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Summary

1. The young Zinzendorf's view of brotherly love and hostility in its context

Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700-1760), founder of the Renewed Moravian Church or “Evangelische Brüdergemeine”, tried to bridge gaps between religious groups, using the concept of Christian brotherly love. Ironically, this very concept also generated conflicts, among other things because it violated the agreements about the borders between the denominations as laid down in the Peace of Westphalia in 1648.

This study of brotherly love and hostility in texts of the young Zinzendorf builds on two important areas of the research on Zinzendorf. First, it looks into the dating and characteristic contents of the phases in Zinzendorf's development. Secondly it investigates the relationship between Zinzendorf's ideas and some religious traditions. This study starts by interpreting the 1713-1727 texts of Zinzendorf using a close reading approach, focusing solely on the texts themselves. The resulting interpretations are placed into their historical context with the help of additional texts. This provides the material that enables a comparison of Zinzendorf's ideas with elements of various traditions within church history, especially the Lutheran Orthodoxy and a number of Pietist subgroups.

This study is rooted in a broad and flexible understanding of Pietism as envisaged by e.g. Hartmut Lehmann. According to him Pietism entails clerical and extra-clerical movements and possibly religious movements other than Christian from about 1600 until today. There are still many gaps in the chart for this immense area. For this study I have chosen to consider a limited number of characteristics of four Pietist subgroups, namely the Pietism of Spener, the Pietism of Halle, Radical Pietism and the Philadelphian movement. Of course, a limited set of characteristics does not fully characterize a tradition. Therefore, this study will not state whether a text of Zinzendorf is for instance a Radical Pietist text but rather if that text bears some typical features of this movement.

The main question to be answered in this study is: What does Zinzendorf's view of brotherly love and hostility in the years 1713-1727 say about his changing relation with certain religious traditions? For that purpose other questions had to be cleared: How do the ideas of brotherly love and hostility develop in Zinzendorf texts dated 1713-1727? To what extent do Zinzendorf's ideas overlap those of various Pietist currents and the Philadelphian movement? To what extent are they contrary to the understandings of the Lutheran Orthodoxy of that time? How do they relate to the ideas of brotherly love and hostility in the statutes of Herrnhut of 1727? In order to answer these questions I first examined texts from “Teutscher Gedichte Erster Theil” for expressions such as: “brother”, “sister”, “Philadelphia”, “hate”, “enemy”, “quarrel” and “difference of opinion”. Then I looked for other relevant texts from comparable phases in Zinzendorf's life. Further questions were: How does the historical context of each passage color the meaning of the above key words? To whom does brotherly love refer? Which characteristics do “brothers” and “sisters” have? To which groups do they belong? Which experiences give them the most joy? What distinguishes “brothers” from “enemies”?

What is their attitude towards the “enemy”? How do they see the end of time, bridal mysticism and the relationship between sanctification and justification? To some extent I examined whether the literary genre determined the expressions of brotherly love and hostility. I also examined to some extent whether Zinzendorf’s texts show differences if a text was written for the public or for his inner circle.

The study shows that many parts of Zinzendorf’s poems from 1713-1727 correspond with facts of historical context. Thoughts of the first-person narrator of the poems turn up in other texts of the young Zinzendorf. Most of the time the “I” in the poems is the voice of Zinzendorf himself, but in some instances the “I” clearly refers to another person, e.g. the one featured in the poem. Even then, the ideas in the poem are identical to the ideas in other texts of the young Zinzendorf.

Characteristics of the “brothers” do not only depict their positions relating to various religious traditions but they also reveal Zinzendorf’s position. Beyond that, the value given to brotherly love reveals Zinzendorf’s point of view on these movements.

2. Unchanging ideas of the young Zinzendorf (1713-1721)

This study shows that some elements of Zinzendorf’s thinking remain unchanged during the entire period of 1713-1727: the love of and for Christ, the emphasis on Jesus’ death on the cross and his conciliatory blood, the emphasis on the grace of God, the belief that Christ lives in us, the reverence for the Lord’s Supper, love for the spiritual “brothers” and “sisters”, the urge to admonish, to convert and to mediate. Also, Zinzendorf considers a pious lifestyle imperative during the entire period of 1713-1727. The characteristics of such a lifestyle are frequent praying, singing, attending the sermon, reading of edifying literature and observing the sanctity of Sunday. It also entails continuous avoidance of sexual pleasure, abundant eating and drinking, violence, cursing, dancing, gambling, pride, hypocrisy, idleness, selfishness, worldly aristocracy, and Christians not yet converted.

There are also a few discrepancies in Zinzendorf’s thinking that remain unchanged. For instance, he emphasizes the importance of the Augsburg Confession but deviates from it himself. His attitude towards the aristocracy is ambiguous as is his attitude towards suffering. On the one hand he is willing to bear mockery and suffering, on the other hand he is fighting and insulting the mockers himself. Sometimes he is heated, at other times he is diplomatic; sometimes he feels hate towards the enemy, at other times love; sometimes he acts with consideration, at other times with juvenile recklessness. Zinzendorf states repeatedly that mankind is nothing without the grace of God, yet he gravely stresses the importance of human merit. So much so that he regards heavenly joy as a reward for human faithfulness, courage and the readiness to sacrifice. However it is because of divine grace that people can be faithful, courageous and ready to sacrifice. Zinzendorf shows great tolerance towards misbehaving people provided they are ready to change their ways, but he shows intolerance towards people unwilling to mend their ways. Though he finds unity, love and piety more important, he is far from indifferent about the doctrines: he differentiates between ‘true’

doctrines and ‘incorrect’ ideas. His tolerance towards people with ‘incorrect’ opinions applies to them only if they behave impeccably. Obedience towards government and towards parents or grandparents is a divine command, unless the demands of these authorities are contrary to God’s will.

The vehemence in Zinzendorf’s statements is partly dependent on the situation in which he finds himself and partly on the literary genre. His poems carry many elements taken from the hymn book of Freylinghausen. In these songs of Halle’s Pietism many strong expressions occur on countless occasions. Whether written for a small circle or a wider audience Zinzendorf’s criticism of the worldly aristocracy and of non-converted Christians is equally strong, also manifested in his preface to “Teutscher Gedichte Erster Theil” where he writes that his sharp criticism of the worldly aristocracy is deliberate in order to antagonize them. Through this criticism he intends to diminish his chances of a worldly career and the temptations that might bring. Zinzendorf shows no double-dealing or fickleness in this. His remarks concerning heterodox views however often are cautious, concealed or knowingly unclear, partially to avoid trouble for himself as well as for other people and partially because according to him mankind must not yet know God’s secrets.

3. Developments in the young Zinzendorf’s thinking

That said, Zinzendorf’s convictions also undergo remarkable changes in the period 1713-1727. These concern changes of his assessment of the aristocracy and the “adiaphora”, his view on Jesus, on “brothers” and “sisters” and the “enemies”; changes in the use of the words “brother” and “sister”, in the function of brotherly love, in his end-time vision, in the distinction between “good” and “evil” people and changes in the extent and nature of his supraconfessionalism.

In the early days his generally positive judgment of the aristocracy singles out godless aristocratic individuals for criticism; in 1722 this is being reversed: Zinzendorf calls aristocracy dirt but glorifies some of its pious members. Through the love of and for Christ they have been able to sanctify their status and use it for God’s work. It is observed in the same year that converted people are considered as equal members of the body of Christ without regard for their social standing. This is explicitly proclaimed in 1727 in the statutes of Herrnhut. This equality of standing however only applies to converted Christians and only insofar religious life is concerned.

With regard to games, 1716-1719 Zinzendorf feels positive only towards their usefulness to train the body and spirit once all their negative side effects have been removed. As to opera, he develops a more refined opinion; in the years after, neither games, opera nor theatre play a part in his life.

An analysis of occurrences of certain words in the poems suggests a transformation from harshness to kindness and from hate to love for the enemy. But the results of the close reading of a number of poems and other texts prove that Zinzendorf regarded enemies with mixed

feelings, both love and hate, throughout his life. Vehemence and hostility are amplified just after he starts his work at court at the end of 1721 and again in 1726 when his involvement with the Görlitz conventicle, the followers of Schwenckfeld and the refugees from Moravia and Bohemia become a political problem. There is a noticeable decrease in the mentions of inner enemies in the years 1721-1727.

In 1718 Zinzendorf rejects Roman Catholicism completely. He also regards as wrong: 1. the Reformed Church' belief in predestination; 2. a closely defined chiliasm such as the Petersens'; 3. the denial by the Orthodox Lutherans that Christ can live in man; and 4. the denial by the Orthodox Lutherans that man can achieve perfection. From 1719 onward Zinzendorf approves Catholic Jansenism and opposes only some aspects of Catholicism such as the power of the pope, the reverence of saints and the rule that common people are not allowed to read the Bible. The distinction between good and evil people coincides less and less with the boundaries of denominations. In 1716 Zinzendorf already considers not only Lutheran people as "brothers" but also members of the Reformed Church as well as the pious who sympathize with Radical Pietists. In the years to follow he calls the members of his society, the "Gesellschaft der Bekenner Christi", his "brothers". During his grand tour through Europe in the years 1719-1720 he discovers kindred spirits even in the Parisian cardinal De Noailles and in a number of Jansenist Catholics. He calls the cardinal a child of God. In the poems of the following years he addresses pious members of the aristocracy as "brothers" and "sisters". From 1721 he is on brotherly terms with Radical Pietists and separatists like the followers of Gichtel and Schwenckfeld. It matters a great deal to him that he gradually gets these people to go to church and to partake in the Lord's Supper. He defends and glorifies the Radical Pietist Hochmann von Hochenau as an example for all Christians, and the same goes for Eleonora Petersen who has a Philadelphian orientation. However brotherly and sisterly he might describe them he does not call these controversial two figures "brother" or "sister" in the poems. In 1727 Zinzendorf regards all converted Christians as "brothers", provided they put the grace of God above all and do their utmost to achieve sanctity. Brotherly love ought to reign amongst them. Quarrel and disagreement are more and more qualities of the 'devilish' unconverted Christians in the years 1721-1725. As such, it is all the more painful that there is an increasing lack of unity in Herrnhut from 1725 onward.

Zinzendorf uses the term "brother" addressing his earlier schoolmates who were a group of like-minded pious devotees as early as 1716. At that time it was fashion to do so in profane letters. However, he gives the word "brother" a religious meaning, which is unusual among lay people and certainly not among students. He once writes of brotherly love in 1716 but it is only from 1721 onward that brotherly love plays a main part in his values. The words "brother" and "sister" are increasingly used to refer to converted Christians whom he regards as parts of the body of Christ. The joy caused by brotherly love increases and receives eschatological aspects. Brotherly love becomes the prerequisite of forming the Body of Christ with all members. If there is no brotherly love, Christ cannot be on earth and therefore it becomes the most important characteristic of a Christian and the condition for the Christ's second coming. Brotherly love itself and the joy accompanying it obtain an inviting and converting effect on the yet un-converted. A profound yearning to bring all the people to salvation this way takes shape. If the children of God feel their brotherly love and by this the

closeness to God, their lives become easy to bear even in difficult situations and they will feel as if they were in heaven. Their faith grows that God's kingdom on earth is near.

Mutual spiritual brotherhood is an absolute condition for marriage. The love between the spouses converges exclusively on Jesus as the 'true' bridegroom. The chastity of the marriage is upheld when sexual pleasure is phased out and sexuality serves exclusively to beget children. However, the love for Jesus bears strong erotic marks; in the contact with this divine bridegroom one feels heavenly enjoyment. For Zinzendorf in his younger years Jesus represents a brother and friend and after 1721 increasingly the bridegroom of his soul.

4. Religious traditions that influenced Zinzendorf

A number of aspects in Zinzendorf's ideas are by no means contrary to Orthodox Lutheran doctrine: 1. the love of and for Christ; 2. the theology of the blood and the cross; 3. the persistent underlining of God's grace and the Augsburg Confession; 4. the value of the Lord's Supper and of obedience; 5. the love for brothers and sisters in spirit; 6. his initially positive thoughts about the aristocracy. Yet, he gradually fills all these ideas with new contents. In the years 1713-1716 Zinzendorf is directly under the influence of Halle. In his opinion the mere faith in the grace of God is not sufficient to save man. Man must enter a deep internal struggle improving oneself in order to earn the eternal bliss of the hereafter. The strict division between 'true' and 'untrue' Christians is part of the Pietism of Halle and clashes with the Orthodox Lutheran doctrine. During his time in Wittenberg Zinzendorf reads many writings of Spener and is influenced by him. This is apparent from the significance he attributes to a person's own conscience. While the Pietism of Halle does not allow any "adiaphora", Zinzendorf developed a more subtle view allowing some freedom for his brothers in his society, the "Gesellschaft der Bekenner Christi". The members of this society have an aristocratic background and are just as pious as Zinzendorf himself. Zinzendorf believes that they should decide themselves, whether they should follow his advice or the advice of someone else in insignificant matters. Nevertheless, contrary to Spener he generally tends to force his principles upon others.

From 1721 onward Zinzendorf regards himself an instrument of God in the Philadelphian movement. He adopts some of their ideas: the supraconfessionalism, the reverence for brotherly love as the force that completes the Body of Christ, some of their end of times viewpoints and some of the bridal mysticism omitting the adoration of the divine Sophia. He expects just as the Philadelphians the kingdom of God on earth but is reserved in his statements about such a kingdom. He does believe that the time of Philadelphia has come but does not call the era of the divided and rigid church Sardes. The significance of the blood of Christ at the Lord's Supper receives heterodox aspects under the influence of Philadelphian and other Radical Pietist ideas. It is not primarily the blood of sacrifice bringing salvation but also the blood that cleanses man and makes him resemble God. The metaphor about the light also plays a part in Zinzendorf's ideas about the Lord's Supper, just as with Leade. Whereas many Radical Pietists reject the Lord's Supper at church, Zinzendorf regards it as an essential part of religion and ties it to the Lutheran Church.

But for Zinzendorf it is not the Lord's Supper or the other sacraments nor the faith in God's mercy that make the church; for Zinzendorf it is love. Because brotherly love often is recognized as the main characteristic of Christians and a precondition for eternal happiness, it receives Radical Pietist and Philadelphian features and does no longer fit into the Orthodox Lutheran doctrine where it is the faith that makes a Christian. In striving for sanctity it is the main issue of the Halle Pietism to conquer desires of the flesh. If striving for it makes one increasingly more loving or more alike God, this striving for sanctity turns more Philadelphian or Radical Pietist. When it comes to his emphasis of brotherly love Zinzendorf is largely influenced by Leade, Hochmann, the Petersen couple and especially Arnold.

In the beginning Zinzendorf's attitude to other people shows an urge to convert them. This fits in the style of Halle Pietism and is not contrary to Orthodox Lutheran doctrine. According to this doctrine God's grace is there for all people. They however have to be moved to believe in this grace and to embrace it in gratitude. As time goes by, Zinzendorf's attitude towards others is marked by typical Philadelphian designs: the scattered children of God must be gathered and unified by brotherly love in order to make the Body of Christ complete. At the same time virtue and the works of Arndt should forge a bridge to the Catholics.

Zinzendorf's ideas comprise more and more heterodox elements. The Bible no longer is the only source of revelation and the church is not the only place where God's word can be heard. Also, God reveals himself in the hearts of everyone. Although Spener sees it that way, it is much stronger in Radical Pietism. Rejection of sexual lust is not unusual in Orthodox Lutheran opinions of his time but plays a more Radical Pietist and Philadelphian part in Zinzendorf's ideas. Disobedience towards the authorities and the dissolving of class distinctions do not fit in Orthodox Lutheran thinking nor in the Pietism of Halle or that of Spener but arise from Radical Pietism. Yet, Zinzendorf is no Radical Pietist since he is not breaking with the Lutheran Church.

In the statutes of Herrnhut the concept of brotherly love is less Philadelphian than in some other texts of Zinzendorf, e.g. some poems, "Die Letzten Reden" and in the prologues to the "Ebersdorfer Bibel" and the "Berthelsdorfer Gesangbuch". Though it is mentioned in the statutes that brotherly love must rule among the residents it is also stressed that the belief in the grace of God and the pursuit of perfection are the characteristics of a "brother". Not a word is said about reaching heavenly joy by brotherly love, mainly because in that period in Herrnhut brotherly love is certainly not yet omnipresent. This does not mean that Zinzendorf was at that time less Philadelphia oriented. Zinzendorf's orientation towards supraconfessionalism was much more developed in 1727 than in 1716.

5. Refinement of the knowledge about Zinzendorf's dependence on religious traditions

Like Aalen, Dietrich Meyer, Nielsen, Schneider, Uttendörfer and other scientific researchers I have also found that Zinzendorf's statements combine elements of Radical Pietism, Pietism of Halle and of the Philadelphian movement. Therefore, this view is not new, but it has been

reached during my study based on other sources and my conclusions have been reached using a different method. My research has given new insights too, refining our knowledge of Zinzendorf. For example, it has become explicitly clear, how, when, where and - sometimes also why – he combined elements of the various traditions of church history in different situations in different ways.

A comparative analysis of the poems and Zinzendorfs diary from the years 1716-1719 made clear, that the poem “Auf den Fall und Errettung eines grossen Herrn” (1717) [1718] had to be dated anew, is referring to the Duke of Zeitz, and criticizes Roman Catholicism and the Catholic Augustus the Strong of Saxony. Thus it was discovered that Zinzendorf was not always a positive supporter of Catholicism. Another discovery was the identity of the historical person referred to in the poem “Bey einer Doctor-Promotion”. This allowed me to conclude that Zinzendorf, like the founder of the Halle Pietism, August Herman Francke, believes that the educated should respect moral demands. As a consequence he refuses to be involved with the promotion of an evil man, and leaves it to the conscience of his friend to make his own decision, not without cautioning him first.

I have also pointed out that Zinzendorf is talking of brotherly love as early as in 1716 and that he must have been influenced by Menantes with regard to using the word “brother” in the opening words of a letter. In those days it is highly unusual to give this word “brother” a religious charge in the way Zinzendorf does. The religious flavor given by Zinzendorf is suggestive of early Radical Pietist influences. I have further shown that the Philadelphian influence in Zinzendorf’s life does not exclusively originate in Ebersdorf but, from 1721 onward, also comes from the Radical Pietists who are admitted to his conventicle in Dresden.

My study shows that Zinzendorf is a spontaneous mediator, formulating compromises in a certain situation, rather than a double-hearted person. Sometimes he is a fine diplomat, but now and again he provokes people in his environment with the heterodox elements of his views and by his sharp criticism of worldly aristocrats and non-pietist Christians. This harsh tone in the poems, probably influenced by the hymn book of Freylinghausen, must be seen as a measure by Zinzendorf to protect his inner self against the tricks of the alluring “world”.

The developments in a growing Herrnhut during the 1720s bring Zinzendorf into conflict with contemporary church politics. However, the text interpretations demonstrate that he attracted the (negative) attention of the authorities long before. He did so by his unionist aspirations, his supraconfessional gatherings in Dresden, his attempts to help the prohibited conventicle of Görlitz as well as the followers of Schwenckfeld who fled the catholic areas. Besides, his biting criticism of the church and the aristocracy might have shocked the authorities.

The emphasis on chastity and piety in the statutes of Herrnhut turns out not to be a mere renaissance of the perfectionism of the Halle Pietism. Neither is it a reaction to Mischke’s criticism on Zinzendorf’s state of conversion. In fact, Zinzendorf and Mischke were in harmony during the time that the statutes were designed and confirmed in 1727. It is true that the number of occurrences of words expressing struggle is increasing from 1726 onward. However, it is unlikely that this reflects the inner struggle of the Halle Pietism as the

expressions of inner enemies decrease in number. Thus one may conclude that the struggle is primarily aimed at the new external enemies.

The statutes of Herrnhut strongly call for avoidance of all scandalous behaviour. There had to be immaculate conduct and a pious way of life; the conflicts among the inhabitants had to be dissolved within Herrnhut; the residents had to obey the authorities as much as possible. The emphasis on perfect conduct and piety in the Herrnhut statutes was important in order to avoid persecution in a difficult political situation. Remarkably, Zinzendorf himself provides scandal by publishing his poem on the pious duchess of Rudolstadt.

The statutes of Herrnhut start with the statement that brotherly love must rule. However, as Zinzendorf was formulating them, brotherly love was more an aspiration than a reality in Herrnhut. So many rules were needed exactly because brotherly love had hardly gained ground yet and there was an abundance of conflicts. Studying the sources and secondary literature, I found that the longing for brotherly love as well as the organization of Herrnhut are inspired by Gottfried Arnold. Zinzendorf and pastor Rothe succeeded in bringing peace to Herrnhut by means of the statutes, by the presentation of the history of the old Bohemian Brethren and by prayer and discussion, but the statutes bear so many elements contrary to Halle Pietism and the Orthodox Lutheran beliefs of that time that they again created a source of fresh discord and animosity.

When the inhabitants of Herrnhut are gathered in great numbers for the Lord's Supper on 13 August 1727 they are feeling brotherly love in their hearts and they are filled with a quiet joy. This is the very moment in which the Renewed Moravian Church is coming into existence. In spite of and grace to Zinzendorf's controversial activities and in spite of all the troubles with church politics, this Church became a global organization characterized by vitality and interconfessional brotherhood.