



PRIFYSGOL CYMRU
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
UNIVERSITY OF WALES
Trinity Saint David

Institute of Education and Humanities/
Yr Athrofa Addysg a'r Dyniaethau

**MA Dissertation Approval Form/
Ffurflen Gymeradwyo Traethawd Hir MA**

Student Name/ <i>Enw Myfyriwr</i>	Justin Griffiths-Bell
Degree Scheme/ <i>Cynllun Gradd</i>	
Start date/ <i>Dyddiad cychwyn</i>	October 2022

I have completed Part 1 of my degree.

*Please delete as appropriate.

Yr wyf wedi/ ar fun cwblhau Rhan 1 o fy ngradd

** Dileu fel sy'n briodol*

Title of Dissertation:

Teitl eich Traethawd Hir

To what extent is a grounding for panpsychism supported in the idea of the work of the Logos as expounded by St Maximus and St Gregory Palamas?

Aims and Objectives:

Nodau ac Amcanion

Aims:

1. To explore the nature of the relationship between the Logos, as described by St Maximus the Confessor and St Gregory Palamas, and a panpsychist understanding of consciousness.
2. To give some account of the problem of evil and mankind's fall, consistent with a Christian conception and a panpsychist understanding of consciousness.

Abstract (approximately 500 words):

Crynodeb (tua 500 gair):

The intractability of the Hard Problem of consciousness has forced scholars to develop alternative ways of understanding how humans experience phenomena in the world. The notion that the mind is equivalent to the human brain was, twenty years ago, something routinely assumed. This assumption has become open to increased challenge. Though not a new idea, panpsychism has received much attention and support recently as a solution to the mind-body problem. A number of Christian thinkers welcome this shift; for one, it flies in the face of conventional materialism. It points towards a single cosmic mind, one that may suffuse and unify all of nature in its being. One might well conceive such a mind as being God. Many have looked towards panentheism, following Karl Krause (1781-1832), as a way to explain the idea in a theological context: God as a universal consciousness operating within all matter and beings in the universe, while simultaneously transcending the material world. It is a comforting thought. However, it is by no means straightforward. A number of questions arise: How can a transcendent God share directly in the operation of the world, down to the level of our consciousness, our thoughts and our phenomenal experience? Given the brutally pragmatic reality of nature, what argument could there be against the claim that the panentheistic God of a panpsychist universe is nothing more than Schopenhauer's blind Will? How could a panentheistic, panpsychist God avoid being party to all human evil? In short, would a panentheistic God of the panpsychist universe be in any way recognisable as the God the Christians worship?

Among the alternative topics I considered for my proposal was the idea of the Logos. In my research on panpsychism in a panentheistic context, I looked for some incorporation of the ideas espoused in the theological work of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, the writings of St Maximus and very lately St Gregory Palamas. I found nothing. It surprised me then to find that the Logos has not been widely considered. Nevertheless, it seems plausible that the Logos, as imagined by Palamas and Maximus, may constitute a grounding for a version of cosmo-panpsychism. I should like to explore this. Such a study may add a useful insight with regard to some of the questions posed above. God remains transcendent in essence. However, his energies suffuse the world and we participate in those energies which are fully God. The degree to which we participate may be more or less extensive with regard to consciousness. The natural world operates on a post-lapsarian mode that is not oriented by the divine logos, but through the gnostic will. Nevertheless, we are able to move towards the light through the Logos himself which is at the centre of us all. This, however, requires a choice. Human evil, therefore, though it avails itself of the light of consciousness that shines on everything, as it does of ubiquitous and God-given material and reason, proceeds in the dimmest light.

Short Introductory Bibliography:

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Proposed Supervisor:
Goruchwyliwr awgrymedig

Please indicate whether ethical approval for project is needed – NO

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Please indicate whether sufficient resources are available for the project – YES

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The above topic, proposal, and supervisor have been agreed:

Cytunwyd ar y pwnc, y cynnig a'r goruchwyliwr uchod:

Signed : Programme Director/
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