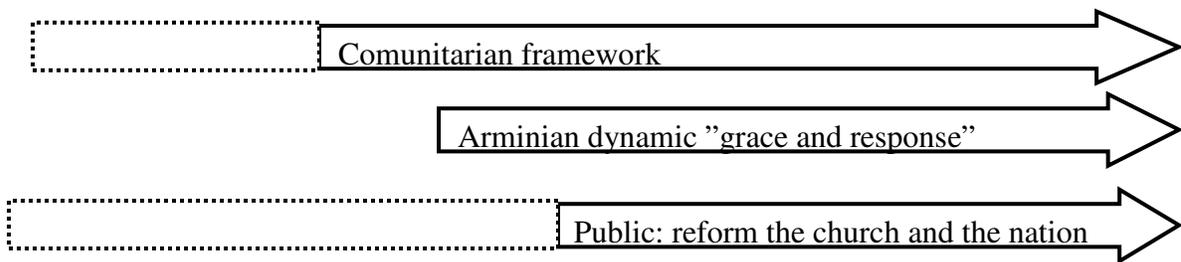
In this way, the psycho-social, the sociological and the historical readings of Wesley

⁵³ In a quite similar conclusion Fowler understands story not as formative but stresses creative involvedness of the human being in its story. He calls this a theological reading. James W. FOWLER. *Weaving the new creation: stages of faith and public church*. New York: Harper Collins, 1991, p. 38.

open a multiple approach, a broader horizon, and a richer understanding of the relation between human choices, divine providence, and cultural influences. In addition, we seek to combine the metaphor of sedimentation with the metaphor of woven cloth, because of the interweaving of psycho-social relations and the relation between God and humanity.

Applying this on our focus on soteriology, we share the following perspective concerning its communitarian framework, its Arminian dynamic and its public expression:

1703		1725	1738	1741			1770		1791
		1729					1778		



The communitarian framework is an essential part of the *social* soteriology of John Wesley. There are obviously family influences and school experiences, culminating first in the group of Oxford, then the group organization in Georgia, and finally, the building up of a class system and its subdivisions. As such, the way of salvation always includes the other, religion is seen as *social* religion.

The Arminian or – to use a Latin American term - synergetic dynamics is guaranteed in 1738, including Aldersgate. Since then salvation is understood as motivated, maintained and developed by grace, responded to by dedication to assuming ones vocation, and the beginning of a continuous process of learning. So we understand Aldersgate as assurance or even new knowledge that the *sola gratia* is the foundation of a healthy and holy pilgrimage in life. Only this maintains the Arminian dynamic of the way of salvation alive, and preserve it from legalism and moralism. For certain, the communitarian aspect and what we call the Arminian dynamics are related: relations between human beings help us to understand and respond to the relation between God and humankind. This is the second sense, that the soteriology of John Wesley is social. It is profoundly relational, in the

sense of being an ongoing encounter with grace, as starting point, and a joyful response to the proclamation of the gospel. Sanctification is seen as *social* sanctification.

This leads to its public expression, not only in the sense of a public presence (the spreading of the gospel), but in the sense of a public involvement, with its institutions, and promotion of reforms. In his days this was not a totally new question. Habermas has shown that this was an English peculiarity since there was a House of Commons. John's father, Samuel, authored a poem when Oglethorpe, in 1728, presided over a commission of Parliament to promote prison reforms. "Make listening crowds detest tyrannick wrong / and learn the love of mercy from my song." This poem reappears in a Collection of Good English poetry, edited by John Wesley in 1744 (!), including a dedication to this commission of Parliament, and remembering its participants⁵⁴, this around the same time that he writes a letter to the king.⁵⁵ His prayer guide for every day of the week includes the whole world.⁵⁶ It was first published in 1733 and then several times reedited. Can we understand this wide ranging soteriological engagement without the communitarian aspect and the Arminian dynamic? Yes, we could, but then we would miss its uniqueness: the reform of the nation is trained in the reform of the Church,⁵⁷ and both are trained in the living as faith community. To be certain, there is no idea of chronological order, for those whose General Rule is "First: To do no harm..." and "Second: To do good...", established already in 1739. Nevertheless it seems that from 1770 onward there is a benchmark for public presence, clearly indicated by the tract on slavery, etc.⁵⁸

2. The image of (a) connected world(s): theological and cardinal virtues and – liberty

⁵⁴ CPJW, vol. 3, 1744, p. 101.

⁵⁵ WJW, vol. 26, 5 mar. 1744 (?), p. 104-106 – *letter* to his Majesty King George II.

⁵⁶ John WESLEY. *A collection of forms of prayer for every day in the week*. Bristol: printed and sold by Felix Farley [...], 1742. [1st edition 1733].

⁵⁷ JJW, vol. 8, 1789 – 31, p. 299 – *Minutes of several conversations between the rev. Mr. Wesley and others from the year 1744 to the year 1789*, Q.3.A: "Not to form a new sect, but to reform the nation, particularly the Church, and to spread holiness over the country."

⁵⁸ John WESLEY. *Thoughts concerning the origin of power*. 1772. John WESLEY. *Some observations on liberty*. 1772. John WESLEY. *Thoughts on the present Scarcity of Provision*. 1773. John WESLEY. *Thought upon slavery*. 1774.

2.1 The medieval contribution: connected virtues

There is a great deal of discussion about Methodist identity, and it follows a wide variety of patterns already described. We wonder whether beside “identity” as guiding idea we might speak of imagination, too. Imagination dialogues with its social, cultural, and religious context. As an example, it is important to remember the use of the popular understanding of the works of mercy and the works of piety follows a much older pattern of the *caritas* based on Mathew 25, but is later amplified by seven pastoral expressions of the *caritas*.⁵⁹ It is a perspective which integrates and relates different expressions of service, and is on a deeper level directly related to the theological (faith, love, hope) and the cardinal virtues (prudence, temperance, justice, courage or strength) combining biblical and platonic understandings of virtues, very popular in ancient Christianity and its approximation to the Stoa, finally integrated by Thomas Aquinas in his theological system, and rediscovered by the Renaissance in its preference for Antiquity. The theological virtues appear in Wesley in a sermon from 1733, in combination with humility⁶⁰, and in other texts with obedience.⁶¹

The traditional stress on *caritas* and prudence is present in Wesley in his Notes on the Old Testament (1765), and in a important reflection about the right of everyone to sustain himself or herself.⁶² In 1738 Wesley refers to the “Royal law of charity”⁶³. In his Notes on the New Testament, Wesley reflects on the effectiveness of evangelism combining piety and charity⁶⁴ and affirms the importance “To join in all public works of charity”⁶⁵.

⁵⁹ Works of mercy, include in this old tradition, not “only” social work. It would be better if Methodist would understand “works of piety” as preparation and qualification of service, and “works of mercy” as service the spread of the gospel in words and deeds.

⁶⁰ WJW, vol. 1, 1733, p. 403 – *sermão* 17, §I.2 [The circumcision of the heart].

⁶¹ Some late conversations between the rev. Mr. Wesley and others. Conversation I, segunda-feira, 25 jun. 1744, Q. 7: “...**seeing God being the very essence of faith; love and obedience**, the inseparable properties of it.” (grifo deste autor). Esta combinação se tornou também um conhecido selo com as palavras “Believe – Love – Obey”.

⁶² OTJW, 1765, [vol. 1,] p. 656 – Dn 24.6: “Under this, he understands all other things necessary to get a livelihood, the taking away whereof is against the laws both of charity and prudence, seeing by those things alone he can be enabled both to subsist and to pay his debts.”

⁶³ John WESEY. Carta para Arthur Bedford, Londres, 28 set. 1738: “Royal law of charity.”

⁶⁴ NTJW, 1754, p. 561 – Fm 1.6: “I pray that the communication of thy faith may become effectual – That is, that thy faith may be effectually communicated to others, who see and acknowledge thy piety and charity.”

⁶⁵ NTJW, 1754, p. 548 – 1Tm 6.18.

Finally, charity and justice are “acceptable principle[s]”⁶⁶, or considerate useful criteria in his time for the communication of the gospel. Prudence, he uses in the sense wisdom of life,⁶⁷ quite close to the ancient meaning which combines memory, intelligence (reading the signs of the time) and providence. It is early as 1734 that Wesley edits a book from John Norris, a neo-Platonist from Cambridge.⁶⁸ It is re-edited seven times until 1791, and his biography appears in the Christian library and in the *Arminian Magazine*.⁶⁹ Together with the latitudinarian “sincerity” – and beside the puritan “seriousness”, prudence is considered a gift, a grace to conduct one’s life in a virtuous (not victorious) manner:

Thus we are directed to take notice of God’s providence in the little common occurrences of human life, and in them also **to exercise our own prudence, and other graces**: for the scripture was not intended only for the use of philosophers and statesmen, but to make us all wise and virtuous in the conduct of ourselves and families.⁷⁰

In this small commentary appears an important aspect of the *social* soteriology of Wesley. First, he connects divine providence with the exercise of human prudence, as correspondents based on grace. Second, prudence is not only for nobility, but for common people. Third, this occurs in daily life. Sometimes we also find prudence and courage,⁷¹ or prudence and justice.⁷² The combination of prudence and human wisdom is rare,⁷³ because Wesley generally restricts wisdom to God, often in combination with jus-

⁶⁶ OTJW, 1765, [vol. 2,] p. 1468 – Ne 5.15.

⁶⁷ LJW, vol. 5, Cork, 27 maio 1769, p. 137 – *carta* para Joseph Benson: “When I was at Oxford, I never was afraid of any but the almost Christians. If you give way to them and their prudence a hair’s breadth, you will be removed from the hope of the Gospel.”

⁶⁸ John NORRIS. *A treatise on Christian prudence*. WESLEY, John (ed.), London, 1734.

⁶⁹ Compare also: John NORRIS. *Treatises upon several subjects including reason and religion and the fathers advice to his children*. 1698 and John WESLEY. *An earnest appeal to men of reason and religion*, 1743.

⁷⁰ OTJW, 1765, [vol. 1,] p. 93 – Gn 24.29: “Thus we are directed to take notice of God’s providence in the little common occurrences of human life, and in them also **to exercise our own prudence, and other graces**: for the scripture was not intended only for the use of philosophers and statesmen, but to make us all wise and virtuous in the conduct of ourselves and families.”

⁷¹ OTJW, 1765, [vol. 2,] p. 945 – 1Sm 16.14: “...prudence, and courage, and alacrity...”.

⁷² OTJW, 1765, [vol. 2,] p. 974 – 1Sm 25.7: “...justice, and gratitude, and prudence...”.

⁷³ OTJW, 1765, [vol. 3,] p. 1756 – Sl 89.19: “...person of singular courage and wisdom.” NTJW, 1754, p. 489 – Ef 1.8, há um uso paralelo entre “wisdom” e “prudence”. Prudência é aqui o dom da responsabilidade. “...and prudence: Which he has wrought in us, that we may know and do all the abundant overflowings of his free mercy and favour.”

tice.⁷⁴ In other moments Wesley combines prudence with the Latin virtues as piety⁷⁵, and humility⁷⁶. Also we find combinations with integrity and humanity.⁷⁷ What we surprisingly do not find is the combination of prudence and temperance, understood as exaggeration.⁷⁸ His thermometer of temperance from 1790 (!)⁷⁹ is actually not very far from

⁷⁴ OTJW, 1765, [vol. 2,] p. 1598 – J6 23.12: “Not only in power and majesty, but also in justice, and wisdom, and goodness”; and OTJW, 1765, [vol. 2,] p. 1886, 1604-1605, 1606 – J6 27.23, 36.5 e 24; OTJW, 1765, [vol. 2,] p. 1636, 1650-1651 – SI 9.10; 19.1.

⁷⁵ OTJW, 1765, [vol. 2,] p. 840 – Jz 11.12: “prudence, and no less piety”; also OTJW, 1765, [vol. 1,] p. 850 – Js 14.2 e OTJW, 1765, [vol. 2,] p. 850 883 – Rt 2.8.

⁷⁶ OTJW, 1765, [vol. 2,] p. 894 – 1Sm 2.1; NTJW, 1754, p. 407 – 1Co 1.1. Hereappears the classic understanding: knowledge needs humility to serve in daily life.

⁷⁷ NTJW, 1754, p. 343 – At 23.19: “...with great integrity, humanity, and prudence.”

⁷⁸ NTJW, 1754, p. 76 – Mt. 23.25: “But intemperance in the full sense takes in not only all kinds of outward intemperance, particularly in eating and drinking, but all intemperate or immoderate desires, whether of honour, gain, or sensual pleasure.”

⁷⁹ AMJW, vol. 13 , abril 1790, p. 157 – *A moral and physical termometer: or, a scale of the progress of temperance and intemperance*[continuação na página seguinte].

TEMPERANCE			
70	Water:		Health, wealth Serenity of mind,
60	Milk and water:		
50	Small beer:		Reputation, long life, and Happiness
40	Cyder and perry:		Cheerfulness,
30	Wine:		Strength and
20	Porter:		Nourishment, when taken Only at meals, and in
10	Strong beer:		moderate quantities.

0 INTEMPERANCE				
		Vices	Diseases	Punishments
10	Punch:	Idleness; peevishness;	Sickness; Poking and tremors of the hands in the morning;	Debt;
20	Toody & crank:	Quarreling;	Bloatedness; inflamed eyes;	Black-eyes; Rags;
30	Grog, and brandy and water:	Fighting; lying;	Red noise and face; Sore and swelled legs; jaundice;	Hunger; Hospital;
40	Flip and shrub:	Swearing;	Pains in the limbs; and burning in the palms of the hands and soles of the [feet]	Poor-house;
50	Bitters infus'd in spirits; Hysteric waters:	Obscenity;		Jail; Whipping;
60	Gin, Annissed, Brandy, Rum, and Whisky in the morning:	Swindling; perjury; burglary; murder;	Droply; Epilepsy; Melancholy; Madness; Poisy; Apoplexy;	The hulks; Botany bay;
70	During day and night:	Suicide.	Death.	Gallows

the opposition of the good Beer Street and the bad Gin Lane in the gravures of Hogarth.⁸⁰ But to whom do reason and prudence relate? Concerning his sermon 70 reason is the capacity to organize ones life in a responsible way, and prudence is its application.⁸¹ In a similar way, the Bible has to be interpreted by reason and experience, and this has to be brought to life by common prudence.⁸²

But it is not sufficient to focus only on the elements of theological and cardinal virtues in Wesley. The major point is its connection. They are the reason why Wesley so easily combines justice, temperance, courage, prudence, love, hope and faith. It is the imagination of the medieval connectedness of everything – God, cosmos, earth, creation, humanity, Christianity, individual persons, and Christ. But, Wesley does not only repeat this world view. He combines it with the Anglican view of reformation and a modern issue – liberty. Liberty of the choice of ones own religion.

For Wesley, the will of God relates everyone with humanity.⁸³ In consequence, Wesley understands God as responsible for the whole humanity. He loves humanity, and is “...a lover of the souls (every life)”.⁸⁴ Second, true followers of Christ love humankind as God

⁸⁰ *Beer Street and Gin Lane* de William Hogarth de 1751. They were published with two poems from the Anglican divine James Townley. “Beer Street: **Beer, happy product of our Isle** / Can sinewy strength impart, / And, wearied with fatigue and toil, / Can cheer each manly heart. / Labor and Art, upheld by thee, / Successfully advance; / We quaff thy balmy juice with glee, / And Water leave to France. / Genius of Health, thy grateful taste / Rivals the cup of Jove, / And warms each English generous breast / With Liberty and Love”; “**Gin Lane: Gin, cursed fiend with fury fraught**, / Makes human race a prey; / It enters by a deadly draught, / And steals our life away. / Virtue and Truth, driv’n to despair, / Its rage compels to fly; / But cherishes, with hellish care, / Theft, Murder, Perjury. / Damn’d cup ! that on the vitals preys, / That liquid fire contains, / Which madness to the heart conveys, / And rolls it through the veins.” O texto e as imagens são disponíveis em: < <http://www.webbgarrison.com/hogarth/beergin.html> >. Access in: in 10 sept. 2006.

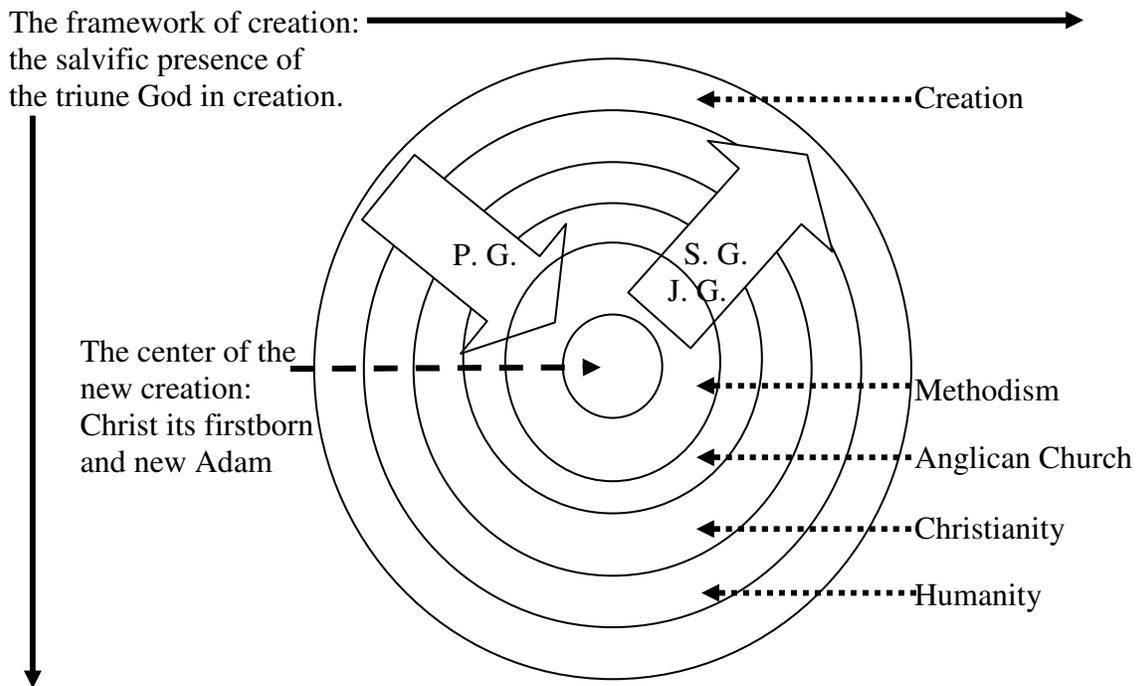
⁸¹ WJW, vol. 2, 1781, p. 590 – sermão 70, §I.3 [The case of reason impartially considered]: “...What is it that reason can do? [...] It can direct servants how to perform the various works [...] and to act with prudence and propriety in every part of his employment.”

⁸² WJW, vol. 9, 1749, p. 259 – *A plain account of the people called Methodists*, 1749, §II.10 “10. [...] There is much scripture for it, even all those texts which enjoin the substance of those various duties whereof this is only an indifferent circumstance, to be determined by reason and experience. (3.) You seem not to have observed, that the Scripture, in most points, gives only general rules; [...] But common sense is to determine, on particular occasions, what order and decency require. [...] But it is common prudence which is to make the application of this, in a thousand particular cases.”

⁸³ John WESLEY. *Thoughts upon God's sovereignty*, 1777: “GOD [...] As a Creator, he has acted, in all things, according to his own sovereign will. [...] 6. Of his own good pleasure, he made such a creature as man [...] 7. He hath determined the times for every nation [...] 8. He has allotted the time, the place, the circumstances, for the birth of each individual.”

⁸⁴ Veja a expressão nos sermões, nas cartas e nas canções “*Lover of souls*”.

loves it.⁸⁵ In a broader sense, Wesley introduces himself in 1760 as a “...a lover of mankind and of common sense”⁸⁶. In 1764, we read that he understands himself as “a lover of good English and common sense”⁸⁷ “...to assist persons of common sense e no learning...”⁸⁸ In 1747 he already related common sense with all humankind⁸⁹ and exceptionally he can speak of “common sense” of “common prudence”.⁹⁰ This relates different ethnicities, social groups and peoples in grace. It is grace. Wesley’s world view can be visualized in this manner:⁹¹



⁸⁵ WJW, vol. 1, 1740, p. 691-692 – *sermão* 33, §I.5 e §II.1 [Upon the Lord’s sermon on the mount, XIII]: “...ye were not lovers of God and of all mankind; ye were not renewed in the image of God. Ye were not holy as I am holy. [...] His soul is athirst for nothing on earth, but only for God, the living God. He has bowels of love for all mankind, and is ready to lay down his life for his enemies. He loves the Lord his God with all his heart, and with all his mind and soul and strength.³² He alone shall enter into the kingdom of heaven who in this spirit doth good unto all men; and who, being for this cause despised and rejected of men, being hated, reproached, and persecuted, `rejoices and is exceeding glad’, knowing in whom he hath believed...”.

⁸⁶ John WESLEY. *The desideratum: or electricity made plain and useful. By a lover of mankind and of common sense.* 1760 (6 edições até 1791).

⁸⁷ John WESLEY. *The complete English Dictionary, explaining most of those hard words, which are found in the best English writers.* By a lover of good English and common sense. Bristol: Printed by William Pine, 1764.

⁸⁸ John WESLEY. *The complete English dictionary*, 1753, p. 1.

⁸⁹ PPJW, 1747, p. viii, §7: “7. Thus far Physick was wholly founded on experience. [...] Thus ancient men, having little experience join’d with common sense and common humanity cured...”.

⁹⁰ WJW, vol. 9, 1749, p. 259 – *A plain account of the people called Methodists*, 1749, §II.10.

⁹¹ In the diagram “P. G.” stands for “preveniente grace”, “J.G.” for “justifying grace”, and “S.G.” for “sanctifying grace”. The last two are specially linked with Christ, as imputed and imparted justification.

2.2 The modern contribution: liberty

Liberty, in Wesley, is not a human attribute on its own. In general, he/she can only “dream of it”.⁹² On the other hand, it is a human right given by God.⁹³ So, where the Kingdom of God grows and humanity is restored, people are liberated,⁹⁴ and this includes the overcoming of the lack of sensibility with one another.⁹⁵ The mark of every kind of relation is now “justice, mercy and truth”⁹⁶ and God interacts “...strongly and sweetly influencing all, and yet without destroying the liberty of his rational creatures.”⁹⁷ For Charles Wesley, the Spirit operates the same way.⁹⁸ Wesley concentrates on religious liberty, prison reform, and abolition as examples of liberty from sin. Others understood this message: “Mr. Wesley is highly laudable in thus endeavouring to extend that *liberty with which Christ has made us all free* to so large and miserable part of the rational creation.”⁹⁹ In respect to the American colonies he, nevertheless, reduces the issue of religious liberty and the question of property.¹⁰⁰ And here it is not that Wesley did not know

⁹² WJW, vol. 1, 4 april 1742, p. 143 – *sermão* 3, §3 [Awake, thou that sleepest]: “Full of all diseases as he is, he fancies himself in perfect health. Fast bound in misery and iron, he dreams that he is happy and at liberty. He says, ‘Peace, peace’, while the devil as ‘a strong man armed’ is in full possession of his soul.”

⁹³ WJW, vol. 1, 1746, p. 260 – *sermão* 9, §II.10 [The spirit of boundage and adoption]: “How lively portraiture is this of one ‘under the law’! One who feels the burden he cannot shake off; who pants after liberty, power, and love, but is in fear and bondage still! Until the time that God answers the wretched man crying out, ‘Who shall deliver me’ from this bondage of sin, from this body of death? – ‘The grace of God, through Jesus Christ thy Lord.’”

⁹⁴ A liberdade do pecado é um primeiro fruto do Espírito. Veja WJW, vol. 1, 1746, p. 244 – *sermão* 8, §III.2 [The first fruit of the Spirit]: “Now, then, ‘Stand thou fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made thee free.’ He hath once more made thee free from the power of sin, as well as from the guilt and punishment of it.” See also WJW, vol. 2, 30 nov. 1780, p. 446 – *sermão* 60, § III.3 [The general deliverance]: “The liberty they then had will be completely restored, and they will be free in all their motions.”

⁹⁵ WJW, vol. 1, 1746, p. 312 – *sermão* 12, §19 [The witness of our own spirit].

⁹⁶ WJW, vol. 1, 10 mar. 1758, p. 365 – *sermão* 15, §II.10 [The great assize]: “...but God disposed all ‘strongly and sweetly’, and wrought all into one connected chain of justice, mercy, and truth.”

⁹⁷ So in WJW, vol. 4, 1791, p. 148 – *sermon* 127, §19 [On the wedding garment] e WJW, vol. 4, 12 august 1788, p. 42-43 – *sermon* 118, §II.1 [On the Omnipresence of God]: “God acts in heaven, in earth, and under the earth, throughout the whole compass of his creation; by sustaining all things, without which everything would in an instant sink into its primitive nothing; by governing all, every moment superintending everything that he has made; **strongly and sweetly influencing all, and yet without destroying the liberty of his rational creatures.**”

⁹⁸ HWCJ, 1746, p. 33.

⁹⁹ GMSU, 1773, p. 137

¹⁰⁰ WJW, vol. 3, 7. nov. 1775, p. 569 – *sermon* 111, §I.2 [National sins and miseries]: “They are screaming out for liberty while they have it in their hands, while they actually possess it; and to so great an extent that the like is not known in any other nation under heaven; whether we mean civil liberty, a liberty of enjoying all our legal property, or religious liberty, a liberty of worshipping God according to the dictates of our own conscience.”

that civil liberty could include freedom of the press, and free speech¹⁰¹, or freedom from oppression of any kind.¹⁰² Obviously, Wesley sees all this as only guaranteed in terms of British liberty. In ultimate consequence, this limits his theology of global providence and separates it from justice.

2.3 The relation between God, Christ, individuals, the Church and humanity

The basic perception is that relation is preserved from becoming oppression, and liberty from becoming indifference. To be a member of the faith community does not separate one from humankind, neither from creation. Justice is not reduced to justification, temperance not to legalism, courage not to fanaticism, prudence not to egoistic cleverness, as all are interpreted by love, just as, as we have seen, is liberty. Has Wesley done this in a perfect way? No. But there is a legacy in the direction that he took. In postmodern times, and in its fragmentation, we see fundamentalism as a variation of legalism and moralism as the “answer”, and, on the other hand, ghetto-communities defending their very special liberties without connecting themselves with their neighborhood.¹⁰³ Local churches exist in closed communities, and do not see their world as their parish. In relation to his *social* soteriology, this qualifies the private, communitarian and public life as a responsible or accountable life, in a very broad sense. As the whole world or the whole of humankind is not excluded, neither is the whole human being. All becomes a question of soteriology. Let us now verify in other areas the thesis of Wesley’s preference for “open systems” and “open systems”. As Runyon reminds us, the Anglican idea of sacramental transmission of grace and the Calvinistic concept of double predestination tend to view and apply grace partially or totally without the involvement of the human being in salvation. On the one hand, Wesley continues to take the Lords Supper as stressing the *extra nobis* of salvation: the sacraments remind us of the relational aspect. For the same reason, he baptizes children. On the other hand, he compares the doctrine of double predestination as a “stoical

¹⁰¹ WJW, vol. 3, 7 nov. 1775, p. 570 – *sermon* 111, §I.4 [National sins and miseries].

¹⁰² WJW, vol. 3 1778, p. 607 – *sermon* 113, §II.15 [The late work of God in America]: “...true civil liberty; a liberty from oppression of every kind; from illegal violence; a liberty to enjoy their lives, their persons and their property”.

¹⁰³ One of its ecclesiological expression of this is communitarianism, very often in combination with a stress on personal virtue (Stanley Hauerwas).

dream of fatal necessity [...] heathenness error” and “Turkish divinity [...] that all things are done unavoidably”.¹⁰⁴ In his English dictionary he reaffirms his rejections of the stoics where they promote a closed system: “*STOICS*, a sort of philosophers who taught that all things are ordered by fate”¹⁰⁵. Tis in spite of the fact that he edited, in 1750, the fables of a Stoic thinker, dealing with a liberated roman slave of the emperor Augustus.¹⁰⁶ For the same reason he fights with deism, latitudinarism, puritans, pietists and catholics, and to a certain extent, with the new economical spirit which culminated in Adam Smith.¹⁰⁷ Wherever they promote what he discerned as a closed system, he challenges them. Wherever they provide resources for his *social* soteriology, he borrows from them. Mysticism is rejected wherever it promotes a solitary spirituality, but prayer is considered to be essential. Deism is rejected where it seems to say that God has left the earth to humankind, but reason is considered to be an important essential of human understanding and conduct. Puritan and catholic promotion of absolute governments (Puritan - in the time of Cromwell); catholic (promotion of an absolute monarchy among pretenders to the English throne) he disagrees with, but approves the importance of sanctification in life. From quietism – as a type of Moravian mysticism of non-involvement - he flees from, but learns from them how to read homilies regarding justification¹⁰⁸. The question is not stoic or not, Calvinistic or not, catholic or not, pietist or not - the question is a closed system or not, closed to God and closed to the poor.

2.3.3 The spirituality behind social soteriology: exercises which promote the integration of the personal-relational, social-communitarian or public-utopian aspects of faith

We would like now to comment on the spirituality which sustains this *social* soteriology, investigating its major elements and relations, but not by providing a list of individual practices of devotion. The legacy of Wesley is not only his personal discipline of prayer, sacrament, feasting, bible-reading, visiting the poor and the ill, education of children, etc.

¹⁰⁴ AMJW, vol. 1, june 1778, p. 252.

¹⁰⁵ EDJW, 1764, p. S U.

¹⁰⁶ John WESLEY (ed.). *Phaedri fabulae selectae*, 1750.

¹⁰⁷ In my thesis I showed this in the third chapter.

¹⁰⁸ Patrick STREIFF. John Wesley und die Homilien der Kirche von England. *Theologie für die Praxis*, ano 28, n. 1-2, 2002, p. 12-21.

or other forms of observing classic spiritual exercises. His *social* soteriology depends on the form of the personal-relational, social-communitarian or public-utopian aspect of faith.

We understand the personal-relational aspect as a description of the fundamental constitution of the human being as relational, that Wesley reaffirms by his emphasis on the doctrine of *imago Dei* - natural, political and moral. This relationship includes the interaction between God and humankind, or relations with neighbor, which is a two way relationship always characterized by the emphasis on the double order of love. Because of this, in Wesley to care, or to express piety, means establishing relations with God and with neighbor.

The social-communitarian aspect gives life to the personal-relational aspect, and, to a certain point, it is co-constitutive of it. Again we stress two aspects. First, the human being as relational being needs company in order to develop, to be challenged, to become mature. *Social* soteriology works by and maintains itself in and through community. Second, the relationship with all humankind must be established. We can not flee it, we are part of it. This leads us to a clear distinction between Wesley and the proposal of communitarianism, and its self-limitation on the local church and its counter-cultural function as promoted by John Howard Yoder (menonite), Nicholas Wolterstorff (neocalvinist), James William McCelndon, Jr. (baptist) or Stanley Hauerwas (methodist).¹⁰⁹ Their basic thesis that the Kingdom of God can only be anticipated through the local church is under discussion in Methodism.¹¹⁰ Basically, Hauerwas seeks John Milbank, and his critique of the Christian realism of Niebuhr. It is interesting that the Methodist Hauerwas does not dialogue with Wesley to support his position.

So, Wesley takes a different road than communitarianism. The social-communitarian aspect does not limit itself to the boundaries of the local church or congregation. It is wider and

¹⁰⁹ Brian HEBBLETHWAITE. Sozialethik. *TRE*, vol. 31, 2000, p. 523.

¹¹⁰ Veja a discussão entre Cobb, Jr. e Hauerwas. John B. COBB, Jr. Ally or opponent? A response to Stanley Hauerwas. *Theology Today*, vol. 41, n. 4, Princeton, NY, 1995, p. 570-573; Stanley HAUERWAS. Knowing how to go on when you don not know where you are going: a response to John Cobb. *Theology Today*, vol. 41, n. 4, Princeton, NY, 1995.563-569.

includes the public sphere parting from the soteriological dynamics as seen in the personal-relational aspect. The focus is not only on transformative relations between God and the Church, but on God and humankind. So the socio-communitarian aspect already includes the entire world.

But what is really missing in the communitarian proposal is the universal-utopic aspect. The vision to reform the Church and the nation is linked with an eschatology which emphasizes God's active involvement in history,¹¹¹ the kingdom of grace as dynamic power,¹¹² , and the presence of the Son as reconciling power from whom his Church learns to go the way of salvation as the way of the cross. The cross is an essential ingredient in the universal-utopic aspect: it is neither cheap grace nor cheap hope¹¹³. Reconciliation includes self opening towards the other, the different – as God does, or what *imatitio Christi* really means. Reconciliation teaches each of us to look beyond our own peer group and have an encounter with Christ in the other, the different.¹¹⁴ This is the first aspect of what we call the communitarian-utopic. Its hope-horizon calls us to a radical new understanding of inclusive community. Even more, this aspect nurtures the hope that a responsible re-creation of relations, structures and institutions is possible, and that this

¹¹¹ WJW, vol. 2, 1765, p. 156 – *sermon* 43, §I.1 [The Scripture Way of Salvation]: “I.1. The salvation which is here spoken of is not what is frequently understood by that word, the going to heaven, eternal happiness. It is not the soul's going to paradise, termed by our Lord 'Abraham's bosom'. It is not a blessing which lies on the other side death, or (as we usually speak) in the other world. The very words of the text itself put this beyond all question. 'Ye are saved.' It is not something at a distance: it is a present thing, a blessing which, through the free mercy of God, ye are now in possession of. Nay, the words may be rendered, and that with equal propriety, 'Ye have been saved.' So that the salvation which is here spoken of might be extended to the entire work of God, from the first dawning of grace in the soul till it is consummated in glory.”

¹¹² WJW, vol. 1, 1748, p. 582 – *sermon* 26, §III.8 [Upon the Lord's sermon on the mount, VI]: “We pray for the coming of his everlasting kingdom, the kingdom of glory in heaven, **which is the continuation and perfection of the kingdom of grace on earth.**” NTJW, 1754, p. 201 – 1Co 17.30: “That ye may eat and drink at my table – That is, that ye may enjoy the highest happiness, as guests, not as servants. These expressions seem to be primarily applicable to the twelve apostles, and secondarily, to all Christ's servants and disciples, whose spiritual powers, honours, and delights, are here represented in figurative terms, **with respect to their advancement both in the kingdom of grace and of glory.**” WJW, vol. 20, 6 jan. 1748, p. 189 – *diary*: “...there is reality in religion. – *diary*, edition 1788: “...there is no reality but religion.”

¹¹³ WJW, vol. 7, 1780, p. 695-701 – *Collection of hymns*, hymn 505 a 508, “I: [...] ***There with him we reign in love.*** / part II: [...] ***Love be there our endless feast!*** / part III: [...] ***Saved by faith which works by love.*** / parte IV: [...] Hence may all our actions flow, / Love the proof that Christ we know; / Mutual love the token be, / Lord, that we belong to thee. / Love, thine image love impart! / Stamp it on our face and heart! / Only love to us be given – / ***Lord, we ask no other heaven.***”

¹¹⁴ Wesley stresses that perfection is to love the enemy. We could say: Perfection without radical involvement in favor of the other is impossible, but radicalism without love is never perfect.

promotes signs of the Kingdom. And although these signs are marked by human involvement, and as such are intermediate, they point in a direction, the direction of continuous reform.

	The Spirituality of <i>Social Soteriology</i> and its		
	personal –relational aspect	social-communitarian aspect	universal-utopic aspect
	Love of God and Neighbor	To love neighbor, enemy and humanity.	
Baptism	Adults: not born again	Educational Responsibility of the parents and the Church.	Children: Born again, giving of the Spirit
Lord’s Supper	Converting Grace	Open table (open communion)	Anticipation of the Kingdom.
Sacraments		Resistance to the idea that humans being encounter everything in themselves –opposition to a self-enclosed faith (and life).	
Pneumatology	Prevenient grace makes relational and involved life possible; justifying grace assures grace as the power of life	Sanctifying Grace qualifies peoples relations in every aspect of life, from their faith relations to their world relations	Grace is universal, accessible to everyone.
Pneumatic accent	Testimony and gift of the Spirit	The fruit of the Spirit and union with Spirit by the band of love	Spirit as creator and vivifier
Anthropology	Human beings are relational beings	Human beings are meant to be responsible beings	Human beings need (a) hope (horizon).
Theological virtue	Faith	Love	Hope
Cardinal virtue	Courage, temperance	Justice, prudence	
Liberty	Liberty to choose	Liberty to participate	Liberty to access

	The Spirituality of <i>Social Soteriology</i> and its		
	personal –relational aspect	social-communitarian aspect	universal-utopic aspect
Cardinal virtue	Courage, temperance	Justice, prudence	
Liberty	Liberty to choose	Liberty to participate	Liberty to access
Eschatology and Kingdom of God	The transformation of people	The continual reformation of all social (economic, political, religious) constructions including institutions.	The transformation of people; The transformation of all social (economic, political, religious) constructions including institutions.

This presentation is not to be understood as a system, it is more a visualization of relations, of aspects which mutually strengthen and correct themselves. The personal-relational aspect of this spirituality offers strong roots. Salvation is not the isolation of individuals, although it involves his/her interior, but relates the person with God and neighbor. The social-communitarian aspect is the exterior counterpart, which is of fundamental importance to the ongoing maturation of the individual. The universal-utopic idea can lead to destruction if they justify their means at any cost. This can only be hindered in community, in community with brothers and sisters and in community with humankind. Without communitarian corrections the universal-utopic perspective leads to false zeal, and destructive zeal is not appropriate for a *social soteriology*. A social soteriology leads us toward responsibility, and not an isolated and egoistic existence concerned only with self. In order to accomplish this people need the other and altogether we need hope.

To maintain a *social soteriology* these three aspects must be related in a mature way.

3. Social soteriology developed as *theology ad vitam, ad populum, and ad pauperum*

Thus far we have proposed a more synthetic reading of Wesley's biography and affirmed that he held a quite synthetic view of the word, although not in the sense of a closed sys-

tem, and that he developed a spirituality according to this broad vision. Now, in this last chapter, we would like to investigate the very purpose of this *social* soteriology, the promotion of life, especially the life of the common and often forgotten people, and among them, especially the poor. These three emphases are related but offer specific aspects. It is our intention to develop them in the following way:

Ad vitam: Wesley's reflection about antinomism, moralism, happiness, salvation of souls from death (an often forgotten addition), the distinction between religious experience and experimental religion and impression and experience, and his inclusion of daily life in the examples of his (Aristotelian) logic, all seen as promotion of life.

Ad populum: a reflection about the relation between Wesley and the people, in cultural terms.

Ad pauperum: The starting point are the Poor Laws. It follows Wesley's deconstruction of the argument that the poor are poor because they are idle, and that the poor cannot be liberated since they will always be present and finally his efforts to provide spirituality accessible to the people and the poor.¹¹⁵

Because of the limited space, it is not possible to develop the details of each of these items. What is important is to recognize that these aspects shaped the *social* soteriology of Wesley and occupied his reflections. Nevertheless, it is important to discuss some questions regarding method.

3.1 *Ad populum* understood as *ad pauperum*: the social historic reading of Wesley

Wesley's special relation with the poor has been constantly noted, for example in a very early German biography of Wesley from 1793.¹¹⁶ Even among those textbooks which re-

¹¹⁵ I'd like to mention here the contributions of our third colleague at the Center of Wesleyan Studies, Claudio de Oliveira Ribeiro (see his paper at this conference). His profound involvement with and reflection about the poor as central issue of theology is always inspiring.

¹¹⁶ In a very old German biography of Wesley the effectiveness of Wesley especially among the poor is underlined. August Hermann NIEMEYER (Königlich preus. Consistorialrath und Professor der Theologie). *Leben Johann Wesleys: Stifter der Methodisten nebst einer Geschichte des Methodismus* von J. Hampson. Vol. II, Aus dem Englischen. Halle: In der Buchhandlung des Waisenhauses, 1793, p. 3-4.

fer more to “people” than to “poor” in their titles,¹¹⁷ there is a tendency to understand people as poor people and Wesley as someone who related to them in a special way. This tendency was reinforced when the social historic perspective, with its focus on the question of class, class relations and justice, dominated Wesleyan studies in the sixties, seventies and eighties, and even concepts like *folk theologian*¹¹⁸ or *people’s theologian*¹¹⁹ represent more a social than a cultural historic perspective. To be clear, there is no doubt regarding the ongoing importance of this perspective, but we also believe that *ad populum* opens a second field of discussion, extremely important especially where Methodism in non Anglo-Saxon countries seeks roots. Whereas the social perspective should not be forgotten, the cultural question is a second key question. Without a cultural understanding of Wesley it is difficult to deal with enculturation, and to overcome a mere countercultural attitude.

3.1 *Ad populum*: the challenge of a cultural historic reading of Wesley

“People” had in the eighteenth century the meaning of “all inhabitants of a nation” (= the English people), “members of a movement” (people called Methodists), a group of persons in relation to their superior (people of God), the masses in distinction to nobility (the common people)¹²⁰, or laity in comparison to clergy¹²¹. So, people can be understood as a distinct group in relation to another, and as the totality of the individuals of one nation. There is no doubt that the perspective *ad populum* in Wesley refers to simple, mainly not

¹¹⁷ Robert F. WEARMOUTH. *Methodism and the common people of the eighteenth century*. London: Epworth Press, 1945. Oscar SHERWIN. *John Wesley friend of the people*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1961.

¹¹⁸ Albert OUTLER. *Wesley Works*, vol. 1, p. 35-37, apud BAKER, Frank. *Unfolding John Wesley: a survey of twenty year’s studies in Wesley’s thought*. *Quarterly Review*, n. 1. Nashville, TN: The United Methodist Board of Higher Education, outono 1980, p. 49.

¹¹⁹ William Ragsdale CANNON. *Salvation in the theology of John Wesley*. *Methodist History*, vol. 9, n. 7, Madison, NJ: General Commission on Archives and History of the UMC, out. 1970, p. 6: “He was always the people’s theologian. His sole purpose in thinking theologically at all was to help them. Their salvation was the burden of his preaching.”

¹²⁰ See the use in GMSU, may 1739, vol. 9, p. 257. “Not to consider the evil of Methodism any further in a religious view, I shall confine myself to a few reflections on the bad effects it may have upon civil society. I think it must be owned by all, that a multitude of sects and religion must be very disadvantageous to any community. Differences of opinion in religious matters not only breed dissensions and animosities **among the people**, but generally carry along with them a diversity of sentiments with regard to government. Besides, that such disagreement must be always very inconvenient to those at the helm of state.”

¹²¹ EDJW, 1764, p. L A: “The *LAITY*, the people, distinguished from the clergy.”

(school) educated, people, the majority of the inhabitants or as also writes, the “bulk of mankind”.¹²² Rare, but not totally absent, is the use of “vulgar”.¹²³

Hampton refers to the people as cultural phenomenon and concludes that Methodism interacts with English popular culture in a biased way, rejecting some of its expressions and corresponding to some of their expectations: with superstition Methodism interacts well, whereas indecency is rejected.¹²⁴ Whereas Hampton’s vision of the people is surprisingly negative – can common peoples’ culture be reduced on being or “superstitious” or “indecent”? – there is little doubt that Wesley had a more positive attitude to his people (and the poor). But did he embrace their culture as worthy of being recognized? One area may be popular medicine. Very different to other parts of continental Europe which related popular medicine to witchcraft, Wesley did not do so. Nevertheless he believed, until his later years¹²⁵, in the existence of witches¹²⁶, attacks through witchcraft as challenge of the seniority of Jesus Christ¹²⁷, and complicity with the devil¹²⁸, which Hogarth inspired in 1762 in his well known gravure “Credulidade, superstição e fanatismo”, describing a Methodist service including all kinds of popular beliefs, among them, witchcraft.¹²⁹ But in his attempt to revitalize family medicine Wesley include popular medical traditions. In his English dictionary he returns to the old tradition of books about plants and their medicinal attributes.¹³⁰ A herbalist is simply “... one that has skills in herbs”,¹³¹ and this

¹²² WJW, vol. 1, 1746, p. 103-104 – *sermon*, [Preface] §2: “...I now write (as I generally speak) *ad populum* – to the bulk of mankind – to those who neither relish nor understand the art of speaking, but who notwithstanding are competent judges of those truths which are necessary to present and future happiness.”

¹²³ WJW, vol. 3, set.-out.1785, p. 202 – *sermon* 85, §3 [On Working Out our Own Salvation]: “Certain it is that these truths were never known to the vulgar, the bulk of mankind, to the generality of men in any nation, till they were brought to light by the gospel.”

¹²⁴ David HEMPTON. *Methodism and politics in British society: 1750-1850*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1984, p. 29. It is very strange that the mere council to join hygiene and prayer to promote health can be called “supersticious”. See Douglas HAY e Nicholas ROGERS. *Eighteenth-Century English Society: Shuttles and swords*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 169-170. Both depend very much on Hampton.

¹²⁵ AMJW, vol. 6, february 1783, p. 100-102 e 153ss – Witchcraft; AMJW, vol. 6, 1783, p. 212ss, 267, 324ss, 377ss, 435ss, 494ss, 547ss, 606ss, 667ss – An extract of Mr. Baxter’s certainty of the world of spirits; AMJW, vol. 8, 1785, p. 318ss, 375ss – A relation of witchcraft discovered in the village of Mohra in Sweden.

¹²⁶ OTJW, 1765, [vol. 1,] p. 275 – Ex 22.18.

¹²⁷ OTJW, 1765, [vol. 1,] p. 411 – Lv 19.26.

¹²⁸ OTJW, 1765, [vol. 1,] p. 640 – Dt 18.10.

¹²⁹ An detailed analyses can be find in Bernd KRYSMANSKI " We see a ghost: Hogarth's satire on Methodists and Connoisseurs" *The Art Bulletin*, june 1998. < http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0422/is_2_80/ai_54073985 >. Access: 12-09-2006.

¹³⁰ EDJW, 1764, p. H K e H O: “An *HERBEL*, a book that treat herbs”.

knowledge is positive, a gift of God, even if the person is not a Christian, as he makes clear in his guide to popular medicine “Primitive physick”¹³².¹³³ In this respect, popular culture and humankind are embraced by God, the creator¹³⁴ and protected by Jesus, the Lord¹³⁵. This is important to remember, especially when popular beliefs in demons, witches and the devil are once again penetrating the people called Methodist, and anxiety greatly influences their spirituality, at least in Brazil. It is not easy to deal with this kind of popular mentality, but Wesley definitely tried to give his answer to it and not merely ignore it. The question is less whether we agree with his proposal than whether theology and church embrace the task of corresponding to culture and popular beliefs in all of their diversity, its wisdom and its superstition.

3.3 The dynamic tension between a reading ad populum, ad pauperum and ad vitam

Whereas a cultural - historical reading often fails to focus on social questions, a historical reading is limited in its response to cultural perspectives. And both can be quite ecclesio-centric or anthropocentric. But in Wesley we find a constant reflection which develops “the way of salvation” as in proximity with the promotion of life. The vocation to serve the present age is to save souls – from death.¹³⁶ Death is the opposition of life. And the vocation to save souls is not to be understood in intimist or quietist terms.

And above all, do you use every means in your power to save souls from death? If [...] “you do good unto all men”, though “especially to them that are of the household of faith”, your zeal for the church is pleasing to God; but if not, if you are not “careful to maintain good works”, what have you to do with the church? If you have not “compassion on your fellow-servants”, neither will your Lord have pity on you.¹³⁷

¹³¹ EDJW, 1764, p. H K e H O: “An *HERBALISTS*, one that has skills in herbs”.

¹³² PPJW, 1747, p. vii – viii, §4 e 5.

¹³³ The title is interesting. Beside “primitive physick” the Anglican sacerdots practiced “spiritual physick” which was exorcism to attend popular believes. Nothing of this appears in this little book. See also a comment in EDJW, 1764, p. P H: “A *PHANTASM*, or *PHANTOM*, an apparition, vision, fancy”, where Wesley seems to be more critical.

¹³⁴ OTJW, 1765, [vol. 1,] p. 220 – Êx 8.19.

¹³⁵ NTJW, 1754, p. 491 – Ef 1.21: “God has invested him with uncontrollable authority over all demons in hell, all angels in heaven, and all the principes and potentates on earth.”

¹³⁶ WJW, vol. 1, 24th august 1744, p. 177 – *sermon* 4, §IV.8 [Scriptural Christianity]: “Have we a burning zeal to save souls from death?”

¹³⁷ WJW, vol. 3, 6th may 1781, p. 319-320 – *sermon* 92, §III.9 [On zeal]

Fellow-servants, Church, and all men are called to do good works to save their souls from death, to prevent those whose lives are in danger before their time by providing company and time, and by joining in their struggles to maintain and restore lives and reform nations. But although this includes all, and not to forget even those who act sometimes as violent enemies of the people called Methodists, some times belonging to the higher part of society,¹³⁸ there is a tendency in Wesley to serve first who is not served yet.

The rich, the honourable, the great, we are thoroughly willing (if it be the will of our Lord) to leave to you. Only let us alone with the poor, the vulgar, the base, the outcasts of men. Take also to yourselves the saints of the world: But suffer us "to call sinners to repentance;" even the most vile, the most ignorant, the most abandoned, the most fierce and savage of whom we can hear. To these we will go forth in the name of our Lord, desiring nothing, receiving nothing of any man, (save the bread we eat, while we are under his roof), and let it be seen whether God hath sent us. Only let not your hands, who fear the Lord, be upon us.¹³⁹

And thirteen years later, he commented in his diary, "I dined at Lady –'s. We need great grace to converse with great people! From which, therefore, (unless in some rare instances,) I am glad to be excused."¹⁴⁰

Social soteriology is an options for those who want to serve best the present age. May be to discuss, as a joint afford of all the Methodist family and their friends, how we can beside our differences, convictions, deceptions, dreams, hopes and fears, contribute to a better understanding of the mechanisms which cause death and deception and the knowledge, lifestyle and church life that provides an experimental religion open to reform itself and engaged with the reform of the nation. The communitarian framework, the arminian dynamics and the public expression of faith are important ingredients that this may happen.

¹³⁸ The motive of the possibility of persecution is transversal in the works of John Wesley and the prayer for the enemies a task since Oxford. (see also FPJW, 1742, p. 8, and diary 22nd June 1745 where he preaches in the morning in St. Ives about "to love the enemies" and at night in Gwennap about "persecution". Although this happens at two different places the mindset is clear: the two issues belong together, even persecution does not free oneself from not loving the other.

¹³⁹ WJW, vol. 11, 1745, p. 316 – *Farther appeal to men of reason and religion*, §III.35.

¹⁴⁰ WJW, vol. 21, 21 april 1758, p. 142 – *diary*:

Abbreviations

- AMJW** John WESLEY (ed.). *Arminian Magazine*: consisting of extracts and original treatises on universal redemption. London: Printed by R. Hawes, jan. 1778 – dec. 1781; printed by J. Paramore, at the Foundary, Moorfields, jan. 1782 – dec. 1787; printed and sold at the New Chapel, Cityroad, jan. – dec. 1788; printed for the author and sold at at the New Chapel, Cityroad, jan. – dez. 1789; printed for the editor and sold at the New Chapel, Cityroad, jan. 1790 - sept. 1791. [monthly pupilcation].
- CLJW** John WESLEY (ed.). *A Christian Library*: Consisting of extracts from, and abridgments of, the choicest pieces of practical Divinity which have been published in the English tongue, 50 volumes. By JOHN WESLEY, M.A., Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford, 1749-1755.
- CPJW** John WESLEY. *A Collection of moral and sacred poems from the most celebrated English authors*, 3 volumes, Bristol: printed and sold by Felix Farley [...], 1744.
- EDJW** John WESLEY. *The complete English Dictionary, explaining most of those hard words, which are found in the best English writers*. By a lover of good English and common sense. N.B. The author assures you, and thinks that this is the best English DICTIONARY in the world. Bristol: Printed by William Pine, 1764. 2th edition.
- FPJW** John WESLEY. *A collection of forms of prayer for every day in the week*. Bristol: printed and sold by Felix Farley [...], 1742. [1st edition: 1733].
- GMSU** Silvanus URBAN (ed.). *Gentleman's Magazine and Historical Chronicle*. London, 1739 – 1791.
- HSCJ** John WESLEY e Charles WESLEY. *Hymns on the Lord's Supper*, with a preface concerning the Christian sacrament and sacrifice de Dr. Daniel Brevint. Bristol: printed by Felix Farley, 1745 [Facsimile; Medison, NJ: The Charles Wesley Society, 1995.]
- JJW** John WESLEY. *The Works of John Wesley*. Complete and unabridged. Londres: Methodist Book Room, 1872. 3rd edition. [Facsimile; Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1986. [citamos desta obra os textos ainda não editados pela WJW].
- LJW** John WESLEY. *The Letters of Rev. John Wesley, A.M.*, sometime fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford. TELFORD, John (ed.). London: The Epworth Press, 1960. (1st edition: London: The Epworth Press, 1931).
- LoJW** John WESLEY. *A Compendium of Logic*. The second edition, enlarged. London, 1756.

- NTJW** John WESLEY. *Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament*. Bristol, 1754. [Facsimile. Salem, Ohio: Schmul Publishers, 1976.]
- OTJW** John WESLEY. *Explanatory Notes upon the Old Testament*. Bristol: Printed by William Pine in Wine-Street, 1765. [Facsimile. Edition in 4 volumes. Salem, Ohio: Schmul Publishers, 1975.]
- PPJW** [John WESLEY]. *Primitive physick: or, an easy and natural method of curing most diseases*, London: printed and sold by Thomas Trye near Gray's-Inn Gate, Holborn, 1747. 1ª edição [until 1760, edited anomalously].
- WJW** John WESLEY. *The Bicentennial Edition of Works of John Wesley*, vol. 1-4 [Sermons]; vol. 7 [Hymns]; 9 [The Methodist Societies]; 11 [Appeals & Open Letters]; vol. 18-24 [Journal and Diaries]; vol. 25-26 [Letters 1721-1755,] Oxford: Clarendon Press (1975-1983: BAKER, Frank (general editor). (1984ff; HEITZENRATER, Richard P.; BAKER, Frank (textual editor). Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1984.