STUDIA PATRISTICA

VOL. LXVII

Papers presented at the Sixteenth International Conference
on Patristic Studies held
in Oxford 2011

Edited by
MARKUS VINZENT

Volume 15:
Cappadocian Writers
The Second Half of the Fourth Century

PEETERS
LEUVEN – PARIS – WALPOLE, MA
2013

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VOL. LXVII

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Abbreviations

AA.SS	see ASS.
AAWG.PH	Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen Philologisch-historische Klasse, Göttingen.
AB	Analecta Bollandiana, Brussels.
AC	Antike und Christentum, ed. F.J. Dölger, Münster.
ACL	Antiquité classique, Louvain.
ACO	Acta conciliorum oecumenicorum, ed. E. Schwartz, Berlin.
ACW	Ancient Christian Writers, ed. J. Quasten and J.C. Plumpe, Westminster (Md.)/London.
AHDLMA	Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge, Paris.
AJAH	American Journal of Ancient History, Cambridge, Mass.
AJP	American Journal of Philology, Baltimore.
AKK	Archiv für katholisches Kirchenrecht, Mainz.
AKPAW	Abhandlungen der königlichen Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin.
ALMA	Archivum Latinitatis Medii Aevi (Bulletin du Cange), Paris/Brussels.
ALW	Archiv für Liturgiewissenschaft, Regensburg.
AnalBoll	Analecta Bollandiana, Brussels.
ANCL	Ante-Nicene Christian Library, Edinburgh.
ANF	Ante-Nicene Fathers, Buffalo/New York.
ANRW	Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt, ed H. Temporini *et al*., Berlin.
AnSt	Anatolian Studies, London.
AnThA	Année théologique augustinienne, Paris.
APOT	Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English, ed. R.E. Charles, Oxford.
AR	Archivum Romanicum, Florence.
ARW	Archiv für Religionswissenschaft, Berlin/Leipzig.
ASS	Acta Sanctorum, ed. the Bollandists, Brussels.
AThANT	Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments, Zürich.
Aug	Augustinianum, Rome.
AugSt	Augustinian Studies, Villanova (USA).
AW	Athanasius Werke, ed. H.-G. Opitz *et al*., Berlin.
AZ	Archäologische Zeitung, Berlin.
BA	Bibliothèque augustinienne, Paris.
BAC	Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, Madrid.
BASOR	Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, New Haven, Conn.
BDAG	A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, 3rd edn F.W. Danker, Chicago.
BEHE	Bibliothèque de l'École des Hautes Études, Paris.
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium, Louvain.
BGL	Benedictinisches Geistesleben, St. Ottilien.
BHG	Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca, Brussels.
BHL	Bibliotheca Hagiographica Latina Antiquae et Mediae Aetatis, Brussels.

BHO	Bibliotheca Hagiographica Orientalis, Brussels.
BHTh	Beiträge zur historischen Theologie, Tübingen.
BJ	Bursians Jahresbericht über die Fortschritte der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft, Leipzig.
BJRULM	Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, Manchester.
BKV	Bibliothek der Kirchenväter, ed. F.X. Reithmayr and V. Thalhofer, Kempten.
BKV2	Bibliothek der Kirchenväter, ed. O. Bardenhewer, Th. Schermann, and C. Weyman, Kempten/Munich.
BKV3	Bibliothek der Kirchenväter. Zweite Reihe, ed. O. Bardenhewer, J. Zellinger, and J. Martin, Munich.
BLE	Bulletin de littérature ecclésiastique, Toulouse.
BoJ	Bonner Jahrbücher, Bonn.
BS	Bibliotheca sacra, London.
BSL	Bolletino di studi latini, Naples.
BWAT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten Testament, Leipzig/Stuttgart.
Byz	Byzantion, Leuven.
BZ	Byzantinische Zeitschrift, Leipzig.
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft, Berlin.
CAr	Cahiers Archéologique, Paris.
CBQ	Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Washington.
CChr.CM	Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis, Turnhout/Paris.
CChr.SA	Corpus Christianorum, Series Apocryphorum, Turnhout/Paris.
CChr.SG	Corpus Christianorum, Series Graeca, Turnhout/Paris.
CChr.SL	Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina, Turnhout/Paris.
CH	Church History, Chicago.
CIL	Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum, Berlin.
CP(h)	Classical Philology, Chicago.
CPG	Clavis Patrum Graecorum, ed. M. Geerard, vols. I-VI, Turnhout.
CPL	Clavis Patrum Latinorum (SE 3), ed. E. Dekkers and A. Gaar, Turnhout.
CQ	Classical Quarterly, London/Oxford.
CR	The Classical Review, London/Oxford.
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, Louvain. Aeth = Scriptores Aethiopici Ar = Scriptores Arabici Arm = Scriptores Armeniaci Copt = Scriptores Coptici Iber = Scriptores Iberici Syr = Scriptores Syri Subs = Subsidia
CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum, Vienna.
CSHB	Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae, Bonn.
CTh	Collectanea Theologica, Lvov.
CUF	Collection des Universités de France publiée sous le patronage de l'Association Guillaume Budé, Paris.
CW	Catholic World, New York.
DAC	Dictionary of the Apostolic Church, ed. J. Hastings, Edinburgh.

DACL	see DAL
DAL	Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie, ed. F. Cabrol, H. Leclercq, Paris.
DB	Dictionnaire de la Bible, Paris.
DBS	Dictionnaire de la Bible, Supplément, Paris.
DCB	Dictionary of Christian Biography, Literature, Sects, and Doctrines, ed. W. Smith and H. Wace, 4 vols, London.
DHGE	Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastique, ed. A. Baudrillart, Paris.
Did	Didaskalia, Lisbon.
DOP	Dumbarton Oaks Papers, Cambridge, Mass., subsequently Washington, D.C.
DOS	Dumbarton Oaks Studies, Cambridge, Mass., subsequently Washington, D.C.
DR	Downside Review, Stratton on the Fosse, Bath.
DS	H.J. Denzinger and A. Schönmetzer, ed., Enchiridion Symbolorum, Barcelona/Freiburg i.B./Rome.
DSp	Dictionnaire de Spiritualité, ed. M. Viller, S.J., and others, Paris.
DTC	Dictionnaire de théologie catholique, ed. A. Vacant, E. Mangenot, and E. Amann, Paris.
EA	Études augustiniennes, Paris.
ECatt	Enciclopedia Cattolica, Rome.
ECQ	Eastern Churches Quarterly, Ramsgate.
EE	Estudios eclesiasticos, Madrid.
EECh	Encyclopedia of the Early Church, ed. A. Di Berardino, Cambridge.
EKK	Evangelisch-Katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament, Neukirchen.
EH	Enchiridion Fontium Historiae Ecclesiasticae Antiquae, ed. Ueding-Kirch, 6th ed., Barcelona.
EO	Échos d'Orient, Paris.
EtByz	Études Byzantines, Paris.
ETL	Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses, Louvain.
EWNT	Exegetisches Wörterbuch zum NT, ed. H.R. Balz *et al*., Stuttgart.
ExpT	The Expository Times, Edinburgh.
FC	The Fathers of the Church, New York.
FGH	Fragmente der griechischen Historiker, Berlin.
FKDG	Forschungen zur Kirchen- und Dogmengeschichte, Göttingen.
FRL	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments, Göttingen.
FS	Festschrift.
FThSt	Freiburger theologische Studien, Freiburg i.B.
FTS	Frankfurter theologische Studien, Frankfurt a.M.
FZThPh	Freiburger Zeitschrift für Theologie und Philosophie, Freiburg/Switzerland.
GCS	Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller, Leipzig/Berlin.
GDV	Geschichtsschreiber der deutschen Vorzeit, Stuttgart.
GLNT	Grande Lessico del Nuovo Testamento, Genoa.
GNO	Gregorii Nysseni Opera, Leiden.

GRBS	Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies, Cambridge, Mass.
GWV	Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht, Offenburg.
HbNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament. Tübingen.
HDR	Harvard Dissertations in Religion, Missoula.
HJG	Historisches Jahrbuch der Görresgesellschaft, successively Munich, Cologne and Munich/Freiburg i.B.
HKG	Handbuch der Kirchengeschichte, Tübingen.
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament, Tübingen.
HO	Handbuch der Orientalistik, Leiden.
HSCP	Harvard Studies in Classical Philology, Cambridge, Mass.
HTR	Harvard Theological Review, Cambridge, Mass.
HTS	Harvard Theological Studies, Cambridge, Mass.
HZ	Historische Zeitschrift, Munich/Berlin.
ICC	The International Critical Commentary of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, Edinburgh.
ILCV	Inscriptiones Latinae Christianae Veteres, ed. E. Diehl, Berlin.
ILS	Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae, ed. H. Dessau, Berlin.
J(b)AC	Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum, Münster.
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature, Philadelphia, Pa., then various places.
JdI	Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Berlin.
JECS	Journal of Early Christian Studies, Baltimore.
JEH	The Journal of Ecclesiastical History, London.
JJS	Journal of Jewish Studies, London.
JLH	Jahrbuch für Liturgik und Hymnologie, Kassel.
JPTh	Jahrbücher für protestantische Theologie, Leipzig/Freiburg i.B.
JQR	Jewish Quarterly Review, Philadelphia.
JRS	Journal of Roman Studies, London.
JSJ	Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period, Leiden.
JSOR	Journal of the Society of Oriental Research, Chicago.
JTS	Journal of Theological Studies, Oxford.
KAV	Kommentar zu den apostolischen Vätern, Göttingen.
KeTh	Kerk en Theologie, 's Gravenhage.
KJ(b)	Kirchliches Jahrbuch für die evangelische Kirche in Deutschland, Gütersloh.
LCL	The Loeb Classical Library, London/Cambridge, Mass.
LNPF	A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, ed. P. Schaff and H. Wace, Buffalo/New York.
L(O)F	Library of Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church, Oxford.
LSJ	H.G. Liddell and R. Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, new (9th) edn H.S. Jones, Oxford.
LThK	Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche, Freiburg i.B.
MA	Moyen-Âge, Brussels.
MAMA	Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua, London.
Mansi	J.D. Mansi, Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio, Florence, 1759-1798. Reprint and continuation: Paris/Leipzig, 1901-1927.
MBTh	Münsterische Beiträge zur Theologie, Münster.

MCom	Miscelanea Comillas, Comillas/Santander.
MGH	Monumenta germaniae historica. Hanover/Berlin.
ML	Mediaevalia Lovaniensia, Louvain.
MPG	See PG.
MSR	Mélanges de science religieuse, Lille.
MThZ	Münchener theologische Zeitschrift, Munich.
Mus	Le Muséon, Louvain.
NGWG	Nachrichten der Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen.
NH(M)S	Nag Hammadi (and Manichaean) Studies, Leiden.
NovTest	Novum Testamentum, Leiden.
NPNF	See LNPF.
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version.
NRTh	Nouvelle Revue Théologique, Tournai/Louvain/Paris.
NTA	Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen, Münster.
NT.S	Novum Testamentum Supplements, Leiden.
NTS	New Testament Studies, Cambridge/Washington.
OBO	Orbis biblicus et orientalis, Freiburg, Switz.
OCA	Orientalia Christiana Analecta, Rome.
OCP	Orientalia Christiana Periodica, Rome.
OECS	Oxford Early Christian Studies, Oxford.
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta, Louvain.
OLP	Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica, Louvain.
Or	Orientalia. Commentarii editi a Pontificio Instituto Biblico, Rome.
OrChr	Oriens Christianus, Leipzig, then Wiesbaden.
OrSyr	L'Orient Syrien, Paris.
PG	Migne, Patrologia, series graeca.
PGL	A Patristic Greek Lexicon, ed. G.L. Lampe, Oxford.
PL	Migne, Patrologia, series latina.
PLRE	The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire, ed. A.H.M. Jones *et al.*, Cambridge.
PLS	Migne, Patrologia, series latina. Supplementum ed. A. Hamman.
PO	Patrologia Orientalis, Paris.
PRE	Paulys Realenzyklopädie der classischen Alterthumswissenschaft, Stuttgart.
PS	Patrologia Syriaca, Paris.
PTA	Papyrologische Texte und Abhandlungen, Bonn.
PThR	Princeton Theological Review, Princeton.
PTS	Patristische Texte und Studien, Berlin.
PW	Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft, ed. G. Wissowa, Stuttgart.
QLP	Questions liturgiques et paroissiales, Louvain.
QuLi	Questions liturgiques, Louvain
RAC	Rivista di Archeologia Cristiana, Rome.
RACh	Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum, Stuttgart.
RAM	Revue d'ascétique et de mystique, Paris.
RAug	Recherches Augustiniennes, Paris.
RBen	Revue Bénédictine, Maredsous.
RB(ibl)	Revue biblique, Paris.

RE	Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche, founded by J.J. Herzog, 3e ed. A. Hauck, Leipzig.
REA(ug)	Revue des études Augustiniennes, Paris.
REB	Revue des études byzantines, Paris.
RED	Rerum ecclesiasticarum documenta, Rome.
RÉL	Revue des études latines, Paris.
REG	Revue des études grecques, Paris.
RevSR	Revue des sciences religieuses, Strasbourg.
RevThom	Revue thomiste, Toulouse.
RFIC	Rivista di filologia e d'istruzione classica, Turin.
RGG	Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart, ed. Gunkel-Zscharnack, Tübingen
RHE	Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique, Louvain.
RhMus	Rheinisches Museum für Philologie, Bonn.
RHR	Revue de l'histoire des religions, Paris.
RHT	Revue d'Histoire des Textes, Paris.
RMAL	Revue du Moyen-Âge Latin, Paris.
ROC	Revue de l'Orient chrétien, Paris.
RPh	Revue de philologie, Paris.
RQ	Römische Quartalschrift, Freiburg i.B.
RQH	Revue des questions historiques, Paris.
RSLR	Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa, Florence.
RSPT, RSPh	Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques, Paris.
RSR	Recherches de science religieuse, Paris.
RTAM	Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale, Louvain.
RthL	Revue théologique de Louvain, Louvain.
RTM	Rivista di teologia morale, Bologna.
Sal	Salesianum, Roma.
SBA	Schweizerische Beiträge zur Altertumswissenschaft, Basel.
SBS	Stuttgarter Bibelstudien, Stuttgart.
ScEc	Sciences ecclésiastiques, Bruges.
SCh, SC	Sources chrétiennes, Paris.
SD	Studies and Documents, ed. K. Lake and S. Lake. London/Philadelphia.
SE	Sacris Erudiri, Bruges.
SDHI	Studia et documenta historiae et iuris, Roma.
SH	Subsidia Hagiographica, Brussels.
SHA	Scriptores Historiae Augustae.
SJMS	Speculum. Journal of Mediaeval Studies, Cambridge, Mass.
SM	Studien und Mitteilungen zur Geschichte des Benediktinerordens und seiner Zweige, Munich.
SO	Symbolae Osloenses, Oslo.
SP	Studia Patristica, successively Berlin, Kalamazoo, Leuven.
SPM	Stromata Patristica et Mediaevalia, ed. C. Mohrman and J. Quasten, Utrecht.
SQ	Sammlung ausgewählter Quellenschriften zur Kirchen- und Dogmengeschichte, Tübingen.
SQAW	Schriften und Quellen der Alten Welt, Berlin.
SSL	Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense, Louvain.

StudMed	Studi Medievali, Turin.
SVigChr	Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae, Leiden.
SVF	Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta, ed. J. von Arnim, Leipzig.
TDNT	Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Grand Rapids, Mich.
TE	Teologia espiritual, Valencia.
ThGl	Theologie und Glaube, Paderborn.
ThJ	Theologische Jahrbücher, Leipzig.
ThLZ	Theologische Literaturzeitung, Leipzig.
ThPh	Theologie und Philosophie, Freiburg i.B.
ThQ	Theologische Quartalschrift, Tübingen.
ThR	Theologische Rundschau, Tübingen.
ThWAT	Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament, Stuttgart.
ThWNT	Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, Stuttgart.
ThZ	Theologische Zeitschrift, Basel.
TLG	Thesaurus Linguae Graecae.
TP	Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association, Lancaster, Pa.
TRE	Theologische Realenzyklopädie, Berlin.
TS	Theological Studies, New York and various places; now Washington, D.C.
TThZ	Trierer theologische Zeitschrift, Trier.
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen, Leipzig/Berlin.
USQR	Union Seminary Quarterly Review, New York.
VC	Vigiliae Christianae, Amsterdam.
VetChr	Vetera Christianorum, Bari (Italy).
VT	Vetus Testamentum, Leiden.
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary, Waco.
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, Tübingen.
WZKM	Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes, Vienna.
YUP	Yale University Press, New Haven.
ZAC	Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum, Berlin.
ZAM	Zeitschrift für Aszese und Mystik, Innsbruck, then Würzburg.
ZAW	Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, Giessen, then Berlin.
ZDPV	Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins, Leipzig.
ZKG	Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte, Gotha, then Stuttgart.
ZKTh	Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie, Vienna.
ZNW	Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche, Giessen, then Berlin.
ZRG	Zeitschrift für Rechtsgeschichte, Weimar.
ZThK	Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche, Tübingen.

Cappadocian Writers

The Spirit Manifested by the Son in Cappadocian Thought

Giulio MASPERO, Rome, Italy

ABSTRACT

The Cappadocians state that the Spirit is manifested by the Son. Their theology is based on the distinction between immanence and economy. The Pneumatological manifestation is analysed from the point of view of this fundamental distinction. The immanent character of the Son's role in the procession of the third Person is connected to the development of the Pneumatological dimension of the relationship of the Father and Son. This theological improvement came as a result of the debate with the Pneumatomachians.

Introduction

The formula 'manifested by the Son' (δι' Υἱοῦ πεφηνός) is found in the writings of Gregory of Nyssa in reference to the Holy Spirit. Clearly this is information received from tradition, as can be seen from the presence of this expression in the Creed of Gregory the Thaumaturge transmitted by Gregory of Nyssa in his panegyric dedicated to the evangelist of Cappadocia.

From the pneumatological point of view the formula is relevant to the question of the *Filioque* and the understanding of the role of the Second Person in the procession of the Holy Spirit. The text of the Creed indicates the role of the Son in the revelation and sending of the Third Person into the world, clearly referring strictly to the economic dimension.

However, the analysis of some texts by Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory Nazianzen, written against the Pneumatomachians, shows a reinterpretation of the manifestation of the Spirit by the Son in an immanent sense. The key to this re-examination is the new ontological value assigned to relation (σχέσις), which follows a path similar to that which characterized the term λόγος.[1]

[1] See Giulio Maspero, 'Patristic Trinitarian Ontology', in *id*. and Robert Wozniak (eds), *Rethinking Trinitarian Theology: Disputed Questions and Contemporary Issues in Trinitarian Theology* (London, 2012), 211-29.

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The starting formula

In *De vita Gregorii Thaumaturgi*[2] Gregory of Nyssa relates a Symbol of Faith[3] that the Thaumaturge would have learned directly in an apparition from the dialogue between John and Mary the Mother of Jesus. The discussion concerning the true author of the text does not yet seem to be resolved.[4] However, the pneumatology of the Creed is extremely interesting.[5]

After the first two articles, dedicated respectively to the Father and the Son, the following appears:

> And the one and only Holy Spirit which has His existence from God, and that has been manifested [to men] through the Son (δι' Υἱοῦ πεφηνός), the perfect image of the perfect Son, life, cause of life, holy source, holiness who gives holiness; in Him is manifested (φανεροῦται) God the Father who is above all and in all, and God the Son who is in all creation.[6]

The phrase 'to men' is absent in the Latin translation by Rufinus and in one of the two Syriac manuscripts, more specifically in the most recent which dates back to the ninth century.[7] The fact that the oldest Syriac tradition would have included the phrase seems to suggest that the element has been eliminated to promote an immanent reading of the passage, otherwise referring to the economy.

The term *image* (εἰκών) applied to the Spirit, as found in Athanasius' pneumatology, demonstrates the antiquity of the theology of the Creed. Because of the pneumatomachian crisis in the fourth century, the procession of the Third Person needed to be differentiated from eternal generation by modifying the symmetric, derivative structure, which bound the Spirit to the Son in the same fashion as the Son was connected to the Father.

Additionally, the second article of the Creed seems to point to a theology that preceded the Nicene period because the derivation of the Second Person from the First is expressed through the genitive form rather than the preposition *from* (ἐκ). It is said that the Son is *invisible of the invisible* (ἀόρατος ἀοράτου), *incorruptible of the incorruptible* (ἄφθαρτος ἀφθάρτου), *immortal of the*

[2] See Tamaz Kochlamazashvili, ar. 'Thaum (De vita Gregorii Thaumaturgii)', in Lucas F. Mateo Seco and Giulio Maspero (eds), *The Brill Dictionary of Gregory of Nyssa* (Leiden, 2009), 718-20.

[3] Gregory of Nyssa, *De vita Gregorii Thaumaturgi* (GNO X/1, 17,24-19,5).

[4] See Léon Froidevaux, 'Le symbole de saint Grégoire le Thaumaturge', *RSR* 19 (1929), 193-247; Luise Abramowski, 'Das Bekenntnis des Gregor Thaumaturgus bei Gregor von Nyssa und das Problem seiner Echtheit', *ZKG* 87 (1976), 145-66 and Michel van Esbroeck, 'The Credo of Gregory the Wonderworker and its Influence through Three Centuries', *SP* 19 (1989), 255-66.

[5] See Antonio Aranda, 'El Espíritu Santo en la Exposición de Fe de S. Gregorio Taumaturgo', *Scripta Theologica* 10 (1978), 373-407.

[6] Gregory of Nyssa, *De vita Gregorii Thaumaturgi* (GNO X/1, 18,13-22).

[7] See *Rufini versio latina Eusebii Historiae ecclesiasticae* (E. Schwartz, GCS 9.2, p. 955s) and *Londinensis Musei Britannici Syriacus* DLIX Add. 18815.

immortal (ἀθάνατος ἀθανάτου) and *eternal of the eternal* (ἀΐδιος ἀϊδίου).[8] Similar grammatical constructions are also used by Gregory of Nyssa,[9] who at the same time declares them equivalent to the derivative Nicene formula φῶς ἐκ φωτὸς, θεὸς ἀληθινὸς ἐκ θεοῦ ἀληθινοῦ.[10]

Gregory of Nyssa's re-interpretation

The theological discussions of the fourth century are deeply connected to the Nicene hermeneutics of *Light from Light*. Found in the perspective inspired by Arius, the very same preposition *from* indicated the subordination and the difference of substance. The root of the question was ontological because metaphysics, from the time of Aristotle to the Neo-Platonists, identified relation as an accident. In this framework the only tool that permitted the subject to be recognized as individual was substance, in such a way that the personal distinction of the Father and the Son demanded the affirmation of a difference in substance.

The ontology needed to be extended in order to interpret *Light from Light* as an affirmation of the perfect identity of substance. Basil had already pursued this method, when he highlighted the difference between God and that which is found in nature, reinterpreting the names *Father* and *Son* in such a way as to remove any passive content from them. According to the bishop of Caesarea, within the Trinity the names 'Father' and 'Son' are not marked by limitations that are observed at the creature's level, but *only express the reciprocal relation* (τὴν πρὸς ἄλληλα σχέσιν ἐνδείκνυται μόνην).[11] The novelty of this concept is clearly at the relational level.

The instrument of the *reciprocal relation* (ἡ σχέσις πρὸς ἄλληλα) appears several times in the works of Gregory against Eunomius. In fact, the latter had recourse to this expression to indicate the necessary relationship to differentiate the second and third substance from the supreme substance within the ontological hierarchy.[12] The response of the bishop of Nyssa was an ontological reinterpretation of σχέσις in the wake of Basil, reconnecting the reciprocal relationship that unites the Father and the Son to the names of the divine persons revealed in Scripture, to affirm the identity of nature between them.[13] The three divine persons do not have necessary and quantitative relationships between them,

[8] Gregory of Nyssa, *De vita Gregorii Thaumaturgi* (GNO X/1, 18,9-12).

[9] See the formula ἄκτιστον ἀκτίστου, ἀγαθοῦ ἀγαθήν, ἀϊδίου ἀΐδιον, in Gregory of Nyssa, *Contra Eunomium* III 4,26,6-7 (GNO II, 144,7-8).

[10] See *ibid*. 1,65,12 (GNO II, 27,3) and 1,85,9-10 (GNO II, 33,15-6).

[11] Basil, *Contra Eunomium* II 22, 48 (SC 305, 92).

[12] See Gregory of Nyssa, *Contra Eunomium* I 154,2 (GNO I, 73,4), 406,1 (GNO I, 145,10-1), 411,8 (GNO I, 146,21-2), 412, 3.6 (GNO I, 146,25-6 and 28-9).

[13] See *ibid*. 159 (GNO I, 75,1-7).

because they are not like larger or smaller vases placed one inside the other. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are, in fact, without limit and boundary (πέρατι καὶ ὅρῳ), in such a way that their relational distinction concerns hypostasis and maintains the identity of substance (κοινωνεῖν κατὰ τὴν οὐσίαν καὶ διῃρῆσθαι κατὰ τὸν τῆς ὑποστάσεως).[14] So the *reciprocal relation,* understood from the first names of the two divine persons revealed in Scripture, simultaneously expresses the unity of nature in the distinction of the two subjects (ἐν δύο τοῖς ὑποκειμένοις τὴν ἑνότητα τῆς φύσεως).[15]

This distinction of individuals within the Trinity, based not on the distinction of substance, requires the transition to a new ontological level as original as essence, but distinct from it: the πῶς εἶναι. In *Contra Eunomium* III, Gregory writes:

To exist in a non-generated form (ἀγεννήτως) is one of the attributes of Him who is, but the definition of Being is one thing, the definition of the mode of being (πῶς εἶναι) is another.[16]

Combining the adverb with εἶναι is equivalent to the use of prepositions with the same verb in an explicit[17] or implicit manner, as found in the Nicene ἐκ. It indicates the plane of hypostatic distinction, which must be clearly differentiated from the opposition between created and uncreated:

We discover the non-generated through opposition (πρός) to the generated and the incorruptible is known by comparing it to (πρός) the corruptible and substance is recognized by comparing it to (πρός) the insubstantial … So the substance is intended as such in being something (ἐν τῷ εἶναί τι), while the corruptible or the incorruptible signify being of a certain nature (ἐν τῷ ποδαπὸν εἶναι), the generated and the in-generated signify being in a certain way (ἐν τῷ πῶς εἶναι).[18]

The progression of Gregory's analysis is quite clear: the substantial identity, which concerns all levels of being, must be accompanied by the relational distinction, characteristic of the in-generated Father and the generated Son, on another level with respect to the distinction between the created and the uncreated, as well as to that between the corruptible and the incorruptible.

This precise context seems to be necessary to study the bishop of Nyssa's re-examination of the pneumatological formula *manifested by the Son* originally found in Gregory the Thaumaturge's Symbol of Faith:

And the Holy Spirit, who in the uncreated nature is in communion (κοινωνίαν) with the Father and the Son, is nevertheless distinguished in turn by His proper characteristics.

[14] See *ibid*. 410-3 (GNO I, 146-7).

[15] See *ibid*. 498,1-2 (GNO I, 170,13-4). The theme reappears in the first book of *Contra Eunomium* III 1, 7, 6 (GNO II, 6,8-9); 9, 2 (GNO II, 7,2-3) and 112,7 (GNO II, 42,1).

[16] *Id*., *Contra Eunomium* III 5,60,8-10 (GNO II, 182,11-3).

[17] See the magnificent text in *ibid*. 8, 39,6-41,6 (GNO II, 253,12-254,11).

[18] *Id*., *Contra Eunomium* II 1, 386, 1-4.9-11 (GNO I, 338,27-30; 339,3-5).

To not be that which is contemplated properly in the Father and the Son is His most proper characteristic and sign: His distinctive feature to that of the other two does not consist in being in an un-engendered mode (ἀγεννήτως), nor in an engendered mode (μονογενῶς), but to be in the mode of constituting the whole (ὅλως). He is conjoined to the Father by the fact of being uncreated, but is distinguished in turn by the fact of not being the Father as He is. United to the Son by the uncreated nature and by the fact of receiving the cause of existence from the God of the universe, He is distinct from the Son in turn by the peculiarity of not subsisting hypostatically (ὑποστῆναι) as the Only Born of the Father and by the fact of *being manifested by the Son* Himself (δι ‘αὐτοῦ τοῦ υἱοῦ πεφηνέναι). But further, the Holy Spirit is distinguished from creation that subsists (ὑποστάσης) by means of the Only Born (διὰ τοῦ μονογενοῦς), since He is invariable, immutable and without need of any external good (ἑτέρωθεν). In this way no one may think that the Spirit has something in common with creation due to the fact that He is manifested (πεφηνέναι) by the Son (διὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ).[19]

The articulation of the different ontological levels is extremely clear; the distinction between the divine Persons does not concern nature, as all three are the only uncreated nature, but concerns the πῶς εἶναι, which is linked to the adverbial expression of the distinctive features of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The latter is indistinguishable from the previous two regarding nature, but is distinct from them according to the relation indicated by the personal names mentioned in Scripture, because He is neither Father nor Only Begotten. The Third Person receives the cause of existence from the First, just as it is for the Son, but differs from the latter because the Third is manifested by the Second (δι’ αὐτοῦ τοῦ υἱοῦ πεφηνέναι). The text is quite clear that Gregory accurately highlights this distinction between the last expression and that of receiving the being through (διά) the Logos that characterizes all creatures according to *John* 1:3. It follows that the formula *manifested by the Son* has been reinterpreted here in an immanent sense.[20]

The manifestation of the Third Person by the Second must be bound to His hypostatic properties indicated by the adverb ὅλως, translated here as to *be in a way to make it whole*.[21] Basil’s *De Spiritu Sancto* inspires the previous translation:

[19] *Id*., *Contra Eunomium* I 279,4-281,1 (GNO I, 108,7-109,5).

[20] André de Halleux agrees with this reading, though usually critical on the point of immanent interpretation of the role of the Son in the procession of the Spirit in Gregory of Nyssa. See André de Halleux, ‘*Manifesté par le Fils*. Aux origines d’une formule pneumatologique’, *RTL* 20 (1989), 3-31, 25.

[21] Perhaps the adverb ὅλως is an echo of Basil’s ὅλον ἑκάστῳ παρὸν καὶ ὅλον ἁπανταχοῦ ὄν in *De Spiritu Sancto* (IX 22 [SC 17bis, 326,3-4]), his clearest expression of the pneumatological formula of the *Undiminished Giver*, to which Lewis Ayres has recently dedicated a wonderful article (Lewis Ayres, ‘The Holy Spirit as the ‘Undimished Giver’: Didymus the Blind’s *De spiritu sancto* and the development of Nicene pneumatology, in D. Vincent Twomey and Janet E. Rutherford, *The Holy Spirit in the Fathers of the Church* [Dublin, 2010], 57-72). Within Gregory’s works the expression clearly passes from the economic dimension to the immanent one.

And one also is the Holy Spirit, He too proclaimed in his individuality (μοναδικῶς), who, united to the unique Father through the unique Son (δι' ἑνὸς Υἱοῦ), brings the Holy Trinity worthy of all praise to completion (συμπληροῦν) in Himself.[22]

The Spirit is He who brings unity to the Trinity, precisely because He receives being from the Father, but in His personal individuality is manifested by the Son. The Third Person is Himself through the Second Person.

The transition of *manifestation* from the economic to the immanent interpretation appears to be linked to the discussion with the Pneumatomachians who denied the divinity of the Spirit while accepting that of the Logos. This forced Gregory to develop Basil's pneumatology, overcoming his uncertainties, that A. Meredith attributes to an incompletely developed understanding of the distinction between the created and the uncreated, inherited from the Alexandrian tradition.[23]

The most effective response to the Pneumatomachians that Gregory of Nyssa developed was distinction without separation of the two processions achieved by placing the Third Person *between* the Father and the Son: the royal power and glory that the two eternally exchange. It is the gift of this royal power and glory that constitutes the Second Person as the perfect image of the First.[24] But this implies a relational reinterpretation of the manifestation of the Spirit by the Son, and therefore a transition to the immanent dimension. Within the Thaumaturge's Creed the Spirit was the image of the Son in the same way that the Son was the image of the Father. Now this image is not to be interpreted as an expression of the common identity in nature, but as an exclusive reference to eternal generation.

Gregory Nazianzen's confirmation

The thirty-first *Oratio* of Nazianzen seems to confirm this reading. From the outset he states that his object of investigation is the immanent dimension, viz. the θεολογία. Hidden in the background is the ever-present, Intra-Trinitarian interpretation of the Nicene *Light from Light* that must be extended to the Holy Spirit in order to respond to the Pneumatomachians.[25] To the affirmation typical

[22] Basil, *De Spiritu Sancto*, 18, 45, 24-27, p. 408.

[23] See Anthony Meredith, 'The Pneumatology of the Cappadocian Fathers and the Creed of Constantinople', *IThQ* 48 (1981), 196-211.

[24] See Giulio Maspero, 'The Fire, the Kingdom and the Glory: The Creator Spirit and the Intra-Trinitarian Processions in the *Adversus Macedonianos* of Gregory of Nyssa', in Volker H. Drecoll and Margitta Berghaus, *Gregory of Nyssa: The Minor Treatises on Trinitarian Theology and Apollinarism. Proceedings of the 11th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa (Tübingen, 17-20 September 2008)* (Leiden, 2011), 229-76.

[25] Consider the application of the term 'Light' to all three Divine Persons in Gregory Nazianzen, *Oratio 31 (De Spiritu Sancto)*, 2 (SC 250, 278).

of the Arian dispute that, if there was a time when there was no Son, then neither was there the Father, it was added that, if there were a time without the Spirit, then neither was there the Son.[26] The logic of the Pneumatomachians was trumped, extending the accepted arguments for the Second Person to the Third Person. This is also the case for the soteriological affirmation that if the Spirit is simple creature then He cannot save man by uniting him to God through deification.[27]

The argument is purely ontological: Gregory asked if the Third Person need be counted among the beings that exist by themselves (τῶν καθ' ἑαυτὸ ὑφεστηκότων) or among those that exist in another being (ἐν ἑτέρῳ), viz. if the Spirit is substance (οὐσίαν) or accident (συμβεβηκός). In the second case it should be an operation of God (ἐνέργεια), one of those realities that concern substance (τῶν περὶ τὴν οὐσίαν), but are not substance themselves. However, if the Spirit is substance, there is no other option but to admit that He is either creature or God Himself, because it is impossible to conceive of an intermediate (μέσον) between these or a mixture (σύνθετον) of being created and uncreated.[28]

After Gregory clarifies that the Third Person is divine substance, he negates the Pneumatomachians' assertion that the Spirit needs to be either generated or in-generated. In the first case there would be two in-generated, while in the second case there would be two necessary results, both absurd; He either comes directly from the Father, been brother or even twin of the Son, or He comes from the Son, becoming a nephew of God.[29]

One must stick to the facts, without fear of names (ἐδεξάμην ἂν τὰ πράγματα, οὐ φοβηθεὶς τὰ ὀνόματα), and without applying human categories or natural parental relationships to the Trinity (τῆς ἡμετέρας συγγενείας). One must recognize that the Spirit is from God and is consubstantial (ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ὁμοούσιον). One must purify the category of relation, moving to a higher conception of it (τινα σχέσιν ὑψηλοτέραν).[30]

The result of this analysis is based in *John* 15:26, demonstrating the divinity of the Holy Spirit through His relational position between the Father and the Son:

> Since He proceeds (ἐκπορεύεται) from the Father, the Spirit is not a creature; since He is neither generated, He is not the Son; since He is in the middle (μέσον) of the in-generated Person and the generated One, He is God.[31]

The ontological argument that preceded the statement excluded the possibility that the μέσον could be understood in an economic sense or as an intermediate,

[26] See *ibid*. 4 (SC 250, 280,28-9).
[27] See *ibid*. (SC 250, 282,13-4).
[28] See *ibid*. 6 (SC 250, 286,1-17).
[29] See *ibid*. 7 (SC 250, 286,26-288,2).
[30] See *ibid*. 7 (SC 250, 288,6-17).
[31] *Ibid*. 8 (SC 250, 290,11-4).

substantial level between the created and uncreated. In fact, it is the same solution introduced by Gregory of Nyssa.[32] The μέσον here is solely relational.

This procession of the Spirit cannot be explained in natural terms and the apophatic veil remains. Gregory writes that it would be folly to desire a glimpse of the mysteries of God (εἰς θεοῦ μυστήρια παρακύπτοντες), when *Sir*. 1:2 says that one cannot count the sand of the sea or the drops of rain.[33] But Christian Revelation requires the affirmation of both the unity of nature and the trinity of Persons, with their eternal relations.

One comes to a text that seems essential for the interpretation of the manifestation of the Spirit by the Son:

> What then, does the Spirit lack, they say, to be the Son? If in fact, He lacked nothing, He would be the Son. We say that He lacks nothing: in fact, God is not incomplete. The difference consists in the manifestation (ἐκφάνσεως), so to speak, and in the reciprocal relation (τῆς πρὸς ἄλληλα σχέσεως): hence also the difference in their names.[34]

The personal distinction finds its basis in the distinction between revealed names and these names imply the reciprocal relation. The manifestation, then, is on the level of relation in the pure immanence of the Blessed Trinity. Gregory of Nyssa's reinterpretation of the Thaumaturge's formula is confirmed by Gregory Nazianzen in his response to the Pneumatomachians.

Conclusion

1. Gregory the Thaumaturge's formula *manifested by the Son* contained in the pneumatological article of his Creed originally possesses a clear economic value. In the development of the theological response to the Pneumatomachians, it became reinterpreted because of the need to place the Spirit between the Father and the Son, in order to defend His divinity, expanding beyond the linear representation of the Trinity inherited from Origen and characterized by a more directly economic value.
2. The Spirit as the intermediate being between the Father and the Son was to be understood in a purely relational sense and not as an ontological difference, simultaneously maintaining the Trinitarian order and the monarchy of the First Person.
3. The previous point implied a reinterpretation of the ontological foundations of reality and the development of a category of relation not purely accidental

[32] See Gregory of Nyssa, *Adversus Macedonianos* (GNO III/1, 102,22-31); *In illud: Tunc et ipse filius*, GNO III/2, 21,17-22, 16 and *In canticum canticorum* (GNO VI, 467,2-17).

[33] See Gregory of Nazianzen, *Oratio 31 (De Spiritu Sancto)*, 9 (SC 250, 290,25-292,1).

[34] *Ibid*. 9 (SC 250, 290,25-292,1).

but immanent to the very same essence. From this perspective, the manifestation of the Spirit by the Son is not intended as a reference to His revelation in history, but as an expression of the eternal πῶς εἶναι and of the reciprocal σχέσις of the Divine Persons in the purest divine immanence.[35]

[35] From this perspective it seems that A. de Halleux's conclusions cannot be fully shared when he writes about the δι' ὑιοῦ: 'Il s'agit toujours chez lui, semble-t-il, d'une épiphanie, et lorsque cette relation est comprise comme éternelle, et non seulement comme *économique*, il se pourrait que ce ne soit qu'au titre de la puissance révélatrice qui s'actualise dans l'histoire de la création et de salut.' (A. de Halleux, 'Manifesté par le Fils' [1989], 31).

Who Can Listen to Sermons on *Genesis*? Theological Exegesis and Theological Anthropology in Basil of Caesarea's *Hexaemeron* Homilies

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ABSTRACT

In Basil of Caesarea's *Hexaemeron* 1, he introduces his first sermon on *Genesis*, and indeed his entire cycle of homilies on the creation narrative, by indicating that listening properly to his preaching requires one to be a certain kind of person. More specifically, members of the Cappadocian's audience need to have undergone purification. This paper explicates what Basil means by purification, and it demonstrates how this requirement sets up key theological moves that he makes in *Hexaemeron* 1 and the rest of his sermon series on *Genesis*.

I

Basil's sermons on *Genesis* are based on a type of reasoning that he views as necessary in order to hear and appropriate scriptural preaching. The Cappadocian's anthropology of the listener, and specifically the requirement that the hearer's reason be made holy in order to read properly, is a crucial feature of the sermon series. In order for his rhetoric to have its intended effect, Basil expects his listeners to be purified, and indeed to become increasingly purified over time. This purity stipulation is bound to strike modern readers as odd, since we are not used to thinking that the reader of Scripture needs to be a certain sort of person. Yet it is important to understand Basil's homilies on their own terms and not to project foreign notions back onto them. Hence, this paper seeks to expound what Basil means by purification and why he deems it necessary in order to read *Genesis* fittingly. Basil's ninth sermon on *Genesis* is often discussed by contemporary scholars, who focus on what seems to be an outright denunciation of allegorical interpretation on his part.[1] This essay concentrates

[1] *Hex*. 9.1. The key early point of reference is Jean Gribomont's argument that, while Basil learned the interpretive methods of Origen early in his life, when he edited a collection of Origen's writings in his maturity, Basil came to see Origen's approach as flawed: Jean Gribomont, 'L'Origenisme de Saint Basile', in *L'homme devant Dieu: Mélanges offerts au père Henri de Lubac*, ed. Henri de Lubac (Paris, 1964), 292. On this reading, *Hex*. 9.1 shows a senior Basil distancing himself explicitly from Origen's methods. Subsequent literature has sought to find

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on what for Basil is a logically prior point, as he makes clear even in that context, that is, Scripture's role in the course of human sanctification.[2] The discussion that follows revolves not around the question of which interpretive techniques Basil applies to the Bible; rather, it focuses on the Cappadocian's construal of the hearer's identity in terms that are both dynamic and theological.[3]

II

Basil provides an initial orientation to what is required to understand *Genesis* in the introduction to his first sermon. The necessity of purification is a function of the subject matter on which he preaches. The first sermon is a discourse on the words 'in the beginning God made the heaven and the earth.' Naturally enough, Basil opens his exposition with a gloss of his main theme: 'I am about to speak', he says, 'of the creation of heaven and earth, which was not spontaneous, as some have imagined, but drew its origin from God.'[4] He preaches,

alternative explanations for Basil's language. Richard Lim concludes that the exigencies of the situation in which Basil spoke are the primary issue. Allegorical readings are fitting for a mature audience, but the congregation to which Basil delivered this address was immature: Richard Lim, 'The Politics of Interpretation in Basil of Caesarea's Hexaemeron', *VC* 44 (1990), 351-70, 361f. For his part, Stephen Hildebrand does not find this convincing. While he agrees with Lim that the *Genesis* sermons were not addressed to an advanced audience, he points to evidence that the same holds for many of the sermons on the *Psalms*, in which Basil does seem to engage in allegorical interpretations of the *Psalter*. Hence, a supposed difference in audience does not explain Basil's varying ways of handling the scriptural text. See Stephen M. Hildebrand, *The Trinitarian Theology of Basil of Caesarea: A Synthesis of Greek Thought and Biblical Truth* (Washington, 2007), 137f. Hildebrand's counterproposal is, first, that *Genesis* is intrinsically less open to spiritual interpretation than are other scriptural texts; and, second, that Basil becomes more alert to potential abuses of allegory later in his life. Especially in this first respect, Hildebrand's reading is a contemporary defense of the judicious line taken in Manlio Simonetti, *Lettera e/o allegoria: Un contributo alla storia dell'esegesi patristica* (Rome, 1985), 143f.

[2] *Hexaemeron* sermons 1-9 are indisputably by Basil. A number of scholars also accept that Basil composed two additional sermons, *Hexaemeron* 10-1: see the editorial introduction to Basil, *Sur l'origine de l'homme: Hom. X et XI de l''Hexaéméron'*, ed. Alexis Smets and Michel van Esbroeck, SC 160 (Paris, 1970), 13-26, 81-126. Be that as it may, in this paper, I deal with only sermons 1-9.

[3] For helpful historical background on preachers and audiences in the fourth century, see Jaclyn L. Maxwell, *Christianization and Communication in Late Antiquity: John Chrysostom and His Congregation in Antioch* (Cambridge, 2006), 11-41; Isabella Sandwell, *Religious Identity in Late Antiquity: Greeks, Jews, and Christians in Antioch* (Cambridge, 2007). For specific consideration of Basil and the other Cappadocians, see the still useful Jean Bernardi, *La prédication des Pères Cappadociens: Le prédicateur et son auditoire* (Paris, 1968).

[4] *Hex.* 1.1. I use, and often modify on the basis of the original Greek text, the English translations of Basil's *Hexaemeron* from *Basil: Letters and Select Works*, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, vol. 8 of *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church* (Edinburgh, 1975). The critical edition of the sermons is: Basil, *Homilien zum Hexaemeron*, ed. Emmanuel Amand de Mendieta and Stig Y. Rudberg, GCS 2 (Berlin, 1997).

then, on creation as a divine act. To contemplate the created order is to turn one's attention to the creator, to see the world not as an autonomous entity, but rather to view it *sub specie divinitatis* and to contemplate the worker in the work. Later on in his series, commenting on the Genesis narrative, Basil says, 'Everywhere, in mystical language (μυστικῶς), history is sown with the dogmas of theology.'[5] Lewis Ayres helpfully comments: 'Μυστικῶς here indicates that Basil sees the text of Genesis as intended to stimulate and guide reflection on the character of the *divine* action and power.'[6] If that is how Basil views the text of *Genesis*, what is required to read it? 'What ear is worthy to hear such a tale?' Basil inquires. 'How earnestly should the soul prepare itself to receive such high lessons?'[7] Listening appropriately to the creation account requires that one's affections be purified, not obsessed with worldly concerns, and that one is eager to discern a true conception of God in the created order. When the biblical text is preached, it challenges its listeners to divest themselves of certain practices and modes of thought, and it reorients people toward God. The purpose of the words of Scripture is not to meet with 'the approval of those who hear them', but to further 'the salvation of those being instructed by them.'[8]

Basil elaborates on this fundamental requirement by developing an analogy between his ideal listener and Moses.[9] Moses was adopted by Pharaoh's daughter, was educated in a manner fitting for a member of the ruling family of Egypt, and enjoyed all the material luxuries of the royal court. Yet he relinquished all of these things when he fled Egypt for the desert of Ethiopia, where he spent forty years in the contemplation of nature before he had an encounter with God (*Num*. 12:6-8). What Basil presents as most important about Moses is that he broke his attachment to his former life and sought eagerly for God via the created order. Part of what makes this parallel work in Basil's mind is that the Cappadocian assumes the Mosaic authorship of *Genesis*; thus fourth-century congregants need the same qualities that Moses demonstrated in order to listen to the account he wrote. Moses functions as a prototype for the one who can understand Scripture.

In the balance of this section, I pay special attention to how the introduction to *Hexaemeron* 1 sets up key theological themes that run through the sermon and into the rest of Basil's homilies on *Genesis*. The paper as a whole thus

[5] *Hex*. 6.2.

[6] Lewis Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford, 2004), 314. My emphasis.

[7] *Hex*. 1.1. Translation altered.

[8] *Hex*. 1.1. Translation altered.

[9] *Hex*. 1.1. The analogy is noted but not fully explored by Marguerite Harl, 'Les trois quarantaines de la vie de Moïse: Schéma de la vue du moîne-évêque chez les Pères Cappadociens', *REG* 80 (1967), 407-12; Andrea Sterk, *Renouncing the World yet Leading the Church: The Monk-Bishop in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, MA, 2004), 62.

focuses more on the literary integrity of the homilies than on the sources from which Basil draws.[10]

The basic requirement that Basil's audience should follow the example of Moses applies quite broadly, to the entire range of listeners in his audience. It is not as if Moses is a paradigm only if one renounces the demands of ordinary life, such as work and family. That this is true is perhaps most obvious when Basil addresses himself directly to a large group of artisans who have assembled to hear his third sermon. Although these tradesmen are actively engaged in a life of work – Basil even concedes that he cannot detain them for too long, due to their obligations to return to their labour – as a preacher, he presses upon them the same essential norm that he outlines in his opening sermon: 'Deliver your heart…', he tells them, 'from the cares of this life and give close heed to my words.'[11] The artisans are not exempt from the purity stipulation, even though they spend much of their lives working in the world: they too must put out of their mind worldly distractions if they are to focus their minds on the biblical message. In other sermons, Basil addresses people that he thinks may be engaging in spouse abuse, and others that he thinks may well become entangled in avarice while gambling,[12] yet he sees his entire audience as enmeshed in the same essential set of spiritual dynamics – they are prone to sin and need constantly to be purified – and he lays the same purity mandate upon *all*. According to the scriptural narrative, Moses spent decades in the desert prior to his encounter with God, yet listening to *Genesis* requires that Basil's audience members undergo the same movement that marked his life: putting aside attachments and concerns that occlude one's vision of God. The way the Cappadocian addresses a wide audience subverts what Charles Taylor calls a 'multi-speed system' of Christianity, by which Taylor means enjoining a drastically higher standard of Christian conduct upon renunciative vocations than upon those who remain involved in work, family, and civic life.[13]

Why is it necessary for anyone to be a certain kind of person in the sense outlined above? Basil's answer is evident from the variety of ways in which the introduction to *Hexaemeron* 1 sets up moves that he makes in his interpretation of *Genesis*. First, the notion of purification has a bearing on how the Cappadocian engages with Greek philosophies and scientific systems in the course of his preaching. According to some of these systems, the world simply exists on its own; divine causation has no place in explaining its

[10] On the question of Basil's sources, see Yves Courtonne, *Saint Basile et l'hellénisme, étude sur la rencontre de la pensée chrétienne avec la sagesse antique dans l'Hexaméron de Basile le Grand* (Paris, 1934); Basil, *Homélies sur l'Hexaéméron*, ed. Stanislas Giet, SC 26 (Paris, 1949), 47-69.

[11] *Hex*. 3.1.

[12] *Hex*. 7.5-6, 8.8.

[13] Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA, 2007), 81.

origin. The tack Basil takes as he advances his own contrary thesis is essentially to shrug off this opposition. 'The philosophers of Greece have taken a great deal of trouble concerning nature, and not one of their systems has remained firm and unshaken, each being overturned by its successor. Thus the refutation is no work for us, for they are sufficient to destroy themselves.'[14] The idea that non-Christian systems conflict with and undercut one another is a common polemical strategy among patristic authors. What is noteworthy is that Basil's 'opposition' is not entirely extrinsic to his own congregation. He speaks as if these ideas hold some sway over his own audience: he assumes that these systems have insinuated themselves into the thinking of his congregation, and that they need to be opposed if the story of creation is to become intelligible for his listeners. To the extent that these philosophies obscure what Basil wants to proclaim, that is, the divine origin of the cosmos, he finds it necessary to criticize them. Where no such conflict exists, the Cappadocian is happy to adopt and employ a whole range of these conceptualities.

Basil utilizes a similar strategy when dealing with scientific reflection on the natural world. This should not be entirely surprising, since there was not, in the Cappadocian's milieu, a hard-and-fast distinction between philosophy and science. He is himself steeped in scientific knowledge, which is on display in each of his sermons on creation; he is wary of scientific systems only to the extent that they proceed without any reference to God. Preaching on the phrase 'in the beginning' (Ἐν ἀρχῇ), the very first Greek words of the *Genesis* text, Basil confronts those who infer that the world is without an origin from the observation that the heavenly bodies move in a circular orbit.[15] According to the way that a circle is described within geometry, it has no defined beginning point: it has a center, of course; its circumference, though, does not have a prescribed initial point. This lack of a starting point does not mean, however, that the observable celestial bodies have been in orbit from eternity. Part of the significance of the word 'beginning' is to oppose this kind of reasoning. Basil has harsh words for those who misuse geometry in such a way, yet notice the precise way in which he focuses his critique: 'Of what use then are geometry – the calculations of arithmetic – the study of solids, and illustrious astronomy, this laborious vanity, *if* those who pursue them imagine that this visible world is co-eternal with the Creator of all things, with God himself; *if* they attribute to this limited world, which has a material body, the same glory as to the incomprehensible and invisible nature…'.[16] Applying mathematical analysis to the created world is not a problem in and of itself; it only becomes problematic when those undertaking the analysis put God to the side. The Cappadocian

[14] *Hex*. 1.2. Translation altered.
[15] *Hex*. 1.3.
[16] *Ibid*. My emphasis. Translation altered.

appreciates the power of science to discover features of the natural order.[17] Purification becomes a necessity whenever the created world ceases to point human beings to God in some way.

The theme of purification is relevant in a second, subtler way as well. Basil aims to unsettle views that he sees as giving people an improper certainty in regard to their knowledge of the world. The sermon series offers detailed discussion of features of the world: the communal life of bees, the order of the creation of the heavenly bodies, and the different sorts of food that various species eat, to mention just a few examples. While Basil treats these subjects at some length, he does not want to arrive at the essence of the things that God created in the heavens and on the earth. 'To spend time on such points is not useful for the edification of the Church.'[18] Statements like this have struck some as verging on articulating an extremely sharp opposition between faith and reason, to the detriment of the latter. Emmanuel Amand de Mendieta, for instance, deems Basil to be 'very near to the fideist position' when he says this.[19] Yet the root concern driving Basil's resistance to an account of essences is not to oppose reason or knowledge per se, but rather to disturb what he considers to be a false certainty. To capture the essence of an object is to know it comprehensively and in its entirety. The homilies on creation intend to awaken an unending sense of wonder in their audience at the way in which the world cannot be known apart from the mystery of God, who created all that is. This is what motivates Basil to say:

> Let us not seek for a nature devoid of qualities by the conditions of its existence, but let us know that all phenomena with which we see it clothed pertain to the conditions of its existence and complete its essence. Try to take away by reason each of the qualities it possesses, and you will arrive at nothing. Take away black, cold, weight, density, the qualities which concern taste, in one word all these which we see in it, and the substance vanishes.[20]

His intention here is to hold attributes and essence together, and to show how various attributes of the created world point toward God when they are seen with the eyes of faith. From this point of view, there is always more about the world to understand, for there is always more about God to understand. Facile claims to have grasped the essence of a created object bring this process to a premature halt.

[17] *Hex.* 1.4.

[18] *Hex.* 1.8. Translation altered.

[19] Emmanuel Amand de Mendieta, 'The Official Attitude of Basil of Caesarea as a Christian Bishop Towards Greek Philosophy and Science', in D.A. Baker (ed.), *Orthodox Churches and the West* (Oxford, 1976), 25-49, 41.

[20] *Hex.* 1.8. Translation altered.

III

This brings the discussion to the positive correlate of the process of purification that has been in focus so far: hearers need a kind of readiness to hear *Genesis* preached in that they must be willing to see glimpses of God in the world he created. The first sermon deals especially with the negative moment, and subsequent sermons develop the positive side more fully. While this dual process is doubtless a messy one in the life of a given believer, there is nevertheless something of a logical sequence operative here. The positive vision of God becomes possible only once a sufficient number of obstacles to it have been eliminated. Those who have attained a degree of purity can see the world in its relationship to God. Basil uses a number of different images to depict this relationship: the world is a school in which human beings are trained in the knowledge of God, it is a work of art that prompts those contemplating it to admire its creator, and it is God's workshop.[21] In this section of the essay, it is impossible to offer an exhaustive account of the ways in which *Genesis* serves as a pointer to the God who created the world. All that is feasible, within the space constraints of this paper, is to give a small sampling of the reading strategies that Basil applies to *Genesis*.

The biblical text guides hearers in seeing the world as testimony to God: this semiotic potential is what one scholar refers to as the 'figural function' creation exercises if it is seen in the light of scriptural witness.[22] Understood in this way, creation offers various pointers to the creator. First, it highlights its own dependency and God's corresponding absoluteness and independence. In *Hexaemeron* 5, Basil suggests that the grass of the field ought to bring to mind the Isaiahnic text about all flesh being grass (40:6); grass should thus remind Christians of the impermanence of human life.[23] The underlying point has to do with the contingency of the human person on God. A person can gain strength and display a great deal of vigor in her prime, but she will inevitably lose this strength in due course. The preacher's intent here is to set a specific feature of creation against the dual backdrop of the *Genesis* account and wider scriptural testimony and, thereby, to bring out a theological issue. It is an associative interpretation of creation that links together *Genesis*, *Isaiah*, and the world itself. There are genuine resonances here between the *Hexaemeron* and much later English Romantic poets such as Wordsworth, for whom the world is shot through with a divine presence. Of course, there are major differences as well: Basil construes created signs as distinct from that to which they point, as we shall see at the conclusion of this section of the essay. The world depends

[21] *Hex.* 1.6., 1.7, 4.1. See also *Hex.* 1.11, 3.10.
[22] L. Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy* (2004), 315.
[23] *Hex.* 5.2.

on God, and it evokes thoughts of its creator. Yet the two are clearly distinct: God remains transcendent.

Second, creation also contains telling examples of divinely established order. The world consists of an array of entities with fixed natures and correlative proper functions; in various ways, this providential order testifies to the creator. For instance, every plant has its place, Basil says, some for the animals to eat, some for human beings to consume, and so on.[24] This demonstrates God's ongoing solicitude for the created world. The same point shines through in the way that certain animals demonstrate foresight, such as the sheep's eating plenty of grass when winter is approaching, and the supply of food is beginning to dwindle. Giving this species such an instinct is God's way of providing for it. In addition, Basil derives a moral for human beings from the proper behavior of these animals. He says, 'When we consider the natural and innate care that these creatures without reason take of their lives we shall be induced to watch over ourselves and to think of the salvation of our souls.'[25] In this way, the natural world points to a spiritual truth.[26]

Third, the divine act of creation to which *Genesis* points, sometimes only with subtle hints, is a work of the triune God, a joint act in which the Father, the Son, and the Spirit act as the one God they in fact are. As in the passages cited previously, here Basil reads these texts against a broader biblical background. In his third sermon, he provides a Christological interpretation of the command, 'Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters' (*Gen*. 1:6).[27] In his interpretive reflection, the Cappadocian utilizes plainly theological criteria to arrive at his reading of the passage. He asks how

[24] *Hex*. 5.9.

[25] *Hex*. 9.3.

[26] Only because the initial created order is good can Basil infer how people ought to conduct themselves from how things are in the world. He deduces *ought* from *is* because *Genesis* 1 portrays reality as it should be. Yet Basil preaches to an audience that lives in a postlapsarian world. So how can he use *Genesis* 1 as a lens through which his hearers can come to understand what is a genuinely different situation? He offers nothing like a full-scale theodicy, but the Cappadocian employs a few different strategies to handle the existence of evil. Sometimes, instances of malice serve as negative examples, ones that human beings ought not to follow. Crabs are industrious but malicious, according to Basil; they love to eat oysters, but are unable to open the oyster's shell on their own. Therefore the crab sneaks a pebble between the two halves of the shell when they are not entirely shut as a ploy to extract the oyster from its protective covering (*Hex*. 7.3). Human beings, on the other hand, are charged to love their neighbours. At other times, Basil argues that some things that seem evil may not be straightforwardly evil, such as a plant that is poisonous to one species yet helpful to another (*Hex*. 5.4). The closest he comes to offering a comprehensive account of evil is to portray it as a privation, not an independent essence in and of itself, not an *ens creatum* that issues from God (*Hex*. 2.4). Despite the presence of evil in the post-fall world, Basil presupposes that reality as it exists for his audience still approximates *Genesis* 1 sufficiently closely that it can indeed be understood through the framework of the biblical text.

[27] *Hex*. 3.2.

God speaks, whether after the manner of human beings, who receive sense impressions from external objects, conceptualize these data, and then articulate their thoughts in literal speech. Or, perhaps God 'speaks' in an altogether different way, issuing a command to the Word of God, by whom he works *ad extra*. 'It is he [the Word] whom Scripture indicates in its details, in order to show that God has not only wished to create the world, but to create it with the help of a coworker.'[28] Basil notes that this second reading is preferable since the first is culpably anthropomorphic. The second, by contrast, is more in line with 'true religion'.[29] With this criterion, he invokes not so much a scriptural canon as a biblically-formed doctrine of God as his interpretive standard. The Cappadocian pauses to explain why he thinks the command is just inchoate in its indication of Christ. 'It is not that [this text] grudges us knowledge', he says, 'but rather that it may kindle our longing by showing us some trace and indication of the mystery.'[30] Basil's working assumption is that listeners come to full knowledge of God over the course of time, not all at once, and are aided in this even by veiled remarks and hints in scriptural narrative. Difficult texts require a great deal of effort, yet interpreters tend to savor all the more that for which they must work.[31]

Basil is slightly more reticent in giving *Genesis* a pneumatological interpretation than he is in construing it Christologically. When the Cappadocian comes to *Gen*. 1:2, which speaks of the Spirit moving on the waters, he deliberates between a couple of different readings.[32] Does 'spirit' refer simply to air? The text would then be enumerating the elements of creation, one of them being air, which is now said to be diffused and in motion above a body of water. The other option is to take the text in a more directly theological way and to read 'Spirit' as the Spirit of God, the person who completes the Trinity. Basil opts for this interpretation, citing as his ground the frequency with which Scripture uses πνεῦμα to stand for the person of the Spirit. Basil does not expound his exegetical argument in much depth: he does not seem to feel a great deal of pressure to explain why πνεῦμα should refer to God here, even though it often refers to other things in other contexts. That the term frequently carries a theological sense suffices for him in this sermon. Finding a pointer to the Spirit in *Gen*. 1:2 allows Basil to claim that the Spirit, as well as the Father and the Son, took an active part in creation.

Seeing creation as a witness to the triune God in this way is, however, markedly different from identifying God with the world, something the Cappadocian is anxious to avoid doing. Basil does want his audience to learn how to see the divine worker in the work of creation, yet he is keen to underscore that the being of God forever transcends creation. The Cappadocian is only a few lines

[28] *Ibid*. Translation altered.
[29] *Ibid*.
[30] *Ibid*. Translation altered.
[31] Another Christological reading can be found in *Hex*. 3.4.
[32] *Hex*. 2.6.

into his exposition of the opening words of *Genesis* when he establishes that the infinite God exceeds the finite world. The work of creating shows only a 'very small part of the power of the Creator', he states, in the same way that the abilities of a potter are not exhausted when he has made a number of vessels.[33] 'The maker of all these things does not have a power that is capable of making just one cosmos; it can extend to infinity, needing only the inclination of his will to bring the greatness of the visible world into being.'[34] So, even as creation testifies to God, God exceeds creation and is not exhaustively known by means of it. Basil's intention to undercut any contrived promotions of the created world brings him into confrontation with astrology in a later sermon. He dedicates his sixth homily to the creation of the sun and the moon, and part of the message is given over to a vigorous polemic against astrology. Against the view that heavenly bodies control human destiny, and that future events can be read off of the motion of the sun and moon, Basil emphasizes the relative insignificance of these objects. He reads the text of Genesis to say that light shone on creation prior to the creation of the sun, and that living things grew without its aid at first: clearly, he is not deterred by Origen's ridicule of any such interpretation and thinks, instead, that with God all things are possible. For Basil, God created in this way to undermine the belief that the sun is the ultimate origin of the light on which life depends.[35] The Cappadocian brings his discussion back to the more general point about divine transcendence, and ends his sixth homily with a dramatic flourish, saying: 'Compared with their author, the sun and moon are but a fly and an ant. The whole universe cannot give us a right idea of the greatness of God; and it is only by signs, weak and slight in themselves, often by the help of the smallest insects and of the least plants, that we raise ourselves to Him.'[36] Thus Scripture trains people to see creation as a *signum* pointing to God, but it is one whose testimony falls far short of the reality itself, which the sign struggles to indicate.

IV

In conclusion, consider these words from Basil's biographer, Philip Rousseau, as he summarizes many important aspects of the Cappadocian's view of the interpretation of *Genesis*:

> A complete ascetic programme was the inescapable prerequisite [for reading]: purification from passion, escape from the distractions of ordinary life, a readiness for hard work, a heightened desire for things spiritual. … Parallels with Basil's ascetic

[33] *Hex.* 1.2.
[34] *Ibid.* Translation altered.
[35] *Hex.* 6.2. See also *Hex.* 5.1, 6.5.
[36] *Hex.* 6.11.

exhortations are easy to discern; and yet he made explicit his awareness that, in the *Hexaemeron*, he was addressing 'ordinary' people with many other preoccupations. It was to this audience that he presented the very highest ideal, an intimate dialogue with God: for in the straightforward words of the sacred text … it was ultimately God himself who was revealed to the true exegete.[37]

If the words of *Genesis* are straightforward in any sense, certainly the way in which they make reference to God is not, as we have seen. What is true is that, for Basil, the 'true exegete' is necessarily an ascetic in the sense that he must divest himself of all that obscures his view of God in the created world. Seeing God is not a task that human beings perform spontaneously, naturally, or automatically. They need to be shown how to see; this is where scripture becomes important, yet even proper reading necessitates formation on the part of the interpreter. This involves relinquishing one's attachment to systems of thought that run against the grain of Scripture's portrayal of the origin of the world; distancing oneself from overly restrictive ontological accounts, ones that claim that essences are easily within reach and that therefore exclude the contingency of all created being on the divine mystery; and opening oneself to signs of God in the created order. The positive side of this process cannot proceed unless the interpreter has made some progress through the negative side.

Basil's reading of *Genesis* is certainly not the sort of interpretation that we are used to now, but the *Hexaemeron* is important precisely because it is a compelling statement of a neglected theological anthropology, one with the capacity to unsettle today's ingrained habits of thought.

[37] Philip Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea* (Berkeley, 1994), 327.

Humans and Animals: St Basil of Caesarea's Ascetic Evocation of Paradise

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Abstract

Contemporary Christianity can benefit from a critical examination of its predominant attitudes toward animal creation. Do animals have value that is merely instrumental – a means to the end of human satisfaction – or do they have worth in themselves, as creatures of God? This article will explore an Eastern Christian perspective on humanity's relation to animal creation through the lens of one of the primary fourth-century Church Fathers, St Basil ('the Great') of Caesarea. Although his discourses do not primarily concern the moral status of animals, his remarks considered in context reveal his underlying views of humanity's relationship to the rest of creation. An exploration of these views can help us to articulate a Christian vision of the moral value of animals and, thus, our ethical duties toward them. This article notes that Basil's ascetic focus is grounded in the reality of Christ's having reopened access to paradise, in which all creatures are in harmony with God and each other. Although Basil does not condemn the killing of animals for food, which God permitted as a concession to – and a reflection of – creation's fallen condition, neither does he view the treatment of animals as a matter of moral indifference. In various ways, all creatures reflect the glory of their Creator, and Christians are to strive to regain the paradisical relationships originally intended by God. Animals are closest to humans and ought to be shown kindness, because their capacities make them most capable of benefiting or suffering at our hands.

Introduction

An increasingly pertinent issue in contemporary ethics concerns the treatment of non-human animals: What is their moral value, and what is our responsibility to them? In some societies, non-human creation is often seen merely as instrumental, a means to the end of human satisfaction. Although many cultures and individuals might acknowledge a vague distinction in moral value among an animal, a plant, and a rock, the fact that animals are not humans frequently amounts to both the beginning and the end of the inquiry. For Christians in particular, the fear of compromising human uniqueness as created in God's image can stifle reflection on whether animal creation has inherent worth, considered apart from its utility to humans. The Christian tradition has been

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criticized for setting humanity on such an exclusive pedestal as to render animals improper objects of moral concern.[1]

On the other hand, it has been correctly noted that this interpretation of Christian attitudes is often exaggerated, while Christian resources supporting a gentler view toward non-human creation are overlooked.[2] The Christian tradition, particularly in its ascetic aspect, contains a rich theology of creation allowing for a higher view of animals, without heedlessly blurring the lines between human and non-human creation. This article will explore an Eastern Christian perspective on humanity's relation to animal creation by an examination of the writings of St Basil ('the Great') of Caesarea. It must be borne in mind, however, that animal value is not the subject he is primarily treating. Rather, Basil's discourses center around asceticism, wealth and poverty, moderation, kindness, and creation's role in reflecting God's glory. But his remarks do shed light on his background assumptions about the moral value of animals and the relational stance we ought to take toward them.

Basil's Writings

Basil's most extensive treatment of animal creation is found in his *Hexaemeron*, a series of homilies on the six days of creation, in which he speaks at length about the types of animals, describing their various natures and sometimes analogizing the traits of different animals to human virtues and vices.[3] Basil remarks that plants and trees may be said to 'live' (ζῆν), due to their faculties of receiving nourishment and growing, but they are neither 'living beings' (ζῷα) nor 'animate' (ἔμψυχα).[4] For Basil, then, the life of a 'living'

[1] See, *e.g.*, John Passmore, 'The Treatment of Animals', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 36 (1975), 195-218, 209.

[2] Robin Attfield, 'Christian Attitudes to Nature', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 44 (1983), 369-86, 369. Several secondary sources state that Basil prayed for animals. See, *e.g.*, Andrew Linzey and Tom Regan (eds), *Love the Animals: Meditations and Prayers* (New York, 1988), 34, 86. However, most of these sources cite the quoted prayers only to other secondary sources. One source cites Basil's liturgy, but I have been unable to find any such prayers there, and correspondence among scholars has supported my suspicion that these quotations are, unfortunately, spurious.

[3] These homilies show Basil's exegesis to be more literal than allegorical. Robert M. Grant, *Early Christians and Animals* (New York, 1999), 77. Grant also avers that these homilies are based partly on Aristotle and partly on lore collected by Plutarch and others, and arranged by Basil for homiletical purposes. He argues Basil was likely a reliable source for ancient views of animals, since such views would have been included in the fields in which he was most proficient: rhetoric, grammar, and philosophy (*ibid.*).

[4] Basil, *The Hexaemeron* 7:1, in Stanislas Giet, ed. and trans., *Basile de Césarée: Homélies sur l'Hexaéméron*, SC 26bis (Paris, 1968), 392. The word ζῆν is the infinitive of the verb ζάω, or ζῶ, meaning simply 'to live'. The word ζῷα is the plural of the noun τό ζῷον, which, in addition to indicating a 'living being', is also used as a word for 'animal'. Given the similarity of the

and 'animate' being is characterized by motion and sentience. Differences exist, however, in the fullness of this life, depending on the type of animal. Noting that Genesis calls aquatic beings 'reptiles of living souls' (ἑρπετὰ ψυχῶν ζωσῶν), while naming the terrestrial animal as a 'living creature' (ψυχὴν ζῶσαν), Basil says the difference is that aquatic beings are animated by strictly physical phenomena in the body, while land animals have souls that, although irrational, allow them to feel genuine affections and emotions.[5] One of his more memorable examples of animal emotion is the way a camel, after it has been struck, hides its grudge until an opportune moment for payback.[6] In lieu of reason, God provides animals with the power of feeling and instinct. The dog, for example, is taught by nature things that the world's sages have barely been able to discover through long study and complicated arguments.[7] Animals, which know how to treat their own injuries and can predict weather changes, demonstrate God's care for all beings.[8] Nonetheless, the souls of animals, being in the blood, are of the earth's substance and do not survive the flesh's decomposition.[9]

The third kind of animal, after the aquatic and terrestrial animals, is the flying creature.[10] Basil believes birds to be generally trainable, and he discusses the highly ordered societies of flying creatures, including even the industrious bee.[11] He also praises the filial piety of the stork, which he considers 'not far from rational intelligence'.[12] He explains: 'Encircling their father, who dropped his feathers because of old age, they warm him with their own wings, and providing food in plenty, they even furnish strong support in flight, gently raising

verb and the noun, it is curious that Basil affirms one and negates the other as applied to plants. This can be explained by Basil's linking of ζῷα to the adjective ἔμψυχα, which denotes having life, or breath, in oneself. Basil's understanding likely arises from *Genesis* 1:30, in which God gives the plants as food to every animal or moving thing 'which has the breath of life in itself' (LXX: ὃ ἔχει ἐν ἑαυτῷ ψυχὴν ζωῆς).

[5] *Ibid.* 8:1, in S. Giet, *Homélies sur l'Hexaéméron*, 430-5, quoting *Gen.* 1:20, 24. Basil seems to see fish as ontologically between plants and land animals. His low view of aquatic life, as dumb and untrainable, is somewhat surprising. One translation includes a footnote indicating that Basil's view is in contradiction to ancient experience, which knew of tame fish. See Basil, *The Hexaemeron* 7:1, in vol. 8 of *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series 2 (ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, 14 vols. [Edinburgh, 1895 = Grand Rapids, Mich., 1975]), 90[2].

[6] *Ibid.* 8:1, in S. Giet, *Homélies sur l'Hexaéméron*, 434-5. Although Basil does not say so – and in fact explicitly states a few sentences earlier that without a doubt terrestrial animals are devoid of reason – such a behavior suggests a capacity for some level of calculated planning beyond emotional reaction.

[7] *Ibid.* 9:4, in S. Giet, *Homélies sur l'Hexaéméron*, 500-1.

[8] *Ibid.* 9:3, in S. Giet, *Homélies sur l'Hexaéméron*, 490-3.

[9] *Ibid.* 8:2, in S. Giet, *Homélies sur l'Hexaéméron*, 434-7.

[10] *Ibid.*, in S. Giet, *Homélies sur l'Hexaéméron*, 438-41.

[11] *Ibid.* 8:3-4, in S. Giet, *Homélies sur l'Hexaéméron*, 444-53. Basil apparently views flying insects as being on a higher plane of life than fish.

[12] *Ibid.* 8:5, in S. Giet, *Homélies sur l'Hexaéméron*, 452-3 (Τὸ δὲ τῶν πελαργῶν οὐδὲ πόρρω ἐστὶ συνέσεως λογικῆς).

him on each side by the wing'.[13] Also near human reason is the vulture, which follows armies to battle in expectation of carnage. Basil indicates that every bird has something in its nature that we should admire and that should lead us to glorify the Creator.[14] He says that God's providence for unreasoning creatures exists to encourage us to ask Him for the things pertaining to our salvation.[15] The primary value of animal creation, then, is in its pointing beyond itself to its Creator, who also created us.

In another work, Basil comments on the condition of humans and animals in paradise and encourages Christians to live, so far as possible, in such a way as to anticipate the full restoration of that state.[16] He notes that in *Genesis*, God originally gave fruit, not meat, to both humans and animals as food (*Gen.* 1:29-30), indicating that predation and death were not in God's essential will for creation. Humans and, by extension, other animals, received God's permission to eat meat after the flood, as a concession to the fallen state (*Gen.* 9:3). But although survival by predation is a result of the fall, the order of paradise will be restored. Basil specifies that his intent is not to prohibit foods that God has permitted, but rather, to bless the original state. The varied human diet arose as a consolation after sin excluded us from the joys of paradise.[17] But now, 'wishing to conduct ourselves according to the imitation of the life in paradise, fleeing this excessively material enjoyment of foods, let us lead ourselves as much as is possible toward that life, using fruits and seeds and the things from the fruit trees for a way of life, but that which is beyond these, we dismiss as unnecessary. For they are not abominable on account of the One having created them, but they are not to be chosen for the sake of the enjoyment of the flesh'.[18]

A couple of points bear mentioning here. The first is that Basil links the destinies of humans and animals, in both fall and restoration. The second is that Basil is not morally condemning the eating of meat.[19] Rather, he is exhorting us to the ascetic renunciation of worldly pleasures, by which we may participate in the eschatological state inaugurated by Christ. Therefore, although he is not claiming that eating meat is sinful, he is inviting us to examine our reasons for doing so, thereby shifting the ethical focus from rules to virtue. Having

[13] *Ibid*., in S. Giet, *Homélies sur l'Hexaéméron*, 454-5.

[14] *Ibid.* 8:7, in S. Giet, *Homélies sur l'Hexaéméron*, 464-8.

[15] *Ibid.* 8:5, in S. Giet, *Homélies sur l'Hexaéméron*, 458-9.

[16] Basil, 'On the Origin of Man, Discourse 2: On Man', 6-7, in Alexis Smets and Michel van Esbroeck (eds and trans.), *Basile de Césarée: Sur l'origine de l'homme*, SC 160 (Paris, 1970), 238-47.

[17] *Ibid.*

[18] *Ibid.* 7, in A. Smets and M. van Esbroeck, *Basile: Sur l'origine de l'homme*, 244-7.

[19] In fact, in another discourse, he extols the rational faculty, through which humans rule the rest of creation, by describing the ways humans catch various animals. The purposes of these traps, however, are left unspecified. Basil, 'On the Origin of Man, Discourse 1: On that which is according to the Image', 9-10, in A. Smets and M. van Esbroeck, *Basile: Sur l'origine de l'homme*, 188-95.

reminded us of God's original purpose for creation and His condescension because of our failure to abide by it, having drawn a connection between the eating of meat and the satisfaction of the flesh's passions, and having described the monastic discipline as an example of the life directed toward God's original purpose, Basil challenges us to follow this example so far as possible. If we reduce Christian ethics to a set of rules, we may look no further than Basil's failure to forbid the eating of meat, but we would be missing his point that Christianity is a life transfigured by the grace of Christ.

In his preaching on fasting, Basil reemphasizes the disparity between our present existence and the life for which we were created, saying that neither meat nor wine was in paradise, but that after the flood, 'when perfection (τελείωσις) was despaired, then [their] enjoyment was conceded'.[20] Fasting helps Christians to redirect their focus toward paradise. We benefit from a detachment from the need for meat. Basil says the Israelites were healthy and able to defeat the Egyptians while satisfied with manna and water, but when they began desiring meat, their lusts turned them back to Egypt, and they did not see the promised land.[21] So gluttony, epitomized for Basil by the desire for meat, leads to a person's destruction. In contrast to meat and wine, the food representing the angelic state is bread, which is not zealously sought by those who are slaves to the stomach.[22] But interestingly, Basil also mentions animals as beneficiaries of fasting, saying, 'no living being (ζῶον) laments death, nowhere is there blood, nowhere is there a sentence by the unmerciful (ἀπαραιτήτου) belly being carried out against the animals (ζώων). The cook's knife has stopped; the table is sufficient with things growing naturally (αὐτομάτοις). The Sabbath was given to the Jews, in order that one might rest, it says, "your beast of burden (ὑποζύγιον), and your child"'.[23] Basil makes clear that fasting is prescribed not only for monks and nuns, but for all Christians,[24] whom he calls to strive for the virtue of temperance.[25] The monastic might eat no meat, while the non-monastic Christian might eat only a little. But to be attached to it, to nurture an overbearing need for it, is wrong for either person. The same holds true for any type of food or drink, and Basil mentions wine in the same

[20] Basil, 'On Fasting, Discourse 1', 5 (PG 31, 169b), citing *Gen.* 9:3, 20-1.

[21] *Ibid.* 9 (PG 31, 180b-c).

[22] *Ibid.* (PG 31, 180c), citing *Ps.* 77:25. Basil includes wine with meat as a concession to the fall, palatable to the senses, but not part of the original ideal still represented by angels. Therefore, it would be disingenuous to argue that the main issue here is the 'fallen' character of eating animals in particular. We see, however, that Basil commends abstention from meat as a merciful choice.

[23] *Ibid.* 7 (PG 31, 176a), quoting *Ex.* 20:10.

[24] Basil, 'On Fasting, Discourse 2', 2 (PG 31, 185c-d, 188a).

[25] Basil, *Ep.* 22:1 (PG 32, 289b). Basil says that the Christian, 'in general, [should] be a lover of pleasure concerning no food or drink; for he who contends for a prize exercises control over all things' (καθόλου περὶ οὐδὲν βρῶμα ἢ πόμα φιλήδονον εἶναι· ὁ γὰρ ἀγωνιζόμενος πάντα ἐγκρατεύεται).

vein. While temperance is Basil's main concern, we may note his particular emphasis on meat, and especially his colorful reference to the sentence issuing from the 'unmerciful belly' carried out against the animals. At the very least, all Christians should fast regularly and give the animals some reprieve, just as animals, too, are entitled to rest on the Sabbath.

So although Basil does not condemn the killing of animals for food, he disparages the practice when its purpose is merely to satisfy a gluttonous appetite. In extolling fasting, which he prescribes for all Christians, he does not neglect to mention the happy consequence that animals are spared. He also notes God's provision for animals: Although they are irrational, many have affections and instincts that enable them to care for themselves and one another. In paradise, which Christ has reopened for us, humans and animals lived in harmony. All these points indicate that Basil understands animals to have moral value, though not in the same manner or degree as humans. His distinction among the levels of animal creation suggests he would attribute different value to different types of animals, depending on the level of sentience and intelligence. Nevertheless, all animals manifest the Creator's glory, so none can be reduced to the status of mere instrumentalities. The role of creation in pointing to God implies that Christians ought not to view any of creation in a strictly functionalist sense.

Conclusion

In conclusion, although Basil does not flatly condemn killing animals for meat, he does not view the treatment of animals as a matter of moral indifference. Lukas Vischer aptly expresses the ascetic approach of Basil and many other Christians as follows:

> For many centuries the generally accepted life-style, consciously based on Christian tradition, was one of satisfaction with sufficiency. To be sure, ascetic life was not exclusively based on this consideration. Yet abstinence also meant limiting the area of creation to which human beings laid claim. In one of his homilies on the six days of creation, Basil the Great speaks of the relations between God's creatures and the fact that the strong feed off the weak. He advises human beings not to take advantage of their position of strength, but to live in the 'poverty of true self-sufficiency.' Asceticism is the way to a more profound relation to creation.[26]

Basil's asceticism is grounded in the reality of Christ's having reopened access to paradise, in which all creatures are in harmony with God and each other. It is our vocation to lead the rest of creation into communion with God, but in turning toward ourselves and seeking to gratify our own desires, we have been

[26] Charles Birch and Lukas Vischer, *Living with the Animals: The Community of God's Creatures* (Geneva, 1997), 31.

responsible for division and discord in creation. The dominion with which God entrusted us in order to unify creation with its Creator, we often exercise in a self-serving manner. In so doing, we have lost sight of creation's role in glorifying God, and have come to see it in impoverished, utilitarian terms – as existing merely to meet our needs, however we define them. While Basil may distinguish humans from animals by the element of rationality, he does not see in this distinction a justification for treating animals as lacking in moral value. On the contrary, animals have this value because of their creation by God to manifest His glory and to partake of the goodness of His creation.

All of God's creation has inherent worth, but animals are closest to humans and should be shown kindness, because their faculties make them most able to benefit from it, and most able to be harmed by our cruelty or callousness.[27] If we choose to serve our interests by exploiting animals in cruel fashion, we cannot pretend to be rightly exercising that dominion God granted humans in the beginning. Rather, we must acknowledge that we are falling short of the standard God set for us as stewards of His creation. For Basil, the first step in curing this failure is an ascetic one: recognizing how much less we need than we commonly assume, and adjusting our relationship to the rest of creation accordingly. When joined to an outlook of thanksgiving for the goodness God has bestowed on all creatures, this ascetic step takes on an integrating, life-affirming dimension that leads all creation toward the state of paradise that God has always intended. Fr Dumitru Staniloae writes: 'Salvation and deification undoubtedly have humanity directly as their aim but not a humanity separated from nature, rather one that is ontologically united with it. For nature depends on man or makes him whole, and man cannot reach perfection if he does not reflect nature and is not at work upon it.'[28] Along the same lines, Vladimir Lossky writes: 'In his way to union with God, man in no way leaves creatures aside, but gathers together in his love the whole cosmos disordered by sin, that it may at last be transfigured by grace.'[29] Basil would, no doubt, agree.

[27] John Balguy is not far from this view when he says that, even if lacking in the capacity for virtue, 'brutes, as they are capable of being treated by us either mercifully or cruelly, may be the *objects* either of virtue or vice.' J. Balguy, *The Foundation of Moral Goodness* (London, 1728), Pt. 1, §3, quoted in J. Passmore, 'Treatment of Animals' (1975), 209.

[28] Dumitru Staniloae, *The World: Creation and Deification*, *The Experience of God: Orthodox Dogmatic Theology* 2; eds. and trans. Ioan Ionita and Robert Barringer (Brookline, Mass., 2000), 1.

[29] Vladimir Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, trans. Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius (Crestwood, N.Y., 1976), 111.

Voyageur en Exil: Un aspect central de la condition humaine selon Basile de Césarée

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ABSTRACT

The 'way' in images, the route, the traveler, applied to human life, is certainly present in antique philosophy, but they are more developed in the Old and New Testament. Basil of Cesarea for whom the Scriptures are the sole guide for Christian action takes note of these topics. The present article intends to illustrate them with reference to texts not only taken from Basil's *Homilies on the Psalmes*, although these are important for Basil's anthropology, but also from his entire work, especially his *De baptismo* and *De Spiritu Sancto*.

L'image du chemin, du voyage pour décrire la vie humaine est fréquente et banale. Après un bref rappel de sa place dans la littérature classique, puis dans la Bible juive et le Nouveau Testament, je voudrais montrer que Basile de Césarée donne à cette image une grande importance et ce, de manière fort cohérente.

I. Héritage culturel et assimilation des Écritures

La philosophie grecque, depuis Pythagore, nous a transmis la métaphore des deux voies symbolisée par la graphie de l'*upsilon* majuscule et ses branches – celle du plaisir et celle du devoir, ou, peut-on dire, les voies du bien et du mal. Ce symbolisme[1] devait être assez connu pour que Jérôme en fasse mention dans sa lettre (*ep*. 107) à la jeune Laeta, mère de Paula. Platon s'y référa dans le vieux mythe du jugement des morts repris dans le *Gorgias* (524a-527d): le jugement a lieu dans la «Prairie» d'où partent deux voies, l'une vers les Iles des Bienheureux, l'autre vers le Tartare. Mais Basile, l'auteur de la *Lettre aux jeunes gens*, qui connaît bien ses classiques, disposait cependant de modèles qui trouvaient en lui une résonance incomparable.

[1] Voir A. Darrieutort, 'Chemin', dans *Vocabulaire de théologie biblique* (s/d de X. Léon-Dufour), 2e éd. (Paris, 1970), c. 159-62; G.-H. Baudry, 'Voie. I', *Catholicisme* XV, fasc. 74 (2000), c. 1288-95.

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L'on sait en effet que pour Basile l'autorité suprême est l'Écriture. C'est sur elle que le chrétien doit modeler sa vie. Et précisément l'image du chemin, sans doute parce que les anciens sémites ont été des nomades, tient une place particulière dans les représentations qu'affectionnait Israël pour parler de sa vie religieuse et morale.

Qu'il suffise de rappeler qu'Abraham s'est mis en route, à l'appel de Dieu, initiant par là une aventure dans laquelle il s'agit de reconnaître «les voies de Dieu», qui ne sont pas celles des hommes (cf. *Isa* 55:81). Et cette aventure se poursuit durant l'Exode, années où Israël «marche avec son Dieu» (*Micah* 6:8). Au désert, Dieu soutient son peuple «comme un homme soutient son fils». La marche est longue, difficile, temps d'épreuve qui permet à Dieu de sonder son peuple (cf. *Deut* 8:2-6), mais qui aboutit au repos, dans un pays où Israël comblé bénira Yahweh (*Deut* 8:7-10). Par ailleurs les pèlerinages contribuent à ancrer la notion de chemin sacré.

Même une fois arrivé en Terre promise, Israël doit néanmoins continuer de «marcher dans les voies du Seigneur» (*Ps* 118:1, LXX). Révélée par Dieu à son peuple, «la voie entière de la connaissance» n'est autre que le «livre des préceptes, la Loi qui subsiste éternellement (*lBa* 3:37; 4:1). Il faut donc «marcher dans la Loi du Seigneur» (*Ps* 118:1). Corrélativement, la désobéissance à la Loi est un égarement (*Deut* 31:17) qui conduit à la catastrophe, dont la dernière sanction sera l'Exil (*Lev* 26:41).

À l'époque du judaïsme, la doctrine des «deux voies» résume la conduite morale des hommes. Deux chemins se présentent à l'agir humain, le bon et le mauvais (*Ps* 1:6; *Prov* 4:18 et 12:28). Le chemin de la vertu, droit et parfait, consiste à pratiquer la justice (*Prov* 8:20…), à être fidèle à la vérité (*Ps* 118:30…), à rechercher la paix (*Isa* 59:8). Le mauvais chemin, tortueux, est celui que suivent les insensés (*Prov* 12:15), les pécheurs, les méchants; il mène à la perdition (*Ps* 1:6). À l'homme il appartient de choisir, et il est responsable de son choix (*Deut* 30:15-20…). Nous reviendrons plus loin sur les enrichissements de ce thème dans le Nouveau Testament, enrichissements que Basile fait siens. Signalons dès à présent que le thème des *Deux voies* est présent dans les textes de Qumran (*cf.* 4Q 473), et que la Voie désignera dans les *Actes des Apôtres* le christianisme naissant (*Acts* 9:2; 18:25; 24:22).

II. La vie humaine est comme un chemin

En reprenant l'analyse que fait de ce thème saint Basile, nous suivrons de près la thèse très fouillée du Frère Saulus Rumšas o.p.,[2] en précisant qu'il convient

[2] *Une anthropologie à la rencontre d'une spiritualité. L'enseignement épiscopal de Basile de Césarée (370-379)*, Thèse […] de théologie (Strasbourg, 2007), 560 p., en 2 vol (inédit).

parfois d'expliciter ce que l'évêque de Césarée propose à ses fidèles, en particulier dans ses *Homélies sur les Psaumes*.

1. Son point de vue n'est pas seulement moral, mais surtout spirituel. Pour le chrétien, la vie sur terre n'est qu'une étape vers la vie future. Il lui faut donc avoir le regard bien fixé sur la destination finale. De fait, subsistent bien des incertitudes sur le propriétaire du chemin, sur les rencontres que le voyageur pourra faire en route: le voyageur aura à faire face à des dangers, mais surtout sera confronté aux plaisirs comme aux épreuves. Dans l'*homélie sur sainte Julitte*, le couple humain est décrit comme des voyageurs ayant le même chemin: «Ils ont parcouru toute la partie de la route qui leur était commune et sont arrivés à l'endroit où le chemin désormais se divise … Nos voyageurs avaient donc un but différent, et c'est par hasard que les relations nouées en cours de route ont établi entre eux une certaine intimité».[3] Plus généralement, le «propre de l'homme saint, c'est de vivre cette existence-ci comme un passage, et de marcher avec hâte vers une autre vie», et Basile, dans cette 1ère *Homélie sur le Ps 14*,[4] de rappeler l'exemple d'Abraham (*Gen* 23:16; cf. *Acts* 7:16).

2. La considération de la destination finale aide à prendre le bon chemin. Car deux chemins se présentent à l'homme. Quels sont-ils? Le chemin du mal, du bourbier, et celui du bien. Basile l'appelle le plus souvent «chemin de la vertu», étroit et pénible. Celui qui l'emprunte «sera assailli par les tribulations».[5] Mais pour Basile ce trajet n'est pas décrit en termes de morale, mais de spiritualité[6]: la vie de l'homme est en effet chemin de la connaissance de Dieu, qui passe de l'Esprit par le Fils jusqu'au Père.[7]

Sur ce chemin du bien y a-t-il un guide? Oui, c'est le Christ lui-même. Paraphrasant l'*Epître aux Philippiens* (1:21), Basile s'exprime clairement dans l'*hom. sur le Ps 33*, 9: «Notre vie est donc vraiment le Christ, et la vivre en Lui, c'est la vraie vie».[8] On remarquera que, fidèle à la pensée paulinienne, Basile n'envisage pas pour l'homme un guide extérieur, comme pourrait l'être un «premier de cordée», malgré toutes les qualités que peut offrir celui-ci, mais un guide intérieur.

À quel moment convient-il de choisir ce guide? Basile ne le dit pas explicitement, mais d'après ses écrits on ne peut pas douter que c'est lors du baptême, moment où le catéchumène adhère au Christ. Le début du *De baptismo*[9] précise bien qu'il lui faut se faire disciple du Seigneur *avant* d'être admis au baptême, – se faire disciple du Seigneur consistant à «se détacher de tout péché», des

[3] *Hom.* 5, 5 (PG 31, 249B); trad. inédite de dom Ed. Rouillard o.s.b. († 1992).
[4] *Hom.* I *in ps. 14, 1* (PG 29, 252A).
[5] *Ibid.* (PG 29, 252B).
[6] *Hom. in ps. 45, 2* (PG 29, 420A).
[7] *De S. Sp.* XVIII 47 (SC 17bis, 412, 17-9).
[8] *Hom. in ps 33*, *9* (PG 29, 372D).
[9] Titre de l'ouvrage (I 1); éd. J. Ducatillon, SC 357 (Paris, 1989), 80.

tracas de la vie […] et à être délivré de la tyrannie du diable.»[10] Et un peu plus loin, il énumère plusieurs *logia* évangéliques qui préconisent, de la part de celui qui s'engage dans la voie de disciple, un examen sérieux des conditions requises.[11] La vie chrétienne, c'est la ressemblance avec Dieu. Tous les hommes sont en quelque sorte de la même pâte, possèdent les mêmes virtualités, car ils ont été créés à l'image de Dieu. Mais la ressemblance (ὁμοίωσις) est au-dessus, car elle suppose, nous dit Basile, la connaissance.[12] Le baptême configure les chrétiens au Christ mort et ressuscité «pour que nous marchions de même, nous aussi, dans une vie nouvelle.»[13]

Mais Basile, en connaisseur de *Jean* 14:6 (cité 17 fois), va plus loin: le Christ *est* le chemin véritable.[14] Le commentaire basilien de cette expression johannique explicite ce qu'est cette route: «le progrès continu et ordonné vers la perfection, grâce aux œuvres de justice et à l'illumination de la connaissance».[15] Et, conclut Basile, c'est «une bonne route, notre Seigneur, dont il n'y a pas à s'écarter et sur laquelle on ne risque pas de dévier: elle conduit, en fait, au bien, le Père. 'Nul, en effet, ne va au Père que par moi'. Ainsi donc notre montée vers Dieu se fait-elle par le Fils».[16]

Le voyageur a-t-il moyen de s'assurer qu'il arrivera à la destination finale? Oui, il lui faut pour cela se rendre au plus près de la Vérité, qui est le Christ. À ceux qui en sont loin, commente Basile dans son *Homélie sur le Ps 45*, la Parole 'Venez et voyez' les incite à se rapprocher:

> «Comme pour les yeux de notre corps un grand éloignement ne permet pas de saisir distinctement ce que l'on regarde, tandis que se rapprocher de l'objet considéré en donne une claire connaissance, il en est de même aussi pour ce que l'on considère par l'esprit: celui qui ne s'est pas rapproché de Dieu par ses actes, et qui ne s'est pas uni à Lui, ne peut voir ses œuvres par les yeux purifiés de son âme».[17]

Après l'aspect individuel du cheminement, abordons la démarche de la multitude: tous les hommes sont-ils appelés à parcourir *le même* chemin? Oui, mais dans cette vie terrestre, il faut distinguer, nous dit Basile, entre la vie du corps et la vie de l'âme, ou entre l'homme extérieur et l'homme intérieur, entendons par là, sans entrer dans le détail d'une pensée parfois imprécise, le principe spirituel qui doit diriger l'être humain. D'autre part, à considérer l'auditoire de Basile, ce ne sont pas seulement les moines qui sont appelés à parcourir le chemin vers le Bien. En effet, non seulement il est bien connu qu' aux yeux de

[10] *De bapt*. I 1 (SC 357, 87 et 91).
[11] *Ibid*. I 1 (SC 357, 99 et 98, n. 21).
[12] *De S. Sp*. I 2 (SC 17bis, 252, 12).
[13] *De bapt*. I 1, 8 (citant *Rm* 6:4) (SC 357, 127).
[14] *De S. Sp*. VIII 17 (SC 17bis, 306, 49-52).
[15] *Ibid*. VIII 18 (SC 17bis, 310, 37-45).
[16] *Ibid*. VIII 18 (SC 17bis, 310, 48) (citation de *Jn* 14:6).
[17] *Hom. In ps. 45, 7* (PG 29, 425-8).

Basile les membres des fraternités basiliennes ne constituent pas une catégorie à part de chrétiens et que les exigences évangéliques sont identiques pour tous,[18] mais l'Esprit Saint appelle *tous* les hommes, c'est Lui, qui, dans le *Ps* 48 «rassemble et convoque tout par sa proclamation, lui le Paraclet, l'Esprit de Vérité, qui rassemble les sauvés par l'intermédiaire des prophètes et des apôtres…»[19] Notons bien: l'Esprit appelle, mais ne contraint personne. C'est donc bien l'homme qui décide, après mûre réflexion, comme font les personnages (notamment un roi) des «mini-paraboles» rapportées par *Luc* (14:28-35).

Le chemin, que tous les hommes sont donc appelés à parcourir, comporte-t-il des étapes? Analysons donc le «profil du chemin» qui pour Basile attend les hommes. Ce chemin, qui n'est pas de facilité, est présenté par lui, traditionnellement, comme l'échelle de Jacob dans l'*Homélie sur le Ps 1*:

> «Je pense que l'exercice de la piété (*eusebeia*) est semblable à cette échelle que vit un jour le bienheureux Jacob, qui d'une part était en terre, au ras du sol, mais d'autre part s'élevait plus haut que le ciel lui-même (cf. *Gen* 28:12). Ainsi ceux qui s'engagent dans une vie vertueuse doivent d'abord mettre le pied sur les mêmes degrés, de là, monter toujours sur les degrés suivants jusqu'à ce que, petit à petit, ils arrivent aussi haut que la nature humaine peut monter. Donc, comme en montant sur le premier degré d'une échelle, on quitte la terre, ainsi pour vivre comme Dieu le désire, le début du progrès est de se séparer du mal. Du reste, un parfait repos est plus facile que n'importe quelle action».[20]

«Échelle» implique montée. Mais Basile, à la différence de plusieurs, ne se lance pas dans une description des différents échelons. S'agit-il d'une progression constante et linéaire? ou bien des redescentes sont-elles possibles? Il faut, nous dit Basile, «instituer notre vie de telle sorte que notre passé ne soit jamais meilleur que l'avenir ou le présent».[21] Ou pour reprendre les termes du *De baptismo*,[22] tirés de Luc, tout «retour en arrière» est exclu.

Mais à chaque moment il nous faut faire des choix, car nous sommes sujets au changement, nous ne sommes pas des anges.[23] Peut-être parce qu'il a fait des études de médecine, Basile s'intéresse aux étapes du développement du corps humain, trois ou quatre selon les textes[24]. Et Basile envisage la vie de l'homme intérieur comme un itinéraire de croissance. Relevons que celui-ci

[18] Sur ce point capital de la conception qu'a Basile de la vie chrétienne, voir la synthèse magistrale de dom J. Gribomont, *Théologie de la vie monastique. Études sur la tradition patristique* (Paris, 1961), 99-113, en part. 101-2.

[19] *Hom. in ps. 48, 1* (PG 29, 432D-433B).

[20] *Hom. in. ps. 1, 4* (PG 29, 217D et 220A); S. Rumšas, *Anthropologie* (2007), 420. Trad. de Luc Brésard o.c.s.o., Basile de Césarée. *Magnifiez le Seigneur avec moi. Homélies sur les Psaumes (extraits),* Foi vivante 387 (Paris, 1997), 49.

[21] *Enar. in Isaiam* (authenticité douteuse) (PG 30, 145A).

[22] *De bapt.* I 1, 4 (SC 357, 95); répété en I 2, 3 (SC 357, 113).

[23] Cf. *hom. in ps. 44, 1* (PG 29, 388C).

[24] Cf. S. Rumšas, *Anthropologie* (2007), 423-6.

n'est pas un programme d'ascèse, comme le rigorisme[25] de Basile pourrait le donner à penser. Cette croissance, en effet, est celle des graines:

«Le Seigneur lui-même compare la perfection de ceux qui croient en lui à la croissance des graines quand il dit: [il en est du Royaume des cieux] comme d'un homme qui jette la semence sur la terre: il s'endort et se lève la nuit et le jour; et la semence lève, elle croît sans qu'il le sache».[26] Autrement dit la croissance se fait en Dieu, sans intervention de l'homme. «Le seul effort de l'homme ne mène pas à la perfection».[27]

Ce «façonnage» entre les mains de Dieu n'exclut pas cependant l'existence d'étapes spirituelles. La seconde homélie *Sur l'origine de l'homme* exprime la croissance de l'âme en ces termes: «C'est le développement des connaissances en vue de la perfection (*teleiôsin*)».[28] Basile utilise plusieurs fois une division ternaire du progrès spirituel. Ainsi, dans son explication du *Ps 1*[29], il distingue, parmi les hommes qui marchent vers la demeure de Dieu, les trois groupes suivants: les débutants, les progressants et les parfaits. Tripartition confirmée dans le traité *Sur le Saint-Esprit,* mais sans explication: «Par lui [l'Esprit Saint], les cœurs s'élèvent, les faibles sont pris par la main, les progressants deviennent parfaits».[30] C'est sur ce genre de textes que s'est appuyé Pierre Humbertclaude[31] pour reconnaître chez Basile un enseignement des trois voies purgative, illuminative et unitive. Cet auteur a rarement été suivi.

Laissant de côté certaines considérations[32] de l'évêque de Césarée que l'on peut appliquer à des débutants ou à des progressants, bornons-nous à souligner que Basile s'adresse à tous les fidèles (tous les hommes?) qui se pressent pour écouter le prédicateur. Il serait peu «pastoral» d'égrainer des conseils d'ascèse, praticables seulement pour les moines.

Au contraire, on aura remarqué que le cheminement spirituel conduit à se dépouiller, à renoncer à gravir les échelons à la force du poignet et peut-être ainsi à verser dans le pélagianisme. Le voyageur doit apprendre au fond à *se laisser* guider, et donc à faire preuve de passivité. Et comment le voyageur peut-il se désapproprier de lui-même? Par l'assistance de l'Esprit Saint. Au début du *De baptismo*, après avoir répondu avec empressement à la demande qui lui

[25] Cf. E. Baudry, o.c.s.o., 'À propos du rigorisme de s. Basile (…)', dans *Commandements du Seigneur et libération évangélique*, s/d. J. Gribomont, Studia Anselmiana 70 (Roma, 1977), 139-73.

[26] *Hex.* V 5 (SC 26bis, 299) (citation de *Mc* 4:26-7).

[27] S. Rumšas, *Anthropologie* (2007), 422.

[28] II 5 (SC 160 [Paris, 1970], 237); S. Rumšas, *Anthropologie* (2007), 426.

[29] Cf. *Hom. in ps. 1, 2* (PG 29, 213A).

[30] *De S. Sp.* IX 23 (SC 17bis, 328, 12-3).

[31] *La doctrine ascétique de Basile de Césarée. Études de théologie historique* (Paris, 1932). Sur les trois «voies», ouvrage classique de A. Tanquerey, *Précis de théologie ascétique et mystique*, 9e éd. (Paris et Tournai, 1924), 397-407. Voir aussi H. Blommestijn, 'Progrès. Progressants', *DSp* XII, f. 83-85 (1986), c. 2383-2405 (c. 2385-2389 sur Origène).

[32] Cf. S. Rumšas, *Anthropologie* (2007), 429-31.

était faite, Basile demande «que l'Esprit saint et bon [lui] rappelle et [lui] enseigne ce qu'Il a appris du Seigneur (cf. *Jn* 14:26 et 16:13), et qu'Il dirige [son] âme sur un chemin de paix (cf. *Lk* 1:79)».[33]

Conclusion

Ce thème du voyageur n'est pas original[34], ce qui n'est sans doute pas étonnant dans la mesure où Basile reconnaît dans l'Écriture l'autorité suprême ou même la seule autorité. On n'est pas surpris que l'évêque de Césarée n'ait pas donné à cette description de la vie chrétienne une présentation systématique. En effet d'une part, un exposé *ex professo* n'est pas dans sa manière (ni dans les habitudes des Pères d'une manière générale); d'autre part, les homélies se prêtent bien mal à un tel développement. Bien plus, il semble que dans les œuvres écrites Basile ait affectionné le genre des «questions-réponses.» Ce n'est pas seulement vrai des *ascetica,* car le *De baptismo* en garde bien des traits[35]. Mais quoique cette analyse introduise peut-être dans la pensée de Basile une logique qu'elle ne comportait pas, elle a du moins l'intérêt de montrer la cohérence des vues d'un pasteur d'âmes.

Sans doute la comparaison de la vie humaine avec un long voyage a-t-elle laissé de côté quelques aspects qui auraient pu être développés, par exemple la fatigue et les besoins du voyageur, les rencontres faites en chemin, les épreuves traversées. Une omission apparente peut surprendre, celle des sacrements, nourriture ou réconfort du voyageur. Mais Basile note avec force à plusieurs reprises que le baptisé «a désormais besoin d'être nourri de la nourriture de la vie éternelle», l'Eucharistie[36]. *Factus cibus viatorum*, comme dira au XIII^{e} s. l'auteur (saint Thomas d'Aquin?) du *Lauda Sion*[37]. L'évêque de Césarée, pré-

[33] *De bapt*. I 2, 1 (SC 357, 105).

[34] À l'issue de ma communication, un ami bénédictin, que je remercie chaleureusement, me signalait les échos très nets de la spiritualité basilienne qu'il relevait dans la *Regula Benedicti* (= *RB*), Prologus 13 (*currite*), 21 (*per ducatum Evangelii pergamus itinera eius*), et 42-4 (*currendum et agendum est modo quod in perpetuo nobis expediat*); *RB* 7, 67 (*his omnibus humilitatis gradibus ascensis*) et *RB* 73, 4 (*recto cursu perveniamus ad creatorem nostrum*). S. Benoît recommande en effet la lecture de «notre Père S. Basile» (*RB* 73, 5) et ces rapprochements ne sont sans doute pas fortuits. Une enquête sur le thème du chemin serait à faire à partir des textes basiliens et pseudo-basiliens qu'a sûrement connus S. Benoît, à savoir d'une part le *Petit Ascéticon* traduit par Rufin d'Aquilée en 397 (*Regula Basilii*, ed. K. Zelzer, CSEL 86, 1986) et d'autre part l'*Admonitio ad filium spiritualem* (CPL^{3} 1155*a*), sur laquelle on consultera A. de Vogüé, 'Entre Basile et Benoît: l' *Admonitio ad filium spiritualem* du Pseudo-Basile', *Regulae Benedicti Studia* 10-1 (1981-82), 19-34.

[35] Cf. l'introduction de SC 357, 15-8.

[36] *De bapt*. I 3, 1 (SC 357, 193); *Moralia* 21, 1 (PG 31, 737D).

[37] À St Mary Magdalen's d'Oxford, l'autel de Lady Chapel (dedicated to Our Lady of Mount Carmel) porte l'inscription: '*Ecce panis angelorum* / *Factus cibus viatorum*.'

curseur de la Constitution *Dei Verbum* (n. 21) de Vatican II, a établi ce lien fondamental de la Parole de Dieu avec le Corps du Christ, car elle est vraiment divine. Rien ne doit en être négligé, de façon à «connaître avec plus de précision l'intention de la Divine Ecriture: elle n'a pas permis que chacun de nous s'égare dans des opinions erronées et tombe dans le péché».[38] La Parole de Dieu, pourrait-on dire, est aussi la boussole du baptisé voyageur.

[38] *De iudicio* 6 (PG 31, 668) (nouvelle traduction à paraître aux Ed. du Cerf par dom E. Baudry, J.-M. Baguenard et Sister M. Ricard). Le rôle de Basile comme précurseur de *Dei verbum* est mis en lumière dans l'Encyclique *Patres Ecclesiae* de Jean-Paul II (2.1.1980).

Nautical Imagery in the Writings of Basil of Caesarea

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ABSTRACT

In all the various genres of Basil's writings, nautical imagery can be found. This article will look at some of the most significant and representative examples, the context in which they were written, and discuss the message and teaching Basil is trying to convey through these visual associations.

The use of metaphors help develop our inner sense of sight, by painting a picture in our minds, that then helps us retain the message being conveyed. Basil was very intent that the people he was addressing hear and retain the message he was trying to impart to them. He would have been exposed to nautical imagery through a familiarity with Greek literature that went back at least as far as Homer. This was then reinforced by his own experience of traveling the seas in various ships, with his voyages to and from Palestine, Egypt, Constantinople and Athens. The six texts to be cited here represent a variety of audiences and genres. This universality attests to the success such metaphors had through the centuries in Basil's part to the world.

The Roman Empire in the fourth century had a well developed network of roads, connecting cities and forming trading routes. Five major routes met in Caesarea. Of these was the road to Tyana in the southeast. Tyana was near the Eurymedon River, over which was built a Roman bridge said to have been nine meters above water level, so as to allow large transport ships to pass on their way to the commercial docks.[1] This may have been a route Basil could have taken to connect with various sea voyages he would have made. The maritime trade used sailing ships with rounded hulls, which were dependent on the wind blowing from the right direction. The military vessels had more pointed hulls and were propelled by three levels of oarsmen.[2]

The first text to be cited is from the ascetical homily titled, *Attende tibi ipsi*. The homily is centered on *Deut*. 15:9: 'Give heed to yourself lest a wicked

[1] See Stephen Mitchell, *Anatolia, Land, Men and Gods in Asia Minor* (Oxford, 1993), vol. 1, 245-7 and vol. 2, 65 (map).

[2] See, for example, http://www.mariamilani.com/ancient_Roman_ships.htm or 'Transportation and voyaging by sea in Roman times', at http://www.jaysromanhistory.com/romeweb/transport/shiptravel.htm.

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thought steal in upon you'. It is broadly dated by Paul Fedwick to the years during Basil's active Church ministry as priest or bishop (363-378 AD). The text here cited occurs at the beginning of the homily, and aims to capture the attention of his audience for the message he wants to impart.

> If the passage of our words is attended by a deep tranquility and calm, they weigh anchor in the ears of our disciples, as in a peaceful haven, untroubled by storms. But, if a noisy protest on the part of our hearers, like the angry surge of the sea, oppose our words, they will be dispersed in the midst of their course through the air and like a ship they will be wrecked.[3]

Basil aims to instruct his listeners, ascetics either monastic or otherwise, about the importance of governing themselves. In his opening comments he sets out to muster his listeners' attention. He compares the words he is about to impart to a ship. For these words to be heard, they must settle in a calm and tranquil mind, as a ship lays anchor in a peaceful haven. But, if his listeners protest against what he is saying, his words will be all disengaged from each other and will be wrecked and of no use to anyone.

We turn next to two examples from his exegetical homilies, beginning with *Homily on Psalm 1*. The audience for his *Homilies on the Psalms* represented the mixture found in the general public, and Basil aimed to provide spiritual nourishment for the faithful, who came together in some places to sing the psalms.[4] Here, we will consider a passage from his first homily on the psalms, where he is expounding on the meaning of the sentence, 'Blessed is the man who has not stood in the way of sinners'.

> Life is called a way because each being that enters into life hastens toward its end. Just as those who are sleeping in ships are carried by the wind through its own force to the harbors, even though they themselves do not perceive it but the course hurries them on to the end, so we also, as the time of our life flows on, are hurried along as if by some continuous and restless motion on the unheeded course of life, each one toward his proper end.[5]

Basil goes on to explain the meaning of this passage. The 'way' is the voyage of life. We keep moving forward, passing everything by. It is another way of saying that 'life is fleeting and passing'. With the image of being asleep in a ship, unaware of the course, Basil is saying that the things remain and we pass them by. They remain behind and we move on, unable to prevent being carried

[3] *Attende tibi ipsi* 1. English translation, *Give Heed to Thyself* in St. Basil, *Ascetical Works*, trans. by Monica Wagner, Fathers of the Church (Washington, 1962), 431, hereafter referred to as Wagner.

[4] *Ep*. 207, 3; English translation by Blomfield Jackson in *The Treatise De Spiritu Sancto*, *The nine homilies of the Hexaemeron* and *The Letters of Saint Basil The Great*, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series, 8 (New York, 1895 = Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1978), 247, hereafter cited as: Jackson.

[5] *Homily on Psalm 1,* 4; English translation by Agnes Clare Way, *St. Basil, Exegetical Homilies*, Fathers of the Church 46 (Washington, D.C., 1963), 158-9, hereafter cited as: Way.

in the inevitable flow of our life towards its end. Basil says that we are all 'on the way', and life's pleasures and afflictions are neither lasting nor permanent.

A related theme is found in the *Hexameron*, a series of nine homilies on the six days of creation as recounted in *Gen.* 1:1-27, up to the account of the creation of the human being. The homilies were given on consecutive days, one in the morning, one in the evening. His audience was a mixed one, as might have been found in a parish setting. Indeed, some scholars have seen it as a time of retreat, during which Basil was instructing his people. Gribomont dates it to after his *Epistle* 236, but not during his last year of life (378 AD).[6] Basil writes: 'It seems to me, that meeting with all these innumerable marvels has made me forget all measure and experience the fate of those who navigate the high seas without a fixed point to mark their progress, and are often ignorant of the space they have traversed.'[7]

Basil is speaking at the end of an evening discourse, explaining that he has gotten a bit carried away by the marvels of creation he has been describing to his listeners, so much so that he has lost all track of direction. He then brings this homily to a close and says they will continue the next morning. The meaning of the nautical allusion used in this passage, is that good navigation needs a fixed point to help ascertain one's locaton and progress, as well as an awareness of the area one has so far traveled.

A dramatic use of nautical imagery is found at the end of *De Spiritu Sancto*, Basil's treatise on the Holy Spirit. It was written during the early years of his episcopate, probably 372-373 AD,[8] in response to a request from Amphilochius, Bishop of Iconium, for information on the Holy Spirit. The need arose because Basil's orthodoxy had been challenged as a result of his using two slightly different forms of the doxology, which in turn called into question the nature of the Holy Spirit and the relations between the three members of the Trinity. The passage to be quoted occurs at the end of the treatise, where Basil comments on the then present state of the Church, which was riddled with quarreling factions.

To what shall I liken our present condition? It may be compared, I think, to some naval battle which has arisen out of time old quarrels, and is fought by men who cherish a deadly hate against one another, of long experience in naval warfare, and eager for the fight … See rival fleets rushing in dread array to the attack. With a burst of uncontrollable fury they engage and fight it out. Fancy, if you like, the ships driven to and fro by a raging tempest, while thick darkness falls from the clouds and blackens all the scene, so that watchwords are indistinguishable in the confusion, and all distinction between friend and foe is lost. To fill up the details of the imaginary picture, suppose

[6] Jean Gribomont, 'Notes bibliographiques sur s. Basile le Grand', in Paul Fedwick (ed.), *Basil of Caesarea: Christian, Humanist, Ascetic* (Toronto, 1979), 29-31.

[7] *Hexameron* VII, 6; in Jackson, 94.

[8] See *Basile de Caesarée, Sur le Saint-Esprit,* introduction, text and notes by Benoit Pruche, SC 17bis (Paris, 1968), 42, hereafter cited as: Pruche.

the sea swollen with billows and whirled up from the deep, while a vehement torrent of rain pours down from the clouds and the terrible waves rise high … Jealousy of authority and the lust of individual mastery splits the sailors into parties which deal mutual death to one another. Think, besides all this, of the confused and unmeaning roar sounding over all the sea, from howling winds, from crashing vessels, from boiling surf, from the yells of the combatants … They do not cease from their struggle each to get the better of the other, while their ship is actually settling down into the deep.[9]

Basil lived in tumultuous times, bishops were fighting and leading one faction against another. Second generation Arians became bishops, forcing the orthodox bishops into exile. Basil's own spiritual guide and teacher, Eustasius of Sebaste, had joined the Pneumatomachi, a group that denied the divinity of the Holy Spirit. He goes on to describe at length the state of warfare between the Arians and the orthodox. 'We see, as it were, whole churches, crews and all, dashed and shattered upon the sunken reefs of disingenuous heresy, while others of the enemies of the Spirit of Salvation have seized the helm and made shipwreck of the faith'. From his earliest time as a Christian, after having participated at the Synod of Constantinople in 361 AD, he was struck by the infighting among Christian factions.[10]

The text from *Quod rebus mundanis*, an ascetical homily, reflects a nautical image that is far from unique among writers in the early Christian centuries, that of a ship in a turbulent storm, weighed down with a heavy load. The sailors frantically throw the whole cargo into the sea, so as to raise the ship, and keep it from sinking. The context in which this image appears is a homily directed to a group gathered around a village church. We learn this from an impromptu addition two thirds of the way through the homily, which alludes to a fire that had just happened, lit at a pyre near the church, but, though the church had been saved, the homes and possessions of certain members of the village had been destroyed. 'Those of us, therefore, who have not suffered this adversity should place at their disposal our own goods. Let us embrace as brothers those who have barely escaped with their lives'.[11] However, the text to be cited occurs in the main body of the homily. Basil is exhorting his listeners to fight the machinations of the Devil, to reverse the sinful ways their lives may have taken, such as having fallen to deception and amassing riches through acts of injustice, 'fettering the mind to the protection of this wealth'.

If anyone has contracted the ineffaceable defilement or sated himself with other crimes, let him, while there is still time, before he has gone down to final destruction, cast off the greater part of his burden, before his ship goes under, let him get rid of his ill-gotten wares, as the mariners do … Furthermore, money, when it is cast off to good purpose,

[9] *De Spiritu Sancto* XXX 78; Pruche, 526-9; Jackson, 48.

[10] *De judicio Dei* 1, English translation by W.K.L. Clarke, in *The Ascetic Works of Saint Basil* (London, 1925), 77.

[11] *Quod rebus mundanis* 9; Wagner, 500.

is not lost to those who have flung it away and cast it from them. As if deposited in other, safer ships – the stomachs of the poor – it is preserved and, reaching the harbor in advance, is kept for those who have rid themselves of it, not to their peril but unto glory.[12]

Here, Basil is not only calling sinners to salvation, he is also exhorting his listeners to the practice of charity and alms giving, depositing money in safer ships, the stomachs of the poor. He continues on this theme, saying we would derive much benefit by distributing among many the 'weight of our riches'. This message is timeless.

The last example to be cited is from Basil's talk to young people, *De legendis libris gentilium*, *On the Reading of Greek Literature*. With this work, Basil sets out for students guidelines on how to benefit from reading pagan Greek literature. As has already been noted, Greek classical literature formed a basic curriculum in all schools in the Hellenistic world of late antiquity. This also included the Christian schools, where text books provided excerpts from pagan texts facing pages for selected Old or New Testament texts.[13] This work consists of ten sections of varying lengths, and it has a style that is similar to that of Plutarch's *Moralia*, with arguments based on analogies and similes.[14] Basil's principal thesis is that young people should seek out those writings which would help them grow morally, and ignore the rest (I, IV). 'What, therefore, these things are, and how we shall distinguish them, is the lesson which I shall teach you from this point on'.[15]

In this same introductory section, there is a key statement: 'This it is, and naught else, that I have come to offer you as my counsel – that you should not surrender to these men once for all the rudders of your mind, as if of a ship, and follow them whithersoever they may lead.'[16] The 'rudder of the mind' refers to the faculty of reason and discernment. Basil is telling the young people, that to successfully profit from the writings of the pagan Greeks, they need to use good judgment, follow guidance, and exercise their discerning faculty. This means separating out and adapting what is useful to reaching the Christian end in these writings from from what is not. He highlights the words of Hesiod on virtue as leading to 'the same end as our own'.

[12] *Quod rebus mundanis* 7; Wagner, 496-7.

[13] See Samuel Rubenson, *The Letters of St. Antony, Monasticism and the Making of a Saint* (Minneapolis, 1995), 95-9; 109-15.

[14] *De legendis libris gentilium* I, IV; hereafter cited as *De legendis*. The Greek text and much of the background information is taken from the work of N.G. Wilson (ed.), *Saint Basil on Greek Literature*, with Introduction and Commentary (London, 1975), 75. Hereafter cited as: Wilson. This is the edition that I have used. The English translation is the one by Deferrari, Basil, 'Address To Young Men On Reading Greek Literature', in *St. Basil: The Letters* IV (London, 1935), 379* 435, hereafter cited as: Deferrari.

[15] *De legendis* I; Wilson, 20; Deferrari, 381.

[16] *De legendis* I; Deferrari, 380-31. Wilson attributes the phrase, 'surrendering the rudders of the mind' to Plato, *Clitophon* 408b, in his edition, *Saint Basil on Greek Literature*, 40.

Conclusion

Basil was aware of the value of the inner senses. In the realm of the inner audio sense, a melody connected with words helps us retain the message of a psalm we have just sung, as Basil explains in his first *Homily on the Psalms*. Similarly, in the realm of the inner visual sense, metaphors create interior pictures, by which we can more easily receive, understand and retain the message. The nautical images used by Basil provide us with diverse aspects of his teaching. A calm, undistracted mind enables words to lay anchor and be retained. We progress best if we have a fixed point to focus on. The rudder of our mind represents the discerning faculty within each of us. In the use of nautical imagery to convey his ideas, Basil was a master.

Die basilianische Anthropologie als Verständnisschlüssel zu *Ad adolescentes*

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ABSTRACT

Kein anderes Werk von Basileios von Kaisareia zeichnet sich durch eine so ungewöhnliche Wirkungsgeschichte aus und erfuhr so gegensätzliche Beurteilung wie die kleine Schrift *Ad adolescentes*. Ein Leitmotiv im Wirken von Basileios war die Erziehung des Menschen. Sein Menschenbild ist geprägt von der dynamischen Grundkonstitution des Menschen, der berufen ist, sich in Freiheit durch ein Leben der Tugend zu entfalten; von einem Teleologismus, der jedes Tun auf sein immanentes Ziel hinordnet und zugleich alles dem großen Ziel der Sorge um die unsterbliche Seele unterordnet; und von der Haltung des 'Gebrauchs', welche jede irdische Wirklichkeit im Geist der Unterscheidung zu nutzen weiß, um die gesteckten Ziele zu erreichen. Die genannten Elemente finden sich alle in *Ad adolescentes*, welches daher als Erziehungsschrift zur Verwirklichung des anthropologischen Ideals von Basileios anhand der griechischen schulischen Pflichtlektüre von Grammatikerschülern bezeichnen werden kann.

Perhaps no other work of Basil of Caesarea displays such a peculiar reception history or undergone such conflicting assessment as his *Ad adolescentes*. The subject of human formation was a central and reoccurring trait in the life and work of Basil. His understanding of the human person is permeated by the image of man's dynamic and primordial constitution, of the human person who in freedom is called to development and come to full maturity by means of a virtuous life; of a teleologism that directs man's actions to his immanent goal and simultaneously to that greater goal of the good of his immortal soul, to which everything must be subordinated. In this sense Basil also speaks of the disposition of utility to which every earthly reality can be employed with the spirit of discernment, to reach this greater goal. These elements are all to be found in *Ad adolescentes*. This therefore allows us to describe the work as an educational treatise in which Basil's anthropological ideals are realised by means of his evaluation of the obligatory Greek literature of students of grammar.

1. Abriss der bisherigen Interpretationsgeschichte

Kein anderes Werk von Basileios von Kaisareia erfuhr eine so unterschiedliche Beurteilung wie die kleine Schrift *An die Jugendlichen – wie sie aus der heidnischen Literatur Nutzen ziehen können* – Πρὸς τοὺς νέους, ὅπως ἂν ἐξ

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ἑλληνικῶν ὠφελοῖντο λόγων, kurz: *Ad adolescentes*.[1] Bereits die handschriftliche Überlieferung kennt verschiedene Überschriften. Nach der Übersetzung ins Lateinische um das Jahr 1400 durch Leonardo Bruni lassen sich aufgrund der Titelgebung drei Verständnisweisen unterscheiden: *Ad adolescentes* – eine Anweisung für die richtige Lektüre der klassischen Literatur, ein Aufruf zum Tugendleben oder ein humanistischer Erziehungsratgeber.[2] Doch auch die jüngere Basileiosforschung kommt zu keinem einheitlichen Ergebnis:[3] 'Magna Charta aller christlichen höheren Bildung für die kommenden Jahrhunderte'[4] nennt sie W.W. Jaeger, eine 'Apologia pro ascesi monastica'[5] J. Gribomont. 'Une causerie familière et élémentaire'[6] stellt sie für E. Amand de Mendieta dar, während für Ch. Gnilka Basileios die Gefahren der Literatur so stark betont, dass die Schrift auch 'den Charakter einer Warnung'[7] trägt. So wie er sehen auch P. Blomenkamp, P.J. Fedwick und M. Naldini in der Aneignung einer kritischen Auswahlfähigkeit, um Nutzen aus der Literatur ziehen zu können, die Hauptintention des Werkes.[8] L. Vischer betont, dass *Ad adolescentes* keine Grundsatzdiskussion zum Verhältnis heidnischer Literatur und Christentum führen, sondern nur 'praktische Ratschläge'[9] geben möchte. Einen 'Appell an die Bildungsgegner unter den eigenen Glaubensbrüdern, ihre Abneigung gegen die griechische Paideia aufzugeben' und eine Widerlegung des heidnischen Vorwurfs, sämtliche Christen seien ungebildet und einfältig sieht R. Klein in der Schrift.[10] Auf dem Hintergrund der Vätertheorie der *praeparatio evangelica* besteht nach T. Špidlík die Grundaussage darin, dass die griechische Literatur nicht nur für die Heiden, sondern auch für die jugendlichen

[1] Ausführlich dazu Luzi Schucan, *Das Nachleben von Basilius Magnus 'ad adolescentes'. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des christlichen Humanismus* (Genf, 1973). Der Text von *Ad adolescentes* ist entnommen *Saint Basile. Aux jeunes gens sur la manière de tirer profit des lettres helléniques*, ed. Fernand Boulenger, CUFr (Paris, 1965). Die Zeilennummern der Ausgabe sind unmittelbar der Kapitelangabe nachgestellt.

[2] Vgl. *ibid*. 35-7.

[3] Siehe auch die Übersicht bei Friederike Bräutigam, *Basileios der Große und die heidnische Bildung. Eine Interpretation seiner Schrift 'Ad adolescentes'* (Jena, 2003), 9-14 und weiterführende Hinweise zur Sekundärliteratur auf den Seiten 159-64.

[4] Werner Wilhelm Jaeger, *Das frühe Christentum und die griechische Bildung* (Berlin, 1963), 60.

[5] Jean Gribomont, *In tomum 30 Patrologiae Graecae ad opera Sancti Basilii Magni adnotationes* (Chevetogne, 1960), 6.

[6] Emmanuel Amand de Mendieta, *Fatalisme et liberté dans l'antiquité grecque* (Amsterdam, 1973), 26.

[7] Christian Gnilka, *Der Begriff des 'rechten Gebrauchs'*, Chresis. Die Methode der Kirchenväter im Umgang mit der antiken Kultur 1 (Basel und Stuttgart, 1984), 111.

[8] Siehe Paul Blomenkamp, 'Erziehung', *RAC* 6 (1966), 534; Paul Jonathan Fedwick, 'Basil of Caesarea on education', in *Basilio di Cesarea. La sua età, la sua opera e il Basilianesimo in Sicilia. Atti del congresso internazionale (Messina 3-6 dic. 1979)*, 2 Bde. (Messina, 1983), 1,591; Mario Naldini, 'La posizione culturale di Basilio Magno', in *ibid*., 1,213.

[9] Lukas Vischer, *Basilius der Große. Untersuchungen zu einem Kirchenvater des vierten Jahrhunderts* (Basel, 1953), 22.

[10] Richard Klein, 'Kaiser Julians Rhetoren- und Unterrichtsgesetz', *RQ* 76 (1981), 85.

Adressaten eine Vorbereitung zum Evangelium sein kann.[11] In der jüngsten und ausführlichsten Studie zu *Ad adolescentes* hält F. Bräutigam fest, das Werk sei 'am ehesten ein Beleg dafür, wie sich im ausgehenden 4. Jh. eine gewisse Selbstverständlichkeit im Umgang mit dem heidnischen Erbe durchzusetzen begann.'[12] Da *Ad adolescentes* in keiner Studie fehlt, die das Verhältnis von griechischer und christlicher Paideia behandelt, kann dieser kurze Abriss keinesfalls den Anspruch auf Vollständigkeit erheben. Er zeigt dagegen sehr deutlich, zu welch unterschiedlichen Verständnis- und Deutungsvarianten Form und Inhalt der Schrift Anlass geben: Interpretationen, die in nicht unerheblicher Weise durch Vorverständnis, Ansatz und bereits erfolgte Wirkungsgeschichte bedingt sind.

2. Das basilianische Menschenbild als Verständnisschlüssel

Die Untersuchung der basilianischen Schriften zeigt, dass das Bemühen um die Erziehung des Menschen Denken und Wirken von Basileios prägte.[13] Ein Erziehungsideal setzt ein Menschenbild voraus. Die basilianische Anthropologie zeichnet sich durch drei Merkmale aus: Erstens die dynamische Grundkonstitution des Menschen als Abbild Gottes: Der Mensch soll die in ihm angelegte Liebeskraft durch ein Leben der Tugend in Freiheit entfalten. Zweitens die Zielgerichtetheit des menschlichen Lebens: Der Kappadokier benennt viele innerweltliche Ziele, wie das Halten der Gebote, die Sorge um die Seele, die Erinnerung an Gott und als höchstes die 'Vergöttlichung' des Menschen, d.h. die Angleichung des menschlichen Geistes an den Geist Gottes; darüber hinaus wird er nicht müde an das transzendente Ziel zu erinnern, das ewige Leben bei Gott. Drittens die Notwendigkeit des vernunftgeleiteten 'Gebrauchs' jeder irdischen Wirklichkeit im Geist der Unterscheidung, um die aufgezeigten Ziele zu erreichen.[14]

Die drei genannten anthropologischen Merkmale finden sich auch in *Ad adolescentes*. Erstens ermahnt Basileios die Jugendlichen, ein Leben der Tugend zu führen. Darin besteht für ihn der eigentliche Nutzen, der aus dem Studium der griechischen Literatur gewonnen werden kann (vgl. 5,1-4). Den

[11] Vgl. Thomas Špidlík, 'San Basilio Magno e la cultura', in S. Felici (ed.), *Crescita dell'uomo nella catechesi dei Padri (età postnicena)*, BSRel 80 (Roma, 1988), 70-1.

[12] Friederike Bräutigam, *Basileios der Große* (2003), 155.

[13] Vgl. die Promotionsarbeit von Martin Mayerhofer, *Die Erziehung des Menschen. Untersuchungen zu einem Leitmotiv im Wirken von Basilius von Cäsarea*, die in Kürze veröffentlicht wird.

[14] Zur basilianischen Anthropologie vgl. Olympia Papadopoulou-Tsanana, *Ἡ ἀνθροπολογία τοῦ μεγάλου Βασιλείου*, Analekta Blatadon 7 (Tessalonike, 1970); Karl Berther, *Der Mensch und seine Verwirklichung in den Homilien des Basilius von Cäsarea. Ein anthropologisch-ethischer Versuch* (Freiburg, 1974); Aleksandr Lisovskij, *L'uomo e la prospettiva della sua divinizzazione nel pensiero di Basilio di Cesarea* (Roma, 2005).

heidnischen Schriftstellern ist nur dann Aufmerksamkeit zu schenken, wenn sie die Tugend loben oder das Böse tadeln (vgl. 4,34-6). Die Vertrautheit mit der Tugend bereits im jugendlichen Alter bringt der Seele großen Nutzen (vgl. 5,6). Im fünften und sechsten Kapitel führt Basileios *Ermahnungen* zur Tugend aus der Literatur an. Im siebten Kapitel listet er *Beispiele* tugendhafter Männer aus der Antike auf, die zur Nachahmung einladen. Drei zentrale Kapitel der Schrift also sind dem Thema der Tugend gewidmet. Die Jugendlichen sind nicht gezwungen, seine Ratschläge anzunehmen, Basileios respektiert ihre Wahlfreiheit (vgl. 1,3; 1,13-20; 10,26-7). Besonders deutlich zeigt sich dies am Topos von Herakles am Scheideweg, der sich in freier Wahl für ein anstrengendes und tugendhaftes Leben entscheidet, für welches ihm als Belohnung versprochen wird, ein Gott zu werden (vgl. 5,55-77).

Zweitens betont *Ad adolescentes* die Notwendigkeit, von Anfang an alles auf ein Ziel hin auszurichten (vgl. 3,51-4). Das ganze achte Kapitel ist diesem Thema gewidmet. Basileios führt die Beispiele des Steuermannes, des Schmiedes und des Zimmermannes an, von denen jeder seine Tätigkeit zielgerichtet ausübt. Er folgert daraus, dass auch die Jugendlichen auf das Ziel des christlichen Lebens konzentriert sein sollen. Unter den immanenten Zielen betont der Kappadokier besonders die Sorge um die Seele. Aus allem ist Nutzen für ihr Wohl zu ziehen (vgl. 2,38-9), darunter fällt auch die Beschäftigung mit der heidnischen Literatur (vgl. 4,1-2). Die Jugendlichen sollen – gleich der Vorgehensweise der Bienen gegenüber den Blumenblüten – all das von der Literatur aufnehmen, was für ihre Seele nützlich ist (vgl. 4,40-1; vgl. 8,4-5). Daneben ist die Seele auch zu schützen, damit sie nicht unvermerkt etwas Schlechtes aufnimmt (vgl. 4,13). Das ganze neunte Kapitel ist schließlich dem Thema der Sorge um die Seele gewidmet. Diese Sorge verweist auf das transzendente Ziel des ewigen Lebens. Nach diesem Ziel müssen die Christen streben, um im Gericht Gottes nicht für ihre Nachlässigkeit bestraft zu werden (vgl. 8,67-77). Im zweiten Kapitel (vgl. 2,1-25) erläutert Basileios: Jedes nur innerweltliche Ziel, wie Reichtum, Ahnenstolz, Körperkraft und Schönheit besitzt keinen Wert im Vergleich mit dem himmlischen Ziel. Dieses ist das wahre Ziel des menschlichen Lebens, es ist unendlich größer als jedes irdische Glück. Da allein die Seele unsterblich ist, fordert er im letzten Kapitel (vgl. 10,9-31) dazu auf, sich für die Ewigkeit ein Kapital anzulegen: Nach einem Sprichwort sollen die Jugendlichen gleichsam jeden Stein umdrehen, um zu schauen, ob sich etwas Brauchbares zur Erreichung dieses Zieles darunter finden lässt.

Das dritte Kennzeichen der basilianischen Anthropologie, der 'Gebrauch' der irdischen Wirklichkeit zum Erreichen der gesetzten Ziele, wird in *Ad adolescentes* anhand der schulischen Pflichtlektüre der Adressaten, wohl 15-16 jährige Grammatikschüler, durchdekliniert.[15] Der *Nutzen* der Literatur wird nicht

[15] Zur Frage des Alters der Adressaten vgl. Erich Lamberz, 'Zum Verständnis von Basileios' Schrift *Ad adolescentes*', *ZKG* 90 (1979), 78-81.

in Frage gestellt, worauf bereits der Titel verweist (vgl. ebenso 4,1-3; 7,2-5), in ihrem *Gebrauch* ist jedoch Unterscheidungsfähigkeit gefragt, um 'zu wissen, was auch zu übergehen ist – εἰδέναι τί χρὴ καὶ παριδεῖν' (1,27-8; vgl. 2,13). Der Rat von Basileios ist, dass seine Neffen nicht kritiklos und ein für alle Mal den heidnischen Schriftstellern die 'Steuerruder des Geistes – τὰ πηδάλια τῆς διανοίας' (1,25) übergeben. Vielmehr soll gerade die Beschäftigung mit der heidnischen Literatur durch den Vergleich mit der christlichen Lehre eine Schulung des Geistes sein (vgl. 3,1-4). Taten und Worte von *vorbildlichen* Männern sind nachzuahmen. Kommt die Rede jedoch auf *schlechte* Vorbilder, so sind die Ohren davor zu verschließen (vgl. 4,5-12). Wie die Biene von der Blüte nur das Brauchbare nimmt und man die Rose pflückt, ohne sich an den Dornen zu stechen, so soll von der Literatur nur das Nützliche verwendet, das Übrige beiseite gelassen werden (vgl. 4,36-51; 8,1-3). Neben den theoretischen Hinweisen gibt Basileios – besonders vom fünften bis zum neunten Kapitel – das eigene Beispiel, wie die griechische Literatur im doppelten Sinne 'gebraucht' werden kann: Durch die entsprechende *Auswahl* dessen, was nützlich ist und durch die *Anpassung* an die eigene Intention. Um im Geist der Unterscheidung aus allem Nutzen ziehen zu können, bedarf es des richtigen Gebrauchs der Vernunft. Basileios nimmt in *Ad adolescentes* öfters auf die Vernunft Bezug, wenn er auf die Abkehr von lasterhaften und unvernünftigen Handlungsweisen zu sprechen kommt. So sind dem Zorn gleich einem widerstrebenden Pferd die Zügel der Vernunft anzulegen (vgl. 7,19-21) und jede Leidenschaft ist mit dem Stock der Vernunft zu zähmen (vgl. 7,72-4). Denn die Vernunft muss das Steuer der Seele in der Hand haben (vgl. 8,16-9). Einem vernünftigen Menschen liegt auch nichts an schönen Kleidern (vgl. 9,20-2), so führt er aus. Die Jugendlichen sollen keine Rücksicht auf die Meinung der Leute nehmen, sondern 'die rechte Vernunft zur Führerin des Lebens wählen – τὸν ὀρθὸν λόγον ἡγεμόνα ποιεῖσθαι τοῦ βιοῦ' (9,137-8). Zuletzt schließt die Abhandlung mit dem Aufruf, dass sich die Jugendlichen stets jenen Menschen zuwenden sollen, die mit gesundem Verstand denken (vgl. 10,41-2).

3. Folgerungen

In der Schrift *Ad adolescentes* finden sich die Grundmerkmale des basilianischen Menschenbildes wieder. Dabei ist es interessant zu beobachten, dass der Kirchenvater jene Elemente nicht entfaltet, welche mit der konkreten Situation nicht unmittelbar in Verbindung stehen: So geht er nicht weiter auf die dynamische Grundkonstitution des Menschen ein und übergeht eine ganze Reihe innerweltlicher Ziele, die spezifisch christlich sind, wie das Halten der Gebote, die Erinnerung an Gott, die Nachahmung Christi oder die 'Vergöttlichung' des Menschen. Dagegen betont er gerade jene anthropologischen Themen, für welche er in der heidnischen Literatur Anknüpfungspunkte und Bestätigung findet:

Die Bedeutung des Tugendlebens, die menschliche Freiheit, die Sorge um die Seele, der Vernunftgebrauch. So lässt sich *Ad adolescentes* als *Erziehungsschrift zur Verwirklichung des anthropologischen Ideals von Basileios anhand der griechischen schulischen Pflichtlektüre von 15-16 jährigen Grammatikschülern* bezeichnen. Basileios zeigt sich als geistlicher Vater, der in kenntnisreicher und ausgewogener, aber auch in ernster und entschiedener Weise die Jugendlichen auf ihre christliche Würde verweist. Diese Würde verpflichtet sie zu einem tugendhaften Leben, für welches sie auch aus der griechischen Literatur lernen können. Die Wirkungsgeschichte von *Ad adolescentes* war wohl nicht zuletzt auch gerade wegen der aufgezeigten anthropologischen Inhalte so nachhaltig.

Basil and Gregory of Nyssa on the Ascetic Life: Introductory Comparisons

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Abstract

This article introduces a discussion of the two brothers on the ascetic life, surveying first the range of common familial influences they inherited, the early exposure to the native Anatolian ascetic movement, the differing political and religious contexts in which they worked, and the profound, indeed 'mystical' motivation that drove all Basil's ascetic teaching and pastoral work. The sample text for Basil is his *Homily on the Martyr Julitta*. Passages from varied works of Gregory are compared.

Introduction

The two illustrious Church Fathers, Basil of Caesarea, called 'the Great' by ancient acclamation, and Gregory of Nyssa, who among his many epithets, has been called a 'Father of Christian Mysticism',[1] were full blood brothers from one of the most remarkable families in Christian history. The writings of both Church Fathers deal extensively with the topics of Christian asceticism and mysticism.

As Volker Drecoll pointed out in his invitation to participants, since the time of Karl Holl[2] the profiles of Basil, Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory of Nazianzus have tended to be studied separately. A wide range of monographs appeared especially on Basil and Gregory of Nyssa in the later 20th century. For Basil there is a huge documentation of the manuscript tradition,[3] but as yet, no new systematic critical edition is available beyond Maran and Garnier's monumental work in the early 18th century. For Gregory of Nyssa, the critical edition, *Gregorii Nysseni Opera*, is nearly finished, even if now a certain amount of revision is indicated in the light of advances in textual knowledge. Gregory of

[1] Pope Benedict XVI, general audience of 29th August 2007. Pope Ratzinger was confirming in part the judgment of J. Daniélou, *Platonisme et théologie mystique: Essai sur la doctrine spirituelle de saint Grégoire de Nysse* (Paris, 1944), 6. There are other glowing epithets: Gregory was called ὁ τῶν Πατέρων Πατήρ ('the Father of the Fathers') by Epiphanius the Deacon at the 7th ecumenical council, Nicaea II (787), 6th session (Mansi XIII 203-364, 293E), and ὁ τῶν Νυσσαέων φωστήρ ('the shining light of Nyssa'), Nicephorus Callistus, *Hist. eccl.* XI 19.

[2] *Amphilochius von Ikonium* (Tübingen, 1904).

[3] Notably Paul J. Fedwick (ed.), *Bibliotheca Basiliana Universalis* (Turnhout, 1993-7).

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Nyssa scholars are discussing whether a similar project can be launched for Gregory's brother Basil, provisionally titled *Basilii Caesariensis Opera*. And that in turn has led to a renewed interest in looking at the two brothers together.

Familial influences, historical contexts

Our focus is the Christian ascetic life, and its logical completion in the mystical life. Immediately we can set out much that Basil and Gregory had in common on this score. Both received much, each in different ways, from the ascetic and spiritual protagonist in their family: Macrina the Younger, the first-born of the siblings. This was no doubt the greatest of their common familial influences. But they shared other formative influences too: the social caché of the provincial landed aristocracy combined with a long proven commitment to Christianity even to an heroic degree when tested, the higher Hellenic curriculum for the boys, a keen interest in 'the medical art' evinced by the whole family, a Christian domestic culture in which women frequently took a leading role, a moderate Origenism derived from Gregory Thaumaturgus of Neocaesarea especially through the medium of the paternal grandmother, Macrina the Elder, theologically a disposition towards the Nicene *homoousios* also from the church at Neocaesarea,[4] early exposure to the native Anatolian ascetic movement through the visits of Eustathius of Sebasteia to the family home in Neocaesarea,[5] and finally the family's great reverence for the martyrs – most notably the Forty Martyrs of Sebasteia.[6]

I myself have been much engaged with this entire family for quite some years. Basil was my first focus, and my doctoral thesis was a study of his *Great Asketikon* particularly in relation to Rufinus of Aquileia's Latin translation of

[4] See Basil's late letter to the Neocaesareans, *Letter* 204, R.J. Deferrari (tr.), *Saint Basil – The Letters in four volumes* (Cambridge, Mass., I 1926; II 1928; III 1930 and IV 1934), III 154-75, 156, 168.

[5] All these features are studied in my *The Asketikon of St Basil the Great* (Oxford, 2005), ch. 3: 'The Geography behind the History', 38-50, and ch. 4: 'The Emergence of Monasticism in Anatolia', 51-98. The evidence is quite clear that the family lived in the city of Basil the Elder's career as a rhetorician and advocate: Neocaesarea, the metropolis of Pontus Polemoniacus. I argue that Eustathius' well documented travels across northern Anatolia mean that he almost certainly accessed the *Via Pontica* by travelling up from Sebasteia to Neocaesarea, where he demonstrably had contact with the family in Basil's childhood.

[6] See now Vasiliki M. Limberis, *Architects of Piety: the Cappadocian Fathers and the Cult of the Martyrs* (Oxford, 2011). Limberis argues that for the Cappadocians all aspects of Christian life were best communicated, understood, and indeed lived, through the prism of martyr piety. The grandson of confessors of the faith on his father's side, and the great-grandson of a martyr on his mother's side, Basil certainly lived in vivid awareness of the recent and even contemporary age of the martyrs (*e.g.* during the *imperium* of Julian), and used the memory of the martyrs to stir the common faithful to piety: 'You are children of confessors and children of martyrs, who strove unto blood against sin. Let each of you use his own kin as example of constancy on behalf of piety' (*Letter* 240, Deferrari III 420-9, 423).

its lost *first* edition, the *Small* or *Little Asketikon*. The focus in this session is to sketch two or three important points as the basis for continuing investigation.

When comparing the works of each of the brothers on the ascetic life, it is almost a truism to say that Basil is primarily concerned with promoting and stabilizing a sound neo-nicene monastic *politeia* in central and eastern Anatolia, while with Gregory, the older he grows the more he moves in the direction of mystical theology. What they had to say on the ascetic life, therefore, is not a matter of *contrast*, but of *complementarity*, with chronology a strong factor in explaining the mode in which each of them operated.

The Theodosian world of the 380s and early 390s in which Gregory's literary career flourished, had changed considerably from the world of the 360s and 370s in which Basil toiled. Basil died late in September 378,[7] merely a month or so after the death of Valens, the Arian Emperor who, like some horrible incubus, had overshadowed much of his pastorate. Basil left behind him a large patrimony of ascetic writings born of years as a renowned spiritual father. In the mid 380s and later, Gregory could take much of that practical and organizational work for granted, and in a far more favorable climate, politically and religiously, respond to the interests of committed ascetics themselves who, well tutored by Basil on the basics, clamored for more on the ultimate goal of the Christian spiritual life, that *telos* which Basil had so eloquently adumbrated in the introduction to his *Asketikon*, as we shall see below.

The mainspring of Basil's ascetic life

For the benefit of Gregory scholars, two aspects of Basil's ascetic doctrine might be emphasized here: his own deepest motivation in the Christian spiritual life, and his proposal of the Life in Christ as a single vocation and commitment for *all* Christians.

In *Longer Response* 2 of the *Great Asketikon*, Basil sets out the theoretical foundations of the Christian ascetic and community life, first of all in an account of creation, of the constitution of man, and of the divine *philanthropia* of Christ's Incarnation. Here he argues the philosophical/theological underpinnings of the entire ascetic project. As he sets out his arguments, Basil lifts the veil momentarily on the profundity of his own spiritual motivation. I beg you to listen carefully to this magnificent passage:[8]

[7] The date of Basil's death was under scholarly review in the late 1980s and 90s, beginning with P. Maraval, 'La date de la mort de Basile de Césarée', *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 34 (1988), 25-38, and fairly answered by J.-R. Pouchet, 'La date de l'élection épisopale de saint Basile et celle de sa mort', *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 87 (1992), 5-33. Pouchet demonstrated that Basil died in late September 378.

[8] Translated from Klaus Zelzer, *Basili Regula – A Rufino Latine Versa* (Vienna, 1986), 10-2, but qualified by consultation with the *Great Asketikon*, *Longer Rules* 2 (PG 31, 909B-912A).

10 Having received a commandment to love God, we possess the capacity to love implanted at the moment we were first constituted by God.[9] 11 And the proof is not from without, for anyone may discover the traces of what we have said from himself and within himself. 12 For we all are by nature enamoured of the beautiful,[10] even if what exactly is the beautiful appears differently from one to another,[11] 13 and, untaught, we show affection toward our friends and blood kin, and spontaneously display every goodwill towards our benefactors.

14 Now what is more wonderful than the divine beauty (indeed, *what other good is there but God alone?* (see *Luke* 18:19), 15 what thought more alluring than the splendour of God? 16 What yearning of the soul is so keen and intolerable as that which comes from God upon the soul cleansed of all vice, which, from a true affection declares: *I am wounded with love* (*Song* 2:5)?

18 Wholly ineffable and indescribable, as I at any rate experience it, are the lightning flashes of the divine beauty; speech cannot express it, hearing cannot take it in. 19 Invoke if you will the rays of the morning star, the brightness of the moon, or the light of the sun itself; none of them are worthy of being likened to that glory – indeed, the comparison falls far shorter of the true light than deep night and the moonless dark compared with (the flawlessly clear light of the high noon sun.

20 Yet such beauty is not visible to fleshly eyes; it is comprehended only by the soul and the mind. 21 Whenever it illumined any of the saints it left embedded in them an intolerable sting of yearning,[12] 22 till at length, as if languishing in the fires of such love and) they, chafing at this present life, said: *Alas for me, that my sojourning is*

[9] Basil seems to be tributary to Origen here. The natural implanted love of God that needs to be trained and released so it can sore upward to its home in the absolute beauty of God is the theme of Origen's *Homilies on the Song of Songs* – to which book of scripture Basil shortly refers. Origen's doctrine in turn has antecedents in Plato's writings. The trapped finite soul impelled by the dynamism of *eros* to regain its ultimate home, once it has been kindled by moral *ascesis*, is told vividly in the analogy of the cave in *Republic* Bk 7, and in the argument of the *Symposium*.

[10] τῶν καλῶν, the 'beautiful', also comprising the 'good', hence the Latin translation, *bonum*.

[11] Basil touches on the differing opinions of the philosophers in *Hom. on Ps 48.1* (PG 29, 432-60, 432A-B) (Way, 311-31, 311): 'Some, even among the pagans (τῶν ἔξω) have imagined for themselves what the end of man might be, and have arrived at different conceptions about that end. There are those who declared that the end was knowledge [Platonists], others practical activity [Aristotelians], others an alternative use of life and body [Stoics], whereas the bestial declared that the end is pleasure [Epicureans]. But for us [Christians], the end for the sake of which we do everything and to which we press forward, is the blessed life in the world to come, which will be fulfilled when we have God reigning over us. Till now, no better conception than this has been found in rational nature'.

[12] εἴπου τινα περιέλαμψε τῶν ἁγίων, καὶ ἀφόρητον τοῦ πόθου τὸ κέντρον αὐτοῖς ἐγκατέλιπεν, *RBas* 2.21-2: if it should happen that this loveliness has bruised the mind and heart of the saints and left embedded in them a most fiery sting of yearning after it ('*qui decor, si cuius forte sanctorum mentem animumque perstrinxit, flagrantissimum in eis amoris sui stimulum defixit*') 22 till at length, as if languishing in the fires of such love and shuddering in horror at this present life, such as these go on to say: *When shall I come and appear before the face of God?* (*Ps*. 41:3).

prolonged! (*Ps*. 119:5), *when shall I come and appear before the face of God?* (*Ps*. 41:3) and this: *To depart and to be with Christ would be far better* (*Phil*. 1:23), 23 and again (such a one, burning in the flames of his ardour would say): *My soul has thirsted for God,* the strong one, *the living* (*Ps*. 26:4) and: *Now O Lord, let your servant depart* (*Luke* 2:29). Oppressed by this life as in a prison, they found it hard to contain the impulses which the divine yearning has kindled in their souls. 24 Insatiable in their desire of the vision of the divine beauty, they prayed that their vision of the sweetness of the Lord might extend into eternal life (see *Ps*. 16:4).

So then, human beings are by nature enamoured of the beautiful.

This passage belongs to the oldest strata of the *Asketikon*, which Basil edited and published in about 365/366, probably in Caesarea. It sums up his life and work among the ascetic communities of Pontus especially in the period 363-365. Thanks to Rufinus we preserve here, as elsewhere, those personal interjections: *as I at any rate experience it*, which Basil sometimes edited out in later versions. In terms of the higher development of the Christian spiritual life, the mystical life as it were, what Gregory would later expound so eloquently and at such length is here in germ already, in Basil's personal testimony. This is a man seized with the love of the divine beauty, one in whom all the powers of *eros* are trained on the ultimate end. He is a Christian steeped in Hellenic paideia, who uses a more or less Platonic discourse in an attempt to convey the highest Christian intuitions. Once we grasp this, we realize that any attempt to infer from the moral thrust of many of Basil's exhortations to the faithful, that he was somehow a mere moralist, is to mistake him radically. Without doubt a depth of theocentric intensity, a vibrant and dynamic spiritual *tonos*, is the mainspring of all of Basil's approach to the moral and ascetic life.

The one way of Christian life according to Basil

The second point I wish to emphasise is this. The earliest years of Basil's turn to Baptism and the ascetic life, *i.e*. the late 350s, were also years of huge doctrinal turmoil and bitter party politics in the church. His first ascetic endeavours were marked at the same time by much personal anguish over the miserable state of the church. A threefold remedy crystallized in Basil's mind: obedience to the Lord and his teaching, a passionate commitment to the apostolic tradition of the Church, and the necessity of each Christian's engagement in the moral and spiritual endeavour launched by Baptism; in brief: Scripture, Church and piety, and not one sustainable without the other.

Well aware of the dangers of factionalism, arrogance and a sense of spiritual superiority towards the broader church by enthusiasts in the ascetic movement, Basil developed an approach that firmly rejected any sense of there being 'two rungs' in the Christian life: the more ordinary level and a sort of spiritual elite. He is very consistent about this. In *Longer Responses* 20 he teaches: 'The life

of the Christian is of only one kind, having but one goal – the glory of God.'[13] Two consequences of this might be noted. Firstly, when addressing the ascetics and monks, Basil comes to rely less and less on traditional Hellenic discourse, and more and more on an immediate, scripturally based manner of exhortation. Gregory by contrast, was never reluctant to display his command of Hellenic *paideia* in his Christian discourse. Secondly, when Basil, in his pastoral life as priest and bishop exhorted the faithful outside the ascetic communities, he maintains unabated his tone of moral earnestness, though he might use certain tactics to convey his stringent message more gradually. There is a certain tension here, in Basil's insistence on *one* spiritual vocation, *one* goal, *one* obedience for all Christian believers, whether they be ascetics in the communities or those living the common life in civil society, yet Basil for the most part plays the tension skilfully.

Basil's *Homily on the Martyr Julitta*

Basil's *Homily on the Martyr Julitta*[14] has never, to the best of my knowledge, been translated into English before. Its intention is to commemorate a local martyr, and there is much that concerns the ascetic life to be discovered in it, for indeed, to Basil's mind, the line between the *agonia* and the triumph of the martyr, and the imperatives and the sublime goal of the Christian ascetic life, is non-existent. How fitting it is that Basil may have been the first non-martyr in the Christian tradition to have been accorded the cult of a saint, and that his brother Gregory, through his *In Basilium fratrem*, was instrumental in securing the feast-day: 1st January.[15]

[13] Μονότροπός ἐστιν ὁ Χριστιανοῦ βίος, ἕνα σκοπὸν ἔχων, τὴν δόξαν τοῦ Θεοῦ. Basil cannot conceive in principle that there could be two ways of Christian life; to him the basis of the Christian ascetic life is the same 'narrow way' of the Gospel undertaken by *all* Christians in Baptism. A very similar statement of principle occurs in *Letter* 150 (II 365 Def.): 'There is only one way leading (μίαν εἶναι ὁδόν) to the Lord and all who travel toward him are companions of one another and travel according to one agreement as to life (κατὰ μίαν συνθήκην τοῦ βίου)'. See discussion of the married life in relation to the ascetic life in *LR* 12 and note. Basil's vocabulary is consistent, *e.g*. *Homily on Ps 114* (PG 29, 484-93, 492D; Way 351-9, 357): 'Therefore, there is no male and female in the Resurrection but there is a single life and it is of one kind' (ἀλλὰ μία τίς ἐστι ζωὴ καὶ μονότροπος). See Karl S. Frank on Basil's *monotropos bios* in 'Monastische Reform im Altertum: Eustathius von Sebaste und Basilius von Caesarea', in R. Bäumer (ed.), *Reformatio Ecclesiae* (Paderborn and München, 1980), 35-49, specially 43-7, 'Die Einheit der Nachfolge Jesu'.

[14] *Homily on the Martyr Julitta, and on those things omitted from the previous homily on thanksgiving* (PG 31, 237-62).

[15] Gregory of Nyssa, *In Basilium Fratrem* (Eulogy for his brother Basil), GNO X 1, 109-34. According to both P. Maraval, 'La date de la mort' (1988) and J.-M. Pouchet, 'La date de l'élection' (1992), Gregory's proposal of Basil's feast day on 1st January does not imply that this

We query Basil's homily on three topics: Women and the ascetic life, continual prayer and the purification of the passions, and the end or *telos* of man's existence. We will then tap four testimonies of Gregory on these same topics, culled from various sources.

Gregory as a successor of Basil

But first a few comments on Gregory himself. From Gregory Nazianzen's *Letter* 76 we know that the younger Gregory was in Caesarea for his brother's death and funeral. From then on Gregory's own writings enter prominently – indeed one can say erupt – into the historical record.[16] Immediately Gregory presents himself as the continuator of Basil's work, as he takes up and completes themes initiated by Basil. This stance is expressed so promptly, consciously and with unaffected authority that is reasonable to infer that on his death-bed Basil himself had personally commissioned his brother, whom he himself had ordained bishop, to continue in the defence and promotion of sound faith[17] and not to forget his special care, the monks and virgins.[18] Accepting a mantle of responsibility, conferred in solemn circumstances, such as Elisha received from Elijah, Gregory took up the charge conscientiously and with zeal.

As Basil's distressing *Letter* 58 attests, and also other historical hints from the difficult mid 370s, he had no illusions as to his brother's lack of competence in the arena of diplomacy and church administration. But he had a high esteem for his brother's powers of discourse and the commitment of his piety. He had already called on them, at the beginning of the 370s while Gregory was still a practising rhetorician in Caesarea. So it was in response to Basil's invitation that Gregory wrote his first surviving work, *On Virginity*, precisely on the ascetic and mystical life. One of his aims, as I have argued in my book on Gregory's letters, is to encourage the young men in his classes who might be thinking of the priesthood to choose celibacy, and to do so in those approved ascetic communities who looked to Basil as their spiritual father. Now on his deathbed, Basil charged his gifted younger brother to use all his powers in defence of the Christian truth, and his trust, of course, was surpassingly fulfilled.

was the actual date of his death. The arguments are reviewed in my *Macrina the Younger* (Turnhout, 2008), 49-52.

[16] Three works belong to the early months of 379, his *Second homily On the Forty Martyrs,* the homily *Against Usurers,* and the treatises *On the Making of Man,* followed soon after by *Apologetic Defence on the Hexaemeron.*

[17] See Gregory of Nyssa, *Letter* 29.4.

[18] See Gregory of Nyssa, *Letter* 3.26.

Women and the ascetic life:

In Basil's homily, there is much discussion of women. Basil was always a trenchant defender of the equality, if not the superiority of women in the ascetic life, or, in this case, martyrdom. A later passage not cited here, *Homilia in Julittam* 2, 240D-241A, is one of the most eloquent testimonies in patristic literature to the innate co-equality of men and women, both made *in the image of God*. Here is the opening of Basil's speech:

1. [237A] The occasion for this assembly is the proclamation of the blessed martyr. For we have announced to you that this day should bear the memory of the great contest which Julitta, that most blessed of women, fought in a womanly body – that is, if it is proper to call her a woman who hid the weakness of the womanly nature by her innate grandeur of soul – a very brave (ἀνδρειοτάτην) contest which struck with utter amazement those who were then present at the spectacle and those who later received by hearing the report of the torments [237B].

By her I deem that our common adversary was especially confounded, not bearing to be worsted by women. He who boasted of those great things: that *he would shake the entire inhabited world, and seize it as a nest, and take them as eggs that have been left* (*Isa*. 10:14) and *devastate the cities* (*Isa*. 6:11), is shown up worsted by womanly virtue. Having attempted to expose her in the hour of trial as being unable through the weakness according to nature to preserve piety for God to the end, he discovered by experience that she was braver than nature, and that she laughed down his terrors in the same measure that he had expected her to tremble before his threats.

Compare now Gregory of Nyssa's opening of his *Life of Macrina*, Prefatory Letter (GNO VIII/1, 370.1–371.23)

2. You will surely not forget our meeting, when, preparing to visit Jerusalem according to vow, to see in those places the traces of the Lord's sojourn in the flesh, I met you by chance in the city of Antioch. And you will remember all the different topics we discussed, for it was not likely that our meeting would lapse into silence, with your intelligence prompting so many topics of conversation.

3. As often happens on such occasions, the conversation flowed on until we came to the recollection of the life of someone greatly esteemed. The subject of the tale was a woman – if indeed she was a 'woman', for I know not whether it is fitting to designate her of that nature who so surpassed nature (see *Gal*. 3:28).[19] 4. Our tale did not derive its credibility from hearing tales from others, for our conversation rehearsed in detail what experience itself had taught us; it had no need of being attested by another's report. The virgin called to mind was no stranger to our family such that it would be necessary to learn the marvels concerning her from others. No, she was of the same

[19] See *On the Making of Man* 16.7, where *Gal*. 3:28 is cited. In Gregory's interpretation of *Gen*. 1:27, man was created first in the image of God, and only *afterwards* was differentiated into male and female, since the division into sexes could not be true of the divine archetype.

parents as we were ourselves, being as it were a votive-offering of the fruits to come, the first shoot of the maternal womb.

Unceasing Prayer and the Purification of the Passions

Basil, *Julitta* 3: But whether it is also necessary [244A] to *pray unceasingly* (1*Thess.* 5:15) and is the precept possible, you are ready to ask, and I, to the best of my ability, shall undertake the advocacy of this word. … We ought to express our petition not merely in syllables. The power of prayer should be fulfilled more in the moral disposition of the soul (προαιρέσει μᾶλλον ψυχῆς) and in the virtuous actions that extend (συμπαρεκτεινομέναις) throughout the whole of life. For *whether you eat,* he says, *or whether you drink, or whatever you do, do all for the glory of God* (1*Cor.* 10:31). You are seated at table: pray. You are offered bread: express thanks to the giver. With wine you strengthen the weakness of the body (see 1*Tim.* 5:23): be mindful of the one who provided you with the gift to cheer the heart (see *Ps.* 103:15) and to soothe infirmities. Has the need for food passed? Do not, however, let the memory of the benefactor pass. … The day is completed: give thanks to him who has lavished the sun on us to serve our daily work, and has provided fire to illumine the night and to serve all the other needs of life. …

4. Therefore do not let the night be altogether the private and special domain of sleep. Do not let half your life be wasted in the insensibility of sleep, but divide the time of night [244D] between sleep and prayer. Why, let even the time of sleep itself become an exercise in piety. For in some way the fantasies that arise during sleep are for the most part echoes of the day's concerns. For as are our life's pursuits, so also of necessity are our dreams. This is how you *pray unceasingly*, not by expressing prayer in words, but by joining yourself [245A] to God through the whole conduct of your life (ἀλλὰ δι' ὅλης τοῦ βίου τῆς διαγωγῆς συνάψας), till your life itself becomes one continuous and unceasing prayer (ὡς συνεχῆ καὶ ἀδιάλειπτον εἶναι προσευχὴν τὴν ζωήν).

Gregory of Nyssa, from *Homily 1 on the Lord's Prayer* (GNO VII/2, 8.13-9.4)

Anyone who does not unite himself to God through prayer is estranged from God. Therefore we must first of all learn this saying: *that we ought always to pray and not grow weary* (*Luke* 18:1). For it is through prayer that we come to be with God, and anyone who is with God is far from the adversary. Prayer is the guard-post of chastity, the tutor of spiritedness, the subduing of pride, the cleansing of bitter memory, the pruning away of envy, the elimination of injustice, the rectification of impiety. Prayer is the well-being of bodies, the happy tenor of the home, the good order of the city, the strength of the realm, the rallying banner of war, the sure basis of peace, the reconciliation of adversaries, the retention of allies. Prayer is the seal of virginity, the fidelity of marriage, the shield of travellers, the sentinel of those who sleep, the encouragement of those who keep vigil … Prayer is intimacy with God and contemplation of the invisible (Θεοῦ ὁμιλία, τῶν ἀοράτων θεωρία), the plenitude of our yearnings and equal honour with the angels (τῶν ἐπιθυμουμένων πληροφορία, τῶν ἀγγέλων ὁμοτιμία), the advancement of the good, the warding off of the bad, the correction of sinners, the enjoyment of things present and the substance of things hoped for.

The End (*telos*) of Man

Basil, *Julitta* 7 [256A]: … The Lord, after bestowing benefits so great and splendid, which nevertheless are not incomparable, promises us many times more afterward: the loveliness of paradise, and glory in the Kingdom, honours equal to the angels, and the contemplation of God (καὶ Θεοῦ κατανόησον), which to those deemed worthy is the very highest of goods (ὅπερ τοῖς ἀξιωθεῖσι τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἐστι τὸ ἀκρότατον), for which all rational nature yearns (οὗ πᾶσα ἐφίεται λογικὴ φύσις), to which we also might attain when we purify ourselves of the passions of the flesh (ἐκ τῶν παθῶν τῆς σαρκὸς ἑαυτοὺς ἐκκαθάραντες).

Gregory of Nyssa, from *On Virginity* 11 (GNO VIII/1, 291-7, 297)

Perhaps then the treatise has gently led us through examples to the thought of transforming ourselves to something better than we are, and has shown us also that the only way for the soul to be attached to the incorruptible God is for it to make itself as pure as it can. … I refer to the person who has purified all the powers of his soul from every form of evil, and I daresay that it is clear that the only thing which is beautiful by nature is that which is the cause of all beauty and all goodness. For just as the eye cleansed from rheum sees objects shining brightly in the distance in the air, so also the soul through incorruptibility acquires the power to perceive the Light. The goal of true virginity and zeal for incorruptibility is the ability to see God, for the chief and first and only beautiful and good and pure is the God of all.

Conclusion

Although this paper is but a preliminary sketch pointing to further investigation of this topic, still, a few basic positions have been established. Firstly, that the élan of spiritual *eros*, that 'reaching out' to the divine beauty, that so informs Gregory's later works on Christian mystical theology, is already to be found in Basil, when he sets out the theoretical basis of the totally committed Christian life, *i.e*. the life of conscientious and wholehearted ascetic endeavour. Then, using as our point of reference Basil's homily *On the Martyr Julitta* we then took a 'depth sounding' on three topics, 1. Women and the ascetic life, 2. Unceasing prayer and purification of the passions, and 3. the End (*telos*) of Man. We found in each comparison the use of common *topoi*, favorite scriptural texts, and a common sensibility. This simply confirms Gregory of Nyssa's expressed intention to continue as his brother's successor in doctrinal expositions. Only Gregory in his flourishing years was favoured with far better political circumstances than was Basil, in which he used his own exceptional gifts of intellect and spirit to extend Christian ascetical and mystical doctrine, the seeds of which were sown well before in the discourse of his great elder brother and spiritual father, Basil the Great.

Universal Salvation and Human Response in Gregory of Nyssa

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ABSTRACT

Mysterious elusiveness may not exist in his fellow Cappadocians, but in Gregory of Nyssa it is not simply a question of his gradual immersion in doctrinal and semi-political issues. Even when he had come to terms with the views of Eunomius, Apollinarius and Ablabius, it is possible to find in him provocative tensions. This is true above all of the work that he wrote for catechists in about 384 or 385, the *Oratio catechetica*.

In her monograph *Universal Salvation* Morwenna Ludlow canvasses very thoroughly the problem with which this paper is concerned. She addresses the meaning of the crucial *apokatastasis* and comes to the conclusion that it is polyvalent.[1] By insisting on the importance of freedom in his outlook, Gregory qualifies the idea of salvation for all, the devil included. Later she comments on *Catechetical Oration* 26 that "universalism and the purificatory nature of punishment after death are inextricably connected in Gregory's mind".[2]

In her second work on the relationship between Gregory of Nyssa and postmodernism,[3] Dr Ludlow entitles her introduction "The elusive Gregory". This mysterious elusiveness may not exist in his fellow Cappadocians, but in Gregory himself it is not simply a question of his gradual immersion in doctrinal and semi-political issues. Even when he had come to terms with the views of Eunomius, Apollinarius and Ablabius, it is possible to find in him provocative tensions. This is true above all of the work that he wrote for catechists in about 384 or 385, the *Oratio catechetica*. What makes his position particularly elusive is that it is never quite clear whether or not his teaching, Origenist in inspiration,[4] means that everyone including the devil will be saved, independently of moral choices and moral seriousness, or whether we all need both the sacraments and the moral life if we are to achieve the recovery of likeness to

[1] Morwenna Ludlow, *Universal Salvation. Eschatology in the Thought of Gregory of Nyssa and Karl Rahner* (Oxford, 2000), 38ff.

[2] M. Ludlow, *Universal Salvation* (2000), 85.

[3] Morwenna Ludlow, *Gregory of Nyssa, Ancient and (Post)modern* (Oxford, 2007).

[4] See now M.J. Edwards, 'The Fate of the Devil in Origen', *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 86 (2010), 163-70.

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God forfeited at the fall and made available again through the life, death and resurrection of Christ.

The issue of universalism is made all the more interesting once it is remembered that Gregory also embraced a doctrine of concrete universals, evident in his treatise *To Ablabius On Not Three Gods,* and also that, in following out the sheep image of *Luke* 15:4, he clearly regards the sheep/lamb as representing the whole of human nature. This emerges most clearly in section 16 of his treatise *Against Apollinarius*.

In the former of these treatises, written – at least arguably[5] – to defend his brother Basil (also his teacher) against the charge of tritheism, Gregory argues that, just as when we speak of the nature or φύσις of manhood, we are referring not to an abstract human nature but to all human beings classified together, so too when discussing the deity we are not referring to an abstract reality in which all three persons take a share, but to one basic reality, God.[6] In other words, we are here dealing with the problem of concrete universals.

The thought, perhaps strange to us, that human beings do not simply belong to the same class, but actually form a suprapersonal unity, is well illustrated by a passage in chapter 16 of Gregory's *Against Apollinarius*, in which the shepherd that is Christ takes the lost sheep on his shoulders.[7] It is arguably the case that the sheep represents the human nature that he assumed: a passage later in the same treatise more than suggests this (*GNO* III.I.221,17 = chapter 53). In any event, it is the whole of fallen humanity that is lifted up and restored to the other ninety-nine. Both the above passages make a similar point, namely the more than conceptual unity of human nature, though for differing reasons, since this unity is in one case a metaphysical, and in the other case a hermeneutic premise. However, later on in section 29 of the same treatise, he states that it is the προαίρεσις (or 'choice') of individuals that determines their future condition (*GNO* III.I.177ff.). In other words, universal restoration is not accomplished without our co-operation.

Precisely the same problem is addressed in the *Catechetical Oration*. If *apokatastasis* entails the lifting up necessarily of the whole of humanity, what place is there for either sacraments or the moral life? In chapters 36 and 37 of the *Oration*, Gregory argues for the vital importance of baptism, eucharist and the moral life for the entry into heaven and restoration of the lost likeness. The moral life is a *conditio sine qua non* of the return of the lost sheep. In other words, although in chapter 26 Gregory argues for the ransom theory and also for the salvation of the author of all the trouble, the devil himself, as a consequence of the just retribution that Christ makes by his cross and resurrection,

[5] See now Johannes Zachhuber, 'Nochmals: Der "38" Brief des Basilius von Cäsarea als Werk des Gregor von Nyssa', *ZAC* 7 (2003), 73-90.

[6] *Gregorii Nysseni Opera* III.I.40,5. For extended discussion of this issue see Richard Cross, 'Gregory of Nyssa on Universals', *Vigiliae Christianae* 56 (2002), 372-410, with its assessment by Johannes Zachhuber, 'Once again, Gregory of Nyssa on Universals', *JTS* 56 (2005), 75-98.

[7] *GNO* III.I.152,2. See also *Homilies on Ecclesiastes* 2.4 (*GNO* V.305,1).

he still insists on the need for us of a moral reformation. This idea finds in Gregory its most illustrious expression (though not in the *Catechetical Oration*) with the notion of *epektasis,* the constant upward striving of saved spirits.

This point is made more strongly near the conclusion of his work by his use of the word ἀντίδοσις or 'retribution'. We shall be paid back in accordance with the lives that we have lived here. This example apart, the expression referred to occurs, according to the *Lexicon Gregorianum*,[8] on five other occasions, all in the same treatise, *On the Premature Death of Infants*, in answer to the question what will happen to us after death.

Gregory divides the human race into three classes, those who will get to heaven, those who will not, and those who, because of their premature deaths, cannot be treated according to the strict rules, even though they do not incur the penalties of original sin. This is the natural conclusion of a passage in the text where Gregory speaks of a baby that is unaware of sin (*GNO* III.II.28ff.). Even those who have, as it were, failed the test by their lives here on earth will have to endure long, but not eternal punishment – purgatory – in the period hereafter.

This seems to be the sense of a passage where he speaks of 'punishment through purification, stretching out for a very long time εἰς ἄπειρον' (*GNO* III.II.87,11). Whatever the precise meaning of this expression, at least it implies that the effects of sin demand some sort of retributive punishment before we are ready for the presence of God. In other words the passage suggests a lengthy purgatory, if not a permanent hell. Ἄπειρον could mean either literally endless or having no fixed term.

Gregory's more liberal or generous approach contrasts on at least two issues with that of Augustine, who in his more mature works defines a position that makes the whole of the human race a *massa damnata* (*City of God* 14.26), as well as offering a less hopeful position on universal salvation (*City of God* 21.17). He distinguishes the latter from the more liberal position of Origen, who had more influence on Gregory. It seems possible, therefore, on this issue to see *Gregory* as coming between the sombre vision of Augustine – above all as we find it in his *Handbook* (*Enchiridion*) and *City of God* – and the more optimistic spirit of Origen.

The most clear statement of the universality of salvation, expressed through *apokatastasis*, occurs in *The Life of Moses* 2.82, where the Egyptians freed from darkness are likened to souls once committed to the fires of hell and now set free. This passage so upset Germanus of Constantinople (640-733) that he tried to have it removed, but according to Daniélou's note on the text, he had no reason for this excision. Germanus would appear to have been prejudiced by his hostility to the idea of universal salvation.

[8] F. Mann, *Lexicon Gregorianum* (Leiden, 1999-), citing *GNO* III.II.73,15; 74,2; 81,9; 81,26; 82,16.

The final words of the *Catechetical Oration* (chapter 40) are αἰῶνια ἀντίδοσις, and are eminently, perhaps intentionally, ambiguous. Does αἰῶνιος mean very lengthy or everlasting? Translations of the phrase differ. Srawley in the Cambridge edition[9] takes it to mean 'the future life, conceived as the reward for man's conduct in this life'. E.R. Hardy has 'eternal reward'.[10] Finally Winling in the Sources Chrétiennes edition,[11] has 'rémunération éternelle'. But even if the life to come is treated as a reward or recompense for the life lived here, salvation is not perceived as something automatic, independent of our co-operation.

The optimistic reading of this expression offers something not unlike the teaching of Origen.[12] The more austere reading of it to mean eternal retribution is not unlike the position of Augustine, who insists in *Handbook* 9.32 (basing himself on *Romans* 9:16) that actual salvation depends entirely on the divine will. Clearly Gregory and Augustine differ sharply in their understandings of divine justice. For Gregory the term is used in *Catechetical Oration* 21 and 26 in a univocal sense – that is, to mean the same as we mean by justice – whereas Augustine uses it equivocally, in a sense different from our normal usage. There is no hint of analogy here. As noted above, Augustine articulates his position at *City of God* 21.17 in conscious criticism of Origen's *First Principles* I 6.3 and III 6.5 – and by implication (though his name is not mentioned) of Gregory's *Catechetical Oration*, which, like Origen, also argues for the salvation of the devil.

There is an obvious way in which Gregory and Augustine part company on this issue. For Augustine only a minority will enter heaven, while for Gregory all can and must be saved. 'God wishes all to be saved' (1*Timothy* 2:4) is a text often used by Gregory, but it caused Augustine some difficulty, as is clear from *Enchiridion* 27.103. But for Gregory, our free co-operation must, as it were, supplement the divine labour of Christ, and for its effectiveness our free choice (προαίρεσις) cannot achieve its purpose without divine 'synergy'.[13] There seems to be more than a hint of semi-Pelagianism in Gregory's approach. By and large, therefore, with a few exceptions (above all from *Life of Moses* 2.82 and *Catechetical Oration* 26) all *can* be saved, but this does not exclude the possibility that not all *will* be saved, and even if they are, human freedom still needs the support of God if it is to realise its true end. This point is well illustrated by a passage from the *Second Homily on Ecclesiastes* (GNO V.305,

[9] J.H. Srawley, *The Catechetical Oration of Gregory of Nyssa* (Cambridge: CUP, 1903), 164.

[10] E.R. Hardy, *Christology of the Later Fathers* (Philadelphia, 1954), 325.

[11] *Discours Catéchetique*, ed. E. Mühlenberg with translation and notes by Raymond Winling, SC 453 (Paris, 2000), 338.

[12] See *e.g. First Principles* III 1.15.

[13] See 1*Cor.* 3:15, with the treatment of grace by Mateo Seco in *The Brill Dictionary of Gregory of Nyssa* (Leiden, 2010), 364. He cites as examples of synergy or *summachia* Gregory's *On Christian Instruction*, *GNO* VIII.I.46 and 72. For *summachia* see *also Sermon 3 On the Lord's Prayer* (*GNO* VII.II.34,8; 34,12; 35,2; 36,25; 36,14).

14ff.), where, having used the lost sheep image of *Luke* 15:3, he carries on by exhorting us to take the road to freedom from the cramping effects of sin.

The result is that, although the so-called 'physical theory' of redemption was achieved by Christ's incarnation and death on the cross, thus ransoming us from the hostile greed of the devil, this work needed to be realised by the sacraments – above all of baptism and holy communion – and by the moral life, while this last depended for its efficacy above all on the synergy of God. A certain, perhaps intentional, ambiguity, surrounds the question of Gregory's universalism. His frequent use of the expression *apokatastasis* is almost always connected with the notion of a return to beginnings (εἰς τὰ ἀρχαῖα), and this return depends on our own moral seriousness.[14] In his second *Homily on the Lord's Prayer* (GNO VII.II.26,28ff.) he compares our recovery of the lost likeness to the pilgrimage of the prodigal son at *Luke* 15:11. It follows that, though on occasion Gregory seems to ignore the importance of human co-operation in the work of salvation, he usually insists on the centrality of the virtuous life. In his first *Homily on the Song of Songs*, Gregory ascribes to Gehenna a preventative or corrective, rather than retributive, role (*GNO* VI.15,18ff.).

Finally J.N.D. Kelly in his epilogue to *Early Christian Doctrines* has this to say:[15] 'Gregory of Nyssa sometimes mentions eternal pains, but his real teaching envisages the eventual purification of the wicked, the conquest and disappearance of evil, and the final restoration of all things, the evil himself included'. He cites two passages from the *Catechetical Oration* (chapters 26 and 35) to prove his point.

[14] *On Virginity* 12 (*GNO* VIII.32, 6); and *Homilies on Ecclesiastes* 1.13 (*GNO* V.296,17). See also *Life of Moses* 2.45 and 2.47.

[15] J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines* (London, 1978), 483.

‘Physical’ Soteriology in Gregory of Nyssa: A Response to Reinhard M. Hübner

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Abstract

In *Die Einheit des Leibes Christi bei Gregor von Nyssa* (Leiden, 1974) Reinhard M. Hübner argues that Gregory’s soteriology should not be interpreted in ‘physical’ terms. By this he means that it is not, as earlier scholars had argued, based on the fundamental identity between Christ’s human nature and the human nature of those who are to be saved (that is, with the Church as the Body of Christ or, more widely, with the whole human race) conceived as an ontic unity. Rather, he claims, Gregory sees the Church as a new creation in the Spirit, with its unity based not on any ‘physical’ identity with the body of Christ but solely on faith and virtue. He also argues that, for Gregory, the soteriological agent, the ἀρχή of the salvation of humankind, is not Christ’s human nature, but rather what he calls the ‘Logos-*Dynamis*’, the divine principle, operating in our human bodies.

It is argued here that the evidence which Hübner adduces for challenging the ‘physicalist’ (or, perhaps better, ‘solidarist’) interpretation of Gregory’s soteriology is not very convincing. Hübner concedes that there are passages in Gregory’s *Oratio catechetica* which clearly suggest a ‘solidarist’ soteriology; it will be argued that his attempt to explain these away is unpersuasive. So far as the soteriological role of the Logos is concerned, it will be argued that Hübner’s attempt to defend this on the basis of a passage from chapter 32 of the *Oratio catechetica* is based on a misinterpretation of the context and purpose of that passage.

Finally, it will be tentatively suggested that from the theological point of view Hübner’s attempt to read Gregory in a way that downplays one particular soteriological motif is unnecessarily negative and restrictive and that, although this paper argues that the ‘solidarist’ model was central to Gregory’s soteriology, that does not mean that he may not, without inconsistency, have used other models as well.

When Gregory of Nyssa writes about soteriology,[1] he often uses the concept of the fundamental identity between Christ’s human nature and the human nature of those who are to be saved. He is not altogether consistent as to who is

[1] References in this paper to Gregory’s works are to the volume and column of Migne, *Patrologia Graeca* (henceforth PG), preceded, where is an edition in *Gregorii Nysseni Opera* (the Leiden ‘Jaeger’ edition, henceforth GNO), by the volume and page number. The GNO text, where available, is followed unless otherwise stated. English translations (ET), where not otherwise indicated, are by me.

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included within this latter group – the ecclesial Body of Christ, the Church, or, more widely, with the whole human race conceived as an ontic unity. But in either case the power of the resurrected Christ, the defeat of death, is communicated in a quasi-physical way from Christ to the wider humanity: Christ is the first-fruits and the Church or humankind as a whole is the 'batch' or 'lump' which the first-fruits sanctifies.[2]

Nineteenth century scholars[3] called this model 'physical soteriology'. But in *Die Einheit des Leibes Christi bei Gregor von Nyssa*, published in 1974, Reinhard M. Hübner argues that Gregory does not in fact make any substantive use of this model and seeks to downplay those passages in Gregory's works which appear to express it. This paper seeks to challenge Hübner's arguments about this.

Where Gregory identifies the 'lump' with the *ecclesial body*, the Church, Hübner seeks to show that the idea of the Church as a body in the sense of an organic ontic reality, with a unity founded on the mutual interdependence of head, limbs and other organs, played no significant part in Gregory's soteriology. In support of this, he goes to considerable lengths to demonstrate that Gregory shows little if any interest in the social or hierarchical aspects of the Church.[4] The Church for Gregory, he claims, rather than being the body of Christ in any physical sense, is seen primarily as a new creation in the Spirit, with a unity based solely on faith and virtue. The flesh of Christ, as the new Adam, the first fruits of the new creation, communicates that Spirit to us, but purely spiritually ('geistig').[5] He believes Gregory took this idea from the pseudo-Athanasian *De incarnatione et contra Arianos*.[6] Both the author of that work and Gregory, he claims, used it to avoid seeing the relation between Christ and his Body the Church in purely physical terms. He implies indeed that for Gregory, as for the author of *De incarnatione et contra Arianos*, the flesh of Christ, himself born of the Spirit, becomes the life-giving Spirit and communicates that Spirit to us.[7]

[2] See 1*Cor*. 15:20 and *Rom*. 11:16.

[3] The term was first used in this context by Ritschl in 1870 – see Reinhard M. Hübner, *Die Einheit des Leibes Christi bei Gregor von Nyssa: Untersuchungen zum Ursprung der 'physischen' Erlösungslehre* (Leiden, 1974), 325.

[4] R. Hübner, *Einheit* (1974), 183-203. See also A.S. Dunstone, *The Atonement in Gregory of Nyssa: The Tyndale Lecture in Historical Theology, 1963* (London, 1964; consulted 7 November 2006 at http://www.earlychurch.org.uk/pdf/nyssa_dunstone.pdf), 23: 'Gregory is chary of using the Pauline word σῶμα to express the mutual indwelling of believers in one another and in Christ.'

[5] R. Hübner, *Einheit* (1974), 120-4, 168-70.

[6] Following M. Tetz, he attributed this work to Marcellus of Ancyra (R. Hübner, *Einheit* [1974], 32^{20}, 53), but this attribution has been subsequently challenged; see Johannes Zachhuber, *Human Nature in Gregory of Nyssa: Philosophical Background and Theological Significance*, Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae 46 (Leiden, 2000), 139.

[7] R. Hübner, *Einheit* (1974), 120, 281-3.

The evidence Hübner advances for the centrality of this complex of ideas in Gregory's soteriology is however unconvincing. A lack of interest in ecclesiastical hierarchy and the social relationships between members of the Church is not incompatible with a belief in the Church as a soteriologically significant organic reality. It is certainly true that Gregory often referred to the 'new creation' and to Christ as the 'new man', conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin.[8] Hübner produces no evidence however to support the view that Gregory uses these ideas to build a distinctive soteriology which somehow overrides the 'physical' model. Indeed, as Hübner acknowledges, at least one of the passages he cites in support of his 'new creation' hypothesis – from *Contra Eunomium* III, book 10, where the reference is to 'that new man which is created after God' – actually includes several references to a 'physical' relationship between the 'new man's' human nature and humankind.[9] Nevertheless, Hübner asserts that the 'new creation' in this passage must be a wholly spiritual event ('ein rein geistiges Geschehen').[10]

It is difficult to see in what sense the incarnation as new creation can be seen as 'rein geistig'. Obviously it was a 'pneumatic' event in that it was brought about through the Holy Spirit. But Hübner seems to be using 'geistig' here to mean 'non-material'. The only passage I have found which might be taken to give explicit support to the notion of the incarnation as a 'spiritual' event in that sense is in *Contra Eunomium* III, book 2: 'The Word became flesh that He might change our flesh to spirit by being made partaker with us in flesh and blood.'[11] But little weight should be given to this isolated passage, which is clearly intended as a rhetorical antithesis – the Word became flesh, so that the flesh might become Spirit.

Turning to those passages where Gregory is discussing not the Church but *the whole 'body of humanity'* as a unity, Hübner similarly downplays Gregory's use of the role of Christ's human nature, viewed in a physical sense, as the ἀρχή of our salvation, the 'first fruits' within the 'lump' of human nature. He stresses rather the soteriological role of the Logos, or what he calls the 'Logos-*Dynamis*'.[12]

[8] See Robert M. Orton, *Garments of Light, Tunics of Skin and the Body of Christ: St Gregory of Nyssa's Doctrine of the Body* (unpublished PhD thesis, King's College London, University of London, 2009), 110f. and n. 2 thereto.

[9] Gregory of Nyssa, *Contra Eunomium* III 10 (GNO II 293-9; PG 45, 889B-892C); trans. NPNFathers, Second Series, Volume 5 (Peabody, Massachusetts, 1995 – henceforth NPNF), 241f.

[10] See R. Hübner, *Einheit* (1975), 123f. His assertion is based on the not very clear grounds that Gregory also refers in this passage to Christ having come to '[slay] the enmity between us and God' (*Eph.* 2:16).

[11] *Contra Eunomium* III 2 (GNO II 70; PG 45, 637B); trans. NPNF, 158. See R. Orton, *Garments* (2009), 118[27], and R. Hübner, *Einheit* (1975), 170.

[12] R. Hübner, *Einheit* (1974), 159: 'Die keimhafte (τῇ δυνάμει)) Auferstehung aller Menschen in Christus bedeutet das Wirksamwerden des göttlichen Prinzips (Logos-*Dynamis*) im todverfallenen Meischheitsleib […]'.

Here Hübner seeks to draw a distinction between the 'physicalism' he finds in *De incarnatione contra Arianos* and the use of similar 'physicalist' language by Gregory.[13] In the former, the ἀρχή of the defeat of death is the body of Christ which is 'consubstantial' with the 'batch' of humanity; in Gregory the ἀρχή is 'the (not consubstantial) divine *Dynamis*'. So, says Hübner, Gregory 'breaks the logic of the original model, which works only by virtue of the consubstantiality between the original principle' – Christ's human body – 'and, if one may so describe it, its field of operation'[14] – humanity as a whole.

Now it is true that there are passages[15] in which it is clearly the divine δύναμις which actually brings together the divided body and soul in the resurrection, in the case both of Jesus and of other Christians after him. But this is in no way inconsistent with the notion of Christ's humanity being the *point of contact* between that divine δύναμις and humanity, which is then in turn the medium through which that power is transmitted to other Christians. Gregory's Christology assumes that Christ's humanity is progressively sanctified by the Logos, and that the resurrection is a key moment in that progression; it is by virtue of our solidarity with that humanity that we can share in that progression, in Christ's resurrection and his glorification. Hübner concedes that his thesis is not supported when, in other passages, Gregory characterizes the ἀρχή in terms clearly referring to the humanity of Christ rather than to the Logos.[16] But Hübner argues that he does so only 'under the pressure' of the

[13] And in Athanasius – R. Hübner, *Einheit* (1974), 255-68.

[14] R. Hübner, *Einheit* (1974), 161: 'Aber indem Gregor nun unter dem „Anfang" nicht mehr wie Markell den dem „Brei" der Menschheit konsubstantialen Leib Christi versteht, sondern die (nicht konsubstantiale) göttliche Dynamis, die sich dem „Brei" verbunden hat, als den Anfang und das Wirkprinzip einsetzt, durchbricht er die Logik des ursprünglichen Modells, das nur bei Konsubstantialität von Prinzip und Wirkungsfeld, wenn man einmal so sprechen darf, funktionsfähig ist.'

[15] In chapters 16 and 32 of the *Oratio catechetica* – *s*ee R. Orton, *Garments* (2009), 154-6. Hübner also refers to, but does not quote, Gregory's *Refutatio confessionis Eunomii* (GNO II 387; PG 45, 548B-C): 'His Godhead […] by joining again the elements which had been […] parted, so as to give to all human nature a beginning and an example which it should follow (ἀκολουθίαν καὶ ἀρχήν) of the resurrection from the dead […]' (NPNF, 127.) This actually supports his case better than the *Oratio catechetica* passages, but (as he seems implicitly to concede, in *ibid*. 162[285]) is not inconsistent with the interpretation offered here: the fact that the Godhead must be regarded as the primary ἀρχή of the resurrection (as, in one sense, it is of everything) does not preclude the humanity of Christ being its ἀρχή *within the body of humanity*, the point of contact between Christians and the divine.

[16] 'That compound humanity which he had assumed', *Oratio catechetica* (GNO III/IV 49; PG 45, 52C – but GNO now reads ἀνθρώπῳ for ἀνθρωπίνῳ συγκρίματι here); 'the flesh which was the receptacle of Godhead' and which 'derived its being from no other source than the lump of our humanity, even he who through the resurrection was exalted along with his Godhead', *Oratio catechetica* (GNO III/IV 78; PG 45, 80B); 'our first-fruits [which have] been transformed to the Divine nature by its union with God', *Refutatio confessionis Eunomii* (GNO II 387; PG 45, 548C).

earlier schema found in *De incarnatione contra Arianos*.[17] That seems unduly dismissive of Gregory's intellectual robustness.

Hübner maintains that Gregory's concept of humanity transformed into divinity leaves an 'unbridgeable gap',[18] that is, presumably, between Christ's divinity and his humanity. He has correctly identified a problem in Gregory's Christology. But that does not in itself invalidate Gregory's soteriology, which starts, as it were, on the human side of the Christological gap and is based on the continuity between a divinized 'first-fruits' and the rest of the 'batch' of humanity.

In support of his thesis that the principal soteriological agent is Christ as Logos rather than Christ as man, Hübner cites the latter part of chapter 32 of the *Oratio catechetica*, where Gregory is discussing the appropriateness of the Cross as the instrument of Christ's death. The key sentence is:

> We are taught by the Cross, the figure of which is divided into four parts, so that from the centre, where the whole converges, the projections are four in number, that He Who was stretched thereon […] is He Who binds and unites the universe to Himself, bringing in His own Person the different kinds of existing things to one accord and harmony.[19]

Hübner reads this – mistakenly in my view – in an eschatological sense, and argues that it refers to the soteriological role of the Logos as 'bringing things together' in the End.[20] It is clear from the context however that there is no eschatological or soteriological reference here; Gregory is merely providing an ingenious defence of the cross as an appropriate symbol of the Logos, the divine reason which holds all things in the universe together, and therefore as an appropriate way for Jesus, who was divine Logos as well as man, to have died.[21]

In the *Oratio catechetica* Gregory uses very 'physical' language about Christ's *eucharistic* body. Unsurprisingly Hübner dismisses this as atypical of

[17] R. Hübner, *Einheit* (1974), 161: '[…] offensichtlich unter dem Zwang, die innere Logik des gewählten Schemas aufrecht zu erhalten oder wieder zu gewinnen […]'.

[18] R. Hübner, *Einheit* (1974), 162: 'Die letzte Formulierung ['die in die Gottheit verwandelte Menschheit'] gibt sich als der angestrengte Versuch zu erkennen, den Graben zu überbrücken, der sich nicht überbrücken läßt.'

[19] *Oratio catechetica* (GNO III/IV 79-8f.; PG 45, 80D-81A); trans. J.R. Srawley, *The Catechetical Oration of St Gregory of Nyssa: translated with an introduction and notes* (London, 1917), 94.

[20] R. Hübner, *Einheit* (1974), 163: '[…] als Prinzip der Einheit der ganzen Schöpfung, die durch den Kreuzestod geschaffen wird, nicht mehr (wie im Bilde vom Menscheitsleib) der Inkarnierte erscheint, sondern der göttliche Logos.'

[21] Moreover, even if such a reference were intended, it would merely mean that Gregory was confusingly conflating his eschatological 'body of the Logos' model (on which see R. Orton, *Garments* [2009], 165-6) with the 'physicalist' or, to use the term which I prefer, 'solidarist', 'body of humankind' model. It would not necessarily mean that he somehow disowned the 'solidarist' model or treated it as superseded by the other one.

Gregory's thinking.[22] He draws attention[23] to some other interpretations of the eucharist by Gregory, where the stress is more on its ethical[24] or sacrificial[25] aspects. It should be noted however that his citations here are drawn from exegetical and homiletic rather than systematic, apologetic or polemical contexts. So perhaps it is they, rather than the more developed exposition in the *Oratio catechetica*, which should be treated as *obiter dicta* by Gregory.

To summarize. Hübner concedes, of course, that when writing about soteriology Gregory does indeed use the concept of the unity of humankind, of what might be called Christ's 'solidarity' with the Church or with the 'body of humankind'. But he seeks to rebut any literal interpretation of that solidarity, and specifically the 'pharmacological-mechanistic' kind of 'physische Erlösungslehre' which was attributed to Gregory by Ritschl, Harnack and their followers.[26] He takes that to imply some kind of automatic (and therefore presumably universal) transmission of salvation from Christ's human body to his ecclesial body or, even more broadly, to the 'body of humankind'. He maintains that in any case Gregory uses models such as that of the body or the 'first-fruits' and the 'batch', in a purely 'illustrative' ('bildlich') way,[27] as a metaphor for solidarity of faith or of virtue or 'in the Spirit'.[28]

As stated above, Gregory certainly does use 'spiritual' language in a soteriological context. But – and this is the main theological point to be made in response to Hübner – that does not mean that he could not at the same time, and without inconsistency, place what I have called the 'solidarist' model at the centre of his soteriological thinking. Both soteriological approaches are 'illustrative' in that they use metaphors based on some kind of model; Hübner's preferred formulation of 'solidarity in the Spirit' is itself hardly be understood in a direct or univocal way, in that the word 'in' is clearly used in a metaphorical or at any rate analogical sense. Although this of course raises complex and controversial theological issues, it seems doubtful whether the truths about how God saves the world in Christ can be understood at all other

[22] R. Hübner, *Einheit* (1974), 176: 'Dabei zeigt sich, daß die Eucharistielehre der *Katachese* eine Ausnahme ist und also wohl einen durch die Intention des Traktates, der eine für gebildete Heiden bestimmte, rational begründete Hinführung zum Glauben sein will, hervorgerufenen fundamentaltheologischen Versuch darstellt.'

[23] R. Hübner, *Einheit* (1974), 176-9.

[24] Greg. Nyss., *In canticum canticorum* (GNO VI 308-11; PG 44, 989C-D, 992B).

[25] Greg. Nyss., *De tridui inter mortem et resurrectionem Domini nostri Iesu Christi spatio* (GNO IX 287f., PG 46, 612C-D).

[26] See R. Orton, *Garments* (2009), 49 and n. 71 thereto.

[27] R. Hübner, *Einheit* (1974), 142, 328.

[28] In *ibid*. 102f., he cites as evidence for this Gregory's use of expressions of comparison in such phrases as οἷον ἀπαρχή τις and ὥσπερ τις τάξις […] διά τινος ἀκολουθίας in *In illud: Tunc et ipse Filius* (GNO III/II 14, 14-5; PG 44, 1313B-C). On *ibid*. 149, Hübner makes the same observation in respect of καθάπερ τινὸς ὄντος ζῷον πάσης τῆς φύσεως in the *Oratio catechetica* (GNO III/IV 78; PG 45, 80B).

than in such 'illustrative' or metaphorical ways.[29] And, given the range of different models for salvation which scripture and the tradition provides, it seems more likely that, in order for Christians to obtain some sort of even limited epistemic access to the modalities of salvation, it is necessary for them to avail themselves of the whole of that range, rather than to focus on one model to the exclusion of the others.[30]

[29] Hübner himself (*ibid.* 142) seems to concede this: 'Dabei steht für das soteriologische Argument, das nur die Tatsache der vollen Menschheit Christi aus den Aussagen der Schrift folgern, aber nicht das „Warum" und das „Wie eigentlich" erfassen kann, im Grunde nur die bildliche Ausdrucksweise zur Verfügung.'

[30] This paragraph owes much to Janet Martin Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language* (Oxford, 1985, ppbk. ed. 1987). Morwenna Ludlow, *Gregory of Nyssa, Ancient and (Post)modern* (Oxford, 2007), 156, refers to that and other works in commenting how recent developments in philosophical theology have altered views about the role of metaphor in theology.

Seeing God through Language. Quotation and Deixis in Gregory of Nyssa's *Against Eunomius*, Book III

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Abstract

Book III of Gregory's *Contra Eunomium* is mostly devoted to explaining three crucial sentences from the Holy Scripture: *i.e*. *Prov*. 8:22; *Acts* 2:36; 2*Cor*. 3:17. In various ways Eunomius did use such statements to advance his arguments against the divinity of the Only-Begotten. Now Gregory – recalling the teaching of his brother Basil – re-examines the original questions, by showing his arguments and his witnesses as he was calling them before a justice court. Thus, book III seems to assume the features of a passionate and articulated 'theoretical homily' in defense of the Incarnation of God. My aim is to stress once more the originality of Gregory's account, who, in many passages, anticipates the style of the most relevant modern analytic philosophers. In this short contribution I will focus myself on the following traits: (1) the use of the powerful Cappadocian semantics of 'ousia' / 'hypostasis'; and (2) the recurrence, throughout the whole text, of some indexical expressions with a special performative force.

Quotation and deixis[1] are relevant devices of human language. In everyday language people combine them as occasion arises, whereas in more formal contexts, or in written texts, both quotation and deixis are carefully exerted. Of course, troubles can nevertheless take place and theological debates are very attractive places as regards such accidents. In this paper I would show a very interesting case, where, in my opinion, quotation and deixis play a crucial role. The matter for our case study comes from the *Contra Eunomium* III by Gregory of Nyssa.

1. 'Two Christs and two Lords'?

To begin with, let me summarize the narrative. During their prolonged debate about the nature and place of the Only-Begotten, Eunomius and Gregory of

[1] The item 'deixis' (from the Greek δεῖξις) is of common use in modern linguistics, where it serves to 'refer to the function of personal and demonstrative pronouns, of tense and a variety of other grammatical and lexical features which relate utterances to the spatio-temporal co-ordinates of the act of utterance', John Lyons, *Semantics: 2* (London and New York, 1977), 636. In my opinion, a deictic term – any term assuming a deictic function in a given context – does introduce in the semantics of communication an instance of subjectivity, assigning the participants of enunciation a person-role. See my *Cronosensitività. Una teoria per lo studio filosofico del linguaggio* (Roma, 2004).

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Nyssa separately ran into the Apostle Peter's famous sentence [1] 'God has made him Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified' (*Acts* 2:36). Both of them quoted it as a crucial statement in the context of the Trinitarian debate, although they were not in agreement as to its meaning. According to the reconstruction provided by the Nyssen, Eunomius produced Peter's words as supporting evidence for believing that God 'made' (ἐποίησεν) his Christ as a 'thing made' (ποίημα),[2] whilst Gregory resolutely refused this interpretation as missing the point. Some years before, Eunomius had used the same interpretation of *Acts* 2:36 quarrelling with Gregory's brother, the bishop Basil. Of course, Basil had an easy time with Eunomius, so dismantling his claim by ushering into the debate the notion of economy (οἰκονομία)[3]. The move allowed him to take the quoted sentence of Peter as referred οἰκονομικῶς to the person of Christ: 'Our own position – Basil claimed – is that it is not good religion to apply 'made' to the divinity of the Only-begotten, but to the form of a slave which belonged by divine economy to the time of his presence in the flesh'.[4] God the Father had raised him, after he [*i.e.*, 'this Jesus you did crucify'] accepted to the end the human condition. However, Basil's distinction of theology and economy did not persuade Eunomius, who accused the bishop of having insulted the saints, of having ascribed the redemption to a man and, not least, of having in fact introduced 'two Christs and two Lords' (δύο Χριστοὺς καὶ δύο κυρίους).[5]

Some, perhaps, among these charges could have been used by Eunomius as a pretext for a personal quarrel. Anyway, by a careful reading of the book, two different conceptions emerge through the words of the discussants. On the one side, two theologies are duelling in the effort to give the ἀληθής τε καὶ ἀδιαίρετος ἕνωσις[6] of humanity and divinity a sense and a meaning. On the other side, two opposite conceptions of language do emerge from the shadow of the Greek spoken by the contenders. The strictly theological themes will not be

[2] See Eun., *Liber Apolog*. 26,11 (= *Eunomius. The Extant Works*, text and translation by Richard Paul Vaggione, Oxford Early Christian Texts [Oxford, 1987], 70-1): 'And indeed a trustworthy witness of the fact that he [*sc*. the Only-Begotten] was made is Peter, *etc*.'

[3] For such a notion in Cappadocian philosophy see Bas. *CE* II 3 (= PG 29, 576d-577b).

[4] I quote here from the standard Engl. version by Stuart George Hall, as that of common usage among Gregory's scholars in international contexts.

[5] In a recent paper – submitted to the '12th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa' which took place at Leuven in September, 14-18, 2010 – I dealt with such a presumed superfetation of persons. The revised text will appear as 'Oneness of Mankind and the Plural of Man. Some Remarks on Contra Eunomium III': in Johan Leemans (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa's Contra Eunomium III. Proceedings of the 12th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa Contra Eunomium III (14-17 September 2010), Faculty of Theology, K.U. Leuven (Belgium)* (Leiden and New York; forthcoming).

[6] So Gregory wrote in his short treatise *Ad Theophilum adv. Apollin*. (= GNO III/1, 128, 3). He also used somewhere the term ἀνάκρασις (see *e.g*., Greg. Nyss., *Or. Cat. magna* VI 25).

discussed here;[7] now, I prefer to pay attention to the conflict of Eunomius' and Gregory's philosophical concepts of language and their respective ontological commitments, sometimes – with some exceptions – neglected by theologians.

2. Language-games and personhood

A language is commonly described as having the structure of a game. The comparison is partly justified, for both language and game are instances of ruled behaviour. However, since neither a unique game nor a unique language exists, the similitude must be adapted depending on the cases. After Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* the idiom 'language-game' (*Sprachspiel*) became habitual among the scholars instead of 'language'. According to this view, describing a given language does mean anything but explicitly representing the rules of that given game. Some rules are known in advance, some others are not.[8] Moreover, some languages do have just a syntactic plan, as for instance, music, whilst some others have also a semantic plan giving any well-formed expression of that language a sense and/or a reference. Verbal languages are regulated not only by rules, but also by social constraints. Its pivotal role depends, as Wittgenstein claimed, on their being a family of *Sprachspiele* framing several *Lebensformen*.[9]

Speaking of God is a very sophisticated language-game, if any. Many people do it: theologians, philosophers, atheists and, of course, common persons. Within the history of the Occident such a game knew its ups and downs. During the early times of Christianity the players preferably used Greek; for they knew Greek to be both the language they *spoke* and the language they *spoke about*. In recent times, the number of players increased, despite their awareness of being players of a *language*-game diminished until the safety level (and, perhaps, until the salvation level too). How to judge, otherwise, the untidiness of some contemporary liturgies? Speaking of God in the 4th century was a very sophisticated language-game the stake of which was Truth or False, as in modern logic. The rules of such a game were not a preliminary, but a crucial part of the game itself. For the majority of early players did not take such rules as a matter of human stipulation, like in many other *Lebensformen*. Consequently, it is not at all hazardous to characterize such a speaking of God as a speaking *with* God too.

[7] The reader is deferred to the interesting papers presented by Andrew Radde-Gallwitz ('Contra Eunomium 3.3') and Matthieu Cassin ('Contre Eunome III') and eventually by other participants at the above mentioned 12th International Colloquium (proceedings forthcoming).

[8] Aiming at distinguishing the previous knowledge of a speaker from the progressive modification introduced in it by the utterances of a given interpreter, Donald Davidson introduced a sort of split. He did call 'prior theories' those just envisaged before the acts of communication, and 'passing theories' the really used ones. See his essay 'A Nice Derangement of Epitaphs', now in *id.*, *Truth, History and Language* (Oxford, 2005), 89-107.

[9] See Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (Cambridge, 1953).

In spite of the just mentioned pervasiveness of the rules, each player was seeking for a personal way of meeting both God and the other players, whether to join Him with other believers or to oppose Him with all their own strengths. Besides, the personal attitude of every man player was a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for the final step of the game. Considering that any player is involved as a person within the game, we are prevented from equalizing the ancient game we called 'speaking of (and with) God' to any game using a formalized language (in modern terms).[10] The latter might be described regardless of any player; furthermore, a formalized language requires nothing but a syntax with its standard assignment of values to every single name or variable. Everything in a regimented language can be done by stipulation. Unfortunately, no regimented language requires either persons to be quoted or deixis points as external to the game table.

So, we have an important reason to remove formalized languages from our horizon. They need neither the quoting of someone's words nor pointing by deixis. On the contrary, human languages ought to be taken into consideration, for they do need both of them. *Quotation*, on the one side, is a powerful mean for people to become able reporting one's talk, no matter they understand its meaning. *Deixis*, on the other side, allows speakers to direct one's attention to whatever in a shared environment, by using words as 'Yo!', 'Lo!', 'You', 'I' or by gesturing.[11] Therefore, it can be reasonably supposed that they were introduced into human languages for they have to do with persons. By persons is meant here: (1) a blank in the structure of verbal or nominal predicates, as in '__is a man' or '__gives__to__'. In that case any expression filling in the gap within the predicate is the third-person one, he / it. We call them the person(s) of the sentence; (2) a marking signature for a participant in the act of communication, as 'I' or 'You', otherwise, several nonverbal indicators. We call such marks the person(s) of the enunciation.[12] Émile Benveniste – who

[10] For the sake of simplicity, one might attempt a basic definition as follows: a formalized language is based on a system of symbols, a group of rules and a lexicon. Singular terms and bounded variables are simple symbols ranging over entities of a domain. Predicate or function expressions are symbols too of the language, though considered as satisfied by some or by all given sequences of individuals. The rules do state when a string is a well-formed one; the lexicon component of a theory does assign any well-formed string some sequences of individuals. Sentences are complex symbols capable of being true or false according to some grasp or explicit criterion of Truth.

[11] The relevance of the so called indexicals in the field of an integrated theory of truth and meaning is defended with convincing arguments by Donald Davidson, *Subjective, Intersubjective, Objective* (Oxford, 2001); see spec. the essay 'The Second Person', 107-21. In the field of pragmatics the place of demonstrative elements has been recently stressed by Rebecca Kukla and Mark Lance, *Yo! And Lo! The Pragmatic Topography of the Space of Reasons* (Cambridge, Mass., 2009).

[12] Italian language does make it explicit the symmetry of our parallelism, by using the term 'enunciato' where English has 'sentence' and 'enunciazione' where English uses 'act of utterance'.

accurately examined the question – did trace a dividing line between the subjective participants as 'I' and 'You', on the one side, and the non-subjective ones, as, *e.g.*, 'He' or 'It'.[13] By the way, a salient fact is that quotation and deixis are in inverse relation to subjective and non-subjective persons. One would say direct quotation simply casts *the person talking* (the 'I') in the role of an absent speaker 'He' (the so called non-person). Conversely, deixis merely casts *the person being talked about* (a 'It') in the discourse of the speaking 'I' as a non-verbal part of his utterance. *Casting persons into one another* seems to be the task of both quotation and deixis. Clearly, our speaking of God (and with God) is a game only persons are able to play.

3. Speaking of God: just a language-game?

There has to be a reason for the insistence of Gregory on quoting throughout his third book the sentence of Peter: ἀσφαλῶς οὖν γινωσκέτω πᾶς οἶκος Ἰσραὴλ ὅτι καὶ κύριον αὐτὸν καὶ Χριστὸν ἐποίησεν ὁ θεός, τοῦτον τὸν Ἰησοῦν ὃν ὑμεῖς ἐσταυρώσατε.[14] And there has to be some explanation for the expression 'ὁ βλεπόμενος ἄνθρωπος' was used by both Eunomius and Gregory in connection with Peter's quoted sentence. What ὁ βλεπόμενος ἄνθρωπος does mean in the economy of this speaking of God? Eunomius used such words to discriminate the λόγος ἐν ἀρχῇ and ὁ ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ σαρκὶ ἑαυτὸν φανερώσας (*CE* III 4, 43, 6), *i.e.* the form of a slave. Gregory considered the incarnation as the sole 'mutation' observable in the Godhead. Indeed, against the dualism of his adversary he answers as follows: κατὰ τὸ βλεπόμενον, ἀλλοῖος παρ᾽ ὃ τῇ φύσει ἦν θεωρούμενος. διὰ τοῦτο πρὸς Φίλιππον λέγει τὸν πρὸς μόνον τὸ ἀλλοιωθὲν ἀτενίζοντα ὅτι βλέπε διὰ τοῦ ἀλλοιωθέντος τὸ ἀναλλοίωτον (*CE* III 4,24,14-25,3). Four verbs pertaining to the visual perception are condensed here in just three lines of text: does such a stress mean something relevant for the discussion? In another passage Gregory alludes to Eunomius' view as to the opposition of visible and invisible: ἆρα τὸν θεόν, ὃν οὔτε ἑώρακέ τις οὔτε ἰδεῖν δύναται, ἢ τὸν σωματικὸν χαρακτῆρα τουτέστι τὴν τοῦ δούλου μορφήν, ἐν ᾗ ἦν ὁ θεός; (*CE* III 10,6,4).

Other witnesses might be cited here, to give evidence supporting the relevance of person-deixis in the debate against Eunomius. Rather, one could wonder what game is Gregory playing here? His stress on the visible dimension is a new move in this type of game, for God is invisible by definition. Until then, speaking of

[13] See Émile Benveniste, *Problèmes de linguistique générale* II (Paris, 1974).

[14] The sentence of *Acts* 2:36 appears in many passages; the most relevant ones are the following: CE III 3, 111; III 3, 122; III 3, 128; III 3, 130-3; III 4, 137; III 4, 140; III 4, 147-8; III 4, 140-50.

God was a matter of philosophical categories, especially that of substance and that of divine attributes. A visual dimension was unnecessary to play the theological game, for the discussion seemed to deal with just the properties of God. It goes without saying that Gregory's posit of 'τὸ βλεπόμενον' was not a divine attribute. Eunomius teased Basil for a similar move (see *CE* III 3, 15 – 8); now in front of the grasp of Basil's brother, he takes the 'βλεπόμενος ἄνθρωπος' as a matter of ontological considerations. Thus, answering first to Basil and then to Gregory, he offers to his critics *en passant* the very account of his own view of language and semantics. Let me quote at least the following passage:

> We call the Son 'offspring', therefore, in accordance with the teaching of the Scriptures. We do not understand his essence to be one thing and the meaning of the word which designates it to be something else. Rather, we take it that his substance is the very same as that which is signified by his name, granted that the designation applies properly to the essence. We assert, therefore, that this essence was begotten – not having been in existence prior to its own coming to be – and that it exists, having been begotten before all things by the will of its God and Father.[15]

According to Aetius' account of nouns and substances,[16] Eunomius considered the divine names as rigidly defining the divine essence, in such a way that any other name must be taken as a synonymic one. Unlike human names and languages, the Godhead's substance and names do rise and fall together. There was no room for a conception of semantics as a cardan joint between the metaphysical plan and the ontological one. Language was a sort of array of the countable entities in the universe. God, as the unengendered substance (ἀγέννητος οὐσία), escaped this framework. In fact, God was envisaged outside the human language, by means of a peculiar interpretation of the locution 'κατ' ἐπίνοιαν'. Let me quote again:

> (EUN.) When we say 'Unbegotten' (Ἀγέννητον), then, we do not imagine that we ought to honour God only in name, in conformity with human invention (κατ' ἐπίνοιαν ἀνθρωπίνην); rather, in conformity with reality, we ought to repay him the debt which above all others is most due God (τὸ πάντων ἀναγκαιότατον ὄφλημα τῷ Θεῷ): the acknowledgment that he is what he is (τὴν τοῦ εἶναι ὅ ἐστιν ὁμολογίαν). Expressions based on invention (κατ' ἐπίνοιαν λεγόμενα) have their existence in name and utterance only (ἐν ὀνόμασι μόνον καὶ προφορᾷ), and by their nature are dissolved along with the sounds.[17]

[15] Eun., *Liber Apologeticus* 12 (Vaggione), 48-9.

[16] So wrote as for this Bas. Caes., *De spiritu sancto* II 4, 8-12): 'There is an old sophism, found by Aetius, the chief of this heresy, who wrote somewhere in his letters as follows: "Things naturally different ought to be termed by different names; conversely, things that are found to be differently termed ought to be different by nature too".' (Ἔστι γάρ τι αὐτοῖς παλαιὸν σόφισμα, ὑπὸ Ἀετίου τοῦ προστάτου τῆς αἱρέσεως ταύτης ἐξευρεθέν, ὃς ἔγραψέ που τῶν ἑαυτοῦ ἐπιστολῶν, λέγων· τὰ ἀνόμοια κατὰ τὴν φύσιν, ἀνομοίως προφέρεσθαι· καὶ ἀνάπαλιν· τὰ ἀνομοίως προφερόμενα, ἀνόμοια εἶναι κατὰ τὴν φύσιν).

[17] Bas. Caes., *Adv. Eun.* II (PG 29, 520,32-7); also in R.P. Vaggione, *Eunomius* (1987), 41.

From a passage quoted by Gregory in his first book we learn some notions of Eunomius' metaphysical procedure. He did not talk of the Father and the Son, but of 'the supreme and the very properly real substance' (τῆς ἀνωτάτω καὶ κυριωτάτης οὐσίας) and of 'another substance, being by reason of the first one' (τῆς δι' ἐκείνην μὲν οὔσης); instead of the Holy Spirit, he envisaged 'a third substance, not ranking with either of these (καὶ τρίτης γε τῆς μηδεμιᾷ μὲν τούτων συνταττομένης), but subordinated to the one, as to its origin (ἀλλὰ τῇ μὲν διὰ τὴν αἰτίαν […] <ὑποταττομένης>), and to the other, as to the operation it was produced by' (τῇ δὲ διὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν καθ' ἣν γέγονεν ὑποταττομένης). Then, he did take substances as followed by operations and these by compliant names (συμπεριλαμβανομένων δηλαδὴ καὶ τῶν ταῖς οὐσίαις ἑπομένων ἐνεργειῶν καὶ τῶν ταύταις προσφυῶν ὀνομάτων).[18] By this way of speaking Eunomius tried to conceal in thick fog his obscurity (πολλῷ τῷ γνόφῳ τῆς ἀσαφείας κεκαλυμμένος). However, it was clear to Gregory that Eunomius parlance of 'operations of substances' (ἐνεργείας οὐσιῶν) was not but a machinery ready to engage some non-relational names as substituting the relational ones.[19] Back to our similitude, Eunomius' talking of God was the same as one's playing a game of patience. He resembled a chess player moving without having a look at the chessboard. Due to his concept of names and descriptions as rigidly designators, Eunomius was forced to admit ὁ λόγος ἐν ἀρχῇ, and ὁ βλεπόμενος ἄνθρωπος as different 'chessmen', *i.e.* as different persons. Eunomius' ontological dualism is, in my opinion, a consequence of his ontological commitments and his deixis-free semantics.

4. Quoting through person-deixis

One might now wonder which framework Gregory did oppose to the above cited. Language – the Nyssen argued – is not built on just, on the one hand, revealed names and, on the other hand, human expressions based on invention – as Eunomius claimed. There are not two separate languages: for, in the affirmative, there would be two Christs too; we can see the Godhead just through human language. Throughout the pages of especially the book II language emerges not as a mere set of acts of saying (asserting, defining and so on) by use of verbal designators. Thus, to Eunomius' insensitiveness towards human language Gregory opposes his account of *indexicals* or acts of *person-deixis*. In addition to the reference expressions and to the concepts supported

[18] *CE* I 205,1-3.

[19] *CE* I 1,201,1-6: ὀνομάζει τὰς ἀποτελεστικάς, ὡς οἶμαι, τοῦ υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος δυνάμεις, δι' ὧν ἡ πρώτη οὐσία τὴν δευτέραν εἰργάσατο καὶ ἡ δευτέρα τὴν τρίτην, καὶ τὰ ὀνόματα τῶν ἀποτελεσθέντων ἔργων προσφυῶς συγκατεσκευάσθαι τοῖς ἔργοις φησίν.

by them, there are several nonverbal devices capable of conveying, within a given language-game, any sort of things to be used instead of – or combined with – words: quotations and deixis acts are among them. By metaphor: Eunomius played his talking of God by just verbal signs; *now*, Gregory realizes that God's Incarnation in the human flesh cannot really be said by means of a merely verbal language. Had been it possible, one could be forced to admit some complication in the simplicity of the Godhead. How Gregory did escape such Skylla and Carybdis? Plainly, through a more comprehensive vision of language, that allowed him to grasp the appearing of God the Son not to be a property one has to add to his proper concept of God.[20] Moreover, the Incarnation cannot be defined by words: it becomes visible just by means of a *person-deictic* way of reference. It does mark a splitting point between *saying* and *shewing*. If so, the Logos (ὁ λόγος) would be the One who makes everything to be said, though in himself he lies unsayable – one might argue, paraphrasing a famous sentence by Wittgenstein.[21] Accordingly, the saying ὁ βλεπόμενος ἄνθρωπος could be viewed as referring to what *cannot be said*, but can only *be shown*.

Everything in such a debate seems to happen as in a chess game. A single move is not only a string of algebraic or verbal symbols referring to chessmen, squares and state of affairs in the chessboard. A move is, or is not, something visible too outside its algebraic or verbal description. It is enough just having a look to the chessboard itself – or to a diagram of it. For looking hard at the chessboard is not an accessory move of the game, but the way for a chessman to shew itself as staying before any other chessman. A chessman verbally (algebraically) described, but unseen, is a *third-person chessman* of a sentence about chess, say: 'White Queen moves from d2 up to d6'. Now, suppose a chessman becomes able to see – and be seen by – other chessmen. What does change? The chessman is the same in both cases. However, a sensitive chessman is a *second-person chessman* too for any other chessman in the chessboard. The same applies to the players: certainly, their linguistic (chess) moves might be described in terms of third-persons verbal sentences and/or algebraic symbols;

[20] A similar objection to Eunomius was made by Basil (see Bas. Caes., *Adv. Eun.* II 29, 9-13). Basil's argument was that: taken the oneness of the Divinity as granted, it is impossible to have a grasp, separately, of the Father and the Son; of course, apart from adding each of them some characters via a well-articulated thought. For, in absence of any character of the substance, there is no way it could enter our own knowledge. Εἰ γὰρ μηδὲν εἴη τὸ τὴν οὐσίαν χαρακτηρίζον, οὐδενὶ ἂν τρόπῳ πρὸς τὴν σύνεσιν ἡμῶν διικνοῖτο. Μιᾶς γὰρ οὔσης θεότητος, ἀμήχανον ἰδιάζουσαν ἔννοιαν Πατρὸς λαβεῖν ἢ Υἱοῦ, μὴ τῇ τῶν ἰδιωμάτων προσθήκῃ τῆς διανοίας διαρθρουμένης. The question arises what is to be meant by τὸ τὴν οὐσίαν χαρακτηρίζον, whether a property or, rather, a mark.

[21] See Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus logico-philosophicus*, Engl. vers. by D.F. Pears and B.F. McGuinness (London and New York, 1922), 4.12: 'Propositions can represent the whole of reality, but they cannot represent what they must have in common with reality in order to be able to represent it – logical form […]'; and 4.1212: 'What *can* be shown, *cannot* be said'.

nevertheless, when seated opposite each other, they are second-person chess players. They are *Gegenüber* of each other.

We could say that Gregory, by discovering the indexical dimension of God's speaking with humans, he did realize the real task of Basil's economy. Let me quote the crucial passage that Gregory quoted ending his explanation of the sentence of Peter in a very homiletic *climax*. In order to show the indexical role of pointing in both the sentence of Basil and of Gregory, we modified the standard translation as follows:

> What are the apostle's words? 'Be it known,' he says, 'that God has made him both Lord and Christ'. Then, as though someone has asked (εἶτα ὡς ἂν πυθομένου τινός) on whom this grace was bestowed, he (*indexically* points) as if with his finger at the subject (οἱονεὶ δακτύλῳ τὸ ὑποκείμενον *δεικνύει*): '*This* (Τοῦτον) *Jesus,*' he says, 'whom you crucified (ὃν ὑμεῖς ἐσταυρώσατε).' What does Basil say about this? He says that (the *indexical expression of language*) (ἡ δεικτικὴ τοῦ λόγου φωνή) states that '*this one* (τοῦτον) who was crucified by you <the listener themselves (παρ' αὐτῶν τῶν ἀκουόντων)> has been made Christ and Lord;' 'for you crucified him (ὑμεῖς γὰρ ἐσταυρώσατε),' it says, and quite likely those who had demanded his execution were listening to the speech (ἀκροατὰς εἶναι τοῦ λόγου), for the time between the crucifixion and Peter's public address was not long.' (*CE* III 4,149-50).

Within brackets we enclosed our own translation of the Greek words used by Basil and recaptured by Gregory. This translation appears to me a more accurate one, for it explicitly mentions the indexicals as such. We also enclosed instead an expression of the original Greek text oddly omitted by the translator. These interventions on the translation are dictated by both a philological and a philosophical care: making it clear that the effect obtained by the combination of quotations and person-deixis acts. On my eyes, this is the most relevant move in the game of speaking of God played by Basil, Gregory and Eunomius. Quotation was crucial to fix the intended meaning of the words. It did connect the present utterance of the Father with its compliant one excerpted from the Scripture, making them somehow *samesayer* speakers.[22] However, quoting was not enough in order to express a proposition, as Eunomius too knew, for one can just utter the sounds, but not their meaning.[23] So, there was room for a person-deictic way of reference. Peter's indexical expressions were intended by both Basil and Gregory to achieve a *perlocutionary effect* in his own

[22] 'Samesaying' is a term by the philosopher Donald Davidson. In his account of indirect speech, Davidson used a quotational approach, as resulting from what follows: 'The idea that underlies our awkward paraphrase [*sc*. of any indirectly reported sentence] is that of *samesaying*: when I say that Galileo said that the earth moves, I represent Galileo and myself as samesayers', in Donald Davidson, *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation* (Oxford, 1984), 104.

[23] Eunomius stressed the risk of misunderstandings in his *Apolog*. 6, claiming that 'now, if we could see that those who had once accepted the sounds (τὰς φωνάς) must of necessity keep their real meaning undistorted along with the words […] we would have made it the measure and term of our arguments, etc.' (R.P. Vaggione, *Eunomius* [1987], 39).

listeners. Such an effect would have sprang from the overlapping of Peter's listeners as Jesus' crucifiers and Gregory's listener, *i.e.* Eunomius as a new 'crucifier' of him. The Greek is very clear on this, by saying *expressis verbis* Jesus to be the one crucified by the listeners selves (τὸν παρ᾽ αὐτῶν τῶν ἀκουόντων ἐσταυρωμένον). So, the *third-person crucifiers* (They) and the *second-person listeners* (You) do overlap each other. Accordingly, both the sentence plan and the enunciation plan overlap too.

5. Finally, the emerging of the second-person One

The point is very close to its provisory ending. As we hope to have shown, book III of Gregory's *Contra Eunomium* is mostly devoted to explaining a crucial sentence from the Holy Scripture: *Acts* 2:36. In various ways Eunomius used such a statement to advance his arguments against the divinity of the Only-Begotten. However, due to his own account of God as unengendered substance, Eunomius restricted his speaking of God to just quoting and interpreting some scriptural sentences; and then, he assigned the entities spoken about an ontological counterpart in terms of solely substances and operations.[24] Now Gregory – recalling the teaching of his brother Basil – rewrites the original questions, by using quotation and deixis in a new combination. Thus, third book seems to assume the features of a passionate and articulated 'theoretical homily' in which words and gesture, citations and acts of pointing revealed the very content of the Christian revelation.

The Incarnation is meant by the Cappadocian fathers as the pivotal joint between Being and Language. The Only-Begotten is 'the Being' and, at the same time, 'the Word' became incarnated as the visible man. Shewing himself, God is the revealing *Logos* as well as the revealed one. However, his flesh does not dualize the divine substance or nature, for no conceptual features are added to God. The economy of Incarnation (ἡ οἰκονομία τῆς ἐνανθρωπήσεως) does not *intrude* any other person to the Trinity. On the contrary, it does *extrude* from the unconceivable notion of God the person-deictic account of him. The *Second Person* of the One (of theology) shows himself *as a second-person* one (of economy), apart from either confusion of persons or division of substance. This, of course, remains the very mystery, though it is not an illogicality.

If we are right as for our Person-deixis hypothesis, it follows that the repeated quotation of Peter's sentence was not a rhetoric gambit, but the logical move directed to be manifest a deictic axis in the speaking of God. For *quotation and deixis do not change the reference of names; rather both act on the ways of reference*. Consequently, one could take Basil's 'economy' (οἰκονομία) as a

[24] Our knowledge of Eunomius' ontological commitments depends to a great extent on Gregory's quotations. As to substances and operations, see *CE* I (= GNO I/1,151-4 Jaeger).

generic name standing for what we called here a *person-quoting through deixis*: a complex way of reference obtaining between the non-subjective persons of an utterance and the subjective ones.[25] It was first Basil to notice[26] a deictic plan in *Acts* 2:36. According to him, Gregory did quote and, at the same time, shew the Apostle in the acts of both quoting and shewing. Let us have a look at the entire talk held by the Apostle Peter:

'Men of Israel, hear these words! Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved by God to you by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, even as you yourselves know, him, being delivered up by the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by the hand of lawless men, crucified and killed; *whom God raised up*, having freed him from the agony of death, because it was not possible that he should be held by it. For *David says* concerning *him*,
'I saw the Lord always before my face, For he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved. Therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced. Moreover my flesh also will dwell in hope; Because you will not leave my soul in Hades, Neither will you allow your Holy One to see decay. You made known to me the ways of life. You will make me full of gladness with your presence.' (*Ps*. 15:8-11)
'Brothers, I may *tell you* freely *of the patriarch David*, that he both died and was buried, and *his tomb is with us to this day*. Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to *the flesh*, he would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, *he foreseeing this spoke about the resurrection of the Christ*, that neither was his soul left in Hades, nor did his flesh see decay. *This Jesus God raised up, to which we all are witnesses*. Being therefore exalted by the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this, which you now see and hear. For *David didn't ascend into the heavens*, but he says himself, 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit by my right hand, Until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet."' "*Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified*.'[27]

The passage is interesting for it involves ontological commitments to all the grammatical persons: the 'I' of the speaker (my tongue, my heart, my flesh, my life); the 'he' spoken about (the Lord); the 'Thou' (the person 'Thou', related to the formers): each of them is mentioned by Peter in a combination of narrative, quotations of verses and ethnographic remarks. The striking aspect, needless to say, deals with the replacement of the *third-persons* by use of the *second-person* compliant ones and *vice versa*. Peter quotes and comments the Psalm with a dual-reference to David's flesh. The second-person relationship implied in ἡ σάρξ μου (2:26) and τὴν ψυχήν μου (2:27) is, first, changed by Peter into a third-person reference: ἡ σὰρξ αὐτοῦ, *i.e.* τοῦ πατριάρχου Δαυίδ.

[25] On economy as both a personal relationship and property, see Bas. Caes., *De spiritu sancto* 15,35,1-13 (Pruche) and Greg. Nyss., *Antirrh. adv. Apollin.*, (= GNO III/1, 225,27-226,6 Müller).
[26] In his *Adv. Eun.* II 3,14-6. See M. La Matina, 'Oneness of Mankind' (forthcoming).
[27] *Acts* 2:22-36. Italics by me.

Then, quite amazingly, he assigns such a flesh a vague reference: it is not David who ascended the Heaven (οὐ γὰρ Δαυὶδ ἀνέβη εἰς τοὺς οὐρανούς), but 'God did rise *this* Jesus, whose *we* all are witnesses' (*τοῦτον τὸν* Ἰησοῦν ἀνέστησεν ὁ θεός, οὗ πάντες *ἡμεῖς* ἐσμεν μάρτυρες). Where does it come from such a semantics of persons pointing at the crucified (*Acts* 2:34-6)? Did he change the meaning? Or did he confuse the individuals in parole?[28] Indeed, not the reference, but its way is somewhat different, for ἡ σὰρξ αὐτοῦ shows an *'I – He'* reference, whilst ἡ σάρξ μου clearly manifests an *'I – Thou'* reference: the former, but not the latter, could be taken as a description of a state of affairs. Moreover, in the former I could be wrong referring to one's flesh; whilst in the latter, *I never can be wrong speaking of my flesh*. Now, we might wonder: did David talk about himself or about a third-person flesh? Peter thinks of any of them. Rather, his quotation emphasizes David's casting into another person given to him as an 'I – Thou' relationship. Therefore, when Peter says '*this* Jesus whom *you* crucified' the phrase sounds as a person-deixis pointing at Jesus thanks to the second-person 'you'.

Akin to the Apostle, both Basil and Gregory too undoubtedly realize that the anthropological context of Peter's address did not change the meaning of the sentence, but just the way it worked. The phrase ἡ σὰρξ αὐτοῦ did maintain its standard meaning of 'David's flesh'. However, its truth conditions were fixed on the basis of Peter's supposition that: (a) a person-deixis act (προϊδών) and (b) a quotation act (ἐλάλησεν περὶ τῆς ἀναστάσεως τοῦ Χριστοῦ) were accomplished by David, casting his person into the 'I – Thou' relationship with the Lord. The use of person-deixis reference by David in the above quoted passage of *Acts* supports evidence for this. Just to say, a first group of phrases commit to *first-* and *third-person* reference: 'Προορώμην τὸν κύριον ἐνώπιόν *μου*', 'ἐκ δεξιῶν *μου*', 'ηὐφράνθη ἡ καρδία *μου* καὶ ἠγαλλιάσατο ἡ γλῶσσά *μου*'. A second group does commit to just first- and second-person reference: 'οὐκ ἐγκαταλείψεις τὴν ψυχήν *μου*, οὐδὲ δώσεις *τὸν ὅσιόν σου*', '*ἐγνώρισάς μοι*', '*πληρώσεις με* εὐφροσύνης μετὰ τοῦ προσώπου *σου*'. Among them, we find the opaque self-reference expressed by 'ἡ σάρξ *μου*'. How many persons (I, Thou, He) are there?[29] According to Peter's interpretation,

[28] This passage of the *Acts* is judged semantically opaque by critics. An interesting article is that by David P. Moessner, '*Two* Lords "at the Right Hand"? The Psalms and an Intertextual Reading of Peter's Pentecost Speech (Acts 2:14-36)', in Richard P. Thompson and Thomas E. Phillips (eds), *Literary Studies in Luke-Acts. Essays in Honor of Joseph B. Tyson* (Macon, Ga, 1998); Moessner stresses the 'cryptic reference' to *Psalm* 15:8-11 wondering: 'Who is this "you" (Ps 15:10-11 = *Acts* 2:27-28)? Is this "you" the "Lord" mentioned two verses previously, or is this change of person to *direct* address referring now to someone else, to "God" perhaps?', 222. See also Greg Herrick, 'The use of Psalm 16:8-11 in Acts 2:25-8', at http://www.bible.org (2000,1-19); C. Kavin Rowe, 'Acts 2.36 and the continuity of Lukan Christology', *NTS* 53 (2007), 37-56.

[29] D.P. Moessner, '*Two* Lords "at the Right Hand"?' (1998), 23 argues that 'David in his experience (*Ps.* 109:1) speaks of two distinct 'lords': 'my Lord' and 'the Lord', suggesting that 'the ambiguity of the referent for the "Lord at your right hand" of *Psalm* 109:5 (κύριος ἐκ

the patriarch David was not talking about himself, but he was casting his proper person into another person. The opaqueness of '*ἡ σάρξ μου*' commits to such mysterious a relationship obtaining by acquaintance. Finally, Peter's statement at 2:36 does appear now in its true light: He makes it manifest to the house of Israel the relationship obtaining between (a) the quoted person showing himself to David and (b) the deictic person, whose flesh *you,* the listeners, crucified.

To end with, David did not see his own flesh (as a I to III relationship), but the flesh of God (as a I to II relationship). Of course, *ἡ σάρξ μου* was his own flesh, though was not the third-person of David himself. If we are right interpreting Peter semantics of names, it does mean that David's talking of flesh and life was not a narcissistic *intruding*, but rather an act of *extruding* an unrevealed offspring from himself; still better an act of *casting their persons into one another*. So, the Cappadocians stressed – against Eunomius – the role played in the economy of God by both the quotation and the deictic reference to Jesus as the second-person '*whom you* crucified'. Also in this light the Nyssen's reproaching must be understood: 'Why then do you not see (*πῶς οὖν οὐχ ὁρᾷς*) – he said to Eunomius – that the whole concept of the talk is flowing in a deixis point? (*ὅλην περὶ τὸ δεικνύμενον ἀναστρεφομένην τοῦ λόγου τὴν ἔννοιαν;*)'.[30] This way, the Cappadocian fathers did identify the *quoted person meant by the expression* *ἡ σὰρξ αὐτοῦ* *through the one shewed by deixis*. A third-person character did lead to a second one: '*this* Jesus *you* crucified (*τοῦτον τὸν Ἰησοῦν ὃν ὑμεῖς ἐσταυρώσατε*) – that is, this *βλεπόμενος ἄνθρωπος* in front of *you* – God made *him* both Christ and Lord (*καὶ κύριον αὐτὸν καὶ Χριστὸν ἐποίησεν ὁ θεός*)'. The invisible Only-Begotten became flesh without intruding new entities in the ontology of the Godhead. The *climax* of quotations made by Gregory did catch the Apostle in the same act Gregory accomplished before his hearers: *Gregory was so shewing the second-person one Peter too did shew*. He did overlap the speech act accomplished by the Apostle in his speech of Pentecost.

It happens in such circumstances that the category of person appears as it really is: a sort of primitive in human communication, to be thought of without the encrustations of any moral theory of personhood. Person and deixis – as John Lyons observes – do appear first in the theory of grammar: 'The category of person depends crucially upon the grammaticalization of the participants-roles, and more especially upon the grammaticalization of the speaker's reference to himself as the speaker'.[31] Despite its restricted formulation, Lyons'

δεξιῶν σου) could well invite such an identification'. I consider the argument by Moessner as a correct inference from the text of *Psalm* 109. However, I wonder why not to think of casting of persons, instead of introducing a second Lord.

[30] *CE* III 4,50,1 (= *GNO* I/2,153,13-4 Jaeger).

[31] John Lyons, *Semantics: 2* (1977), 640.

remark is acute, and supports some interesting philosophical developments. Where quotation and deixis are relevant is where voicing and voiceless beings are thought of as second person relationships. Eunomius was blind towards the Incarnation, for he was not able to see what was shown *through* what was said. This is perhaps the reason why he quoted the sentence of Peter omitting the deictic part '*this* Jesus whom *you* crucified'. He did knew what was *said* by the Apostle, but did not pay attention to what ὁ λόγος every time *shows* to everybody, provided, of course, they make – as Basil and Gregory did – the effort of seeing God *through* language.

The Light Imagery in Gregory of Nyssa's *Contra Eunomium* III 6

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Abstract

This article investigates how Gregory of Nyssa uses the imagery of light in his justification of the divinity of the Son in *Contra Eunomium* III 6 (*CE* III 6). Throughout his works, the light imagery is one of the main imageries he uses in his soteriology to describe the relation between the Divine and humans. *CE* III 6 uses this imagery in a special way, namely to explain the relation between the Father and the Son. This unusual use clarifies some aspects of the imagery indicated implicitly in its soteriological uses.

Three questions are discussed in this article: 1. Which characteristics of light manifest the position of Christ as the Son of God? 2. Which kind of relation between the Father and the Son is illustrated by this imagery?

The light imagery appears intensively in *CE* III 6. Three paragraphs within the chapter are analyzed closely (GNO II 2: 190.11-27; 192.19-193.4; 203.15-204.17). The article develops along the following lines: (1) the overall argumentation and content of *CE* III 6; (2) how these three paragraphs apply the imagery of light for his argumentation. In the conclusion results of the analysis will be put in a broader framework discussing the significance of *CE* III 6 for understanding Gregory's use of the imagery of light.

Introduction

With more than 700 occurrences in total, light imagery plays an important role in Gregory of Nyssa's writings. Gregory uses this imagery in all sorts of works, such as doctrinal works, ascetical works, spiritual works, sermons, and letters. This imagery relates most closely to Gregory's spirituality: It is one of the main kinds of imagery that Gregory uses to describe the relation between the Divine and humans. Therefore, the spiritual meaning of this imagery in Gregory is very often a topic in patristic studies.

Many scholars concentrate on Gregory's use of the imagery of light, in which he compares light to the soul's moment of illumination, namely when the soul realizes the unreliability of the sensible world and turns to true reality in God. In Gregory's mode of spiritual development, the soul travels from this light to deeper darkness.[1]

[1] See Jean Daniélou, *Platonisme et Théologie Mystique: essai sur la doctrine spirituelle de saint Grégoire de Nysse*, Théologie 2 (Paris, [2]1954). Andrew Louth, *The Origins of the Christian*

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In this mode, light signifies a transitional period which the soul has to transcend by means of its own spiritual progress.

However, Gregory's use of light imagery is far more diverse than this observation: the illumination of the soul is only one way in which he uses light imagery. For Gregory, human participation in the Divine life is itself living in the light, 'for, as the prophet says, it is not that Light is seen but that it is perceived in Light.'[2] Martin Laird has noticed this mingling of the imagery of light and the imagery of darkness in Gregory's *In Canticum Canticorum*.[3] Light not only leads the soul to get rid of the sensible world on the lower stage of the spiritual development, but also plays a positive role in the final union of the soul with God.[4]

Many examples of light imagery in Gregory's writings reveal this positive side of light. In his doctrinal and apologetic works, such as *Contra Eunomium*, *Ad Simplicium de fide*, *De deitate Filii et Spiritus Sancti et in Abraham*, *Adversus Macedonianos de Spiritu Sancto*, *Adversus Arium et Sabellium*, Gregory refers to the imagery of light from time to time.[5] There is a long history of authors in the early church using the imagery of light in Trinitarian theology.[6]

Mystical Tradition: From Plato to Denys (Oxford, [2]2007), 81; J. Warren Smith, *Passion and Paradise*: *Human and Divine Emotion in the Thought of Gregory of Nyssa* (New York, 2004), 117-9, 148-82.

[2] My translation of οὐ γὰρ ἔστι, καθώς φησιν ὁ προφήτης, τὸ φῶς ὀφθῆναι μὴ ἐν φωτὶ καθορώμενον. Greek text: *Encomium in Sanctum Stephanum Protomartyrem*, ed. Otto Lendle (Leiden, 1968), 36.5-6.

[3] Martin Laird, *Gregory of Nyssa and the Grasp of Faith: Union, Knowledge, and Divine Presence*, The Oxford Early Christian Studies (Oxford, 2004), 174-204. Already in the 1950s Walter Völker noticed the importance of the light imagery for the mystical experience in Gregory. See his *Gregor von Nyssa als Mystiker* (Wiesbaden, 1955).

[4] The same kind of idea see W. Völker, *Mystiker* (1955), 208.

[5] An overview of the use of the word 'light' in Gregory's different works can be found in: Adolf Martin Ritter, 'Light', in Lucas Francisco Mateo-Seco and Giulio Maspero (eds), *The Brill Dictionary of Gregory of Nyssa* (Leiden, 2010), 447-50.

[6] For studies on the imagery of light in the Trinitarian context see F.J. Dölger, 'Sonne und Sonnenstrahl als Gleichnis in der Logostheologie des Christlichen Altertums', *Antike und Christentum* 1 (1929), 271-90; George Leonard Prestige, *God in Patristic Thought* (London, 1959); Richard Hanson, *Studies in Christian Antiquity* (Edinburgh, 1985), 253-78; Franz Dünzel, *A Brief History of the Doctrine of the Trinity in the Early Church*, trans. John Bowden (London, 2007), 38. These works focus on the power of the imagery of light for conceptual elaboration. They do not read the imagery of light from the perspective of an inter-personal relationship, which applies not only to the persons in Trinity, but also to the relations between God and humans. Studies concerned with Gregory's usage of light can be found in Kerstin Bjerre-Aspegren, *Bräutigam, Sonne und Mutter: Studien zu einigen Gottesmetaphern bei Gregor von Nyssa* (Lund, 1977), 114-70; Verna Harrison, *Grace and Human Freedom according to St. Gregory of Nyssa*, Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity 30 (Lewiston, 1992), 107-21. Both authors write on the relation between the soul and the Divine, which is a different topic than mine, and they do not mention *CE* or other works treating Trinitarian issues in their discussions. For more systematic studies of imagery in the Cappadocian Fathers see Manfred Kertsch, *Bildersprache bei Gregor von Nazianz: ein Beitrag zur spätantiken Rhetorik und Popularphilosophie*, Grazer Theologische Studien 2

Gregory follows this tradition and develops it when coining his own Trinitarian theology. In the context of the Trinitarian controversy, he uses this imagery mainly to demonstrate the divinity of the Son, and this imagery thereby expresses a positive relation between the Son and the Father. Although the light imagery in Gregory's doctrinal treatises deals with a different topic than in his spiritual works, there are still some parallels and connections to be found between the imagery used in these two types of works.

In this article, I am going to discuss how Gregory uses the imagery of light in one of his main doctrinal works, *Contra Eunomium* III 6 (*CE* III 6).[7] I shall give a detailed analysis of three passages from this book,[8] and answer two questions: 1. Which characteristics of light manifest the position of Christ as the Son of God? 2. Which kind of relation between the Father and the Son is illustrated by this imagery? The article will conclude with a discussion about the significance of the imagery of light in *CE* III 6 for understanding the same imagery in the context of Gregory's spirituality. It is necessary to look at the broader context of these passages in *CE* III 6 first.

Contra Eunomium III 6

In *CE* III 6 Gregory criticizes Eunomius for his use of the concept of natural creation to describe the *begetting* (γέννησις) of the Son by the Father. Due to the confusion of *begetting* and *creating*, Eunomius thinks that the Only-begotten comes into being from not being, and thereby there was a time when the Father was without the Son. Gregory responds to this assertion by saying that in order to understand how the same Christ can exist eternally *and* be begotten by the Father at the same time, we should look at the relation between the Father and the Only-begotten with a different lens than that which we use for the relation between the Creator and the creation: the Son relates to the Father as the Father's image. An image and its archetype are connected so closely that

(Graz, 1980). P. Calasanctius, *De Beeldspraak bij den Heiligen Basilius den Grote: met een Inleiding over de Opvattingen van de Griekse en Romeinse Rhetoren Aangaande Beeldspraak*, Studia Graeca Noviomagenisia 2 (Nijmegen, 1941).

[7] The critical edition of this text: *Contra Eunomium Libri: Pars Altera*, ed. Werner Jaeger, GNO 2 (Leiden, 1960), 3-133; I use the English translation made by Stuart Hall in preparation of the 12th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa, the proceedings of which are forthcoming. By the imagery of 'light' I mean images dealing with light, so the sun/disc imagery and the lamp/flame imagery are both included. I will use the term 'the imagery of "light"', the sun/disc imagery, or the lamp/flame imagery in different contexts.

[8] GNO 2, 190.11-27, 192.19-193.4, 203.15-204.17. Similar use of the imagery of light in Gregory can be found in *Ad Simplicium de fide*, ed. F. Müller *et al*., GNO 3.1 (Leiden, 1958), 63-4; *Adversus Arium et Sabellium*, GNO 3.1 (1958), 73-4; *Adversus Macedonianos de Spiritu Sancto*, GNO 3.1 (1958), 92-3; *De deitate Filii et Spiritus Sancti et in Abraham*, ed. Ernestus Rhein *et al*., GNO 10.2 (Leiden, 1996), 123-4.

their existence includes the existence of the other. In the abovementioned three passages, Gregory uses the imagery of light to elaborate three points in regard to the Father-Son relation within *CE* III 6:[9] Christ as the image of the Father, the closeness of their relation, and the necessity of the generation.

The First Passage (GNO 2, 190.11-27)

The first passage uses the imagery of light to demonstrate how the Son as the image of the Father possesses the same divinity as the Father. Gregory first shows the connection between the sun/disc imagery and the imagery of the Son as the image of the Father.

> Just as the body of the sun is replicated in the whole disc that surrounds it, and one who sees the disc goes on through what is apparent to think of the substantial reality of the whole that lies deep within so, he [the Apostle] says, in the greatness of the Son's power the Father's majesty is replicated, in order that whatever knowledge there is of the one [the Son] may equally be believed of the other [the Father].[10]

Athanasius has made a similar connection between the sun/disc imagery and the image of the Father.[11] According to Athanasius the relation between the sun and its disc illustrates how the Father and the Son are distinct from each other and at the same time one. But Gregory, in his polemics with Eunomius, wants to show, by the sun/disc imagery, two more aspects of the Father/Son relation than Athanasius does: first, the function of the Son as the image of the Father, and second, the equality between the Father and the Son.[12] I shall explain these two aspects one by one. First, the Son and light share the same 'function' as an image, namely to reflect its archetype. Gregory calls what an image reflects 'the substantial reality of the whole that lies deep within' (ὅλου τοῦ κατὰ τὸ βάθος ὑποκειμένου τὴν ὑπόστασιν), where the term *substantial reality* (ὑπόστασις) refers to the sun. In this Gregory draws an analogy between the Father and the sun and between the Son and light: as the Father is for humans inaccessible in His essence; likewise, the sun is too far away for human eyes to see.[13] Therefore, the Only-begotten Son and light are the same in being an image, whose visible characters can transmit the *incomprehensible* essence of

[9] GNO 2, 190.11-27, 192.19-193.4, 203.15-204.17.

[10] GNO 2, 190.11-7: ὡς γὰρ τὸ ἡλιακὸν σῶμα ὅλῳ τῷ περιέχοντι κύκλῳ χαρακτηρίζεται καὶ ὁ τὸν κύκλον ἰδὼν ὅλου τοῦ κατὰ τὸ βάθος ὑποκειμένου τὴν ὑπόστασιν διὰ τοῦ φαινομένου ἀνελογίσατο, οὕτως εἶπεν ἐν τῷ μεγέθει τῆς τοῦ υἱοῦ δυνάμεως τὸ τοῦ πατρὸς μεγαλεῖον χαρακτηρίζεσθαι, ἵνα ὅσον τοῦτο γινώσκεται, τοσοῦτον εἶναι κἀκεῖνο πιστεύηται.

[11] See Athanasius, *Orations III Contra Arianos*, Athanasius Werke. 1.1: Die Dogmatischen Schriften III, ed. Karin Metzler (Berlin, 2000), 318-9.

[12] F. Dünzel, *A Brief History* (2007), 109.

[13] Kerstin Bjerren has also noticed the connection between the imagery of light and Gregory's negative theology. See K. Bjerren, *Bräutigam* (1977), 114-5.

their archetype.[14] Secondly, an image reflects *the whole* (ὅλου) of its archetype. So Gregory adds an attribute to *the substantial reality* (τὴν ὑπόστασιν): 'of the whole that lies deep within' (ὅλου τοῦ κατὰ τὸ βάθος ὑποκειμένου). The Son is the same with the Father in majesty, power, glory and so on, 'whatever knowledge there is of the one [*i.e.*, the Son] may equally be believed of the other [*i.e.*, the Father]' (ἵνα ὅσον τοῦτο γινώσκεται, τοσοῦτον εἶναι κἀκεῖνο πιστεύηται). To show this equality between the Son and the Father, in *CE* I Gregory calls the Son a second Sun: 'It is not so much a ray from a sun which we shall perceive, but from the unbegotten Son a second Sun shining out together with him as if begotten simultaneously with the very thought of the first, in every respect like him in beauty, power, brilliance, greatness, brightness, and all the attributes of the sun together.'[15]

Gregory then shows which characteristics of light make it an image of its archetype.

> Furthermore, as the brilliance of light radiates from the whole solar disc (for one part of the disc does not shine while another remains dim), just so the whole glory, which is the Father, radiates all round with the radiance it emits, that is, with the true Light; and as the beam comes from the sun (for there would be no sunbeam if there were no sun), yet the sun is not thought of by itself without its radiated beam, so in communicating the bond and eternity of the existence of the Only-begotten from the Father the Apostle calls the Son 'radiance of glory'.[16]

First, as the beginning of the text says, light has the character of exhaustiveness, that is, it radiates from *the whole solar disc* (ἐκ παντὸς τοῦ ἡλιακοῦ κύκλου) with the same light. In the same way, once the Son replicates the Father's glory, He covers *the whole* of the Father's glory.[17] Secondly, the existence of light is dependent on its source: the glory of the Father 'radiates all round with the radiance it emits' (τῷ ἐξ ἑαυτῆς ἀπαυγάσματι πανταχόθεν περιαυγάζεται). Light is able to replicate the hypostasis of its source, since light belongs to its source. Finally, the action of *emitting* (ἀπαυγάζω) gives to light these characteristics.

[14] In all the passages we are going to discuss, Gregory uses the imagery of light to emphasize the necessity of simultaneous existence of both the light and its source.

[15] GNO 1, 180.23-7: μᾶλλον δὲ οὐχὶ ἀκτῖνα ἐξ ἡλίου νοήσομεν, ἀλλ' ἐξ ἀγεννήτου ἡλίου ἄλλον ἥλιον ὁμοῦ τῇ τοῦ πρώτου ἐπινοίᾳ γεννητῶς αὐτῷ συνεκλάμποντα καὶ κατὰ πάντα ὡσαύτως ἔχοντα κάλλει δυνάμει λαμπηδόνι μεγέθει φαιδρότητι καὶ πᾶσιν ἅπαξ τοῖς περὶ τὸν ἥλιον θεωρουμένοις. Translation by Stuart Hall, in Lucas F. Mateo-Seco & Juan L. Bastero (eds), *El 'Contra Eunomium I' en la produccion literaria de Gregorio de Nisa: VI cologuio internacional sobre Gregorio de Nisa*, Coleccion Teologica 59 (Pamplona, 1988), 112.

[16] GNO 2, 190.17-27: καὶ πάλιν ὡς ἐκ παντὸς τοῦ ἡλιακοῦ κύκλου ἡ τοῦ φωτὸς λαμπηδὼν ἀπαυγάζεται (οὐ γὰρ τὸ μέν τι λάμπει, τὸ δὲ ἀλαμπές ἐστι τοῦ κύκλου), οὕτως ὅλη ἡ δόξα, ἥτις ἐστὶν ὁ πατήρ, τῷ ἐξ ἑαυτῆς ἀπαυγάσματι τουτέστι τῷ ἀληθινῷ φωτὶ πανταχόθεν περιαυγάζεται.

[17] Gregory wants to emphasize the equality between the Son and the Father by highlighting the 'wholeness' of the Son reflecting the Father. This usage is influenced by the development of Trinitarian theology in Gregory's time.

Emission is a kind of action, as Gregory explains, where 'the original remains as it is, while what flows from it is considered in itself.'[18] *Emitting* is an essential character of light to illustrate the relation between the Father and the Son, since *begetting* is similar to the action of *emitting*. Gregory writes: 'It includes also another kind of generation to describe the acknowledgement of the Son as God, that of physical emission: it speaks of 'radiance of glory; (*Heb*. 1:3), 'odour of perfume' (see *Song of Songs* 1:3), and 'breath of God' (see *Wis*. 7:25).'[19] The same is the case with *emission*, Gregory says that in *begetting* '[the Son] is thought of as both from [the Father] and with him.'[20] Gregory is not the first one to draw a comparison between *emission* and *begetting*, and the comparison occurs frequently in the Trinitarian debates.[21] However, it is probably Gregory's invention to explain through the notion of *begetting* as well as *emission* that the relation between the Father and the Son is *with no interval intervening* (μηδενὸς διαστήματος μεσιτεύοντος): 'that the one exists from the other, and is thought of as with the other, with no interval intervening between the Father and the one derived from him.'[22] So, the special characteristics of light not only show how it is possible for an image to replicate its archetype, but also reveal the intimacy between an image and its source.

We should explore a further implication of the intimacy: the mutual dependence between the Father and the Son. The sentence I mentioned above, the glory of the Father 'radiates all round with the radiance it emits' (τῷ ἐξ ἑαυτῆς ἀπαυγάσματι πανταχόθεν περιαυγάζεται), shows a mutual dependence between light and its source: 1) light comes into being through emission from its source, and 2) its source cannot radiate without light. In this intimacy, light and its source are dependent on each other for their existence. As Gregory says next, 'and as the beam comes from the sun (for there would be no sunbeam if there were no sun), yet the sun is not thought of by itself without its radiated beam' (καὶ ὡς ἐκ τοῦ ἡλίου μὲν ἐστὶν ἡ ἀκτίς [οὐ γὰρ ἂν ἦν ἀκτίς, εἰ μὴ ἥλιος ἦν], οὐ μήν ποτε χωρὶς τῆς ἀπαυγαζομένης ἀκτῖνος ἐφ' ἑαυτοῦ νοεῖται ὁ ἥλιος). Light and its source have such an inner relation that neither part can be complete without the other, and each one constitutes a part of the other.[23] Gregory points out immediately that this dependence relates to the

[18] GNO 2, 196.10-1: ἐφ' ὧν καὶ τὸ προηγούμενον μένει οἷόν ἐστι καὶ τὸ ἀπ' ἐκείνου ῥέον ἐφ' ἑαυτοῦ νοεῖται.

[19] *Ibid*. 199.12: συμπαραλαμβάνει καὶ ἕτερον τῆς γεννήσεως εἶδος πρὸς σημασίαν τῆς τοῦ υἱοῦ θεολογίας τὸ ἐκ τῆς ὑλικῆς ἀπορροίας, καί φησιν ἀπαύγασμα δόξης καὶ ὀσμὴν μύρου καὶ ἀτμίδα θεοῦ.

[20] *Ibid*. 199.21-2: τὸ ἐξ αὐτοῦ τε καὶ μετ' αὐτοῦ νοεῖσθαι.

[21] The earliest source probably is in Origen's *De principiis* II 4, ed. Paul Koetschau, GCS 22 (Leipzig, 1913), 126-32.

[22] GNO 2, 200.1-3: τὸ ἐξ ἐκείνου τε εἶναι καὶ μετ' ἐκείνου νοεῖσθαι, μηδενὸς διαστήματος μεταξὺ τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ ἐξ αὐτοῦ μεσιτεύοντος.

[23] Gregory expresses the same idea in his treatise, *Ad Simplicium, de fide*: 'And for this reason also Paul calls Him 'the brightness of glory', that we may learn that as the light from the lamp is of the nature of that which sheds the brightness, and is united with it (for as soon as the lamp

existence of each part: 'So in communicating the bond and eternity of the existence of the Only-begotten from the Father the Apostle calls the Son "radiance of glory"' (οὕτω τὸ συναφές τε καὶ ἀΐδιον τῆς ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς ὑπάρξεως τοῦ μονογενοῦς παραδιδοὺς ὁ ἀπόστολος ἀπαύγασμα δόξης τὸν υἱὸν κατωνόμασε'). In another place in *CE* III 6, Gregory uses a more direct term to illustrate this intimate connection, namely the *direct bond* (ἡ ἄμεσος συνάφεια) between the Father and the Son. [24]

The Second Passage (GNO 2, 192.19-193.4)

The second passage talks again about the intimacy between the Father and the Son. But Gregory shows more balance between the distinction and the union between the two persons in the Godhead. The distinctions provide another ground for the *direct bond*.

If (to take an hypothetical example) someone were to give a flame a power of free choice, it would be clear that the flame would wish, along with existing, also to emit light from itself, and having willed it [the flame] would surely not lack the power, since its natural power would accomplish the purpose with the light at the same time as constituting the flame; for undeniably, if it were granted to it purposely to start the flame, it would envisage the combination of all together, the kindling of the fire, willing the light, and the light itself, since the movement of the free will would in no way impede the instant existence of the light. In the same way, just as in the example we have given, if you also grant to the Father the will for good, you will not separate the Son from the Father by that act of will.[25]

The Son is so intimately joined to the Father that nothing stands in between them, not even the Father's will. This kind of intimacy exists also between the light and its source. Later Gregory mentions in *CE* III 6, 'by 'radiance' the

appears the light that comes from it shines out simultaneously), so in this place the Apostle would have us consider both that the Son is of the Father, and that the Father is never without the Son.' (διὸ καὶ ὁ Παῦλος ἀπαύγασμα δόξης αὐτὸν ὀνομάζει, ἵνα διδαχθῶμεν ὅτι, ὥσπερ τὸ ἐκ τοῦ λύχνου φῶς καὶ ἐκ τῆς φύσεώς ἐστι τοῦ ἀπαυγάζοντος καὶ μετ' ἐκείνου ἐστίν (ὁμοῦ τε γὰρ ἐξεφάνη ὁ λύχνος καὶ τὸ φῶς τὸ ἐξ αὐτοῦ συνεξέλαμψεν), οὕτω κελεύει καὶ ἐνταῦθα νοεῖν ὁ ἀπόστολος, ὅτι καὶ ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς ὁ υἱὸς καὶ οὐδέποτε χωρὶς τοῦ υἱοῦ ὁ πατήρ) (Translation: *Nicene and Post-nicene Fathers II, V*, trans. William Moore [Grand Rapids, Mich., repr. 1994], 338; Greek text: GNO 3.1, 63.26-64.5).

[24] For the term ἡ ἄμεσος συνάφεια see GNO 2, 191.16.

[25] GNO 2, 192.19-193.5: Ὥσπερ εἴ τις (λέγω δὲ καθ' ὑπόθεσιν) προαιρετικήν τινα τῇ φλογὶ δύναμιν δοίη, δῆλον ἂν εἴη ὅτι ὁμοῦ τῷ εἶναι ἡ φλὸξ καὶ τὴν αὐγὴν ἐκλάμπειν ἀφ' ἑαυτῆς θελήσει, θελήσασα δὲ πάντως οὐκ ἀδυνατήσει, τῆς φυσικῆς δυνάμεως ἐπιτελὲς ποιούσης ὁμοῦ τῷ συστῆναι τὴν φλόγα τὸ περὶ τὴν αὐγὴν βούλημα, ὡς ἀναντιρρήτως εἰ τοῦτο δοθείη τὸ προαιρετικῶς κινεῖσθαι τὴν φλόγα, πάντων κατὰ ταὐτὸν τὴν συνδρομὴν νοεῖσθαι, τῆς τε τοῦ πυρὸς ἐξάψεως καὶ τοῦ περὶ τὴν αὐγὴν θελήματος καὶ αὐτῆς τῆς αὐγῆς, ὡς μηδὲν τῆς προαιρετικῆς κινήσεως πρὸς τὴν ὀξεῖαν τῆς αὐγῆς ὑπόστασιν ἐμποδιζούσης – οὕτως κατὰ τὸ ῥηθὲν ἡμῖν ὑπόδειγμα καὶ τῷ πατρὶ τὸ ἀγαθὸν θέλημα συνομολογῶν οὐκ ἀποστήσεις διὰ τοῦ θελήματος τοῦ πατρὸς τὸν υἱόν.

close bond and inseparability' between the Father and the Son is made known.[26] Under the strange image of a flame's will Gregory speaks *de facto* about the will of the Father. In the Father, will and action are not separate from each other. In *CE* III 1, Gregory says of the Father: 'He always both wills what he is and, of course, is what he wills.'[27] The passage about the will of a flame talks also about the action of a flame. The *emission* of light by a flame has the characteristic that the emitted light constitutes the very action of emitting it: 'Its natural power would accomplish the purpose with the light at the same time as constituting the flame' (τῆς φυσικῆς δυνάμεως ἐπιτελὲς ποιούσης ὁμοῦ τῷ συστῆναι τὴν φλόγα τὸ περὶ τὴν αὐγὴν βούλημα). This expression is similar to the one in the previous instance of this imagery: 'The glory of the Father "radiates all round with the radiance it emits".' But there is also an important difference: in the present passage Gregory no longer says that the flame *emits* light; rather he describes light in a more positive way as *constituting* (συστῆναι) the flame. This subtle difference highlights another aspect of the inseparability between light and its source. They are both constituents of the same action and are involved in the same movement but with different positions: the flame kindles light, and light forms the flame. In the same way, the Father and the Son are engaged in the same movement of *generation* with no separation. The character of movement shows how it is that distinct persons can be one in essence: the Father and the Son move from opposite directions towards each other and their movement forms the one action of *generation*. Distinction and oneness are realized together in a dynamic unity. So Gregory concludes: 'If you also grant to the Father the will for good, you will not separate the Son from the Father by that act of will' (τῷ πατρὶ τὸ ἀγαθὸν θέλημα συνομολογῶν οὐκ ἀποστήσεις διὰ τοῦ θελήματος τοῦ πατρὸς τὸν υἱόν). The Father generates the goodness, and the Son forms the goodness, and at the same time they both are goodness.

The Third Passage (GNO 2, 203.15-204.17)

In the third passage Gregory reinforces both the necessity for the Father to *beget* the Son and their oneness in essence by using special terminology. He says: 'So if no radiance exists, he [man] holds that the radiating nature does not exist either … For it is not possible to conceive in the mind a substantial reality which makes no impression, a glory which emits no light …'[28] It does not seem accidental for Gregory to use the words *the radiating nature* (τὴν

[26] *Ibid*. 202.23-4: τῷ δὲ ἀπαυγάσματι τὸ συναφές τε καὶ ἀδιάστατον.

[27] *Ibid*. 46.2-3: ἀεὶ καὶ βούλεται ὅπερ ἐστὶν καὶ ἐστὶ πάντως ὃ καὶ βούλεται.

[28] *Ibid*. 204.2-3; 12-3: ὥστε τοῦ ἀπαυγάσματος μὴ ὄντος ὁμολογεῖσθαι μὴ εἶναι μηδὲ τὴν ἀπαυγάζουσαν φύσιν … οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ἐπινοῆσαι τῷ λόγῳ οὔτε ὑπόστασιν ἀχαρακτήριστον οὔτε ἀλαμπῆ δόξαν οὔτε ἄσοφον θεόν…

ἀπαυγάζουσαν φύσιν) (instead of sun or lamp) and *a substantial reality* (ὑπόστασιν) here. By these two words, Gregory highlights that the relation between the Father and the Son is a relation between reality and its attributes.[29] This passage conforms to Gregory's negative theology: since God is incomprehensible, it is necessary for the Only-begotten Son to be the image of the Father in the world so that humans can see the attributes of God, although the essence of God remains unknown. With the Son showing the attributes of the Father, the Father and the Son form one entity together. Their oneness lies not in what eyes can perceive, but at a level inaccessible, the level of their *ousia*.[30]

Conclusion

To conclude, we may say that Gregory's imagery of light comes into the Trinitarian debate to support his idea of Christ being the image of God. The relation between the light and its source shows us that as the image of God, Christ does not only reflect the glory of the Father, but He is also in a *direct bond* with the Father: they depend on each other mutually, constitute the same movement with distinct actions, and share their existence in an incomprehensible way.

From this analysis we can discern the following significance of light imagery for human spiritual life. Primarily, in *CE* III 6 Gregory links the imagery of light up with the imagery of the Son as the image of the Father. Since human beings are made in the image of God, there is a mediated relation between the imagery of light and the imagery of human beings as the image of God. That means human spiritual life and the relation between the soul and the Divine can be illustrated to some extent by the imagery of light. Now in *CE* III 6, the imagery of light shows that the relation between the Father and the Son within the Godhead is a mutual dependence existing in a dynamic movement. Therefore it may also be said regarding the relation between God and humanity is dynamic as well; humans are not totally passive, but rather enter into a communication with God. Finally, since the imagery of light illustrates the intimacy between the Father and the Son, when applying this imagery to human spiritual life, Gregory probably wants to indicate a similar, though not identical, intimacy between the human and the Divine. This, however, is a topic for another occasion, and would require its own examination of Gregory's spiritual works.

[29] Just as *radiance* is an attribute of the *radiating nature* and an *impression* functions as an attribute of *a substantial reality*, so the Son is an attribute of the Father.

[30] This assertion already leads us to another topic: the distinction between *ousia* and *hypostasis*. It is not my intention to go into this complicated matter. Here use the term *ousia* since I want to emphasize that the Father and the Son are united with each other as a single entity rather than as two separate realities. Oneness is the true meaning of their intimacy.

Does God 'Follow' Human Decision? An Interpretation of a Passage from Gregory of Nyssa's *De vita Moysis* (II 86)

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Abstract

The peculiar emphases of Gregory of Nyssa's thought earned him all kinds of charges, in his own lifetime and onwards: among others, that he falls into Tritheism, Modalism, Synergism, Pelagianism or Semi-Pelagianism. The purpose of this paper is to interpret one of these theoretical audacities. It can be found in a passage from his late treatise *De vita Moysis* (II 86), where he refers to the evils suffered by the Egyptians in the book of *Exodus*, and he attributes their cause to human decision (προαίρεσις). He affirms there that Divine Justice itself 'is consequent' or 'follows' (ἐπακολουθοῦσα) human decisions according to their merit. Although at this point Gregory follows closely Origen's exegesis – which tried to rebut the determinism of certain Gnostic schools by affirming the true self-government of the soul, even regarding salvation or damnation, he goes beyond his Alexandrian predecessor and his Greek sources concerning the real autonomy of human actions, in interpersonal correspondence between the human and the divine.

Scholars tend to acknowledge unanimously that the question of freedom is one of the core issues in Gregory of Nyssa's thought.[1] However, the identification of the original elements in his conception of freedom and the explanation of their theoretical basis have proven to be more intricate tasks. Indeed, one can find numerous elements from the Platonic, Stoic and Peripatetic schools in Nyssen's philosophy, as well as traces of the anthropology of earlier Christian authors such as Justin, Irenaeus, Clement, Origen and Methodius.

Although Gregory is heir to a long philosophical and theological tradition regarding human freedom, he has a remarkable capacity to transcend the limits of that tradition with profound intuitions and unexpected emphases. I believe a thorough analysis of Gregory's 'audacities' may provide a clue to understanding the

[1] See, for example, Jérome Gaïth, *La conception de la liberté chez Grégoire de Nysse* (Paris, 1953); Verna E.F. Harrison, *Grace and human freedom according to St. Gregory of Nyssa*, Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity 30 (Lewiston, NY, 1992); Giampietro Dal Toso, *La nozione di* proairesis *in Gregorio di Nissa: Analisi semiotico-linguistica e prospettive antropologiche*, Beiträge zum Studium der Kirchenväter 5 (Frankfurt am Main, 1998); Martin Streck, *Das schönste Gut: der menschliche Wille nach Nemesius von Emesa und Gregor von Nyssa*, Forschungen zur Kirchen- und Dogmengeschichte 88 (Göttingen, 2005).

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novelty of his thought. The purpose of this paper is to interpret one of these bold theories that drew my attention. I found it in a short passage of *De vita Moysis*, in the context of an allegorical exegesis of the Egyptian plagues. Gregory wants to explain there – as both Homer and Plato had done before[2] – that God cannot be held responsible (αἴτιον) for evil, but he employs a very peculiar terminology.

> The Egyptian decision produces all these [plagues] as an antecedent cause (ἅπερ πάντα ποιεῖ μὲν κατὰ τὸ προηγούμενον ἡ Αἰγυπτία προαίρεσις), and God's impartial Justice introduces (ἐπάγει) them, being consequent (ἐπακολουθοῦσα) to the decisions according to their merit.[3]

The Origenian inspiration of the phrase is undeniable. Obviously, Gregory knows Origen's explanation of these passages of *Exodus* and his arguments against Gnostic determinism. However, as we shall see, his own account is more audacious than any of the speculations to be found in Origen's works. Gregory does not merely say that Pharaoh's disobedience is in his power and that it deserves God's punishment through the plagues. He is actually stating that the Egyptians themselves are the main creators of their own punishment. He therefore suggests that divine justice – and God himself – 'follows' human purpose and in a way submits to it.

Both in Ancient sciences and Logic the verb ἐπακολουθέω and its equivalent ἕπομαι – meaning 'to be consequent', 'to follow closely' – indicated a certain hierarchical order and were predicated of the inferior and the relative with respect to their causes and first principles.[4] In traditional schools they were also used to evoke the lofty ideals of practical life: assimilation to God (ὁμοίωσις θεῷ), following or imitation (μίμησις) of the divine and the natural, life according to reason (κατὰ λόγον).[5] Their attribution to God with respect to human initiative in Nyssen's works is highly paradoxical.[6] It appears to restrict divine omnipotence and to bestow an excessive power upon human beings.

Hence, what does Nyssen truly intend to express through these words? I will propose that his main objective is to establish full coordination between God and human beings. Not at the level of essence or nature, but rather, in an interpersonal

[2] See Homer, *Od*. I 32-4; Plato, *Resp*. X 617d-e; *id*., *Tim*. 42e3-4.

[3] *De vita Moysis* II 86 (ed. Herbert Musurillo, GNO 7.1 [Leiden, 1964], 58.20-3).

[4] For example, in Marcus Aurelius, *Med*. VI 44; VII 75; Plotinus, *Enneads* II 3 (52), 16; III 2 (47), 10-1.

[5] See, for example, Plato, *Phaedrus* 248c; *Laws* IV 715e-716d; Philo, *Spec. Leg*. IV 186-8; *id*., *Migr*. 128; Epictetus, *Ench*. 49; Alcinous, *Didasc*. 28, 1-3; Marcus Aurelius, *Med*. VII 31; Diogenes Laertius, *Vit*. VII 87; Clement of Alexandria, *Strom*. II 19, 100-1.

[6] Interestingly, in a section of *De opificio hominis* Gregory seems to repent from using the verb to describe God's anticipation of and response to the autonomous movement of human decision. He explicitly opts for the traditional προκατανοέω, although he doesn't exclude the more daring predicate: "… ἐπακολουθήσας, μᾶλλον δὲ προκατανοήσας, τῇ προγνωστικῇ δυνάμει …" (*De opificio hominis* XVI 14 [ed. George H. Forbes, *Sancti Patris nostri Gregorii Nysseni Basilii Magni fratris quae supersunt omnia* I.2 (Burntisland, 1861), 204]).

sphere. It would seem Gregory wishes to base his own conception of human freedom and decision (προαίρεσις) on this human-divine personal relationship.

To be sure, if God were thought of only in essential or ontological categories, it would be absurd to assume that the first and ultimate cause could 'follow' in any way one of its effects. On the other hand, if we keep in mind the personal character of both Godhead and humanity, that 'hypostatic difference' communicated from God to mankind, which implies also a real lordship (κυριότης) of both over their natures,[7] it is not unreasonable to conceive a more reciprocal correlation between Creator and creature, in which the first interacts in some way with the second and can be 'consequent' to the gift he has granted. We shall now examine this statement of *De vita Moysis* comparing it both to Gregory's other writings and to the doctrines of his predecessors in the philosophical and theological traditions.

Cosmological order and personal authority

Jean Daniélou has studied the relevance and the philosophical sources of the notion of ἀκολουθία in Gregory of Nyssa's thought, a term that signifies a necessary sequence between statements or phenomena in disciplines as diverse as Logic, Metaphysics, Cosmology, Medicine, History and Biblical Exegesis.[8] Following the Stoics – probably known to him through the Platonists and Peripatetics – Gregory considers that this ἀκολουθία refers to a divine ordering of the cosmos and manifests itself through the sequential and necessary progress of nature in every being.[9]

Having thus adopted to a certain extent the Hellenic conception of the world, the Fathers were compelled to confront the Stoic dilemma of the compatibility of Fate or the cosmic order with human freedom. It could be expressed by the following question: How can a person be considered a free agent if she is immersed in that universal concatenation, the 'natural coordination (φυσικήν σύνταξιν) of the universe – described by Chrysippus –, in which from eternity certain things are consequent (ἐπακολουθούντων) and interconnected to others'?[10] Plotinus expresses it in a simpler way: 'How can we be wholly lords (ὅλως κύριοι) when we are being led (ἀγόμεθα)?'.[11]

[7] See my 'Human communion and difference in Gregory of Nyssa: from Trinitarian Theology to the Philosophy of human person and free decision', in Volker H. Drecoll and Margitta Berghaus (eds), *Gregory of Nyssa: The Minor Treatises on Trinitarian Theology and Apollinarism*, Vigiliae Christianae Supplements 106 (Leiden, 2011), 337-49.

[8] See Jean Daniélou, *L'être et le temps chez Grégoire de Nysse* (Leiden, 1970), 18-50.

[9] See, for example, *In Hexaemeron* (ed. Hubert R. Drobner, GNO 4.1 [Leiden, 2009], 23.18-24.10).

[10] Chrysippus ap Gellius, *Noct. Att.* VII 2 (SVF II, 1000).

[11] Plotinus, *Enneads* VI 8 (39), 2, 19. See also *ibid.* VI 8 (39), 4, 10-1.

This is the question that troubles Nyssen's mind. He tries to find a principle of action that may prove to be irreducible to the necessary connection of natural causes. Of course, the Platonists and Aristotelians of the second and third centuries AD had offered a variety of theories against the extreme determinism of the Stoics, to guarantee the causal autonomy of human agents.[12] Subsequently, Christian authors take up many of these arguments and elaborate some of their own.[13] However, in spite of all these efforts the strength of Chrysippus' theory remains unbroken during those years, as demonstrated by some later Stoic formulations.[14] The truth is that, although one may diminish or sometimes even eliminate the influence of external forces over human actions – as Chrysippus himself and the rest of the schools intend to do when they speak of 'what is up to us (τὸ ἐφ´ ἡμῖν)' –, it is harder to avoid the internal necessity of each subject, tied to its physical, psychological and intellectual constitution.

Precisely in this cosmic context, where everything is ruled by supreme Justice and Order, Gregory asks himself once more how to unravel the question of the compatibility between divine and human causalities. Therefore, in the *Oratio catechetica* he returns to the biblical image of the creation of man and the Creator's love for his creature.

> The one who holds the authority over all (τοῦ παντὸς τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἔχων), owing to an excess of his esteem towards man, handed over something (ἀφῆκέ τι) to be under our own authority, of which only each of us is the lord (οὗ μόνος ἕκαστός ἐστι κύριος). And this is the decision (προαίρεσις), a certain independent and self-governing (αὐτεξούσιον) resource, situated in the freedom of reason.[15]

The text is extremely rich in meaning. It implies that God almighty has given a portion of his own authority to each individual, though not as a participated essential power, necessarily subordinate to his own, supreme and absolute. It seems as if God himself had confined his own sphere of dominion and had 'let loose' or 'let fall' – two possible meanings of ἀφίημι – a share of that lordship to human persons. That is why each one is called the 'lord' of their decisions in an exclusive way (μόνος ἕκαστός ἐστι κύριος).

Two earlier Greek Christian authors have made statements similar to this one by Nyssen. The first is from the *Dialogus cum Tryphone*, where Justin declares that God has capacitated (ἐνεδυνάμωσε) angels and humans, both created in

[12] See, for example, Alcinous, *Did*. 26, 1-3; [Plutarch], *Fat*. 570A-572E; Alexander of Aphrodisias, *Mant*. 15, 185-6.

[13] See, for example, Origen, *Com. Gen*. III ap. *Philoc*. XXIII; Bardaisan of Edessa, *Lib. leg. reg*. (PS 1.2, 543-55).

[14] See, for example, Alexander, *Fat*. XIII, XXII, *et passim*. See also Susanne Bobzien, *Determinism and Freedom in Stoic Philosophy* (Oxford, 1998), 396-412.

[15] *Oratio catechetica* XXX 4 (ed. Ekkehard Mühlenberg, GNO 3.4 [Leiden, 1996], 75.13-7).

free choice and self-governed (ἐν ἐλευθέρᾳ προαιρέσει καὶ αὐτεξουσίους), either to choose what is agreeable or to act maliciously.[16]

The second one is a fragment of *De libero arbitrio* by Methodius, who affirms that God, willing to honour (τιμῆσαι) man, 'granted him the authority of being able to do what he wished (τὴν ἐξουσίαν αὐτῷ τοῦ δύνασθαι ποιεῖν ἃ βούλεται δεδωκέναι)'.[17] This authority consists – according to Methodius – in the power either to obey divine precepts (πείθεσθαι τοῖς προστάγμασιν) or not to heed them (μὴ ὑπακούειν).[18]

They both describe a certain power delegated by God to human nature, and specifically to its rational faculty. The activity of this power can either submit to divine law and follow it – πείθομαι corresponds here to ἐπακολουθέω – or else turn away from it, probably due to a failure of the intellect. Even though we can find in these authors an effort to supersede Platonic intellectualism, there is no room in their theories for a God following human decision. Human beings remain utterly absorbed in the divinely established order.

Continuing with the cosmological analysis of the problem, we must address the redefinition made by Gregory of the word ἐξουσία, which I have translated as 'authority'. The term was particularly relevant during the debate on Fate and 'what is up to us' since the Hellenistic period. The Ancient Stoics defined freedom (ἐλευθερία) as 'the authority of independent action (ἐξουσία αὐτοπραγίας)'[19] while Epictetus defined it as 'something self-governed and autonomous (αὐτεξούσιόν τι εἶναι καὶ αὐτόνομον)'.[20] However, the meaning of ἐξουσία suffers a decisive change towards a certain indeterminism of action in the refutation of the Stoic theory by the Peripatetic Alexander of Aphrodisias. In his *De fato* we read that humans possess an 'authority of choice (ἐξουσία τῆς αἱρέσεως)' over their actions, derived from the deliberative faculty and from reason, which makes them capable of acting differently in equal circumstances.[21]

In a remarkable passage concerning our topic, Alexander is forced to accept, along with Chrysippus, that well-known ancient metaphysical principle: that nothing happens without a cause (ἀναιτίως). However, he asserts that not everything that exists can follow pre-established, determined and pre-existing causes because, in that case, human deliberation would be vain (τὸ βουλεύεσθαι μάτην).[22] For Alexander the deliberative power is essential to human beings.

[16] See Justin Martyr, *Dial. Tryph.* 88, 5. We find a very similar statement in Origen, *Perì arkhôn* III 1, 19.

[17] Methodius, *De lib. arb.* (PG 18, 264B-265A). See also Origen, *C. Cels.* VIII 72.

[18] See *ibid.*

[19] Ap. Diogenes Laertius, *Vit.* VII 212.

[20] Epictetus, *Diss.* IV 1, 56.

[21] Alexander of Aphrodisias, *Fat.* XI (179.8-180.2). See Bobzien, *Determinism and Freedom* (1998), 406-8.

[22] *Ibid.* XI (178, 8-15).

As a result, since nature produces none of the antecedent or foremost things in vain (μηδὲν μάτην ἡ φύσις ποιεῖ τῶν προηγουμένων), this activity cannot befall as a consequence (κατ' ἐπακολούθημά τι) and concomitance with respect to things that happen by way of antecedent (τοῖς προηγουμένως γινομένοις).[23]

The terminology matches exactly the one used by Gregory in the text quoted at the beginning of this article. In this case, however, Alexander attributes the causality and authority of deliberate action to nature itself (φύσις) and to its universal effectiveness from inside the agents. Not to a principle that would belong to the individual as such. Hence, although the author places the principle (ἀρχή) of action in human beings, even affirming 'by this authority (ἐξουσία) there exists something up to us (ἐστί τι ἐφ΄ ἡμῖν): the fact that we are the lords (ἡμεῖς ἐσμεν κύριοι) of what comes to be in such a way, and not a certain cause from outside (ἔξωθεν)'[24], this nevertheless does not liberate the agent from the 'inner' determinants of his own being: the impulses, appetites and inclinations of his nature or species.

The problem with Alexander's solution is that his 'antecedent cause', which lies in human deliberation and reason and is responsible for actions, can rightly be considered a 'consequence' of its own nature, which is prior to its faculties and guides them from the inside. In fact, this is generally what occurs regarding the ancient use of the plural, first-person personal pronoun in this context, the 'we' or 'us' in the formula τὸ ἐφ΄ ἡμῖν. Even though the authors guarantee the causal autonomy of the agents in order to preserve their moral responsibility, the 'self' from whom the election and the action emanate tends to be identified with something more general or comprehensive than each person's *ego*. This higher principle is acknowledged as nature or species by an Aristotelian like Alexander[25] and as the superior instances of the Soul and Intellect by a Platonist like Plotinus.[26] The supreme and universal realities always possess being in a more real or intense way than inferior beings or individuals and, therefore, also power.

We stated previously that in Gregory's *Oratio* the authority handed over by God is not described as a participated natural or essential faculty, but as a personal lordship.[27] It is not possible here to explain in detail the relationship of this problem with Nyssen's Trinitarian controversies.[28] We may at least state

[23] *Ibid*.

[24] *Ibid*. XV (185, 12-4).

[25] Alexander of Aphrodisias, *Prov*. (ed. H.-J. Ruland, *Die arabischen Fassungen zweier Schriften des Alexander von Aphrodisias: Über die Vorsehung und über das liberum arbitrium*, diss. [Saarbrücken, 1976], 87.5-91.4 *et passim*). See Robert W. Sharples, *Peripatetic Philosophy 200 BC to AD 200. An Introduction and Collection of Sources in Translation* (Cambridge, 2010), 205.

[26] See Plotinus, *Enneads* V 1 (10), 10; IV 4 (22), 14.

[27] Following the philosophical tradition, Gregory interrelates closely the terms ἐξουσία and κυριότης, but in his debate with Eunomius he interestingly affirms that in certain contexts they must be differentiated from the notion of οὐσία; see *Contra Eunomium* III 4, 58-64 (ed. Werner Jaeger, GNO 2 [Leiden, 1960], 156.15-159.6).

[28] See my 'Human communion and difference' (2011).

that, according to the theological and metaphysical theory of his adversary Eunomius of Cyzicus, every ontological differentiation or derivation necessarily implies some kind of inferiority. In the causal chain of descending essences and operations that are consequent (παρεπομένων) to one another – Eunomius concludes –, every reality that 'follows' a certain cause, cannot be coordinate (συνταττομένης) with it; rather, the former is always subordinate or submitted (ὑποταττομένης) to the latter.[29] This is why he calls the hypostasis of the Son not only inferior but even a slave to the Father.[30] Gregory argues against this univocal conception of causal succession (ἀκολουθία) and order (τάξις), particularly when his opponent dares to apply it to divine or human persons, which are in no way subordinate to one another as such.[31]

For this same reason, Gregory affirms that the authority (ἐξουσία) of human persons cannot be necessitated either externally or internally, as we can read already in his *De virginitate* and *De opificio hominis*.[32] At this point, he also goes further than the Middle-Platonists, for whom Fate enclosed the order of a law (ἡ γὰρ εἱμαρμένη νόμου τάξιν ἐπέχουσα),[33] and its decrees predetermined by way of hypothesis the consequences of free actions.[34] For Nyssen, however, the Creator concedes to humans that each and everyone's decision (ἡ ἑκάστου προαίρεσις) should be their own Destiny and Fate (μοῖρα καὶ εἱμαρμένη).[35]

The 'overturned order': an excerpt from *De oratione dominica*

Gregory's confrontation of that absolute cosmic order of descending causalities takes an unexpected turn in the fifth oration of his treatise *De oratione Dominica*, which relates to the passage about the plagues in *De vita Moysis*. Indeed, while interpreting the second petition of the Lord's Prayer: 'forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors', Gregory affirms that in this case as well it can be said that God follows human being. He himself warns us against the temerity of his way of thinking.

For it is daring (τολμηρόν) to consider in the intellect the thoughts that occur to me regarding this issue, but it is even more daring (τολμηρότερον) to disclose the object

[29] Ap. *Contra Eunomium* I 151-4 (ed. Werner Jaeger, GNO 1 [Leiden, 1960], 71.28-73.15).

[30] See *ibid*. III 8, 43-58 (GNO 2, 254.26-261.3). See also *In illud: Tunc et ipse Filius* (ed. J. Kenneth Downing, GNO 3.2 [Leiden, 1987], 3-28).

[31] See *ibid*. I 191-204 (GNO 1 [Leiden, 1960], 82.19-86.16).

[32] See *De virginitate* XII 2, 1-17 (ed. John P. Cavarnos, GNO 8.1 [Leiden, 1986], 297.24-298.16); *De opificio hominis* XVI 11 (202).

[33] See Alcinous, *Didasc*. 26, 1.

[34] See *ibid*. 26, 2; in Alcinous' words: 'What follows is fated (καθείμαρται δὲ τὸ ἑπόμενον)'. See also [Plutarch], *Fat*. IV 569B-570B; Chalcidius, *In Tim*. 150-2. See John M. Dillon, *The Middle Platonists. A Study of Platonism 80 B.C. to A.D. 200* (London, 1977), 296.

[35] See *Contra Fatum* (ed. Jacob A. McDonough, GNO 3.2 [Leiden, 1987], 56, 16-7).

of my thought in words. In fact, what is being said? That just as God is proposed for imitation (εἰς μίμησιν) to those who are being rectified according to the good – as the Apostle says: 'Be my imitators, as I am of Christ' – so inversely (τὸ ἔμπαλιν) [He] wishes your own disposition to become an example for God towards the good. And the order is somehow overturned (ἀντιμεθίσταται τρόπον τινὰ ἡ τάξις), so that we may dare (ὥστε τολμῆσαι) to expect that, in the same way that the good is perfected in us by the imitation of the divine, likewise God will imitate our deeds when we become righteous regarding any of the goods. In order that you may also say to God: 'What I have done, you do it as well. Imitate this slave of yours, O Lord; this poor beggar, O King of the universe'.[36]

Here is a clear evidence of the personal coordination between God and humans that Gregory proposes and that was discussed earlier. First, he mentions the classical and biblical conception of human following and imitation of God or Christ, to which he resorts as well in so many occasions,[37] but he adds at once the paradoxical counterpart. The causal order is explicitly inverted. The reciprocity between both appears deep and extremely close, literally between an 'I' and a 'You'. Gregory's effort seems to be aimed at translating the biblical intimacy between God the Father and his children to the philosophical language and categories regarding order and causality.

It is definitely a bold idea, but according to Gregory this boldness belongs to the Creator himself, having placed the human person at his same level. It is God who from the beginning endowed her with the freedom (ἐλευθερία) and the confidence (παῤῥησία) to be at his side, as the author declares a few lines above.[38] Moreover, God himself 'wishes' (βούλεται), according to the text, to imitate the example of each human being and to submit in a way to their judgement.

When Nyssen affirms in *De mortuis* that 'what is self-governed is equal to God (ἰσόθεον γάρ ἐστι τὸ αὐτεξούσιον),'[39] I believe that he refers to this personal coordination between the divine and the human, to this new 'hypostatic' meaning of human decision and authority. Indeed, the equality to God referred to in that expression could not be ontological, and that is why Gregory reminds us in the passage on the Lord's Prayer – where he brings face to face the slave and the Lord, the poor beggar and the King – that the essential asymmetry between the created and the uncreated is infinite, as we can also see in the rest of his works.

Furthermore, in this passage Gregory clearly departs from Origen, to whom he owes so much regarding his anthropological theory.[40] Although the Alexandrian never affirms that God 'follows' or 'imitates' human beings, he

[36] *De oratione dominica* V (ed. John F. Callahan, GNO 7.2 [Leiden, 1992], 61, 12-24).

[37] See, for example, *De virginitate* XV 2; *In inscriptiones Psalmorum* II 11, 54; *Oratio catechetica* XXXV 8; *De vita Moysis* II 249-55; *De perfectione Christiana*.

[38] See *De oratione dominica* V (60, 21-5).

[39] *De mortuis* (ed. Günther Heil, GNO 9 [Leiden, 1967], 54, 10).

[40] In his commentary to this petition of the Lord's Prayer, Origen does not suggest anything like the words of Nyssen (see Origen, *De oratione* XVIII).

does envision a Providence that in a certain way adapts itself to the rational creatures respecting their free movements, as when she repairs and guides back to unity the countless divergences of the spirits that had broken off from the original communion in the *Lógos* because of the Fall.[41] In this way, however, Origen wants to reaffirm that the sole power ('*una virtus*') to govern the universe belongs to the Godhead.[42] The reason why he says that God somehow 'responds' to the deviated movements of the intellects is, besides his dispute with Gnostic determinism, to preserve divine omnipotence in the administration of the cosmos, even of movements away from the good, which he does not cause but he preconceives and restores.

That is certainly not what Gregory intends to say. His God wants to ensure precisely that there subsists a sphere over which he retains no control whatsoever. This is the personal sphere, really distinct from the essential and natural level. Indeed, in the fourth of his *Homilies on Ecclesiastes*, where he condemns slavery as a sin, he asserts that not even God himself (οὐδὲ αὐτοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ) can dominate human beings, although his natural prerogatives and essential superiority would allow him to do so. The reason is that the Creator doesn't regret his own gifts, and he wouldn't enslave the one he made free and lord of creation.[43] Besides, as the text on the Lord's Prayer demonstrates, according to Nyssen the Godhead interacts with and follows human beings not only in their rebellious actions and dispositions, but also in those which are righteous and virtuous.

Origen also uses the verb ἐπακολουθέω while commenting on the Exodus episodes in *Perì Arkhôn*[44] – the same passages Gregory interprets in *De vita Moysis*. Nevertheless, he does not predicate this verb of God, but of Pharaoh's own act of 'hardening', which 'is consequent' (ἐπακολουθεῖ) – as Origen says – to God's benevolent purpose.[45] This divine purpose descends upon every rational creature as the rain falls over the earth, but it produces diverse effects in each of them according to their inner dispositions.

Origen wishes the same as Gregory: to rebut the determinism of human action. But, in doing so, he preserves the traditional metaphysical scheme of descending causes and of an essential order that comprehends everything. As a result, although he effectively defends the causal autonomy of individuals, even regarding their salvation or damnation,[46] he describes a retributive divine Justice, which punishes those refusing to obey.[47] He also speaks of 'primordial causes' (πρεσβυτέρας αἰτίας) in each agent, which merit the honour or

[41] See, for example, Origen, *Perì arkhôn* II 1, 2; III 1, 14; *id*., *Hom. Jer*. XVIII 6.
[42] *Ibid*.
[43] See *In Ecclesiasten Homiliae* IV 1 (ed. Paul Alexander, GNO 5 [Leiden, 1962], 336.10-21).
[44] See Origen, *Perì arkhôn* III 1, 8-17.
[45] *Ibid*. III 1, 10.
[46] *Ibid*. III 1, 6.
[47] See *ibid*. III 1, 17.

dishonour that God himself provides them.[48] At this point, he even implies the existence of options made by the soul before her birth in the body, as described by Plato in the Myth of Er.[49] For all these reasons, Origen's theory of the compatibility between Providence and free will differs little from the model we find in the late Platonists and Alexander, and it resembles the answer given by Plotinus.[50] Some of Nyssen's speculations on the subject, as we have shown, tend not to stick so closely to the classical tradition.

Psychological sequence and *proaíresis*

Thanks to the personal quality that characterises the decision and authority of each human self, according to Gregory, both the antecedent cause of their actions and the consequences are up to them. The author expresses this in a synthetic exhortation: 'You be the judge to yourself (αὐτὸς γενοῦ σεαυτῷ δικαστής)'[51]. Only each human self in the present moment of their existence possesses the authority over their own being and destiny, since they have been placed in a way beyond the order of things.

I have already mentioned some of the psychological facets of this distinct intuition of Nyssen. Most significant is perhaps the waning of the intellect (νοῦς) as the personal centre and the emergence in its place of the self and free decision (προαίρεσις).[52] According to Greek thought, just as in the cosmos everything should obey the supreme commands, thus also in the human soul the passions and desires must follow the order imposed by reason and intellect; hence the countless analogies between the cosmic, political and psychological spheres in all philosophical schools. The Peripatetic philosophers, for example, drawing on Aristotle's complex theory of action, in a strict logical sequence, uphold the priority of reason and deliberation over προαίρεσις or choice, because, as Aspasius puts it: 'First one must deliberate (βεβουλεῦσθαι) and arrive at a reasoning (τὸν λογισμόν), and then appetency follows (εἶτ' ἐπακολουθεῖν τὴν ὄρεξιν)'.[53]

In his first writings, more clearly influenced by Platonism and the Alexandrian tradition, Gregory is an ardent supporter of this pre-eminence of the νοῦς as the ruling principle.[54] However, this conviction is gradually transformed as

[48] *Ibid*. III 1, 21-3.

[49] See Plato, *Resp*. X 617d-619a.

[50] See Plotinus, *Enneads* III 2 (47).

[51] *De oratione dominica* V (GNO 7.2 [Leiden, 1992], 61.3).

[52] This weakening was probably brought about by the controversy with Apollinaris; see 'Human communion and difference' (2011), 345-9.

[53] Aspasius, *In ethica Nichomachea* 70-1 (Heylbut).

[54] See, for example, *De opificio hominis* IX 1 (ed. George H. Forbes, *Sancti Patris nostri Gregorii Nysseni Basilii Magni fratris quae supersunt omnia* I.1 [Burntisland, 1855], 148); XIV 1

he develops his theory of person and decision, in the midst of his Trinitarian and Christological controversies. Gregory seems to realise that, if the personal lordship of each human being were to reside in the intellect, which is one of the faculties belonging to human nature, then it would turn out to be a constitutive element of the necessary dynamism of their own being and, ultimately, it would be in some way compelled by nature's laws. This was one of the 'inner' determinants that posed a quandary to previous theories.

Accordingly, as stated by Gregory, whilst the hypostasis is different from essence, the προαίρεσις is distinguished from and irreducible to nature. We can actually observe how the essential participation that God makes of νοῦς in *De opificio hominis*, where Nyssen describes the intellect as 'a particular adornment of his own nature (τὸν ἴδιον αὐτοῦ τῆς φύσεως κόσμον)',[55] begins to transform into an interpersonal gift in *De anima et resurrectione*, where he speaks of the authority (ἐξουσία) the Creator himself 'has bestowed because of his love of humanity (ἔδωκεν ὑπὸ φιλανθρωπίας)'.[56] What is more, a few years later in the *Oratio catechetica* Gregory suggests that reason itself (ἡ διάνοια) would be useless if the authority to decide (ἐξουσία τοῦ προαιρεῖσθαι) existed in someone other than oneself.[57] Thus it can be inferred that personal authority now resides in the self and not in the rational faculty.

Besides, in the passages that speak of God being consequent to human beings, this following is not of human intellect, but of the authority and decision of the self. In his homily on the fifth beatitude, which also implies the reciprocity of mercy, Gregory once more brings God and the human person face to face. Divine judgement (τὴν θείαν κρίσιν) – he says – follows the things in accordance with our own purpose (τοῖς κατὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν πρόθεσιν ἑπομένην).[58]

Immediately afterwards he refers to the metaphor of the mirror in order to illustrate the relationship between human beings and their Creator. The reflection in the mirror – he says – responds to each person according to their own expressions, whether they are bright or gloomy. This is not precisely a description of a one-way relationship or a reframing of the traditional retribution model. God interacts at the same level with human persons, presenting himself personally to them and accepting their response to his initiative of love.

I do not think it is fortuitous that Nyssen evokes the same image of the mirror in *Contra Eunomium* to represent the intimate correspondence between the person of the Father and of the Son, establishing at once their distinction

(I.2, 188-90); see also Philo, *Inmut. Dei* 47, 1-4; Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* II 11; Origen, *Perì Archôn* III 1, 3-4.

[55] *De opificio hominis* IX 1 (I.1, 148).

[56] *Dialogus de anima et resurrectione* (PG 46, 81D).

[57] See *Oratio catechetica* XXXI 1 (GNO 3.4, 76.6-77.6).

[58] See *De beatitudinibus* V (ed. John F. Callahan, GNO 7.2 [Leiden, 1992], 129.22-130.15).

according to hypostasis and the identity of their will.[59] Although the essential communion between the divine persons differs infinitely from the one between God and human beings, the personal correlation is indeed analogous.

Conclusion

So far my research and interpretation concerning Gregory's audacious intuition: God follows humans. If read along the proposed lines, as an interpersonal coordination between God and the human self, there seems to be no reason to suspect either a lessening of divine omnipotence or an exaggeration of the power bestowed on the human person.

We must agree this is not the only aspect of Nyssen's philosophy that sounds paradoxical or even anachronistic. The peculiar stresses of his way of thinking earned him all kinds of charges, in his own lifetime and onwards: among others, that he falls into Tritheism, Modalism, Synergism, Pelagianism or Semi-Pelagianism.

Actually, Gregory is profoundly indebted here to the long Greek patristic tradition that precedes him, and still he is trying to offer a new, more radical grounding for its theory of the freedom of choice. Certainly, then, although loyal to that tradition, he is highly original and often inopportune. It may be somehow due to his candid and yet indomitable character, as described by his brother Basil. Yet some of his bold speculations open unexplored roads and challenge readers to transcend the boundaries of their culture and worldview, even today.

[59] *Contra Eunomium* II 215-17 (GNO I, 288.4-29).

Anointing and Kingdom: Some Aspects of Gregory of Nyssa's Pneumatology

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Abstract

The biblical notions of 'anointing' and 'kingdom' are two significant concepts of the christology and pneumatology of Gregory of Nyssa. Gregory finds in them on several occasions throughout his writings[1] an appropriate way to set forth his theological concept of the Holy Spirit. *Isa.* 61:1, *Luke* 4:18, *Acts* 10:38 and the variant of *Luke* 11:2 that Gregory reads in parallel with *Matth.* 6:10[2] are fundamental for understanding Gregory's pneumatology.

The pneumatological use of 'anointing' and 'kingdom' points out that Gregory of Nyssa's pneumatology is biblically rooted. It also shows the existent theological continuity between Irenaeus and Athanasius, Basil and Gregory of Nyssa,[3] who use these notions to affirm the intimate unity of Persons in the Trinity.

Gregory of Nyssa, based on the notions of 'anointing' and 'kingdom', expresses the relation of the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son and, especially, the 'indivisible and inseparable union'[4] between them.[5]

Irenaeus and Athanasius

The biblical idea of the Son being anointed in his divinity by the Holy Spirit is present in the Fathers since the first centuries. However, from the beginning

[1] See Gregory of Nyssa, *Maced.* (GNO III/1 102f.); *Eust.* (GNO III/1 15f.); *Ref. Eun.* 11 (GNO II 317); *Or. Dom.* III (GNO VII/2 39,15-9); *Perf.* 7f. (GNO VIII/1 176f.); *Prof.* 12f. (GNO VIII/1 134,3-6).

[2] See *Or. Dom.* III (GNO VII/2 39,15-40,20).

[3] The closeness of language and thought between the Great Cappadocians – especially Gregory of Nyssa – and Irenaeus with regard the concept of the Holy Spirit as divine unction, may suggest the Cappadocian's conviction that defending the Trinitarian doctrine was anchored in the doctrine of the first generation of Christians.

[4] τῆς ἀχωρίστου καὶ ἀδιαστάτου συναφείας, *Eust.* (GNO III/1 16,12f.).

[5] The Nyssen's texts where the Holy Spirit is identified with the divine *anointing* of the Son and with his *kingdom*, or *kingship*, have special relevance to understanding Gregory's idea of intimate communion between the Son and his Spirit (see *Rom.* 8:9).

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the references to the anointing by the Spirit seems to be an expression of the divine nature of the Word,[6] and it is not easy to recognize a specific allusion to the Spirit as a divine person.[7] The first clear Trinitarian expression around the anointing of Christ appears in Irenaeus of Lyon, who doubtlessly identifies the unction of Christ with the Holy Spirit[8] in some of his writings. I quote a passage of the *Adversus haereses* III:

> For in the name of 'Christ' is implied, the one who anointed, the one that was anointed, and the unction itself with which he was anointed: he who anointed is the Father, he who was anointed is the Son, and the unction itself is in the Holy Spirit. As the Word declares by Isaiah: 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me' (*Isa*. 61:1; *Luke* 4:18), indicating the anointing Father, the anointed Son, and the unction, which is the Spirit.[9]

Irenaeus is pointing out the unity of the three divine persons: the Father who anoints, the Son who is anointed and the Holy Spirit who is the unction.[10] In this case, the anointing does not mean the divine nature of the Son but the Holy Spirit, as a member of the Trinity. According to A. Orbe, in Irenaeus the Spirit's anointing seems to concern the Word of God, the Son before the Incarnation, therefore it has a transcendent dimension beyond the historical anointing of Jesus in his economy of salvation.[11] In contrast, other authors such as A. Rousseau and L. Doutreleau consider that for Irenaeus the anointing of the Son concerns exclusively his humanity.[12] Nevertheless, Irenaeus' thought clearly identifies the anointing with the Holy Spirit. And this fact is probably

[6] The question of baptismal anointing of the Son and the uniqueness of the Word and Jesus, becomes in the first centuries, for the speculations of Gnosticism, a complicated issue. In any case, both anointing – the anointing of Jesus and the anointing of the Word – are closely related. As J.M. Odero states, 'la teología patrística ha ofrecido tres posibles vías de interpretación para la Unción de Cristo, según que ésta fuera situada como Unción eterna del Verbo, como Unción en la Encarnación, o como Unción en el Bautismo del Jordán', so José Miguel Odero, 'La unción y el bautismo de Cristo en San Cirilo de Alejandría', in Lucas Francisco Mateo-Seco (ed.), *Cristo Hijo de Dios y Redentor del hombre. III Simposio Internacional de Teología de la Universidad de Navarra* (Pamplona, 1982), 520.

[7] See Antonio Orbe, *La unción del Verbo. Estudios Valentinianos III* (Roma, 1961), 71.

[8] Although the intent of Irenaeus in the passages where he speaks of Christ's anointing is eminently christological rather than pneumatological, the simple trinitarian statement (the Father anoints, the Son is anointed, and the Holy Spirit is the unction itself) is situated at the beginning of the theological development of the Holy Spirit as eternal divine anointing and hence that it acquires a special importance.

[9] Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses* III 18,3 (SC 211, 350f.). See the parallel texts: *Adversus haereses* III 6,1; III 9,3 (SC 211, 64-8, 108-12); *Epid*. 47 (SC 406, 152).

[10] Basil uses this statement in the same way, see Basil of Caesarea, *De Spiritu Sancto* XII 28 (SC 17bis, 344).

[11] See A. Orbe, *La unción del Verbo* (1961), 505-11.

[12] See Adeline Rousseau, *Irénée de Lyon. Démonstration de la prédication apostolique*, SC 406 (Paris, 1995), 303f.; Adeline Rousseau and Louis Doutreleau, *Irénée de Lyon. Contre les hérésies livre III*, SC 210 (Paris, 1974), 248-52.

the precedent on which Athanasius and the Cappadocians – especially Gregory of Nyssa – build to develop the theology of the anointing with regards the *immanent* Trinity.

Athanasius, through the theme of the anointing, brings out a valuable vision of the presence of the divine Persons in one another. His grasp is a rich contribution to the understanding of the mutual inherence of the divine Persons. In his *Epistulae ad Serapionem* on at least two occasions he uses the notion of anointing, while he is underscoring the bond between the Son and the Spirit.[13] After stating that the Spirit is called unction and seal,[14] Athanasius affirms that the Holy Spirit, who belongs to the Word,[15] is 'fragrance' and 'form' of Christ. The unction and the one that is anointed have the same fragrance and the same form. In this way it is shown how the Holy Spirit cannot be a creature, because the Son – being 'in the form' (*Phil.* 2:6) of the Father – is not a creature.[16] I quote:

> If we have confessed that the Son is not a creature, because he is in the Father and the Father is in him, then the Spirit likewise cannot possibly be a creature; because the Son is in him and he is in the Son. Wherefore, he who receives the Spirit is called a temple of God.[17]

As we see, the affirmation of the divinity of the Holy Spirit – him not being a creature – is given from his intimate unity with the Son. If there is no distance between them the Holy Spirit must be divine. It is impossible for a created spirit to exist in the Son and the Son in him.

Gregory of Nyssa

The words of Gregory of Nyssa about the pneumatological anointing follow the same argumentative line. He makes a more detailed use of the notion of anointing than his predecessors. The theme appears repeatedly throughout his works, but is chiefly found on a more detailed treatment in his works: *Adversus Macedonianos* and *Ad Eustathium*. The underlying idea is that it is impossible to confess the Holy Spirit as inferior or subordinate to the Son if, according to the Scripture, the Son is anointed with the Spirit. As there is no distance between the oil and the skin, there cannot be separation between Christ and his anointing.[18]

[13] See Athanasius, *Epistulae ad Serapionem* I 23,4-6; III 3,1-4 (AthW I 1,4, 508f.; 569f.).
[14] *Ibid.* I 23,4 (AthW I 1,4, 508).
[15] See *Rom.* 8:9; *ibid.* I 23,5 (AthW I 1,4, 509).
[16] See *ibid.* I 23,6 (AthW I 1,4, 509).
[17] *Ibid.* III 3,4 (AthW I 1,4, 570); trans. C.R.B. Shapland, *The Letters of Saint Athanasius Concerning the Holy Spirit* (London, 1951), 172.
[18] See *Maced.* (GNO III/1 103,1-5); *Ref. Eun.* 11 (GNO II 317).

Whoever dismisses the Holy Spirit cannot confess Christ since – as Gregory says – 'how will one who does not recognize the chrism along with the Anointed One confess Christ? "God anointed this man", he says, "in the Holy Spirit" (*Acts* 10:38).'[19] For Gregory to think of Christ necessarily entails thinking of the Holy Spirit, just as nobody can contemplate the Father without considering the present Son.[20] In *Adversus Macedonianos* Gregory underscores the royal meaning of the chrism in order to stress the divine nature of the Spirit:

So if the Son is king by nature, and the chrism is a symbol (σύμβολον) of his kingship, then what does the logic (ἀκολουθίας) of the reasoning mean to you? That the chrism is not something foreign to the natural king, and we do not classify the Spirit with the Holy Trinity as a stranger and foreigner. Indeed the Son is king. But the Holy Spirit is the living, substantial and subsistent kingship (βασιλεία δὲ ζῶσα καὶ οὐσιώδης καὶ ἐνυπόστατος τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον). Since he has been anointed with this kingship, the only-begotten Christ is also king of all existing things. So if the Father is king and the Only-begotten is king and the Holy Spirit is kingship, the reason for kingship in the case of the Trinity is absolutely the same. […] If, then, the Son is king by nature, and the dignity of the kingship (ἀξίωμα βασιλείας) is the Holy Spirit, through which the Son is anointed, how is it possible to think that the kingship by nature could be foreign to itself?[21]

The Holy Spirit is contemplated together with the Son.[22] He is the distinctive mark, the sign, the symbol of the Son's kingship (σύμβολον βασιλείας) and therefore he can neither be of a strange nature nor distant from the King himself. If the Son is king for the ointment of the Holy Spirit that he receives from the Father, the Spirit must belong to the same divine – royal – scope.[23] Gregory calls the Holy Spirit the living, substantial and subsistent kingship (βασιλεία ζῶσα καὶ οὐσιώδης καὶ ἐνυπόστατος) to indicate that he belongs to the same and unique divine nature of the Son. Both Son and Spirit have the same royal dignity for they are inseparable in their divine nature, in their glory. Gregory's explanation in the *Ad Eustathium* is particularly clear:

For this reason, in order that the dignity (ἀξία) of the Holy Spirit might be more clearly manifest to human beings, he was named by the Scripture[24] as the symbol of kingship

[19] *Maced.* (GNO III/1 102,14f.).

[20] See Giulio Maspero, 'The fire, the kingdom and the glory: The Creator Spirit and the intra-trinitarian processions in the *Adversus Macedonianos* of Gregory of Nyssa', in Volker Henning Drecoll and Margitta Berghaus (eds), *Gregory of Nyssa: The Minor Treatises on Trinitarian Theology and Apollinarism* (Leiden, 2011), 229-276, 260.

[21] *Maced.* (GNO III/1 102-3).

[22] See *Ref. Eun.* 11 (GNO II 317).

[23] Using these texts, G. Maspero has highlighted the role of the Holy Spirit as unitive bond inside the Trinity: 'The Spirit makes the Trinity one in his very being the communion of the Father and Son: The Second is image of the First, is King as He is, precisely by the Person of the Holy Spirit'. G. Maspero, 'The fire, the kingdom and the glory' (2011), 262.

[24] Gregory, while explaining the metaphorical meaning of the unction, quotes before: *Acts* 10:38; *Luke* 4:18. See *Eust.* (GNO III/1 15,19).

(σύμβολον βασιλείας), that is *anointing*, from which we are taught that the Holy Spirit shares (κοινωνεῖ) the glory (δόξης) and the kingship (βασιλείας) of the Only-begotten Son of God.[25]

The text reveals that Gregory understands the anointing in a theological way rather than in its economic sense. The anointing of the Holy Spirit belongs to the eternal Son of the Father, who is King before the ages. According to this theological notion of anointing it is not surprising that Gregory uses the name 'Christ' several times, referred to the Word before the Incarnation.[26] This is so as Christ is the name of the one who has received the eternal kingship of his Father in the Holy Spirit. Through the 'earthly anointing' of Christ in his baptism by the Holy Spirit Scripture teaches us that other, 'eternal anointing'. In this transcendent anointing we see that the Father (who anoints), the Son (who is anointed), and the Holy Spirit (who is the unction) share the same royal dignity, sign of their unique divine nature. The last paragraph of the Letter *Ad Eustathium* is beautiful and deep in his theological content:

> The kingship of the Son is not assumed without the dignity of the Holy Spirit. Wherefore he [the Son] is properly called 'anointed', since this name furnishes proof of his indivisible and inseparable union (τῆς ἀχωρίστου καὶ ἀδιαστάτου συναφείας) between the Son and the Holy Spirit. If therefore the Only-begotten God (ὁ μονογενὴς θεός) is anointed (χριστός), and the anointing (χρῖσμα) is the Holy Spirit, and the title of Anointed (χριστοῦ) indicates his kingly authority (βασιλικὴν ἐξουσίαν), and the anointing is the symbol (σύμβολον) of his kingship, then the Holy Spirit also shares (κοινωνεῖ) this dignity (the royal dignity).[27]

The unity of Son and Spirit is described by Gregory with the Greek terms 'τῆς ἀχωρίστου καὶ ἀδιαστάτου συναφείας', in a way that can only happen in God, in the scope of uncreated being. For Gregory's thought creation is essentially *diastematic* in contrast to God who is by nature *undiastematic* (*adiastaton*),[28] therefore an *undiastematic unity* – ἀδιαστάτου συναφείας – cannot exist outside the eternity of God, cannot occur between two who are not perfect in their divine nature.[29]

[25] *Eust*. (GNO III/1 16,3).

[26] Gregory devotes many paragraphs of the books III and IV of his *Contra Eunomium* III to refute the Eunomian interpretation of *Acts* 2:36. In those paragraphs Gregory asserts that it was Jesus in his humanity the one that in the economy of salvation 'was made Lord and Christ', since in his divinity, as the eternal Word of God, he was yet Lord and King before the ages. He who is Lord and King from eternity cannot be made Lord and Christ. See *Eun*. III 3,67-9 (GNO II 131,16-133,20); *Eun*. III 4, 41-52; 59-64 (GNO II 149,27-154,16; 156,26-159,6).

[27] *Eust*. (GNO III/1 16,10-9); the trans. is helped by Anna M. Silvas, *Gregory of Nyssa: The Letters. Introduction, translation and commentary* (Leiden and Boston, 2007), 245.

[28] See Scott Douglass, 'Diastema', in L.F. Mateo-Seco and G. Maspero (eds), *The Brill Dictionary of Gregory of Nyssa* (Leiden and Boston, 2009), 227f.

[29] See Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Présence et pensée: essai sur la philosophie religieuse de Grégoire de Nysse* (Paris, 1947), 1-10.

Gregory argues in these texts that the Holy Spirit is of divine nature through his inseparable unity with the Son. The intimate bond of the Holy Spirit with the Son is a proof of his being God, separated from created beings. This statement, in fact, appears in a more explicit way at the end of the third homily of *De oratione dominica* where Gregory identifies the Holy Spirit with the kingdom of God.

Gregory uses one variant of *Luke* 11:2 ('may thy Holy Spirit come upon us and purify us')[30] in parallel with *Matth.* 6:10 ('thy Kingdom come') to indicate by this identification the impossibility of counting the Holy Spirit among creatures.[31] Gregory goes on with his reasoning stating that the Spirit does not share anything with creatures, for in his royal dignity there is nothing in common with those who are servants.[32] Thus, for example, the Holy Spirit, participating in the dignity of the kingdom of God has authority to purify from sin, an action that is exclusively divine.[33] So the power of the Spirit to purify from sin reveals his divine nature, for in the purifying action he is united to the Only-begotten (*Hebr.* 1:3).[34] Then Gregory concludes that, if the Son and the Spirit have one unique power (δύναμις) and activity (ἐνέργεια), how can a diversity of nature be assumed between them?[35] The same divine nature must be confessed in those in which it is impossible to find a difference with regards their activity and power.

Conclusion

Through the theology of the Holy Spirit as the unction of the Son, Gregory emphasizes one of the key points of his pneumatology and Trinitarian theology: the bonds that exist between divine Persons by their close interpersonal communion.

[30] On the variant of *Luke* 11:2 see Monique Alexandre, 'La variante de Lc 11,2 dans la troisième Homélie sur l'Oraison Dominicale de Grégoire de Nysse et la controverse avec les pneumatomaques', in Matthieu Cassin and Hélène Grelier (eds), *Grégoire de Nysse: la Bible dans la construction de son discours. Actes du Colloque de Paris, 9-10 février 2007* (Paris, 2008), 163-189, 167; See Luc Fritz, 'L'apport de la version marcionite du Notre Père (Lc 11,2) dans la défense de la divinité du Saint-Esprit par Grégoire de Nysse', in Daniel Vigne (ed.), *Lire le Notre Père avec les Pères* (Toulouse, 2009), 215-26. Some allusions to this variant are found in Tertullian (see Tertullian, *Adversus Marcionem* IV 26,3f. [SC 456, 332-4]) but, as M. Alexandre affirms, the witness of Gregory is much clearer and seems to be the root of the later quotations.

[31] See *Or. Dom.* III (GNO VII/2 39,15-40,20).

[32] See *Or. Dom.* III (GNO VII/2 40,3-6).

[33] The purpose of this texts of the *Or. Dom.* against the pneumatomachs seems to be, according to M. Alexandre, a clear indication of its date of composition around the year 381, see M. Alexandre, 'La variante de Lc 11,2' (2008), 181. Even among scholars, there are different opinions, the affirmations of Gregory fit very well in the contexts of the pnematomachian polemic. See Pierre Maraval, 'Chronology of Works', in L.F. Mateo-Seco and G. Maspero (eds), *The Brill Dictionary of Gregory of Nyssa* (2009), 153-169, 159; Ekaterina Kiria, 'De oratione dominica', in L.F. Mateo-Seco and G. Maspero (eds), *The Brill Dictionary of Gregory of Nyssa* (2009), 550-3, 551.

[34] See *Or. Dom.* III (GNO VII/2 41,1-8).

[35] See *Or. Dom.* III (GNO VII/2 41,8-10).

Gregory describes the hypostatic properties (*idiótetas*) of the Holy Spirit mainly on the basis of biblical texts: *John* 15:26, *Rom.* 8:9 and *Gal.* 4:6 saying that the Spirit has his own hypostasis 'because he is from God and he is the Spirit of Christ'.[36] In the words of A. de Halleux, the hypostasis of the Holy Spirit is described by Gregory in terms of *causality* in relation to the Father and in terms of *coeternity* in relation to the Son.[37] Thus, the pneumatology of the anointing is an expression that remarks the statement of the intimate unity of *coeternity* between the Son and the Spirit.

Gregory finds in the pneumatology of the anointing an appropriate way to argue not only the divinity of the Holy Spirit but also his hypostatic property (*idiótes*). Besides saying that the Spirit participates in the unique nature of God for his communion with the Son, the pneumatology of the anointing is an assertion of the hypostatic property of the Holy Spirit. When Gregory affirms that the Holy Spirit is the 'anointing of Christ' and the 'kingship of the king' he is doubtlessly making reference to his personal property (*idiótes*) of being 'Spirit of the Son' (*Rom.* 8:9).

The biblical notions are beautifully used to understand the relationship of interpersonal unity that exists between Son and Spirit. This unity is found not only in their unique divine nature but also in their bond as different divine Persons that exist one in another. Through the notions of anointing and kingdom we perceive that Father, Son and Spirit are intimately united precisely because in his personal properties they are different and they can inhere in one another.[38]

From this point of view we can say that the pneumatology of Gregory of Nyssa acquires a special importance compared to the other Cappadocians. To the argument of the origin of the Spirit in the Father – that was common in the defence of the Spirit's divine nature – Gregory adds the deep reasoning of the mutual inherence of the divine Persons. The Father who anoints, the Son who is anointed and the Holy Spirit who is the unction exist one in the other as different divine Persons. The notions of 'anointing' and 'kingdom' are in the thought of Gregory a lucid illustration both of the Spirit's divine nature and of his personal distinction and property.

[36] See *Maced.* (GNO III/1 89,21-90,5); *Or. Dom.* III (GNO VII/2 43,1). See Werner Jaeger, *Gregor von Nyssa's Lehre vom Heiligen Geist* (ed. Hermann Dörries) (Leiden, 1966), 142.

[37] André De Halleux, '«Manifesté par le Fils». Aux origenes d'une formule pneumatologique', in *Patrologie et Oecuménisme. Recueil d'Études* (Leuven, 1990), 338-66, 362.

[38] The idea of the mutual inherence of the divine Persons can be found, among other texts, in: *Maced.* (GNO III/1 98f.). See L.F. Mateo-Seco, 'El Espíritu Santo en el Adv. Macedonianos de Gregorio de Nisa', *ScrTh* 37 (2005), 475-98, 495f.

A Preface to Gregory of Nyssa's *Contra Eunomium*? Gregory's *Epistula* 29

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Abstract

The fourth century witnessed the growth of Christian epistolography as bishops increasingly took up this literary form for a variety of social functions including the mediation of their presence and power throughout their dioceses. Although Gregory of Nyssa, unlike his brother Basil, is not known for his letters, he too used the craft of letter writing. Among the thirty or so of Gregory's extant letters, one letter in particular remains highly important for his other writings: *Epistula* 29 was dispatched to Peter, another of Gregory's brothers, and sought advice on the publication of Gregory's most important polemical work, the *Contra Eunomium*. Manuscript evidence shows that this letter, along with Peter's response (*Epistula* 30), were regularly appended to the beginning of the *Contra Eunomium* in medieval manuscripts. For Byzantine scribes and readers, these letters evidently functioned as a kind of preface that provided information about the stages and methods of composition, as well as Gregory's purpose behind the treatise. For the modern reader of the *Contra Eunomium* as well, these letters continue to provide valuable introductory details.

This essay provides a more detailed examination of the relationship between this brief correspondence and the *Contra Eunomium*. In particular it seeks to move beyond viewing the letters as a simple introductory preface by drawing upon recent scholarship on the function of letter writing in late antiquity. The essay explores the ways in which Gregory uses epistolography to legitimate his role in the Eunomian controversy and his authorship of the *Contra Eunomium*. The paper first traces out the transmission of *Epistula* 29 and then briefly establishes a theoretical framework for interpreting fourth-century Christian epistolography, before it turns to explore in more detail Gregory's missive and his intention for sending it. It is argued that Gregory uses epistolography to control possible negative responses to the *Contra Eunomium*, as well as to legitimate his increased standing in the eastern church and within his own family as a result of the death of Basil. Gregory establishes a rhetoric of Basil as father, who at his death, bequeathed to Gregory an inheritance of continuing his theological work and rehabilitating his memory and theological authority from the calumny of Eunomius.

In the fall of 380 Gregory of Nyssa dispatched a letter to his brother Peter. The years that preceded the sending of this letter had been quite difficult for Gregory as he dealt with a series of professional obligations and personal tragedies, including a forced exile, theological and episcopal controversies in

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neighboring sees, pastoral responsibilities, and the deaths of Basil and Macrina.[1] These events of the latter half of the 370s left deep marks on Gregory about his position within the shifting contours of ecclesiastical and imperial politics in the late fourth century. So it is understandable that Gregory sent his letter to Peter in which he expresses some anxiety about the possible negative reception of the recently completed first installment of the *Contra Eunomium*.[2] He is so concerned that he asks Peter whether he should even publish it.

I. The Transmission of *Epistula* 29

This letter and Peter's reply – now labeled *Epistulae* 29 and 30 – witness a time after the first book had been completed but before it was published, and surely before its readers had time to assess the text and the impact of it on the contemporary theological scene.[3] As such, they are fantastic windows into the circumstances of the *Contra Eunomium*'s production, its method of composition, and Gregory's own understanding of its genre and purpose. The absence of any formal preface to the *Contra Eunomium* as a whole, or to any of the individual books, has led many scholars to use these letters for establishing the immediate context of the *Contra Eunomium*. Consequently, scholars have often regarded them as a *de facto* preface to Gregory's polemical *magnum opus*.[4]

[1] These years of Gregory's life are notoriously difficult to establish with precision. Many details are contingent on the dating of the return of bishops exiled under Valens, Basil's death, and a pro-Nicene council at Antioch (at which Gregory was present). For a summary of the issues and relevant bibliography, see Pierre Maraval, 'Retour sur quelques dates concernant Basile de Césarée et Grégoire de Nysse', *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 99 (2004), 153-7. These matters do not directly concern the present study.

[2] The *Contra Eunomium* (= *CE*) comprises three books. Book 1 is usually dated to 380 and book 2 followed soon thereafter. Book 3 came several years later, probably composed during 381-3. Gregory mentions in his letter that he had time to respond only to the first of Eunomius' two λόγοι. Although Maraval and Silvas interpret this first λόγος as including both books 1 and 2 of Eunomius' *Apologia apologiae*, it is likely that only book 1 is meant (Maraval, 311[1], and Silvas, 207[440]; see references below). Therefore, this letter was composed after book 1 of the *CE* had been completed, but before book 2.

[3] Giorgio Pasquali first numbered them in this way (*Gregorii Nysseni Epistulae*, editio altera, Gregorii Nysseni Opera [= GNO] VIII/2 [Leiden, 1959], 87-91), a numbering that Pierre Maraval also followed in his revision of Pasquali's edition (*Grégoire de Nysse: Lettres*, SC 363 [Paris, 1990], 308-19). All quotations from the letters are from Maraval's edition. Translations are my own.

[4] For example, Maraval describes them as a preface (P. Maraval, *Lettres* [1990], 73), and Virginia Burrus calls *Ep.* 29 a dedicatory letter (*'Begotten, Not Made': Conceiving Manhood in Late Antiquity* [Stanford, 2000], 99). Gregory's meager letter collection has rarely been studied, and these letters in particular are generally mentioned only in situating the immediate context of the *CE*. On Gregory's letter corpus, see Giorgio Pasquali, 'Le Lettere di Gregorio di Nissa', *Studi Italiani di filologia classica* NS 3 (1923), 75-136, and much more recently, Anna M. Silvas, *Gregory of Nyssa: The Letters*, SVigChr 83 (Leiden, 2007).

Manuscript evidence also supports viewing these letters as a preface. The individual books of the *Contra Eunomium* became notoriously disordered,[5] yet this manuscript tradition reveals that from a very early stage the *Contra Eunomium*, with little exception, circulated with these two letters attached to its beginning.[6] Early printings followed suit: Jacob Gretser's *editio princeps* of the *Contra Eunomium*, subsequent editions, such as Migne's *Patrologia Graeca*, and the only complete English translation of the *Contra Eunomium*, follow the manuscript ordering and append this correspondence (numbered one and two) to the *Contra Eunomium*.[7] All the while, they remain absent from editions and translations of Gregory's letter collection. Only in the twentieth century with the appearance of the *Gregorii Nysseni Opera* were the letters expunged from the *Contra Eunomium* and inserted at the end of the letter collection as numbers 29 and 30.[8] Of course we can never be certain when they were attached to the *Contra Eunomium* – or even how the *Contra Eunomium* was originally published – but we can be fairly certain that they were originally exchanged as genuine correspondence, from a sender to a recipient across physical distance. In other words, these letters are not the formulaic dedicatory prefaces in epistolary form often found attached to ancient literature. Indeed, based on *Epistula* 29 there is no reason to suspect that a copy of the *Contra Eunomium* accompanied the letter. It is only in the reply that one senses that Peter had access to Gregory's treatise, but even this evidence is not entirely convincing.[9]

[5] The details of this confusion are of little direct consequence for this study. Details can be found in Werner Jaeger's critical edition of the *CE* (GNO I-II [Leiden, 1960], II.v-lxxi). A summary is found in his *Gregor von Nyssa's Lehre vom Heiligen Geist* (Leiden, 1966), 78-84.

[6] Only Cod. Laurentianus Med., 86, 13 includes the correspondence in the letter collection. This has been explained away by Pasquali because of the tendency of the scribe to include other non-'letter' texts within the letter collection, such as the letter-treatise *Ad Simplicium* (G. Pasquali, *Epistulae* [1959], lxxiii).

[7] Jacob Gretser published a two-volume *Opera omnia* (Paris, 1615) of Gregory's works, which omitted book 1 of the *CE* and consequently *Ep.* 29 and 30. In 1618, an appendix was published as an additional third volume, which included book 1 of the *CE*, *Ep.* 29 and 30, and the chapter summaries (the *periochae*), as well as other texts (*Appendix ad sancti Gregorii Episcopi Nysseni Opera* [Paris, 1618]; the correspondence of Gregory and Peter at 1-5). For Migne: PG 45, 237-1122 (with the letters at 237-44). The only complete English translation: *Gregory of Nyssa against Eunomius*, in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, W. Moore and H.A. Wilson (trans.), second series, vol. 5 (reprinted, Grand Rapids, MI, 1979). However, the letters are not found in the translation of book 1 by Stuart George Hall in *El 'Contra Eunomium I' en la producción literaria de Gregorio de Nisa*, Lucas F. Mateo-Seco and Juan L. Bastero (eds) (Pamplona, 1988), 35-135, which is based on Jaeger's critical text without the correspondence.

[8] Pasquali included them only because of Jaeger's failure to do so in his edition of the *CE* (G. Pasquali, *Epistulae* [1959], lxxiii).

[9] And this occurs only in the opening line of Peter's reply: Ἐντυχὼν τοῖς γράμμασι τῆς ὁσιότητός σου καὶ κατανοήσας ἐν τῷ κατὰ τῆς αἱρέσεως λόγῳ τὸν ὑπὲρ τῆς ἀληθείας καὶ τὸν ὑπὲρ τοῦ ἁγίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν ζῆλον (*Ep.* 30.1; Maraval, 314-6). The plural γράμμασι could refer to both the letter and the *CE* or simply to the letter. Likewise, it is slightly ambiguous as to whether λόγῳ refers to the treatise or the argument more broadly. The same can be said for

II. Rereading *Epistula* 29

These letters, therefore, have led a double life throughout their transmission to the modern world, for the most part attached to the *Contra Eunomium*, but sometimes separated from it; originally as exchanged correspondence, and now as part of Gregory's letter collection. This double life is not a minor or unimportant issue, but reveals an important ambiguity about their status as genuine correspondence, and because of their attachment to the *Contra Eunomium*, they have been read primarily as a simple preface.

From the earliest mention of letters in the story of Bellerophon, who, as Homer tells us, carried his own death sentence with him in the form of a letter,[10] epistolography remained a fundamental, quotidian enterprise for many in the ancient world – although thankfully not always as dangerous as for poor Bellerophon. The writing of letters formed an essential aspect of the culture and communication in antiquity, and a large number and variety of these letters have survived. Although simple in form, the letter was remarkably malleable, and ancient authors used it for philosophical, literary, and theological aims, in addition to more mundane communication.

Christians were of course no different in their use of and dependence on letters, and from Christianity's beginnings, letters comprised an important aspect of the Christian social and literary fabric. Christian epistolography dramatically expanded to match the growing freedoms and needs of communication that resulted from the church's ever-firmer hold on the governance and culture of the late-antique empire. One need only mention the large letter collections of Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, Basil of Caesarea, and Gregory of Nazianzus to see the rapid expansion of this medium, especially in the hands of the late-ancient episcopacy. It is true that Gregory of Nyssa usually is not ranked among these great epistolographers, but he too was adroit in using the craft of letter writing and was knowledgeable of its conventions and forms.[11]

a similar reference to λόγῳ in *Ep.* 30.5. Peter shows no knowledge of the *CE* beyond what Gregory himself wrote in his letter. For a comparison of a cover-letter to the *CE* from Gregory's own hand, see his *Ep.* 15, which is addressed to a certain John and Maximian and which explicitly mentions the inclusion of the *CE* (whether only book 1 or books 1-2 is not clear). Interestingly, Gregory was able to supply this copy only after he had found a copyist.

[10] On Bellerophon, see *Iliad* 6.152-203. Though there is debate whether the σήματα λυγρά (6.168) mentioned by Homer really was a letter. On this important literary moment, see Patricia A. Rosenmeyer, *Ancient Epistolary Fictions: The Letter in Greek Literature* (Cambridge, 2001), 39-44. Her chapter 'A Culture of Letter Writing' (19-35) is also an excellent introduction to the practical aspects of epistolography in antiquity.

[11] In Gregory's short corpus (Pasquali's collection has twenty-eight letters written by Gregory and two written by others), we see him writing a variety of letters including letters of introduction (*Ep.* 8), exhortation (*Ep.* 17), and mediation (*Ep.* 7), all of which follow traditional epistolographic conventions.

Older scholarship on ancient epistolography attempted to establish the precise formal characteristics and taxonomies of ancient letters in an attempt to define precisely what constitutes a real or genuine letter. Due to the diversity of purpose and form, as well as the sheer number of extant letters, the search for hard and fast criteria has unsurprisingly reached little consensus.[12] More recent scholarship has tended to avoid these formal considerations and more often has focused on the social and cultural function of epistolography itself. By looking at authorial self-presentation in letters these studies explore the social function of correspondence and the ways in which letters helped to establish and maintain relationships across physical distance and separation. Modern approaches also emphasize the role of the ancient letter collection. Collecting, selecting, editing, and publishing were not innocent, and what results is not a simple archive of letters, but rather an artificial, tendentious collection of texts.[13]

So what results if we reexamine Gregory's letter not as an introductory or a dedicatory preface to the *Contra Eunomium*, but rather as an ancient letter that was sent to express, maintain, and control the relationship between sender and recipient? Gregory's letter to Peter can be dated fairly confidently to the second half of 380, because of three details mentioned in the letter: first, Gregory's return from his stay in Sebasteia; second, Basil's recent death; and third, the completion of book 1 of the *Contra Eunomium*.[14] A date in the second half of 380 gives him enough time to complete the second book before he gives a public recitation of both books in Constantinople, as Jerome suggests.[15] The months before he penned the letter provided him with enough time to settle back down in his bishopric of Nyssa following the preceding tumultuous years and to complete book 1 and start on book 2. Earlier in 380, Gregory had a forced stay in Sebasteia, where much to his dismay he was elected bishop. This seems to have been particularly traumatic for Gregory, given the number of letters written in this period. In one passage Gregory laments all that happened there claiming that the events are 'worthy of silence, inexpressible groans, continuous shame, and sorrow that does not expect an ending with the passing of time'.[16] This situation along with his earlier exile and the death of Basil and

[12] See, for example, the article and the literature cited in John L. White, 'New Testament Epistolary Literature in the Framework of Ancient Epistolography', *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, Part 2, *Principat*, 25.2 (Berlin, 1984), 1730-56.

[13] A characteristic example of either the author or a later scribe actively selecting which letters go in and arranging them into a specific ordering is Andrew Cain, *The Letters of Jerome: Asceticism, Biblical Exegesis, and the Construction of Christian Authority in Late Antiquity*, Oxford Early Christian Studies (Oxford, 2009).

[14] μετὰ τὴν ἐκ τῆς Ἀρμενίας ἐπάνοδον (*Ep.* 29.1; Maraval, 308-10). Ἀρμενία here refers to Sebasteia. On Basil's death, see *Ep.* 29.4; and on the completion of book 1 of the *CE*, see *Ep.* 29.1-2. See also footnote 2 above.

[15] An event reported in Jerome, *De viris illustribus* 128.

[16] Τὰ δὲ ἐπὶ τούτοις σιωπῆς ἄξια καὶ στεναγμῶν ἀλαλήτων καὶ κατηφείας διηνεκοῦς καὶ πένθους τὴν ἐκ τοῦ χρόνου λύσιν οὐκ ἀναμένοντος (*Ep.* 19.14; Maraval, 252). On this important

Macrina created a period of crisis for Gregory, but one that also witnessed a surge of creativity, with the penning of *De hominis opificio*, the *Apologia in Hexaemeron*, numerous homilies, and of course, the first parts of the *Contra Eunomium*.

This time of intense literary productivity also produced some publishing anxiety, in particular because of the feared criticism by his readers of his use of *ad hominem* attacks and invective in the opening sections of the *Contra Eunomium*.[17] Gregory writes to his brother Peter:

> What causes my uncertainty is the following. When I received Eunomius' treatise at the death of Basil [ἐπειδὴ κατ' αὐτὴν τοῦ ἁγίου Βασιλείου τὴν κοίμησιν τὸν τοῦ Εὐνομίου λόγον ὑπεδεξάμην], my heart was still boiling over in grief and was in pain for this common misfortune of the churches. Moreover, Eunomius not only had written those things which seemed to support his own doctrine, but directed a greater part of his energy to invective [σπουδὴ περὶ τὰς λοιδορίας], which he painstakingly wrote against our father. Therefore, enraged by his insolent words, I showed some anger and hostility against the writer.[18]

Gregory's concern is that his readers would fault him for the very same thing he faults Eunomius throughout the *Contra Eunomium*, namely Eunomius' slanderous and indiscriminate use of λοιδορία or invective against Basil. This accusation occurs repeatedly throughout the *Contra Eunomium*. Gregory even suggests that Eunomius used a κατάλογος τῆς λοιδορίας, a 'catalog of abuse', which included every slur imaginable.[19] To add to his anxiety, Gregory reports that he was also feeling the pressure to publish, since the text's completion had been somehow leaked, and a large number of his supporters were demanding its publication.[20] And making matters still worse, Gregory notes that he had access to Eunomius' codex for only seventeen days before he had to return it, clearly not enough time to refute the entire text.[21]

Since Gregory is here using several rhetorical tropes, we need not, and indeed probably should not, take all of these claims at face value, and perhaps he had things under more control than what he suggested to Peter. While Gregory no doubt wanted the advice of Peter, reading behind Gregory's statements suggests that the letter was also penned as a kind of pre-publication public relations

event in the life of Gregory and the letters associated with it, see the often cited article of Franz Diekamp, 'Die Wahl Gregors von Nyssa zum Metropoliten von Sebaste im Jahr 380', *Theologische Quartalschrift* 90 (1908), 384-401, which established the details of the events in Sebasteia.

[17] The so-called historical section, or *CE* 1.1-146. It deserves to be noted, however, that this language also occurs throughout the remainder of the *CE*.

[18] *Ep*. 29.4; Maraval, 310.

[19] *CE* 1.74; Jaeger, I.47.

[20] *Ep*. 29.3. Gregory claims that he does not know how the leak happened. We can surmise that these supporters are from his own church, as well as from Sebasteia and other neighboring towns and regions.

[21] *Ep*. 29.2.

campaign designed to dispel criticism of his work. Further evidence of Gregory's attempt to control reaction to his work – or at least evidence of his continued interest in how the work was received – is the fact that Gregory continued to solicit responses and feedback from others regarding these opening sections of invective even after its publication. *Epistula* 15, a cover-letter attached to an early copy of the *Contra Eunomium* and addressed to two young rhetors, contains a request to examine the opening sections of his *Contra Eunomium*'s own invective. Of course the line between public and private that we now take for granted when sending a letter was not necessarily assumed among ancient correspondents. Not only did the tenuous means of letter delivery threaten confidentiality, but the senders themselves often expected that their letters be read publicly.[22] Something similar seems to be at place in his letter to Peter, and it is tempting to think that its contents had a wider audience than just Peter, who possibly resent the letter along to some of those who had been pestering Gregory to publish his refutation.

The letter also directly addresses Gregory's own use of λοιδορία by establishing a broader rhetoric of the language of father and son. In his missive, Gregory identifies the recently deceased Basil as 'father'. This rhetoric in Nyssen's thought has been noted often before. Virginia Burrus, for example, has argued that much of the rhetorical polemic in the first book of the *Contra Eunomium* operates by showing Eunomius to be a bad son to father Basil, a negative portrayal against which Gregory positively constructs himself as a good son and thereby legitimates his own theological authority and position. This rhetoric, Burrus observes, also operates in these letters.[23] The title father, of course, can also indicate a theological authority, a usage that became increasingly common in the fourth century.[24] Gregory of Nazianzus uses it to describe Gregory the Elder,[25] and Basil famously invokes the 'Fathers' to support and legitimate his own theological positions and even offers an early florilegium of their writings in his *De spiritu sancto*. Gregory of Nyssa also frequently employs this usage, especially in his works against Apollinarius and the Macedonians, and most often in the plural explicitly referring to the council of Nicaea (325): ἡ κοινὴ τῶν πατέρων ἐξεφώνησε σύνοδος.[26] In giving Basil this epithet

[22] Silvas also suggests that *Ep.* 19, written to a certain John, was probably meant to be circulated more widely, probably in Antioch (A. Silvas, *Letters* [2007], 173).

[23] V. Burrus, *Conceiving Manhood* (2000), 98-112. See also Raymond Van Dam, *Families and Friends in Late Roman Cappadocia* (Philadelphia, 2003), esp. 67-74.

[24] This increased appeal to the authority of tradition and the 'Fathers', as well as the increased citation of their writings during the fourth and fifth centuries, has been the subject of a detailed study by Thomas Graumann, *Die Kirche der Väter: Vätertheologie und Väterbeweis in den Kirchen des Ostens bis zum Konzil von Ephesus (431)* (Tübingen, 2002).

[25] Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oration* 18.16 (PG 35, 1004): ὀρθοδοξίας γενέσθαι πατὴρ καὶ διδάσκαλος.

[26] *Antirrheticus adversus Apolinarium* (GNO III 1, 157). This is just one example. Likewise, echoing the language of *Ep.* 29 and the *CE*, he calls Basil 'our common father and teacher' (Βασίλειος, ὁ κοινὸς ἡμῶν πατὴρ καὶ διδάσκαλος) in his *De hominis opificio* (PG 44, 125).

Gregory and his contemporaries foreshadow what Patrick Gray has called the appeal to the 'select fathers', namely the fifth-century canonization of specific theologians, whose writings possess individual theological authority.[27]

Gregory ultimately distinguishes in the *Contra Eunomium* between the proper and improper use of λοιδορία based on the congruity of words and character. As a result, Eunomius refutes himself by writing what is not true about Basil's character;[28] whereas Gregory's own use of this rhetorical form is justified since he is merely defending Basil, who is worthy of defense as the church's common father and, after his death, a new theological authority. By doing so, Gregory moves the ostensible purpose of his invective from attacking Eunomius to defending Basil, and thereby shifts from invective to apology. While we might be underwhelmed by this argument, this letter and its rhetorical devices suggest a strong eagerness on Gregory's part to show himself as Basil's defender, and thereby, to occupy a new leadership position and to consolidate his authority within the pro-Nicene community. He does this not only by theological treatises and sermons, but also by letters.

III. Conclusion

It is necessary to revisit the title of this paper and its question mark: can (or should) these letters be considered a preface? Epistolary prefaces were common in late antiquity, but these two letters are different from the standard, highly formulaic dedicatory letter, such as Gregory's epistolary preface (also addressed to Peter) to the *De hominis opificio*. As such, this letter is too different to be considered a true preface, and there is no evidence that Gregory himself intended it to be so. Despite this, we can still read the letter in conjunction with the *Contra Eunomium*. Indeed, the collection, selection, and publication of letters in late antiquity were equally, if not more, important than the original exchange. In its afterlife – after it had been sent – a letter was able to be reread and re-presented to new and ever-expanding audiences and in new forms of circulation. In this way, letters could continue to serve their epistolary function, though often in ways beyond the author's control. It is important to note that Peter's reply, which has not been discussed, but which enthusiastically encouraged Gregory to publish, was also included along with Gregory's letter at the beginning of the *Contra Eunomium*. The two letters attached to the beginning of the *Contra Eunomium* would now be directed to new readers and could

[27] Patrick T.R. Gray, '"The Select Fathers": Canonizing the Patristic Past', in Elizabeth A. Livingstone (ed.), *SP* 23 (1989), 21-36. As Gray notes the 'select fathers' is a phrase of Leontius of Jerusalem.

[28] *CE* 1.77 (Jaeger, I.49): ὅτι γὰρ ψιλὰ τῆς λοιδορίας ἐστὶ τὰ ῥήματα τῆς τῶν πραγμάτων ἀληθείας οὐ προσαπτόμενα, ἐξ αὐτῶν ἐστι τῶν γεγραμμένων ὁ ἔλεγχος.

assuage these readers who would soon encounter the problematic passages of the *Contra Eunomium* that Gregory wrote these sections only with reluctance and only in defense of Basil and that he had the authorization and approval of Peter to do so.

Of course, we will never know precisely when these letters were originally connected with the *Contra Eunomium*. But as Richard Lim and others have shown, writing became increasingly important at the end of the fourth century, as theological debates moved from public oral disputations to increasingly text-based debates.[29] So we should not be surprised to find letters functioning as another weapon in the Christian polemical arsenal to be used in these battles waged over and through texts.[30] But we should also be careful, lest the way we encounter these texts, whether in manuscripts, critical editions, or translations, limit the way we read and interpret them.

[29] Richard Lim, *Public Disputation, Power, and Social Order in Late Antiquity*, Transformation of the Classical Heritage 23 (Berkeley, 1995), esp. 109-81.

[30] Of course, letter writing was incredibly important for the earlier theological controversy surrounding Arius. Socrates mentions that both Arius and Alexander compiled letter collections for polemical purposes (Socrates, *Hist. eccl.* I 6). The early developments of the so-called Arian controversy have even been called an 'epistolary battle' (Rowan Williams, *Arius: Heresy and Tradition*, revised edition [Cambridge, 2001], 49). Letters from all the major players, including the emperor Constantine, have survived, often quoted by later fifth-century church historians. By the time of Gregory's debate with Eunomius, the theological treatise was perhaps the favorite written instrument for these purposes, but no doubt letter writing continued in earnest, and letters continued to be allowed into the public record. See *CE* 1.37 for a letter of George of Laodicea (not extant) entered as evidence against Aetius, Eunomius' teacher.

Gregory of Nyssa's *Vita Macrinae* in the Fourth-Century Trinitarian Debate

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Abstract

In 380 Gregory of Nyssa was preparing for the upcoming Council of Constantinople (381), a forum where theologians would be addressing the ongoing Trinitarian controversy. His oldest brother Basil had just died in 379 and his oldest sister Macrina passed soon afterwards. In addressing the Trinitarian debate, he composed the first two books of his *Contra Eunomium* in 380. These were polemical texts that attempted to refute the teachings of Eunomius, a bishop who had long been an adversary of Basil and who threatened the pro-Nicene conception of the Godhead. Within two years, he then completed a sacred biography of his sister, the *Vita Macrinae*. This text praised the virtuous life of his sister and extolled her influence on the family and her community. I suggest in this paper that the *Vita* also reinforced Gregory's emphasis on the transcendence of God, a point that he had stressed in the *Contra Eunomium* to undermine Eunomius' assertion that the nature of God could be defined in human language. It also showed – through the ascetic rigors of Macrina and her family – that individual comprehension of God's power and growth toward divine nature were predicated on lives of obedience and participation in God's activities (ἐνεργείαι). A major point Gregory was trying to make was that the Godhead could not be circumscribed by Eunomius or anyone else.

In the early 380s, Gregory of Nyssa (c. 335 – c. 395) composed the *Vita Macrinae*, a sacred biography that extolled the piety of his sister Macrina (c. 328-379/380), who had died only recently, in 379 or 380.[1] Gregory's oldest brother Basil of Caesarea (330 – c. 379) had preceded her in death by less than a year, sometime in 379. The *Vita* has received significant scholarly treatment in the last twenty years for its many purposes,[2] but little emphasis has been placed on its function

[1] See the entry 'Chronology of Works' by Pierre Maraval, in Lucas Francisco Mateo-Seco and Giulio Maspero (eds), *The Brill Dictionary of Gregory of Nyssa*, trans. Seth Cherney (Leiden, 2010), 153-69.

[2] Philip Rousseau, 'The Pious Household and the Virgin Chorus: Reflections on Gregory of Nyssa's *Life of Macrina*', *JECS* 13 (2005), 165-86; Susanna Elm, 'Gregory's Women: Creating a Philosopher's Family', in Jostein Børtnes and Thomas Hägg (eds), *Gregory of Nazianzus: Images and Reflections* (Copenhagen, 2006), 171-91; Philip Beagon, 'The Cappadocian Fathers, Women and Ecclesiastical Politics', *VC* 49 (1995), 165-79; Francine Cardman, 'Whose Life is It? The *Vita Macrinae* of Gregory of Nyssa', *SP* 37 (2001), 33-50; Wendy Hellemann, 'Cappadocian Macrina on Lady Wisdom', *SP* 37 (2001), 86-102.

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in the fourth-century Trinitarian debate. In this paper, I suggest that Gregory developed the *Vita* in a way that reinforced the polemics he outlined in books one and two of his *Contra Eunomium*,[3] which he completed in 380 in preparation for the First Council of Constantinople (381). Gregory takes the issues of contemplating the nature of the Trinity and participating in its activities, which he presented briefly in the *Contra Eunomium*, and gives them fuller illustration in the *Vita* through the exemplars of Macrina and her family.[4] The use of biography provided another genre for Gregory to demonstrate θεωρία[5] (contemplation of God) and ἐπινοίαι (conceptions of God) as he expanded on their treatment in the *Contra Eunomium*.

The connection between the *Vita Macrinae* and the *Contra Eunomium* becomes clearer within the context of the fourth-century Trinitarian debate.[6] Writing the *Contra Eunomium* in 380, Gregory was responding to his primary opponent in the Trinitarian debate, Eunomius of Cyzicus (c. 325 – c. 395).[7] In 378 or early 379 Eunomius had completed his *Apologia apologiae*,[8] a work that challenged Basil of Caesarea's Trinitarian thought on many fronts,[9] most significantly by asserting that the essence (οὐσία) of God the Father is ἀγέννητος

[3] Lenka Karfiková, Scot Douglass and Johannes Zachhuber (eds), *Gregory of Nyssa: Contra Eunomium II: An English Version with Supporting Studies*, *Proceedings of the 10th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa (Olomouc, September 15-18, 2004)*, trans. Stuart Hall (Leiden, 2007); hereafter, referenced as *ContrEun*; *Select Writings and Letters of Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa*, trans. W. Moore, H.C. Ogle and H.A. Wilson, NPNF, 2nd Series, vol. 5 (1893; reprint, Peabody, MA, 2004), 33-100, 135-248, 250-314; *Gregorii Nysseni opera*, ed. Werner Jaeger, vols 1 and 2 (Leiden, 1960).

[4] Martin Laird, 'Gregory of Nyssa and Divinization: A Reconsideration', *SP* 47 (2010), 39-44; Martin Laird makes the relevant comment that 'we cannot limit our understanding of the extent to which Gregory of Nyssa appeals to the concept of divinization if we limit ourselves to those texts which use technical language of divinization. Gregory's thought is far too allusive and elusive for that'.

[5] For a nuanced definition of this term in Gregory's thought, see Ari Ojell, 'Service or Mastery? "Theology" in Gregory of Nyssa's Contra Eunomium II', in S. Hall, *ContrEun*, 481.

[6] Thomas Kopecek, *A History of Neo-Arianism*, vol. 1, Patristic Monograph Series 8 (Philadelphia, 1979); Gregory completed several dogmatic works as part of this debate between 379 and 382. They include, but are not limited to, *Ad Graecos*, *Ad Ablabium quod non sint tres dei*, *Ad Simplicium de fide*, and *Adversus Macedonianos de Spiritu Sancto*.

[7] See the chapter 'Eunomius' in Philip Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea* (Berkeley, 1994), 93-132 and 'Eunomius as a Cappadocian Father', in Raymond Van Dam, *Becoming Christian: The Conversion of Roman Cappadocia* (Philadelphia, 2003), 15-45.

[8] This work is known to us primarily through citations and direct quotations from Gregory's *Contra Eunomium*; also see Eunomius of Cyzicus. *Apologia Apologiae*, trans. and ed. Richard Vaggione, in *Eunomius: The Extant Works* (Oxford, 1987), 79-127.

[9] Basil had first denounced Eunomius in his *Contra Eunomium*, a work that he completed in 360; *St. Basil of Caesarea: Against Eunomius*, trans. Mark Delcogliano and Andrew Radde-Gallwitz, FC 122 (Washington, 2011); Basil of Caesarea, *Contre Eunome*, 2 vols, trans. and ed. Bernard Sesboüé, Georges-Matthieu de Durand and Louis Doutreleau, SC 299 and 305 (Paris, 1982-1983).

('unbegotten').[10] The corollary to this assertion was that the Son (who was begotten) could not share in the same essence as God the Father.[11] Subsequently the Son was lower in dignity and rank.[12] Gregory was compelled to respond to Eunomius' *Apologia* on two fronts. First, the adversary had postulated an alarming interpretation of the Trinity, one that threatened the Cappadocians' concept of a Godhead consisting of three distinct entities (ὑποστάσεις) that shared the same essence.[13] And second, with Basil now deceased and thus unable to respond to Eunomius, the duty fell to Gregory to protect the family honor. In this essay, we will focus on the first incentive.

In the extant sections of Eunomius' *Apologia*, his emphasis on the ἀγέννητος of God the Father provided the foundation for his condemnation of the doctrine of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as ὁμοούσιος (same in essence). But this supposition was predicated on an ontological difference between Homoousians and Anomoeans,[14] one on which Gregory focused in his *Contra Eunomium* and also addressed by fellow Cappadocian Gregory of Nazianzus and other colleagues.[15] Eunomius' claim that the essence of God was ἀγέννητος presupposed the human ability to grasp the nature of God through reason. Gregory of Nyssa, among other pro-Nicene theologians, placed the full thrust of his polemical attack against this point. Thus Gregory put forward that 'human nature has not the potential in it to understand precisely the nature of God'.[16] Moreover, 'the barrier which separates uncreated nature from created being is great and impenetrable. One is finite, the other infinite'.[17] And 'so with the Maker of the world: we know that he Is, but we admit we are unable to understand his Being'.[18] Gregory attacked Eunomius' alleged knowledge of

[10] *ContrEun* 2.12-27 (Hall, 62-5).

[11] R. Vaggione, *Extant Works* (1987), 118.

[12] R. Vaggione, *Extant Works* (1987), 124; See John Behr, *The Nicene Faith, Part Two, Formation of Christian Theology* 2 (Crestwood, NY, 2004), 267-83; also Stephen Hildebrand, *The Trinitarian Theology of Basil of Caesarea: A Synthesis of Greek Thought and Biblical Truth* (Washington, 2009), 41-5.

[13] J. Behr, *Nicene Faith* (2004), 414-35; Johannes Zachhuber, *Human Nature in Gregory of Nyssa: Philosophical Background and Theological Significance*, SVigChr 46 (Leiden, 2000), 73-9; Zachhuber shows that this is a complex formula that has come to be worded in simplistic terms. The three Cappadocian fathers did not view this model exactly the same.

[14] The opponents of Eunomius' doctrine called his followers by this term, which derives from *anomoios*, 'unlike'.

[15] See Christopher Beeley, *Gregory of Nazianzus on the Trinity and Knowledge of God: In Your Light We Shall See Light*, Oxford Studies in Historical Theology 12 (Oxford, 2008), 39-40; Beeley suggests that Gregory of Nazianzus may have composed his theological orations (delivered in 380) in collaboration with Gregory of Nyssa, Maximus the Cynic, Jerome, or Evagrius.

[16] *ContrEun* 2.67 (Hall, 74).

[17] *ContrEun* 2.69-70 (Hall, 74-5).

[18] *ContrEun* 2.71 (Hall, 75).

God's nature as a vain and infantile act of fitting the essence of the Son into the logic of his syllogisms.[19]

In contrast to Eunomius' claim to comprehend the essence of God, Gregory issued an alternate system of apprehending God, one that later he illustrated further in the *Vita Macrinae*. He stated that individuals must approach the Godhead in faith, as Abraham had done, and witness the Almighty's divine actions (ἐνεργείαι).[20] By participation[21] (μετουσία) in the Holy One's goodness – which is placed within human grasp by God's initiative – one may experience conceptions (ἐπινοίαι)[22] that, though not defining the reality of his nature, nonetheless present a kind of shadow of his divinity.[23] Giving the example of Abraham, Gregory showed that through one's belief and lifting of the mind, a believer's soul can draw near to God.[24] Gregory thus emphasized a transcendent Godhead, never fully knowable, but nevertheless accessible.[25]

In discussing the process of reaching toward God, Gregory also delineated between sense-perception and contemplation (θεωρία).[26] The former, which involves the use of words, must yield to the mind as the latter 'is exercised upon high and invisible subjects, which the senses cannot reach … the Divine and ineffable Nature'. [27] Verbal expressions are susceptible to error and corruption and they do not have the capacity to measure the unknowable.[28] Within this paradigm, one can discern a dichotomy between two pursuits, that of the philosopher, who trains the mind to reach the unseen, and the rhetorician, who dabbles in the art of manipulating through the use of words. The juxtaposition

[19] *ContrEun* 2.83 (Hall, 78).

[20] *ContrEun* 2.84-7 (Hall, 78-9).

[21] For more on this concept see Torstein Tollefsen, *Activity and Participation in Late Antique and Early Christian Thought*, OECS (Oxford, 2012), 159-69; Brian Daley, 'Divine Transcendence and Human Transformation: Gregory of Nyssa's Anti-Apollinarian Christology', *SP* 32 (1997), 87-95; and David Balás, *METOUSIA THEON: Man's Participation in God's Perfections According to Saint Gregory of Nyssa* (Rome, 1966).

[22] Lewis Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford, 2004), 191-6; Ayres defines the term *epinoia* as 'the activity of reflecting on and identifying the distinct qualities or properties of something'; also Andrew Radde-Gallwitz, '*Epinoia* and Initial Concepts: Re-assessing Gregory of Nyssa's Defense of Basil', *SP* 47 (2010), 21-6.

[23] *ContrEun* 2.148-50 (Hall, 91); Michel Barnes discusses the different approaches to God's causality in Michel René Barnes, 'Eunomius of Cyzicus and Gregory of Nyssa: Two Traditions of Transcendental Causality', *VC* 52 (1998), 73-9.

[24] *ContrEun* 2.86 (Hall, 78-9); see Martin Laird, *Gregory of Nyssa and the Grasp of Faith: Union Knowledge, and Divine Presence*, OECS (Oxford, 2004), 108-11.

[25] Anthony Meredith, 'Divine Incomprehensibility in Gregory of Nyssa and Augustine', *SP* 47 (2010), 3-7.

[26] *ContrEun* 2.574 (Hall, 189); see Khaled Anatolios, *Retrieving Nicaea: The Development and Meaning of Trinitarian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, MI, 2011), 235-9.

[27] *ContrEun* 2.576 (Hall, 189); Maurice Wiles, 'Eunomius: Hair-Splitting Dialectician or Defender of the Accessibility of Salvation?', in *The Making of Orthodoxy: Essays in Honor of Henry Chadwick*, ed. Rowan Williams (Cambridge, 1989), 157-72.

[28] *ContrEun* 2.577-8 (Hall, 189-90).

appearing here corresponds to the rising ascetic movement across the eastern Mediterranean at this same period, a subject which pervades the *Vita Macrinae*. The 'right' philosophy of stretching out or up (ἐπεχκτείνω) to God converges with developing praise in the wider Christian community for the life of withdrawal and self-denial,[29] while in the *Contra Eunomium* the eloquent civic persona descends in status to a source of suspicion and deceit.

The strategy of portraying rhetoricians and logicians as *personae non gratae* is evident from the outset of the *Contra Eunomium* as Gregory begins Book One with a scathing invective, castigating Eunomius as one who shunned the life of seeking truth in favor of public acclaim and worldly pleasures.[30] Already in the early 360s, Basil had reprimanded Eunomius. According to Basil, ambition – not sound doctrine – was driving Eunomius.[31] By 380, when Gregory penned the first two books of his *Contra Eunomium*, this notoriety – whether rhetorical or not – continued to plague Eunomius, 'busied as he was after this about the cloak and purse…'[32] Gregory presents Eunomius as a man obsessed with praise, adept at proving his points through dialectics, but failing to have personal knowledge of God.[33] Gregory mocked his adversary as a sensationalist, a mere entertainer suited for theatrics, but not theology. He was 'like those who produce effects upon the stage, adapting his argument to the tune of his rhythmical phrases, as they their song to their castenets…' [34] Gregory acknowledged him as 'quite a word practitioner' but one who had stooped to a 'vulgar level in a contest of mere arguments and phrases'.[35] Gregory derided him as an insecure wordsmith, more preoccupied with winning his contests with other rhetoricians than disclosing the truth of God. He was content to outwit his theological dissenters, shaming them through the precision (ἀκρίβεια) of his words and the accuracy of his logic. Gregory also likened Eunomius to the scribes and Pharisees, Jewish religious experts who were depicted unfavorably in the Gospels as legalistic – guarding the laws and doctrines of the Jews but not putting into practice the spirit of God's love behind these mandates.[36]

[29] Susanna Elm, *'Virgins of God': The Making of an Ascetic Community* (Oxford, 1994), 106-36.

[30] R. Vaggione, *Eunomius of Cyzicus and the Nicene Revolution* (Oxford, 2000), 184-7; Virginia Burrus, *"Begotten, Not Made:" Conceiving Manhood in Late Antiquity* (Stanford, 2000), 101-3; R. Van Dam, *Becoming Christian* (2003), 28-37.

[31] Basil, *Contra Eunomium* 1.2.

[32] *ContrEun* 1.6 NPNF (p. 40) (GNO 1.50-3).

[33] See V. Burrus, *"Begotten"* (2000), 97-112 for analysis of this work; especially her discussion of the unflattering 'specular' image that Nyssen painted here.

[34] *ContrEun* NPNF 1.3 (p. 37) (GNO 1.16-7).

[35] *Ibid.*

[36] *ContrEun* NPNF 1.10 (p. 46) (J 1.107); for examples from one of the Gospels, see *Matthew* 12:2-14, 12:38-9, 15:1-9, 16:5-12; and especially chapter 23; on the anti-Judaizing rhetoric of the Cappadocians against Eunomius see Christine Shepardson, 'Defining the Boundaries of

In these characterizations Eunomius emerges as the antithesis of the philosopher and ascetic,[37] a direct contrast to the image of Macrina and her brothers that appears in the *Vita*. Although Eunomius most likely was an accomplished orator and logician, as Richard Vaggione has shown, Basil, Gregory, and subsequent theological opponents built an image of this 'unorthodox' bishop that overstated his penchant for public life and luxury versus contemplation.[38] Asceticism, according to Richard Vaggione, has come be associated with the homoousian party, when in reality Eunomius also envisioned a community that moderated the passions of its citizens.[39] Nevertheless the vilification of Eunomius as lacking spiritual training and failing to pursue higher realities – especially when coupled with his portrayal as a man bent on status and wealth – left a damaging legacy of Eunomius that disqualified him for explicating the nature of God in the eyes of pro-Nicenes. In the *Vita*, Gregory expounds on the juxtaposition in the *Contra Eunomium* between precise knowledge of God – asserted by the sophist Eunomius – and Gregory's own doctrine of growth in comprehending the activities (ἐνεργείαι) that define divine nature, an essence that cannot be fully comprehended.

When Gregory took up his pen to create the *Vita Macrinae* within two years after having completed the first two books of the *Contra Eunomium*, he continued to invoke a reticence towards rhetoric, logic, and public life as a way of reinforcing his ontological model. His account shows minimal regard for παιδεία – the cultural and intellectual training of young men in the values of ancient Greece. This program of creating promising orators and rational thinkers did not accord with his teaching in the *Contra Eunomium* that the Almighty falls outside the bounds of human comprehension and language. Thus the practices of rhetoric and deductive analysis lack meaning in the *Vita*. Macrina and her family approached the Holy One by departing from civic life and the influence of expert sophists. Macrina knew God not through a master of logic, but rather by withdrawing from normal social intercourse and achieving the purity necessary to contemplate the divine.[40] When she was a young woman, her father arranged for her to marry a man of great talent, a rhetorician. 'His reputation as an orator', Gregory tells the reader, represented the young man's

Orthodoxy: Eunomius in the Anti-Jewish Polemic of His Cappadocian Opponents', *CH* 76 (2007), 699-723.

[37] R. Vaggione, *Eunomius* (2000), 184; Vaggione writes that 'an attempt was made to make Aetius and Eunomius the "anti-monks" of the fourth century'.

[38] On rhetoricians as 'lovers of luxury' see Philostratus, *Vitae Sophistarum* 2.3, 2.5 and 2.10 in *Philostratus and Eunapius: The Lives of the Sophists*, trans. Wilmer Wright, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA, 1952), 185, 201 and 223.

[39] R. Vaggione, 'Of Monks and Lounge Lizards: "Arians," Polemics and Asceticism in the Roman East', in Michel Barnes and Daniel Williams (eds), *Arianism after Arius: Essays on the Development of the Fourth Century Trinitarian Conflicts* (Edinburgh, 1993), 197-214.

[40] J. Warren Smith, 'A Just and Reasonable Grief: The Death and Function of a Holy Woman in Gregory of Nyssa's *Life of Macrina*', *JECS* 12 (2004), 57-84.

bridal gift.[41] This talent, however, was fleeting as 'envy cut short this bright promise'.[42] The youth died before he could marry Macrina. The young man's untimely death conveyed a message in the *Vita*. His demise preserved Macrina's pre-sexual state of purity and thus the inviolate nature of her family and the Christian community that Gregory oversaw as bishop.[43] His passing also represented a metaphor for the empty nature of oratory. Macrina's earthly spouse, a lawyer, was replaced by a heavenly bridegroom, Christ, one who provided blessings that transcended earthly benefits. Rather than re-marry, as was the conventional practice, Macrina embraced a higher reality. A contemplative life resulting in ascendancy towards God superseded the prestige, security, and wealth that would have come from union with another man of high standing.

In her own childhood education, Macrina received instruction from her mother, but she was protected from secular studies (παίδευσιν) with their 'passionate themes of tragedy' and 'unseemly antics of comedy'.[44] Her curriculum was grounded in studies leading to a moral life, including much exposure to the books of Solomon and the Psalms of David.[45] Rather than trailing the wisdom of her celebrated brother Basil, who had studied at the finest centers of education in the eastern empire, Macrina later served as his guide. The celebrated oldest brother Basil shed his life of rhetoric – through Macrina's influence – for a sojourn of public withdrawal, physical labor, and complete poverty. Basil had become excessively conceited by his speaking skills and as a man of great importance – a recipient of much attention and praise, a performer – he had given way to pride.[46] But after having undergone Macrina's direction in philosophy (an ascetic program), Basil abandoned his love of fame as a man of eloquence. His energies had been tamed and curbed toward a nobler goal, contemplating God.[47] Likewise, Macrina's second oldest brother Naucratius, an up-and-coming man of strength and potential public leadership, 'turned to a life of monasticism and poverty', thus passing up a career of wealth and glory in order to live away from the city.[48] Living in the wild as a hunter, with God as his only provider, was a far cry from public disputations and mesmerizing

[41] Gregory of Nyssa, *Vita Macrinae* 4.18-24; trans. Virginia Woods Callahan, *Gregory of Nyssa: Ascetical Works*, FC 58 (Washington, 1967), 166; critical edition by Pierre Maraval, in *Grégoire de Nysse: Vie de Sainte Macrine*, SC 178 (Paris, 1971).

[42] *Vita Macr*. 4.23-4 (Callahan, 166).

[43] Elizabeth Clark, 'A Lady Vanishes: Dilemmas of a Feminist Historian after the "Linguistic Turn"', *CH* 67 (1998), 1-31.

[44] *Vita Macr*. 3.10-5 (Callahan, 165).

[45] *Vita Macr*. 3.14-20 (Callahan, 165).

[46] *Vita Macr*. 6.5-15 (Callahan, 167).

[47] On Macrina as 'tamer' see J. Warren Smith, 'Macrina, Tamer of Horses and Healer of Souls: Grief and Therapy of Hope in Gregory of Nyssa's *De Anima et Resurrectione*', *JTS* 52 (2001), 37-60.

[48] *Vita Macr*. 8.7-12 (Callahan, 168-9).

audiences in the polis. For Naucratius, as for Basil, communing with God in nature provided a sacred locus for reaching out to the Eternal. These accounts situated Macrina's family outside the civic arena, where human intellect and discussion resulted in truth. The joining of faith and mind, as presented in the *Contra Eunomium*,[49] was represented in these characters vis-à-vis Eunomius, the quintessential man of logic and words.

Whereas the *Contra Eunomium* represented a more direct presentation of Gregory's Trinitarian thought through a polemical context, the *Vita Macrinae* provided a medium for illustrating his ideas through specific behaviors as reflected in his family. In the *Contra Eunomium* Gregory had asserted that 'when the mind is exercised upon high and invisible subjects, which the senses cannot reach – and I am speaking about the divine and ineffable Nature … then we dismiss the sound of words…'[50] In the *Vita*, Macrina embodies this notion that knowledge of God comes through contemplation (θεωρία) rather than human perception.[51] When her mother suffered the death of her son Naucratius (Macrina's second oldest brother), Macrina used 'her own line of reasoning' to help her mother transcend a state of sorrow.[52] She became for her mother 'a guide towards the philosophical and unworldly way of life',[53] thus leading her to the 'practice of Divinity' (θείων μελέτη).[54] This φιλοσοφία resulted in a cleansed heart that allowed Macrina's mind to process (ἐπινοέω) the activities (ἐνεργείαι) of God. This purification allowed her soul to move towards the hidden essence of the Divine One and to direct her mother in this same pursuit.[55]

In the *Vita*, the life of philosophy represents behaviors rooted in asceticism, where austerity and self-denial surpass human logic and persuasion. In the culture of παιδεία young men studied ancient Greek philosophy towards the goal of becoming virtuous (ἀρετή) citizens and leaders of the polis. They were to be polished speakers and rational thinkers. The imagery of Eunomius in the first book of the *Contra Eunomium*, however, left readers with the impression that a sophist was ill equipped to circumscribe the limits of the Almighty. In the *Vita*, Macrina 'raised herself to the highest peak of human virtue through philosophy',[56] but this ascension was a product of a regimen that guided minds to a God who stood outside the material world. Macrina and her family were

[49] *ContrEun* 2.84-96 (Hall, 78-81).

[50] *ContrEun* 2.576 (Hall, 189).

[51] Another work by Gregory of Nyssa that addresses this issue is the *Ad Ablabium*, composed in 380 or 381; see L. Ayres, *Nicaea* (2009), 344-63; also see discussions in Giulio Maspero, *Trinity and Man: Gregory of Nyssa's Ad Ablabium*, SVigChr 86 (Leiden, 2007).

[52] *Vita Macr*. 10 (Callahan, 170).

[53] *Vita Macr*. 11.4-6 (Callahan, 170).

[54] *Vita Macr*. 11.29 (translation is my own).

[55] *ContrEun* 2.154 (Hall); L. Ayres, *Nicaea* (2009), 351-6.

[56] *Vita Macr*. 1.27-30 (Callahan, 163).

able to participate (μετουσία) in the goodness of God's ἐνεργείαι because they had undergone an ἄσκησις of heart and mind.[57] Their movement toward the essence of the Godhead was predicated on lives of self-sacrifice, charity, and renouncing of worldly treasures. For Macrina and her mother, their path to God meant that 'continence was their luxury and not being known their fame; their wealth consisted in their poverty and the shaking off of all worldly abundance like dust from the body'.[58] By renouncing the security of the world and giving complete devotion to God, they were able to ascertain the heavenly powers (οὐρανίαις συμμετεωροποροῦσα δυνάμεσι).[59]

Throughout the *Vita*, metaphors of reaching toward higher realms abound. This language accords with descriptions of God's transcendence as found in the *Contra Eunomium* where Gregory states:

> The true power and authority, primacy and sovereignty of God, at least on our reckoning, do not consist of syllables, or all and every inventor of words would come to be equal with God, but endless ages, cosmic beauties, radiance of heavenly bodies, and the marvels on land and sea, hosts of angels and supermundane powers, and whatever else in the higher realm we hear hinted at by the scripture, these are what claim for God the power over all things.[60]

Thus, when Macrina maintained a sense of peace and decorum following Naucratius' death, she was credited with a 'spirited' (ὑψηλή) and 'elevated' (ἐπηρημένη) soul.[61] After being led to a life of humility by his sister, Basil consecrated his brother Peter to the priesthood. Their philosophy bore the marks of a rigorous, selfless existence in service to others, and 'their lives progressed to a loftier and higher degree'.[62] Moreover, when Macrina was discussing the future with Gregory, as if guided by the Holy Spirit, her brother's soul was 'lifted up out of its human sphere', where it took 'its stand in the heavenly sanctuaries (οὐρανίων ἀδύτων)'.[63] And when a fever was burning up Macrina's energies as she lay on her deathbed, nevertheless 'she kept her mind free in the contemplation of higher things' (τῶν ὑψηλῶν θεωρίᾳ).[64] These images reinforced the idea in the *Contra Eunomium* of a transcendent God, whose nature is raised above the human senses. Reading the *Vita* in conjunction with the first two books of the *Contra Eunomium*, theologians would have captured the disparity of the Godhead, whose power Macrina grew into (or 'up'

[57] *ContrEun* 2.86-9 (Hall); phrasing on 'asceticism of heart and mind' comes from L. Ayres, *Nicaea* (2009), 352; on participation see T. Tollefsen, *Activity and Participation* (2012), 55-66.
[58] *Vita Macr*. 11.25-30 (Callahan, 171).
[59] *Vita Macr*. 11.43-6 (translation is my own).
[60] *ContrEun* 2.291 (Hall, 124).
[61] *Vita Macr*. 10.14-6 (Callahan, 170).
[62] *Vita Macr*. 14.18-24 (Callahan, 173).
[63] *Vita Macr*. 17.29-30 (Callahan, 175).
[64] *Vita Macr*. 18.10-3 (Callahan, 176).

to), versus the Trinity measured by Eunomius's specialized language (τέχνη). The former was a boundless Divinity, whereas the nature of the latter could be delineated in human language.

Conclusion

The *Contra Eunomium* served the dual function of undermining the credibility of Gregory's Anomoean rival Eunomius and proffering an alternative paradigm of the nature of the Trinity. It also provided initial guidance for individuals in approaching – but not fully comprehending – the Godhead. This was a critical work in a heated battle over the Trinity, with its first two books read at the Council of Constantinople in 381. It spoke primarily to church leaders and imperial representatives engaged in the acrimonious Trinitarian debate, with the state's definition of the Godhead at stake. Few members of the general populace would have had access to, or have been able to understand, its contents. The *Vita Macrinae*, however, incorporated a much broader audience. The much shorter length of the narrative and its accessible language would have made it suitable for oral presentation, while its text also would have been easier to acquire. Its narrative format was much more suitable to the average reader/hearer than the *Contra Eunomium*. It would have resonated with the many audiences of the day who longed for accounts of saints and their feats of holiness, while still drawing the attention of the proficient theologians continuing to engage in the Trinitarian debate.

The *Vita* laid forth a dynamic model of ascetic piety for lay Christians and it was within this context that Gregory could effectively integrate ideas already extrapolated in the *Contra Eunomium*. The convergence of ἄσκησις and φιλοσοφία was an integral theme in the biography, with acts of self-denial and physical deprivation synthesizing with the holy wisdom manifested as the contemplation of the Almighty. Macrina, the consummate *amicus dei*, provided Gregory's ideal of comprehending God. Not by worldly knowledge or eloquent verbiage could one ascertain the Divine one. Rather, through obedience, sacrifice, and participation in the activities that God initiated, a believer could grow closer to the power that ushered forth from the Creator. Macrina, and some of her family members, provided the human element that broadened Gregory's Trinitarian discourse and subverted Eunomian logic.

By incorporating into the *Vita* elements of his polemical treatise the *Contra Eunomium*, Gregory was elaborating on crucial concepts that he was still developing in the context of the Trinitarian controversy. He would refine many of these ideas in later works. For example in the *Life of Moses* (c. 390),[65] he issued

[65] Gregory of Nyssa, *De vita Moysis*, in *Gregory of Nyssa: The Life of Moses*, trans. A.J. Malherbe and Everett Ferguson, Classics of Western Spirituality (New York, 1978).

a much more nuanced illustration of contemplating the Divine than he did in the *Vita*. But in the early 380s, he was still fleshing out many of these concepts. Gregory's Trinitarian theology mirrored the numinous participation in the Godhead that he advocated in place of Eunomius' misguided attempts to delimit the Almighty. His later works reflected the culmination of a journey in his own understanding of apprehending the Eternal One. Most of these were borne out of conflicts with other theologians, thus forcing him to strengthen and expand his ontological formulae.

Gregory of Nyssa's Tabernacle Imagery: Mysticism, Theology and Politics

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Abstract

How should Gregory of Nyssa's *Life of Moses* be characterised – as a work of mysticism, theology or politics? Daniélou describes it as a mystical treatise; but not everyone agrees. Heine argues that it reflects Gregory's polemical debates with Origenism and Eunomianism. Lim, meanwhile, points out the social and political factors behind Cappadocian apophaticism. This paper will explore the interplay between mysticism, theology and politics in *Life of Moses* by focussing on Gregory's tabernacle imagery. In *Life of Moses* 2,170-201, Gregory describes Moses' mystical vision of 'the tabernacle not made with hands'. This vision conveys theological truths about the pre-existent and incarnate Christ. It also contains a clear warning that the common people – *hoi polloi* – are to steer clear of such theological mysteries. They are to worship in the earthly tabernacle, without trying to enter the holy of holies. It will be argued that Gregory is drawing on the paradigm of heavenly ascent, which was widespread in the Hellenistic and Late Antique worlds. Other heavenly ascent texts display a similar intertwining of religious experience, revelation of divine secrets, and claims to political authority. And just as there are debates over whether *Life of Moses* should be labelled 'mystical' or 'theological', so scholars of heavenly ascent texts argue over whether they reflect 'experience' or 'exegesis'. Stone and Himmelfarb, for example, disagree over whether the pseudepigraphic ascent apocalypses are literary documents or manifestations of visionary activity. This paper will put forward the view that experience and exegesis exist in a dynamic relationship, each informing the other, and that neither is apolitical. What we might think of as distinct, even competing, categories, are found to be mutually reinforcing in heavenly ascent texts. So for Gregory, the high point of an ascent to the divine was the mystery of Christian doctrine; and contact with such holiness was an initiation into responsibility.[1]

How should Gregory of Nyssa's *Life of Moses* be characterised – as a work of mysticism, theology or politics? Daniélou describes it as a mystical treatise, 'qui retrace les étapes de la vie spirituelle depuis ses origines jusqu'à la vie mystique'.[2] He ties this understanding of the text to Gregory's personal experience:

[1] I would like to thank the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), whose funding enabled my PhD research, out of which this paper arose.

[2] Jean Daniélou, *Platonisme et théologie mystique: Doctrine spirituelle de Saint Grégoire de Nysse*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1954), 10.

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Once freed from administrative burdens and the heat of theological controversy, Gregory now turned himself wholly towards the life of the spirit. It was a change which reflected the interior evolution which he had been undergoing.[3]

Not everyone agrees. Heine, for example, argues that *Life of Moses* reflects Gregory's polemical debates with Origenism and Eunomianism. He objects to a mystical interpretation of the treatise, both because *Life of Moses* does not set out clear-cut stages for the ascent of the soul, following rather the biblical chronology of Moses' life, and because it 'lacks any clear indication of the concept of attaining "union" with God'.[4] Lim, meanwhile, points out the social and political factors behind Cappadocian apophaticism. Belief in a transcendent God shrouded in mystery

> helped to preserve social solidarity and order by undermining the legitimacy of any differential claim to precise knowledge about the divine essence … Henceforth, claims to virtue and consideration within Christian communities were to be based on the hierarchical factors of birth and ecclesiastical rank.[5]

Are these interpretations of *Life of Moses* mutually exclusive?

I have been investigating Gregory's tabernacle imagery. His interpretation of the darkness on Mount Sinai, which has attracted so much scholarly attention, takes up three paragraphs of *Life of Moses* (2,162-4). His commentary on the vision of the tabernacle 'not made with hands' which Moses saw within that darkness occupies thirty two paragraphs (2,170-201). My aim has been to discover why that vision of the tabernacle was so important to Gregory, and what use he made of its symbolism. One of the ways in which I have done this is by heuristic comparison with a range of heavenly ascent texts. These are texts in which an individual, or possibly a community (thinking of *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, from Qumran), ascends to heaven and glimpses the divine throne with its myriad attendant angels. They range from 1*Enoch* (dating from the 3rd century B.C.E. onwards) to the *Hekhalot* literature, including 3*Enoch*, whose redaction is post-talmudic.[6] Some are Jewish, some Christian, some a mixture (such as a Jewish text reworked by Christian editors) and for some

[3] Jean Daniélou, 'Introduction', in Herbert Musurillo (ed.), *From Glory to Glory: Texts from Gregory of Nyssa's Mystical Writings* (Reprint edition, Crestwood, N.Y., 2001), 3-78, 9.

[4] Ronald E. Heine, *Perfection in the Virtuous Life: A Study in the Relationship Between Edification and Polemical Theology in Gregory of Nyssa's De Vita Moysis* (Cambridge, Mass., 1975), 109.

[5] Richard Lim, *Public Disputation, Power, and Social Order in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, 1995), 179.

[6] For an introduction to heavenly ascent texts see Martha Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses* (Oxford, 1993). For the difficulties of dating the *Hekhalot* texts see Peter Schäfer, 'Tradition and Redaction in Hekhalot Literature', in *Hekhalot-Studien* (Tübingen, 1988), 8-16.

more nuanced definitions of identity are required.[7] I am not arguing that Gregory was influenced by any of these texts in particular, but suggesting that he describes Moses' experience on Mount Sinai by drawing on the paradigm of heavenly ascent, which was widely exploited in the Hellenistic and Late Antique worlds, by Jews, Christians and pagans.[8] In particular, Gregory mines the idea of heaven as a tabernacle or temple, a concept with deep roots in Near Eastern and Jewish traditions.[9] McGinn argues that the Jewish apocalypses and the philosophical-religious tradition begun by Plato were both 'major components of the background of Christian mysticism'.[10] Gregory's relationship with Platonism has been thoroughly explored. By comparing and contrasting his work with apocalypses and other descriptions of heavenly ascent, can new light be shed on his use of imagery?

Heavenly ascent texts combine psychology, theology, science and politics. In 1*Enoch*, for example, Enoch dreams – a psychological state – of ascending to heaven, where he learns both about God – theology – and about rivers, mountains, rocks, winds and stars – cosmology. Embedded in the text is a polemic against the priests of the Jerusalem temple – politics. The fault line in Gregorian scholarship between those who label *Life of Moses* and *On the Song of Songs* as 'mystical' and those who consider them to be 'theological' is mirrored by debates over whether heavenly ascent texts embody exegesis or experience. Stone and Himmelfarb have had a long running disagreement over whether the pseudepigraphic ascent apocalypses are 'literary documents' or reflections of 'actual visionary activity or analogous religious experience'.[11] Or, to take a different example, Halperin and Schäfer insist that the accounts of *ma'aseh merkavah* (the work of the chariot) in rabbinic literature are referring to the exegetical activity of interpreting the first chapter of *Ezekiel*,

[7] See, for example, David Frankfurter, 'Beyond "Jewish Christianity": Continuing Religious Sub-Cultures of the Second and Third Centuries and Their Documents', in Adam H. Becker and Annette Yoshiko Reed (eds), *The Ways that Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Minneapolis, 2007), 131-43.

[8] Segal describes the heavenly journey of the soul as 'the dominant mythical constellation of late classical antiquity': Alan F. Segal, 'Heavenly Ascent in Hellenistic Judaism, Early Christianity and their Environment', in Wolfgang Haase (ed.), *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung. 2. Principat. 23.2* (Berlin, 1980), 1333-94, 1388.

[9] See Jon D. Levenson, *Sinai and Zion: An Entry into the Jewish Bible* (Minneapolis, 1985), 111-42.

[10] Bernard McGinn, *The Foundations of Mysticism: Origins to the Fifth Century* (New York, 1991), 5.

[11] M. Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven* (1993), 98; see also *id*., 'The Practice of Ascent in the Ancient Mediterranean World', in John J. Collins and Michael Fishbane (eds), *Death, Ecstasy and Otherworldly Journeys* (Albany, 1995), 123-37, 132; Michael E. Stone, 'A Reconsideration of Apocalyptic Visions', *Harvard Theological Review* 96 (2003), 167-80, 167; see also *id*., 'Apocalyptic, Vision or Hallucination?', in *Selected Studies in Pseudepigrapha and Apocrypha with Special Reference to the Armenian Tradition*, Studia in Veteris Testamenti pseudepigrapha 9 (Leiden, 1991), 419-28, 428.

whereas Wolfson and Morray-Jones object to any sharp distinction between exegetical activity and visionary mysticism.[12] Alexander argues that 'there is constant ebb and flow between text and experience', with mystical experience helping to determine the way in which individual scriptural elements are combined, and Scripture providing a matrix 'which stimulates, structures and interprets' experience.[13] However, as interpreters, we do not stand in the same relationship to 'experience' as to 'exegesis'. Whereas the exegetical moves behind a text can be deciphered, decoding the experience involved is another matter. 'L'historien ne sait que ce qu'on lui dit. Il ne pénètre pas le secret des cœurs'.[14] Trying to extrapolate from pseudepigraphical narratives to the religious experiences of their authors is an impossible task. It is equally dangerous to try and discern Gregory's personal experience in his allegorical exegesis of *Exodus*. And in both cases it does the texts a grave disservice if 'experience' is confined to inner spiritual experience. Heavenly ascent texts do not simply claim a privatised, subjective experience for their heroes. The throne of God is the epicentre of holiness and power. To claim knowledge of an ascent to that throne is to claim authority. As Rowland says of the apocalypses,

> Unless we grasp the high view of authority inherent in these texts, we shall not fully appreciate the potentially exclusive view of the value and content of the revelations. After all, what the apocalypses purport to offer is not the mere opinion of the expositor but a divine revelation…[15]

The authors of heavenly ascent texts were involved in the power politics of their day, and a vision of heaven was seen as a trump card, used both by disaffected minorities and by religious authorities trying to curb unruly enthusiasm. Schäfer sees in 1*Enoch* 'a devastating critique of the Temple in Jerusalem': Enoch's vision could imply that the holy of holies in the earthly temple is empty, and that God has withdrawn to his temple in heaven.[16] The Qumran community, also estranged from the Jerusalem temple, maintained its identity and self-belief by participating in heavenly worship. This was presumably

[12] David J. Halperin, *The Merkabah in Rabbinic Literature*, American Oriental Series 62 (New Haven, 1980), 179; Peter Schäfer, *The Origins of Jewish Mysticism* (Tübingen, 2009), 211; Elliot R. Wolfson, *Through a Speculum That Shines: Vision and Imagination in Medieval Jewish Mysticism* (Princeton, 1994), 121-4; Christopher Rowland and Christopher R.A. Morray-Jones, *The Mystery of God: Early Jewish Mysticism and the New Testament*, CRINT 12 (Leiden, 2009), 258-9.

[13] Philip S. Alexander, *The Mystical Texts: Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice and Related Manuscripts*, Companion to the Qumram Scrolls 7 (London, 2006), 60.

[14] A.J. Festugière, *La révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste, vol. iv: Le Dieu inconnu et la gnose* (Paris, 1954), 267; quoted Colin W. Macleod, 'Allegory and Mysticism in Origen and Gregory of Nyssa', *Journal of Theological Studies* 22 (1971), 362-79, 362.

[15] Christopher Rowland, 'Apocalyptic Literature', in D.A. Carson and H.G.M. Williamson (eds), *It Is Written: Scripture Citing Scripture: Essays in Honour of Barnabas Lindars* (Cambridge, 1988), 170-89, 181.

[16] P. Schäfer, *The Origins of Jewish Mysticism* (2009), 66.

seen as a temporary measure, until such time as the Jerusalem temple returned to its true calling. But claims of heavenly ascent were not only produced and treasured within rebellious prophetic movements. The rabbis appropriated *ma'aseh merkavah* to themselves, issuing dire warnings to keep everyone else away. Gregory of Nyssa insisted that not all Christians could imitate Moses' ascent:

> The multitude was not capable of hearing the voice from above but relied on Moses… This is also true of the arrangement in the Church: Not all thrust themselves toward the apprehension of the mysteries, but, choosing from among themselves someone who is able to hear things divine, they give ear gratefully to him…[17]

Heavenly ascent texts are not disinterested descriptions of personal experiences, they are bids for religious power, attempts to give divine authority to the knowledge they present. This is not to say that they are nothing but politics. Lesses criticises Halperin for 'reducing the religious goal of the Hekhalot texts to nothing more than a search for power and (refusing) to acknowledge that the framers of these texts sought in some of their rituals to attain a vision of the transcendent God'.[18] Mysticism is not one-dimensional; it is a complex, rounded phenomenon. Personal spiritual experience, scientific curiosity, and political agenda were all motors of heavenly ascent texts.

In *Life of Moses*, Gregory describes Moses ascending to the tabernacle 'not made with hands'. This is not an earthly, material place. In the Platonic tradition it represents the κόσμος νοητός – the realm of ideas; but, as Daniélou points out, Gregory replaces the Platonic κόσμος νοητός with the world of angels.[19] Hence his allegorisation of the heavenly tabernacle furniture:

> The pillars gleaming with silver and gold, the bearing poles and rings, and those cherubim who hide the ark with their wings, and all the other things which are contained in the description of the tabernacle's construction – all of these things, if one should turn his view to things above, are the heavenly powers which … support the universe in accord with the divine will.[20]

These powers – the cherubim/seraphim in particular – shield the incomprehensible divine nature, 'the ineffable secrets',[21] represented by the mysteries in the ark of the covenant. But the vision also has theological content. It reveals a

[17] *Life of Moses* 2,160. All quotations from *Life of Moses* are taken from Abraham J. Malherbe and Everett Ferguson, *Gregory of Nyssa: The Life of Moses*, Classics of Western Spirituality (New York, 1978). The Greek text can be found in Jean Daniélou, *Grégoire de Nysse: La Vie de Moïse, ou Traité de la perfection en matière de vertu*, 3rd ed., SC 1bis (Paris, 2000).

[18] Rebecca Macy Lesses, *Ritual Practices to Gain Power: Angels, Incantations, and Revelation in Early Jewish Mysticism*, Harvard Theological Studies 44 (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 1998), 32.

[19] J. Daniélou, *Platonisme et théologie mystique* (1954), 162.

[20] *Life of Moses* 2,179.

[21] *Life of Moses* 2,181.

new name for Christ – 'he is given the predicate "tabernacle"'.[22] Gregory briefly alludes to a topic he discusses at much greater length elsewhere, that of just what divine names do and don't reveal:

> If we name such a God 'tabernacle,' the person who loves Christ should not be disturbed at all on the grounds that the suggestion involved in the phrase diminishes the magnificence of the nature of God. For neither is any other name worthy of the nature thus signified, but all names have equally fallen short of accurate description, both those recognized as insignificant as well as those by which some great insight is indicated.[23]

With that caution in place, 'tabernacle' gives him scope for exploring both the heavenly Christ – 'the power which encompasses the universe, in which lives the fulness of divinity', and the earthly Christ, who 'pitched his own tabernacle among us'.[24] The twofold nature of the tabernacle also suits his political purpose. Not everyone is to aspire to follow Moses up the mountain; a vision of the tabernacle 'not made with hands' is reserved for the superheroes of the faith. Gregory compares Moses to John (*Life of Moses* 2,163), David (2,164), Paul (2,178), Isaiah and Ezekiel (2,180). Most Christians should aim to become pillars and lights in the earthly tabernacle, by '(supporting) the Church and (becoming) lights through their own works'.[25] Gregory has used the paradigm of heavenly ascent only to undercut it. In *To Theophilus, Against the Apollinarians* he argues that had we all had a similar experience to that of Moses, Paul, Elijah, Ezekiel or Isaiah there would be no need for the incarnation.[26] Here the logic is reversed: given the incarnation, there is no need to ascend to heaven. We become part of the body of Christ by participating in the earthly tabernacle. And even within the earthly tabernacle, the common people – *hoi polloi* – are not to enter the holy of holies:

> If the interior, which is called the Holy of Holies, is not accessible to the multitude (τοῖς πολλοῖς), let us not think that this is at variance with the sequence of what has been perceived. For the truth of reality is truly a holy thing, a holy of holies, and is incomprehensible and inaccessible to the multitude.[27]

In heavenly ascent texts the ascending hero becomes transformed, putting on the garments of heaven. There is a prime example in 2*Enoch*:

[22] *Life of Moses* 2,177.
[23] *Life of Moses* 2,176.
[24] *Life of Moses* 2,177, 175. For more details of Gregory's Christological interpretation of 'tabernacle' see Ann Conway-Jones, 'Uncreated and Created: Proverbs 8 and *Contra Eunomium* III/1 as the Background to Gregory's Interpretation of the Tabernacle in *Life of Moses* II 173-7', in Johan Leemans and Matthieu Cassin (eds), *Gregory of Nyssa: Contra Eunomium III: Proceedings of the 12th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa (Leuven, 14-17 September 2010)*, Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae (Leiden, forthcoming).
[25] *Life of Moses* 2,184.
[26] GNO III,I 123-4.
[27] *Life of Moses* 2,188.

The Lord said to Michael, 'Take Enoch, and extract (him) from the earthly clothing. And anoint him with the delightful oil, and put (him) into the clothes of glory.' And Michael extracted me from my clothes. He anointed me with the delightful oil … And I gazed at all of myself, and I had become like one of the glorious ones, and there was no observable difference.[28]

It is this 'angelification', rather than 'union' with God, that is the goal of heavenly ascent texts.[29] Gregory uses Exodus' description of the priestly garments to take up the theme of transformation. He too argues that we should aspire to an airy, angelic robe. But he links this robe to virtue:

He who would be a priest to God … should not inflict upon his soul a heavy and fleshy garment of life, but by the purity of his life he should make all the pursuits of life as thin as the thread of a spider web.[30]

It is by living a virtuous life that human beings are able to don priestly garments and participate in divine glory.[31]

Paying attention to Gregory's tabernacle exegesis prevents *Life of Moses* being simplistically categorised as either mystical or theological or political. The three are held together. Under 'mysticism' might be included Moses' ascent to a tabernacle made of spirits which is the radiating centre of holiness and which protects the incomprehensible essence of God; under 'theology' Gregory's exploration of the application of the name 'tabernacle' to both pre-incarnate and incarnate Christ; under 'politics' the heavenly tabernacle as the source of authority to which only the priviledged few have access. The heuristic comparison with heavenly ascent texts reveals that this holding together of what might be seen as different, even competing, categories is nothing unusual. The experiences of the authors of those texts cannot now be recovered; but they describe religious, visionary experiences for their heroes, thus justifing claims to authoritative knowledge. For Gregory, the high point of Moses' ascent into the darkness of Mount Sinai is the mystery of Christian doctrine. The heavenly tabernacle is a type of the heavenly Christ. This mystery is beyond intellectual comprehension, it can only be grasped by faith; and only the select few, destined for positions of responsibility, should even attempt to do so. But its benefits are available to all through the community's worship in the earthly tabernacle. Anyone can aspire to wear an airy, angelic robe by living a life of virtue, in which faith and practice go hand in hand.

[28] 2*Enoch* 22:8-10; F.I. Andersen, '2 (Slavonic Apocalypse of) Enoch', in James H. Charlesworth (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, Volume 1: Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments* (New York, 1983), 91-221, 139.

[29] See E.R. Wolfson, *Through a Speculum That Shines: Vision and Imagination in Medieval Jewish Mysticism* (1994), 84-5.

[30] *Life of Moses* 2,191.

[31] For more details see Ann Conway-Jones, 'The Garments of Heaven: Gregory of Nyssa's Interpretation of the Priestly Robe (*Life of Moses* 2,189-191) Seen in the Light of Heavenly Ascent Texts', in *SP* 50 (2011), 207-15.

How Would Gregory of Nyssa Understand Evolutionism?

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Abstract

The three famous Cappadocians who formed a 'school' in the fourth century AD complement one another in the way they envisage the evolution of creation. St Basil of Caesarea explains in his writings how this 'mechanism' operates in nature and his view is the closest to those of contemporary evolutionists. Gregory of Nyssa completes his 'system' with details concerning human evolution and proposes the doctrine of *apokatastasis* (restoration) of humankind after the Fall. St Gregory Naziansus subscribes to the latter, but he does not do it overtly – the respective notion is implied in his work in a 'cautious, undogmatic' way, in Hanson's qualification.[1] All three Fathers of the Church believe that God will bring all creation into harmony with the Kingdom of Heaven.[2]

This article attempts to detect a conception of human evolution in terms of supersession of species within the writings of Gregory of Nyssa; in order to do that, Basil's thoughts are used as an introduction. The universal restoration which Gregory of Nyssa believes will take place, would mean for humanity both the fulfillment of its goal of a perfect moral development and its biological end (*i.e.* the ceasing of the human race's progression); therefore it is difficult to treat the two ultimate 'scenarios' in separation. It seems that this Cappadocian father believes the number of the souls/humans to be limited in God's mind where they originate. As is known, he thinks that creation is in the process of becoming fulfilled and this state of affairs will cease when the Restoration has been accomplished.

There is evidence from the Cappadocian Fathers (fourth century AD) that would support the idea of 'becoming by generations' in regard to both inanimate and living beings, with a special place reserved in its account for humankind. The representatives of this theological movement see evolution in general as a means through which God operates within Creation. They underline that humankind has been endowed by God not only with the dignity of creativity, but also with the potentiality to reach the maximum that can be achieved in this process: that of becoming co-creators of their own image to the point of attaining deification.

[1] J.W. Hanson, *Universalism: The Prevailing Doctrine of the Christian Church During Its First Five Hundred Years* (Boston and Chicago, 1899), Chapter XV: Gregory Nazianzen.

[2] Christos Simelidis, *Selected Poems of Gregory of Naziansus. 1.2.17; ll 1.10, 19, 32: A Critical Edition with Introduction and Commentary*, Hypomnemata 177 (Göttingen, 2009), 74.

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Even though the notion regarding such a purpose of human life is not exclusive to the Cappadocians (St Athanasius, c. 295-373, also spoke about *theosis*[3]), in their writings they detail the progression of humanity and explain its role in relation to everything else God created or rather 'has so far created', since they believe that God's act of 'making' continues throughout history. They maintain that a universal Restoration (ἀποκατάστασις), which constitutes the aim of humanity's moral development, represents the end of human evolution as supersession of species as well.

This article attempts to follow in particular Gregory of Nyssa's contribution to the respective theological movement and clarify his view on the development of the human race.

Creation

Writing under the influence of divine revelation Moses characterises the Scripture as 'the book of the generation of heaven and earth' (*Gen.* 2:4). Gregory of Nyssa points out that Moses (inspired by God) describes the moment the Creation first came into being. It seems that this was in fact the instant when 'all that is seen was finished, and each of the things that are betook itself to its own separate place' and also when 'the Divine power and skill was implanted in the growth of things, guiding [them] with the reins of a double operation (for it was by rest and motion that it devised the genesis of the things that were not, and the continuance of the things that are).'[4] For St Gregory of Nyssa – as for Basil – everything that is visible in creation was chronologically preceded by the Divine Word (Logos) or, to be more precise, by a thought in God's mind. All Cappadocians (as does Plato in *Timaeus* and also his followers) understand cosmology as the key for both responding to the question 'Why did humanity appear last, after the rest of creation came into being?' and fathoming 'the manner of the generations of the souls'.[5] Because cosmology is the background on which all other considerations find their meaning, the conception of St Basil the Great, who wrote on this topic, will be touched upon. Nonetheless, since it was not him who developed a theory of (human) *epektasis*, but Gregory of Nyssa, his younger brother, we shall focus on the works of the latter, after introducing two fundamental ideas of Basil (330-379 AD): one is that there is a Creator and that He established a beginning and the other is that the material and the spiritual worlds were created simultaneously by Him. Actually, St Basil of Caesarea commences his Homily 1 in the *Hexameron* by announcing: 'I am about to speak of

[3] St Athanasius of Alexandria, *On the Incarnation* (PG 25, 192B).

[4] Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Making of Man*, in H. Wace and P. Schaff (eds), *A Selected Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* (NPNF) V (London, 1893), 388.

[5] Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Making of Man*, 407.

the creation of heaven and earth which was not spontaneous, as some have imagined, but drew its origin from God.'[6] And developing more on the first statement in the Scriptures, and also revisiting the topic in his Homily V entitled *The Germination of the Earth*, St Basil expresses his understanding of creation as an on-going process; it is not finished but is still taking place (in God's thought). His view is consistent with what the verb *bara'* denotes in Hebrew: 'the action of God in bringing about his creative work' or the idea of 'setting into motion'; it regards not only the original creation of the world, but one finds it also 'often referring to any new beginning in the normal everyday processes of life and death.'[7] Therefore, in Hebrew thought 'In the beginning God *bara*' (*Gen.* 1:1) and He still continues to do so. In the language of the *Psalms* both meanings are evident. Denis Alexander gives a few examples, out of which I use two here. When referring to the first meaning, *Ps.* 89:47 says: 'Remember how short my time is/ For what futility have You created [*bara'*] all the children of men!' and in regard to the second sense of the verb, *Ps.* 51:10 asks: 'Create [*bara'*] in me a clean heart, O God!'[8]

Returning to Gregory of Nyssa (c. 332 – after 385), one can say that he felt compelled to write about the evolution of the human race in order to complete Basil's 'system'. Of course, in doing so he unavoidably operates with cosmological notions. He quotes Moses' above-mentioned 'indication' that heaven and earth were made by God 'in the beginning'.[9] Then he provides details on the interrelations existent within the outcome of the creative process: 'The earth was made in such a way that is never shifted from its own base, nor does the heaven ever relax in its vehemence, or slacken its motion.'[10] The earth and the heaven are diametrically opposed to one another in their 'operations'. For Gregory, the remaining created elements are 'the offspring of rest and motion, brought into being by the Divine will'[11] and were adorned with 'their appropriate beauty'[12] from their inception. Because it lies between opposites, one can say that creation acts as a 'mean between the extremes, so that there is manifestly a mutual contact of the opposites through the mean'.[13] He believed in cosmic order, and as a consequence, that not even the position of heavenly bodies was fortuitous, but rather that they were set in a harmony prescribed by

[6] St Basil the Great, Homily 1 ('On how God created the Heaven and the Earth'), *Hexameron* (PG 29, 1,1) (emphasis added).

[7] D. Alexander, *Creation or Evolution. Do we have to choose?* (Oxford and Grand Rapids, 2008), 24.

[8] *The Orthodox Study Bible. New Testament and Psalms: Discovering Orthodox Christianity in the Pages of the New Testament*, New King James Version (1997), 709, 677.

[9] Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Making of Man*, 389.

[10] *Ibid.*

[11] *Ibid.*

[12] *Ibid.*

[13] *Ibid.*

Divine wisdom before the Creation. He thought that their place in the sky was permanent and that they were immobile.[14] That can be viewed, for instance, in opposition to the belief of a representative of Greek philosophy – Plotinus (204/5-270) – who conceived of them as moving accordingly 'to their own souls'.[15]

Gregory believed, as did Basil, that the world was created by God out of love in a single act, in the form of seminal principles[16] which developed into the reality we know (he lists sky, air, stars, fire, waters, earth, animals, and plants) by means of the power God provided them with.[17] He explains that the power inside the seed is also manifested in a certain natural order, even in the case of humans; it evolves

> not by any means that another nature is infused into it – in the same way we suppose the human germ to possess the potentiality of its nature, sown with it at the very start of its existence, and that is unfolded and manifested by a natural sequence as it proceeds to its perfect state, not employing anything external to itself as a stepping-stone to perfection, but itself advancing its own self in due course to the perfect state.[18]

The 'mechanism' of the evolutionary process works in the same manner for all things: after the inferior comes into being, it follows a specific 'route' and gradually grows into perfection. The Cappadocian emphasizes that it is necessary for the evolution in nature to follow the aforementioned series of steps until everything reaches attainment. The purpose of this ascendance in nature is the human being; everything 'aspires towards it'; this is why it came after plants and animals – for them to be at its service.[19] But even humankind 'aligns' itself to the respective upward impetus and finds its perfection through spiritual life.

The earth is the place where the world exists as 'a school of rational souls and where the knowledge of God can be learnt, but [it is] also a guide [learning milieu] for the mind to contemplate the invisible.'[20] Human freedom can be exercised there. These views expressed here by Basil, with whom Gregory agreed, are consistent with those in the Holy Scripture referring to the universe as a work of God. In passages where it describes the creation of single elements, the Book invokes God's will, while presenting these elements, as being at the

[14] Gregory of Nyssa (PG 44, 117A).

[15] Plotinus, *Enn*. II and *Against the Gnostics*. See J.-M. Narbonne (ed.), *Plotinus in Dialogue with the Gnostics*, Ancient Mediterranean and Medieval Texts and Contexts, Studies in Platonism, Neoplatonism, and the Platonic tradition 11 (Leiden and Boston, 2011), and Luc Brisson and J.-F. Pradeau (eds., trans.), Plotin, *Traités 51-54. Sur la vie de Plotin et la mise en ordre de ses livres par Porphyre* (Paris, 2010).

[16] Gregory of Nyssa, *Hexameron liber* [*Apologia in Hexameron*] (PG 44, 77D).

[17] *Id*. (PG 44, 71, 72B-C, 113B, 121D).

[18] Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Making of Man* 28 (*ibid*. 421).

[19] Gregory of Nijssen, *On the Making of Man* (*ibid*. 389).

[20] St Basil the Great, Homily l, *Hexaemeron* (PG 29, l.11D).

same time the product of natural causes brought about by natural conditions.[21] Humans are not an exception from this point of view; God's intentionality, love, and natural causes have also 'co-operated' in their case: they are created both in the image of God and in the likeness of the created world.

Image of God in people

When Gregory of Nyssa affirms – persistently – that people are made in God's image he also states that the image is indestructible within them in spite of their condition after the Fall. In the *Making of Man* he attempts to explain what this image is and how a human being can conform to it. He realises the difficulties of such a comprehension:

> In what then the greatness of man consists, according to the doctrine of the Church? Not in his likeness to the created world, but in his being in the image of the nature of the Creator. What therefore, you will perhaps say, is the definition of the image? How is the incorporeal likened to the body? How is the temporal like the eternal? That which is mutable by chance like to the immutable? That is subject to passion and corruption to the impassible and incorruptible? That which constantly dwells with evil, and grows up with it, to that which is absolutely free from evil? There is a great difference between that which is conceived in the archetype, and a thing which has been made in its image: for the image is properly so called if it keeps its resemblance to the prototype; but if the imitation be perverted from its subject, the thing is something else, and no longer an image of the subject. How then is man, this mortal, passible, short-lived being, the image of that nature which is immortal, pure, and everlasting?[22]

As one can see, in all his musings Gregory does not mention any differences (whether sexual, or social, or of any kind) as existing in God's image present in His creatures; therefore to speak about them as if they were important would mean to attribute them to God, which would be totally wrong since they do not reflect Him as the prototype He is. It can be inferred from the text above and from the lack within it of any reference to inner divisions, that not only was human nature as a whole created in the image of God, but that of each individual as well. This ties in with the fact that Christ assumed not an individual human nature alone, but human nature as a whole, and in the writings of Gregory, as we shall see further, the idea is dependent on his concept of humanity as πλήρωμα or wholeness.

Gregory's position that the divisions, the passions, or any other 'accidents' which happen in the case of human nature, are non-essential from the divine perspective is accompanied by his conviction that they can be turned to a good use. We shall discuss later some of these divisions, but for the moment

[21] *Gen.* 1:11.
[22] Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Creation of Man* (404).

Gregory's conclusion concerning the existence of God's image in people should be presented:

> [T]his is what we, tracing out the truth so far as we are capable by conjectures and inferences, apprehend concerning the matter. Neither does the word of God lie when it says that man was made in the image of God, nor is the pitiable suffering of man's nature like to the blessedness of the impassible Life; for if any one were to compare our nature with God, one of two things must need be allowed in order that the definition of the likeness may be apprehended in both cases in the same terms – either that the Deity is passible, or that humanity is impassible; but if neither the Deity is passible nor our nature free from passions, what other account remains whereby we may say that the word of God speaks truly, which says that man was made in the image of God.[23]

The answer to all questions regarding what God's image in people consists of is provided by Gregory in these terms: 'The image, therefore, properly belongs to the better part of our attributes; but all in our life that is painful and miserable is far removed from the likeness to the Divine.'[24]

Nevertheless, there are some scholars and Christians who would not agree with him on this. One of the authors who opposes such a point of view is Mark McIntosh for whom the climax of human suffering, the abandonment, and isolation Christ himself felt in the final stages of his life, were in fact proofs of 'the unfathomable presence of God – drawing Jesus into an intimacy so infinite that our world can only experience it as absence, forsakenness, the ultimate decentring.'[25]

People see God and his image in other individuals, *i.e.* in society. David Brown comments on Gregory of Nyssa's *The Life of Moses* 1:239:

> Whether we think of God as inside or outside time, temporal progression and developing social relationships are integral to human identity, and so, however the relation between God and humanity in heaven is conceived, it must still be mediated within […] society, that is by a very rich environment; therefore far from that being something to regret, it demonstrates how seriously God takes the kind of creatures he has made us, with progression continuing to be integral to who we are.[26]

Gregory assures us that God did not create people in order to destroy them and the divine image within them. He said that in the same way in which 'benevolence […] had built a tower so that its remains could be rebuilt', God permits people to go back to the state of purity they had before the Fall. To put it in

[23] Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Creation of Man* (404).

[24] Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Creation of Man* (410).

[25] Mark McIntosh, *Mystical Theology: The Integrity of Spirituality and Theology* (Oxford, 1998), 203.

[26] David Brown, *Discipleship and Imagination: Christian Tradition and Truth* (Oxford, 2000), 122. Brown also gives a second reason for Gregory's preference for a dynamic model of the afterlife over a static one: human identity is shaped in this dynamic manner by the context in which people live.

Nyssen's terms, the soul is recovered from the rubble: there is a need to put the latter into a crucible in order to eliminate the slag of vice and to regain the original luminosity of the soul, which is consistent with the entire Greek tradition that affirms that the grace of baptism is a return of the human being to its original state.

Epektasis

The Cappadocian is certain that humankind evolves and he names the evolution that it undergoes *epektasis* (a constant progress). His view on this issue was in one sense Platonic in that it had the story of the Fall and Return of the human soul as central to it. However, in opposition to Plato and his followers, who supported the idea that stability is perfection and described change in negative terms, the Cappadocian Father affirms that human progress is a constant increase in virtue and godliness. And, as John Milbank rightly observed, for Gregory *epektasis* encapsulates the idea 'that virtue requires a constant "moving out" from passivity to activity and the idea that there is a "transgenerational" movement as each generation imitates its own models.'[27] Rowan Williams brings a new dimension to the discussion on the notion of *epektasis* by pointing out that it is about the trajectory of the soul, which is not only intellectual but loving as well; it is a movement that is both 'receptive and responsive'.[28] The ideas of both these authors refer to the reality that a human being undergoes a progressive transformation in the imitation of Christ; perhaps one could say that the manner in which a generation emulates Christ might differ – at least to some extent – from the manner in which another did, in spite of the fact that He Himself is eternal.

In Gregory's theology, only God himself has always been perfect, has never changed, and never will. God is, in his terminology, a 'beneficent nature'[29], a 'goodness without measure'[30], a 'worthy object of love for all beings endowed with reason, the beauty the most to be desired, *the origin of all that exists, the source of life, intellectual light, and wisdom*'.[31] Human beings fell from grace in the Garden of Eden, but rather than returning to an unchanging state, human-

[27] John Milbank, 'The force of identity', in *id*., *The Word Made Strange* (Oxford, 1997), 198; this article has been also published as: 'Gregory of Nyssa: the force of identity', in Lewis Ayres and Gareth Jones (eds), *Christian Origins: Theology, Rhetoric, Community* (London, 1998), 94-116.

[28] Rowan Williams, *The Wound of Knowledge: Christian Spirituality from the New Testament to St. John of the Cross* (London, 1979), 67.

[29] Gregory of Nyssa, *De anima et resurrectione* [*On the Soul and the Resurrection*] (PG 46, 103B).

[30] *Ibid*.

[31] St Gregory of Nyssa (PG 46, 103B) (emphasis added).

ity's goal is to become increasingly perfect, more like God, even though a human being will never understand, much less attain, God's transcendence.

In Ware's reading, for St Gregory of Nyssa the world's inhabitants have the consciousness of the beginning and of their Creator. People can be raised up only by the awareness that they are made in the image and likeness of God, *i.e.* they are spiritual beings, exalted over the natural and social world and summoned to transfigure it and to be stewards of it.[32] Gregory explains that humanity rules over creation by virtue of sharing in the image of God, that is to say, by participating in certain divine qualities. All qualities that humans possess (goodness, benevolence, beauty, *etc.*) have their source in the divine goodness and beauty. God fashioned humanity to be the master of everything He made in a way analogous to the manner in which He acts as such Himself.

One can interpret Gregory's writings as speaking about two 'creations', as some authors have done, for example, Verna Nonna Harrison[33] and Sarah Coakley ,[34] but in his case this does not refer to the creation of the soul and of the body in stages, as in Origen's theology. For the Cappadocian, the first creation is rather an expression of a divine plan in which humanity received the dignity of being able to participate in God prior to its birth. The second is that made in six days and described by Moses; it is the creation which, according to Jean Laplace, 'is not only about Adam and Eve, but it is also about God's intimate life'.[35] Gregory's claim that people undergo a continual process of being made suggests the fact that each person, as well as humankind as a whole, is being shaped and led towards what God wanted them to be from the moment He conceived them; actually this is more than a suggestion since such a notion is implied in almost all of Gregory's works. The history of this continual becoming of humans is the history of salvation and of the progression of humanity as a whole, spiritually and – since the two go in parallel for the Nyssen – in terms of succession of generations as well. From this perspective, the first two chapters in *Genesis* do not describe how the world was created, but God's plan, developed through Christ, to create a human being having Him incarnated as a prototype. This description was made in metaphoric and poetic terms suitable for communicating a mystery. Another way of interpreting Gregory's view is that human evolution unfolded from the first creation as a purely original state in God's mind in which humankind is both asexual and immortal to the first creation as an embodied original state when humanity is both sexual and mortal, and to the first creation as a return to the Maker. Following this

[32] Kallistos Ware, *The Beginning of the Day. The Orthodox Vision of Creation*, trans. from Greek by Niki Tsironis (Shrine of Neomartyr George of Ioannina, 2007).

[33] Verna (Nonna) E.F. Harrison, 'Male and female in Cappadocian theology', *JTS* 41 (1990), 441-71; *ead.*, 'Receptacle imagery in St. Gregory of Nyssa's anthropology', *SP* 22 (1989), 23-7.

[34] Sarah Coakley, 'Creaturehood before God: male and female', *Theology* 93 (1990), 343-54.

[35] Jean Laplace, *Grégoire de Nysse. La création de l'homme* (Paris, 2002), 49-50.

vein one can say that, for Gregory, humankind's evolution means its passing from a potentiality in God's will to an actuality through coming into being by generations.

A paradox is present in the relationship between God and its creation, which can be captured in the question: How can He, as an indivisible unity, manifest Himself in the multiplicity of created things? Philip Sherrard's opinion on this matter is that,

> not only can nothing be outside God, but also everything must be directly related to, and reflect an aspect of, His divinity. This in turn means […] that God's ultimate nature, or His Essence, cannot finally be identified with anything; it is beyond everything, totally transcendent of all manifestation and relationship, unqualified and undetermined.[36]

But a communication with God is nevertheless possible in virtue of Him being a Person; therefore a continual dialogue person to Person takes place.

The existence of the world has a purpose, but one that is revealed gradually to humankind. If God had revealed Himself and His ways at once, the world of created things would have lacked its purpose. As shown above, for the Cappadocian fathers the main purpose of human beings is to exercise their spiritual powers on the ascending path to God.[37] When considering Gregory of Nyssa's theology – and this is probably valid in general for the school he belongs to – one should notice that his ideas about the structure of the universe were inspired by the Platonic view, but the fundamentals of his doctrine were affirmed or reassessed in the light of Christian thought. Everything is from God and the world exists and functions through a free act of the spirit; it is a manifestation not only of the freedom of God who created people but also the freedom of each individual.

Body and soul. The finite number of human beings

Regarding the controversial problem of the relationship between body and soul, the Cappadocian countered any notion which asserted that a living body could exist without the soul and also any theory which maintained that the soul existed before the body. As implied above when discussing 'the two creations', he believed that there is one common and simultaneous beginning for both.[38] Not only are the soul and the body created together, but they develop in parallel. The potentiality for conception comes from a living and animate body, one

[36] Philip Sherrard, *The Greek East and the Latin West: A Study in the Christian Tradition* (Limni-Evia, 1995), 35.

[37] K. Ware, *The Beginning of the Day* (2007), 209.

[38] Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Making of Man* 28-9 (420-1).

which is 'warm and operative and in motion' and the condition of death arises because of the withdrawal of the soul. Regarding the latter, all of its attributions, elements of rationality, desire, anger, and so on, are not yet visible, yet we assert that they have their place within it, and that the energies of the soul also grow with the subject in a manner similar to the formation and perfection of the body. For as a human being experiences a special activity of the soul when it is perfectly developed, so at the beginning of a person's existence he/she shows in himself/herself 'that co-operation of the soul which is suitable and comfortable to his [her]existing need, in its preparing for itself of its proper dwelling-place by means of implanted matter.'[39]

For the Nyssen, just as one cannot see the articulations of the parts in that which is implanted for the conception of the body before it begins to take form, neither can one perceive the properties of the soul before they begin to operate within the body. No one would doubt that the thing so implanted in an embryo is made into the different varieties of limbs and interior organs, and not by the importation of any other power from without, but by the power which resides in it and transforms it. Likewise, through similar reasoning, one can equally suppose in the case of the soul that even if it is not visibly recognized by any manifestation of activity in an embryo, it is nonetheless there; for even the form of the future human being is potentially there; this is, however, concealed because it is not possible that it should be made visible before the necessary sequence of events allows it. If such an analogy is allowed here, the situation is similar to that regarding the tree of knowledge: the problem with it was not that people ate from it, but that they did so too early; God just wanted Adam and Eve to wait until they were ready to gain knowledge through experiences of acting in the world.[40]

For Gregory, the soul is 'simple and uncompounded' and as such, it survives the dissolution of the composite body, whose scattered elements it will continue to accompany as if watching over its property until the Resurrection, when it will 'clothe' itself in them again. Regarding the number of souls, since from the temporal perspective humanity is a thought of God which is not yet completed, additions to the number of souls continue. When this thought finally comes to an end, the 'progress of humanity' (*epektasis*) and the supersession of species will cease; there will be no more births and consequently, after a short time, no deaths. Gregory writes to that effect because he believed that humanity in its fullness consists of a certain number of individuals (he uses the above mentioned term *plerōma*) and that 'only when this number is fulfilled and humanity completed all things will be consummated and the humanity transformed.'[41] In her book *Universal Salvation: Eschatology in the Thought*

[39] Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Making of Man* (404).
[40] Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Making of Man* 29 (410).
[41] Gregory of Nyssa, *De hominis opificio* 21.5 (PG 44, 205C).

of Gregory of Nyssa and Karl Rahner, Morwenna Ludlow emphasizes the bishop's stance that the human race is made up of a specific number of souls.[42]

As mentioned earlier, in believing that the soul and the body were created simultaneously, the Cappadocian father rejects Origen's theory of two temporally successive stages of creation (one for the body and one for the soul; with the body created second) and Plato's view of two creations, *i.e*. his matter-soul dualism. For Gregory human beings will be restored in both of their aspects, material and immaterial (*i.e*. not only in spirit). The sense of human development vindicates for people the rightness of appropriately-lived corporeal life against the Platonists' flight to the world of Ideas.

But as one can notice, Gregory's interpretation – having the story of the Fall and Return of the human soul as central – is Platonic, and Gregory's familiarity with Plato's words – especially with those from the dialogue *Timaeus* – is evident. Both thinkers share the view that God created everything in an orderly fashion, according to his image, and with no evil within it. For Plato, God endowed the whole of creation with intelligence and soul:

> Let me tell you then why the Creator made this world of generation. He was good, and the good can never have any jealousy of anything. And being free from jealousy, he desired that all things should be as like himself as they could be. This is in the truest sense the origin of creation and of the world, as we shall do well in believing the testimony of wise men: God desired that all things should be good and nothing bad […]. Wherefore also finding the whole visible sphere not at rest, but moving in an irregular and disorderly fashion, out of disorder he brought order, considering that this was in every way better than the other. Now the deeds of the best could never be or have been other than the fairest; and the Creator, reflecting on the things which are by nature visible, found that no unintelligent creature taken as a whole was fairer than the intelligent taken as a whole; and that intelligence could not be present in anything which was devoid of soul. For which reason, when he was framing the universe, he put intelligence in soul, and soul in body, that he might be the creator of a work which was by nature fairest and best. Wherefore, using the language of probability, we may say that the world became a living creature truly endowed with soul and intelligence by the providence of God.[43]

The role of love in the process of deification

As mentioned, the Nyssen and the other Cappadocian thinkers, as Athanasius before, build on the Platonic tradition in the way they envisage the ultimate purpose of souls: to be united with the Divinity. Among other things, they share in the Platonist outlook which considers the Creator as making his work

[42] Morwenna Ludlow, *Universal salvation: Eschatology in the Thought of Gregory of Nyssa and Karl Rahner* (Oxford, 2009), 47.

[43] Plato, *Timaeus* 27e-31b; *The collected Dialogues of Plato*, trans. B. Jowett (New York, 1961).

out of love. That becomes evident if one compares their positions with that expressed, for instance, in the sixth *Ennead*, where Plotinus (204/5-270) states:

> There [in the intellectual realm] is the true object of love, with which one may coexist by apprehending it and possessing it truly […]. Now whoever knows this, knows what I am saying – that the soul has another life there, into which it enters after approaching and partaking of it, so as to be in a condition to know that the giver of true life is here and it has no need of anything. On the contrary, it must put aside all the rest, and abide in this alone, *becoming this alone* after having shed all our other encumbrances. Thus we shall strive to go hence with speed, resenting our attachments to other things, in order that we may be wholly enfolded within ourselves and have no part in which we do not touch god.[44]

As one can see, for Plotinus the soul unites through love with the One to the point of becoming the One. But that happens just in the intellectual realm; in this case *theosis* is the result of contemplation. For the early Christian thinkers discussed here this process of unification with God through love presupposes also a bodily involvement through ascesis, prayer, *etc*. But the main difference between Plotinus and the Cappadocians is the fact that for the latter, the process of deification of humans happens in an individual, personal manner; each human being has a personal relationship with God on the way to 'the restoration of man to his original state' or 'to that Divine grace in which God at the first created Man'[45], *i.e*. the restoration of the state of being in and with God. This is the 'definition' that Gregory gives also to the resurrection, which for him comes from the very necessity of things.[46]

Sexual differentiation. Succession by generations

Concerning the sexual division – the basis for the multiplication of the human race and for its evolution – Gregory of Nyssa opines that people were created simultaneously as individuals, male and female ('male and female created he them'). As already shown, he does not conceive of the sexual difference as essential for human nature; therefore for him such a split does not reflect God. The sexual differentiation is a consequence of sin and it is an imposition on our nature; nevertheless sexuality does not belong to the providential order. God created it to enable reproduction by that means as a remedy to death after the Fall (This is not to say that the Fall was inevitable. Rather, sexuality ensured that *in case* humanity did 'fall', there was the means ready to counter the effects of such a downward move). When this event took place, the succession by generations

[44] Plotinus, *Enneads* VII 9.45-56 (emphasis added).
[45] Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Making of Man* (411, 427).
[46] Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Making of Man* (388, 410).

was initiated to ensure humanity's perpetuation to the moment of *apokatastasis*; without the Fall, there would have been no need of generations.

When the Cappadocian answers the question 'why are there male and female in the image, seeing that these are not in the Prototype?' and affirms that 'in humanity there is no male, nor female' he wants to emphasise St Paul's point of view that the significance of gender disappears as long as people are one in Christ and reject 'the old [*i.e.* fallen] man.'[47] Here one can detect a reference to the other state of matter: that which intervenes or takes place after the physical death of the body, when it transforms itself (or is transfigured) into a spiritual 'substance' that is no longer subject to division.

Although Gregory's view is in agreement with Thomas Aquinas' theory of reproduction by matter as a consequence of sin, he does not regard it as an unmitigated misfortune. For him, the sexual multiplication of people due to the material functioning of their bodies at each generation is accidental because it is in the service of an inferior principle, one which operates at the animal level. Such a principle of division would not exist in the state of a perfect image, *i.e.* in freedom and independence of spirit. Our life in the flesh and the passions are explicable through our common animality. This 'translates' into instinctive movements that our will cannot control and which constitute what is opposed to the perfection of image within us. While the impulses are natural within an animal and in humans to the extent they share in that animality, and serve to perpetuate the species, in the case of humans – who are able to rise beyond the biological – the passions can limit freedom and produce an imbalance. Due to intelligence, which can be put in the service of passions, humans could proliferate to the point of absurdity. But a positive outcome resulting from a good employment of the passions may also be attained.

As Gregory discussed in chapter 21 of his *The Making of Man*, if humanity had made the other choice – that of obedience – from the beginning of creation, neither time ('succession of generation') nor divisions (sexual or any other) would have been necessary, and people would have reached quickly their perfection due to the presence of the flawless image of God within them which will be there fully at the end of time, after they will complete their eschatological journey into God. Laplace phrases the situation thus: 'People were meant to be like angels, but instead they have developed as animals.'[48] In his always optimistic tone, Gregory says that, however, in spite of the human choice to lapse, we go beyond our animality and serve God through the concrete acts of our lives. And also that when Christ took our flesh, he transfigured it and passed it into the state of resurrection.

Gregory also states that people are not merely animals, even though sexuality and the passions are present in them, because people have the ability to – and

[47] Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Making of Man* (427).
[48] J. Laplace, *Grégoire de Nysse* (2002), 55.

should – make allowance for these drives in their present life; instead of trying to eliminate them people can deploy them for a good purpose. This is another point where Gregory differs from Plato, whose discontent with the bodily and sensible order is well known and has already been mentioned in this text. For the bishop, it is God's will and permission which allows us to use the passions properly in order to achieve our purpose in creation. Thus, St Gregory says, they are not supposed to be treated with the radicalism of the stoics or the avoidance of the Neo-platonists. In the perspective of a real development even sexuality is an undeniable good for the spirit. He considers that, in addition to suffering and death, in the postlapsarian era, sexuality has a role not only in perpetuating life, but it can also become a condition of salvation and redemption.

He also explains that after the Fall, everything has become a mixture of bad and good, and the existent portion of bad may be put to a positive use – even anger, fear, 'and any other such-like emotions' of the soul,[49] without which human nature cannot be studied – all these are to be considered external additions, because in the Beauty which is man's prototype[50] no such characteristics are present. Gregory thinks that in general everything which is a consequence of sin becomes a source of salvation and the better part of humanity uses their fleshly passions to 'recover their lives' and achieve freedom.

To conclude on this point, God – knowing that people might use their freedom to choose the Fall – created them in a state which is appropriate to aid them in dealing with the consequences of it. In creating human beings, he mixes in them his image with something of the irrational: he puts on them 'garments of skin' and adds sex to nature, and therefore, people, with the spark of divinity in them (with God's image), develop concretely as an animal species. Sexuality and the consequences it entails are, therefore, superimposed to God's eternal design and humanity must reach Jesus Christ in these terms, *i.e.* the terms of their own choice to fall.

Rosemary Rodford Ruether asserts that, for Gregory, human nature in the image of God must not only be without gender and without body, but must be totally without differentiation;[51] that because God is an undifferentiated monad. As Ludlow indicates, the idea of a simultaneous creation of both man and woman brings a more egalitarian perspective than that of the early Church, which emphasized the sequential and allegedly hierarchical creation account of Adam and Eve in *Genesis* 2; therefore it seems that Gregory's view is a departure from this. His teaching challenges some tenets of the early Church (and of some later fundamentalist Christians).[52]

[49] Gregory of Nyssa speaks at large about this topic in *On the Soul and the Resurrection*.

[50] Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Making of Man* (391).

[51] Rosemary Radford Ruether, 'Gender and Redemption in the Patristic Era', in *Women and Redemption. A Theological History* (Minneapolis, 2011), 58.

[52] M. Ludlow, *Gregory of Nyssa. Ancient and (Post)-Modern* (Oxford, 2007), 167.

It is surprising that, in spite of Gregory's 'organic' stand on creation and his 'co-existential' view on body and soul, there are still interpretations of Gregory's reading of *Genesis* which do not perceive them as such, as that of Sarah Coakley, who affirms that there is a double creation in the Nyssen's view: in the first instance a non sexual and purely spiritual creation (for it is assumed by Gregory that to be truly 'in the image of God' the creature must be angelic, non-physical); only in the second instance – and 'with a view to the Fall' – is bodily nature added, both male and female.[53] But actually, as shown, for Gregory, true human nature, in addition to containing the image of God, includes within it also human physicality in order to ameliorate the consequences of the Fall.

Notions of theodicy in Gregory of Nyssa's view on human progress. Sin

In the process of evolution as understood by the Cappadocians, the existence of evil and sin as a form of it, has a role in the formation of a person and, therefore, in the evolution of humanity. In the *Making of Man*, Gregory of Nyssa gives a metaphysical explanation for the existence of evil in the world; partially in chapters 12, 16, 20, and 21. In the latter he refers to its disappearance at the *apokatastasis*. Using a Platonic language, the Nyssen refers to the 'impetus' and 'desire' of people to act against each other. Since nature is characterised by equilibrium among its various elements, if something goes wrong with one of them, the others are affected. Gregory agrees with Plotinus that the evil comes about when such a situation occurs. But, more importantly, what differentiates Gregory from Plotinus on the issue of theodicy, and is noticeable if one goes into the essence of their ideas, is the fact that for the Greek philosopher and the tradition from which he comes, evil is 'an accident' within the universal creation, without any connection to the moral order, while for Gregory of Nyssa all evil is associated with moral evil, *i.e*. with the idea of sin. Despite defending the concept of freedom, Plotinus is concerned not to renounce in his thought the rigidity and order sometimes associated with the explanation of evil which the ancient Greeks shared.[54] For them, the individual, aware of his responsibly, does not modify in any way the harmony around him/her, and his/her initiatives are limited by the preoccupation to maintain the existent order. From that point of view, the evil is necessary, even though people have to enforce the fulfilment of this necessity. As Jean Guitton states, the tendency of the Greeks was 'to make sin an inevitable act, similar to the accidents of nature; for them the error is almost fatal.'[55] Plato himself thinks that the evil comes from 'the periodical movements of the soul' which, he thinks, are a

[53] S. Coakley, 'Creaturehood before God' (1990), 93.
[54] Plotinus, *Enn*. III 2,17, 45-8.
[55] Jean Guitton, *Temps et éternité chez Plotin et Augustin* (Paris, 2004), 231.

consequence of the latter's attachment to a material body.[56] The Cappadocian opines that matter in itself is indifferent, but the way in which it is used can lead either to a spiritual improvement or to a decline.

In chapter 20 of *The Making of Man* Gregory engages with the issue of the concrete presence of sin in people. There he proposes two approaches to it. One of them connects sin with freedom, and asserts that sin occurs as a consequence of a bad use of the latter. The second raises the question of sinning through 'inexperience', 'bewilderment', and especially 'lack of discernment', and 'ignorance'. Gregory opines that: 1. Sin is not a pure, conscious, and wilful revolt against God, but it often occurs under the appearance of good. 2. Psychologically, sin comes into being through pleasure. 3. The true fault of a human being is that it allows him or her to be attracted to and trapped within 'good mixtures' or/and 'does not pay sufficient attention.' Therefore sin is not committed because of error, as the Greeks believed, but is a lack of attention and/or a deficiency of the will; 4. The sinner can become aware of the mistake and accept responsibility for his/her act.[57] Whatever way the sin manifests itself among the individuals, according to Gregory's idea of *apokatastasis*, no trace of evil and sin will remain when that process will be accomplished (restoration means turning all things towards the good). Laplace says that in order to reconcile the two approaches to sin, one should remember that Gregory 'sacrificed the Greek ideas on the issue of sin: he places himself in the domain of concrete human experience.'[58]

As it is known, there are changes within the human individual and their existence made Gregory of Nyssa say that, since a person is physically different every day, it would be difficult to assess ('to judge') in which 'phase' of their 'progress' people are, whether they can rise again, *etc*. Gregory's view on the resurrection discussed earlier, when dealt with the issue of soul and body, helps with understanding the idea of human evolution he proposed in *The Making of Man* and his general theology of creation. The fact that this Father of the Church sees the resurrection as the restoration to the original state offers a solution to the issue of 'judgement' and of the 'hereafter'. All humanity – that is, all humans (*anthropoi*) – will restore within themselves the image of God with which they were created. They will have accomplished thus the role God 'saw' as necessary for them to attain an authentic image of themselves.

St Gregory of Nyssa's concepts strongly influenced not only those of St Maximus the Confessor (c. 580-662) for example – who shared in the idea of *theosis* or 'divinization of people' as being the highest point of evolution – but also the medieval and later thinking in general. For example, in the fifteenth

[56] Plato, *Timaeus* 47d.

[57] Gregory of Nyssa, *De hominis opificio* XII (PG 44); *Cantica Canticorum*; *In Ecclesiastem* IV (PG 44, 676B, 676D).

[58] J. Laplace, *Grégoire de Nysse* (2002), 62.

century (1463-1494), Pico della Mirandola's outlook on the creative vocation of man echoes notions from St Gregory's *Sermones de creatione hominis*. He imagines the dialogue between God and Adam, with the Creator saying:

> I have placed thee at the center of the world, that from there thou mayest more conveniently look around and see whatsoever is in the world. Neither heavenly, nor earthly, neither mortal nor immortal have We made thee. Thou, like a judge appointed for being honourable, art the molder and maker of thyself: thou mayest sculpt thyself into whatever shape thou doest prefer. Thou canst grow downward into the lower natures which are brutes. Thou canst again grow upward from thy soul's reason into the higher natures which are divine.[59]

In my opinion Laplace's understanding of Gregory's ideas on evolution is the correct one. He provides also an explanation to the issue of human creation in the Cappadocian thought. For this scholar, the best way to understand the 'reproduction of individuals, the life of the flesh and the passions' in Nyssen's thought is by speaking in terms of an eternal and a temporal view, rather than adopting the Platonic notion of the two creations.[60] It means that Gregory's theory of *epektasis* becomes clearer if one tries to reconcile the eternal view of God on humanity and the latter's temporal development. In this 'dual perspective', since it is both ideal and concrete, humanity can be described as having two distinct orders operating with different measures: one of eternity and one existing within historical time. Even though it is difficult to pin down the relation between the universal atemporal *anthropos* and particular historical *anthropoi* in Gregory's theology, it seems that he thinks each is as 'real' as the other: they are two perspectives on the same reality. Throughout his theology Gregory is concerned equally with both the eternal and the temporal and the material and the spiritual. According to the Cappadocian, one can say that the fact that human nature was conceived in the image of God makes it atemporal (in addition to making it asexual); from this point of view humanity eternally exists in its definitive perfection,[61] while from a temporal standpoint it does not yet exist in its perfection, but it is still in the process of becoming. As mentioned earlier, for Nyssen the fullness (*plerōma*) of humanity is only in the process of being fulfilled.

In summary, from the eternal viewpoint, the common cause that simultaneously determined the existence of both the soul and body of every human being lies in the original will of God at the outset of Creation. According to the temporal perspective, this cause comes into existence on the occasion of each generation. One could draw the conclusion that for these early thinkers creation was an evolutionary process. It was initiated by God out of love and in total

[59] Picco della Mirandola, *Oration on the Dignity of Man* (Cambridge, 1998), 5. He wrote it in 1486; the book was called the 'Manifesto of the Renaissance'.

[60] J. Laplace, *Grégoire de Nysse* (2002), 54.

[61] J. Laplace, *Grégoire de Nysse* (2002), 56.

freedom. As shown above, they repeatedly affirm that God did not need to create the world, but He chose to do so. A much later Orthodox theologian, George Florovsky (1893-1979), writes along the same lines confirming what the Cappadocians believed. He states: 'The world exists. But it *began* to exist. And that means: the world could have not existed. There is no necessity whatsoever for the existence of the world'.[62] The only reason for its having come into being is the divine love: 'The sole foundation of the world consists in God's freedom, in the freedom of Love.'[63] Because of this Love one can say that God has not left his creation; he has not just created the universe and then withdrew from it, but is still creating and indwelling it. He is omnipresent within his own work.

The answer to the question asked at the onset of my article concerning the reason for why humanity was the last to be created has become evident throughout it: it is the fulfilment of the original creation in the eschaton. The Cappadocian fathers saw creation as the way through which God speaks to humanity, and through which He lifts humanity to the level of co-partner. Since humankind was meant to increase spiritually – *i.e*. to evolve – evolution is a way or a method used by God to create it and everything it needs.

The final conclusion with regard to the evolution of humanity, both spiritually and as a species, is that, since the two processes unfold in parallel, as suggested throughout Gregory of Nyssa's work, both will be completed simultaneously. To give him the last word: 'The end is one, and one only; it is this: when the complete whole of our race shall have been perfected from the first man to the last' it will be possible 'to offer to every one of us participation in the blessings which are in Him…'[64]

[62] George Florovsky, *Creation and Redemption*, Collected Works 3 (Belmont, 1976), 45; his emphasis.

[63] *Ibid*. 71.

[64] Gregory of Nyssa, *De anima*, NPNF V, 465, 459.

Sinai and Corporate Epistemology in the Orations of Gregory of Nazianzus

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Abstract

The image of Moses' ascent of Mt. Sinai from *Exodus* 19 is among the favorites of Gregory of Nazianzus, especially in his discussions of the problem of Christian knowledge of God. Paying special attention to the roles of Moses and the Hebrew people waiting below the mountain, Gregory uses the story to illustrate a number of complex ideas on his part regarding how Christians are able to come to a knowledge of God. This paper explores Gregory's use of the figures of Moses and the Hebrew people at Sinai in the process of making several key points about how, in Gregory's view, the Church as a whole is led to the knowledge of God. In numerous passages scattered throughout his *Orations* (esp. 2, 11, 20, 28, 32), Gregory uses the *Exodus* narrative to explore the relationship between Christianity's spiritual leaders, and the broad mass of Christians who make up the Church. Gregory especially relies on the narrative to illustrate his understanding that, for most Christians, a very limited direct approach to the knowledge of God is possible. At the same time, Gregory uses the figure of Moses in particular to indicate the important role which he thinks that Christian spiritual leaders play in connecting this majority of Christians to God. Gregory's discussions of the relationship between God, Moses and the Hebrew people reveal a consistent vision of corporate epistemology driven by Church leadership. Moreover, for Gregory, this way or interpreting the Sinai narrative has real implications with respect to his life and career, and is foundational to his own construction of his place in the Church.

Gregory of Nazianzus' understanding of Christian knowledge has been a subject of fascination for scholars both historically and in recent literature. Gregory discusses Christian knowledge in a variety of ways, but one of his preferred means for doing so is through the narratives of Moses' ascent of Mt. Sinai found in *Exodus* 19:24 and 31. Over the course of his orations, Gregory engages in extended exegesis of Sinai at least five times,[1] and mentions the narrative briefly thrice more.[2] While Gregory's use of the figure of Moses to talk about

[1] *Or*. 2.92-93; 11.2; 20.2 28.2; 32.16.
[2] *Or*. 6.17; 31.1; 40.45.

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the knowledge of God has been discussed by recent scholars,[3] little attention has been paid to Gregory's use of the entire narrative of Sinai to help construct an epistemology of the Church as a whole. Yet, as this paper will show, it is a communal orientation which drives Gregory's exegesis of Sinai. For Gregory, Sinai shows that different Christians play different roles in the Church's project of coming to know God. While some are leaders, most are not, and must pursue knowledge of God by way of a connection to those leaders who stand metaphorically above them on the mountain. This vision of a stratified, yet communal approach to knowledge of God is a hallmark of Gregory's epistemology, and as such, understanding Gregory's exegesis of Sinai provides important insight into how Gregory's corporate epistemology functions both in theory and in practice from his point of view.

As we will see over the course of this paper, Gregory's exegesis of Sinai as a model for corporate epistemology remains remarkably consistent throughout his orations. In sermons spanning the entirety of Gregory's career as a preacher, his exegesis of Sinai seems never to change fundamentally. This fact suggests that Gregory either developed his understanding of the epistemological and ecclesiastical meaning of Sinai early in his career, or he homogenized his reading of Sinai during the editing of his orations in retirement.[4] Either way, there is no sign of apparent development in Gregory's use of the symbol of Sinai to discuss his epistemology of the Church. Thus, in our analysis of Gregory's use of Sinai in his orations we will select passages from Gregory's writings based on the clarity with which they discuss Gregory's understanding of certain elements of Sinai and their meaning for the Church, rather than based on the chronology of their original delivery.

One of Gregory's most important treatments of Sinai comes in *Oration* 32. The oration was delivered in 379 at Constantinople, and is largely devoted to addressing concerns on Gregory's part over the myriad and bitter divisions between Gregory's orthodox community, and other Christian groups in the capital.[5] Here, Gregory enters into a series of warnings to his congregation that theological discussion and knowledge of God are not fit for just anyone, but rather only a few.

[3] See especially Christopher Beeley, *Gregory of Nazianzus on the Trinity and the Knowledge of God* (Oxford, 2008), 65, 93, 101-2; John McGuckin, *Saint Gregory of Nazianzus: An Intellectual Biography* (Crestwood, 2001), 245, 284-5.

[4] The first appearance of Gregory's exegesis of Sinai in his corpus is in the very early *Oration* 2, which may suggest that Gregory did develop his reading of Sinai near the start of his career. However, the same passage appears in an identical doublet found in *Oration* 20, which fact may suggest later editing of both sermons, especially considering that *Oration* 2 is too long to have been publicly delivered in its current form. The problem is thus vexed, but the consistency of Gregory's reading of Sinai is clear.

[5] Paul Gallay, 'Discours 32', SC 318 (Paris, 1985), 10-9.

How deep is our baseness, and how great the promise to know (γνῶναι) God as much as we have been known [1*Cor*. 13:12] … Even Moses barely saw the back parts of God … Now when did you nourish anyone from the sky? What water have you given from the rock? … Recalling these things about Moses, do you not recognize in them a sequence and order in the ranks of gifts (χαρίσματος ἀκολουθίαν καὶ νόμον τάξεως)? If you are a Moses, go into the cloud, and speak to God, and hear His voice, and receive the law, and be a law-giver. If you are an Aaron, go up as well, but stand outside the cloud nearby. If someone is an Ithamar or Eleazar and third after Moses, or if someone is one of the seventy elders, then stand further off, having the third rank. But if you are one of the people (λαοῦ), of the many (τῶν πολλῶν), the mountain does not admit you – if even an animal should touch it, it will be stoned. Wait below and hear only the voice, and do this after cleansing yourself and being purified as you were commanded.[6]

Here, Gregory is telling his audience that there are ranks within the Church in regards to how closely certain individuals may approach God. He begins with a reminder of the lowliness of himself and the other individuals in his congregation, and then compares their status to that of Moses. Gregory makes the comparison primarily by way of the two rhetorical questions directed towards his congregation in which he asks them when they have ever done works like those of Moses. Gregory builds on his mention of Moses in order to make his next point, namely that surrounding the 'sequence and order in the ranks of gifts.' Gregory employs the image of Sinai primarily to illustrate the types of ranks which he thinks exist in the Church in regards to the individual approach to knowledge (γνῶσις) of God. Thus, in *Or*. 32.15-6, we see Gregory using the image of Mt. Sinai, and the various people present at the theophany there, as a means for showing that not all individuals in the Church are of the same rank in approaching the knowledge of God.[7] Each of Gregory's other important uses of Sinai trades on his understanding that the narrative illustrates that there exists a God-ordained epistemological stratification within the Church.

Gregory possesses a clear sense that there is serious danger in any individual Christian seeking to approach knowledge of God more closely than his or her rank on the model of Sinai allows. In order to establish the existence of such a danger, Gregory frequently emphasizes certain elements of the Sinai theophany, especially the trumpets, smoke and lightning which hold the Hebrew people below the mountain, as well as God's command in *Ex*. 19:13 that any people or animals which touch the mountain should be stoned. The best example is in Gregory's longest treatment of Sinai, found in *Oration* 28, the second of Gregory's 'Theological Orations'. The passage comes as Gregory is preparing for an extended discussion of the Trinity, which discussion will take up the

[6] *Or*. 32.15-6. All translations are my own. Source texts are those from the *Sources Chrétiennes*.

[7] Jean Plagnieux, *Saint Grégoire de Nazianze Théologien* (Paris, 1951), 132, confirms the observation that Gregory sees the ranks of Sinai as applying to the Church rather than using them to contrast Christian minds with those outside the Church.

remainder of his 'Theological Orations'. In the passage, Gregory compares his impending theological discourse with the ascent of Sinai, and equates himself with Moses.

> I am going up the mountain eagerly, or rather, to speak more truthfully, I am eager and at the same time distressed (the first through hope, the second through weakness) – I am going up in order to come into (γένωμαι) the cloud … so, if anyone is an Aaron, let him go up with me … and be prepared to remain outside the cloud. If anyone is a Nadad or Abihu, or one of the elders, let him come up, but stand further away according to the degree of his purification (καθάρσεως). And if anyone is of the many (πολλῶν) and of those unworthy of such a height of contemplation (θεωρίας), if he is totally unclean (ἄναγνος), let him not come near, for it is not safe (οὐ ἀσφαλές). If, though, he is clean (ἡγνισμένος) for the moment at least, let him remain below, and let him hear only the voice and the trumpet … and let him see the fuming mountain, shaken with lightning, a terror (ἀπειλήν) and as much a wonder (θαῦμα) to those unable to ascend. And if anyone is an animal, evil and wild and totally incapable of understanding contemplation or theology … let him stand even further away and retreat from the mountain, or else he will be stoned and trampled and as a miserable one he will die miserably.[8]

Gregory's purpose in *Or*. 28.2 is to indicate that for any Christian to approach closer to God than is appropriate is dangerous (οὐ ἀσφαλές). As he says in the passage, Gregory's immediate goal is to express hesitation on his part at the prospect of discussing the intricate Trinitarian questions which will occupy the rest of his 'Theological Orations'. This hesitance suggests that Gregory sees the risk of danger of ascending too high on the model of Sinai to apply to himself as well as those in his audience. Hesitant though he is, however, Gregory indicates that he will indeed metaphorically ascend Mt. Sinai by way of delivering the orations which he is about to present, and invites those in his congregation who are of the ranks of Aaron or the elders to join him. This invitation indicates that Gregory sees at least some in his audience to be capable of approaching the metaphorical mountain; Gregory is not the only person in the room worthy of this. However, Gregory warns that those Christians not falling at least in the rank of the elders must instead occupy the ranks of those who experience the simultaneous 'terror' (ἀπειλήν) and 'wonder' (θαῦμα) of the Sinai theophany. Thus, for most in Gregory's audience, little or no approach of the metaphorical Sinai is actually appropriate. Finally, Gregory reminds his audience of the animals at Sinai, and says that anyone occupying this rank must flee the metaphorical mountain of Sinai or 'die miserably.' He uses similar language again in *Oration* 20 to highlight the fearful and dangerous elements of the Sinai experience.[9] In *Or*. 28.2, then, we see Gregory constructing the Church's approach to the knowledge of God as one in which he, and a few

[8] *Or*. 28.2.
[9] *Or*. 20.2.

others in his audience, approach God much more closely than the rest of his listeners, and, more importantly at the moment, one in which there is serious fright and danger for anyone who attempts to exceed their appropriate rank on the model of Sinai.

In spite of his clear sense that there is danger for Christians in ascending beyond their rank as it corresponds to Sinai, Gregory's exegesis of Sinai by no means cuts off the mass of Christians completely from any contact with the divine. Indeed, Gregory seems to go out of his way to indicate that those Christians belonging to 'the many' below the mountain really do have a connection to God on the summit. Gregory indicates that, within the scheme of Sinai, the many are linked to God by two means: first, God's voice heard on the mountain, and second, the tablets of stone containing the ten commandments, brought down by Moses from the mountain according to *Ex*. 24 and 31.[10]

The first of these connection points has already been mentioned in an above passage, namely our quotation from *Oration* 28. Once again, Gregory says here that if a person 'is clean (ἡγνισμένος) for the moment at least, let him remain below, and let him hear only [God's] voice and the trumpet'.[11] Gregory emphasizes the same point in *Orations* 2, and 20 as well.[12] Gregory does not spell out what precisely the symbol of the voice means, but his interest in highlighting it is of importance because it illustrates a sense on Gregory's part that there exists a direct connection between the many and God on Mt. Sinai. However, there is a second critical connection point between the many and God according to Gregory's exegesis of Sinai, one that receives a good deal of attention from Gregory. This connection is symbolized in Gregory's reading of Sinai by the stone tablets of the law. There are two important aspects of Gregory's understanding of the tablets and what they symbolize which we must explore. The first is that, for Gregory, the stone tablets have a different meaning for those higher up on Sinai than they do for the many waiting lower on the mountain. Gregory says this explicitly in *Oration* 28.

> It is necessary, then, for our discussion to depart from these [animals] and to be written on solid stone tablets. It must be written on both sides of these, for the law is both transparent (φαινόμενον) and secret (κρυπτόμενον) at the same moment. It is the latter to the many (τοῖς πολλοῖς), that is, to those waiting below, and it is the former to the few (τοῖς ὀλίγοις), that is, to those who reach upward.'[13]

For Gregory, the tablets of the decalogue play a critical role in the life of the many. He indicates in the above passage that their meaning is comprehensible

[10] Gregory seems to mix *Ex*. 19, 24 and 31 together quite fluidly, though his emphasis tends to be on the narrative according to *Ex*. 19.

[11] *Or*. 28.2.

[12] *Or*. 2.92; 20.2.

[13] *Or*. 28.2. See J. Plagnieux, *St. Grégoire* (1951), 131-40, for a discussion of the importance of the few and the many to Gregory's theology as a whole.

at two levels. Hints of an Alexandrian scriptural exegesis are certainly present, but more important for our discussion is Gregory's move to infuse the tablets of the law with a multivalence that allows them to serve as a connection point to the knowledge of God for all those on the mountain, whether high up or lower down. The dual nature of the tablets corresponds to the stratified nature of the Church as Gregory is constructing it here, and allows the tablets to function within this stratification.

In order to observe the second important aspect of Gregory's use of the symbol of the stone tablets, we must first examine Gregory's treatment of his own role in the Church as modeled by Sinai. Gregory frequently appears to struggle with his place within an epistemologically stratified Church. Is he a Moses, an Aaron, one of 'the many'? Gregory will identify himself with Aaron at least once, in a passage in which he equates his friend Basil with Moses,[14] but most of the time Gregory appears as a Moses. He accepts this role, however, with a great deal of reluctance. This is because, for Gregory, Moses serves in the narrative not so much as a hero of Christian knowledge or an ideal towards which all should strive, but rather as an example of how few are actually called to approach fully the knowledge of God. In particular, Gregory employs the narrative to this end in two identical doublets found in *Or*. 2 and 20, in both of which passages he deals with his own serious concerns about his worthiness to be a Christian leader. We will examine the first of these passages, found in *Oration* 2. The oration was delivered early in Gregory's career as he was serving as a priest in Nazianzus. Immediately after being ordained, Gregory had run away to Pontus to spend time with his friend Basil there. Gregory's basic purpose in *Oration* 2 is to defend this decision to flee, at least temporarily, from the duties of ordained ministry. Among a series of rationalizations, Gregory offers the example of Sinai to illustrate why he is so worried about taking on the role of priest.

> Before someone has overcome this [earthly material] as much as possible, and has been sufficiently purified (ἀνακαθᾶρσαι) in mind, and grown far closer than others to God, I do not think it is safe for him to take on either any leadership of souls, or mediation between God and human beings – for this is essentially what a priest (ἱερεύς) does. Where does this fear (δέος) come from? … I hear about Moses, that when God talked with him, while many were called to the mountain, of whom one was even Aaron … only Moses came near. The rest were ordered to worship far away, and the people (λαός) did not go up with Moses. This is because it is not for everyone to become close to God – rather, it is for the one who is like Moses, and capable of bearing the glory of God.[15]

If even an Aaron may not ascend the mountain entirely, Gregory asks, what business does he have in taking on the role of priest which, he implies, is

[14] *Or*. 11.2.
[15] *Or*. 2.91-2.

analogous to Moses' role at Sinai? For Gregory, the highest epistemological stratum of the Church, represented at Sinai by Moses, is the level of greatest danger. It is not a status to be pursued, but rather feared (δέος). We see the same consternation on Gregory's part in the nearly identical doublet of this passage from *Oration* 20.[16] While Gregory's focus in *Oration* 2 is on his own ordination to the priesthood, Gregory includes the same exegesis of Sinai in *Oration* 20 in a discussion about Christian theologians more generally. Gregory's inclusion of the example of Moses when talking about his own ordination to the priesthood as well as when discussing the prerequisites of Christian theology suggests that Gregory understands the implications of Sinai for the Church in a consistent way throughout his writings, but that he does not do so in such a way as to rigidly construct his exegesis of Sinai on the model of the ordained offices of the Church.[17] In other words, Moses, for Gregory, is a symbol of Christian leadership, but not necessarily a rigid analogue of the office of bishop or priest, though he may be employed as a symbol in discussions of these offices. For Gregory, Moses can serve to represent any ordained Christian leader, or any Christian theologian, or both. We will say a little more about Gregory's flexible understanding of Christian leadership as it relates to Sinai in a moment.

For Gregory, therefore, playing the role of Moses as a priest means taking on special spiritual risk which not all Christians are equipped to handle. It is in a passage which reveals why Gregory believes that people like him must play the role of Moses in spite of this fear that he brings up the second important aspect of his exegesis of the stone tablets to which we referred above. The passage comes in *Oration* 40, wherein Gregory addresses a group of catechumens whom he is about to baptize into the Church. With some uncertainty about the orthodoxy of their previous theological training, Gregory seeks, as quickly as possible, to give them a lesson in his version of correct Trinitarian doctrine. He sums up what he is doing by making reference to Sinai. 'Let us go forward into the cloud. Give me the tablets of your heart. I will become a Moses for you, even if it is brash to say so – I will write a new decalogue with the finger

[16] *Or*. 20.2.

[17] Gregory's use of identical passages to present his exegesis of Sinai in both *Or*. 2 and *Or*. 20 may also provide some insight into the relationship which exists in Gregory's mind between those who are theologians (the topic of *Or*. 20), and those who are ordained priests and bishops (the topic of *Or*. 2). In sum, Gregory's use of doublets to discuss Sinai in these two orations suggests that Gregory sees those who are priests and bishops, along with those who are theologians to be playing the same essential role in the Christian community as modeled on Sinai. If Gregory does indeed assume this, then we can conclude that, for Gregory, priests and bishops like those discussed in *Or*. 2 must become active theologians on the model of *Or*. 20, in order to properly lead their congregations. This does not, however, logically lead to the conclusion that only priests and bishops *are* theologians in Gregory's mind, as we will see again below. In his own case, Gregory seems to see his career as an ordained leader and his career as a theologian, both modeled on Sinai, to be inextricable, and to be devoted to the same essential end.

of God – I will write an abridged salvation (σύντομον σωτηρίαν). But if anyone is a heretical and irrational animal, let him stay below, or he will risk being stoned by the word of truth.'[18]

Here we see Gregory, now a bishop rather than a priest, hesitantly embracing the role of Moses, and giving some indication of what he understands this role to mean with regard to those people below the mountain. He does so by comparing the hearts of his listeners to the tablets of the law. If his listeners allow him to, Gregory says, he will write the decalogue on these tablets on his listeners' behalf. The context indicates that this 'writing' is, for Gregory, instruction in his understanding of correct Trinitarian doctrine. Thus, what Gregory is saying in *Oration* 40 is that he believes that it is his duty to take on the spiritual risk of becoming like Moses in order to instruct his congregation in correct Trinitarian doctrine. This suggests that, for Gregory, the stone tablets of Sinai represent, at least in part, Trinitarian doctrine. As we already saw, for Gregory, the tablets can be understood at two levels, depending on one's epistemological rank on the model of Sinai. In constructing the stone tablets as analogous to Trinitarian doctrine, and in insisting that they are understood at two possible levels, Gregory appears to indicate that he is responsible for understanding Trinitarian doctrine at the highest level, and that his understanding of this higher level of doctrine in some sense helps to facilitate his congregation's connection to God by way of the tablets. By so instructing the catechumens whom he is addressing in *Oration* 40, Gregory sees himself to be helping to establish, through doctrinal instruction, a mediated connection between them, the many at Sinai, and God.

Thus where, for Gregory, the many below the mountain maintain an unmediated connection to God which is symbolized by God's voice, they are also linked to the knowledge of God by a connection represented by the stone tablets of the law, which connection, for Gregory, is mediated for them by those higher on the mountain of Sinai. It is important to see that Gregory equates the rank of Moses with the priesthood in *Oration* 2, and speaks as a bishop in *Oration* 40, both quoted above. This suggests that Gregory believes that the ordained leaders of the Church bear a certain responsibility to take on the spiritual risks inherent in attaining to the rank of Moses. Gregory's words in *Oration* 40 also show that he has a clear sense that he is personally responsible for helping establish the mediated connection between his congregation and God which is represented by the stone tablets. Yet, we must make note that, for Gregory, the fact that there exists a responsibility on the part of ordained Christian leaders like him to maintain a connection between the many and God is not taken to imply that it is only by way of priests and bishops that Christians can come to know God. As we have already seen, Gregory makes certain in his exegesis of Sinai to discuss God's voice on the mountain, and he uses this

[18] *Or*. 40.45.

voice to illustrate a direct, apparently immediate connection between the Hebrew people and God. It is unfortunate for us that Gregory never makes explicit what it means for his congregation to hear the voice of God in this metaphorical sense. Nonetheless, it is clear that, for Gregory, an immediate connection between the many and God on the model of Sinai does exist. More importantly, however, in his exegesis of Sinai, Gregory does not indicate that the epistemological stratification which he sees within the Church corresponds rigidly to Her offices. Gregory's reference to the bishop Basil as a Moses in *Or.* 11.2, as well as his concerns about his own worthiness to be a priest, do indicate that both bishops and priests ought generally to take on the rank of Moses from Gregory's point of view. However, his sincere exhortation that his audience take their proper place within the ranks of the Church in *Or.* 32.16 offers to this audience the possibility that anyone listening, including presumably those who are not ordained at all, may be a Moses, Aaron, Ithamar and so on. Finally, Gregory's willingness to use identical passages discussing Sinai in the doublets of *Ors.* 2 and 20 illustrates, as mentioned above, the flexibility of Gregory's use of the metaphor, while also highlighting the consistency of its meaning in Gregory's eyes. We may summarize the point by saying that a variety of individuals and offices in the Church can be and are represented fluidly by Gregory using the various metaphorical ranks of Sinai, while the significance and meaning of each rank is presented consistently by Gregory regardless of the individuals or offices to whom he ascribes a particular rank in a particular context. Further, Gregory does not see the epistemological responsibility of Christian leaders to imply that such leadership be defined solely in terms of ecclesiastical office.

We have thus made five key observations about Gregory's exegesis of Sinai as it pertains to his corporate epistemology. First, we have seen that, for Gregory, Sinai illustrates that there are many levels at which Christians may find themselves in relation to the knowledge of God. Second, Gregory's exegesis of Sinai makes clear his belief in the danger of ascending higher than one ought in these ranks. Third, Gregory's exegesis shows his understanding of the fear and responsibility resting on anyone who does ascend the mountain like Moses. Fourth, Gregory is clear in noting that, so long as one is not of the rank of the animals, there remains a connection to God for people at all levels. And, fifth, for those who are below the mountain, this connection is, at least in part, mediated by doctrinal teaching presented by those above. This understanding of Gregory's exegesis of *Exodus* leads us to a simple, but important observation about Gregory's corporate epistemology. For Gregory, there is, for all Christians, a non-negotiable first step in the approach to God, and this is to observe, understand and accept one's place within the stratified scheme of the Church. Gregory states this quite explicitly in the passage with which we began our discussion, and so it is appropriate to come full circle as we conclude. Once again, Gregory calls to his congregation in *Oration* 32 saying, 'If you are a

Moses, go into the cloud, and speak to God, and hear His voice, and receive the law, and be a law-giver. If you are an Aaron, go up as well, but stand outside the cloud nearby … But if you are one of the people, of the many … wait below and hear only the voice'.[19]

Gregory understands the narrative of Sinai to mean that the Church is and must remain stratified, and he understands Moses, Aaron, the elders and the Hebrew people all to be connected to God in different ways. As such, Gregory believes that Christians, including himself, must take their place in the approach to God without desiring more or less than what is appropriate. In Gregory's mind, without a proper self-assessment in the context of a profoundly corporate epistemology, serious danger awaits the Christian who would come to know God. Christians must discover whether they are to be leaders, ordained or otherwise, in which case they must approach God directly and help in the project of building a connection between 'the many' below the mountain and God, or whether they are among those 'many', and therefore need to rely, at least in part, on the mediation of their leaders to bridge the epistemological gap between them and God.

Ultimately, this vision of Church epistemology had real and practical consequences for Gregory. In the quotations above, Gregory demonstrates clearly that he considers himself to be a man in the rank of Moses, and most of his congregation to be like those waiting below the mountain. For Gregory this means that he, as a Christian leader, takes on special spiritual risk in order to help establish a crucial touch-point between his congregation and the knowledge of God. This understanding of his own place is one of the primary considerations underlying Gregory's career and writings. This is because it contributes substantially to Gregory's understanding of the project at the heart of his life's work: to captivate the world with his preaching and poetry, in so doing to make clear and accessible what he believed to be a correct and complete doctrine of God, and thereby ultimately to serve as a Moses and thus help to bridge the inevitable epistemological gap between the many and the summit of Sinai.

[19] *Or*. 32.16.

The Figure of Moses in Gregory of Nazianzus' Autobiographical Remarks in his Orations and Poems

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Abstract

At the end of his autobiographical poem *De se ipso et de episcopis* (*Carm.* 2.1.12), Gregory closes his farewell speech to his friends in Constantinople claiming that he shall now converse with God μόνῳ μόνος. I shall argue that the formula was a subtle allusion to *Exodus* 33:11 as is indicated in Philo's use of the formula in the *Life of Moses* and Gregory's own use in *De virtute* (*Carm.* 1.2.10). In referring to Moses' conversation to God on Mount Sinai, Gregory once again compares himself with the figure of Moses such as he has done much more explicitly in several of his orations (1, 2, 20, 32, 28). In this article I shall examine the various ways Gregory used the figure of Moses as an exclusive figure to legitimize his own personal authority.[1]

Conversing with God μόνῳ μόνος

At the end of his autobiographical poem *De se ipso et de episcopis* (*Carm.* 2.1.12), Gregory closes his farewell speech addressing the bishops assembled in Constantinople for the last time. In a highly polemic way, he bids them and their thrones and dominions farewell, and claims that he himself will withdraw to God,

> Accordingly, you may have your thrones and your dominions, if these be the values that hold first place for you. I bid you farewell, you may go on hurling invectives, parcelling out patriarchies. Let the whole universe give way before you, and one incumbency be exchanged for another, one man ejected and another elevated, if you enjoy that sort of thing. On with the show. As for me, I propose to be concentrated on God. It is for Him I live and breathe, to Him alone that I turn my gaze. Before I was born my mother promised me to Him, and to Him dangers and a fair vision in the night have united me. To Him I shall offer in sacrifice the pure motions of the mind,

[1] The present article reproduces parts of a chapter in my book *Recasting Moses: The Memory of Moses in Biographical and Autobiographical Narratives in Ancient Judaism and 4th Century Christianity*, Early Christianity in the Context of Antiquity (Frankfurt am Main, 2012).

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conversing with Him, μόνῳ μόνος, in so far as one can attain that state.[2] (*Carm.* 2.1.12.804-8, translation slightly modified)

Gregory's choice of words here is hardly accidental. In this article I shall argue that Gregory's picture of himself as one who will converse with God μόνῳ μόνος, actually encapsulates a frequent motive in the self-portrait which he has given in several of his orations (1, 2, 20, 32, 28). In planning to speak with God μόνῳ μόνος, which we could translate with something like 'speaking alone with the alone', Gregory pictures himself as the retired official living the solitary life. However, as anyone familiar with Gregory's work will know, the formula is much more subtle than that. The retirement which Gregory refers to here is not that of a priviliged senior citizen. Gregory portrays himself as the ascetic μοναχός,[3] the 'solitary one', which is doing the anachoritic retirement from society.

Actually, the μόνῳ μόνος-formula might be seen as a subtle allusion to *Exodus* 33:11. In the Septuagint version, the Lord is said to have spoken to Moses 'face to face (ἐνώπιος ἐνωπίῳ)'. The expression was, however, sometimes rephrased as μόνῳ μόνος probably in order to avoid the anthropomorphism of the original expression. Thus for instance, Philo of Alexandria used the μόνῳ μόνος-formula in his *Life of Moses* (1.294; 2.163) and Gregory had also used the formula in referring to *Exodus* 33:11 in his *De virtute* (*Carm.* 1.2.10).[4] In referring to Moses' conversation to God on Mount Sinai,

[2] The English translation is from Denis Molaise Meehan, *Saint Gregory of Nazianzus, Three Poems*, The Fathers of the Church 75 (Washington D.C., 1987), 49-74. The Greek text can be found in Beno Meier, *Gregor von Nazianz: Über die Bischöfe (Carmen 2,1,12), Einleitung, Text, Übersetzung, Kommentar*, Studien Zur Geschichte und Kultur des Altertums. Neue Folge 2. Reihe, 7. Band (Paderborn, München, Wien and Zürich, 1989), 32-72.

[3] Gregory actually titles one of his poems Πρὸς τοὺς ἐν κοινοβίῳ μοναχούς (PG 37, 642A). Evagrius Pontius, too, who was not only ordained to the diaconate by Gregory but also repeatedly describes himself as Gregory's student wrote a text entitled Πρὸς τοὺς ἐν κοινοβίοις ἢ συνοδίαις μοναχούς (*Sententiae ad monachos*). The use of the term μοναχός as referring to an ascetic figure (a monk) is first attested in an Egyptian papyrus document dated to the year 324. Concerning this document and other early uses of the term, see E.A. Judge, 'The Earliest Use of Monachos for "Monk" (P. Coll. Youtie 77) and the Origins of Monasticism', *JAC* 20 (1977), 72-89.

[4] PG 37, 716A. Eusebius may also have alluded to LXX-*Ex.* 33:11 in his use of the same phrase (μόνος μόνῳ) in his description of Constantine's religious practice in the *Life of Constantine* IV 22.1. The term could of course refer to other works such as Plotinus' *Enneads* I 6.7 where the expression is also used about the ascent to God. It seems, however, more likely that the expression had become a standard rephrasing of LXX-*Ex.* 33:11. Gregory of Nyssa also uses the phrase in relation to Moses in his *In Inscriptiones Psalmorum*. Here, however, the phrase is used in relation to Moses' anachoritic retirement from society in Midian before his vision of the burning bush:

> He [Moses] willingly shook off his royal dignity like so much dust which is stripped off by the stomping of the feet. He banished himself from human society for forty years and lived alone (μόνος μόνῳ), focusing steadfastly in undistracted solitude on the contemplation of invisible things. After this he was illuminated by the inexpressible light, and freed the lower part of his soul from the dead garment made of skin [*i.e.* the physical body – symbolized in

Gregory pictures himself as a new Moses speaking alone with God. In so doing he invokes the authority of the figure of Moses in order to construct his own character as he has previously done even much more explicitly in many of his orations.

A poor and insignificant shepherd

Already in his first orations, Gregory refers to Moses. His primary concern in these orations is his personal rehabilitation as presbyter of the church at Nazianzus. After having fled because his father ordained him priest in late 361, Gregory returned to Nazianzus before Easter 362 to assume the priesthood. The flight had to be accounted for and Gregory devotes a lengthy oration, the second oration, to explaining and defending his flight to Pontus from sacerdotal responsibility. Gregory stresses here that a man has to go through long philosophical training before he can be entrusted to serve as a mediator between God and humanity, and he refers to Moses as a model who was suitably prepared for the task of leadership (*Orat.* 2.92). He argues that he hesitated to accept the priesthood out of fear for his own insufficiency, since 'it is not everyone who may draw near to God, but only one who, *like Moses*, can bear the glory of God.' (*Orat.* 2.92, emphasis added).[5] In resisting the call Gregory thus actually only did what Moses had also done, since he was also initially reluctant to respond to God's call (*Orat.* 2.114).[6]

The question of sufficiency continues to be a central question in Gregory's orations and the Moses narratives repeatedly turn up again in relation to this question, as, for instance, in *Oration* 32. This oration was probably delivered at Constantinople in 379 soon after Gregory had accepted to head the small Nicene community there.[7] Gregory's aim in this oration is a double one,

the command to Moses to remove his sandals when he approached the burning bush] (*In Inscriptiones Psalmorum* 43-4).

The English translation is from Ronald E. Heine, *Gregory of Nyssa's Treatise on the Inscriptions of the Psalms*, Oxford Early Christian Studies (Oxford, 1995). The Greek text can be found in Jacob Mc Donough and Paulus Alexander (eds), *Gregorii Nysseni Opera V: In Inscriptiones Psalmorum, In Sextum Psalmum, In Ecclesiasten Homiliae* (Leiden, 1962), 24-175.

[5] The Greek text of Gregory's first orations can be found in Jean Bernardi, *Grégoire de Nazianze, Discours 1-3*, SC 247 (Paris, 1978), 84-241 (*Orat.* 2), and 72-83 (*Orat.* 1). The English translation is from C.G. Browne and J.E. Swallow, *NPNF,* Second Series, vol. 7 (Grand Rapids, 1989), 204-27 (*Orat.* 2), and 203-4 (*Orat.* 1).

[6] Gregory already refers to Moses in the introduction to his first oration, ' … it is a good thing even to hold back from God for a little while, as did the great Moses of old' (*Orat.* 1.1). In addition to the implicit and explicit allusions to Moses' flight in his first two orations, Gregory also records other Biblical parallels to his flight, most notably that of Jonah, see *Orat.* 2.104-9.

[7] The majority of scholars place *Oration* 32 at the beginning of Gregory's career in Constantinople, see Paul Gallay, *La Vie de S. Grégoire de Nazianze* (Lyon and Paris, 1943), 143-5, Jean Bernardi, *La Prédication des Pères cappadociens, Le Prédicateur et son auditoire* (Montpellier, 1968), 148-9, and John McGuckin, *Saint Gregory of Nazianzus: An Intellectual Biography* (New York, 2001), 254.

namely to insist upon retaining the distinction between leaders and those led, since not everyone is qualified to be a leader, and to scourge those leaders who fail to meet the standards of personal sanctity.

In order to make a persuasive plea, Gregory bases his own authority more on a personal vision than on institutional ordination. He introduces himself as a poor and insignificant shepherd and claims that he has yet to win acceptance from his fellow pastors (*Orat.* 32.1). Whereas the majority of clergymen fail to appreciate their responsibilities, he claims that he is himself troubled with the ever-present fear of inadequacy,

> My brothers, you cannot know how difficult it is for us to stand here as a pompous figure of authority and lay these laws upon you, the multitude … You cannot know how great a gift from God is silence and not having to speak on every occasion, thus to have it within ourselves, as keepers over both our speech and our silence, to choose what to say and what to suppress. For all speech is by nature loose and inadequate and, because it is open to challenge, vulnerable, and speech about God all the more so as the subject is more important and the emotion runs higher and the venture is more difficult. What shall we fear? And where then place our trust? Human reason? Speech? The things we hear? We oscillate precariously between three poles: the difficulty of forming a conception of him, the near impossibility of expressing it in words, and the still greater task of finding an ear to receive it in purity. (*Orat.* 32.14, translation slightly modified)[8]

Gregory then proceeds by appealing to the Moses narratives in order to legitimize his insistence upon retaining the distinction between leaders and those led,

> If you are Moses, go up into the cloud and seek to talk to God and to hear his voice; and receive the Law, and become a lawgiver. But if you are Aaron, go up with him but stop outside the cloud and stay close by. And if you are an Ithamar or an Eleazer and third from Moses or one of the elders and a member of the Seventy, stand even farther away, although you are third in rank. But if you are one of the people and belong to the multitude, the mountain does not admit you; even a beast which touched there will be stoned. Wait below and seek to hear only the voice and this only after you have cleansed and purified yourself, as you have been commanded. (*Orat.* 32.16, translation slightly modified)

With his appeal to the Moses narratives just after he has exposed his fear of linguistic inadequacy, Gregory's self-examination takes on a new meaning. The audience would probably not be slow to recognize the parallel with Moses' confession of being weak-voiced and slow-tongued (LXX-*Ex.* 4:10), which had been seen, since Philo, as an act of self-understanding. Moreover, the parallel is enhanced when Gregory argues that God's gifts are ranked sys-

[8] The English translation of *Oration* 32 is taken from Martha Vinson, *St. Gregory of Nazianzus, Select Orations*, The Fathers of the Church 107 (Washington D.C., 2003), 191-215. The Greek text can be found in Claudio Moreschini, *Grégoire de Nazianze, Discours 32-37*, SC 318 (Paris, 1985), 82-155.

tematically and claims that only a Moses can enter the cloud whereas the multitude may have to wait below. Gregory's self-portrait as a pompous figure who gives laws to the multitude thus seems to resemble his picture of the exalted lawgiver.

Penetrating the cloud

Gregory returns to Moses' ascent of the mountain again in oration 28 the second of his five so-called *Theological Orations*. In these orations Gregory attacks the Neo-Arian doctrines and focuses on what he considers to be their Trinitarian and Christological errors. The first oration, *Oration* 27, is primarily of an introductory kind and focuses on what is necessary to be a true theologian. In the next oration, Gregory argues the main doctrinal issue, the incomprehensibility of God's essence, and develops this point while establishing his own character, thereby identifying himself with the true theologian as described in the previous oration,

> I eagerly ascend the mount – or, to speak truer, ascend in eager hope matched with anxiety for my frailty – that I may enter the cloud and company with God (for such is God's bidding). Is any an Aaron? He shall come up with me. He shall stand hard by, should he be willing to wait, if need be, outside the cloud. Is any a Nadab, an Abihu, or an elder? He too shall ascend, but stand further off, his place matching his purity. Is any of the crowd, unfit, as they are, for so sublime contemplation? Utterly unhallowed? – let him not come near, it is dangerous. Duly prepared? – let him abide below. He shall hear but the voice and the trumpet, true religion's outer expressions; he shall see the mount in smoke with its lightning-flashes, warning and wonder to those who cannot ascend it. (*Orat*. 28.2)[9]

If Gregory was only hinting at the parallel between himself and Moses in oration 32, he now explicitly himself enters the cloud on Sinai and communes, like Moses, alone with God. Thus Neil McLynn has called Gregory's use of the Moses narratives in *Oration* 28 a completion of 'the process which he had begun in *Or*. 2 and continued in *Or*. 32.'[10] In *Oration* 28, Gregory implies that he had himself already reached the proper level of purification and contemplation. In his ascent, however, Gregory learns that God's essence is unknowable not only to the average believer but even to a heavenly being. Just as Moses only saw the hind parts of God, so Gregory claims that he only saw God's 'averted figure',

[9] The English translation of *Oration* 28 is by Lionel Wickham in Frederick W. Norris, *Faith gives Fullness to Reasoning, The Five Theological Orations of Gregory Nazianzen* (Leiden, New York, København and Köln, 1991), 224-44. The Greek text can be found in Paul Gallay, *Grégoire de Nazianze, Discours 27-31 (Discours Théologiques)*, SC 250 (Paris, 1978), 100-75.

[10] Neil McLynn, 'A Self-Made Holy Man: The Case of Gregory Nazianzen', *JECS* 6 (1998), 463-83, 476.

What experience of this have I had, you friends of truth, her initiates, her lovers as I am? I was running with a mind to see God and so it was that I ascended the mount. I penetrated the cloud, became enclosed in it, detached from matter and material things and concentrated, so far as might be, in myself. But when I directed my gaze I scarcely saw the averted figure of God, and this whilst sheltering in the rock, God the word incarnate for us. Peering in I saw not the nature prime, self-apprehended (by 'self' I mean the Trinity), the nature as it abides within the first veil and is hidden by the Cherubim, but as it reaches us at its furthest remove from God, being, so far as I can understand, the grandeur, or as divine David calls it the 'majesty' inherent in the created things he has brought forth and governs. All these indications of himself which he has left behind him are God's 'averted figure'. They are, as it were, shadowy reflections of the Sun in water, reflections which display to eyes too weak, because too important to gaze at it, the Sun overmastering perception in the purity of its light. Thus and thus only, can you speak of God, be you Moses and Pharaoh's 'God', had you reached, like Paul the third heaven and heard ineffable mysteries, had you even transcended it, deemed worthy of an angel's or an archangel's station and rank. For were a thing all heavenly, all super-celestial even, far more sublime in nature than ourselves, far nearer God, its remoteness from him and from his perfect apprehension is much greater than its superiority to our low, heavy compound. (*Orat.* 28.3)

As in oration 32, Gregory's claim for similarity to Moses is used here in order to establish his own character in contrast to that of his opponents. Whereas others can claim authority because of their ecclesiastical position (most likely Demophilus, the Arian metropolitan bishop of Constantinople), Gregory bases his own authority on his personal vision. Through the description of his own contemplative experience he claims that he himself lives up to the high standard of personal sanctity. He now boldly shows himself as being one who, like Moses, may draw near to God (see *Orat.* 2.92) in order to direct his gaze on God.

Gregory also uses his reference to Moses' ascent and his vision of the hind parts of God polemically to legitimize his view of the incomprehensibility of God. In this way he argues against the Neo-Arian claim for the comprehensibility of God's nature, which was probably seen as one of the fundamental errors of later Arian theology.[11]

Though the Arian dominance in Constantinople suddenly ended with the emperor Theodosius' arrival in November 380, Gregory's time in Constantinople nevertheless came to an end when in 381 he resigned as president of the Second Council of Constantinople and returned to Cappadocia. In his autobiographical poem *De se ipso et de episcopis* written very soon after his return to Nazianzus, he records his immediate reaction to the humiliating experiences at the Council where bishops from Egypt and Macedonia had opposed his appointment as the new metropolitan bishop of Constantinople as

[11] See F.W. Norris, *Faith gives Fullness to Reasoning* (1991), 116-7. The assertion that the divine nature is incomprehensible is the most oft-repeated statement within the *Theological Orations*, *ibid.* 40.

being illegitimate on the ground of Canon 15 from the Council of Nicaea, which forbade the migration of bishops from one see to another.

However, though he left Constantinople in haste, Gregory was not to be silenced. While the Council was probably still in session, he composed *De se ipso et de episcopis* (*Carm.* 2.1.12) partly in order to participate from afar in the key debate concerning his successor,[12] and partly as an apologetic defence of his actions at the Council. Though he does not classify himself explicitly among the good bishops whom he praises in the poem, he hints, as we have seen, towards the end that the best model for a new bishop at Constantinople was in fact himself. Though the reference to Moses and *Exodus* 33:11 is, admittedly, somewhat implicit in the poem, his friends in Constantinople would most likely catch the parallel,[13] since they had seen him develop the parallel between himself and Moses' ascent repeatedly in his orations, each time also emphasizing the ascent as being a *solitary* task (cf. LXX-*Ex.* 24:2, 'And Moses alone [μόνος] shall come near to God'). Gregory's picture of himself as speaking, like Moses, with God, μόνῳ μόνος, in his retirement thus becomes his conclusive proof that he himself really was the one best qualified for the office in Constantinople.

Short conclusion

As we have seen, Gregory uses the figure of Moses as a sort of *retrospective* model throughout his career.[14] He never claims to imitate Moses, but rather demonstrates in his repeated self-presentations that his life at decisive moments resembled that of Moses. In light of the influential Christian *mimesis* discourse, it can hardly be coincidental that Gregory did not portray himself as intentionally imitating the figure of Moses.

By picturing his life as straightforwardly resembling the life of Moses rather than intentionally imitating it, Gregory again seems to maintain the distinction

[12] It seems clear from *Carm.* 2.1.12.819-20 that Nectarius has not yet been elected. See also his description of the wickedness of present-day bishops and his criteria for choosing new ones in *Carm.* 2.1.12.176-91, 747-60.

[13] I agree with McLynn that in his two autobiographical poems *De se ipso et de episcopis* and *De vita sua* Gregory definitely writes for an intended audience, namely that of his circles in Constantinople, see Neil McLynn, 'The Voice of Conscience: Gregory Nazianzen in Retirement', *Vescovi e pastori in epoca teodosiana*, vol. 2. *SEAug* 58 (Rome, 1997), 299-308, 299. This goes against Jungck and Meier who both suggest, on the basis of the repetitive and disorganized structure of the two poems, that they were left unfinished only to be discovered by his literary executors, see Christoph Jungck, 'Einleitung', in *id*., *Gregor von Nazianz, De Vita Sua, Einleitung, Text, Übersetzung, Kommentar* (Heidelberg, 1974), 13-52, 46, and Beno Meier, 'Einleitung', in *id*., *Gregor von Nazianz, Über die Bischöfe* (1989), 1-31, 16-7.

[14] In his interesting study on Gregory's use of pagan and Biblical models, Demoen calls this use of retrospective models *exempla probationis*, Kristoffel Demoen, *Pagan and Biblical Exempla in Gregory Nazianzen, A Study in Rhetoric and Hermeneutics*, CCLP II (Turnhout, 1996), 81.

between the leaders and those led. The implication seems to be that while everyone could attempt to imitate Moses the life of Gregory was straightforwardly like the life of Moses. In addition, the claim to imitate Moses would not have solved Gregory's immediate problems, namely the problematic events in his career. However, by apologetically keying the sore points of his career to the Moses narratives, he could make those points – his flight to Pontus, for instance, – meaningful. The keying transformed the flight to Pontus from being an immature and disrespectful reaction to his father's ordination into being evidence of his meek and devout nature. The refusal of public office, followed by acceptance of it at a later stage, was of course a well-known classical political motif, which Gregory exploits here with considerable skill.

Perhaps due to his aristocratic and elitist point of view, Gregory stresses the *great divide* between Moses and ordinary people, claiming that only a Moses can enter the cloud, *i.e*. enter into communion with the divine. As Georgia Frank has argued, Gregory found in Moses' ascent almost a personal metaphor for the pursuit of God.[15] Time and again he returns to this ascent and exploits it in order to build up his own character. In his orations the figure of Moses becomes a pattern on which he can model himself as the outstanding outsider to whom the people have repeatedly refused to give an ear.

[15] Georgia Frank, *The Memory of the Eyes. Pilgrims to Living Saints in Christian Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 2000), 89.

Pneumatology and Soteriology according to Gregory of Nazianzus and Cyril of Alexandria

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Abstract

In my article I examine whether Cyril of Alexandria's conception of the Holy Spirit's soteriological work was influenced by Gregory of Nazianzus. In the concluding chapter of his 2008 monograph on Gregory's Trinitarian thought, Christopher Beeley suggests that much of Cyril's thought – including his pneumatology – was heavily influenced by Gregory. While Beeley has since written specifically about the Christological points of convergence between Cyril and Gregory, the degree to which Cyril's pneumatological thought was indebted to Gregory has not yet been explored. I focus my attention on their portrayals of the Spirit's role in human salvation in an effort to establish whether this facet of Cyril's pneumatology is reliant on Gregory. It will be demonstrated that, while some correlations between Cyril and Gregory on the Spirit's saving work exist, Cyril's account places far greater emphasis on the Spirit's role in our adoption as children of God. Gregory describes the Spirit's soteriological operation in large part with reference to deification. Although Cyril occasionally refers to deification with reference to the work of the Spirit, he devotes much more attention to the idea that, through the Spirit, we are transformed so as to enter into a filial relationship with God, a relationship that both encompasses and transcends our deification. I shall argue that Cyril's emphasis on divine filiation is rooted in his understanding of the Holy Spirit's identity as the Spirit of the Son who, as the Son's likeness, transforms us to become by grace what the Son is by nature – children of God. Through an analysis of the logic of Cyril's conception of divine filiation through the Holy Spirit, as articulated in a number of significant passages in works written prior to the outbreak of the Nestorian controversy in 428, I shall demonstrate that Cyril's account of the Spirit's role in salvation appears to rely little on Gregory's thought. Indeed, it will be argued that Cyril's portrayal of the Spirit's saving work is much more developed and complex than that put forward by Gregory.

In a brief section of the concluding chapter of his monograph on Gregory of Nazianzus' trinitarian thought, Christopher Beeley assesses Gregory's theological influence on Cyril of Alexandria, and posits that much of Cyril's thought – including his pneumatology – was heavily reliant on the Cappadocian.[1] Beeley

[1] Christopher A. Beeley, *Gregory of Nazianzus on the Trinity and the Knowledge of God: In Your Light We Shall See Light* (Oxford, 2008), 322.

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does not elaborate on this point, and while he has since written specifically and persuasively about the Christological points of convergence between Gregory and Cyril,[2] the degree to which Cyril's pneumatology was indebted to Gregory remains unexplored. It is outside the scope of this paper to provide an in-depth comparative analysis of the two thinkers' respective conceptions of the Holy Spirit. I intend, rather, to focus my attention on one pivotal facet of their pneumatologies – the role of the Holy Spirit in human salvation. Given that both Gregory and Cyril develop their doctrines of the Holy Spirit primarily around soteriological concerns, an examination of their portrayals of the Spirit's salvific role will constitute a helpful starting point for evaluating the degree to which Cyril's pneumatology was reliant on Gregory. I turn first to Gregory's understanding of the Spirit's soteriological role.

It has been rightly noted that Gregory's soteriology revolves around deification.[3] In the patristic period, only Athanasius refers to terms denoting deification more frequently than Gregory,[4] and for Gregory it is the Holy Spirit who is primarily responsible for our deification. Gregory points repeatedly to the Spirit's role in deification, particularly when defending the Spirit's deity. In his *Fifth Theological Oration*, an oration devoted entirely to the Holy Spirit, Gregory writes: 'If [the Spirit] has the same rank as I have, how can it make me God (πῶς ἐμὲ ποιεῖ Θεόν), how can it link me with deity?'[5] Later in the same oration, he writes: 'For if [the Spirit] is not to be worshipped, how could it deify (θεοῖ) me through baptism?'[6] In *Oration* 34, he writes: 'If the Holy Spirit is not God, let it first be deified (θεωθήτω), and then let it deify (θεούτω) me its equal.'[7] Referring to the Spirit as baptism's perfect completion in *Oration* 39, Gregory declares: 'And how can [the Spirit] not be God … since you become God (σὺ γίνῃ Θεός) from it?'[8] And in his poem on the Holy Spirit, Gregory posits that the Spirit must be God because it forms or makes God here on earth.[9] Deification is at the heart of Gregory's portrayal of the Spirit's role in human salvation, and indeed, at the heart of Gregory's defence of the Spirit's

[2] Christopher A. Beeley, 'Cyril of Alexandria and Gregory Nazianzen: Tradition and Complexity in Patristic Christology', *JECS* 17 (2009), 381-419.

[3] Donald F. Winslow, *The Dynamics of Salvation: A Study in Gregory of Nazianzus* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1979), 34, 127, 171-8, 179; Norman Russell, *The Doctrine of Deification in the Greek Patristic Tradition* (Oxford, 2004), 213-25; C. Beeley, *Gregory of Nazianzus* (2008), 116-7, 175.

[4] N. Russell, *Deification* (2004), 214.

[5] *Oration* (*Or.*) 31.4 (SC 250, 282). English translation: Lionel Wickham, *St Gregory of Nazianzus. On God and Christ: The Five Theological Orations and Two Letters to Cledonius* (Crestwood, NY, 2002), 119 (slightly modified).

[6] *Or.* 31.28 (SC 250, 332).

[7] *Or.* 34.12 (SC 318, 218). English translation: D. Winslow, *Dynamics* (1979), 131 (slightly modified).

[8] *Or.* 39.17 (SC 358, 186).

[9] *Carminum* 1.1.3 (*De Spiritu Sancto*) (PG 37, 408A).

deity.[10] The Holy Spirit can make us gods only because the Spirit is itself God. To deny the deity of the Spirit, who is given in baptism, is to deny salvation as deification, for if the Spirit is not God then we are merely baptized into a creature.[11]

The Spirit's role in the deification of humanity needs to be understood in the broader context of Gregory's portrayal of humanity's creation and fall and of his portrayal of the soteriological possibilities opened up for humanity through the incarnation of the Son. Humanity was, according to Gregory, created to be deified.[12] In *Oration* 38, Gregory recounts the creation of humanity, emphasizing that God intended the first human ultimately to be 'deified by his inclination towards God (πρὸς Θεὸν νεύσει θεούμενον).'[13] Deification was not, however, to be thrust upon Adam, but was to be embraced by him through his free will.[14] He was to cultivate 'immortal plants (φυτῶν ἀθανάτων)', or 'divine thoughts (θείων ἐννοιῶν)', and so to make progress in perfection that he might be deified.[15] But Adam, still spiritually immature, endeavoured to grasp that of which he was not capable and was subsequently banished from the paradise in which divine thoughts could be cultivated.[16]

Sin therefore disrupted humanity's created purpose. But since each person, as Gregory recounts Basil saying to the prefect Modestus, is 'a creature of God called to be God (Θεὸς εἶναι κεκλευσμένος)',[17] a way needed to be found to make deification possible once again. This is where the incarnation comes in. Gregory emphasizes that the Son of God became human to open up the possibility of deification to us. Two natures – one divine, one human – are united in Jesus Christ, 'God becoming man, man becoming God (θεωθέντος)'.[18] The Son, Gregory asserts, deified his own humanity to make our deification possible. Humanity and divinity became entirely united in the incarnate Word, according to Gregory, 'that I might be made God (γένομαι Θεός) to the same extent that he was made man.'[19]

Jesus Christ thus re-opened the possibility of human deification. And, according to Gregory, that which is made possible by Jesus Christ is made

[10] See also *Or*. 31.29 (SC 250, 334).

[11] See *Or*. 40.42, 44 (SC 358, 296, 302).

[12] See D. Winslow, *Dynamics* (1979), 60-70.

[13] *Or*. 38.11 (SC 358, 126). English translation: Brian E. Daley, *Gregory of Nazianzus* (London, 2006), 122 (slightly modified).

[14] *Or*. 38.12 (SC 358, 126-8).

[15] *Or*. 38.12 (SC 358, 128). English translation: B. Daley, *Gregory of Nazianzus* (2006), 122.

[16] *Or*. 38.12 (SC 358, 128-30).

[17] *Or*. 43.48 (SC 384, 228).

[18] *Epistle* 101.21 (SC 208, 44).

[19] *Or*. 29.19 (SC 250, 218). English translation: L. Wickham, *On God and Christ* (2002), 86. See also *Or*. 1.5 (SC 247, 78); *Or*. 30.3, 14, 21 (SC 250, 230, 256, 270-2); *Or*. 38.13 (SC 358, 132-4). See D. Winslow, *Dynamics* (1979), 86-92; N. Russell, *Deification* (2004), 220-3; C. Beeley, *Gregory of Nazianzus* (2008), 146-7.

actual through the Holy Spirit.[20] We are deified through the Holy Spirit who is given to us in baptism. However, deification is not for Gregory a static condition mechanically conferred once for all, but is the re-creation and transformation of those who receive the Spirit through baptism such that those who receive the Spirit are united to Christ and so are transformed to become like Christ, God made human.[21] The Spirit's deifying work thus appears to be predicated on the ontological unity the Spirit has with the Son. The Spirit, because it is God, is united with the Son because the Son is God, and therefore, all that is the Son's belongs also to the Spirit.[22] Gregory does not, however, devote much attention to the specific relationship of Son and the Spirit, nor does his understanding of human salvation require him to do so. It is the deity of the Spirit, its consubstantial inclusion in the trinitarian life of God, that is the focus of Gregory's pneumatological speculation, and it is this focus on the deity of the Spirit that guides his portrayal of the Spirit's soteriological operation. The Spirit makes us gods because the Spirit is God.

If Cyril of Alexandria's pneumatology was indeed influenced by Gregory's pneumatology, one would expect a high level of congruity between their respective accounts of the Holy Spirit's role in human salvation. Like Gregory, Cyril portrays the Holy Spirit as absolutely central to human salvation, and like Gregory, Cyril characterizes the Spirit as actualizing that which Jesus Christ made soteriologically possible. But in contrast to Gregory, Cyril very rarely uses the technical language of deification to describe human salvation. Such terminology is restricted in large part to early works such as the *Thesaurus* and *De trinitate dialogi*, and even in these texts the vocabulary of deification is used in a measured manner.[23] Cyril does use this vocabulary with reference to the Holy Spirit, but he does so infrequently. Cyril tends, instead, to focus less on the Spirit's role in our deification than he does on the central part the Spirit plays in our divine filiation, our adoption as children of God. Thus, even when he does use the technical terminology of deification to describe the Spirit's soteriological work, he usually combines this usage with reference to divine

[20] D. Winslow, *Dynamics* (1979), 129; C. Beeley, *Gregory of Nazianzus* (2008), 154; Christopher A. Beeley, 'The Holy Spirit in the Cappadocians: Past and Present', *Modern Theology* 26 (2010), 90-119.

[21] See *Or*. 2.22 (SC 247, 118-20); *Or*. 18.13 (PG 35, 1000D-1001A); *Or*. 40.10 (SC 358, 218). See D. Winslow, *Dynamics* (1979), 189-99 and N. Russell, *Deification* (2004), 224-5 for a more detailed account of Gregory's understanding of deification.

[22] See *Or*. 34.10 (SC 318, 216).

[23] There has been speculation that his reticence to use the technical language of deification in his later works is perhaps tied to the Nestorian controversy, and specifically to the conflicting portrayals of what deification means in terms of the humanity of Jesus Christ. However, this does not explain Cyril's guarded usage of the technical vocabulary of deification in his earlier writings. See Daniel A. Keating, 'Divinization in Cyril: The Appropriation of Divine Life', in Daniel A. Keating and Thomas G. Weinandy (eds), *The Theology of St Cyril of Alexandria: A Critical Appreciation* (London, 2003), 149-85; N. Russell, *Deification* (2004), 192-3.

filiation, placing emphasis on the latter. For example, in a passage from the *Thesaurus*, Cyril writes the following with reference to the salvific work of the Holy Spirit:

> For we have been adopted through entering into a relationship with God and have been deified (θεοποιούμεθα) by him. For if we are called sons of God through having participated (μετασχόντες) in God by grace, what kind of participation do we attribute to the Word, that he should become Son and God? We are [these things] through the Holy Spirit; to think this of the Word would be absurd.[24]

Cyril here is defending the divinity of the Son and his eternal sonship, and in this vein he draws a distinction between our identity as gods and sons of God and the Son's essential divinity and sonship. More importantly for our purposes is Cyril's understanding of the Spirit's role in our transformation. He refers to deification and divine filiation in the first sentence, both of which, as he writes, occur through the Holy Spirit. But it is divine filiation that receives the attention in the following sentence, where Cyril draws the reader's attention, not to our attaining the status of gods, but to the filial relationship we now have with God through participation in God, a participation that is, it would appear, through the Holy Spirit.

A similar accent on divine filiation in one of the rare passages in which Cyril uses the technical language of deification is found in book VII of *De trinitate dialogii*. Book VII is devoted entirely to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and in the passage quoted below, Cyril defends the deity of the Holy Spirit on the basis of the idea that we are deified through it. He writes:

> But it is inconceivable that a created being should have the power to deify (θεοποιός). This is something that can be attributed only to God, who through the Spirit infuses into the souls of the saints a participation (μέθεξιν) in his own specific character. When we have been conformed by [the Spirit] to him who is the Son by nature, we are called gods and sons of God on account of him. And because we are sons, as scripture says, 'God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying 'Abba! Father!' (*Gal*. 4:6).[25]

Those who receive the Holy Spirit participate in its 'own specific character', which appears to be bound up with the Son, for it is through participation in the Spirit that we are transformed to become like the Son. And while Cyril refers in this text to being called both gods and sons of God through the Spirit, his focus is the Spirit's role in divine filiation as evidenced by his immediate citation of *Galatians* 4:6, a text, it should be noted, never cited by Gregory of Nazianzus. Cyril does not explicate the precise relationship between deification and divine filiation in this passage, nor does he do so elsewhere. Nevertheless, it is telling that Cyril, just as he did in the passage quoted above from the

[24] *Thesaurus* (*Thes*.) 25 (PG 75, 45A). English translation: N. Russell, *Deification* (2004), 194. See also *Thes*. 335 (PG 75, 569C); *Thes*. 349 (PG 75, 592D).

[25] *De trinitate dialogi* (*DT*) VII 644CD (SC 246, 180). English translation: N. Russell, *Deification* (2004), 195 (slightly modified).

Thesaurus, draws his readers' attention to divine filiation in one of the few passages in which he uses the technical vocabulary of deification to describe the Spirit's salvific work.

As the above quotation from *De trinitate dialogi* implies, the Spirit's transforming operation is tied to the relationship the Spirit has to the Son, a relationship to which Cyril devotes extensive attention throughout his corpus. Throughout his writings Cyril insists that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of both the Father and the Son, but focuses particularly on the Spirit's relationship with the Son. To demonstrate the unity the Spirit has with the Son, Cyril frequently cites New Testament texts such as *John* 14:16-8, *John* 15:26, *John* 16:13-5, *Romans* 8:9-10, *Acts* 16:7, and *Ephesians* 3:16-7, arguing that these texts show that the identity of the Holy Spirit is tied to its being the Spirit of the Son. The Spirit is therefore, according to Cyril, the Son's own (ἴδιον),[26] 'the natural likeness (ὁμοίωσις φυσική)' of the Son,[27] and the Son's 'pure image (εἰκὼν ἀκραιφνής).'[28] To stress the Spirit's relationship with the Son, Cyril frequently uses the verb πρόειμι with reference to the Spirit advancing or proceeding through or from the Son. For example, Cyril refers variously to the Spirit proceeding *from* the Father and the Son,[29] *through* the Father and the Son,[30] *from* the Father *through* the Son,[31] and occasionally to the Spirit proceeding *from* the Son.[32] Such language is very suggestive, and led some medieval Latin theologians to cite him as a Greek patristic ally of the *filioque* clause.[33] But it should be noted that

[26] *DT* VII 640E (SC 246, 168).

[27] *In Joannem* (*In Jo.*) 17:20-1, P.E. Pusey (ed.), *Sancti patris nostri Cyrilli Archiepiscopi Alexandrini in d. Joannis Evangelium* (Oxford, 1872), ii 731. I shall cite this work with reference to the biblical text under discussion (*i.e.*, *John* 20:21 will be cited as *In Jo.* 20:21). In cases of direct quotation from this text, I will, in parentheses, cite the volume number of Pusey's edition, followed by the page number.

[28] *In Jo.* 17:18-9 (Pusey, ii 720). Other texts in which Cyril cites the above New Testament texts to argue for the Spirit being the Spirit of the Son include: *DT* VI 593A (SC 246, 26-8); *DT* VII 639D (SC 246, 166); *DT* VII 642A-B (SC 246, 172); *In Jo.* 1:32-3 (Pusey, i 186-8); *In Jo.* 3:36 (Pusey, i 258-9); *In Jo.* 14:16-7 (Pusey, ii 467-8); *In Jo.* 14:18 (Pusey, ii 471-2); *In. Jo.* 14:25-6 (Pusey, ii 508); *In Jo.* 15:26-7 (Pusey, ii 607-9); *In Jo.* 16:12-3 (Pusey, ii 628); *In. Jo.* 16:15 (Pusey, ii 638).

[29] *Thes.* 345 (PG 75, 585A). See Marie-Odile Boulnois, *Le paradoxe trinitaire chez Cyrille d'Alexandrie: Herméneutique, analyses philosophiques et argumentation théologique* (Paris, 1994), 513.

[30] *De recta fide ad Theodosium* 40 (Edward Schwartz [ed.], *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum* [Berlin, 1927], I 1.5, 56. Schwartz' work is hereafter cited as ACO). See M. Boulnois, *Le paradoxe trinitaire* (1994), 525[338]; George Berthold, 'Cyril of Alexandria and the Filioque', *Studia Patristica* 19 (1989), 143-7.

[31] *Adversus Nestorii Blasphemias* IV 3 (ACO I 1.6, 82[13-5]); *In Jo.* 20:22-3 (Pusey, iii 131). See M. Boulnois, *Le paradoxe trinitaire* (1994), 523[336].

[32] *In Jo.* 15:26-7 (Pusey, ii 607); *In Jo.* 16:12-3 (Pusey, ii 629); *In Jo.* 16:14 (Pusey, ii 636). See M. Boulnois, *Le paradoxe trinitaire* (1994), 525[337].

[33] For an account of Cyril's influence on debates regarding the *filioque* clause, see M. Boulnois, *Le paradoxe trinitaire* (1994), 492-500; Bernard Meunier, 'Cyrille d'Alexandrie au Concile

Cyril never uses ἐκπορεύεσθαι – a more technical term used both in *John* 15:26 and in the Niceno-Constantinopolitan creed with reference to the Spirit's procession from the Father – to refer to the Spirit's procession from the Son.[34] Cyril appears, therefore, to perceive there to be a distinction between πρόειμι and ἐκπορεύεσθαι, but does not describe the precise nuances of each term. A. Edward Siecienski gives the most convincing explanation of the distinction between the two terms in Cyril's thought. The use of πρόειμι to denote the Spirit's procession from the Son allows Cyril 'to establish both a temporal and eternal relationship between the Son and the Spirit, yet one that does not involve the Son in the Spirit's ἐκπόρευσις.'[35] Cyril's restricted use of ἐκπορεύεσθαι to denote the Spirit's procession from the Father indicates that he was unwilling to broaden the scope of the term beyond that sanctioned by the Constantinopolitan council. Yet at the same time he is concerned to emphasize that the Spirit is not simply the Spirit of the Father, but is also, as scripture itself makes clear, the Spirit of the Son. Cyril's use of the language of πρόειμι provides a means for him to express his conviction that the Spirit and the Son possess an eternal relationship without going beyond the sanctioned biblical and conciliar language denoting the Spirit's procession of the Father. There is, admittedly, some ambiguity in Cyril's use of πρόειμι, and such ambiguity is perhaps evidence that his use of the verb is not intended to be taken in a technical sense to denote the origination of the Spirit, but is simply meant to express that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of the Father *and* the Son, that the Spirit has a unity with the Son that is profound and substantial.[36]

More could be said regarding Cyril's use of the language of procession, and more research needs to be done into this facet of his thought. For the purposes of this essay, it is sufficient simply to point out that the emphasis Cyril places on the unity of the Holy Spirit with the Son is simply not found to the same degree in Gregory of Nazianzus. Gregory is much more precise in his language regarding procession than Cyril, with much more pronounced emphasis on the Spirit's procession, and thus origination, from the Father.[37] And while, as already noted, Gregory does point to the ontological unity of the Spirit with the

de Florence', *Annuarium Historiae Conciliorum* 21 (1989), 146-74. See also Aloysio M. Bermejo, *The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit according to Saint Cyril of Alexandria* (Oña, Spain, 1963), 40[69].

[34] Brian E. Daley, 'The Fullness of the Saving God: Cyril of Alexandria on the Holy Spirit', D. Keating and T. Weinandy, *The Theology of Cyril of Alexandria* (2003), 113-48.

[35] A. Edward Siecienski, *The Filioque: History of a Doctrinal Controversy* (Oxford, 2010), 49.

[36] As Marie-Odile Boulnois notes, while Cyril's theology of the Spirit's procession is not developed sufficiently enough to allow definitive conclusions to be reached regarding the Son's precise role in the procession of the Spirit, he certainly 'went further than many of his predecessors in affirming the dependence of the Spirit on the Son'. See M.-O. Boulnois, 'The Mystery of the Trinity according to Cyril of Alexandria: The Deployment of the Triad and its Recapitulation into the Unity of Divinity', D. Keating and T. Weinandy (eds), *The Theology of Cyril of Alexandria* (2003), 75-111; See also Brian E. Daley, 'The Fullness of the Saving God' (2003), 113-48.

[37] See A. Siecienski, *The Filioque* (2010), 40-3.

Son, he has very little to say about this unity or about the implications of this unity for the soteriological operation of the Holy Spirit beyond simply saying that the Spirit shares its identity as God with the Son, and can therefore deify humanity because it is God.

Cyril's pronounced emphasis on the Spirit's close unity with and relationship to the Son leads him, in contrast to Gregory, to pay less attention to the Spirit's role in our deification, and much more attention to divine filiation. The Spirit's unity with and likeness to the Son means for Cyril that the salvific work of the Holy Spirit is to transform those who receive it to bear likeness with the Son, to become by grace what the Son is by nature; namely, sons, or children, of God. In his tenth festal letter, written in 422, Cyril articulates the logic underlying his conception of the Spirit's role in our adoption as children of God. Cyril writes that the Son of God became human in order that the lowliness of human nature might be raised to a higher state.[38] This potentiality is actualized through our participation in the Holy Spirit who moulds and conforms us to Christ, and is able to do so because the Spirit is the 'form (μορφή)' of Christ.[39] Through our participation in the Spirit, the 'image (εἰκών)' and 'imprint (χαρακτήρ)' of Christ become radiant in us, and we are changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another (2*Cor*. 3:18).[40] Cyril describes this transformation in terms of divine filiation. For we are moulded to Jesus Christ through his Spirit 'in order that when God the Father sees conspicuous in us the features (χαρακτῆρας) of his own offspring, he may thenceforth love us as his children, and may adorn us with transcendent honors.'[41]

In this letter, Cyril portrays the Spirit's work of conforming us to the Son as being inseparable from the incarnation of the Son. Our transformation is not, however, directed simply to the attainment of sanctity in imitation of Christ, nor is this transformation linked here to deification. Rather, Cyril describes our transformation through the Spirit in relational terms, positing that divine filiation is the culmination of our participation in the Spirit. The emphasis is on being conformed to *Christ*, to the Word made flesh. The Spirit is not simply the Spirit of the Son. The Spirit is the Spirit of the one who became a human being for our sake, Jesus Christ, both God and human. We participate in the Spirit, and so come to share in that which the Spirit is. And because the Spirit is the form of Christ, our participation in the Spirit means that we actually share in that which Christ is. We are thus conformed to become like Christ to such a degree that we manifest the characteristics of God's Son in the flesh, becoming children of God. Christ is, as it were, the paradigm, concrete manifestation,

[38] *Homiliae Paschales* (*HP*) X 2.617B - X 4.624D (SC 392, 208-22).
[39] *HP* X 2.619D (SC, 392, 210); X 2.620A-B (SC 392, 212).
[40] *HP* X 2.620C, 621A (SC 392, 214).
[41] *HP* X 2.620B (SC 392, 212). English translation: Philip R. Amidon, *St Cyril of Alexandria: Festal Letters 1-12* (Washington, 2009), 184.

and actualization of what it is for a human fully to be a child of God, to have God as a Father. By receiving and participating in the Spirit of Christ, we become children of God by being moulded to Christ, who is the Son of God by nature.

Similar ideas are expressed elsewhere in Cyril's writings. In various places throughout his commentary on *John*, Cyril recounts that we are adopted as children of God through the Holy Spirit because, through him, we partake of the incarnate Son whose Spirit it is. Through the Spirit 'the Son gives what belongs properly to him alone'[42] to the believer. We are embossed with Christ's image through the Spirit and so become children of God, ascending to a dignity that transcends our nature.[43] We do not become children of God in exactly the same way as Christ is the Son, for he is the Son of God by nature whereas we become children of God by grace. The magnitude of this grace, however, should not be underestimated. For our adoption as children of God through the Spirit means that we are brought into a 'natural relationship (εἰς οἰκειότητα φυσικήν)' with God the Father.[44] It is not that we are simply declared children of God. We become children of God, for, through the Spirit, the fundamental elements of our being are 'changed (μεταστοιχειοῦσθαι)'[45] such that we become capable of crying 'Abba! Father!'[46] United to Christ,[47] made partakers of him through the Spirit,[48] we are enabled to bear fruit in the form of a transformed life characterized by faith, love, and obedience, and so are able to 'preserve the benefit of [our] noble birth'[49] as children of God. We share in the 'peculiar, essential, and natural qualities (ποιότητος)' of the Son, for in giving the Spirit he 'engrafts (ἐντίθησι) in the saints kinship (συγγένειαν) to his own nature.'[50]

What does this brief summary of Cyril's understanding of the Spirit's soteriological role tell us regarding the possible influence of Gregory? Simply in terms of the terminology used to describe the soteriological role of the Holy Spirit, there is substantial divergence between the two thinkers. Gregory does describe deification as re-creation and re-birth through the Holy Spirit,[51] but he rarely, if ever, refers to this re-birth in terms of divine filiation, and certainly not with the emphasis given to this idea by Cyril. Vigorously defending the deity of the Holy Spirit, Gregory devotes his accounts of the Spirit's soteriological

[42] *In Jo.* 1:12 (Pusey, i 133).
[43] *In Jo.* 1:12 (Pusey, i 133).
[44] *In Jo.* 1:13 (Pusey, i 135).
[45] See G.W.H. Lampe (ed.), *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford, 1961), 861.
[46] *In Jo.* 16:7 (Pusey, ii 620).
[47] *In Jo.* 15:1 (Pusey, ii 534).
[48] *In Jo.* 15:1 (Pusey, ii 534).
[49] *In Jo.* 15:1 (Pusey, ii 535).
[50] *In Jo.* 15:1 (Pusey, ii 535-6).
[51] See *Or.* 40.2, 3, 7, 8, 42 (SC 358, 198-200, 210, 212-4, 294-6).

operation to the idea that we become gods by the Spirit who must therefore be God. Mainly due to differences in historical and theological context, Cyril is not as concerned as Gregory to defend the Spirit's deity. Of more particular concern for him is the articulation of a soteriology centred around the idea, clearly articulated in scripture, that our salvation in Christ is intertwined with our becoming children of God (*John* 1:12-3; *Romans* 8:14-7; *Galatians* 4:4-6). It could be argued that Cyril's focus on salvation as divine filiation owes something to Athanasius, for whom divine filiation was a more prominent soteriological theme than for Gregory.[52] Whatever the case may be, Cyril goes farther than either Gregory or Athanasius in expounding on the specific role the Spirit plays, particularly given the Spirit's relationship with the Son, in our attainment of divine sonship. Moreover, although Gregory does link the Spirit's salvific work to its unity with the Son, and he does, as noted above, refer to deification through the Spirit in terms of the attainment of Christ-likeness, we do not find the kind of intense focus on the Spirit's identity vis-à-vis the Son that we find in Cyril. Nor do we find much use of the language of participation in Gregory,[53] though participation in the divine nature may be implicit in his thought. This is in stark contrast to Cyril who persistently and emphatically describes our adoption as children of God with reference to participation in the Spirit. The fact that Cyril cites or alludes to 2*Peter* 1:4 more frequently than any other writer in the patristic period, and does so usually with reference to the Holy Spirit,[54] while Gregory never cites 2*Peter* 1:4, is telling in this regard.[55] Language of participation provides for Cyril a means to describe the filial intimacy humanity now has with God the Father in a manner that is not found in Gregory's thought.[56] Cyril submits that because we partake of, and are thereby transformed through, the Spirit of the Son made man, we attain Christ-likeness at

[52] N. Russell, *Deification* (2004), 170-1, 175. Russell here cites the relevant texts of Athanasius.

[53] See N. Russell, *Deification* (2004), 213-4, 222-5 and C. Beeley, *Gregory of Nazianzus* (2008), 118-9. Russell and Beeley disagree regarding Gregory's notion of deification. Russell suggests that Gregory's understanding of deification is purely metaphorical and is focused on the imitation of Christ, and he points to Gregory's avoidance of language of participation. Beeley, I think rightly, argues that Gregory's notion of deification 'indicates a real and growing participation in God's nature' so that Christians become gods in more than a metaphorical manner. Nevertheless, Gregory is not as explicit about participation.

[54] Bernard Meunier, *Le Christ de Cyrille d'Alexandrie: L'Humanité, Le Salut, et la question Monophysite* (Paris, 1997), 163-5.

[55] See N. Russell, *Deification* (2004), 192, 213-4. For a thorough list of Cyrilline texts containing reference to 2*Peter* 1:4, see B. Meunier, *Le Christ de Cyrille d'Alexandrie* (1997), 163-4[1] and Daniel A. Keating, *The Appropriation of Divine Life in Cyril of Alexandria* (Oxford, 2004), 144[1].

[56] B. Meunier provides a detailed examination of the notion of participation in Cyril's thought in *Le Christ de Cyrille d'Alexandrie* (1997), 161-213, and focuses particularly on the role of the Holy Spirit in our participation in God. Unfortunately, Meunier does not address the centrality of divine filiation in Cyril's understanding of participation, and therefore in his soteriology as a whole.

the very depths of our being, even to the point of sharing his identity as the Son of God. Cyril portrays human salvation as entering a new filial relationship with God the Father through the Spirit of his Son. We do not only become gods through participation in the Holy Spirit; we become children of God, drawn into the trinitarian life by grace through our participation in him who is the Son of God by nature. Such differences in terminology and in detail between Gregory and Cyril demonstrate, I think, that Cyril's portrayal of the soteriological role of the Holy Spirit actually owes very little to Gregory.

Human Freedom and Divine Providence according to Gregory of Nazianzus

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ABSTRACT

In spite of the obvious sympathies Gregory of Nazianzus feels towards Platonic language concerning status of the human soul, it is impossible to understand his concept of free will without considering the role the body plays in the formation of will. Furthermore, the Theologian's view on human freedom in face of God is significantly shaped by his Pro-Nicene commitments. Defending the absolute divine sovereignty of the humble and suffering Christ and his equality with the Father Gregory questioned the view on the divine sovereignty, which presupposed the image of the impassible God acting in the human world from the distance of a detached observer. Instead, he proposed the idea of divine sovereignty exercised in the act of a loving self-sacrifice and self-denial revealed in the salvific activity of Christ. Consequently, Gregory's theology of human freedom is represented by the paradoxical interplay between human autonomy and divine heteronomy. The article analyses the logic of this interplay and states, that the Theologian's vision of human free will can make a significant contribution to the contemporary debates on the relationship between faith and reason.

Although the importance of free will in Gregory's theology has been well noticed and even praised, the complex nature of his concept of freedom has not hitherto been accorded deep exploration. Indeed, as Plagnieux points out, he was 'a champion of human liberty in the face of God'.[1] But does Gregory offer us any articulated theological concept of this 'human liberty in the face of God'? Or is this his personal disposition silently operating on the background of his theological vision?

It seems that the answer would more likely support the second suggestion, insofar as Gregory did not give us any systematic account on the matter. Yet, the numerous precise formulations of the conceptual character concerning human free will here and there found in his writings should make us careful to dismiss easily the Theologian's possible contribution to the issue raised.

So the question I want to address here then is what place could be assigned to these formulations concerning human free will in the broader context of

[1] Jean Plagnieux, *Saint Grégoire de Nazianzen Théologien* (Paris, 1952), 75.

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Gregory's theological thought, and what kind of logic is operating in the Theologian's construction of the notion of free will, if it exists at all.

It is my contention that Gregory offers us highly elaborated concept of free will, which does not oppose the revelation of a transcendental God to the autonomy of reason, but rather considers the former a necessary condition for the formation of the latter. In order to substantiate my thesis, I will start with the analysis of Gregory's notion of freedom and the role soul-body constitution plays in it in his accounts on the creation of man. Then I will proceed with the exploration of how the assumption of the human fallen will by Christ corresponds to the primordial state of human freedom and sheds light both on the logic of the proper functioning of the free will and on its dark side, what we might designate in Kantian terms as a 'radical evil'. Finally, I will point towards implications of Gregory's vision of free will that might contribute to the modern debates on reason and faith.

Gregory unfolds his story about the primordial state of man and the fall around his complex notion of free will. He does not envisage the Paradise bestowed upon the ancestors as something simply given as an object of enjoyment. Certainly, Paradise is a gift of God, but at the same time and from the beginning Gregory makes clear that it is to be obtained as well, as if it is somehow kept in distance from man. Such a paradoxical state of this gift is conditioned by another gift – the gift of freedom. In the following passage he briefly summarizes ethical motivations for this contrast of gifts:

> This being (man) He placed in Paradise, whatever the Paradise may have been, having honoured him with the gift of free will (in order that good might belong to him as the result of his choice, no less than to Him who had implanted the seeds of it).[2]

But in fact Gregory's concern with the lost Paradise has a broad background, which suggests to us that he was not least interested in the conceptualization of the biblical accounts. Thus, elsewhere he offers the following general formulation:

> This, indeed, was the will of Supreme Goodness, to make the good even our own, not only because sown in our nature, but because cultivated by our own choice, and by the motions of our will, free to act in either direction. (*Or*. 2.17)

As we see, Gregory elucidates what 'the Paradise may have been' for him: it is intrinsically linked with human nature if not identified with it. Indeed, both above-quoted passages immediately follow his discussions on the purposes of

[2] Τοῦτον ἔθετο μὲν ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ, ὅστις ποτὲ ἦν ὁ παράδεισος οὗτος, τῷ αὐτεξουσίῳ τιμήσας, ἵν' ᾖ τοῦ ἑλομένου τὸ ἀγαθὸν οὐχ ἧττον ἢ τοῦ παρασχόντος τὰ σπέρματα (*Or*. 38.12). I will mostly quote from the following English translation: *Select Orations of St. Gregory Nazianzen*, trans. Charles Gordon Browne and James Edward Swallow, ed. Philip Schaff (New York, 1893).

the soul/body division in human nature. For its extreme clarity I quote the discussion connected to the first passage:

> He placed him, great in littleness on the earth; … one and the same spirit and flesh; spirit for grace; flesh for pride; the one that he might continue to live and praise his Benefactor, the other that he might suffer, and by suffering be put in remembrance, and be corrected if he became proud of his greatness. (*Or*. 38.11)

This sophistic play with antitheses, in Reuther's words, characteristic of Gregory's style and here skillfully matched with his expression of Christian theological antitheses[3] reveals that the above noticed tension between 'already' and 'not yet' in the gift of Paradise is in fact nothing else than a tension found in our very nature – a gift of the Creator. This passage tries to discern the moral motivations in the creation of such tension in human nature: while man with his spirit participates in the greatness of deifying grace, he obtains the full awareness of the given-ness of this high status and so gives thanks to his 'Benefactor'. So, while in spirit man feels his closeness to his creator, his body draws a line of separation between them. It marks a distance from an eternal 'not yet'. Then if we ask what the function of free will might be, the discussion in the second oration highlights the place of free will in this tension by giving the reasons for the creation of body/soul duality:

> There are two: one, that it may inherit the glory above by means of a struggle and wrestling with things below, being tried as gold in the fire by things here, and gain the objects of our hope as a prize of virtue, and not merely as the gift of God … The second reason is, that it may draw to itself and raise to heaven the lower nature, by gradually freeing it from its grossness, in order that the soul may be to the body what God is to the soul, itself leading on the matter which ministers to it, and uniting it, as its fellow-servant, to God. (*Or*. 2.17)

So, Gregory establishes a close correlation between free will and the body, which has already been noticed by Winslow, who points to the 'pedagogical role' of the body which plays a decisive role in the dynamics of the realization of free will.[4] But what that scholar failed to notice is the complex character of this role of the body: he considers the pedagogy acted by God through bodily suffering 'a failure', since it did not affect the moral correction of man.[5]

In fact, Gregory's strong defense of the autonomy of human will represents the further development of the theological tradition derived from Clement of

[3] Rosemary Radford Reuther, *Gregory of Nazianzus: Rhetor and Philosopher* (Oxford, 1969), 66.

[4] Donald F. Winslow, *The Dynamics of Salvation: A Study in Gregory of Nazianzus* (Cambridge, 1979), 55.

[5] *Ibid*. 74.

Alexandria[6] that by no means admits any kind of automatic character of salvation. The sole pedagogy that a body capable of suffering can provide, as we have seen in the previous passage, is a prevention of pride by means of facing man with the gap which separates him from the almighty God. Thus, the body makes man feel the insufficiency of his created nature and the need of work of his free will in order to 'rise to heaven'. But Gregory shows also insufficiency of the efforts of human will for that end. He brings into play the notion of the divine law defined as a prohibition imposed on free will in his work in Paradise and which is 'a Commandment as to what plants he might partake of, and which one he might not touch'. On the other hand, Gregory paradoxically considers this very prohibiting law 'a material for free will to act upon' (*Or*. 38.12). Moreover, this acting of free will upon this material paradoxically ends with elimination of the latter:

> … not, however, because it was evil from the beginning when planted; nor was it forbidden because God grudged it to us … But it would have been good if partaken of at the proper time, for the tree was, according to my theory, Contemplation, upon which it is only safe for those who have reached maturity of habit (τοῖς τὴν ἕξιν τελεωτέροις) to enter. (*Ibid*.)

Let us follow the logical thread of Gregory's thought and attempt to reconstruct his concept of free will. Here it will be helpful to summarize his accounts of the dialectically opposed notions: autonomy of human will and heteronomy of divine intervention. According to Gregory, the first step takes heteronomy

[6] On Clement's doctrine of human free will see Peter (Panayiotis) Karavites, *Evil, Freedom, and the Road to Perfection in Clement of Alexandria* (Leiden, Boston and Köln, 1999). But it is obvious that Gregory's teaching is under the direct influence of another Alexandrian, Origen, who does not only have more elaborate doctrine of human free will co-operating with and trained by divine grace but also the concept of divine pedagogy in which an important role is assigned to the body (see Joseph Wilson Trigg, *Origen: The Bible and Philosophy in the Third-century Church* [London, 1985], 108-15). We can also find a similar providential function of the body in some Platonists. Thus, according to Augustine, Porphyry states that "God put the soul into the world that it might recognize the evils of matter, and return to the Father, and be forever emancipated from the polluting contact of matter" (Augustine, *City of God* X 30). The roots of this doctrine seem to go back to Plutarch's daemonology (see his *De facie*; also John Dillon, *The Middle Platonists: A Study of Platonism 80 B.C. to A.D. 220* [London, 1977], 217-8). However, even if Origen's thought is more indebted to the traditional Christian and biblical teaching of redemption than to the philosophical doctrine of spiritual purification (Jean Danielou, *Origène* [Paris, 1948], 265), the human body is still considered by him a 'secondary form of existence' acquiring its positive function as a tool of correction only after the fall of man (Anders-Christian Lund Jacobsen, 'Origen on the Human Body', in L. Perrone (ed.), *Origeniana Octava: Origen and the Alexandrian Tradition* I [Leuven, 2003], 651-6). On the contrary, as we have seen, Gregory places the body with its capacity of suffering and correcting free will already in God's initial plan of creation without admitting any necessity of fall for its activation. For him the body represents a constituent element of the human being assisting him in the cultivation of the virtue of free will in the pre-lapsarian state, since divine grace is by definition "a prize of virtue and not merely the gift of God" (*Or*. 2.17).

when God creates man and places him in Paradise. But the heteronomy at the same time steps back when in a body capable of suffering and in a Paradise requiring work it reveals a lack of sufficiency of the current state of man, thus creating a space for the activity of the human autonomy. Yet then it intervenes again in the form of the prohibiting law seemingly constraining the autonomy, but, in fact, instructing it for its full realization. So, in this complex dynamics heteronomy intervenes into human life with the aims: 1) to bring about autonomy as such, 2) to prevent it from its self-destruction and lead towards growing into 'maturity of habit'.

To answer the fully justified question, how heteronomy of the divine intervention leads to human autonomy instead of its abolition, first we should address another question: how Gregory understands the very nature of this heteronomy in reference to Christ's salvific activity. He expresses demand for it in a striking way: 'We needed an Incarnate God, a God put to death that we might live' (ἐδεήθημεν Θεοῦ σαρκομένου καὶ νεκρούμενου); 'God crucified' (Θεὸς σταυρούμενος) (*Or*. 45.28-9); 'God capable of suffering' (Θεὸς παθήτος) (*Or*. 30.1, 10). Then, he can find it logically quite tenable to assert unity of the person of the Savior and at the same time the fullness of human nature in him even more strongly than his Nicene predecessors had done.[7] Such a 'kenotic' view on the divine activity in relation to the creation sheds light on the logic of the above portrayed play of the divine activity intervening and at the same time abstaining from intervention: the only acceptable divine heteronomy is self-sacrificing heteronomy for the sake of human autonomy.

So Gregory envisages the assumption of fallen human will by Christ as corresponding to the primordial state of human freedom. Moreover, the former reveals at once the formation and the realization of the letter. Gregory offers a universal Christological-soteriological formula: 'What [Christ] was he set aside; what he was not he assumed' (*Or*. 37.2). And in such a radical mode of assumption of human nature he fully identifies himself with our lack of being and hence with the will conditioned by the demand to fulfill this lack. Now Christ can really have a will which desires to escape human suffering and death which has become fully his own. Indeed, this is how Gregory portrays Christ's agony at the garden of Gethsemane (*Or*. 30.12) and his forsakenness by God (*Or*. 30.5). He provides it with a broad theological reasoning which is worth to be quoted at length:

> As long then as I am disobedient and rebellious, both by denial of God and by my passions (πάθεσιν), so long Christ also is called disobedient on my account. But when all things shall be subdued unto Him on the one hand by acknowledgment of Him, and on

[7] See Christopher A. Beeley, 'Cyril of Alexandria and Gregory Nazianzen: Tradition and Complexity in Patristic Christology', *JECS* 17 (2009), 381-419, 393; Frederick Norris, *Faith Gives Fullness to Reasoning: The Five Theological Orations of Gregory of Nazianzen* (Leiden, 1991), 181.

the other by a reformation, then He Himself also will have fulfilled His submission, bringing me whom He has saved to God. For this, according to my view, is the subjection of Christ: namely, the fulfilling of the Father's Will. But as the Son subjects all to the Father, so does the Father to the Son; the one by His Work, the other by His good pleasure, as we have already said. And thus He Who subjects presents to God that which he has subjected, making our condition His own. Of the same kind, it appears to me, is the expression, 'My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?' It was not He who was forsaken either by the Father, or by His own Godhead, as some have thought, as if It were afraid of the Passion, and therefore withdrew Itself from Him in His Sufferings (for who compelled Him either to be born on earth at all, or to be lifted up on the Cross?). But as I said, He was in His own Person representing us. For we were the forsaken and despised before, but now by the Sufferings of Him who could not suffer, we were taken up and saved. Similarly, He makes His own our folly and our transgressions (τὴν ἀφροσύνην ἡμῶν καὶ τὸ πλημμελές); and says what follows in the Psalm, for it is very evident that the Twenty-first Psalm refers to Christ.

These passages lucidly demonstrate that Gregory's concept of free will is formed in the soteriological framework of Scripture, which also serves as a ground to his Trinitarian theology. We see here again that his view on human free will makes sense only in the light of the interrelation with God. This makes clear both positive and negative possible effects of the exercise of free will by man. If the positive effect follows the obedient acceptance of the divine will and law, then the problem of radical evil results from 'our transgressions', which are expressed in 'resistance' (ἀντιπαλαιόω) and 'struggle' (ἀντιπίπτω) against God (*Or*. 30.12). In this case 'human will', ἀνθροπικὴ θελήμα, degrades into 'passions'. But even this rebellious will is response to the embodied state of man created by God. In other words, man cannot rebel against God without the help of God. The initial demand for freedom and emancipation is already provoked by the state created by God. What remains for a pious and obedient man is not to extinguish this potentially negative impulse, but to give it proper orientation which achieves its full realization in deification imagined by Gregory in a striking way: 'God may, to use a bold expression, hold converse with us as God; being united to us, and known by us; and that perhaps to the same extent as He already knows those who are known to Him' (*Or*. 45.3).

In conclusion I can state that Gregory understands the realization of freedom as a movement from the freedom of a perhaps neutral moral character to freedom in God. Yet, in this concept not two different kinds of freedom are presented, regarded as having different values in the eyes of God, but Gregory assumes only one freedom with its possibility to be alienated from itself due to its nature as gift: every gift is given but in such a way as to set us free from feeling our indebtedness to its giver. So, we can use free will freely to have a good not only as given but also as 'cultivated by our own choice'. Then, the obedience to the divine law and authority would mean nothing else than free recognition of the giver in the act of thanksgiving for the gift which would signal the 'maturity of habit' – freedom from fear to lose freedom.

In view of these considerations, I end with a brief remark on the possible direction towards which Gregory's concept of free will might contribute to the modern debates on reason and faith. Gregory might have nothing against the phrase designated by Kant as a 'motto of Enlightenment': 'Have courage to use your own reason'. He might just add: 'And have courage to thank God for that gift'.

Gregory the Theologian, *Logos* and Literature

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Abstract

One of the main concerns of Gregory's orations against Julian is the emperor's *Edictum de professoribus*. Susanna Elm's work persuasively demonstrates that Gregory's argument against Julian is secular. Julian claims that, because the school authors (Homer, Demosthenes, Herodotus *et alii*) were religious men, in order to appreciate them appropriately one must worship the same gods. If Christians think that these ancients were fools, and they must be if they get the central question of God wrong, why would they study them? Anthony Kaldellis cogently argues that Gregory does not answer Julian's claim and that this is a source of continuing anxiety for later Christian Byzantine *literati*.

However, in the same orations Gregory has some remarkable play with the word Λόγος. This fact is mentioned in scholarship but not much engaged. But it is in a theology of the *Logos*, if anywhere, that one might find the resources for a more adequate response to Julian's argument for the integrity of religion and culture. As a result a consideration of the Λόγος in Gregory's thought has the possibility of answering Julian's criticism. The Λόγος, the One who gives form and rationality to all the κόσμος, is known better by the Christians who know him intimately in his Incarnation than by the pagans who see the Λόγος, as it were, *ex umbris et imaginibus*. In this essay I will argue that the resources for a response to Julian's argument in letter thirty-six can be found both in Gregory's play with the word Λόγος in Orations four and five and in his more fully developed theology of the Λόγος.

In the fall of 362, Gregory Nazianzen's brother Caesarios returned from the court of Julian and informed him more fully about the Emperor's anti-Christian policies and intentions. The thirty-two year old priest, well-educated and enjoying his *otium philosophicum*, settled down that winter to write two orations against Julian that were, as John McGuckin writes, 'literary exercises, probably never delivered at anything more than an informal reading.'[1] He was concerned by Julian's rescript from that same summer of 362 that prohibited Christians from official chairs of rhetoric as well as Julian's claim that Christians could not correctly read pagan Greek classics. In his later years, Gregory included

[1] John McGuckin, *Saint Gregory of Nazianzus: An Intellectual Biography* (Crestwood, New York, 2001), 119. Neil McLynn sees much more bravado in this act than McGuckin does. Neil McLynn, 'Being a Christian Professor in Late Antiquity: Julian's School Law Reconsidered', presented at the colloquium for Gillian Clark, University of Bristol, 2 August, 2011.

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these orations among his works that he hoped would be read by later Greeks as an eloquent rejoinder to Julian's criticisms of Christians, as indeed they were.[2]

Until recently, most discussions of *Orations* four and five were concerned with providing historical background to the texts, that is, they were particularly anxious to identify classical references, and little attention was given them in the Anglophone academy at all.[3] The only English translation of these orations, for instance, was published in the nineteenth century in a collection of ancient texts on Julian.[4] However, two scholars teaching in American universities, Susanna Elm and Anthony Kaldellis, have given these orations a good deal of attention in the past decade and have developed sophisticated intrepretations of Gregory's purpose and accomplishment.[5]

In a series of articles, Elm demonstrates that Gregory's argument in *Oration* four is secular and not distinctively Christian. That is, it makes an argument

[2] Gregory has always been highly esteemed for his epideictic oratory. Eight hundred years later Michael Psellos wrote glowingly of Gregory's epideictic orations. 'Since there are three categories of the rhetorical art, Demosthenes has the highest reputation in the forensic genre, and in parliamentary oratory is cleverer than the rest; but when asked to give a panegyric, he is less good than in his other work and than other writers. But Gregory, when compared to him, not only excels Demosthenes' linguistic gifts in the panegyric form, but not even the Heavenly Trumpet [Chryososotom], as we call him, can hold his own against him in this sphere', 'The Characteristics of Gregory the Theologian, the Great Basil, Chrysostom and Gregory of Nyssa' (PG 122, 901C8-904A6), translation in Brian E. Daley, SJ, *Gregory of Nazianzus*, The Early Church Fathers (New York, 2006), 27.

[3] Rudolf Asmus, 'Die Invektiven des Gregorius von Nazianz im Lichte der Werke des Kaisers Julian', *ZKG* 31 (1910), 325-67; Jean Bernardi, *Grégoire de Nazianze: Discours 4-5*. With intro., trans., and comm. (Paris, 1983); Alois Kurmann, *Gregor von Nazianz Oratio 4 Gegen Julian: Ein Kommentar* (Basel, 1988); Leonardo Lugaresi, *Gregorio di Nazianzo: Orazione IV*. With intro., trans., and comm. (Florence, 1993); *ibid*., *Gregorio di Nazianzo: Orazione V*. With intro., trans., and comm. (Florence, 1997); Luigi Previale, 'Teoria e Prassi del Panegirico Bizantino', *Emerita Boletin de Linguistica y Filologia Clasica* 17 (1949), 72-105; Jennifer Nimmo Smith, *A Christian's Guide to Greek Culture: The Pseudo-Nonnus Commentaries on Sermons 4, 5, 39 and 43 by Gregory Nazianzus*. With intro., text, and comm. (Liverpool, 2001).

[4] C.W. King, *Julian the Emperor. Containing Gregory Nazianzen's Two Invectives and Libanius' Monody with Julian's Extant Thesophical Works* (London, 1888).

[5] Susanna Elm, 'Gregory of Nazianzus' 'Life' of Julian Revisited (Or. 4 and 5): Divine Decree and Imperial Enactment', in *From the Tetrarchs to Theodosius. The Long Fourth Century. Festschrift John F. Matthews*, ed. Scott McGill, Cristiana Sogno and Edward Watts (Cambridge, 2010), 169-80; *ead*.,'Hellenism and Historiography: Gregory of Nazianzus and Julian in Dialogue', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 33 (2003), 493-515; *ead*., 'Historiographic Identities: Julian, Gregory of Nazianzus, and the Forging of Orthodoxy', *Journal of Ancient Christianity* 7 (2003), 263-80; *ead*., 'Orthodoxy and the True Philosophic Life: Julian and Gregory of Nazianzus', *SP* 37 (2001), 69-85. Her book, *Sons of Hellenism, Fathers of the Church: Emperor Julian, Gregory of Nazianzus, and the Vision of Rome* (Berkeley, 2012). See also her paper 'Laughter in Christian Polemics', *SP* 63 (2013), 195-202. Anthony Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium: The Transformations of Greek Identity and the Reception of the Classical Tradition* (Cambridge, 2007). Note: in her new book which was just published as the proofs of this article came in, Elm cogently argues that Gregory was particularly concerned about the Eunomians in *Oration* 4, and that this inter ecclesial debate is the lens through which this oration is best viewed.

whose premises are acceptable regardless of one's religious beliefs. Further, at least on the surface, it concludes that discussions about literature are distinct and separate from discussions about God. I will attempt to encapsulate Elm's argument in a few sentences: In fact it is Julian who has the religious argument. Julian claims that Greek *literature* and Greek *religion* are inseparable. Gregory, on the other hand, distinguishes between the Greek *religion* and the Greek *nation*. Ἕλλην, Gregory argues, is a polysemus homonym and Julian has failed to make a distinction between its two most important significations of nation and religion.[6] Just because the authors of the classics spoke the Greek language and professed a pagan religion does not mean that the two are inseparable. If, as Julian claims, they were inseparable then Christians would rightly be excluded from literature.[7]

Anthony Kaldellis develops Elm's argument in his book *Hellenism in Byzantium*. Kaldellis revisits Julian's rescript of 362 and cogently argues that Gregory's secular argument does not address Julian's concerns about the integration of religion and education. I argue in this paper that Gregory responds indirectly to Julian in the form of a seemingly light-hearted play on λόγος, a Greek word with a plethora of meanings.

The most enjoyable instances of this word play involve the alpha-privative. So, for instance, Gregory tries to demonstrate Julian's stupidity, his ἀλογία, in a wickedly humorous way.[8] But this humor serves a purpose and the contrast between the foolishness of Julian and the wisdom of the Word is drawn out to show who is the real patron of culture: after declaring that he desires to offer

[6] 4. 103.2. Gregory will use this same tactic in his *Theological Orations*. For an examination of Gregory's understanding of language see Frederick Norris, 'Gregory Nazianzen: Constructing and Constructed by Scripture', in Paul M. Blowers (ed.), *The Bible in Greek Christian Antiquity* (Notre Dame, 1997). See also *id*. (ed. and trans.), and Lionel Wickham (ed.), *Faith Gives Fullness to Reasoning: The Five Theological Orations of Gregory Nazianzen*, SVigChr 13 (Leiden, 1991), 33-5, for this same point in Gregory's debate against the Eunomians in his *Theological Orations*.

[7] *Oration* 4.104.

[8] 'Dieser Kaiser [Julian] … ist nicht σοφός sondern σοφιστής, ja σοφιστὴς τῆς κακίας (27,11), der nur σοφὸς εἰς τὸ κακοποιῆσαι ist (27,1). Seine grenzenlose Dummheit ist aber mehr also nur Mangel an Einsicht, sie ist ein moralischer, religiöser Fehler; seine Dummheit drückt sich in seiner ἀσέβεια aus. Die zwei Eigenschaften zusammen charakterisieren Julian erst ganz: er ist σοφὸς τὴν κακαίαν καὶ περιττὸς τὴν ἀσέβειαν (57,2ff.), und wird darum angesprochen als εὐηθέστατε καὶ ἀσεβέστατε καὶ ἀπαιδευτότατε τὰ μεγάλα (67,1f.) … Sarkastisch nennt er in 6,12f. Julian ὁ σοφὸς ἡμῖν βασιλεύς τε καὶ νομοθέτης, der am Anfang der Herrschaft schon seine ἀλογία verkündet (6,14), indem er sich gewalttätig an den λόγοι vergeht (6,15.). Auch 101,9ff. brandmarkt das Vergehen gegen die λόγοι mit dem gleichen Sarkasmus: ἵν' ᾧ μάλιστα φρονεῖν ᾧου δεῖν, τούτῳ μάλιστα λάθῃς ἐνασχημονῶν καὶ ἀλογίαν κατακρινόμενος', A. Kurmann, *Kommentar* (1988), 25, all of his references are to *Oration Four*. 'L'ironia nei confronti dell'intelligenza di Giuliano è un *leitmotiv* di questa orazione', L. Lugaresi, *Gregorio di Nazianzo* (1993), 347. See also, S. Elm, 'Historiographic Identities' (2003), 278 and *ead*., 'Laughter in Christian Polemics' (2013). See also A. Kurmann, *Kommentar* (1988), 15 on Julian's τέχνη instead of λογία. See also *Oration* 4.112 where he compares Julian to an ape who imitates humans but is obviously ἄλογος.

up a sacrifice of words, Gregory encapsulates his entire *Oration* in a long sentence that uses the word λόγος nine times in four very different ways:

Τίς ἀκοὴ τῷ λόγῳ συμπροθυμηθήσεται; Καὶ γὰρ οὐ τῷ Λόγῳ μόνον ἡ δία τοῦ λόγου χάρις οἰκειοτάτη, μετὰ τῶν ἄλλων ὧν ὀνομάζεται καὶ ταύτῃ χαίροντι τῇ προσηγορίᾳ διαφερόντως καὶ τῇ δυνάμει τῆς κλήσεως, ἀλλὰ κἀκείνῳ πρέπουσα δίκη, λόγῳ κολάζεσθαι ὑπὲρ τῆς εἰς λόγους παρανομίας, ὧν κοινῶν ὄντων λογικοῖς ἅπασιν, ὡς ἰδίων αὐτοῦ χριστιανοῖς ἐφθόνησεν, ἀλογώτατα περὶ λόγων διανοηθεὶς ὁ πάντων, ὡς ᾤετο, λογιώτατος.

What ear will zealously share in the (1) *oration*? Indeed not only is an action of praise by means of an (2) oration appropriate for the (3) *Word* (Who, among all of the other names by which he is called, especially rejoices in this name and in the power of this epithet), but also it is a suitable condemnation for him to be punished by means of an (4) oration on account of his crime against (5) culture; he who denied Christians' *culture* as if *culture* were his own (though it is common to all [6] reasonable beings). He was the one who had the most (7) stupid thoughts about (8) culture, he who considered himself the most (9) reasonable one of all! [9]

These uses of the word λόγος cause an association of the things signified. Instead of the sharp distinction between language and its content, Gregory seems to blend the realities signified by his use of the word λόγος. The listener begins to associate four distinct realities that are signified by the one word, λόγος. Those four are: discourse (the first, second, and fourth instances of λόγος), the Second Person of the Trinity (the third instance), literature or culture (the fifth and eighth instances), and rationality (the sixth, seventh and ninth instances).[10] By placing these different uses of λόγος so closely together in the text, Gregory draws the listener to see their intimate relation. They are no longer thought of as merely homonyms, but rather the meanings blend together, suggest each other and in this way a sort of circumincession develops. An apt discourse (λόγος) is fitting for the Word (Λόγος) whom we can approach by our reason (λόγος). It is right that the Son, who takes great pleasure in being called Λόγος, should care about his rational creatures (λογικοί) who are, of course, involved in culture (λόγοι). And so the oration itself serves as an action of praise to the Λόγος and as a condemnation of Julian (ἀλογία) who has sinned against culture,[11] which is so dear to Gregory's heart.[12]

[9] *Oration* 4.4.4-11. Text from Bernardi, *Discours 4-5*. This and all other translations are my own.

[10] 'Tutto il capitolo è costruito su un gioco di parole attorno alle varie accezioni di *logos*: non si tratta di uno sterile sfoggio di bravura retorica, ma di un elemento portante della tesi di fondo di questa orazione', L. Lugaresi, *Gregorio di Nazianzo* (1993), 225. 'Hier braucht Gregor *Logos*, weil er sich mit den λόγοι der Bildung und Literatur, und mit dem Verbot Julians für die Christen, an diesem Gut Anteil zu haben, auseinandersetzt', A. Kurmann, *Kommentar* (1988), 46.

[11] Understanding, with Kurmann, the fifth and eighth instances of λόγος in this paragraph to refer to both literature and the broader elements of education or culture ('Bildung'), A. Kurmann, *Kommentar* (1988), 46.

[12] 5.7-8. See, for instance, *Oration* 4.100.12-8 where Gregory claims to have embraced literature before all other things.

Indeed, Gregory had an almost religious fervor for classical literature.[13] This love for the classics can be better understood through his sense of the deep involvement of the Λόγος in λόγοι or culture.[14] For Gregory, Greek culture and παιδεία are not unimportant to the Second Person of the Trinity. Indeed, Gregory argues, the Son's pleasure in being named the Word leads us to consider that He values Greek culture.[15] Culture (λόγοι)[16] is the possession of all reasonable beings, and Julian cannot take it away from them. It is ironic that in denying the Λόγος, the Second Person of the Trinity who is the source of all reason, Julian demonstrates how ἄλογος he is.[17] Through his word play, then, Gregory has intimately bound literature, his oration, and rationality to the Λόγος in particular and to the Christian religion in general.

Now, Gregory's understanding of the Λόγος is not distinctive in the Greek theological tradition. Gregory speaks of the Λόγος, that is, the Son of the Father, in ways that align with the earlier *Logos* theology of the Apologists. Twice in *Oration* four alone Gregory refers to the Son as δημιουργὸς Λόγος [18] and at another point declares that the structure of the universe is clear to the Λόγος, but not to us.[19] This is a hint of a *Logos* theology close to the Stoic concept of σπερματικὸς λόγος that was modified and developed by Philo, Justin Martyr and Clement of Alexandria.[20] The Λόγος as the principle of rationality of the κόσμος is evident in *Oration* four, paragraph 106 where Gregory depicts the Word as the demiurge and artist. No believer in patent-law,

[13] 'Pour Grégoire l'amour des lettres et le désir de Dieu ne font qu'un: il veut 'consacrer son verbe au Verbe', mettre les *logoi* au service du *Logos*. Le lectuer moderne pourrait être tenté de ne voir ici qu'un assez mauvais jeu de mots; pour Grégoire, c'est la réalité de toute sa vie', Pierre-Thomas Camelot, O.P., 'Amour des lettres et désir de Dieu chez Saint Grégoire de Nazianze: Les logoi aus service du Logos', in *Littérature et Religion,* Mélanges offerts à Monsieur le Chanoine Joseph Coppin, *Mélanges de science religieuse*. Tome suppleméntaire (Lille, 1966), 23-30, 23.

[14] See *Oration* 12.1.

[15] The Second Person of the Trinity's delight in being called 'the Word' over all other names is repeated in *Carm.* 2.2.5.1-6. See Maria Grazia Moroni, *Nicobulo* jr. *al padre* [carm. II, 2, 4], *Nicobulo* sr. *al figlio* [carm. II, 2, 5]: *Una discussione in famiglia*, Poeti Cristiani 6 (Pisa, 2006), 174; Andrew Hofer, O.P., *Herald of the Word: Gregory of Nazianzen Evoking Christ*, Ph.D. dissertation (University of Notre Dame, 2010), 71-2, 117. See also *Oration* 27.5.28-32.

[16] When speaking of literature or culture, Gregory tends to use the plural of *logos*: 'Es ist zu beachten, dass Gregor in diesen Abschnitten den Plural, οἱ λόγοι, braucht, wo das Word 'die Literatur' heisst, von der Julian die Christen fernhalten will (4,9; 5,4.9; 6,2.16.17.24; 100, 1.17; 101,2.12; 102,1; 103,2.4; 104,7)', A. Kurmann, *Kommentar* (1988), 46.

[17] 'Il pourrait bien y avoir là l'écho d'un mot présumptueux du *Misopogon*: "tous me proclamaient brave, intelligent (συνετός), juste (*Misopogon*, 360 c)". C'est un détail propre à ridiculiser Julien que Grégoire retient surtout de son texte', J. Bernardi, *Grégoire de Nazianze* (1983), 47.

[18] At paragraph 78 Gregory uses a series of predicate nouns and noun clauses to describe the Son: … τὸν … δημιουργόν … τὸν τοῦ μεγάλου Πατρὸς καὶ Υἱὸν καὶ Λόγον (78.2-3); δημιουργὸς Λόγος (106.16).

[19] 12.17.

[20] Alois Grillmeier, *Jesus der Christus im Glauben der Kirche I: Von der Apostolischen Zeit bis zum Konzil von Chalcedon (451)*, 3rd ed. (Freiburg, 1990), 202-7, 225-31, 260-6.

Gregory argues that the various φωναί and τέχναι of the world belong to those who speak those languages and practice those arts rather than those who invented them. In addition to possessing the property of universal accessibility, each art and human discovery can be thought of as an instrument that produces a certain pitch. The various instruments participate in a broader harmony that is arranged by the Word. 'The Word', Gregory writes, 'grants all of the elements of human culture to anyone who wishes to partake of them, thus binding together our common life by communion and charity, and making it more civilized.'[21]

We find in *Oration* four, then, an undeveloped *Logos* theology that gives coherence to the various aspects of human culture. It is here that we find resources for a more adequate response to Julian's argument for the integrity of religion and culture, that is, of the need for readers of the pagan classics to be pagans. Gregory claims that if the Christians know the Λόγος intimately through his Incarnation and abiding presence in the Church, then they have the hermeneutical key for reading the pagan classics; for it was the Λόγος, the principle of all rationality, that was responsible for anything true in those pagan texts. This cannot be an Augustinian understanding of pagan culture and religion in which any cult and inspiration of authors is demonic *simpliciter*.[22] Rather, it is the *Logos* theology of Philo, Justin Martyr, Clement and Origen.

Gregory, the compiler of Origen's *Philokalia*, clearly evinces this tradition in his *Second Theological Oration*.

Οὕτως ὁ ἐκ Θεοῦ λόγος, καὶ πᾶσι σύμφυτος, καὶ πρῶτος ἐν ἡμῖν νόμος, καὶ πᾶσι συνημμένος, ἐπὶ Θεὸν ἡμᾶς ἀνήγαγεν ἐκ τῶν ὁρωμένων.

Thus the *Logos* which comes from God and is connatural with all things, and [acts] as a first law for us and is inherent in all things, leads us towards God from things that are seen. [23]

Though Gregory does not use the terms, we can see here Justin's (and the Stoic) distinction between the σπερματικὸς λόγος and the σπέρματα τοῦ λόγου. In Justin and Gregory's theology, the pre-incarnate Son is the rational principle or σπερματικὸς λόγος of the κόσμος. The σπέρματα τοῦ λόγου are human participants in the σπερματικὸς λόγος.[24] This σπερματικὸς λόγος is the source of all truth and wisdom. A human being has truth and wisdom only through participation in this Λόγος.

[21] ὁ τεχνίτης καὶ δημιουργὸς Λόγος … πάντα δὲ εἰς μέσον προὔθηκε πᾶσι τοῖς βουλομένοις, τῷ κοινωνικῷ καὶ φιλανθρώπῳ συνδέων τὸν βίον ἡμῖν καὶ ποιῶν ἡμερώτερον (*Oration* 4.106.14-8).

[22] See *City of God* books 8-10.

[23] *Oration* 28.16.22-5. Paul Gallay and Maurice Jourjon (eds and trans), *Grégoire de Nazianze: Discours 27-31 (Discours Théologiques)*, SC 250 (Paris, 1978).

[24] A. Grillmeier, *Jesus der Christus* (1990), 205.

Thus Gregory claims that the elements and structure of the universe are clear to the Λόγος, but not to us.[25] Now, Gregory does not, in *Oration* four, develop a Trinitarian theology or Christology, nor does he explicitly develop a *Logos* theology. But we can see traces of his understanding of the Λόγος that continue this Apologetic tradition scattered throughout his works. While discussing the names of the Second Person of the Trinity in the *Fourth Theological Oration*, Gregory avers that everything exists by means of the Word.[26] This Word is the foundation of the world's rational structure. Further, the Word is invisible; it is only when he takes on flesh that he becomes visible.[27]

In his *Fifth Theological Oration* Gregory tells us that the Word helps him understand that the Spirit is fully God and in his now familiar trope he uses a pun on λόγος:

στῆναι δ' ὅμως ἀναγκαῖον πρὸς τοὺς λογολέσχας, καὶ μὴ ἐρήμην ἁλῶναι, Λόγον ἔχοντας καὶ συνηγοροῦντας Πνεύματι.

Still, it is necessary for those who have the Word and who defend the Spirit to hold those chatterboxes in check and not to be defeated by default.[28]

Those who rightly understand the Holy Spirit to be fully divine, and therefore of the same substance as the Father and the Son, have the Word and must hold those heretical chatterboxes in check (στῆναι … ἀναγκαῖον πρὸς τοὺς λογολέσχας).[29] Λογολέσχας is a rare postclassical word and Gregory's *Oration* is one of the earliest recorded uses of it.[30] Gregory is stretching himself to make this word play; and a listener, hearing such a rare and modern word in the middle of good Attic prose, would be called to attention.[31]

This theology of the Λόγος allows Gregory to employ the word play which clearly ties religion and culture, specifically the primacy of the Word and his concern with λόγοι or culture. The Λόγος, the One who gives form and rationality to all the κόσμος, is known better by Christians who know him intimately in his Incarnation than by pagans who see the Λόγος, as it were, *ex umbris et imaginibus*. And so, Christians can actually read the classics better than pagans because they have the Word. At the same time, the classics are a necessary or helpful aid in the journey toward God. Though their vision of the supernatural

[25] *Oration* 12.17.

[26] Τί γάρ ἐστιν, ὃ μὴ Λόγῳ συνέστηκεν; *Oration* 30.20.14-5.

[27] *Oration* 30.10.13-6.

[28] *Oration* 31.13.3-5, Greek text in P. Gallay and M. Jourjon (eds and trans.), *Grégoire de Nazianze* (1978). I translate ἐρήμην here in the sense of an undefended action. See Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott (revised by Henry Stuart Jones), *A Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford, 1996), 687, ἐρῆμος III.

[29] *Oration* 31.13.3-5.

[30] See G.W.H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford, 1961), 807.

[31] Gregory had many other Attic words to choose from to convey the same idea: λαλεῖν, θρυλεῖν, φλυαρεῖν, ἀδολεσχεῖν, πολυστομεῖν, φλυεῖν, φληναφᾶν, στωμύλλεσθαι.

is limited, their acuity in perceiving the natural world helps Christians better understand things that are seen and, perhaps, the Λόγος itself that is in those realities.

Why then didn't Gregory simply say this explicitly? I suspect that Gregory knew that Julian, the apostate, would not have accepted this Christian view and for that reason pursued the brilliant secular argument to which Elm has recently drawn our attention. However, it remains the case that, as Kaldellis has argued, Gregory's secular argument does not address Julian's most cogent and religious argument for the unity of religion and culture. A secular approach simply cannot do that. But a theological argument can, and this theological argument, which takes Christian revelation as its premise, is suggested by Gregory in his play with the word λόγος.

The Second Half of the Fourth Century

Marius Victorinus' Remembrance of the Nicene Council

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ABSTRACT

As a Neo-Nicene who takes up the cause of the *homoousios* and tries to defend the cause of Nicaea in the late 350s against coalescing parties of Anti-Nicene theology, we would expect Marius Victorinus to know the details of the 325 council, and to clearly reproduce the 325 creed of Nicaea somewhere within the lengthy four books of *Against Arius*. But we do not find it anywhere within *Against Arius* or his other trinitarian treatises, making us wonder whether or not he actually knows it and has it at hand, even though he speaks at length twice in *Against Arius* about the significance of the 325 council.

In *Against Arius* Victorinus quotes the 381-sounding formula of 'one *ousia* in three *hypostases*,' showing that he has an amazing grasp of currents in Eastern theology circa 362, but it is not clear whether or not Victorinus actually knows very much about the Nicene council or if Victorinus just has the *ideal* of Nicaea in his historical memory. He possibly possessed the text of the 325 creed, if he could quote the condemnations of Arius mentioned in the creed that had become commonplaces. But to quote a creed that had an embarrassing modalist element would certainly serve against his interest, especially when among his stated opponents in arguing for the Neo-Nicene cause in the 350s are old Nicene figures such as Marcellus and Photinus. It was better to recreate a certain memory of Nicaea as a rallying standard of orthodoxy in the trinitarian definition finally emerging after the high-handed Anti-Nicene efforts that culminated in the brief Homoian supremacy of the last years of the 350s decade.

Midway through the decade of the 350s, the city of Rome heard of the conversion and public profession of one its most favored rhetor-philosophers, Marius Victorinus; the aristocracy of the city, still largely pagan, was truly shocked. Augustine would later immortalize Victorinus' conversion in book eight of his *Confessions*.[1] But upon his conversion very late in life, when he would have been around seventy years old, Marius Victorinus committed his remaining

[1] An extended panegyric in *Confessions* VIII,ii,3-VIII,v,10, one of three stories Augustine tells which had made such a huge impression upon him while he was in the throes of pre-conversion *Anfechtung*. For Augustine the moral example of Victorinus' conversion and public profession thirty years before was something he may well have emulated in his own conversion, which makes von Harnack's appellation of Victorinus, 'the Augustine before Augustine', all the more apt. See Eric Plumer, 'The Influence of Marius Victorinus on Augustine's Commentary on Galatians', *SP* 33 (1997), 221-8.

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years and profound abilities to theological study and commentary, throwing himself into the decades-long 'Arian'-Nicene Trinitarian Controversy, and writing his own highly-original trinitarian treatises as polemical works against currents of Anti-Nicene theology.[2] Working within the common Western tradition of 'Neo-Nicenes' of the 340s and 350s, Victorinus lends his new-found theological commitment to the defense and definition of the doctrine of the *homoousios*, though, like other Neo-Nicenes such as Phoebadius of Agen, Gregory of Elvira, Lucifer of Calaris, and Hilary of Poitiers, he does so within the framework of a Western 'miahypostatic' tradition.[3]

In his chief work, the now-named books of *Against Arius*, Victorinus engages an entire array of non-Nicene and anti-Nicene opponents, beginning with Book I, a running commentary on New Testament proof-texts – especially the *Gospel of John* – which could be used to prove the full divinity and consubstantiality of the Son.[4] And in Books II through IV, Victorinus continues his agenda of refuting the arguments of his various anti-Nicene opponents who favored non-Nicene doctrinal definition of the Son's ontological identity and unity with the Father.[5]

Victorinus' entrance into the 'Arian-Nicene' Trinitarian Controversy came in the Latin West of the decade of the mid-350s, when the council held at Nicaea thirty years before and its orthodoxy of trinitarian definition had become a rallying point. Most important from Nicaea and its orthodoxy was the doctrine of the *homoousios*, which Victorinus writes about and defends relentlessly.

[2] Homoian, Homoiousian, and Marcellan opponents; the only trajectory of Anti-Nicene theology Victorinus did not engage with during his last decade of life would have been Anomoeans. The attestation of Victorinus' Western Latin naming of such opponents as Marcellus, Photinus and 'Patripassians' is overlooked in importance, especially if some scholars wish to keep Victorinus within a Western-Marcellan, miahypostatic tradition.

[3] Athanasius is included within these Western Latin figures because of a Western Rome-Alexandria genre juxtaposed with the Eastern, typically Cappadocian, genre. See 'The Fourth Century as Trinitarian Canon', in *Christian Origins: Theology, Rhetoric and Community*, edited by Lewis Ayres and Gareth Jones (New York, 1998), 47-67. For definition of the distinctions between miahypostatic and dyohypostatic theology see Joseph T. Lienhard, 'The 'Arian' Controversy: Some Categories Reconsidered', *Theological Studies* 48 (1987), 415-37, as well as Lienhard's recent work *Contra Marcellum: Marcellus of Ancyra and Fourth-Century Theology* (Washington, D.C., 1999). By Western 'miahypostatic' I am distinguishing between this and the Eastern 'dyohypostatic' tradition. This new movement to retrieve the *homoousios* was solely a Western, miahypostatic camp, and 'Neo-Nicene' used in this sense is far more specific than the wider category of 'neunizänisch' in recent German scholarship. See Christoph Markschies, 'Was ist lateinischer Neunizänismus? Ein Vorschlag für eine Antwort', *ZAC* 1 (1997), 73-95.

[4] Book IA that is, which ends with an extended, elaborate creed in IA 47,1-48, as if he had finished his polemic goal (CSEL 83/I, 139-41). Book II begins with a brief creedal statement, in II 1,5-12 (CSEL 83/I, 168), and then concludes with a creedal profession about consubstantiality that includes the statement that 'this is the faith of Nicaea', in II 12,22-37 (CSEL 83/I, 190).

[5] This included Victorinus arguing for consubstantiality of the Spirit in Books III and IV of *Against Arius*.

The legacy, or memory, of the council of Nicaea itself though was rather more problematic for theologians in the Latin West. Nicaea was preceded by another council, Antioch, earlier in the year 325, which seemed to be trial council for what many may have desired as the outcome of Nicaea. The three bishops who refused to accept its statement of faith were excommunicated, but only provisionally in view of the impending 'great and holy synod in Ancyra' in short months' time.[6] Nicaea was convened and held, then, from late May until the end of July of that year. No Acta survive from this council probably because none were taken down, so it is difficult to reconstruct what actually took place there, apart from the creed it adopted and the anathemas appended, as well as discussion held about setting the correct date for Easter each calendar year, and the terms upon which the Melitian schism could be settled.

Even the number of bishops present at Nicaea was something no one could agree on, whether 270, or more than 250, or nearly/about 300, or more; the actual number can reliably be taken to have been between 250 and 300.[7] Though Ossius of Cordova, Constantine's appointed representative, presided over the council (as he had recently done at Antioch), the composition of the council was largely Eastern. As R.P.C. Hanson summarized it, it was 'more likely that the great majority of Western bishops did not know what all the fuss created by the Arian Controversy was about, and saw no strong reason to make a long journey to a Greek-speaking city for so uncertain a purpose.'[8]

The outcome of the council, the Nicene creed itself, may have dealt with questions that were in dispute, but the creed itself was a mine of potential

[6] Theodotus of Laodicea, Narcissus of Neronias and Eusebius of Palestinian Caesarea. Apparently there were three reasons for changing the venue to Nicaea instead of Ancyra: 'It would be easier for the bishops from Italy and the other parts of Europe to reach Nicaea; the air was better there; and it would be a nearer place for the Emperor to reach (from Nicomedia).' R.P.C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God: The Arian Controversy 318-381* (Edinburgh, 1988), 152.

[7] 'We cannot calculate the number of bishops present at the Council with complete accuracy, because the earliest witnesses give us only round figures and it is the later ones who provide factitious accuracy. One of the earliest witnesses must be the statement of Eustathius of Antioch given to us in its original form by Theodoret … Eustathius says that about 270 bishops were present, though he could not calculate the exact numbers. A version of the Creed of Nicaea was attached to the *Letter of the Council of Nicaea to the Church of Alexandria*, and a short introductory sentence to this Creed describes the number of bishops present as 'nearly 300'. Eusebius of Caesarea in his *Vita Constantini* (III 8) says 'more than 250'. Athanasius in his *Historia Arianorum* 66 says 'about 300' attended, though in his later Letter to the Bishops of Africa he gives the number as 318. Hilary in his *Collectio Antiariana* says 'three hundred or more'. By about 370 the conventional number of 318, the same number as the men of Abraham's household whom he led out to rescue Lot (*Gen*. 14:14), had been accepted everywhere, and this became traditional. Several other legends accumulated round this Council in course of time. Ambrose (*loc. cit*.) already calls it an 'oracle' ('*oraculum*') … All that we can say is that the number of bishops at the Council of Nicaea probably fell between 250 and 300.' R. Hanson, *Search* (1988), 155-6.

[8] R. Hanson, *Search* (1988), 156.

confusion. The creed specified that the Son was 'from the *ousia* of the Father', and yet it also adamantly condemned anyone who said that the Son was of a different *hypostasis*. This semantic confusion about the technical-linguistic terminology for divine substance would create problems for some time to come in coming decades of the Arian-Nicene conflicts, what we now term overall as the Trinitarian Controversy of the fourth century.

There is a curious silence about the creed of Nicaea in the decades following the council.[9] The creed produced by the council was slow to gain relevance in the Latin West until the 350s, when it became a rallying point in the Neo-Nicene cause.[10] Athanasius, for example, did not find Nicene theological language necessary for articulating orthodox trinitarian teaching until the publication ca. 352/53 of his *De decretis*. Hilary of Poitiers famously admitted that he had never heard the Nicene creed until right before he was about to go into exile in Phrygia *ca*. 356 (which probably meant at the Western councils of Arles in 353 and Milan in 355). In Milan in 355 Eusebius of Vercelli had offered the creed to the gathered bishops to sign until an emotional outburst by Valens of Mursa stopped him. It would not be until the Homoian supremacy at the Western council of Ariminum in 359 that Western bishops would begin to

[9] 'within ten years of the Council of Nicaea all the leading supporters of the creed of that Council had been deposed or disgraced or exiled – Athanasius, Eustathius and Marcellus, and with them a large number of other bishops who are presumed to have belonged to the same school of thought, Asclepas of Gaza, Paul of Constantinople, Euphration of Balanea, Cymatius of Paltus, Carterius of Antarados, Eutropius of Adrianople, and his successor to that see, Lucius.' R. Hanson, *Search* (1988), 274-75.

[10] See Jörg Ulrich, *Die Anfänge der abendländischen Rezeption des Nizänums* (Berlin, 1994). Ulrich presented a summary of his work in an article published, in English: 'Nicaea and the West', *VC* 51 (1997),10-24. He argues that the Latin West remained isolated from Nicaea for forty-plus years – employing Marcellan interpretations of Nicaea and Serdica 343, until the time of Hilary, Victorinus, Gregory of Elvira and Ambrose. Ulrich's thesis is a worthwhile case to argue, but far overstated. *E.g*., the last paragraph of his article, *ibid*. 21: 'It took almost forty years until Latin theologians such as Gregory of Elvira began to receive the text of the Nicene creed and to use it as the guiding principle of orthodoxy in matters of the Trinity. And it was well into the sixties of the fourth century, almost half a century after the first ecumenical council in A.D. 325, when Latin speaking theologians entered into the debates about the theology of Nicaea and then started to become more independent and more constructive partners in the search for the Christian doctrine of God, such as Marius Victorinus, Ambrose of Milan…' Despite the obvious allusion to the title of R.P.C. Hanson's comprehensive work, I would note that Victorinus was most probably dead by the time of 'well into the sixties of the fourth century', and Victorinus was just one example of vigorous Western Latin Neo-Nicene retrieval of Nicaea in the 350s. There is a certain amount of current scholarship of the fourth century that sees some dire need to push Western Latin isolation from the current trinitarian debates up to the decades of the late 360s/early 370s, for no apparent or convincing reasons. Ulrich assumes that that the creed of Serdica 343 was circulated in the West and had theological influence on figures such as Hilary or Phoebadius, though there are good reasons for thinking that that creed was not attached to the encyclical circulated throughout Western sees. Ulrich also makes no mention of Ossius and Protagenes' letter to Julius explaining that the creed produced at Serdica was not meant to overrule the 325 creed of Nicaea.

seriously retrieve Nicaea and its theology as the linchpin to trinitarian orthodoxy. Valens of Mursa and his anti-Nicene cohorts may have tried to introduce the *Homoian Dated Creed* of 359 in midst of the proceedings, but the Western bishops rejected this forthright, according to Hilary of Poitiers' recollections of the council. There was an ancient apostolic standard to which all the bishops wished to hold:

'For we believe it is pleasing to all catholics that we ought not to withdraw from an accepted confession (*symbolo*) which we, in collaboration with everyone, recognize; nor are we about to retreat from that confession which we have received from God the Father, through the prophets and through our Lord Jesus Christ, being taught by the Holy Spirit and the Gospels, and by the apostles, and through the tradition of the fathers according to the succession of the apostles unto the proceedings held against heresy at Nicaea, which was cast aside at that time, but now is established permanently.'[11]

An intellectual and spiritual shift had occurred over Nicaea in the last decades in early Christian consciousness. The council had come to be called an 'ecumenical' council, having been held by a very particular, providential number of bishops of the Church, and its theology and historical memory had become a 'sacred tradition of the fathers' invoked as part of polemical forms that were seeking trinitarian definition.

The Case of Victorinus

As a Neo-Nicene who takes up the cause of the *homoousios* and tries to defend the cause of Nicaea in the late 350s, against coalescing parties of Anti-Nicene theology, we would expect Marius Victorinus to know the details of the 325 council, and to reproduce the 325 creed of Nicaea somewhere within the lengthy four books of *Against Arius*. But we do not find it anywhere within *Against Arius* or his other trinitarian treatises, making us wonder whether or not he has it at hand.

In the four books of *Against Arius*, Victorinus strenuously defends and explains the *homoousios* of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and in *Against Arius* Book I this takes the form of a lengthy exegesis of New Testament books that engages all of his opponents who represent Non-Nicene and Anti-Nicene trajectories, especially in I 21-3 where he discusses the meaning of the Christ

[11] Hilary of Poitiers, *Collectanea Antiariana Parisina* A IX.1.3 6-13: '*Sic credimus placere omnibus posse catholicis a symbolo accepto recedere nos non oportere, quod in collatione apud omnes integrum recognouimus, nec a fide recessuros, quam per prophetas a deo patre per Christum dominum nostrum docente spiritu sancto et in euangeliis et in apostolis omnibus suscepimus, et per traditionem patrum secundum successionem apostolorum usque ad tractatum apud Nicheam habitum contra heresim, quae tunc temporis exurrexerat, posita nunc usque permanet*.' *S. Hilarii Episcopi Pictavensis Opera*, ed. Alfred Feder, CSEL 65/4 (Leipzig, 1916), 95.

Hymn of *Philippians* 2. Besides Arius and those originally sympathetic with Arius' theology, the list comprehensively names all of the opponents of the 350s, and just few pages later in I 28, when Victorinus again addresses Homoiousians, Victorinus appeals to the memory of the Nicene council:

But then, forty years ago, where was it hidden, where was it dormant when, in the city of Nicaea, the formula of faith which excommunicated the Arian faction was approved by more than three hundred bishops? In this synod of illustrious men there were present all the luminaries of the Church and of the entire world. Where then had this ancient doctrine fled? But if it did not exist, it was not condemned, and then it must be a recent doctrine! If it already existed, either it escaped discussion or it was put to flight by right thinking and true opinion. And perchance then you, the defender of this doctrine, were not only alive but already a bishop! You kept silence, you as well as your colleagues, disciples and fellow teachers! And during the whole time that followed, as long as the Emperor was in Rome, you heard said in your presence many things contrary to this doctrine, living in communion with those men whom now you anathematize. Furious either that without you they wrote their confession of faith, or constrained by imperial agents you have come as a legate to defend treachery. But what difference where there are thirty or seventy participants, or more; what difference whether it is more or less often! The same faith has been established for the annihilation of all *haireseōn*, one because it both originates from the One and has been effective until now. You, however, you write and say this: that Paul of Samosata and Marcellus and Photinus, and now Valens and Ursacius and others of this kind who were found impious in heresy have been refuted. Were they not saying *homoousion*? No. But then how were they blasphemous? Like Arius Paul of Samosata held: 'The Son comes from nothing; there was a time when he was not; the Son is a creature; he is in every way totally unlike the Father.' What did Marcellus and Photinus hold? That Jesus is merely a man from a man and Jesus is outside the Trinity. And now, Valens and Ursacius, the dregs of Arius. Therefore each had his own blasphemy for which he was excommunicated. But you, for this reason have you conquered them, because you say *homoiousion*? Indeed they have not said *homoousion* and thus they have been conquered![12]

[12] Marius Victorinus, *Theological Treatises on the Trinity*, trans. Mary Clark, Fathers of the Church 69 (Washington, D.C., 1981), 133-5. *AA* I 28, 14-43: '*Ubi latuit, ubi dormiit, ante quadraginta annos, cum Nicea civitate fides confirmata per trecentos et plures episcopos, Arrionitas excludens, in qua συνόδῳ istorum virorum ecclesiae totius orbis lumina fuerunt? Vetus igitur dogma quo fugerat? Si non fuit, non victum est et nunc coepit. Si fuit, aut contentione siluit, aut cognitionis et veritatis sententia fugatum est. Forte et tunc tu, patrone dogmatis, non solum in vita, sed episcopus fuisti. Tacuisti et tu et socii et discipuli et condoctores. Et toto tempore postea, usquequo imperator Romae fuit, praesens audisti multa contraria, conviva exsistens istorum hominum quos nunc anathematizas, iratus vel quod sine te fidem scripserunt, an coactus a magistris legatus venisti in defensionem proditionis. Sed quid differt sive triginta sive septuaginta sive amplius et sive saepius! Eadem fides in destructionem aliarum αἱρέσεων effecta est, una cum sit et ab uno incipiens et operata usque nunc. Tu autem scribis ista et dicis quod Samosateus Paulus et Marcellus et Photinus et nunc Valens et Ursacius et alii istius modi in haeresi inreligiosi inventi destructi sunt. Numquid ὁμοούσιον dicentes? Non. Quomodo autem blasphemantes? Samosateus sicuti Arrius: ex nihilo et quod fuit quando non fuit et quod factura filius et omnino omnimodis dissimilis patri. Quid Marcellus et Photinus? Tantum hominem ex homine Iesum et esse triadem*

The memory of the Nicene council was all-important, but Victorinus can actually describe no details of it apart from commonplaces remembered about it, that it was a gathering of important bishops in the city of Nicaea some 'forty years ago'. This council involved 'more than three hundred bishops', he cites, but like others who wrote about Nicaea during the decades of the fourth century, Victorinus actually does not know the traditional number of bishops present. Victorinus knows Nicene theology that speaks of 'X from X' causality, and he makes statements of the Son being such things as 'God from God, light from light', but the only ways in which he reproduces the original 325 creed is when he quotes the commonplace condemnations of Arius, where Arius was accused of saying that there was a time when the Son did not exist, or the Father created the Son out of nothing. Victorinus apparently does not know the 325 creed, but he does know a tradition of harking back to the Nicene council as a standard for orthodoxy. The extended comments about Nicaea in I 28 as part of an attack against Homoiousians says far more what Victorinus knew about events of 358 in Ancyra and Sirmium: Victorinus depicts Nicaea as an ancient doctrine, as opposed to an innovation, that annihilates all heresy, and his description of Nicaea as a universal standard for orthodoxy in I 28 becomes a tirade against Basil of Ancyra and his party, where he addresses Basil about the events of Basil's local Ancyran council of 358 and subsequent delegation to the emperor at Sirmium in the same year.[13] The memory of Nicaea here is a tool for Victorinus to condemn not just Arius, but contemporary Anti-Nicenes such as Marcellus and Photinus (and their ostensible forerunner in heresy, Paul of Samosata), as well as Valens and Ursacius. The other mention Victorinus makes in Book I of *Against Arius* is just in passing, but here again it is part of a series of condemnations he repeats of these same opponents, after which he makes his positive creedal statement: 'For we affirm the *homoousion* both because of truth and because of the synod of Nicaea.'[14]

extra Iesum. Et nunc, Valens et Ursatius (sic), reliquiae Arrii. Propria ergo blasphemia, propter quam eiecti sunt. Tu autem idcirco vicisti eos, quod ὁμοιούσιον dicis? Non enim dixerunt ὁμοούσιον et sic victi sunt!' Marius Victorinus, *Opera*, ed. Pierre Hadot et Paul Henry, CSEL 83/1 (Vienna, 1971), 103-5.

[13] While it was still winter in 358 Basil summoned a council of bishops to meet in Ancyra, and the statement that emerged from that council marked the appearance of a new and coherent Homoiousian theology. Basil and his companions followed this up by forming a delegation to the emperor's court in Sirmium just few months later, where the emperor was persuaded to support Basil's theology of the Son as κατ' οὐσίαν ὅμοιος τῷ πατρί, and to call a council in the city of Sirmium that summer that would issue a creed supporting the temporary ascendancy of that theology (though that creed, the Third Creed of Sirmium, does not survive). See R. Hanson, *Search* (1988), 348-62.

[14] M. Clark, 163. *AA* I 45, 23-4. '*Nos enim ὁμοούσιον dicimus et veritate et iuxta synodum in Niceapoli*' (CSEL 83/1, 137).

In Book II Victorinus appeals to Nicaea again, and the accusation that the *homoousios* is a recent innovation, as he defends the notions of *ousia* and *hypostasis* as part of defending the *homoousios*:

This term which has been used by our Fathers as a wall and rampart? But it was used only recently. That is because only recently the poinsonous pack of heretics has been let loose. And yet it was established in conformity with the ancient faith – for it had also been taught previously – established then by many bishops (three hundred and fifteen) of the world, in the city of Nicaea, who afterwards, sending to all the churches across the entire world the profession of faith that they had defined, kept thousands of bishops both in those days and in succeeding years in one same faith. Moreover, this term was approved by the emperor, the father of our emperor.[15]

Book II of *Against Arius* was written possibly as much as two years after I 28, *ca*. 361 or 362. This time Victorinus has a better estimate of the number of bishops attending the 325 council (315), but still he shows little other knowledge of what really happened at the council, and what statement of faith it issued. Nicaea as a standard of orthodoxy is reiterated in the final profession of faith in Book II, a book where Victorinus concentrates on responding to Latin Homoians' insistence that unscriptural terms such as *ousia* and *hypostasis* never be employed:

Let one persevere in using it in speaking of God and of Our Lord! But, in truth, may *homoousion* be more and more maintained, written, affirmed, explained, announced in all the Churches. For this is the faith of Nicaea, this the faith of the Apostles, this is the Catholic faith. In this way the Arians, in this way all heretics are vanquished.[16]

Here the cause of Nicaea is equated with the faith of Christ's Apostles that is the universal, Catholic, faith. Nicaea has assumed its greatest proportions as a universal standard of faith, something that was unheard of in the 330s and 340s, even into the 350s, where Hilary said that he had never heard of the creed of Nicaea until he was about to go into exile in 356. But the Neo-Nicene cause existed to retrieve Nicaea and make it into a universal rallying standard.[17]

[15] M. Clark, 212. *AA* II 9, 43-51. '*Quod a maioribus positum, ut murus et propugnaculum? Sed nuper est positum. Quia nuper erupit venenata cohors haereticorum. Quod tamen conditum iuxta veterem fidem – nam et ante tractatum – a multis orbis episcopis trecentis quindecim in civitate Nicea qui per totum orbem decretam fidem mittentes, episcoporum milia in eadem habuerunt vel illius temporis vel sequentium annorum; probatum autem ab imperatore imperatoris nostri patre*' (CSEL 83/I, 185).

[16] M. Clark, 216-7. *AA* II 12,30-5. '*Placet manere, de deo et domino nostro perseveret, ὁμοούσιον vero magis ac magis teneatur, scribatur, dicatur, tractetur, in ecclesiis omnibus praedicetur. Haec enim fides apud Niceam, haec fides apostolorum, haec fides catholica. Hinc Arriani, hinc haeretici vincuntur universi*' (CSEL 83/1, 190).

[17] Michel Barnes details the post-Nicaea assault on Marcellus in his 'The Fourth Century as Trinitarian Canon', in *Christian Origins: Theology, Rhetoric and Community*, edited by Lewis Ayres and Gareth Jones (New York, 1998), 47-67. He asserts that after the condemnation of Arius at Nicaea in 325, this account pivots on the status of Marcellus of Ancyra and the issue of

Conclusion

Just like other Western Neo-Nicenes, Victorinus has the *ideal* of Nicaea in his historical memory, and quite probably he even possessed the text of the 325 creed, if he could quote the condemnations of Arius mentioned in the creed that had become commonplaces. Contrary to some scholarly treatments that wish to portray Victorinus as isolated from any anti-Nicene theological currents in his day, Victorinus clearly has old as well as new texts to respond to in his writings. He reproduces the complete texts of Arius' *Letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia* and Eusebius' *Letter to Paulinus of Tyre*; he closely engages with Basil of Ancyra's 358 Sirmian dossier, which he clearly has in his possession; he even quotes Alexandrian Greek sources of the trinitarian formula of 'three *hypostases* from one *ousia*.'

But to quote a creed that had an embarrassing modalist element would certainly serve against his interest, especially when among his stated opponents in arguing for the Neo-Nicene cause in the 350s are old Nicene figures such as Marcellus and Photinus.[18] Western Neo-Nicenes could probably make a distinction between a commitment to the precise wording of the creed of Nicaea, versus fidelity to the faith and theology it represented.[19] So it was better to

'Nicene' modalism: 'Yet the Nicene creed had very little to say about the reality of the separate existence of the second person; indeed, it anathematized a term that sometimes seemed to be associated with a theology of this separateness, namely *hypostasis*. We know that the silence of the creed on this issue, coupled with the strength of it modalist associations, let queasy a number of those bishops who otherwise agreed that Arius had to be stopped. The bishops could accept the modalist-sounding creed for the sake of condemning Arius, but having succeeded at condemning him they envisioned no wider application of the creed … The idea that the creed might have a wider application despite its modalist connotations was turned on its head when the creed was promoted by Marcellus of Ancyra, seemingly because of its modalist connotations.' (49-50) 'If it seems striking for contemporary scholars to propose that Nicaea slowly acquired its authority only after shedding its modalist associations, then the suggestion that that paragon of Nicene theology, Athanasius, did not always regard Nicaea as authoritative is breathtaking.' (53) 'In the end, Nicaea 325 became orthodoxy only when its potential cost to real distinctions was contained at Constantinople 381, and I would argue that this is how it should be understood today. Fourth-century trinitarian orthodoxy was the net product of rejecting modalism's claim as the necessary cost for defeating subordinationism.' (62)

[18] 'However we regard it, the Creed produced by the Council of Nicaea was a mine of potential confusion and consequently most unlikely to be a means of ending the Arian Controversy. It is significant when Athanasius comes much later to quote N in his polemical writing, he slurs over this equivocal expression. Gregory of Elvira does not reproduce the term exactly and several early Latin translations render it as substantia vel essential, which evades the difficulty. Not many who have written upon the subject of the Creed of Nicaea have observed this serious difficulty presented by it.' R. Hanson, *Search* (1988), 168.

[19] Hanson makes a similar point about the creed of the 381 council: 'No church historian mentions the production of a creed at this council nor gives a text of it. No surviving document reproduces C until it is produced by the archdeacon of Constantinople and read out at the Council of Chalcedon in the year 451, seventy years after the date at which it was supposed to have

recreate a certain memory of Nicaea as a rallying standard of orthodoxy in the trinitarian definition finally emerging after the high-handed Anti-Nicene efforts that culminated in the brief Homoian supremacy of the last years of the 350s decade.

been composed. Almost no authors during those seventy years make any allusion to it nor quote a line from it', R. Hanson, *Search* (1988), 812.

Didymus the Blind and the Metaphysics of Participation

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ABSTRACT

Earlier modern scholarship has tended to date Didymus the Blind's doctrinal contributions toward the end of the fourth century. More recently, some scholars have begun to question the assumption that Didymus' thought must be derivative and consequently later than the thought of those figures commonly thought to be more influential (*e.g.* Athanasius and Basil). This has resulted in a significantly earlier dating for Didymus' *On the Holy Spirit* (c. 360/5). A concommitant project with rediscovering the genius of Didymus is to read him as significantly more philosophically subtle than might previously have been assumed. In service of exploring the potential of Didymus' originality and contribution to late fourth-century doctrinal debates, this paper develops recent scholarship on Didymus' philosophical resources by proffering a fresh analysis of *On the Holy Spirit*, especially by continuing to entertain the question of Didymus' most proximate philosophical resources. Didymus argues in §50-6 of *On the Holy Spirit* that the Spirit is *capabilis*, and, 'because of this, uncreated' (§54). His conclusion in §56 explains §54 by claiming that a substance's being *capabilis* entails its being *inconuertabilis*, and its being *inconuertabilis* entails its being *aeternum*. And if the Holy Spirit is a participable, immutable, and eternal substance, then the Holy Spirit cannot be identified with created substances such as angels. The metaphysics of participation forms a significant basis of Didymus' discourse. The key technical term (*capabilis*) in Didymus' argument is traceable to μέθεξις and cognates, which introduces to a reading of Didymus' theology the notion of participability and suggests a Platonic context; his terminology is close to that of Proclus – but Didymus predates Proclus by half a century. This article therefore explores intriguing resonances in Porphyry and Iamblichus to ascertain whether Didymus has indeed been reading the Platonists carefully or may be drawing on a philosophical commonplace otherwise available to him.

Introduction

This is a condensed presentation of ongoing research on the philosophical resources of Didymus the Blind's trinitarian doctrine.[1] Though my presentation

[1] One impetus for my revisitation of Didymus the Blind as a trinitarian theologian is Alasdair Heron's dissertation, which offers a thoroughgoing assessment of 'dogmatic' texts potentially authored by Didymus. Though *De Spiritu Sancto* is not a disputed text, Heron's dissertation is worth noting here for its exploration of the question of authorship of other Didymean texts, such as *De trinitate* and Ps.-Basil, *Adversus Eunomium* IV-V. See Alasdair Heron, *Studies in the Trinitarian*

Studia Patristica LXVII, 227-237.
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has been allotted to a section on 'Origen and Origenism', Didymus' spiritual and intellectual master will be conspicuously absent from my analysis. That is not because I do not think Origen played a significant role in Didymus' intellectual development.[2] Quite to the contrary, precisely because Didymus' thought appears so characteristically 'Origenist', scholars have tended to presume that Didymus was merely following in the footsteps of Origen at every key juncture – even to the point of assuming that Didymus knew no pagan philosophy in his own right. I am reminded of a parable, of sorts, which my teacher, Michel Barnes, is fond of telling his students. A drunk man, stumbling around in the dark, has lost the keys to his house. He sees a lamp post on the street with some light beneath it and gets down on hands and knees to search for the keys, never to find them – but that is because they are not in the light of the lamp post. Sometimes we have to go looking where there isn't any light to find what we are seeking. Please consider what follows as just such a search.

Didymus' *De Spiritu Sancto*

I am focusing on Didymus' earliest work, the *De Spiritu Sancto*.[3] It exists only in Jerome's Latin translation, which Alasdair Heron has argued is relatively

Writings of Didymus the Blind: His Authorship of the Adversus Eunomium IV-V and De Trinitate (Tübingen, 1972). Quotations from Didymus' *On the Holy Spirit* are based on the *Sources Chrétiennes* edition: *Traité du Saint-Esprit / Didyme l'Aveugle*, ed. Louis Doutreleau, SC 386 (Paris, 1992). I have made use of an unpublished manuscript of an English translation of Didymus' *On the Holy Spirit* by Mark DelCogliano, Andrew Radde-Gallwitz and Lewis Ayres. As of this writing, it is now available as Mark DelCogliano, Andrew Radde-Gallwitz and Lewis Ayres, *Works on the Spirit: Athanasius the Great and Didymus the Blind* (New York, 2011). My thanks to all three of these authors for sharing their earlier work with me, and especially to Mark DelCogliano and Michel Barnes who provided helpful comments on an earlier version of this paper.

[2] Indeed, Origen's influence is probable, if not certain, when it comes to Didymus' use of the metaphysics of participation, especially in *De Spiritu Sancto*. Lewis Ayres would direct us to *Contra Celsum* 6.63-4, where Origen remarks that God 'is participated in rather than participates'. See Lewis Ayres, 'The Holy Spirit as the "Undiminished Giver": Didymus the Blind's *De spiritu sancto* and the development of Nicene pneumatology', in D. Vincent Twomey SVD and Janet E. Rutherford (eds), *The Holy Spirit in the Fathers of the Church: The Proceedings of the Seventh International Patristic Conference, Maynooth, 2008* (Portland, 2010), 57-72, 62. Terms like *capax* and *participatio* span the breadth of *On First Principles*. To cite one example, Origen's characterization of sanctification in *De principiis* I 1.1 deploys the very same causal mechanism of a form-power to speak of the Son as Word and Wisdom that Didymus uses in *De Spiritu Sancto* to speak of the Holy Spirit. However that may be, with this article, my hope is to bracket, for the moment, the default position of treating Didymus as though he were *merely* Origen's heir. I want to hold out the possibility that Didymus was not slavishly following Origen, but that he was putting Origen's influence to use in the light of current philosophy and that philosophy's deployment by contemporary Christian theologians, both 'orthodox' and 'heretical'.

[3] Earlier scholarship placed Didymus' doctrinal work toward the end of the fourth century, but more recently, Mark DelCogliano has argued that *DSS* was authored contemporaneously with

Athanasius' *Letters to Serapion*, in the late 350s or early 360s, whereas previous scholarship dated the work to c. 381. See Mark DelCogliano, 'Basil of Caesarea, Didymus the Blind, and the Anti-Pneumatomachian Exegesis of Amos 4:13 and John1:3', *JTS* NS (2010), 1-15. DelCogliano is arguing for a return to Heron's early views on dating the *DSS*, expressed in Heron, *Studies in the Trinitarian Writings of Didymus the Blind* (1972), 169-70, but which Heron later abandoned. I will quote Heron's position at length for the reader's reference since his thesis is not commonly available: 'It used to be believed that DSS had been written at about the same time as Basil's work with the same title: i.e. c 374-5. The recent investigation by Frln Staimer has however shown beyond all doubt that such a dating is much too late: DSS is rather to be located at about the same time as Athanasius' Letters to Serapion, thus probably in the late 350s or the (very) early 360s. (This incidentally also means that it is the first systematic treatment of the subject, and that Didymus must be recognised as having been a much more original and pioneering spirit tha[n] had been thought.) Some of Frln Staimer's arguments in favour of this dating may be mentioned here…: the doctrine of the Trinity in DSS is still in an early and undeveloped state as compared with the position after the Synod of Alexandria and the *Tomus ad Antiochenos*, written in 362 (Staimer, op cit, 114; 132-133); the question of why the Spirit is not a second Son, or even a grandson of the Father is handled (1084 C f) in a way which represents no real advance on Cyril of Jerusalem's *Catecheses*, written in 348, and is certainly less adequate than the treatment in *Ep ad Serap* I 15 ff and IV (Staimer, 107-110; 121; 123-7); and the opponents with whom Didymus is dealing resemble the Tropici, against whom Athanasius wrote, in that they do not appear to have been influenced by Eunomius, and still recognise that the Son is God (Staimer, 127-132). These factors indicate a date before 362, and before the Letters to Serapion became available to Didymus; and if the Letters are dated (as they usually are) in 358-9, DSS should be placed in the period of c 355-58 (Staimer, 126-7). The only element in Frln Staimer's case which seems a little doubtful is her reliance on the date of the Letters as supplying a *terminus post quem non*: their date is somewhat uncertain, and in any case, they may well not have reached Didymus until some time after they were written. But even if, for this reason, 358 should not be taken too seriously as the latest date for the composition of DSS, it still seems safe to conclude that the work must have been written before c 362. And it was of course written by Didymus in or near Alexandria (unless he had for some reason left Alexandria at that time: but there is no evidence that he ever did).'

Heron places the order of authorship of potentially Didymian Trinitarian works like this:

DSS	DTSpS	CE	DT
c. 355-362	c. 360-365	c. 375-380	c. 390-400

Little is known of Didymus' life, which is usually dated to the years 313-398 on the basis of Palladius, *Historia Lausiaca* 4. There, 'it is stated that Didymus died at the age of 85 ten years after Palladius' arrival in Egypt. C. Butler, The Lausiac History of Palladius. TSt 6, 1-2, Cambridge, 1904, fixes Palladius' year of arrival as 388 (1, 180) and this gives 398 as the year of Didymus' death, and 313 as that of his birth (cf Butler, op cit, 2, 187 n 12). Both Leipoldt, Didymus, 4 and Bardy, Didyme, 3-4 accept this dating. The only alternative evidence is that of Jerome, De Vir Ill 109, ed Richardson, 50 – but the reading there is uncertain, and could mean that Didymus was either 80, 83, or 85 when Jerome composed that work in 392-3 (the first of these would of course accord well with Butler's chronology from Palladius)' (A. Heron, 'Studies in the Trinitarian Writings' [1972], 262-3). It is assumed that, due to Didymus' blindness, he led a sedentary life in the environs of Alexandria and did not travel although it is not certain at what point, exactly, Didymus developed his blindness. That is not to say that his works did not travel, since *DSS* at least travelled to Rome, where Jerome translated a Greek version. Whether Jerome met Didymus on a pilgrimage to the desert or not is an open question. Didymus' influence is a subject of debate that indirectly affects dating of his work. Decisions about influence in a narrative of historical development are difficult because it is tempting to read a lack of influence in later periods as indicative of a lack of influence in earlier periods. In this case, Didymus does appear

wooden and reliable as a witness to the Greek that lay behind it.[4] Didymus first presumes a doctrine of divine simplicity: 'God is … not made good by another, but subsists as such.' This presumption leads to the conclusion that 'God is capable of being received but not capable of receiving.' This conclusion in turn presupposes a hierarchical scheme of participation: any form of 'goodness' that is able to be shared in by some lower form does not gain anything from those lower forms of goodness. 'That which is essentially good cannot be capable of receiving external goodness since it is what bestows goodness on other things' (13). In the treatise as a whole, Didymus sets himself the task of answering the question: *is the Holy Spirit holy in and of himself, or is the Holy Spirit holy 'through participation in another's sanctity'?* (19) Didymus announces that 'the point I want to make is that [the Holy Spirit] himself subsists in those goods which are conferred by the Lord' (11; 32).

Didymus is at pains to differentiate the Holy Spirit from the angels. His opponents considered the Holy Spirit as an angel, a created being, and not a member of the Trinity. Against this, Didymus maintains that the language of 'pouring forth', used in *Romans* 5:5 and *Joel* 2:28, is reserved by Scripture for divine beings as opposed to creatures, such as angels. God sends, and does not 'pour forth', angels (*DSS* §49-50). A being that is 'poured forth' is a being that is 'participated in by others' (*DSS* §50). This leads, then, to an excursus on participation itself, which Didymus articulates in terms of what has been translated in Latin as *capax*, *capiens* and *capabilis*, explained by Jerome in a gloss. Then Didymus establishes the Holy Spirit's divinity by linking a substance's being *capabilis* to its being *inconuertibilis*.[5] Didymus concludes that the Spirit is *capabilis*, and, 'because of this, uncreated' (§54). The conclusion in §56 explains §54 by claiming that a substance's being *capabilis* entails its being *inconuertabilis*, and its being *inconuertabilis* entails its being *aeternum*.

to fall off the map in the fifth century, and his association with Origen destined his *corpus* for extirpation, but that does not necessarily mean he was not a key figure in late fourth-century debates. If Jerome's assessment means anything, it is likely that Didymus was indeed rather influential in Alexandria and Rome. Didymus' theology may be situated within a doctrinal nexus that includes at least the following potential contexts or trajectories: (1) the inheritance of Origen's legacy; (2) Athanasius as a theological contemporary; (3) Jerome's translation of *De Spiritu Sancto*; (4) some Pseudo-Athanasian material as influenced by if not authored by Didymus; and (5) the Cappadocians as potential collaborators/heirs.

[4] Alasdair Heron, 'The Holy Spirit in Origen and Didymus the Blind: A Shift in Perspective From the Third to the Fourth Century', in A. Martin Ritter (ed.), *Kerygma und Logos* (Göttingen, 1979), 298-310. Because Jerome translated Didymus' *De Spiritu Sancto* before Jerome turned against Origen, and since Rufinus translated Origen's *De principiis* into Latin, Heron suggests that we compare the Latin of the one to the other in order to see to what extent Didymus relied upon Origen (298). Based on internal evidence and Jerome's motive to show how the Latins had been unwittingly borrowing from the Greeks, Jerome's translation of Didymus is reliable (299).

[5] That is, unless §56 is a continuation of Jerome's gloss.

These terms and the metaphysics of participation form a significant basis of Didymus' discourse. The *Sources Chrétiennes* edition of *De Spiritu Sancto* reports a total of 30 instances of a form of *capabilis*, *capax*, and *capio*, and a total of 28 instances of a form of *particeps*, *participabilis*, *participatio* and *participo*.[6] Heron has suggested that the distinction between what is *capax* and what is *capabilis* is fundamental to Didymus' theology as a whole.[7] Again, Didymus is laboring against a prevalent angelomorphic pneumatology. And if the Holy Spirit is a participable, immutable, and eternal substance, then the Holy Spirit cannot be identified with created substances such as angels.

Didymus' distinction is clarified by Jerome as follows:

> Didymus calls a substance *capibilem* when it is received by many and bestows on them a share in himself. But a substance is *capacem* when it is filled through communion with another substance, and *capiens* something else, it itself is not received by another.[8]

At first blush, this 'triad' appears similar to the common Neoplatonic division of the unparticipated [*non capabilis*], the participated [*capabilis*], and the participant [*capax et capiens alium*]. Might we then be able to link Didymus' terminology with that of the Greek Neoplatonists? One scholar has noted 'Proclean parallels' in Didymus' *De trinitate* and has used these parallels to question

[6] Doutreleau, 425, 437. The combined references of each set of terms is as follows. *capabilis*, *capax*, *capio*: 10, 9; 13, 2; 13, 7; 17, 4; 17, 7; 18, 3 (twice); 18, 4; 18, 5; 34, 9; 43, 6; 51, 1; 54, 1; 55, 1; 55, 2; 55, 4; 55, 5; 56, 1; 56, 3; 94, 3; 172, 3; 228, 12; 236, 4; 237, 4; 265, 2; 267, 2; *particeps*, *participabilis*, *participatio*, *participo*: 3, 6; 7, 11; 14, 1;14, 7; 18, 2; 18, 5; 20, 13; 25, 6; 26, 2; 32, 1; 36, 5; 38, 2; 50, 5; 73, 15; 78, 8; 80, 4; 92, 2; 92, 5; 142, 2; 196, 4; 231, 5; 236, 3; 264, 5; 265, 1; 265, 6; 267, 2; 267, 4; 268, 2.

[7] Didymus 'emphasizes an absolute contrast between God and creatures; but on the ground of that contrast he also sketches a kind of correlation in which the divine fullness of being fills those creatures who participate in God' (A. Heron, 'The Holy Spirit in Origen and Didymus the Blind' [1972], 301). God is simple and infinite, whereas creatures – even invisible creatures – are composite and circumscribed. Three further distinctions between God and creatures follow from this: (1) God is what he is by nature or 'substantially', whereas creatures possess goodness, holiness *etc*. by participation; (2) God is what God is immutably because God is simple, whereas creatures are what they are mutably; and (3) God is *capabilis*, whereas creatures are *capaces* (sg.: *capax*). This last difference requires some explanation since these terms translate to 'comprehensible' and 'capacious', respectively. Jerome helps us here: '[Didymus] calls *capabilis* a substance which is received by several others, and gives them a part in itself; and capax one which is filled through the communication of another substance, and which, receiving another substance (*sc*. into itself) is itself not received (*sc*. by another)' (302). Didymus argues that the Father, Son, and Spirit are each *capabilis*, not *capax*. The Trinity makes creatures good by allowing them to share in the Trinity's simple goodness. 'This making holy, good and wise is not simply a matter of some external operation of God upon creatures, nor of the mere infusion of qualities into them. It is a genuine participation in God, enabled by a genuine communication of himself, a real "indwelling" in created beings' (303). Such participation is neither automatic nor irreversible (304).

[8] *DSS* 55; DelCogliano, Radde-Gallwitz, Ayres, 13. '*Capabilem substantiam uocat, quae capiatur a plurimis et eis sui consortium tribuat; capacem uero eam quae communicatione substantiae alterius impleatur, et capiens aliud, ipsa non capiatur ab alio*.'

De trinitate's Didymean authorship. Indeed, Proclus teaches a 'triadic structure within each order of reality [that] is due to the distinction between the "Unparticipated" (ἀμέθεκτον), the "Participated" (μεθεκτόν, μετεχόμενον) and the "Participant" (μετέχον).'[9] And there is a 'triad' in Jerome's gloss on Didymus: (1) that which may be participated in (*capabilis*), (2) that which may participate in another (*capax*), and (3) the thing doing the participating (*capiens*). But this is not exactly the triad of Proclus' *Elements*: there is no equivalent for Proclus' ἀμέθεκτον here, and Didymus does not use the Latin equivalent, *incapabilis*, in *DSS*.[10] Didymus could agree with the Pseudo-Dionysian use of Proclus' participation theory to the effect that God is 'that which does not participate in anything else', but it is not so clear that Didymus would go so far as to say that 'nothing else directly participates' in God.[11] Not only does Didymus *not* mention the 'Unparticipated' in this context. The trouble with seeing Didymus' use of this distinction as having come from Proclus is that Didymus authored the *De Spiritu Sancto* at least two decades before Proclus was born.[12] But already in the *DSS* we have a metaphysics of participation functioning as a proof for the Holy Spirit's divinity. My question, then, is: Where is Didymus getting his account of what counts as 'participable' and how does participation function for him in this context?[13]

[9] Balás, 5. Proclus articulates this distinction in propositions 23 and 24 of *The Elements of Theology*, and so, the doctrine would seem to be logically prior to the doctrine of the undiminished giver articulated in propositions 26 and 27. If Proclus' scheme or order is any clue, then it might appear that, while it is true that Didymus teaches the doctrine of the undiminished giver, the distinction Jerome explicates in paragraph 55 is more logically fundamental, and therefore, not precisely the same thing.

[10] See below, on Iamblichus. The Latin equivalent to μεθεκτόν is seen most evidently in a gloss at *DSS* 265: *quod participatione capiatur*. I am siding with DelCogliano, Radde-Gallwitz and Ayres against Doutreleau's reading of τὸ μετοχιχόν here.

[11] William J. Carroll, S.J., 'Participation: The Link to the Divine in Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite', in Willlliam J. Carroll and John J. Furlong (eds), *Greek and Medieval Studies in Honor of Leo Sweeney, S.J.* (New York, 1994), 76.

[12] Proclus was born c. 411, and Didymus must have written the *De Spiritu Sancto* prior to 381, when it is known that Ambrose used the work for his own *De Spiritu Sancto*. However, there is no reason to think that Didymus' *DSS* could not have been written much earlier, even as early as Athanasius' *Letters to Serapion*, in the late 350s or early 360s. See M. DelCogliano, 'Basil of Caesarea, Didymus the Blind, and the Anti-Pneumatomachian Exegesis of Amos 4:13 and John 1:3' (2010), 13.

[13] Given how Didymus uses participation in his argument for the Spirit's divinity, Ayres frames Didymus' participation terminology in terms of the Christian tradition's appropriation of the doctrine of the undiminished giver (L. Ayres, 'The Holy Spirit as the "Undiminished Giver"' [2010]). Ayres points to *DSS* 11, 13, and 17-8 for the appearance of this doctrine in Didymus. These passages presume a definition of divine goodness as simple and not capable of participating but only of being participated in (= *capabilis*). Whether the metaphor can be traced to Didymus' original Greek expression seems justifiable in terms of a Platonic understanding of *methexis*. Based on the first appearance of the doctrine in Philo (at *De opificio* 6.23, 24.72, 23.69, and *De gigantibus* 24-8), Ayres claims that 'the foundation of the doctrine is the principle that the divine

We could of course reach all the way back to Plato himself, who initiated 'participation' talk most notably in the *Parmenides*, and whose nephew Speusippus, according to E.R. Dodds, was 'already well started on the road to Neoplatonism' with a doctrine of 'One beyond Being'.[14] I suggest that Didymus took advantage of the causal nature of the forms: the Holy Spirit, as the divine form-power, indwells the human soul and *causes holiness* to be in it.[15] I will

(or the first principle in a given account of the cosmos) gives without loss (or while remaining in itself).' A *locus classicus* for the doctrine among Platonists is *Timaeus* 42E, in which the demiurge, having created 'all these dispositions', 'continued to abide by the wont of his own nature.' Ayres tells us that it is the phrase ἔμενεν ἐν τῷ ἑαυτοῦ that becomes normative for Plotinus and Proclus. The archetypal image for expressing the doctrine is fire's ability to spread without loss, *e.g.*, a lamp lighting another lamp without losing its own light. Numenius uses this image to articulate the nature of knowledge. Plotinus uses it to describe 'the relationship between the One and Nous.' As I have already noted, Proclus teaches the doctrine in propositions 26 and 27 of *The Elements of Theology*, which follows hard on the heals of claims about participability in propositions 23 and 24. In support of the doctrine of the undiminished giver, Athanasius, quoting *Hebrews* 6:4, says: 'He, therefore, who is not sanctified by another, nor a partaker of sanctification, but who is himself partaken, and in whom all the creatures are sanctified, how can he be one from among all things or pertain to those who partake of him? For those who say this must say that the Son, through whom all things came to be, is one from among all things.' See C.R.B. Shapland, trans., *The Letters of Saint Athanasius Concerning the Holy Spirit* (New York, 1951), 123. Shapland's note observes: 'So Didymus argues … that it is a proof of the Spirit's deity that He is μεθεκτόν, for creation cannot be essentially participated by the rational soul. cf. also his *de Sp.S.*25, and *ps.*Basil, *adv.Eun.*V.713A.' Later on (at 1.27), Athanasius repeats his thesis that 'the Holy Spirit is partaken and does not partake'. Given their proximity in Alexandria and in terms of authorship, whether Athanasius has read Didymus or Didymus has read Athanasius is a question worth raising, but I will not attempt to answer it here. The resemblence in argument from participation might best be explained by Origen's common influence, but that does not settle the issue. For an excellent treatment of the role and function of participation in Athanasius' theology on the whole, see Khaled Anatolios, *Athanasius: The Coherence of His Thought* (New York, 1998).

[14] E.R. Dodds, 'The *Parmenides* of Plato and the Neoplatonic "One"', *The Classical Quarterly* (1928), 129-42, 140.

[15] Artistotle's criticism of Plato's 'theory of forms' is such a large topic that I will not take it up here. Lloyd P. Gerson, *Aristotle and Other Platonists* (New York, 2005), 1-23, in advocating for the provocative thesis that 'perhaps the reason Aristotle appears to be a Platonist is that in fact he is one', at least demonstrates that today scholars are not content with simplistic modern oppositions of Aristotle to Plato (see 209-41 for a canvassing of the problem of Aristotle on the 'theory of forms'). The 'Aristotle' that fourth-century Christians knew was not necessarily, at any rate, the 'Aristotle' of modern critical history, mediated as his corpus was by commentators like Porphyry. H. Apostle notes in his glossary to the *Metaphysics* that, 'usually, A is said to participate in B if "B" or its definition is a predicate of A, directly or derivatively, but "A" is not a predicate of B. Plato held that sensible things participated in Ideas, but said little about the nature of participation' (Hippocrates Apostle, *Aristotle's Metaphysics* [Indiana, 1966], 469). Thus, in Aristotle's corpus, participation becomes primarily a logical affair. This view appears to constitute a kind of modern consensus: 'While Aristotle rejects the Platonic theory of ideas, he uses, nevertheless, rather extensively the verb μετέχειν to express primarily the logical relationship between concepts of different universality, but also the more ontological relation between the imperfect and the perfect possession of a quality or mode of being' (Balás, 3). If this view of

present (briefly) two Platonists who elaborated such causal theories, and who present promising leads for clarifying Didymus' thought: Porphyry and Iamblichus.

Porphyry (*apud* Nemesius)

Nemesius of Emesa presents an interesting case: he provides a quotation of the mid-third-century Porphyry's philosophy, but he himself was writing as a near-contemporary of Didymus. Nemesius' *Nature of Man* invokes the metaphysics of participation.[16] Now, Nemesius' writing may post-date Didymus' *De Spiritu Sancto* by a decade or two, but it indicates pagan doctrines current in Christian circles prior to its authorship, which would be about the time of Didymus' writing.

The context of Nemesius' discussion is that of christology.[17] He articulates an appropriation of the doctrine of the 'undiminished giver', by which Christ 'both is infused and remains altogether unmixed, uncompounded, uncontaminated and unchanged, not affected with them but only acting with them.'[18] Interestingly, Nemesius underwrites this version of the 'doctrine of the undiminished giver' by using Porphyry's participation doctrine, as follows:

> It is not to be denied that a certain substance can be received for the completion of another substance, and can be a part of [this] substance while retaining its own nature together with completing another substance, and, while becoming one with another, can retain its own unity and moreover, while itself untransmuted, it can transmute those things into which it comes so that they gain its activity by its presence.[19]

Aristotle is correct, then it seems strained to consider Didymus' Platonizing model of ontological participation as owing in any way to a Peripateticizing stream *strictu senso*. Nevertheless, given more time and space, analysis of 'participation' in Alexander of Aphrodisias may prove necessary. *Methexis* and its cognates are heavily theorized in his commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, and it is not implausible that Didymus could have had access to Alexander's works. The index to Alexander's first book on the *Metaphysics* lists the following appearances: *metekhein* – (participate) – 32, 3; 51, 10; 52, 1; 89, 10-7; 90, 5-91, 31; 94, 18.20; 95, 2; 98, 5.20; 100, 30; 101, 3.18-22; 105, 12.13.20; (share in) – 4, 17; *methekhtos* – (capable of being participated in) – 89, 5; *metaskhesis* – (participation) – 86, 3; 89, 13; 125, 1; *methexis* – (participation) – 50, 21; 51, 4.5.6.8; 97, 20; 105, 4; *metokhê* – (participation) – 84, 17.20; 100, 27.31; 101, 17; 105, 14; 121, 8.13; *metousia* 4, 17 (W.E. Dooley, S.J., trans., *Alexander of Aphrodisias on Aristotle's Metaphysics 1* [New York, 1989], 216).

[16] Sharples, 2.

[17] Sharples, 84.

[18] Sharples, 84.

[19] Sorabji, trans. 85; Greek from Moreno Morani (ed.), *Nemesii Emeseni De Natura Hominis* (Leipzig, 1987), 43: οὐκ ἀπογνωστέον οὖν ἐνδέχεσθαί τινα οὐσίαν παραληφθῆναι εἰς συμπλήρωσιν ἑτέρας οὐσίας καὶ εἶναι μέρος οὐσίας μένουσαν κατὰ τὴν ἑαυτῆς φύσιν μετὰ τὸ συμπληροῦν ἄλλην οὐσίαν, ἕν τε σὺν ἄλλῳ γενομένην καὶ τὸ καθ' ἑαυτὸν ἓν διασώζουσαν, καὶ τὸ μεῖζον αὐτὴν μὲν μὴ τρεπομένην, τρέπουσαν δὲ ἐκεῖνα ἐν οἷς ἂν γίγνηται εἰς τὴν ἑαυτῆς ἐνέργειαν τῇ παρουσίᾳ.

Porphyry stresses the ability of one substance to *be contained* by another substance even as that substance maintains the ability to 'transmute those things into which it comes so that they gain its activity by its presence.' Does the metaphor of 'containment' explain Jerome's use of *capax* to translate Didymus? Lewis and Short's primary definition of *capax* is 'capacious', or, able to contain something else. And Didymus defines that which we might say 'participates' as being 'filled', as *capiens*, as containing the substance which is *capabilis*. With *capabilis*, and whatever Greek lay behind it, perhaps Didymus has coined a term to stand in for a substance that 'can be a part of [another] substance while retaining its own nature together with completing another substance' (εἶναι μέρος οὐσίας μένουσαν κατὰ τὴν ἑαυτῆς φύσιν μετὰ τὸ συμπληροῦν ἄλλην οὐσίαν). This would present a rather clever use of pagan philosophy to explain both (a) how the Holy Spirit, as a 'participated entity', is uncreated, as well as (b) precisely how the Holy Spirit does what it does, namely, sanctify creatures.

Iamblichus

Some Platonists speculated about participation not only between sensible particulars and forms, but among the forms themselves. Iamblichus is the epitome of such speculation. Dillon explains that Iamblichus' scholastic, emanative metaphysics, which had developed since Plotinus,

> created the necessity for three aspects or 'moments' of each [noetic] hypostasis which represented (a) the hypostasis in its purest form, as opposed to (b) the hypostasis as participated in by a lower level of being, and (c) the hypostasis as reflected *in* the lower level of being; the three levels were termed ἀμέθεκτος (unparticipated), μετεχόμενος (participated) and κατὰ μέθεξιν or ἐν σχέσει (in participation or relation).[20]

What is most interesting about Iamblichus' doctrine for our purposes is that he (as well as Syrianus and Proclus after him) was willing to entertain the notion that forms participate one another. Speculation about the relationship amongst forms as noetic or spiritual entities would be at once interesting and dangerous in Didymus' view. His opponents seem to have taught that the Holy Spirit was one noetic creature among many. If the hypostatic forms can participate one another in a grand spiritual hierarchy, and if it is not that *only* sensible particulars – or *created* entities – participate the (uncreated) forms, then characterizing the Holy Spirit as 'participated in' would not be sufficient to prove his divinity. Given those terms it would be reasonable to suppose that the Holy Spirit, as a participated form, is an angel, a noetic *creature*. To mitigate against such a conclusion, Didymus would need to be careful to distinguish the Holy Spirit

[20] Dillon, 33.

from identification with the forms as *created* noetic entities participable in one another, and to do so, he would want to downplay any Iamblichean mechanism of intra-formal participation. Something like this motivation would clarify Didymus' deployment of participation theory in *De Spiritu Sancto*.

Conclusion

I will conclude with a word about the authorship of the *De trinitate* attributed to Didymus. One might suppose that, because it draws on 'Proclean distinctions' that came about only in the fifth century, it cannot be by Didymus.[21] However, the *De Spiritu Sancto*, whose Didymean authorship is beyond doubt, places significant weight on the metaphysics of participation. Nevertheless, one might argue that the *De trinitate* bears witness to 'Proclean' influence in light of its use of ἀμέθεκτος, a characteristically Proclean term. However, that term is used only once, so far as I have found, in the Didymean corpus: in the disputed text of *De trinitate*, Book II. Recall that Iamblichus identifies that which is ἀμέθεκτον, or unparticipated, with the purest form of a hypostasis in the noetic realm. However, the author of *De trinitate* argues that to be unable to be participated in *in the rational soul* is the characteristic of a creature – a somewhat unexpected application of the term. The use of the term here is something of a malappropism: it means that the *creature* is *not participated* precisely because the creature *participates in* God.[22] This is neither Iamblichus' nor Proclus' sense of ἀμέθεκτον. Furthermore, if it turns out to be the case that Didymus' opponents in *De Spiritu Sancto* did employ some form of Iamblichean intra-formal participation as a means to undermine the Spirit's divinity, then Didymus may have wanted to downplay Iamblichean metaphysics in

[21] This argument would rest on the presupposition that Christians read and were influenced by pagan intellectuals, but not *vice versa*. I appreciated David Brakke's suggestion that it may well be that Proclus read and was influenced by Didymus or Christians like him. However, the tendency in scholarship has long favored the unidirectional influence of pagan intellectuals on Christian thinkers. In the face of such scholarly tradition, then, it would be my burden to prove Didymus' influence on Proclus, and I have not attempted to make that case here. As a case in point, Carlos Steel gave a presentation on the relationship between Christianity and Platonism at the University of Chicago's *Lumen Christi Institute* in November 2011, in which he explicitly presumed that pagans did not read Christians as materially significant sources.

[22] ὅτι μεθεκτὸν οὐσιωδῶς ἐστι· θεοῦ δὲ μόνον ἴδιον τοῦτο. ἡ κτίσις ἀμέθεκτός ἐστιν οὐσιωδῶς τῇ λογικῇ ψυχῇ, ὡς ἐνοικίζεσθαι αὐτήν· μόνου γὰρ θεοῦ ἴδιον τὸ οὕτως μετέχεσθαι. τὸ δ' ἅγιον πνεῦμα μεθεκτὸν οὐσιωδῶς ὑπάρχει ὡς ὁ πατὴρ καὶ ὁ υἱός, καθὰ ἐν τῷ πρώτῳ εἴρηται λόγῳ. 'That [the Holy Spirit] is essentially able to be participated; but this is the property of God alone. The creature is essentially ἀμέθεκτός [not able to be participated] in the rational soul, since it is indwelled; for to be participated in this way is a property of God alone. But the Holy Spirit is essentially able to be participated (μεθεκτόν) like the Father and the Son, just as was said in the first account.'

that context. Such a motivation may explain Didymus' avoidance of the Iamblichean doctrine of an 'Unparticipable' noetic hypostasis in *De Spiritu Sancto*, in spite of the fact that Didymus clearly thinks that an entity's being participated in makes it superior to that which participates in it.

However that may be, it is not my aim to settle the question of *De trinitate*'s authorship here. Rather, I wish to make the larger point that the answer to that question will be wrapped up in a thoroughgoing analysis of both Didymus' thought as a whole – across the biblical commentaries and the dogmatic treatises – and its deployment of participation terminology. Equipped with an assessment of the role of the metaphysics of participation in all of Didymus' undisputed works, we will be in a better position to assess the authorship of spurious writings like *De trinitate* and Pseudo-Basil *Adversus Eunomium* IV-V.

La acedia y Evagrio Póntico. Entre ángeles y demonios

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Abstract

Evagrius Ponticus was one of the most important theoreticians of *acedia* in patristic times. In his writings he gives great weight to *logismos* in the development of spiritual life. Demons and angels have a fundamental role in the shaping and development of *acedia*. If, according to Evagrius, the intention is to prevent the demons of rendering man capable of knowledge (*Kephalaia Gnostica* III 41), then *acedia* must be some kind of 'ignorance', or rather, knowledge of an invented reality or a *metareality*, in which he acquires mastery of the soul.

This study seeks to show how the action of demons and angels are woven into the development of the *acedia* of man's soul.

Evagrio Póntico es uno de los grandes maestros de la espiritualidad cristiana. Dentro de su obra existen algunas temáticas que poseen un mayor desarrollo que otras lo que ciertamente responderá a las prioridades que les fijaba el autor. Una de ellas es la acedia, *logismos* al que le otorga un peso mayor que a cualquiera de los otros pensamientos malvados. 'El demonio de la acedia es el más pesado de todos', dice en el *Tratado práctico*.[1] El fenómeno de la acedia, a la vez espiritual y psicológico, cobra un importante protagonismo en la configuración de la vida espiritual del monje. A diferencia de la vanagloria, de la *gastrimagia* o de cualquiera de los otros siete *logismoi*, ella exige por parte del cristiano una particular vigilancia y una lucha permanente. Si se permite que ingrese al alma, detrás vendrá todo el resto de los demonios, pero una vez vencido, le sobreviene al alma 'un estado de paz y un gozo inefable'.[2]

Por otro lado, Evagrio considera que en su proceso de perfección, el monje vive en una continua lucha contra los demonios en la que también intervienen los ángeles. El mundo de los hombres está situado entre el de los ángeles y el de los demonios y, por tanto, se encuentra empujado hacia un lado o hacia el otro, a veces combatido y a veces combatiendo.[3] Escribe en el *Antirrhetikos*: 'Entre las naturalezas racionales, unas combaten, otras ayudan a los que combaten y

[1] Evagrio Póntico, *Traité pratique ou le moine* 12, ed. A. Guillaumont y C. Guillaumont, SC 171 (Paris, 1971), 521.

[2] Evagrio Póntico, *Traité pratique*, 527.

[3] Cfr. David Brakke, *Demons and the Making of the Monk. Spiritual Combat in Early Christianity* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2006), 76-7.

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otras combaten a las que combaten … Las que combaten son los hombres, las que ayudan son los ángeles de Dios y sus adversarios son los demonios impuros'.[4] Como afirma Guillaumont, el mundo de los hombres se encuentra en medio de una aventura cósmica.[5]

Estos dos elementos, la *acedia* por una parte y el juego entre *ángeles* y *demonios* por otra, deben tener puntos de coincidencia. Es decir, el combate permanente que se libra entre las criaturas racionales debe repercutir de alguna manera en los procesos acediosos que se dan en el alma humana como parte ineludible del camino de perfección. El objetivo de este trabajo, entonces, es determinar algunos aspectos característicos o estrategias empleadas por los demonios para inducir la acedia en el alma del monje, según los escritos de Evagrio Póntico, pero haciendo referencia también a otros autores de la espiritualidad cristiana.

1. Los demonios y la creación de mundos

Se suele decir que el demonio actúa imitando los actos de Dios. Probablemente esta afirmación se compruebe también en el aspecto particular de la doctrina de Evagrio que estamos analizando. Pareciera que el Póntico postula que una de las estrategias elegidas por los demonios es 'crear' en el hombre un mundo paralelo, o una *metarealidad*, de la cual él sea dueño y, de ese modo, tener dominio del alma. Sería este el proceso de la acedia ya que los intelectos caídos trabajan con dos clases de materiales: los pensamientos y las representaciones.[6]

El accionar de los demonios tiene una finalidad concreta que aparece clara en varios textos de Evagrio. Dice por ejemplo en la *Képhalaia gnostica*: 'Acerca de la contemplación de los seres y de la ciencia de la Trinidad, los demonios y nosotros sostenemos un gran combate; ellos queriendo impedirnos conocer y nosotros buscando aprender'.[7] Y en el *De oratione*: 'Toda la guerra entablada entre nosotros y los espíritus impuros no tiene otro objeto sino la contemplación espiritual; para ellos es hostil e insoportable; para nosotros salutífera y muy favorable'.[8] El objetivo de los demonios es impedir que el hombre alcance la 'ciencia de Dios', es decir, el estadio más alto de perfección.

[4] Evagrio Póntico, *Antirrhetikos* I, 1-4; ed. W. Frankenberg, *Evagrius Ponticus*, Abhandlungen der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, Philol.-hist. Klasse, Neue Folge, Bd. XII, 2 (Göttingen, 1912), 472.

[5] Cfr. Antoine Guillaumont, *Un philosophe au desert. Évagre le Pontique* (Paris, 2009), 360.

[6] Cfr. Columba Stewart, 'Imageless Prayer and the Theological Vision of Evagrius Ponticus', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 9 (2001), 173-204.

[7] Evagrio Póntico, *Kephalaia gnostica* III, 41, ed. A. Guillaumont, *Les six Centuries des 'Kephalaia gnóstica' d'Évagre le Pontique*, PO 28 (Paris, 1958), 115.

[8] Evagrio Póntico, *De oratione* 49 (PG 79, 1178).

Este conocimiento propio de la vida del gnóstico consiste en la visión de Dios por lo que las estrategias de los demonios deberán consistir, entonces, en impedir que el monje alcance esa ciencia, que es el placer más grande al que puede aspirar el hombre.[9] Al explicar el motivo de este ataque de los demonios, Evagrio se adscribe a la antigua tradición exegética según la cual la envidia es la que motivó a actuar a Satanás en su tentación a Eva, pues no puede soportar la idea de que el hombre goce de la contemplación espiritual de la cual ellos han sido privados. El resentimiento, los celos y la amargura son las formas que toma entre los demonios la cólera que caracteriza su estado caído.[10]

Es posible, entonces, que una de las estrategias elegidas por el demonio para impedir esa *scientia Dei* pertenezca a la misma especie de la que quiere combatir. Consistirá, por eso mismo, en 'crear' en el hombre otro tipo de conocimiento, o bien construir en él una realidad imaginaria que él pueda dominar. Se trata de interponer entre el hombre y Dios, a quien debe conocer, 'otro mundo' que le impida la visión o conocimiento. Veamos algunos textos: '(cuando los ángeles se acercan a nosotros) nos llenan de contemplación espiritual; cuando ellos se acercan (los demonios) arrojan al alma en imaginaciones vergonzosas'.[11] El modo de actuar de los demonios que está indicando Evagrio consiste en someter al monje a una suerte de irrupción de imágenes o, dicho de otro modo, a una efervescencia de la imaginación que adquiere características totalizantes, puesto que el alma es 'arrojada' a ese mundo de imaginaciones.

Cuando en el *Tratado práctico* describe a la acedia, destaca como uno de sus síntomas el que al monje 'le parece que el sol se mueve lentamente, o está inmóvil, y que el día parece tener cincuenta horas'.[12] Si bien este pasaje se ha interpretado frecuentemente como expresión del aburrimiento y del hastío propio de la acedia, considero que también podría ser interpretado en el sentido de que el demonio está creando fantasías, o bien, realidades falsa, *metarealidades*, que atormentan el alma del monje. En este caso, se trata de inducir en él una percepción equívoca del tiempo, lenta y farragosa, que lo predisponga al tedio y a las otras manifestaciones típicas de la acedia.

En el mismo capítulo, Evagrio indica que el demonio de la acedia también induce a que el monje comience a 'desear otros lugares' y, por eso, vagabundea con su imaginación en busca de un lugar mejor para alabar a Dios.[13] Esta idea del vagabundeo – que incluso puede ser físico – como fruto de imaginaciones, aparece también en otros autores espirituales cuando tratan el tema de

[9] 'No hay nada sobre la tierra que otorgue placer como la ciencia de Dios'. Evagrio Póntico, *Képhalaia gnostica*, III, 64.

[10] Según Evagrio, la cólera es el *logismos* que caracteriza a los demonios. Cfr. Evagrio Póntico, *Traité pratique*, 63-7.

[11] Evagrio Póntico, *Traité pratique* 76, 665.

[12] Evagrio Póntico, *Traité pratique* 12, 522.

[13] Evagrio Póntico, *Traité pratique* 12, 525.

la acedia. Casiano, por ejemplo, dice: 'Luego, esta misma enfermedad le sugiere como conveniente y necesario ir a saludar a los otros hermanos y visitar a los enfermos, aun si viven lejos'.[14] La invasión de imágenes que produce la acedia adquiere una poderosa consistencia en el alma del monje quien se siente asediado hasta tal punto que le resulta imposible escapar de la *metarealidad* que el demonio le ha impuesto.[15] Analicemos más detenidamente esta situación.

2. Pensamientos obsesivos

El carácter de este asalto de imágenes puede ser considerado en el sentido de obsesiones, entendiendo por tal las imágenes que se imponen al espíritu de manera repetida e incoercible. El sujeto reconoce la idea como propia de su mente – no impuesta por nadie – pero, aunque le moleste y le haga sufrir, no es capaz de echarla fuera de su consciencia. Se entabla así en la mente de la persona, una penosa lucha, con fuerte carga de ansiedad, entre la obsesión que se impone y la voluntad que trata de rechazarla fuera de la conciencia. Tal es la fuerza de estas imágenes obsesivas que se transforman en *axiomas* del pensamiento que minan la tensión volitiva y transforma a sus juicios y comportamientos en motivaciones o presiones afectivas sobre la voluntad. El monje acedioso, entonces, se encuentra prisionero en ese sub-mundo o *metarealidad*, del que resulta casi imposible escapar y que lo atormenta constantemente.

Un autor medieval de la primera mitad del siglo XII describe esta situación. Se trata del cartujo Bernardo de Portes quien se dirige al recluso Raynoud de Saint-Rambert con una precisa descripción de este tipo de *logismos* o pensamiento obsesivo que culmina provocando una situación de profunda tristeza en la víctima. Dice:

> Ocurre con frecuencia a aquellos que viven en la soledad de ser confundidos interiormente y rodeados de algunas nubes de tristeza e instigación del demonio. Porque nuestro enemigo inveterado conoce bien los medios para perjudicar a los servidores de Dios, para impedirles orar y dedicarse a las santas ocupaciones. Se esfuerza por arrojarlos a pensamientos de tristeza o de cólera sin motivo alguno, de orgullo, del recuerdo de injurias recibidas, de recuerdos vanos de lo que se dice, de lo que se hace o de lo que se debe hacer, de pensamientos impuros, de tibieza del alma o torpeza en el sueño, a fin de desviar el espíritu de sus santos deseos.[16]

[14] '*Deinde honestas idem morbus ac necessarias suggerit salutationes fratribus exhibendas uisitationesque infirmorum vel eminus vel longius positorum*'. Juan Casiano, *Institutions Cénobitiques* X, 2, ed. J.-C. Guy, SC 109 (Paris, 1965), 388.

[15] Sobre el tema del vagabundeo como síntoma de la acedia puede verse Michael L Barré, '"Wandering about" as a topos of Depression in Ancient Near Eastern Literature and in the Bible', *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 60 (2001), 177-87.

[16] *Lettre de Bernard de Portes au reclus Raynaud* I, 13; en: *Lettres des premiers chartreux.* II *Les moines de Portes*, SC 274 (Paris, 1980), 69.

Observemos que la terminología que usa Bernardo refleja el espíritu de las afirmaciones de Evagrio. Utiliza el verbo *ingero* que significa 'arrojar' para indicar el modo en que el monje es colocado en esa situación de tristeza. Es el equivalente exacto del término griego utilizado por Evagrio, que recurre al verbo ἐμβάλλω. A continuación, enumera el torbellino de *logismoi* o pensamientos que se instalan en la mente del monje creando, de esa manera, una realidad dolorosa y ficticia que le impide alcanzar la *scientia Dei* y lo fuerza a un movimiento espiritual y físico que responde a esas fantasías. Este movimiento o *kínesis* constante implica el alejamiento de la unidad originaria y la explosión de las pasiones que dispersan y fulminan el equilibrio psíquico y espiritual del monje. El alma es incapaz ya de la *praedicatio*, del soliloquio y del coloquio, pues se encuentra prisionera de un mundo de fantasías agresivas que la recluyen en sí misma impidiéndole el 'salir' y el anclarse en la realidad. Por eso, la acedia es una meditación contraria a la meditación, como bien la define Francesco Palleschi.[17]

3. Adam Scott y la *metarealidad* de Evagrio

La hipótesis que busco probar en este trabajo se ve reflejada en el caso concreto de un monje medieval que ha dejado por escrito sus experiencias de lo que claramente puede ser identificado como una crisis acediosa. Me refiero a Adam Scott, primero canónigo premostratense en la abadía escocesa de Dryburgh y abad de la misma entre 1184 y 1188, y luego, monje cartujo en Witham.[18] Llama la atención el cambio repentino del estado de vida de Adam que, de abad premostratense -estilo de vida a la que él consideraba paradisíaco-, pasa a ser cartujo.[19] Su caso es similar al de muchos otros religiosos. Por ejemplo, Guillermo de Saint-Thierry, que de abad de ese monasterio benedictino, se hace cisterciense, o Hugo de Miramar, que de canónigo de la catedral de Montpellier, se hace cartujo en Montrieux. ¿Qué es lo que provoca estos cambios tan rotundos? A partir del análisis de los escritos de Adam puede colegirse que es, justamente, una crisis acediosa, que se manifiesta a través de la creación, en la mente del monje, de una *metarealidad*, con caracteres muchas veces obsesivos, que le sugieren la inconveniencia de su actual estado de vida y la necesidad de elegir otra más perfecta y apartada del mundo.

[17] Cfr. Francesco Palleschi, 'L'acedie dans l'œuvre d'un prémontré devenu chartreux au XII^{e} siècle. Adam Scot et le *Liber De quadripertito exercitio cellae*', en: Nathali Nabert, *Tristesse, acédie et médicine des âmes. Anthologie de textes rares et inédits (XIII^{e}-XX^{e} siècle)* (Paris, 2005), 65.

[18] Sobre este autor puede verse: André Wilmart, 'Magister Adam chanoine prémontré devenu chartreux à Witham', *Analecta Praemonstratensi* 9 (1932), 209-32 y el capítulo de F. Palleschi recién citado.

[19] Escribe: '… locus voluntatis Ecclesia est praemostratensia', y luego la relaciona con el paraíso. Adam Scott, *De tripartito tabernáculo* (PL 198), 616.

No es el caso aquí de juzgar los motivos de las opciones de vida que realizó Adam, sino simplemente de analizar algunos de sus textos que reflejan sus estados espirituales y psicológicos y concluir a partir de ellos y a la luz de los aspectos que he desarrollado en los puntos anteriores.[20]

Adam utiliza con frecuencia la imagen del *viento* para expresar sus estados espirituales y de ánimo. Dice: 'La gran tribulación y la tentación interior es como el viento'.[21] Está utilizando la imagen de una fuerza de la naturaleza que se caracteriza por la impetuosidad con la que arremete, cambiando de un modo muchas veces repentino el estado atmosférico de un lugar. Sus ráfagas que van y vienen, sin ningún orden o concierto, vuelven incapaz cualquier intento de mantener el equilibrio y la simetría de los objetos. La imagen es apropiada para describir los estados de acedia como *metarealidades*: también en este caso se ha perdido toda euritmia interior y es imposible controlar los torbellinos obsesivos que asolan el alma, la que es llevada y traída, contra su voluntad, por los pensamientos que se han ensañado contra ella.

El texto más significativo y desgarrador de Adam Scott se encuentra en sus *Soliloquios*:

> Yo creía que, al renunciar al mundo e ingresar en la vida religiosa, encontraría la paz y el reposo. Pero me veo, a la inversa, embarcado en grandes tribulaciones y dificultades, y en miserias peores que aquellas que podría haber sufrido en el mundo. Yo que, estando en alta mar, busqué un puerto seguro en el cual escapar a la violencia de los vientos y a la crueldad del oleaje, y ahora me siento más bien aplastado por las olas y empujado por ellas de una orilla a otra, peor entonces que cuando nadaba en el mar.[22]

Durante su vida como canónigo, Adam ha estado feliz. Es una vida a la que reconoce como la apropiada para sí. Sin embargo, de un momento a otro, todo cambia, y le parece estar en medio del mar, tratando de mantenerse a flote. Busca, entonces, en la dura vida cartujana lo que él cree será un puerto donde los vientos amainen y pueda cobijarse pero, por el contrario, allí es 'aplastado por las olas'. Adam reconoce en el viento una profunda turbación del espíritu que va y viene, que no escampa y que no le da tranquilidad. Se encuentra

[20] Puede verse el ya citado trabajo de Palleschi donde aparece un análisis de tipo psicológico, desde una perspectiva contemporánea, a este caso.

[21] '*Ventus est tribulatio magna et interior tentatio*'. Adam Scott, *Allegoriae in universam sacram Scripturam* (PL 112, 1073).

[22] '*… sed sperabam, quando saeculo renuntiavi et ad vitam religiosam veni, ad pacem me et quietem venisse. Credebam: nunc autem viceversa ad magnas tribulationes et angustias me video pervenisse, et ad maiores miserias quam quas dum eram in saeculo! Et qui idcirco de maris profundo ad portus soliditatem confugi, ut et ventorum violentiam et fluctum vitarem saevitiam, nunc magis me sentio et fluctibus conquassari et undis hinc inde impelli in littore quam solebam quando natabam in mari*'. Adam Scott, *Soliloquium*, ed. J. Bouvet, en *Collectanea Cisterciensia* 50 (1988), 122. Otra edición del mismo texto puede verse en PL 198, 844BC. Es importante tener en cuenta que Bouvet atribuye, de modo infundado, esta obra a Adán de Perseigne. Sobre esta discusión puede verse Francesco Palleschi, *Les derniers écrits d'Adam Scot. Analyse linguistique et stylistique du «De quadripartito exercitio cellae»* (Salzburg, 2002), 129-39.

encerrado en una *circularidad* de movimiento – que por otro lado se relaciona con la idea de *viento* – y que provoca en él una construcción *autoreferencial* o bien, una construcción intelectual *metareal*, en la que la vida de cartujo se le presenta como su única escapatoria. Se trata de efectos típicos de la acedia. El *metareal* psicológico lo lleva *oboedire Deo magis quam hominibus* y buscar entre los cartujos una vida más intelectual y, también, más dura.[23]

'Ya no eres lo que eras, sino alguien totalmente distinto', dirá en otra de sus obras al referirse a las crisis de acedia.[24] Ha sufrido un cambio psicológico profundo, que lo ha turbado, angustiándolo y provocándole una profunda tristeza y esa necesidad, que ya advertían Evagrio y Casiano, de salir y de abandonar la estabilidad. No se trata, como los monjes del desierto, de vagar de celda en celda visitando amigos, sino de cambiar de orden religiosa, corriendo detrás de una supuesta perfección más adecuada para él. Es esa la imagen que le presenta la construcción *metareal* que le ha provocado la acedia, y tras de la cual se encamina.

Podemos concluir, entonces, afirmando que en la doctrina de Evagrio Póntico al menos una de las estrategias que poseen los demonios en la provocación de las crisis de acedia en la vida monástica, consiste en la creación en el alma del monje de una *metarealidad* que se interpone a su fin, consistente en alcanzar la gnosis divina. Esa realidad ficticia, creada y alimentada por los pensamientos obsesivos, impide o dificulta que la persona posea un contacto adecuado con la realidad y, de esa manera, sus decisiones se tornan confusas y equivocadas, alejándose consecuentemente de su fin.

Esta interpretación evagriana puede verse expresada en la vida y los escritos del monje medieval Adam Scott. Por cierto, es improbable que éste haya conocido los escritos de Evagrio. Sin embargo, el relato de sus vivencias espirituales permite seguir de cerca, como expresión de un testimonio vivo, la enseñanza de Evagrio.

[23] Esta situación límite Adán la había previsto en otra de sus obras, en la que se plantea la posibilidad de que un religioso no pueda cumplir su voto de perfección en el monasterio que ha profesado debido a la vida laxa que en él se lleva. En ese caso, 'oportet Deo obedire magis quam hominibus' (*Hech*. 5, 29), recuerda, y afirma que a tal monje no le podrá imputar la falta de desobediencia porque es preferible obedecer a Dios aunque, para ello, se deba desobedecer a los hombres. Cfr. Adan Scot, *De ordine et habitu canonic. praem*. VIII (PL 198, 504C).

[24] '*Jam idem ipse non est qui aliquando fuisti, sed ex toto alius*'. Adam Scott, *Liber ex exercitio cellae* XXIV (PL 153, 842A).

The Pastoral Care of Epiphanius of Cyprus

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Abstract

This paper will suggest that the *Ancoratus*, Epiphanius' first major writing, can be read as a series of catechetical 'lessons' punctuated with two orthodox creeds. The content of these teachings and the motivations behind their composition point to an aspect of Epiphanius that is often overshadowed by other scholarly interpretations of the bishop from Cyprus. The *Ancoratus* reveals Epiphanius the 'pastor', who wrote to educate, encourage, and equip fellow Christians he perceived were suffering under the oppression of 'heresy'.

Up to the closing decade of the last century, the modern reception and perception of Epiphanius tended to lie at one of two extremes. One Epiphanius was the irritable, over-zealous, meddlesome, and invective-prone author of the *Panarion*, whom Richard Hanson once described as, 'another second-rate theologian standing in the tradition of Athanasius' and 'a writer who is narrow-minded at best and very silly at worst'.[1] Frank Williams, who translated the enormous heresiology into English, perhaps summed up best the reasons why modern scholars had found Epiphanius so unlikable: 'It is Epiphanius' inflated self-esteem which renders him least attractive. It is clear that he considered his own scholarship superior to most, and his own word on any question of importance decisive; once he had pronounced, nothing need be added. Nor was he given to regarding opponents with respect.'[2] Along with criticisms of his personality, most assessments of Epiphanius also disparaged his lack of education and intellectual polish: 'In his writing he is often imprecise, superficial, and verbose and, as Photius (Cod. 122) had already noted, generally lacked in cultivated form as well as the Attic spirit.'[3] These deficiencies were further underscored by the fact that Epiphanius was a contemporary of some of the

[1] Richard Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God. The Arian Controversy, 318-381* (Edinburgh, 1988), 658. See also the generally negative assessment in Frances Young, 'Did Epiphanius know what he meant by Heresy?', *SP* 17 (1982), 199-205.

[2] Frank Williams, *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis, Book I (Sects 1-46)*, Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies 35 (Leiden, 1987), xxv.

[3] Berthold Altaner, 'Epiphanius von Salamis', in *id.*, *Patrologie: Leben, Schriften, und Lehre der Kirchenväter* (Freiburg i.Br., 1950), 272.

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greatest patristic luminaries, many of whom were also highly educated.[4] However, together with the negative assessments came the recognition that despite his shortcomings, Epiphanius had done a great service for the modern understanding of early Christianity through his cataloguing of the theological beliefs and practices of numerous heresies and through his preservation and transmission of otherwise lost texts.[5] Thus there was a general tendency in twentieth-century scholarship on the one hand to criticize and in some cases downplay the importance of the irascible heresiologist, but on the other hand to mine and utilize his writings for other purposes.

The prolific work of Calogero Riggi represents the other Epiphanius, in which *il santo di Salamina* was a defender of orthodoxy, ascetic exemplar, and faithful bishop, who in many ways could do no wrong: 'Few ancient Christian authors reveal such a rooting in faith, alien to personal interests and adverse to philosophical myths. For this, Epiphanius has been accused by moderns of limited intelligence and of an anti-Hellenic mania. In our opinion, he was just very consistent with his personal formation.'[6] In over two dozen articles and books, Professor Riggi consistently praised and admired Epiphanius (though not without the occasional criticism), and he explored in particular what he thought were the rich theological and liturgical contributions of the venerable bishop from Cyprus. However, Riggi's markedly positive reception reflected by and large a minority view within the larger corpus of Epiphanian scholarship of the last century.

Near the turn of the millennium, beginning with the monograph-length study by Jon Dechow, modern scholars have engaged in a thorough reassessment of Epiphanius as a formidable thinker and writer in his own right.[7] Dechow's book situated Epiphanius' personal formation within a specific strand of Egyptian monasticism that laid the foundation for his 'intransigent' convictions and vehement opposition to the theology of Origen. Soon thereafter, Aline Pourkier considered Epiphanius' place in the broader developments within the Christian literary tradition of heresiology, and she studied thoroughly

[4] Pierre Nautin, 'Épiphane (Saint) de Salamine', in *DHGE* 15 (Paris, 1963), 625: 'In fact, Epiphanius seems to be a complete stranger to classical *paideia* and is, in this regard, a unique exception among the grand authors of this age'. Epiphanius was a contemporary of the Cappadocian Fathers, John Chrysostom, Jerome and Augustine, among others.

[5] For example, the Greek text of a large section from Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses* (*Panarion* XXXI 9.1-32.9), the letter of the Gnostic Ptolemy to Flora (*Pan*. XXXIII 3.1-7.10), a large portion of Methodius, *De resurrectione mortuorum* (*Pan*. LXIV 12.1-62.15), and letters written by Basil of Ancyra and George of Laodicea (*Pan*. LXXIII 2.1-22.8).

[6] Calogero Riggi, *Epifanio. L'Ancora della fede*, Collana di testi patristici 9 (Rome, 1977), 9. For a broad appreciation of Epiphanius' life and work, and in some cases an explaining-away of his shortcomings, see *id*., 'La figura di Epifanio nel IV secolo', *SP* 8 (1966), 86-107. For a very specific examination of Epiphanius' spiritual and theological contributions, see *id*., 'Catechesi escatologica dell' "Ancoratus" di Epifanio', *Augustinianum* 8 (1978), 163-71.

[7] Jon Dechow, *Dogma and Mysticism in Early Christianity. Epiphanius of Cyprus and the Legacy of Origen* (Macon, 1988).

Epiphanius' unique contributions to this genre and in particular his rhetorically-driven construction of several heresies found in the *Panarion*.[8] Elizabeth Clark added nuanced depth to our understanding of Epiphanius' version of Origenism, one which was deeply concerned over the consequences of Origen's thought on the theology of the body.[9] Both Rebecca Lyman and Averil Cameron published several insightful articles which further examined Epiphanius' understanding and construction of heresy.[10] Thus the sum of the studies from the last two decades reflects a marked shift in scholarly evaluations of Epiphanius, as there has been a concerted effort to locate him within the broader historical context of late ancient Christianity, especially in relation to developments in the genre of heresiology.[11] There is now an increasing recognition of the subtle complexities of his convictions and deployment of Christian rhetoric, such that Christoph Markschies remarked in an encyclopedia entry on Epiphanius: 'The theological originality of Epiphanius and the source value of his polemic are now judged more favorably'.[12]

As the focus of scholarly attention has been on Epiphanius' construction of orthodoxy and heresy, I believe that this has opened up space to study other aspects of his personal character and thought. Oliver Kösters' monograph and theological commentary on the *Ancoratus* offers one such evaluation, emphasizing well that, 'his [Epiphanius'] motivation is thus *soteriological*. Accordingly, he rigorously advances forward in his argumentation; accordingly, he

[8] Aline Pourkier, *L'hérésiologie chez Épiphane de Salamine* (Paris, 1992).

[9] See Elizabeth Clark, *The Origenist Controversy. The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate* (Princeton, 1992), 86-104.

[10] See Rebecca Lyman, 'The Making of a Heretic: The Life of Origen in Epiphanius' *Panarion* 64', *SP* 31 (1997), 445-51; *id*., 'Origen as Ascetic Theologian: Orthodoxy and Authority in the Fourth-Century Church', in Wolfgang Bienert and Uwe Kühneweg (eds), *Origeniana Septima. Origenes in den Auseinanderstezungen des 4. Jahrhunderts*, Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium 137 (Leuven, 1999), 187-94; *id*., 'Ascetics and Bishops. Epiphanius on Orthodoxy', in *Orthodoxy, Christianity, History*, Collection de l'École Française de Rome 270 (Rome, 2000), 149-61. Also see Averil Cameron, 'How to Read Heresiology', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 33 (2003), 471-92; *id*., 'Jews and Heretics—A Category Error?', in Adam Becker and Annette Reed (eds), *The Ways That Never Parted. Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism 95 (Tübingen, 2003), 345-60.

[11] Alain Le Boulluec, *La notion d'hérésie dans la littérature grecque (IIe-IIIe siècles)* (Paris, 1985) is the seminal work for the critical understanding of the development of heresiology. A. Cameron, 'How to Read Heresiology' (2003), 474 makes the important observation that scholars have tended to read heresiologies as just sources of information, rather than as 'performative or functional texts'. For examples of alternative 'readings' of the *Panarion* as a work of heresiology, see Jeremy Schott, 'Heresiology as Universal History in Epiphanius's *Panarion*', *Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum* 10 (2007), 546-63; Young Kim, 'Reading the *Panarion* as Collective Biography: The Heresiarch as Unholy Man', *Vigiliae Christianae* 64 (2010), 382-413.

[12] Quotation from Christoph Markschies, 'Epiphanios von Salamis', in *Der Neue Pauly, Band 3* (Stuttgart, 1997), 1153.

relentlessly fights heresy.'[13] Furthermore, Kösters demonstrates Epiphanius' consistent appeal to Scripture as the foundation for his doctrinal convictions and how his detailed exegesis of problematic biblical passages reflected a broader knowledge of and engagement with other writers and writings, both orthodox and heterodox, and this certainly mitigates the old criticisms of Epiphanius' intellectual deficiencies. The goal of this paper is to add another shade to a more 'balanced' view of Epiphanius by 1) considering the historical circumstances in which he wrote his first major work, the *Ancoratus*, 2) examining the broader organizational structure of the work, one which reflected a kind of catechesis, punctuated by two orthodox creeds, and 3) noting some of the pastoral strategies he deployed in his work to educate, encourage, and equip his addressees.[14] The picture that emerges is that of Epiphanius the pastor, the one who oversaw, cared for, and guided not only his own flock on Cyprus, but other flocks throughout the Church.

One often overlooked detail in studies (and criticisms) of Epiphanius' life is that his writings were almost always composed in response to other Christians who had sent letters to him to solicit his biblical and theological knowledge and to petition his assistance in resisting and refuting heresy. Epiphanius composed the *Panarion* at the request of two Syrian presbyters, and he also wrote on the orthodox understanding of the virgin Mary in response to an appeal from Christians in Arabia and on the proper celebration of Easter as a reply to Egyptian clerics.[15] The same is true of the *Ancoratus*, which was dictated in the form of a long epistle in response to two letters sent to him from believers in Syedra in Pamphylia, along the southern coast of Anatolia.[16] The historical circumstances and occasion for these letters were clearly one of duress; the 'orthodox' Christians of Syedra were alarmed at local 'heretics' who apparently held to a correct view of the Son, but denigrated the Holy Spirit as a creature neither part of the divine Godhead nor worthy of worship. These were the so-called 'Pneumatomachoi' or 'those who fight against the Spirit'.[17] Furthermore, there is another important element of historical circumstance to

[13] Oliver Kösters, *Die Trinitätslehre des Epiphanius von Salamis. Ein Kommentar zum »Ancoratus«*, Forschungen zur Kirchen- und Dogmengeschichte 86 (Göttingen, 2003), 46 (emphasis mine).

[14] Calogero Riggi, 'La catéchèse adaptée aux temps chez Epiphane', *SP* 17 (1982), 160-8 also suggested one might read the *Ancoratus* as a reflection of what Epiphanius would have understood to be catechesis. Riggi divided Epiphanius' 'catechesis' into three broad categories: dogmatic, moral, and sacramental.

[15] The letter from Acacius and Paul can be found at the beginning of the *Pan*., while the letter to the Christians in Arabia is found at *Pan*. LXXVIII 2.1-24.6. For the fragments on the letter to the Egyptians, see Joseph Lebon, 'Sur quelques fragments de letters attribuées à S. Épiphane de Salamine', in *Miscellanea Giovanni Mercati, Volume I. Bibbia-Letteratura Cristiana antica*, Studi e Testi 121 (Vatican City, 1946), 145-74.

[16] See O. Kösters, *Die Trinitätslehre* (2003), 89-107, on the two letters.

[17] For a useful study, see Michael Haykin, *The Spirit of God. The Exegesis of 1 and 2 Corinthians in the Pneumatomachian Controversy of the Fourth Century* (Leiden, 1994).

be drawn from the first letter, which mentioned, 'many of those who seem to have been deceived have been made wholly sound by the grace of our Lord, through the writings of the bishop Athanasius, worthy of blessed memory…'[18] Epiphanius started the *Ancoratus* at the end of 373, while Athanasius had passed away in the spring of 373, which meant that at least the first letter was sent to Cyprus likely in the summer of that year. The Christians in Syedra must have had in their possession copies of the writings of Athanasius, probably his letters to Serapion on the divinity of the Holy Spirit, but they needed more and the bishop of Alexandria was no longer alive.[19] So they turned to the archbishop of Cyprus for help, and this decision seems to imply that they viewed Epiphanius as someone in theological continuity with Athanasius and perhaps even as the next torch bearer of orthodoxy.

The second letter was likely sent by a monastic community in Syedra, and in it there is an even greater sense of the anxiety of the believers in Pamphylia: 'Even as we are afflicted in an unstable swell and rough billow, we are able to find no one among us competent to be able to solve the questions and to expound to us the sound faith. We have urged your piety to take up the matter, and we truly utter this cry: "Master, save us!"'[20] Furthermore, as Kösters argues, it was quite likely that the local bishop of the church in Syedra was himself one of the Pneumatomachoi, and thus the orthodox believers would have been even more desperate for correct teaching and reliable leadership.[21] Thus in part Epiphanius' strong rhetoric and unyielding dogmatism must be understood as proportional responses to threats faced by true believers, because no pastor would stand by idly as sheep were being attacked by wolves.

Epiphanius' reply to both of these letters was the *Ancoratus*. Though it was a rather lengthy dictated letter, to categorize the text as just an epistle ultimately would be misleading.[22] Scholars have described and characterized the *Ancoratus* in a number of ways, at best as an orthodox theological manifesto and at worst as a haphazard jumble of Christian dogma. Indeed if one does read through the text straight through, it is a challenge to identify any organizing principle or systematic approach. However, from a broader angle, which considers the work as a whole, one can discern a series of theological explications, each of which responds to a particular point of heresy and many of them of such a length that one could imagine them functioning as individual 'lectures' to be read aloud and studied. Furthermore, in each of these lessons Epiphanius consistently identified what was the falsely held belief, and then he elucidated the respective orthodox position. For each point of instruction,

[18] Epiphanius, *Ancoratus*, Letter 1.3. All translations are my own, based on *Epiphanius (Ancoratus und Panarion)*, ed. Karl Holl, GCS 25 (Leipzig, 1915).

[19] O. Kösters, *Die Trinitätslehre* (2003), 90f.

[20] *Anc*., Letter 2.4.

[21] O. Kösters, *Die Trinitätslehre* (2003), 92f.

[22] O. Kösters, *Die Trinitätslehre* (2003), 112-6 on the problems of the structure and genre of the *Anc*.

he provided a litany of scriptural proof texts to affirm his assertions. In other words, one could conceive of the *Ancoratus* as a form of catechesis, broadly organized along a heresiological structure, one in which Epiphanius instructed believers first in what not to believe then in what to believe.[23]

Certain themes and theological issues divide the *Ancoratus* into several 'catechetical' lessons. The first major instruction dealt with the divinity of the Son, vis-à-vis his relationship to the Father, and Epiphanius fully affirmed the theology of ὁμοούσιος as orthodoxy: 'To say the ὁμοούσιον is the bond of the faith. For if you say the ὁμοούσιον, you destroy the power of Sabellius.'[24] Other 'lessons' in later sections also elaborated further on the orthodox theology of the Son, with slightly different emphases, ranging from the difference between divine and human knowledge to the affirmation of the Son as Creator and not a creature.[25] It was essential for Epiphanius to build a foundation of the divinity of the Son in order to establish a theology of the divinity of the Holy Spirit, as he made particular appeal to the shared divine activity of the three persons.[26] Furthermore, Epiphanius consistently situated this unified activity within the framework of the divine οἰκονομία, God's redemptive plan of salvation which culminated in the real, complete, incarnate παρουσία of Christ. Since all three persons were essential to the execution and fulfillment of this plan, this proved the divinity and the individual hypostatic existence of each of the three, united in the triune Godhead: 'The true Father is hypostatic and the true Son is hypostatic and the true Holy Spirit is hypostatic, being three, one divinity, one οὐσία, one praise, one God.'[27]

The *Ancoratus* also included a catalogue of eighty heresies, which matched almost exactly the eighty entries of the *Panarion*, and it seems that for Epiphanius to learn the names of various heresies and schisms would have been an important part of a Christian's education and preparation for baptism.[28] Epiphanius also added several significant teachings on the nature and salvific purpose of the Incarnation, which he insisted was physical, perfect, and real, including body, mind, and soul, specifically in response to the teachings of certain heretics:

[23] This is not to say, however, that the text reads easily or that it comprised clearly identifiable 'lesson' breaks. The *Anc*. does exhibit a lack of tidiness due to its dictated character, the haste and urgency in which it was composed, and the general verbosity and free-flowing style of Epiphanius.

[24] *Anc*. 6.4.

[25] For 'lessons' on the divinity of the Son, see *Anc*. 2-6, 17-26, 28f., 41-52. Arius, of course, was also an important point of opposition.

[26] For the divinity of the Spirit within the Trinity, see *Anc*. 7-11, 14-6, 70-5.

[27] *Anc*. 10.5. The word for 'hypostatic' is ἐνυπόστατος. In the *Anc*., Epiphanius seemed to maintain a one hypostasis theology, though in the *Pan*. he seems to have embraced the one substance, three hypostases formula (for example, at *Pan*. LXXII 1.3, LXXIII 34.2, LXVIII 24.5). See O. Kösters, *Die Trinitätslehre* (2003), 72-6, 298-306, 348-53.

[28] *Anc*. 12-4.

For straightaway it [Scripture] destroyed the opinion of the Manichaeans: for in the saying, 'to eat' and 'to drink', it indicates true flesh. It destroyed the way of the Lucianists and the power of Arius; for Lucian and all Lucianists deny that the Son of God has received a soul, and they say he has had only flesh, that they might actually attribute to the God-*Logos* human experience, to drink and to eat, labor and weeping, pain and distress, and as much as pertains to his incarnate παρουσία.[29]

Again, there is a sense here in which Epiphanius found it important to articulate both the orthodox and the heterodox teaching as part of his pastoral and catechetical teaching.

Epiphanius taught on biblical hermeneutics, specifically on the different levels of reading and interpreting Scripture, because, 'a great wonder comes to me, oh sons of the faith and church, how the lovers of quarrels turned inside out the literal things into allegory, and they understand things which have been said figuratively as literal things'.[30] He attacked the allegorizing tendency of Origen, especially with respect to the real existence of Paradise on earth: 'Thus also concerning Paradise many people allegorize, as the insane Origen wished a fantasy rather than the very truth to be introduced to life'.[31] Epiphanius also specifically criticized Origen's allegorical understanding of the 'garments of flesh' of *Gen*. 3:21, his idea that the Son cannot truly 'see' the Father, and his view of an alternative bodily resurrection.[32] Correspondingly, Epiphanius provided substantial 'lessons' on a true bodily resurrection, both of Christ and of humanity: 'For unbelievers deny the entirety of the resurrection, and wicked believers vulgarly and foolishly have fallen from the hope according to the truth to think thus about the resurrection'.[33] Finally, Epiphanius taught on the immorality and irrationality of pagan idolatry and mythology and on the justice and consistency of God in the Old and New Testaments.[34]

Like a good preacher, Epiphanius also deployed a number of analogies, allusions, and illustrations, both from Scripture and from daily experience, which made certain difficult theological concepts easier to understand. For example, to make sense of how orthodox Christians believe that the humanity of Christ could undergo the passion but at the same uphold a doctrine of impassibility of the divinity, Epiphanius made a comparison with a person wearing a cloak which has a stain on it. The stain is certainly reckoned to the bearer of the cloak, but the stain itself does not penetrate to the actual body of

[29] *Anc*. 33.3-4. On the complete Incarnation, see *Anc*. 31-40, 75-81 (against Apollinaris); on salvation, *Anc*. 64-69.

[30] Quotation from *Anc*. 53.1.

[31] *Anc*. 54.2. On hermeneutics and Paradise, see *Anc*. 53-63.

[32] *Anc*. 62-3, 87. Epiphanius 'refuted' all of these ideas more fully in *Pan*. LXIV.

[33] *Anc*. 83.1. On the bodily resurrection, see *Anc*. 83-101 (contra Hieracites, Hellenes, Manichaeans, and Origenists).

[34] On pagan idolatry and mythology, see *Anc*. 101-6; on God's justice, *Anc*. 110-4.

the person.[35] In another lesson, to help explain the reason and willingness of the Incarnate Christ to suffer, Epiphanius elucidated:

> In the manner of a great king waging war against one more inferior, who knows that his enemy, if he should see him coming in power and with great strength, will beg off and will turn to flight and will destroy many lands of his [the king's] subjects. And because of this, in his wisdom he feigns excuses and gives his back and flees, until the enemy, taking up courage, might be persuaded that the king is cowardly and powerless and might pursue him. And the king, turning himself around suddenly, behind the entire body of men of his force, awaits the weak and opposing [force].[36]

To provide proof from the natural world of the hope of the resurrection, Epiphanius discussed the hair and nails of a person, which grow back after being cut, the famous legend of the Phoenix, the staff of Aaron which though dry miraculously bore fruit, and the staff of Moses which became alive in the form of a serpent.[37] Such devices, of course, were not unique to Epiphanius, but together they did reflect a pastoral concern on his part, that his audience might better understand, explain, and affirm to others the true, orthodox faith.

The *Ancoratus* culminated in two final sections, in which Epiphanius reiterated the centrality of the Trinity in the Apostolic, orthodox confession of faith when he said: 'we know that the Father is Father; Son is Son; Holy Spirit is Holy Spirit, Trinity in unity. For one is the unity of Father and Son and Holy Spirit, one *ousia*, one lordship, one will, one church, one baptism, one faith'.[38] Furthermore, he exhorted the recipients of his instruction:

> … may you, faithful and orthodox, not cease teaching, guiding, instructing this holy faith of the catholic church, as the holy and only virgin of God undertook from the holy Apostles of the Lord to protect. And thus help each of those who are being catechized, who intend to come to holy baptism, not only to proclaim to their sons in the Lord 'the believing', but also to teach specifically, as the same mother of both you and of us all, 'the saying'.[39]

In other words, the *Ancoratus* would provide church leaders and candidates for baptism the essential substance of what an orthodox Christian ought to believe ('the believing'), and it would furnish the necessary public, verbal statements which encapsulated these correct beliefs ('the saying'). Much scholarly attention in the last century has been focused on the two creeds which concluded the *Ancoratus*. The prevailing view is that the first was originally the authentic Nicene Creed, which was later replaced by a scribe with the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed, and the second was written by Epiphanius himself as a baptismal creed which extended and explained further the

[35] *Anc*. 36.6, 93.5.
[36] *Anc*. 34.5.
[37] On hair and nails, see *Anc*. 83.5; on the Phoenix, *Anc*. 84.3-6; on the staff of Aaron, *Anc*. 95.1-2; on the staff of Moses, *Anc*. 96.1-7.
[38] *Anc*. 118.3.
[39] *Anc*. 118.7

preceding Nicene Creed.[40] The inclusion of the Nicene Creed is notable because it seems to represent for Epiphanius the fundamental starting point of an orthodox profession of faith. However, it was also absolutely essential for him to supplement the creed to such a degree of precision that those who prepared for baptism and those who administered it understood exactly what constituted orthodoxy. Thus the positioning of these creeds at the end of the *Ancoratus* supports the notion that Epiphanius might have envisioned his response to the believers in Syedra to comprise a series of catechetical 'lessons', culminating in two orthodox confessions to be proclaimed before baptism.

The *Ancoratus* is a text that is often overlooked and overshadowed by the significantly longer *Panarion*, though both texts certainly exhibit some of the negative qualities typically associated with Epiphanius: unbridled polemic, rigid dogmatism, and uncompromising zeal. However, if only traits of this type comprise the modern reception of Epiphanius, then the picture of the man which emerges is ultimately too shallow. Through the cursory considerations of the historical context and the content of the *Ancoratus* offered in this paper, the hope of the author is that current perspectives on Epiphanius might also seek to understand him in his self-perceived role as pastor and caretaker of the Church. Yes, he was a polemicist who utilized the full range of Christian rhetoric to attack his enemies and to present their beliefs in a distorted way, and yes, he was an individual who perhaps thought too highly of himself and meddled in situations which were beyond his purview. But, he was also a pastor, a man who loved the faithful and orthodox, and he expended every ounce of his energy to educate, encourage, and equip his holy sheep, not only on Cyprus, but in all of Christendom. Epiphanius' life encompassed all of these things, and we as modern scholars, who have the luxury of hindsight and our own sense of what constitutes good behavior and noble character, ought to remember that the figures of the ancient world who so capture our interest and attention were always more complicated than we sometimes make them out to be.

[40] On the first creed, see Bernd Weischer, 'Die ursprüngliche nikänische Form des ersten Glaubenssymbols im Ankyrōtos des Epiphanius von Salamis. Ein Beitrag zur Diskussion um die Entstehung des konstantinopolitanischen Glaubenssymbols im Lichte neuester äthiopistischer Forschungen', *Theologie und Philosophie* 53 (1978), 407-14. On the second creed, see Bernd Weischer, 'Die Glaubenssymbole des Epiphanios von Salamis und des Gregorios von Thaumaturgos im Qērellos', *Oriens Christianus* 61 (1977), 20-40. Also see O. Kösters, *Die Trinitätslehre* (2003), 322-3, n. 40 for an overview of the debate on these creeds.

Insatiable Appetites: Epiphanius of Salamis and the Making of the Heretical Villain

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Abstract

For ancient Christians, the most dangerous enemies are those within the Christian 'body'. Heretics are the stock villains of Patristic literature, in other words. The late fourth-century bishop Epiphanius of Salamis, author of a work entitled *Panarion*, or *Medicine Chest*, is among the most inventive of the ancient heresiologists. Comparing heresy to disease, he also frequently portrays heretical leaders as hypersexual. This paper seeks to build on prior scholarship that has emphasized Epiphanius' prominent use of medical metaphors, on the one hand, and his feminized and eroticized depictions of heretics, on the other. Focusing on the convergence of these two rhetorical strategies, I will explore the resonance of Epiphanius' heresiology with medical literature in which effeminacy – and likewise lustfulness – is represented as a disease. The trope of *lustfulness as disease* can be interpreted as part of a shared cultural milieu that Epiphanius and other writers of medical treatises are drawing from. Thus, Epiphanius invokes the disease of effeminacy discussed by medical writers to construct a heretical villain notable for his insidiousness.

Writing about the AIDS crisis of the 1980's, Leo Bersani gestures towards the role of the media in representing homosexuals as both diseased and hypersexual. He writes: 'The effectiveness of the media as an educating force in the fight against AIDS can be measured by the results of a poll … in which 56.8 percent of *News of the World* readers came out "in favor of the idea that AIDS carriers should be sterilized and given treatment to curb their sexual appetite, with a mere fifty-one percent in favor of the total recriminalization of homosexuality".'[1] By building on prior scholarship that has emphasized his prominent use of medical metaphors, on the one hand, and his feminized and eroticized depictions of heretics, on the other, I read Epiphanius of Salamis, as having a stake in a similar enterprise. Focusing on the convergence of these two rhetorical strategies, I will explore the resonance of Epiphanius' heresiology with ancient medical literature in which possession of excessive sexual desires

[1] Leo Bersani, 'Is the Rectum a Grave?' in *AIDS: Cultural Analysis, Cultural Activism* (Cambridge, 1987), 197-222.

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is represented as a disease.[2] Just as disease may infect the human body, so lustfulness may infect the Christian body. Thus, Epiphanius invokes the disease of excessive lustfulness – often professed as effeminacy – discussed by medical writers to construct a heretical villain notable for his insidiousness.

Rebecca Lyman has shown how Epiphanius was heavily invested in championing the ascetic enterprise in the midst of controversies surrounding both asceticism and ecclesial authority.[3] Writing in the last quarter of the fourth-century (374-376), he addressed such issues, among others, by cataloging and tracing the genealogies of all known heresies. Averil Cameron has noted: 'The cataloguing of heresy itself is a subject with which most of us in the post-Enlightenment West have little sympathy and which we are apt to dismiss with disparaging remarks about superficiality and stereotyping.'[4] However, Cameron and other more recent scholarship have found in Epiphanius a more gifted (if not always a more likable) writer and thinker than he has previously been thought to be.[5] Cameron thus urges, 'a less hostile view might be willing to recognize a degree of literary skill in the ways in which Epiphanius modelled the *Panarion* both on the Song of Songs and on scientific treatises on snake bites and poisons.'[6]

Epiphanius begins his work by informing us of the sources upon which he is drawing. He writes: 'Some of the things which I shall tell the reader about sects and schisms (αἱρέσεών τε καὶ σχισμάτων), I owe to my fondness for study.'[7] Of his scientific study he states: 'Nicander too, the investigator of wild

[2] Richard Flower, 'Genealogies of Unbelief: Epiphanius of Salamis and Heresiological Authority', in *Unclassical Traditions. Volume II: Perspectives from East and West in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, 2011), 70-87. Flower has recently similarly argued for the resonances between the *Panarion* and other medical treatises. I hope to further this argument by showing how the employment of the trope of *effeminacy as disease* implies shared cultural values between the heresiologist and medical writers as well as implicates Epiphanius as a more gifted literary thinker than prior scholarship has suggested.

[3] See J. Rebecca Lyman, 'Ascetics and Bishops: Epiphanius on Orthodoxy', in *Orthodoxie, Christianisme, Histoire* (Rome and Paris, 2000), 149-61 and 'The Making of a Heretic: The Life of Origen in Epiphanius *Panarion* 64', in *SP* 31 (1997), 445-51.

[4] Averil Cameron, 'How to Read Heresiology', in *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 33 (2003), 471-92, 474.

[5] For examples of the scholarly debate on Epiphanius' abilities as a writer and thinker, see: Frances Young, 'Did Epiphanius Know What He Meant by Heresy?', in *SP* 17 (1982), 199-205, Jon F. Dechow, *Dogma and Mysticism in Early Christianity: Epiphanius of Cyprus and the Legacy of Origen* (Macon, 1988); Elizabeth A. Clark, *The Origenist Controversy: The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate* (Princeton, 1992); J.R. Lyman, 'Making of a Heretic' (1997), 445-51; Jeremy Schott, 'Heresiology as Universal History in Epiphanius' *Panarion*', in *Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum* 10 (2006), 546-63; and R. Flower, 'Genealogies of Unbelief' (2011), 70-87. Young, Dechow, and Clark can be seen as less sympathetic readings of Epiphanius while Lyman, Schott, and Flower have sought to recover in Epiphanius a more gifted author and thinker.

[6] A. Cameron, 'How to Read Heresiology' (2003), 476.

[7] Epiphanius, *Panarion* Proem 2.2.4 (GCS v.1). English translation by Frank Williams, *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis* (Leiden, 1987).

animals and reptiles (θηρών τε καὶ ἑρπέτων), imparted the knowledge of their natures. And others who study roots and plants, described what they were made of.' After listing several such authors, Epiphanius writes: 'And no more than they do I, in my similar attempt to reveal the roots and origins of the sects, describe them to harm those who care to read (my description).'[8] He continues as follows:

> Those authors made a diligent effort, not to point evil out, but to frighten men and ensure their safety, so that they would recognize the dreadful, dangerous beasts and be secure, and escape them, by God's power, by taking care not to engage with such deadly creatures if they encountered them, and were menaced by their breath or bite, or the sight of them. And meanwhile, from the same concern, these authors prescribed medicines (ἀλεξητήρια) made from roots and plants, to cure the illness caused by these serpents. Thus, my work too has been compiled as a defense against them and for your safety, to expose the appearance of the dreadful serpents and beasts, and their poisons and deadly bites (ἰοὺς καὶ δήγματα ὀλετήρια).[9]

It is clear that Epiphanius sees his own work as part of the compendium not only of natural science treatises but also of medical literature.

Historian of medicine Vivian Nutton has discussed subtle shifts in medical practices and writings that take place in late antiquity.[10] Nutton notes that Christian thinkers – though not opposed to secular medicine – 'were always careful to leave room for [a] peculiarly Christian type of healing.'[11] The peculiarity Nutton gestures towards is based on the ubiquity of demonic forces and their intercession in the lives of humans.[12] More importantly for our purposes, Nutton draws our attention to an emerging genre of literature in late antiquity. The great medical treatises of the second century, composed most notably by Galen and Soranus, gave way to medical encyclopedias or handbooks in the fourth and fifth centuries. These catalogs assembled and summarized the available medical literature, while also adding new material and interpretations. Aline Rousselle's work on desire and the body in antiquity describes the work of the fourth-century writer and medical complier Oribasius.[13] Though Rousselle suggests that Oribasius added none of his own commentary to his collection of Galen's medical treatises, she maintains the importance of these compilers in that they brought together the most current medical practices and understandings of the body.[14] These authors of medical handbooks, Nutton states, 'were not just compilers; they had to select. They were constantly adding

[8] *Panarion*, Proem 2.3.1.

[9] *Panarion*, Proem 2.2.3.

[10] Vivian Nutton, 'Galen to Alexander, Aspects of Medicine and Medical Practice in Late Antiquity', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 38 (1984), 1-14.

[11] *Ibid*. 5.

[12] See also, Peter Brown, *The Making of Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, 1978).

[13] Aline Rousselle, *Porneia: On Desire and the Body in Antiquity* (Paris, 1983).

[14] *Ibid*. 6.

fresh material or compressing the old; they were not dumb copyists.' He goes on to say, 'they have in the past been dismissed crudely as translators, or mere abbreviators, of earlier writings by Galen and Soranus. But this is far too simple.'[15] As author of the *Panarion*, Epiphanius can be read as such a creative medical compiler. Richard Flower has argued for the 'meticulous and learned manner in which [Epiphanius] had collected and structured knowledge'[16] by using the rhetorical structures of encyclopedic literature. Flower states, 'The *Panarion* thus demonstrates the systematizing and taxonomising function of encyclopaedic literature. As well as asserting their authority as comprehensive catalogues of knowledge, encyclopaedias also present a version of the world that is carefully divided and classified, imposing order on a seemingly chaotic mass of information.'[17]

By drawing on scripture as well as medical and scientific literature as sources for his own heresiological treatise, Epiphanius emphasizes the importance of his own work (a matter of life or death) while at the same time inscribing his own polemics and personal narrative. Citing the *Song of Songs*, Epiphanius draws on the figures of concubines to represent heresies, in contrast to the single dove alluded to as the bride of Christ and the one true Church. Virginia Burrus has noted the convergence of female metaphors with the 'emphasis on the medicine chest and poisonous wild beasts or snakes.'[18] Although Epiphanius's approach to heresiology diverges from previous heresiologists in certain respects, he persists – like many of his predecessors – in describing heretics as hypersexual.[19] Examples of these descriptions can be seen in books twenty-six, twenty-seven, and sixty-three (his treatises on the gnostics, Carpocratians, and Origenists – respectively) of the *Panarion*.

While he does not explicitly name medical sources for linking lustfulness and disease, Epiphanius would surely have been aware of these associations in

[15] V. Nutton, 'Galen to Alexander' (1984), 3. Also see A. Rousselle, *Porneia* (1986). Rousselle writes: '[C]ertain passages by Galen were copied by Oribasius … [he] was similar to Galen in many respects, but lacked his genius', 6. Although Rousselle recognizes the ingenuity of compiling ancient medical treatises, the implication is that because Oribasius was simply compiling Galen's works that he lacked his intellect.

[16] R. Flower, 'Genealogies of Unbelief' (2011), 79.

[17] *Ibid*. 79.

[18] Virginia Burrus, 'The Heretical Woman as Symbol in Alexander, Athanasius, and Jerome', *HTR* 84 (1991), 229-48.

[19] For a discussion regarding Epiphanius' use of female metaphors and their resonances (as well as divergences) with Athanasius' use of them, as well as the reliance on scripture by both authors, see V. Burrus, 'The Heretical Woman' (1991), 240-2. Burrus writes: 'Epiphanius follows Athanasius in presenting the serpent of Genesis 3 as the archetypal personification of heresy and Eve as the archetypal heretic … Epiphanius does not, of course, claim that all subsequent heretics were female (his most important targets are male); nor does he here follow Athanasius in utilizing common stereotypes of effeminate men in order to relate his feminized portrait of heresy to male opponents', 241.

the broader culture. Peter Brown has already illumined how late Roman society viewed sex and the ways Christians emerged from that culture – not in opposition to it, but instead transforming their bodily perceptions within it.[20] Rousselle has similarly demonstrated how 'the cult of the healthy body gave way to monastic asceticism.'[21] But more importantly she has shown the linking of desire and health to be commonplace in late Roman culture, thereby suggesting its availability to appropriation by Christian writers. Therefore it is not desire that Epiphanius condemns but, rather, the lack of control over it.

According to Rousselle sex is stratified in the ancient medical texts with homosexual intercourse being the most damaging, or weakening to the male body.[22] As such, effeminacy is characterized as an insatiated – and worse – uncontrollable desire. Craig Williams has noted the use of the imagery of effeminacy as a disease (*morbus*) that can infect and damage a person's manhood (*virilitas*) in Seneca, Juvenal, and Caelius Aurelianus.[23] Following Michel Foucault, Williams asserts that ancient authors of medical and philosophical treatises understood effeminacy as 'an underlying failure to live up to the central imperative of masculinity: control and dominion both of others and of oneself.'[24] This failure to dominate oneself is at the heart of the excessive sexual appetites of Epiphanius' heretics. Williams notes that in Juvenal and Caelius Aurelianus the discussion of *effeminacy as disease* is expounded on at some length.[25] Both authors, and Juvenal as well, confine their discussions of *effeminacy as disease* to men who sought to be penetrated because this act was emblematic of an excess in lustfulness. Williams writes: 'In Caelius' opinion, men who enjoy being penetrated are afflicted not with a physical ailment but rather with a mental disorder. But this disorder does not consist in an abnormal attraction to members of their own sex, but rather in an excessive lustfulness that may well lead them to engage in traditionally masculine (*i.e.*, insertive) sexual practices as well.'[26]

Aurelianus, writing in the later fifth-century, is one of the interpreters of earlier medical literature whom Nutton brings to our attention. His treatises *On Chronic Diseases* and *On Acute Diseases* are most likely Latin translations of the second-century Greek medical writer Soranus – no longer extant.[27] Aurelianus indeed informs his readers that 'effeminate men (*molles*)' have practices which are 'unnatural to human beings' and it is only because 'lust overcomes

[20] Peter Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (New York, 1988).

[21] A. Rousselle, *Porneia* (1983), 6.

[22] *Ibid.* 1-63.

[23] See Craig Williams, *Roman Homosexuality: Ideologies of Masculinity in Classical Antiquity* (Oxford, 1999), 141.

[24] *Ibid.* 139.

[25] *Ibid.* 180.

[26] *Ibid.* 212.

[27] *Ibid.*

modesty [that] parts intended for other functions are put to shameful use ('*pulso pudore libido etiam indebitas partes obscenis usibus subiugavit*').'[28]

Epiphanius likewise describes 'excessive lustfulness' as a symptom of the disease of heresy. In his description of the gnostics he writes: 'They perform countless other actions, and it is a misfortune to speak of their madness in them. Some have nothing to do with women, if you please, but bring themselves to climax with their own hands, receive their own dirt on their hands, and then eat it.' He goes on to compare them to animals stating: 'For they dispose of their corruption like dogs and pigs. Dogs and pigs and other animals as well, come to climax in this way and eat the discharge of their bodies.'[29] The unsated and perhaps insatiable sexual appetite of the heretic incites Epiphanius to further description:

> For these persons who debauch themselves with their own hands – and not just they, but the ones who consort with women too – finally get their fill of promiscuous relations with women and grow ardent for each other, men for men, to correspond with the scripture, 'receiving in themselves the recompense of their error.'… Moreover they deceive the womenfolk … who put their trust in them … for they never have their fill of copulation; the more indecent one of their men is, the more praiseworthy they consider him.[30]

For Epiphanius, an excessive and seemingly uncontrollable sexual appetite is a stock characteristic of a heretic. Aurelianus, writing only slightly later than Epiphanius (*ca*. 420), similarly describes effeminacy as the disease of hypersexuality, claiming that 'in the case of certain individuals, there is no limit to their desire and no hope of satisfying it ('*cum nullus cupiditati modus, nulla satietatis spes est*'); and they cannot be content with their own lot, the lot which divine providence had marked out for them in assigning definite functions to the parts of the body.' He goes on to say of these 'certain individuals' that 'they even adopt the dress, walk, and other characteristics of women'.[31] Aurelianus, like Epiphanius, makes connections between hypersexuality and disease. Furthermore, Aurelianus understands an excessive lustfulness to be a feminine characteristic – natural in females, pathological in males.

Epiphanius goes on to describe gnostics – men and women alike – as exhibiting insatiable appetites not only for sex but for food as well. Speaking of the gnostic virgins he claims: 'They are always having intercourse and committing fornication, but before the pleasure of their union is consummated they push their villainous seducer away and take the dirt we spoke of for food.'[32] He also describes the consumption of aborted fetuses and menstrual blood. All of this takes place after an extravagant meal. 'The next thing they do is feast', he tells

[28] Cealius Aurelianus, *Tardarum Passionum* 4.9.131-2. English translation by I.E. Drabkin, *Caelius Aurelianus On Acute Diseases and On Chronic Diseases* (Chicago, 1950), 901.
[29] Epiphanius, *Panarion* XXVI 11.1.
[30] Epiphanius, *Panarion* XXVI 11.7-9.
[31] Caelius Aurelianus, *Tardarum Passionum* 4.9.131-2.
[32] Epiphanius, *Panarion* XXVI 11.10.

us, 'and though they may be poor, they set the table with lavish provisions for eating meat and drinking wine. But then, after a drinking bout … they next go crazy for each other.'[33] The overindulgence of food and sex lies in stark contrast to the ascetic ideals of which Epiphanius was concerned with promoting.[34] He relies on biblical scripture and especially Paul's letters for his admonishment of gnostic behavior claiming, 'he [that is, Paul,] cries out against them in his *Letter to the Romans*, and exposes the obscenities of those who commit the misdeeds by saying: 'For even their women did change the natural into that which is against nature' – and of the males, 'men with men working that which is unseemly.' Moreover, in the *Epistle to Timothy* he says of them: 'In the last days perilous times shall come, for men shall be lovers of pleasure.''[35]

In his description of the Carpocratians, Epiphanius is again concerned with their sexual appetites. He tells us 'they have surrendered themselves to the sensations of countless pleasures.' Along with performing sorcery and magic, Epiphanius writes 'these people perform everything unspeakable and unlawful … every kind of unnatural vice and lustful act (ἀνδροβασιῶν καὶ λαγνιστέρων) and carnal intercourse with women, with every member of the body.'[36] Further on in his work Epiphanius describes a different hypersexual heretic, the Origenist who poses as a sexual renunciant while continuing to satisfy his sexual appetites. 'They soil their minds, bodies and souls with unchastity. Some of them masquerade as monastics, and their women companions as female monastics. But they are physically ensnared because they satisfy their appetite but, to put it politely, by the act of Onan and the son of Judah.'[37] Here, similar to his description of the gnostics, masturbation and withdrawal are the acts of the overindulgent. Adding insult to injury, these Christians pretend to be a part of the ascetic enterprise and ideal that Epiphanius would champion. 'They strive, not for purity but for hypocritical purity in name.'[38]

In sum, Epiphanius demonstrates considerable literary creativity and prowess in using medical metaphors to make the link between heresy and disease, taking his cue from other compilers of medical treatises and prior heresiological works. In so doing, he inscribes the body of the orthodox Christian ascetic with both masculine vigor and health – characteristics it might otherwise have been thought to lack.

[33] Epiphanius, *Panarion* XXVI 4.3-4.

[34] Lyman has argued that Epiphanius' invective can be read as an ascetic defining the *right* ascetic enterprise in the fourth-century. As such his cataloging and condemnation of all the known heresies served as a means to that goal. It should be noted that Epiphanius' condemnation of the excesses discussed above should not give the impression that he championed a brand of asceticism associated with complete renunciation of food and sex. In fact Epiphanius can be read as condemning extremes on both ends of this spectrum.

[35] Epiphanius, *Panarion* XXVI 16.2-3.

[36] Epiphanius, *Panarion* XXVII 4.5-6.

[37] Epiphanius, *Panarion* LXIII 1.4-5.

[38] Epiphanius, *Panarion* LXIII 1.6.

De imperio et potestate
A Dialogue with John Chrysostom

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Abstract

What is Chrysostom's view of the *Imperium Romanum*? It is not only the prominent position that John holds amongst the greatest saints of the Orthodox Church that exhorts us to take interest in his opinion of the Roman Empire. The particular historical moment in which he lived, when for the first time the prospect of a cohabitation of Rome with Christianity at the apex of the political pyramid is being attempted, renders the question regarding his attitude towards the *Imperium* especially interesting. Does he share the views of Hippolytus of Rome or Eusebius of Caesarea? Does the experience that John treasures up from the continuous fluctuations of the relations between Church and State in the fourth century AD lead him to the rejection or enthusiastic acceptance of the *Imperium*?

In his brief treatise *De Christo et Antichristo*, which appears in the early third century AD, Hippolytus of Rome interprets, after a series of Jewish and Christian prophecies, the famous vision from the Revelation of John concerning the number 666 – the number the Antichrist will inscribe on the hand or the forehead of all the inhabitants of the world in the 'last' times. Choosing carefully between different names, such as Evanthas or Titan, which had already been suggested as possible transcriptions of the number of the beast by Irenaeus of Lyons, Hippolytus will eventually conclude, 'it is manifest to all that those who at present still hold the power are Latins. If, then, we take the name as the name of a single man, it becomes *Latinus*.'[1] The bloody persecutions, which will follow thereafter against the Church by the emperor Maximinus Thrax, Decius, Valerian and, later, the Tetrarchy, will therefore justify in the eyes of many Christians the connection of Rome by Hippolytus with the number 666 and the kingdom of the Antichrist. The evidence in the ancient sources eloquently expresses that throughout the persecution ordered by Diocletian from Nicomedia in 303 AD, the interest of the faithful for the symbols of Revelation and the chronological calculations of the end of the world was rekindled. The tortures, exiles, confiscations and executions of hundreds of faithful flooded the Roman provinces of the East with blood and

[1] Hipp., *Antichr*. L. For the convenience of the reader, some English translations have been included, utilizing a combination of the ANF and NPNF for patristic – and RSV for biblical quotations. In these translations, some adaptations were made for the present essay when considered necessary.

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constituted undeniable signs that the interval of six thousand years was gradually being exhausted which, in accordance with the ancient prophecies, would intervene between the beginning and the end of the age.[2] The punishment of God will come soon, turning the empire that hates the righteousness and holy name of God into ruins. Its fall will be terrible – worse than that of any other kingdom that dominated the Earth, whether it be the Egyptians, Assyrians, Greeks or Persians.[3] The situation, however, developed in a different way. The decree of religious freedom that was signed in Milan by Licinius and Constantine the Great in 313 AD and the latter's conversion to Christianity will contribute to the settling down of the tension and the feelings of aversion and hatred toward Rome, giving way to an extreme enthusiasm for its historical grandeur. In his work, *De mortibus persecutorum*, an apologetic account of the recent persecutions and their outcome, Lactantius attributes the tribulations that the Christians were subjected to by the government of the Tetrarchy to both the inherent savagery foreign to Roman blood – *a Romano sanguine aliena* – and the barbarian descent of Galerius and Maximian.[4] Just as it has been correctly noted in modern scholarship, *Romanitas* is identified in the narrative of this Latin father with *Christianitas*, that is to say, 'the persecutor persecutes the Church, because he is not really a Roman.'[5] Also, according to a personal account of Eusebius of Caesarea, when the bishops of the East visited Constantine the Great for the celebration of his twenty years of residing on the throne, they took part in an imperial banquet with him, and when they reclined on the couches of the palace, everything resembled a dream of the heavenly kingdom.[6] Furthermore, in his panegyric *Laus Constantini*, which he delivers a few years later, Eusebius will not hesitate to use a verse from *Daniel* (7:27), with which the arrival of the kingdom of God is announced, in order to praise the first Christian emperor and the Caesars Constans, Constantine, Constantine II and Dalmatius who were guaranteeing his dynastic succession to the throne of Rome: καὶ διαλήμψονται τὴν βασιλείαν ἅγιοι ὑψίστου.[7] The kingdom of heaven is very near now if it has not already come. The Scriptures appear to have been fulfilled in the best way.[8]

[2] Lact., *Inst*. VII 25, 3-5.

[3] *Ibid*. VII 15, 11-3, 17-9.

[4] Lact., *Mort. pers*. IX 2.

[5] Martha Sordi, *The Christians and the Roman Empire,* trans. A. Bedini from Italian (London and New York, 1994), 126. See also, *ibid*. 168. Following in the footsteps of Lactantius, Ambrose will connect *Romanitas* more closely with the Christian faith, identifying it with piety toward the triune God and the doctrine of *homoousios*. In relation to this subject, see Jean-Rémy Palanque, *Saint Ambroise et l'Empire Romain. Contribution à l'histoire des rapports de l'église et de l'état à la fin du quatrième siècle* (Paris, 1933), 325-35.

[6] *V.C*. III 15, 1-2.

[7] 'and the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom.' (*L.C*. III 3-5).

[8] See Wolfram Kinzig, *Novitas Christiana. Die Idee des Fortschritts in der Alten Kirche bis Eusebius*, Forschungen zur Kirchen- und Dogmengeschichte 58 (Göttingen, 1994), 510-5, 549-53 and 566-8.

John Chrysostom was born in the middle of the fourth century AD. According to the evaluation of the experts, 348/9 is the most likely year of his birth. Therefore, the early adolescent years of John coincide with the reign of the last descendant of Constantine's dynasty, Flavius Claudius Julianus the Apostate. The period of his studies and his development into manhood overlaps with the reign of the Arian emperor Valens in the eastern part of the Empire. The years that John lived in the desert, living a monastic way of life at the foot of Mount Silpius outside of Antioch, also passed under rule of the same king, who drenched the East in blood with his harsh religious policy. In 381, when we find him again in Antioch and ordained a deacon, Theodosius I has arisen to the throne of the Empire, the first king with an orthodox mind after an almost uninterrupted continuity of pro-Arian kings, from whom cannot be excluded, absolutely at least, even Constantine the Great.[9] During the whole period that John lives in Antioch and progresses in the hierarchical ranks, the relations between Church and State appear to have been fully restored. Four years after the death of Theodosius (†395), his successor Arcadius will summon Chrysostom to Constantinople with the exhortation of his *praepositus sacri cubiculi* Eutropius, in order to take hold of the seat of archbishop. The same king will banish John on two occasions, the first in 403 AD for only a few days and the second in July of 404, within a storm of demonstrations from the people of Constantinople – this time for good. The silver statue that was erected in honour of Eudoxia outside the building of the Senate, just a few meters away from the church of Hagia Sophia, provoked, according to the account of Socrates Scholasticus, the rupture in the already strained relations between the imperial palace and the archbishop of Constantinople.[10] The particulars of his dethronement would be arranged by the synod of bishops that, under the guidance of Theophilus of Alexandria, would invoke the fact that John uncanonically assumed his hierarchical duties after Oak. Death would come upon the church father on the road towards the Black Sea, when an imperial decree was obliging him to move from Caucasus of Armenia to Pityus – his new place of exile.[11] This being the case, when everything is taken into account, what is the view of Chrysostom concerning *Imperium Romanum*? It is not only the prominent position that John occupies amongst the greatest saints of the Orthodox Church that exhorts us to take interest in his opinion of the Roman Empire. The particular

[9] See Timothy D. Barnes, 'Ecclesiastical Politics', in *id*., *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge, Mass., and London, 1981).

[10] Socr., *Hist. eccl.* VI 18, 1-5. The same also in Soz., *Hist. eccl.* VIII 20, 1-3.

[11] For more detail on the eventful life of John Chrysostom, see the biography by John N.D. Kelly, *Golden Mouth. The Story of John Chrysostom – Ascetic, Preacher, Bishop* (London, 1995). Particularly for the period of his episcopal office in Constantinople, see Claudia Tiersch, *Johannes Chryostomus in Konstantinopel 398-404. Weltsicht und Wirken eines Bischofs in der Hauptstadt des Oströmischen Reiches*, Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum 6 (Tübingen, 2000).

historical moment in which he lived, when for the first time the prospect of a cohabitation of Rome with Christianity at the apex of the political pyramid is being attempted, renders the question regarding his attitude towards the *Imperium* especially interesting. Is it the same as that of Hippolytus of Rome or Eusebius of Caesarea? Does the experience that John treasures up from the continuous fluctuations of the relations between Church and State in the fourth century AD lead him to the rejection or enthusiastic acceptance of the *Imperium*? Moreover, John's passion for matters of public concern and his sensibility towards problems of society and inequality is well-known.[12] The judgment of a man, who does not cease throughout his life to scourge the arbitrariness of those in power and who converted the pulpit of the Christian Church into a podium in order for the displeasure and despair of the powerless to be heard – the judgment of John Chrysostom, one is entitled to trust, I think, more than that of anyone else. Let us attempt, therefore, to put the question to him directly, as his countenance is so familiar to us; we encounter it in almost every Orthodox church: Περὶ τῆς τῶν Ῥωμαίων ἀρχῆς δοκεῖ σοι τί, πάτερ; – 'Regarding the authority of the Romans, what is your opinion, Father?'

*

In the fourteen to fifteen volumes that comprise the authentic homilies of Chrysostom in the publication of Migne, the Roman Empire, ἡ Ῥωμαίων ἀρχή, is not mentioned except on rare occasions. This church father might call to mind its existence in various places, interpreting a verse of the Old or New Testament; however, his direct references to the *Imperium Romanum* can literally be counted on the fingers of one hand.[13] This fact surprises us, especially if we consider John's passion and penetrability in connection with the issues of public life, and thus allows us to speak about a void in his oratorical work. Are there any reasons that can possibly explain this? Why does this church father not respond to the question that we previously asked? There are two chief reasons, I think, that justify his silence.

Firstly, *Imperium Romanum*, still in the era in which Chrysostom lives, does not have the character of a united governing entity, which we anachronistically

[12] John is characterized as the harshest critic of wealth among the fathers of the Ancient Church by Rudolph Brändle in his *Johannes Chrysostomus. Bischof-Reformer-Märtyrer* (Stuttgart, Berlin and Köln, 1999), 49-50. Furthermore, Theo Sommerlad perceives the social preaching of John as the seeds of the contemporary socialist ideology in his *Das Wirtschaftsprogramm der Kirche des Mittelalters. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Nationalökonomie und zur Wirtschaftsgeschichte des ausgehenden Altertums* (Leipzig, 1903), 147-8. See also Konrad Farner, *Theologie des Kommunismus?* (Frankfurt a.M., 1969), 56-64.

[13] See, in particular, *Is. Interp.* 2.5 (SC 304, 122-4); *Hom. in 2 Thess* 4.1 (PG 62, 485-6); *Hom. in Phil. 1:18* 4 (PG 51, 314); *Jud.* 4.3 (PG 48, 875); *Hom. in Mt.* 75.3 (PG 58, 690). See also *exp. in Ps.* 45.3 (PG 55, 206-7) and *Jud. et gent.* 6 (PG 48, 821).

attribute to it today. In essence, it consists of a dense network of cities that are spread along the shores of the Mediterranean Sea and presents an ever increasing potential of expansion into the mainland.[14] Despite their submission to the Caesar, *senatus* and *populus romanus*, the cities constitute whole political units with great administrative and economic independence upon which Rome is placed as a superstructure. Apart from providing these political units with cohesion through a united core, from which emanate the chief decisions, Rome is also offering the military umbrella with the legions that are stationed in its provinces across the vast extent of the Empire. Diocletian, and later Constantine, will bring deep incisions to the administrative machine of the government, and for the first time, the *Imperium* will start to take on the form of a contemporary centralized state. However, as it relates to our subject, this mainly happens at a very slow rate that leads us to later eras – the Byzantine period.[15] This is not of course without heavy cost, as is shown by its fragmentation into two different pieces – *Pars Orientis* and *Pars Occidentis*. As for John Chrysostom, the context, within which the common life evolves and the relations of the people, groups or classes are interwoven and form a communal whole, is always the city – Antioch, Constantinople, Athens, Ephesus, Pergamon, Alexandria. It is important to note that, when Rome is referred to simply as so in the writings of John, it does not mean the *Imperium*, but rather the old capital, the royal city, *urbs Roma*.[16] Furthermore, the national-cultural identity of John Chrysostom is shaped in close connection with the regional language, which he uses, as well as the history, traditions and way of life of his particular native land. 'Antioch is boasting', Constantine Cavafy says in one of his poems, 'about its splendid buildings, its beautiful streets […] that it is the seat of glorious kings; for the artists and wise men that it has […] But above all it is incomparably boasting, that it is a Greek city from ancient times; a relative of Argos.'[17] The verses of Cavafy,

[14] In his famous oration *In Romam* (143 AD), Aelius Aristides presents the Roman Empire as a league of cities, among which the most renowned and powerful hold the reins (see, especially, 58-71.92-99K). Although the oration of Aelius is not lacking in embellishment and grandiloquence, the image of the *Imperium* that he conveys to us fits within the basic contours of the analysis of modern researchers. See Peter Garnsey and Richard Saller, *The Roman Empire. Economy, Society and Culture* (London, 1987), especially 37-53; see, in comparison, Claude Mossé, *The Ancient World at Work*, Ancient Culture and Society, trans. J. Lloyd from French (London, 1969), 2. Mossé accurately notes in this work that the decline of the cities essentially meant the end of the ancient world.

[15] For the reforms of Constantine and Diocletian, and for the wider repercussions they had on the functionality of the Roman Empire, see Jochen Martin, *Spätantike und Völkerwanderung,* Oldenbourg Grundriss der Geschichte 4, 3rd ed. (München, 1995), 1-9, 22-6 and 85ff.

[16] See, for example, *Hom. in Phil. 1:18* 4 (PG 51, 314); *Sac.* 4.7 (SC 272, 272); *Hom. in Jo.* 65.1 (PG 59, 361); *Hom. in Rom.* 32.2 (PG 60, 678).

[17] From the poem of Constantine P. Cavafy, 'Παλαιόθεν Ελληνίς', which is included in the standard edition comprising his works, ed. George Savidis, *Ποιήματα,* vol. II (Athens, 1983), 60. This text of Cavafy was translated by George Sarraf, who is a doctoral candidate of the Faculty of Theology at Aristotle University in Thessaloniki. On this occasion, I would also like to thank George wholeheartedly for his valuable linguistic support with the present article.

inspired by the famous *Antiochikos* of Libanius, faithfully convey to us the mentality of the city, which raised John and made him known as one of the best orators of all time. Antioch, in the time of John, is more like Greece and less like Rome. Even though the right of Roman citizenship is granted as early as 212 AD with the *Constitutio Antoniniana* to all the inhabitants of the Empire, it will take centuries until the Greek-speaking populations of the eastern Mediterranean agree to exchange the name *Hellene* for *Roman* in their identification. The massive proselytism of these inhabitants to Christianity from Constantine and his successors will substantially contribute to this transformation, which is, however, brought to completion much later and exceeds by far the historical horizon of the fourth century AD and of late antiquity.[18]

Secondly, the absence of analytical references to *Imperium Romanum* from Chrysostom is related to the fact that throughout his long career this church father did not deliver a single panegyric in honour of the king. We must not forget that the Roman Empire is a deeply person-centered power. As shown by the large number of his statues or his depictions on gold and silver coins that are flooding the Mediterranean world in the first centuries AD and are continuously found in the light of archaeological excavations, the Caesar was personifying Roman authority in the eyes of his citizens. Any disrespect towards him was deemed, as is known, the ultimate betrayal and was punishable by death. Revering him, on the contrary, was a sign of loyalty towards the state and political authorities.[19] Moreover, in the splendid festivities that were being organized on the occasion of the bestowal of his consulship or the anniversary of his residing in power, the orators were competing amongst themselves as to who would best sing his praises, extolling his lineage, virtues and achievements, as well as the grandeur of the kingdom that he governs. The younger Pliny's oration on Trajan or that of Libanius on Julian each comprises two ready examples of panegyrics that one can recall from memory without difficulty. The *Laus Constantini* of Eusebius is yet another example, of especial importance, inasmuch as it gives evidence to the Christianization of this ancient practice of deifying the kingdom of the Romans

[18] As is known, under the influence of Christianity, the term *Hellene* changes and gradually assumes the negative meaning of pagan. Indicative is the title of many Christian apologies that were directed at the pagans and castigated their religious faith: Πρὸς Ἕλληνας, Κατὰ Ἑλλήνων, *etc*. For the Greek conscience of the populations of the eastern *Imperium*, whose guardian was the class of the nobility that staffed the local council of the cities, the study of Simon Swain, *Hellenism and Empire. Language, Classisism, and Power in the Greek World, AD 50-250* (Oxford, 1998) is very informative. See the conclusions of the above study, where the necessity of self-definition for the Greeks against the dominant Roman ideology is put forward by the author as one of the main causes for the birth of the Atticistic style and the Second Sophistic movement (411-12). See also Ewen L. Bowie, 'Greeks and their Past in the Second Sophistic', *P&P* 46 (1970), 3-41.

[19] Among a wealth of literature on this topic, see Alexander Demandt, *Geschichte der Spätantike. Das Römische Reich von Diocletian bis Justinian 284-565 n.Chr.* (München, 1988), 194-5; and Paul Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, trans. A. Shapiro from German (Ann Arbor, 1988), 297-316.

in the person of the emperor before the mid-fourth century AD.[20] However, we do not encounter something similar to the *Laus Constantini* of Eusebius in the writings of John. Out of all the martyrs and confessors, the memories of whom were being honoured with splendour in the churches of Antioch and Constantinople, I do not know exactly, but still doubt if there is even one to whom John neglected to devote a panegyric. Nevertheless, as it relates to the Roman emperors, the account is particularly lacking. The manuscript tradition has only preserved for us fragments from a *post mortem* encomium on Theodosius, which John delivered on 1 January 399 AD in memory of the king. In the form that we find it today in *Patrologia Graeca*, it comprises the prelude to a homily of Chrysostom that centers upon a different matter, the heresy of the Cathars.[21] From then on we recall with difficulty, from the entire *corpus Chrysostomicum*, two homilies that possibly contain references of this church father to the emperor, and even these are not of particular importance.[22] The only panegyric that John addressed to a bearer of Roman power does not concern the emperor but the empress, the wife of Arcadius, Aelia Eudoxia.[23] It was delivered on the occasion of an all-night torch race, in which Eudoxia took part in order to celebrate, together with all the people of Constantinople, the translation of the relics of three martyrs that had arrived at the harbour of this royal capital from Northern Italy in order to be placed in the chapel of St Thomas.[24] The introductory phrase to the prelude of this address conveys to us the joyful sentiment of the orator, as is fitting for a panegyric: σκιρτῶ καὶ μαίνομαι μανίαν σωφροσύνης βελτίονα.[25] In addition, John's praises to Eudoxia are not lacking. Indeed, even more beautiful than the moon, as he depicts her, that shines at night amidst the other stars is the queen, surrounded by the multitude of the faithful; none of her predecessors to the royal throne, he declares, can rival her in splendour and virtue; her fame will not be erased by time; every generation will keep her alive in their memories and bless

[20] See *Eusebius Werke* I, ed. I.A. Heikel, GCS 7 (Leipzig, 1902), 195-259. A detailed commentary of the homily of Eusebius is presented by Harold A. Drake in his study *In Praise of Constantine. A Historical Study and New Translation of Eusebius, Tricennial Orations* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1976). For the panegyrics in honour of the emperor during the period of Roman rule, see Michael Mause, *Die Darstellung des Kaisers in der lateinischen Panegyrik*, Palingenesia-Monographien und Texte zur Klassischen Altertumswissenschaft 50 (Stuttgart, 1994), *passim*.

[21] *Hom. div*. 6.1-2 (PG 63, 491-4).

[22] More on this in the author's dissertation, *Johannes Chrysostomus über das* Imperium Romanum. *Studie zum politischen Denken der Alten Kirche*, Texts and Studies in the History of Theology 10 (Mandelbachtal and Cambridge, 2005), 9-11.

[23] *Cum Imperatrix media nocte in magnam ecclesiam venisset* (= *Hom. div*. 2 [PG 63, 467-72]).

[24] See J.N.D. Kelly, *Golden Mouth* (1995), 140. An English translation of this homily of Chrysostom by Wendy Mayer and Pauline Allen is available in their monograph *John Chrysostom*, in the series The Early Church Fathers (London and New York, 2000), 85-92.

[25] 'I'm jumping with excitement and aflame with a frenzy that is better than common sense' (*Hom. div*. 2.1 [PG 63, 467] trans. W. Mayer and P. Allen, *ibid*. 86).

her eternally.[26] Surely, this is a flattering reference to the eternity of the royal person that strongly brings to mind the adjectives *semper*, *perpetuus* or *aeternus*, which typically accompany the name of the Roman emperor in the epigrams and orations of late antiquity.[27] Nevertheless, aside from the excessive outpourings and praises to Eudoxia, the familiar voice of John echoes in our ears, as we know it from the homilies of his time in Antioch and even his very earliest writings. As it is clear from this address, the enthusiasm of this church father springs from the fact that Eudoxia, who usually remains inaccessible even for the royal eunuchs in the inner chambers of *sacrum palatium*, accepted to come down to the streets of Constantinople and followed on foot after the procession with the relics of the martyrs across the entire distance of approximately seven kilometers, which separate the harbour of the city from Drypia where the chapel of St Thomas was located.[28] In particular, Eudoxia appeared in the streets without her large entourage of slaves and armed soldiers and, taking off the crown and purple cloak, mixed with the crowd as if she was an equal to each of her subjects. Τὴν ἀνωμαλίαν τοῦ βίου ὅλην σχεδόν μετὰ πολλῆς ἀπ[ήλασεν] τῆς ὑπερβολῆς,[29] John will say in a moment of oratorical excitement, addressing the queen in the chapel of St Thomas. This is the grace that gushes forth from the bones of the martyrs, the power that is concealed within them and drives away the hordes of demons.[30] Let us be more explicit: Eudoxia is praised by John not as a Roman *Augusta*, but as a faithful Christian.[31]

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If, then, for one reason or another, which we have attempted to explain above in broad outline, John is not willing to reveal to us his feelings concerning the *Imperium Romanum*, maybe we should put the question to him in a different

[26] *Ibid*. 2.2-3 (470-71).

[27] See Manfred Clauss, *Kaiser und Gott. Herrscherkult im römischen Reich* (München, Leipzig, [2]2001), 256-60 and A. Demandt, *Geschichte der Spätantike* (1988), 189.

[28] *Hom. div*. 2.1 (PG 63, 469).

[29] 'With such great zeal and piety … banishing virtually the entire inequality of her lifestyle to a high degree' (*ibid*. 2 [PG 63, 471] trans. W. Mayer and P. Allen, *John Chrysostom* [2000], 89).

[30] *Ibid*. 1 (PG 63, 469).

[31] It is difficult for me to comprehend the disparaging comments of J.N.D. Kelly concerning the homily of Chrysostom *Cum Imperatrix media nocte in magnam ecclesiam venisset*, which he considers to be an example of court flattery and opportunism (*Golden Mouth* [1995], 141). I think that Kelly entirely misunderstands the motives behind the delivery of this particular homily. John's aim is not to win the favor of the queen, but to emphasize, on the occasion of her symbolic act of mixing in with the crowd of the faithful, the abolition of all the class distinctions within the spiritual domain of the Church. Enlightening are the following passages from this church father: *Hom. div*. 5.2 (PG 63, 487); *Hom. in Gen*. 29.6-7 (PG 53, 270); *Hom. in Rom*. 1.3 (PG 60, 399); *Hom. in Jo*. 10.2 and 15.3 (PG 59, 75 and 102).

way. The earlier patristic tradition, which he knows in depth and uses with great aptitude in his homilies, offers us the most suitable lead. Within this framework we encounter the same thinking repeated with minor variations from one Christian writer after another in an uninterrupted continuity from the second until the fourth century AD. That is to say, Christianity and the Empire flourish simultaneously in the historical foreground. From the era of Augustus onward, as the dominance of the Empire was becoming solidified over the world, Christianity is rapidly proliferating among the nations. This is the motif of 'synchronistic parallelism'. Its origin is found in the apologetic letter of Melito of Sardis to Marcus Aurelius from approximately 170 AD. 'For our philosophy', this church father writes to Marcus Aurelius, 'formerly flourished among the Barbarians; but having sprung up among the nations under thy rule, during the great reign of thy ancestor Augustus, it became to thine empire especially a blessing of auspicious omen. For from that time the power of the Romans has grown in greatness and splendor.'[32] Nearly half a century later, Origen turns to the argument of Melito, responding to the position of the pagan philosopher Celsus on the incompatible nature of Rome with Christianity. Referring Celsus to a messianic prophesy from Psalms (*Ps*. 71:7), he underlines that the accession of Rome to world power was fixed by divine Providence, so the suitable conditions could be created for the spread of the Christian religion everywhere. In accordance with this Alexandrian father, the wars cease and the autonomous states and kingdoms are brought under the scepter of Augustus, with the result that Christ's disciples were able to preach the message of the Gospel unhindered throughout the entire world.[33] *Pax Romana*, as we see, is connected with the Christian mission and included in the plan of divine Economy for the salvation of the world. Finally, in the fourth century, Eusebius of Caesarea will push the reasoning of the previous church fathers even further. In his slogan 'one god–one king' (or monotheism = monarchy), which persistently appears in this author's work, emphasizing that the rise of Octavian to the throne and the stabilization of Roman peace coincided historically with the birth of Jesus, we perceive the completion of the long-standing evolution of the 'synchronistic parallelism' motif and of its incorporation into the ideology of the newly-established Christian state.[34] In the time of Chrysostom, this already constitutes a well-known and shared locus among the ecclesiastical authors. Even in the brief span of the reign of Julian the Apostate, Gregory of Nazianzus

[32] See Eus., *Hist. eccl*. IV 26, 7.

[33] *Cels*. II 30.

[34] *Praep. ev*. I 4, 3-5; V 1, 1-7; *Theoph*. III 1-2; *L.C*. XVI 1-7; *Dem. ev*. III 7, 30-5; VII 2, 20-2; VIII *prooem*. 3. 3, 12-5; IX 17, 13-8; *Is*. 26, 15 Ziegler; *Ps*. 2 and 71 (PG 23, 89A-C and 801C-804B). Concerning the motif of 'synchronistic parallelism,' specifically in Eusebius of Caesaria, see Jean Sirinelli, *Les vues historiques d'Eusèbe de Césarée durant la période prénicéenne* (Dakar, 1961), 388-411; and generally in the fathers of the Ancient Church, together with additional literature, see K. Bosinis, *Johannes Chrysostomus über das* I.R. (2005), 19-22.

will not neglect to remind the pagan emperor: 'that simultaneously with the state of the Christians grew up that of the Romans, and their supremacy began its course with the sojourn of Christ upon earth, which before that time had not perfectly ripened into a monarchy.'[35] That being the case, what is the opinion of John Chrysostom? Within the abundant material that he draws from the patristic tradition, are we able to detect views similar to those of Melito, Origen and the Nazianzen? Or rather, in order to put the question to him in a language that is surely understandable to him: Οὐκ ἀληθές ἐστιν, πάτερ, ὅτι ἅμα τῇ εἰς ἀνθρώπους τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐπιδημίᾳ καὶ τὰ Ῥωμαίων ἀκμάσαι συνηνέχθη, τότε πρῶτον Αὐγούστου τῶν πλείστων ἐθνῶν μοναρχήσαντος καὶ τῆς εἰρήνης καταλαβούσης τὴν γῆν;[36]

We sporadically encounter impressions of the 'synchronistic parallelism' motif in the rhetoric of Chrysostom, a fact that indicates how deeply the thought of this church father has been imbued with ancient Christian apologetics. In his commentary on *Isaiah*, for example, speaking about the cosmogonical changes that the birth of Jesus brings upon human history, John presents to us an idyllic image of *Pax Romana*, which springs out of a golden backdrop – the golden backdrop of a new messianic era that is impressed on the mind of the reader. Peace reigns everywhere, from the islands of Brittany to the Tigris river and still farther south into Palestine, Egypt and Libya: 'covering the entire span of earth over which the sun keeps watch.'[37] Within the vast frontiers of the Empire, which are stretched out even as far as the sun casts its rays, the sources of conflicts and wars have been extinguished. The cities, peoples and nations enjoy freedom, having been delivered from the πικροτάτη λειτουργία of military service.[38] Their ears catch only the echo of the skirmishes that are occurring between the legions and the barbarians at the borders of Roman land.[39] The dangers that the people tasted in the past from pillaging, invasions and the misfortunes of war have been so far removed from their lives that, slowly but surely, they forget even the very use of weapons. The prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled in the ideal conditions of stability and security that the Roman

[35] *Or*. 4.37 (SC 309, 136), trans. C.W. King, *Julian the Emperor* (London, 1888), 21.

[36] 'Is it not true, Father, that Rome experienced its greatest flourishing at the same time that Christ came to the world, when Augustus had imposed his dominance over most of the nations for the first time and peace had spread out across all the earth?' See, in comparison, Eus., *Dem. ev*. III 7, 31.

[37] *Is. Interp*. 2.5 (SC 304, 122-4).

[38] In other words, the obligation to train in the art of war and to take up arms every now and then in order to defend the fatherland from enemies (*ibid*.). In order to emphasize the beneficial results of bringing the entire world together under one political authority, John mentions that the law even in the Athens of classical times forced intellectuals, such as Demosthenes and Socrates, to be marshalled onto the field of battle along with their fellow citizens. See the homily of this church father on *Psalm* 45 (3, PG 55, 207); and, furthermore, Or., *Cels*. II 30; Eus., *Dem. ev*. III 3, 14-5; *Is*. 26, 15 Ziegler.

[39] *Is. Interp*. 2.5 (SC 304, 122).

Empire guarantees to all of its citizens: 'And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks … neither shall they learn war any more' (*Isa*. 2:4).[40] In his commentary on the *Psalms*, yet again, the same idyllic image of Roman peace is depicted before us, as we read the exegesis of John regarding the fulfillment of the following prophecy of David in the present time: 'Come, behold the works of the Lord, how he has wrought desolations in the earth. He makes wars cease to the end of the earth…' (*Ps*. 46:8-9).[41] Thus, the conclusion emerges effortlessly from the examination of the above passages. Similar to the entire apologetic tradition, John sees in the political reality of his time the signs of a new era that is initiated by the coming of Jesus. The development of 'synchronistic parallelism' in John's work touches upon perhaps the most crucial point of the political thought of the Ancient Church – the consecration of *Pax Romana* through its connection with the Incarnation of the Logos and the mission of Christianity. At the same time, he bears witness to the assimilation of essential characteristics of the imperial ideology of Rome and its harmonization with the eschatology of Christianity. The 'golden age' that Virgil is professing in his fourth *Eclogue* and that Hadrian formally proclaims, setting the foundational stone for the temple of *Dea Roma* and *Venus Felix et Genetrix*, according to John, does not actually occur until the Empire turns away from the delusion of idolizing demons to founding its prosperity upon the devoutness (εὐσέβεια) to the God of Christianity![42]

However, regardless of the fact that the rhetoric of John constitutes an organic continuation of earlier apologetics, we observe a distinctive characteristic in the manner with which this church father develops the motif of 'synchronistic parallelism'. To begin with, the idea of the simultaneous flourishing (συνακμή) of Rome and Christianity, which is an idea that brands the entire apologetic tradition from Melito until Gregory Nazianzen, is pushed aside by John into the background. A clear reference, then, to the role that the *Imperium Romanum* plays in the unfolding of the plan of the divine Economy is missing from John's interpretation of the locus. Likewise, the person of Augustus experiences a total eclipse and is completely outshined by Christ. Nowhere

[40] *Ibid*. 2.4-5 (SC 304, 120-4).

[41] *Exp. in Ps*. 45.3 (PG 55, 206-7).

[42] On this point as well, the dependence of this Antiochian father upon earlier Apologetics is also perceptible. See, in particular, the passages of Eusebius that we quoted above, n. 34. However, apart from the Caesarian and other fathers of the Church, it is interesting to note that John's description of *Pax Romana* presents an obvious similarity to the encomia of Rome that were flourishing in the context of the Second Sophistic. Both the universality of the Roman rule (*orbis terrarum*) and its identification with a 'golden age', in which the human race returns after a long period of disasters and wars (*aetas aurea*), constitute commonplaces in the Greek-speaking literature of the first centuries AD. For evidence, see Laurent Pernot, *La rhétorique de l'éloge dans le monde gréco-romain*, vol. II (*Les valeurs*), Collection des Études Augustiniennes, Série Antiquité 138 (Paris, 1993), 751-3. For Virgil and the political ideology of Rome from the Augustan era and onwards, see Hans A. Gärtner, 'Imperium Romanum', *RAC* XVII (1996), 1147ff.

does John make mention of the simultaneousness of Jesus' birth with the rise of Augustus to the throne and the prevalence of the *Pax Romana* over the Mediterranean region. On the contrary, in his *Contra Judaeos et Gentiles quod Christus sit deus*, Octavian appears as a persecutor of the Church, who is opposed to the proliferation of Christianity just as all of the other Roman Caesars until the time of Constantine.[43] The specific difference, however, between Chrysostom and the earlier Apologists is primarily grounded in the particular role that he bestows upon the Church regarding the spreading of peace. It is characteristic that in John's development of 'synchronistic parallelism', the term ἐκκλησία has replaced the abstract expressions that accompany the references to Rome in the earlier church fathers: ἡ καθ' ἡμᾶς φιλοσοφία (Melito), ἡ εἰρηνικὴ διδασκαλία (Origen) or ἡ τοῦ Χριστοῦ διδασκαλία (Eusebius).[44] Also, it is not simply the explicit mention of the Church by Chrysostom. He designates the Church as the πρύτανις τῆς εἰρήνης ('overseer of peace') – a particularly honourable title with political implications that is attributed by other church fathers to Jesus Christ.[45] Furthermore, in the termination of hostilities among the nations and the restoration of peace, John perceives the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophesies regarding the establishment of the Church as 'new' Israel. Indeed, John is referring us to *Isaiah* 2:2 and also to the description of the messianic era in this verse. As is known, the great prophet, before he unfolds the vision of the 'last' times to our eyes (*Isa*. 2:4), when humanity will live without weapons, wars, and catastrophes, he mentions that the ὄρος τοῦ Κυρίου ('mountain of the Lord') will be visible to all at that time. The earlier interpreters identified the ὄρος τοῦ Κυρίου with the Incarnate Divine Logos, considering peace to be a result that follows the spread of his worship all over the world.[46] Chrysostom, on the other hand, identifies the ὄρος τοῦ Κυρίου with the Church, and according to his viewpoint, peace is inseparably bound to the Church's founding and elevation as a sovereign institution of public life. It is the Church that is exalted now above all of the mountaintops

[43] Ἕλληνες ἦσαν βασιλεῖς, Αὔγουστος, Τιβέριος, Γάϊος, Νέρων, Οὐεσπασιανός, Τίτος, καὶ μετ' ἐκεῖνον ἅπαντες ἕως τῶν τοῦ μακαρίου Κωνσταντίνου χρόνων τοῦ βασιλέως· καὶ πάντες οὗτοι οἱ μὲν ἔλαττον, οἱ δὲ σφοδρότερον ἐπολέμουν τὴν Ἐκκλησίαν, ἐπολέμουν δ' οὖν ὅμως ἅπαντες (*ibid*. 15, PG 48, 833).

[44] *Ibid*. 6 (PG 48, 821-2); *Is*. *Interp*. 2.2-5 (SC 304, 104-24).

[45] See, for example, Ath., *Inc*. LII 1: τῆς παρ' αὐτοῦ πρυτανευομένης εἰρήνης – for the ceasing of wars after the Incarnation of the Divine Logos; and similarly, Eus., *L.C*. XVII 12: ἡ πανταχοῦ γῆς πρυτανευθεῖσα διὰ τῆς αὐτοῦ δυνάμεως εἰρήνη. Libanius connects the πρύτανις τῆς εἰρήνης with the goddess Athena; see his *Prog*. XII 22, 3. The political significance of the title πρύτανις τῆς εἰρήνης, which John bestows upon the Church in *Contra Judaeos et Gentiles* (6, PG 48, 821), is clarified by the accounts from classical literature that Liddell-Scott quote in their lexicon ('πρυτανεύω').

[46] A selection of passages can be found in the published doctoral dissertation of the author. See *Johannes Chrysostomus über das* I.R. (2005), 31[50].

nearing the heavens, just as the nations are massively converted to its doctrines.[47] The promise, therefore, of *Isaiah* 2:4 is not fulfilled one-dimensionally by the fragile *Pax Romana* that the legions of Caesar impose – even if their imperial standard bears the monogram Chi-Rho. It is fulfilled, rather, in the new Cosmopolis of Christ that unites Hellene and barbarian, rich and poor, those in power and the powerless into one, new community, breaking the patterns of the world as it approaches the eschatological reality.[48] Scrutinizing over the rhetoric of Chrysostom with care, we collect an abundance of evidence that helps us to form a more lucid idea of the ambitious mission that the Church undertakes in common life. On the one hand, the Church safeguards the peace within the Roman Empire, forging indestructible bonds of friendship between its faithful, who come from social strata with different economic interests and conflicting aspirations.[49] On the other hand, it defuses the crisis that is breaking out across the borders of the *Imperium*, civilizing the barbarian tribes and bestowing upon them the possibility to peacefully coexist with the Roman populations.[50] Whether it was for the Goths of Crimea or their Arianizing brothers in Constantinople who revolted in 399 under the banner of General Gainas, the intense missionary activity that John developed has dimensions that transcend the simple preaching of the Gospel.[51] As it is clearly visible in Chrysostom's writings, his missionary activity is essentially inspired by a political utopia – the unification of all humanity within the bosom of the Church together with the obliteration of racial and social discrimination that hurts and divides people; and the awakening of the feeling of love within the soul of humanity, from which alone, according to John, peace is possible. Αὕτη γὰρ μήτηρ τῶν ἀγαθῶν, mentions this church father in relation to the greatest virtue of the Christian

[47] *Jud. et gent*. 6 (PG 48, 821); *Is. Interp*. 2.2-3 (SC 304, 104-18).

[48] Despite his wholeheartedly positive attitude toward the *Pax Romana*, John is not willing to give it an eternal or metaphysical character. As with any form of peace that is sustained by the balance of power among different states, the *Pax Romana* is also subject to continuous shifts and is in danger of being abolished at any moment. Only the εἰρήνη τοῦ Χριστοῦ, according to this church father, is fixed, unshakeable and immortal. See *Jud. et gent*. 2 (PG 48, 816) and, also, *Hom. in Eph*. 24.2 (PG 62, 170); *Hom. in Col*. 8.3 (PG 62, 354-5). For the Church as a new community that breaks the patterns of the world, see the interesting analysis of Arnold Stötzel, in his *Kirche als „neue Gesellschaft". Die humanisierende Wirkung des Christentums nach Johannes Chrysostomus*, Münsterische Beiträge zur Theologie 51 (Münster, 1984), 91-142.

[49] Their transcendence into the mystical body of the Church is something that John particularly insists upon in his preaching. See *Hom. in Col*. 3.3-4 (PG 62, 321-3) and 8.3 (PG 62, 355); *Hom. in Eph*. 9.3 (PG 62, 72-3); *Hom. in Phil*. 14.2-3 (PG 62, 285-8); *Hom. in Ac*. 37.3 (PG 60, 265-7); see also *Hom. in Rom*. 1.3-4 (PG 60, 399-400); *Hom. in Eph*. 11.1 (PG 62, 79-80); *Res. Chr*. 3 (PG 50, 437).

[50] *Hom. div*. 8.1 (PG 63, 501-2); *Jud. et gent*. 6 (PG 48, 821-2); *Hom. in 1 Cor 10:1* 3 (PG 51, 246); *Exp. in Ps*. 143.3 (PG 55, 461).

[51] The same observation from Gerhard Albert, *Goten in Konstantinopel* (*Untersuchungen zur oströmischen Geschichte um das Jahr 400 n.Chr*.), Studien zur Geschichte und Kultur des Altertums/NF-1.R.: Monographien 2 (Paderborn a.o., 1984), 175.

ethos, αὕτη πολέμων ἀναίρεσις καὶ φιλονεικίας ἀφανισμός.[52] I have, however, the impression that we are being drawn away into a different discussion, and it is perhaps not by chance. Even now that the questioning centers upon the *Pax Romana*, the benefit of peace that Rome offers to the nations, John changes the subject again and chooses instead to speak of something else – the Church.

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A dialogue with John Chrysostom has in store surprises, as we see, and obliges us to re-examine the accuracy of the viewpoint set out in the scholarship related to this church father that, despite the independence of his thought and the particular importance that he gives to the priesthood, he constitutes a representative of Byzantine caesaropapism.[53] Nevertheless, instead of that which we ought to hear from his mouth, if the above viewpoint was correct, that Rome allows for the proliferation of the Church with the peace that is prevalent in its vast territories, he argues quite the contrary – that the Church offers Rome the peace that is necessary for the establishment of its sovereignty and prosperity of the people it governs.[54] Suddenly, then, the question materializes within us concerning John's position towards the 'political theology' that is formed in the fourth century as a result of the gradual rapprochement between Rome and Christianity. Does the *Imperium* hold, in his opinion, a position in the omniscient plan of God for the salvation of humanity? Ἡ τῶν Ῥωμαίων ἀρχὴ οὐκ ἐξαιρέτου τινός τετύχηκεν παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ οἰκονομίας; This is the next question we put to this church father, reminding him of the words of his teacher at the catechetical school of Antioch – Diodore of Tarsus.[55] John will respond to our question willingly. However, the general manner with which he formulates his views causes us confusion, giving us the impression that once again he avoids expressing his viewpoint openly. 'For that there should be rulers […]

[52] 'For love is the mother of all good things, love is the destruction of wars and the end of strife' (*Exp. in Ps.* 132.3 [PG 55, 385]). See also the aphoristic statement of John in his commentary *Ad Ephesios*: Ἐὰν γὰρ εἰρήνη ᾖ καὶ ἀγάπη ἔσται· ἐὰν ἀγάπη, καὶ εἰρήνη ἔσται (45.4 [PG 62, 174]); and for further examples, see *Hom. in Eph.* 9.3 (PG 62, 73); *Hom. in 2 Cor.* 30.1 (PG 61, 606).

[53] See Francis Dvornik, *Early Christian and Byzantine Political Philosophy* (*Origins and Background*), Dumbarton Oaks Studies 9, vol. II (Washington, D.C., 1966), 698-9. Dvornik considers Chrysostom a successor of Eusebius. Others hold this same view; among them, see Erik Peterson, *Der Monotheismus als politisches Problem. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der politischen Theologie im Imperium Romanum* (Leipzig, 1935), 82.

[54] This surely does not mean he fails to recognize the role political authorities play in the preserving of peace. See *Hom. in Rom.* 23.2 (PG 60, 617).

[55] 'Has not God generously given the Roman Empire his favour in a special and distinct way more so than to any other?' See Karl Staab, *Pauluskommentare aus der griechischen Kirche*, Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen 15 (Münster i. W., 1933), 10.

and that all things should not just be carried on in one confusion, the people swaying like waves in this direction and that; this, I say, is the work of God's wisdom,' he mentions in the twenty-third homily of his commentary *In epistulam ad Romanos*,[56] in order to add later that, according to Paul, the archon of the state is in essence a servant of God. The duty of he who is in authority is to reward the virtuous and to punish the evil people, and for this reason he does not unjustifiably carry his sword with him.[57] In his fourth sermon *In Genesim*, then, John attributes the existence of rules of law in the society to the divine will, as well as the austerity with which they are enforced by the authorities. 'One can see sharpened swords everywhere, executioners, tortures, penalties, punishments,' John says in his sermon, describing the harsh and painful measures that God takes after original sin, so that human nature may not be corrupted by evil.[58] We encounter analogous references by Chrysostom to the fear with which the authorities enforce law and order in the society, not to mention in other points of his rhetoric.[59] However, we will need to browse through his commentary on Second Thessalonians in order to realize that all of his theoretical observations on the subject that is of interest to us are basically concerned more with the Roman Empire than with any other political entity that has appeared in the history of humanity. Besides, despite their foundation in the passages of Paul the apostle, these theoretical observations disclose the influence that the Judeo-Christian apocalyptic tradition also exerted upon Chrysostom by means of an emphasis on the vehement face of political power.

In the fourth homily of his commentary on *Second Thessalonians*, namely, John is undertaking the interpretation of the enigmatic κατέχων ('one who restrains'), who hinders by his action the appearance of the Antichrist.[60] Adopting an exegetical tradition that has its origin in Hippolytus and Irenaeus, John identifies the κατέχων as the *Imperium Romanum*.[61] In order to substantiate his interpretation, then, he reminds us of the prophecy of *Daniel* regarding the four kingdoms that come after one another in the governing of the earth (*Dan*. 2:31-45; 7:1-28). The development of events justifies the great prophet of Israel in the best manner. Following the Medes, the world was dominated by

[56] *Ibid*. 23.1 (PG 60, 615).

[57] *Ibid*. 23.2 (PG 60, 616).

[58] *Serm. in Gen*. 4.2 (SC 433, 234).

[59] See *Stat*. 6.1 (PG 49, 81-2) and 21.3 (PG 49, 217-8); *Hom. in 2 Cor*. 15.4 (PG 61, 509); *Hom. in Tit*. 2.2 (PG 62, 672); *Comp*. 3 (PG 47, 390).

[60] See the introductory chapter to John's homily (PG 62, 485-6), which is dedicated to the interpretation of verses 2*Thess*. 2:5-7.

[61] Even in the 4th century the question remained open as to how the words of Paul should be understood concerning the κατέχων – or the κατέχον – which will have to 'first be out of the way', as the apostle writes in his letter (2*Thess*. 2:7), in order to pave the way for the arrival of the Antichrist and the 'last' times. As it concerns the exegetes, on whose side John finds himself, choosing their point of view that the *Imperium* is hiding behind the ambiguous phrases of *Second Thessalonians*, see K. Bosinis, *Johannes Chrysostomus über das* I.R. (2005), 43-6.

the Babylonians, who were succeeded by the Persians, and then they by the Macedonians, until it was Rome's turn to take the reigns of the world; and it will keep them firmly in its hands until the 'last' times. It is the reign of Rome, which now stretches out over the entire length and breadth of the globe, that is restraining the revelation of the 'son of destruction' and of the demonic power that, before the Second Coming, he will establish on the Earth.[62] Without a doubt, the identification of the Empire as the κατέχων decorates its historic grandeur with dramatic highlights and offers it a preferential position in Christian eschatology. However, the romantic myth of the final kingdom on the earth surrounding Rome in Chrysostom's homily is unable to conceal from our eyes the degradation that it suffers, in parallel, at the level of a simple, earthly power. Rome is the fourth beast with the iron teeth and copper nails, which *Daniel* sees in his famous vision swallowing and trampling everything in its path (*Dan*. 7:7,19,23). Coercion and violence, which constitute the main characteristics of every form of political power, realize their culmination in the iron fist with which Rome imposes its dominance among the nations.[63] The very peace that it establishes in the *orbis terrarum* is based upon the power of weapons – the sharpened swords, as Chrysostom says, which are pointed threateningly at whoever disregards the laws and sacred symbols of its empire. Also, Rome's reign is not going to last forever. The *imperium sine fine* that Zeus promises to the descendants of Aeneas[64] is no more than a fairy tale of ancient times. Their own glorious empire too will one day collapse similar to the kingdoms of the Medes, Babylonians or Persians. The Antichrist will seize the throne despite Rome's desperate attempts to prevent and restrain him.[65]

Perhaps more than anything else, the content that Chrysostom attributes to this hated figure of Christian eschatology, and to its dialectical relationship with the κατέχων of *Second Thessalonians*, shows the distance separating him from the political theology of the fourth century, which emanates from the apologetics of Eusebius. The Antichrist, in John's opinion, embodies arrogance, brutality, audacity and every human perversion. His reign marks the last stage of the

[62] *Hom. in 2 Thess*. 4.1 (PG 62, 486). For the motif of the succession of kingdoms (*translatio imperii*) that offers John, similar to earlier church fathers, the basis for decoding the verses 2*Thess*. 2:1-7, see H.A. Gärtner, 'Imperium Romanum' (1996), 1157-8, 1165-9, 1171ff.

[63] The prophet names the fourth beast ὑπέρφοβον or, as Theodotion translates it, φοβερὸν περισσῶς, in order to underline the distance that separates it from the other three in relation to the fear it inspires with its great force (*Dan*. 7:19). The brutality that he shows in the exercise of his power is also unparalleled (*Dan*. 7:7). These characteristics of the fourth beast, which the kingdom of the Seleucids embodied historically during the time in which Daniel authored his book, are attributed to the Roman Empire by the Christian authors. See Hipp., *Dan*. II 12, 6; IV 5, 2. 7, 4 (τὸ θηρίον τὸ ἔκθαμβον καὶ φοβερόν […], τὸ ἔχον τοὺς ὀδόντας σιδηροῦς, ὅπερ ἐστὶν οἱ νῦν κρατοῦντες Ῥωμαῖοι, ἰσχυροὶ ὄντες ὡς ὁ σίδηρος); Ps.-Chrys., *Dan*. 2 (PG 56, 208), among many other accounts in the patristic literature.

[64] Verg., *Ain*. I 178-9.

[65] *Hom. in 2 Thess*. 4.1 (PG 62, 486).

degeneration of the society, as indicated by the term that this church father uses to characterize it – τυραννία.[66] In addition, similar to the succession of different forms of government in the political philosophy of antiquity, the 'tyranny of the Antichrist' is born from ἀναρχία, which is brought about by the weakening of the traditional institutions of power and of the influence they exercise.[67] Then, the passions break loose from all restraint, and, shattering the bonds that keep them imprisoned within the depths of human existence, they are poured out into the public life with violence.[68] This is a development that has painful results – a development which for the time being, according to John, is being prevented by the 'iron kingdom,' that holds the earth under its heel. Ἕως γὰρ ἂν ὁ ταύτης ᾖ τῆς ἀρχῆς φόβος, mentions this church father about the Roman Empire, οὐδεὶς ὑποταγήσεται [τῷ Ἀντιχρίστῳ]· ὅταν δὲ αὕτη καταλυθῇ, ἐπιθήσεται τῇ ἀναρχίᾳ καὶ τὴν τῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ τὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐπιχειρήσει ἁρπάσαι ἀρχήν.[69] Therefore, it is through fear that Rome fulfills its historic mission as the κατέχων. The authoritarianism of its power stems from a great necessity that, already from the beginning of the creation of the world, leads God to the institutionalization of political authorities – the taming of man's animal instincts that threaten to transform communal life into a jungle. 'So if you deprive the city of its rulers, we must lead a life less rational than that of the brutes, biting and devouring one another; the rich man, the poorer; the stronger man, the weaker; and the bolder man, him who is more gentle.' These words of Chrysostom from his sixth homily *De statuis*[70] come spontaneously into our minds as we read his interpretation of the κατέχων. This is because the reality of the crude enforcement of the law of the jungle, which these words describe, is not very far from the horror that humanity will experience in the 'last' times, when the Antichrist will establish his kingdom upon the ruins of the *Imperium Romanum*.[71] I believe, then, that we

[66] *Hom. in Joh.* 41.1 (PG 59, 236). See, in comparison, *Hom. in 2 Thess.* 4.1 (PG 62, 486), where mention is made concerning the usurpation of political authority by the Antichrist.

[67] See Plat., *Res pub.* VIII 562a-564a; Polyb., *Hist.* VI 9, 5-10. 57, 2-9; see also Arist., *Pol.* IV 7, 1296a. 3-4 with the explanations of Jacqueline de Romilly, *Problèmes de la démocratie grecque* (Paris, 1975), 122-30.

[68] See *Hom. in Math.* 77.2 (PG 58, 704): ἐπίτασις ἀτόπων ἡδονῶν; *Hom. in 2 Thess.* 1.1 (PG 62, 470): ἀπόνοια and *ibid.* 4.1-2 (PG 62, 486-7): κακία, ὠμότης, πάντα παράνομα, μηδὲν ὑγιές.

[69] 'For as long as the fear of this empire lasts, no one will willingly exalt himself, but when that is dissolved, he will attack the anarchy, and endeavor to seize upon the government both of man and of God' (*Hom. in 2 Thess.* 4.1 [PG 62, 486]).

[70] *Ibid.* 1 (PG 49, 82).

[71] Moreover, the eschatological dimension of the words of Chrysostom that we quoted above is clear, provided that shortly after in the same homily *De statuis*, this church father refers again to the κατέχων, who prevents the forces of dissolution and chaos from being imposed (*ibid.*). However, here his meaning is extended to include every kind of political power; see my work *Johannes Chrysostomus über das* I.R. (2005), 49-50.

do not need to insist any further. This church father has responded to our question with clarity:

> Yes! God saves the Empire and its crowned kings. However, the high favour that Rome enjoys from the divine corresponds to its particular physiognomy as a political authority. Furthermore, Rome can easily lose this favour if, by overstepping the boundaries of its jurisdiction, it demands religious honours from its subjects, or if it foolishly proclaims its own eternity – an eternity which does not belong to anything of this earthly realm, except of course to the Church, the mystical body of Jesus Christ.[72]

Aeternitas, just as *pax*, constitutes a distinctive feature of the political ideology of Rome, which Chrysostom detaches from the Empire and attributes to the Church as the spiritual authority.

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As we set our eyes upon the figures of the martyrs on the right and left walls of an Orthodox church, we feel the need to put a last question to John: Περὶ τῶν πάλαι πότε γεγονότων κατὰ τῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐκκλησίας διωγμῶν, τί ἂν εἴποιμεν πάτερ; – 'Regarding the persecutions that occurred in the past against the Christian Church, what can we say, Father?' John's response to our question is direct, clear and affirms once again his self-restraint towards the enthusiasm, which the Constantinian turn caused for the intellectuals of the Church, such as Eusebius of Caesaria. Whereas Eusebius, writing in the beginning of the fourth century, consciously downgrades the clash between Christianity and Rome, of course for apologetic reasons, and particularly stresses their common rise from the era of Augustus,[73] John, two generations later, insistently turns the attention of his audience to the gloomy past, when the Christians were persecuted as κοινοὶ ἐχθροί ('public enemies') by the authorities and he underlines with emphasis the opposition that was put up by the Roman Empire against the preaching of the Gospel: 'The kings were pagans at that time', John

[72] It is evident that John is averse to the imperial cult, which he condemns in his commentary on *Second Thessalonians*. In his view, with the phrase τὸ μυστήριον ἤδη ἐνεργεῖται τῆς ἀνομίας (2*Thess*. 2:7), Paul is alluding to Nero, by whom he himself will be put to death in the first persecutions against the Christians. With his unlawful desire to be worshipped as a god, Nero becomes a prefiguration of the Antichrist and turns the power of Caesar into an instrument of Satan (*Hom. in 2 Thess*. 4.1 [486-7]; see also *Eleem.* 1 [PG 51, 262]; *Hom. in Rom.* 31.4 [PG 60, 674]). Furthermore, one clear hint for John, against the doctrine of *Roma aeterna*, is contained in the confiding of Paul in his brethren of Thessaloniki concerning the 'last' times. The allusive language, which this apostle uses in his epistle, has precisely as its goal to conceal the Church's belief in the future collapse of the Empire from the authorities, so as not to provoke their wrath against the faithful (*Hom. in 2 Thess*., *ibid*.). For the *Ecclesia aeterna* in this church father: *Hom. in Eph.* 7.2 (PG 62, 52); *Hom. in Is. 6:1* 4.2 (SC 277, 144); *A. exil* 1.1-2 (PG 52, 429); *Exp. in Ps*. 44.13 (PG 55, 203).

[73] See J. Sirinelli, *Les vues historiques d'Eusèbe de Césarée* (1961), ch. XII; and, in particular, 413-7, 448-54.

will say in one of his early writings, 'and all without exception were persecuting the Church, some more so than others – all, however, persecuted the Church.' Regarding the persecutors of the Church, the first of the Roman emperors that John mentions by name is Octavian Augustus.[74] Also, the persecutions for Chrysostom are not merely a parenthesis to the relations between Christianity and Rome; neither is their meaning reduced to an occasional test, to which God subjects the faithful for pedagogical reasons. On the contrary, the persecutions constitute a fundamental fact that reveals within the historical development the physiognomy of two entirely distinguishable powers – the State and the Church.[75] Nevertheless, the end of the persecutions by the decree of religious tolerance of Milan in 313 AD and the adoption of Christianity as an official religion of Rome establishes the submission of one power to the other that is by nature superior to it – submission which is not far from the taming of the flesh by the spirit within the microcosm of the human being.[76] Appearing in the texts of Chrysostom so clearly for the first time is a fruitful dualism of Church and State, two independent and opposing institutional powers, around which the public life of the Empire is both revolving and structured. This model, still highly theoretical, which carries the preaching of Chrysostom, will be kneaded with the thousand-year history of the Byzantine *Imperium* and will seal the fate of the Hellenic and European civilization from the years of late antiquity until today.[77]

[74] *Jud. et gent*. 15 (PG 48, 833). Octavian Augustus also appears, together with Caligula and Nero, as a persecutor of Christians in the 4th homily of the series *Vidi dominum sedentem in solio excelso* (2 [SC 277, 142-4]). See also *Exp. in Ps*. 147.4 (PG 55, 483).

[75] See especially *Hom. in Mt*. 75.3 (PG 58, 689-90); *Hom. in Phil. 1:18* 4 (PG 51, 314); *Exp. in Ps*. 45.13 and 46.6 (PG 55, 202-3 and 216); *Eutrop*. 2.1 (PG 52, 397-8); *Jud. et gent*. 6 and 15 (PG 48, 821 and 830ff.).

[76] *Hom in 2 Cor*. 15.5 (PG 61, 509); *Hom. in Is. 6:1* 4.5 (SC 277, 164); *Sac*. 3.5 (SC 272, 148-50); *Stat*. 3.2 (PG 49, 50).

[77] An accusation is raised by modern researchers (F. Dvornik, J.N.D. Kelly, K. Groß-Albenhausen and others) that Chrysostom's attitude toward the state is neither consistent, nor founded upon theoretical principles, but rather changes according to the political situation and his personal relations with the royal court. This accusation is unjustifiable and is refuted in a convincing manner by Justin Stephens in his 'Religion and Power in the Early Thought of John Chrysostom', in Andrew Cain and Noel Lenski (eds), *The Power of Religion in Late Antiquity: Selected Papers from the Seventh Biennial Shifting Frontiers in Late Antiquity Conference* (Farnham, 2009), 181-8.

John Chrysostom's First Homily on Pentecost (CPG 4343): Liturgy and Theology

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Abstract

John Chrysostom's *First Homily on Pentecost* (CPG 4343) is one of the earliest festal sermons on Pentecost. The text has hardly been studied in its own right and is not too often referenced in studies on Chrysostom.[1] In what follows I will first discuss some introductory matters (1), then I will present the content of the text (2). Thereby I will focus on thematic links with the rest of Chrysostom's oeuvre. In this way my contribution will integrate this understudied text better in scholarship on Golden Mouth.

1. Text and Context

The text has been transmitted in a few dozens of manuscripts, often together with the second sermon on Pentecost. In a few instances the transmitted text is fragmentary, in some other manuscripts it is transmitted without the second on Pentecost and in two instances a manuscript has them in reversed order. Usually, however, both sermons on Pentecost are transmitted together and in the correct order.[2] Both texts are printed consecutively in volume 50 of the *Patrologia Graeca* and they are referenced together under the number 4343 of the CPG.[3] Of both texts the Chrysostomian authorship has never been put in doubt, nor is there, given the unambiguous ascription in the manuscripts, any obvious reason to do so. It goes without saying that the first and second sermon

[1] An edition with translation, extensive introduction and commentary in the notes to the text, all prepared by Dr. Nathalie Rambault, is underway for Sources Chrétiennes. It will probably be published in 2013. She informs me that the Greek text she has established is very close to the one printed in the PG. Rambault's introduction and commentary will be the only in depth study devoted to the text. In earlier scholarship only chapter 4, to which I will also devote some attention, has caught the attention.

[2] These observations is based on the data of the pinakes-database of the IRHT (http://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/; accessed 28.12.11).

[3] Until the Rambault-edition (see note 1) is published, one has to rely on the text printed in the PG 50, 453-70. We refer to this edition by references to the column number between round brackets in the main text).

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on Pentecost are different texts that should be studied on themselves, even if there are common features.[4]

A first reading of the text immediately reveals this is a festal sermon. The feast of Pentecost, the reason for the celebration is the central theme of the sermon and the Pentecost-narrative of the book of *Acts* provides part of its backbone. This is reflected in the nature and tone of the sermon. Most of Chrysostom's sermons are characterized by a lively, continuous interaction with the audience and a strong parenetic tone and purpose.[5] These are certainly not absent in the sermon but much less strongly so. Because of the festal nature of the sermon the kerygmatic clearly outweighs the parenetic: this sermon's focus is on the salvific operation of the Spirit in this world, only paying attention at the end to ethical challenges and demands resulting from it.

It is hard to say to what extent the text as we have it now overlaps with the text of the sermon as Chrysostom originally delivered it. We do know that Chrysostom, as other late antique homilists, took care of the 'editing' of his homilies, often on the basis of stenographers' notes.[6] In some instances we even do have evidence of such deliberate revisions in the form of several versions of the same text, suggesting that one of these is a faithful copy of the stenographic notes of the sermon as it was delivered.[7] Unfortunately, this is not the case with our sermon, meaning that we have to make a judgment only on the basis of the text as we have it. Here, one might argue that the occasional lively character of passages where the preacher is addressing his audience more directly indicates that our text is at least a credible version of what John may have been saying, even when allowing for later tinkering with the text and/or grammatical and stylistic corrections.

What about place and date of delivery? The text contains one precious indication in this regard. Halfway through his sermon John is developing some thoughts on the presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church. He assures his audience that without the Spirit there would be no teachers and shepherds in the Church fit to do their job. As an example of this he focuses on the person of 'our common father and teacher' who, after the closure of the sermon, will give his benediction of peace and will then preside at the liturgy at the altar.[8]

[4] They should also be carefully distinguished from the set of texts known as *In pentecosten sermones* 1-5 (CPG 4536), the Chrysostomian authorship of which is less clear, see S. Voicu, 'In Pentecosten sermo 1 (PG 52,803-808; CPG 4536): il problema dell'autenticità', in M. Maritano (ed.), *'Historiam perscrutari'. Miscellanea di studi offerti al prof. O. Pasquato* (Roma, 2002), 849-61.

[5] A. Olivar, *La predicacion cristiana antigua*, Biblioteca Herder. Seccion de teologia y filosofia 189 (Barcelona, 1991), 111 writes about John as a homilist that usually it is the other way around.

[6] A. Olivar, *La predicacion* (1991), 907-10.

[7] F. Gignac, 'Evidence for Deliberate Scribal Revision in Chrysostom's Homilies on the Acts of the Apostles', in J. Petruccione (ed.), *Nova et Vetera: Patristic Studies in Honour of Thomas Patrick Halton* (Washington, D.C., 1998), 209-28.

[8] PG 50, 458.

Clearly, John sees himself as in a subordinate position to this person who acts as the chief-liturgist. This situation perfectly fits his years as a presbyter in Antioch under bishop Flavian.[9] On this basis our sermon can be safely situated in Antioch between the years 386 (when John became a priest) and 397 (his departure for Constantinople).[10] While Antiochene provenance can be considered on this basis as established, a more precise date is impossible to arrive at.[11]

The liturgical context is obviously that of the feast of Pentecost. During the last decades of the fourth century AD Pentecost had evolved from the festive closure of the fifty day-period after Easter into an independent feast-day that got his meaning no longer from its relation to Easter but from its own meaning as the commemoration of the giving of the Spirit.[12] Together with the sermons delivered at Pentecost by Gregory of Nazianze and Gregory of Nyssa, Chrysostom's *First Homily on Pentecost* is one of the earliest texts that document Pentecost as one of the cornerstones of the liturgical year.

One final element from the liturgical context of the sermon. As evidence of the presence of the Spirit, John refers to his presence 'in those who received baptism during this holy night' (κατὰ τὴν ἱερὰν νύκτα ταύτην).[13] This is clear evidence that not only with Easter but also during the celebration of Pentecost people were baptised. All the evidence taken together, it would seem that in Antioch at the end of the fourth century the normal trajectory was catechisation during Lent followed by baptism on Easter but that there was also the possibility for baptism during the vigil services of Pentecost and, maybe, even Epiphany.[14]

[9] This passage is by no means unique: in quite a number of other sermons too he is referring in the same vein to Flavian, W. Mayer, *The Homilies of St John Chrysostom – Provenance. Reshaping the Foundations*, Orientalia Christiana Analecta 273 (Rome, 2005), 284-5.

[10] Already Le Nain Tillemont and Savile did so, as well as a host of other scholars. The Antiochene provenance is accepted by the authoritative work of W. Mayer, *Provenance* (2005), 469.

[11] J.N.D. Kelly, *Golden Mouth: The Story of John Chrysostom, Ascetic, Preacher, Bishop* (Ithaca, 1995), 67 dates it (without giving arguments) in 386, which is 'unprecedented' in the state of the art (W. Mayer, *Provenance* [2005], 242[1047]).

[12] R. Cabié, *La Pentecôte. L'évolution de la cinquantaine pascale au cours des cinq premiers siècles*, Bibliothèque de la liturgie (Tournai, 1965).

[13] PG 50, col. 457 infra.

[14] T. Finn, *The Liturgy of Baptism in the Baptismal Instructions of St. John Chrysostom*, The Catholic University of America Studies in Christian Antiquity 15 (Washington, D.C., 1967), 48-9. He bases his conclusions on the following texts: *Bapt. Instr.* 10.5-7; *In act. Apost.* 1; *In Pentecosten* I 3. A careful reading of these sources reveals that baptism in the vigil service of Pentecost may be accepted as certain whereas the evidence for Epiphany is much less univocal and is derived from an ad sensum-reading of the texts, which nowhere unequivocally mention this practice. Moreover, to the evidence should be added the *Second Homily on Pentecost* (*In Pentecosten* II 3; PG 50, col. 469 below-470) of which Antiochene provenance is not certain. Half a century later there is also evidence of baptism at Pentecost in Constantinople (Proclus, *In Pentecosten* 2). In the Latin West already Tertullian had in *De baptismo* 19.2 indicated Pentecost as a suitable time for baptism but did so in an argument that while all days were suitable, Easter nevertheless was the preferred date. The later Western tradition also consistently mentions Easter and Pentecost as the preferred occasions (Pentecost and ultimately every day equally suitable but less desirable):

All of this means that among Chrysostom's audience there must have been a number of newly-baptised Christians and that this was, also at Pentecost, nothing exceptional.

2. The content of the sermon and parallels with other writings of Chrysostom

John opens with praise for his congregation: it is a joy for the eye to see the church filled to capacity on this feast-day! Yet, this is not always the case: too often there are too many empty places. On those occasions the church, who is like a caring mother, is not wearing a gown down to the ankles but seems almost naked. Yet there is no excuse to come only on major feast-days to church. The Jews have to appear before God only three times a year (see *Ex.* 23:17) but us, Christians, God wants to appear before him every day. Epiphany (appearance of the Lord), Easter (death and resurrection) and Pentecost (coming of the Spirit) should be celebrated every day! Having a feast-day shouldn't depend on the calendar but on the Christian's pure conscience: with a pure conscience every day is a feast-day and John exhorts his audience to achieve this in deeds and words. After this opening, John turns to the ὑπόθεσις τῆς ἑορτῆς, the reason of the feast (453-454, below).

Just like Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory of Nazianzen,[15] John interprets Pentecost as the commemoration of a culmination point in salvation history. The coming of the Spirit marks the end of a long series of blessings (πολλὰ ἀγαθά) that have come down from heaven on the entire human race. In the past (the period of the Old Testament) there was manna, fire and rain from heaven; now there is a rain of spiritual gifts, not to water the earth but to nurture human nature so that it may produce a variety of virtuous deeds for those who pursue it. Those who caught even only one drop of these spiritual gifts immediately forgot their human nature and became 'human angels' who show in their mortal body the virtue of immortal spirits. Interestingly, the described process doesn't do away with the body: the angelic nature *enters* so to speak in the human body. The acquisition of the angelic nature is the result of a cooperation between divine grace and human freedom. As the ultimate goal all Christians should strive after, it is a key concept in Chrysostom's Christian anthropology (455-456).[16]

see W.J. Conway, *The Time and Place of Baptism: a Historical Synopsis and a Commentary*, CUA Canon Law Series 324 (Washington, D.C., 1954), 5-8.

[15] Gregory of Nyssa, *In sanctam pentecosten* (ed. D. Teske [GNO X/2] [Leiden, 1996], 287,15-288,25); Gregory of Nazianze, *In sanctam pentecosten* (or. 41), 5 (ed. C. Moreschini, SC 358 [Paris, 1990], 324-7); *In sanctum spiritum* (or. 31), 25-6 (ed. P. Gallay, SC 250 [Paris, 1978], 322-9).

[16] This is developed in great depth in L. Brottier, *L'appel des «demi-chrétiens» à la «vie angélique». Jean Chrysostome prédicateur: entre idéal monastique et réalité mondaine*, Patrimoines-Christianisme (Paris, 2005).

While the angelic life is the goal for all Christians, here John seems to think in the first place of the Apostles. By these spiritual gifts they were transformed into angelic beings, armed with powers that enabled them to perform all sorts of healing miracles of body and soul. These are narrated at length. Miracle followed upon miracle and gradually salvation history developed towards the events of Ascension and Pentecost. Both are intimately linked: Christ ascended to heaven and in the ten days until Pentecost he reconciled humanity with God who sent with Pentecost spiritual gifts as a sign of this reconciliation. John sees this as an exchange: Humanity sent faith and received from heaven the gifts of the Spirit; they sent obedience and received justice (*dikaiosunè*). The absence of the Spirit is a sign of God's wrath but since it is clear how abundantly the Spirit was effused there is no reason to doubt the reconciliation anymore! The coming of the Spirit and his salvific presence is nothing less than the pledge of the reconciliation between God and humanity (456-458 middle).

In a sermon on Pentecost, in which the salvific presence of the Holy Spirit's work is described, an attack on the Pneumatomachians is never far away, also in Antioch where since the 360's a considerable homouiousian faction was present to provide a fertile breeding ground for 'spirit-fighting ideas' to originate.[17] In this sermon the attack on the Pneumatomachians is still veiled: 'Where are they now, those who blaspheme against the Holy Spirit. For if he isn't cleansing us from sins, why do we receive him in baptism? but if he does forgive our sins, it is without ground that those heretics direct against him their blasphemies'.[18] A similar but more elaborate rejection of the Pneumatomachian position he is giving in his *Second Homily on Pentecost*. Pneumatomachians do not recognise or honour the work of the Spirit, John says, but instead reject and blaspheme him. They rob him from his sovereign divine dignity and reduce him to a mere creature among the creatures. The locus classicus of *Matth.* 28:19, however, makes it abundantly clear that the Spirit's dignity is put on the same rank as the Father's and the Son's, that the three exhibit a perfect harmony; that the Trinity is indivisible and that it doesn't support any form of difference or of inversion of order.[19] Other places where John offers extensive argumentations against the Pneumatomachians are in his *75th and 78th Homilies on the Gospel of John*. In *Homily 75* he comments on *John* 14:6: 'And I will ask the

[17] A. Martin, *Athanase d'Alexandrie et l'Église d'Égypte au IVe siècle (328-373)*, Collection de l'École française de Rome 216 (Rome, 1996), 550 and E. Soler, *Le sacré et le salut à Antioche, au IVe siècle apr. J.-C. Pratiques: festives et comportements religieux dans le processus de christianisation de la cité*, Bibliothèque archéologique et historique de l'Institut français d'archéologie du Proche-Orient: Beyrouth-Damas-Amman 176 (Damascus, 2006), 156.

[18] *In pentecosten* I 4 (PG 50, 458).

[19] *In pentecosten* II 2 (PG 50, 465).

Father, and He shall give you another Comforter.' His argumentation focuses on that the Paraclete is 'another' (than Christ):

> Let those be ashamed who have the disease of Sabellius, who hold not the fitting opinion concerning the Spirit. For the marvel of this discourse is this, that it had striked down contradictory heresies with the same blow. For by saying 'another', He showed the difference of Person, and by 'Paraclete', the connection of substance.

In *Homily 78*, the quotation of *John* 16:7 ('For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come') offers the homilist a ready argument against the Pneumatomachians. John comments:

> What here say those who hold not the fitting opinion concerning the Spirit? Is it 'expedient' that the master depart, and the servant come? Do you see how great the honour of the Spirit is?[20]

But back to the *First Sermon on Pentecost*. John continues his argument by describing the Spirit's salvific and inspiring actions by virtue of which the Christian and the Church are quickened. Without Spirit, baptism doesn't make sense. Without the Spirit we could not pray 'Lord Jesus' because, as it is said in 1*Cor*. 12:3, nobody can say 'Lord Jesus' except in the Holy Spirit. Likewise, without Spirit we could not address God or pray to him, as we do in the Our Father. Without the Holy Spirit, the spirit of wisdom and knowledge would be in the church (see 1*Cor*. 12:8). Without Holy Spirit, there wouldn't be in the church shepherds and teachers. For in *Acts* 20:28 it is said 'over which the Holy Spirit has set you as bishops and teachers'. In sum, the Spirit is actively present in baptism, in prayer, in the ministers and teachers in the church (458).

Then John shifts his attention to the very liturgical celebration in which he is delivering this sermon and turns that very celebration and the participants in it into other examples of the Spirit's beneficial actions. He also changes his discursive tone into a more direct tone addressing his audience. The ensuing passage reads as a mini-introduction in liturgical theology. First he puts the spotlight on the bishop Flavian, 'your common father and teacher', who is present. Flavian is filled with the Holy Spirit, which he received with his ordination. When he took place on his cathedra, his episcopal chair, and he gave his congregation the Lord's peace, they responded 'and with your spirit'. The same happened several more times during the service when he addresses his congregation or prays for them but it will also happen during the service at the altar when Flavian performs this holy sacrifice. It is no coincidence, Chrysostom underlines, that Flavian doesn't do at the altar or doesn't touch anything before he has wished his congregation the Lord's grace and they have answered

[20] *Hom. 75 in Joannem* 1 (PG 59, 403) and *Hom. 78 in Joannem* 1 (PG 59, 421). Apparently Soler places this sermon also in Antioch. W. Mayer, *Provenance* (2005), 479, accepts Antiochene provenance only for the homilies nrs. 2 and 12. The rest remains undetermined. The translations have been taken from the NPNF.

'and with your Spirit'. This ritual of address and response is a reminder that what is happening at the altar during the Eucharist is not the work of a human being but of the grace of the Spirit. 'We see a human being', John says, 'but it is God who works through him'. So, don't pay attention, don't focus your eyes on what is visible but on the invisible things that happen, the working of the invisible grace (458 below – 459 above).

I think this is a wonderful passage in the sermon. John uses the present liturgical celebration as an example of the Spirit's actions in and for the Church. It is a very dynamic passage because of the tone of direct address of the audience but also because of the content. The Spirit is present first of all in bishop Flavian, who received it when he was ordained. Secondly the Spirit is also present in the congregation and when the Spirit responds 'and with your Spirit' to the bishop's prayers, they do so while sharing in the same Spirit as he is. The Spirit is the bond between God, bishop and congregation and it is by virtue of this Spirit that the bishop can perform the Eucharistic sacrifice at the altar, where ultimately not he but God through the Spirit is at work. All these elements are also present in Chrysostom's other writings,[21] but here they are brought together in a very condense way. The Spirit is the beating heart of the liturgy and Pentecost, as the commemoration of the sending of the Spirit, certainly was an excellent occasion to treat this topic briefly. The more so, because there were some newly-baptised Christians in church who were, maybe for the first time, participating into a regular eucharist. It is easily conceivable John inserted on their behalf in his sermon a brief mystagogical catechesis, a brief explanation of the core of the rituals they were participating in.

The presence of the Spirit thus is self-evident in old and new miracles, in the sacrament of baptism, in the church, in its teachers, in its ministers and bishops, in the liturgy. This raises the question: why did the Spirit in the times of the apostles perform so many miracles when he is no longer doing this at present? Chrysostom says this is a question he is often confronted with. He doesn't deny the absence of miracles in his own time but underlines this shouldn't be taken as a sign of God giving lesser honour. On the contrary: it bears testimony to a bigger honour and higher esteem. In apostolic times people had only just turned away from worshipping idols; their mind was blunter and not yet so receptive. They clung to the earthly realm. They didn't have understanding for spiritual goods; the grace of the Spirit, which is only visible in and through faith, they didn't know. Therefore they needed miracles: only through visible things they were able to come to faith. For this reason they needed for instance the miracle of the multitudes speaking in so many different languages and yet understanding each other (*Acts* 2:4). Such miracles are necessary to bring those to faith

[21] See P.G. Alves de Sousa, *Pneumatología de los textos sacerdotales de San Juan Crisóstomo*, Teología del sacerdocio 17: La Pneumatología en los Padres de la Iglesia. Facultad de Teología de Norte de España – Sede de Gurgos, Instituto «Juan de Avila» (Burgos, 1983), 63-78.

who do not believe. Many spiritual gifts, however, are not visible to the eyes. The cleansing from sins is a spiritual process, work of the Spirit invisible to the eyes. Miracles are visible signs of divine grace, brought to people who need them as a pledge to come to faith. They are not necessary though and their absence is not a sign of lesser honour but more of a reward: if God doesn't bestow miracles on us anymore, he does so because he judges we don't need these signs to come to belief (459-460).[22]

Then John moves in his Pentecost-narrative to the Spirit who rests on the disciples in the form of fiery tongues. He stresses it was not *real* fire, it only *looked like* fire just like the dove in the Jordan event was not a real dove but the holy spirit (460 middle). In his *Fourth Homily on Acts* John develops a similar line of thought:

'And there appeared unto them', it says, 'cloven tongues like as of fire.' (v. 3) Observe how it is always, 'like as'; and rightly: that you may have no gross sensible notions of the Spirit. Also, 'as it were of a blast': therefore it was not a wind. 'Like as of fire.' For when the Spirit was to be made known to John, then it came upon the head of Christ as in the form of a dove: but now, when a whole multitude was to be converted, it is 'like as of fire.[23]

The episode of the fiery tongues brings John back to the Pentecost-story which he narrates until the end including a few jibes against incredulous Jews. The Jews showed their usual lack of understanding in that they accused the apostles, who were filled with the Spirit, of being drunk. He then points out this doesn't make sense: the new wine comes in the autumn, Pentecost is in the spring (460-461 above), the same he would also use later in his *Fourth Homily on Acts:*

Others mocking said, 'These men are full of new wine.' O the excessive folly! O the excessive malignity! Why it was not even the season for that; for it was Pentecost. For this was what made it worse: that when those were confessing-men that were Jews, that were Romans, that were proselytes, yea perhaps that had crucified Him-yet these, after so great signs, say, 'They are full of new wine!'[24]

Pentecost is a crucial point in salvation history, as an exchange between heaven and earth: humanity sent its firstlings to heaven, where they were accepted by Christ; as pledge and war prisoner he sent the Spirit. As our very firstling, Christ is in heaven where he sits on the throne next to God. At the end of times, he will come from there to judge us. The final part of the sermon is devoted to

[22] One may refer here to a parallel in the *Fourth Homily on Acts* (ch. 1; PG 60, 44, middle-below), in which the visibility oft he OT-media of grace is illustrated by a series of Scriptural examples (e.g. *Ez*. 3:3; *Jer*. 1:9; *Ez*. 2:10; 2*Kgs*. 13; 1*Sam*. 16:13; *Ex*. 3:2).

[23] *Fourth Homily on Acts* (ch. 1; PG 60, 43, above); the translation was taken from the NPNF.

[24] *Fourth Homily on Acts* (ch. 1-2; PG 60, 44); the translation was taken from the NPNF.

the Last Judgment, which John first describes in all its threatening reality. All our deeds, our merits and our sins have been noted down. For these will we receive reward or punishment. We can, however, influence our 'status' by doing good deeds. In this way it is even possible to do away with this entire burden of sins. John encourages his audience to achieve that as good as they can. In this way this largely kerygmatic sermon comes to a strong parenetic closure with a forceful appeal by the preacher on his congregation's free will to take the road he pointed them to (461-463).

3. General Conclusion

In his homily John Chrysostom develops a reflection on the feast of Pentecost for which he used themes and ideas he also used in his other writings. Though different in genre and later in date, it is interesting to see some of his ideas recurring in his *Fourth Homily on Acts*. Thanks to his rhetorical ability, apt use of Scriptures and pastoral flair, this *First Homily on Pentecost* became a true festal sermon, a true celebration of the Pentecost-event.

St John Chrysostom's Exegesis on the Prophet *Isaiah*: The Oriental Translations and their Manuscripts

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Abstract

The article deals with the remarkable exegetical works ascribed to St John Chrysostom – the *Commentary on the Prophet Isaiah* (CPG 4416) partially preserved in Greek, the major part existing in Armenian translation only, and the cycle of six homilies on King Uzziah, '*In illud: Vidi Dominum'* (*Isa.* 6:1) (CPG 4417). Although the Greek text of both of them was studied comprehensively by J. Dumortier and their critical edition appeared in the early 1980s, the manuscript tradition of the Oriental versions – Armenian and Syriac, which provide important textual evidence, remains uninvestigated. The article aims to examine the features of Syriac and to some extent of Armenian manuscripts, which have preserved these valuable pieces of patristic thought, and to provide a preliminary solution for some historical and philological puzzles connected with the texts.

The Christian tradition has regarded the book of *Isaiah* as a prediction of the coming of Christ and has attached particular significance to it.[1] This approach follows the practice described in the Gospel text when Christ Himself chose to interpret the prophecy of *Isaiah* in a synagogue in order to proclaim that it has been fulfilled (*Luke* 4:16-21). The Evangelists connect many episodes in the life of Christ with the words of *Isaiah*. Along with the *Psalms* it is the Old Testament text most frequently used in the Gospels.[2] A large number of commentaries on the book of *Isaiah* were produced during the Patristic period. The main genres of exegetical literature were fairly detailed commentaries, brief scholia and homilies which were often more moralistic rather than strictly theological in character. An occasion for these latter could be provided by either a liturgical reading in the church or by a feast day in some way connected to the text. Some of these interpretations have been lost and we only learn about their previous existence from references in early Christian writers. Some have been

[1] I would like to gratefully acknowledge generous help of Nikolai Lipatov-Chicherin and Zara Pogossian.

[2] More on this subject see in Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Opening the Sealed Book: Interpretations of the Book of Isaiah in Late Antiquity* (Grand Rapids and Cambridge, 2006).

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preserved in fragments in catenae or in quotes by other authors. Some are extant only in translations, yet there are those which are available in the original Greek.[3]

One of the most remarkable commentaries on the book of *Isaiah* belongs to St John Chrysostom. This commentary is a substantial work consisting of 64 chapters (CPG 4416). Chapter I to chapter VIII, verse 10 have been preserved in Greek, while all the remaining chapters (chapter VIII, verse 11 to chapter LXIV) are only known in Armenian translation. The Greek section was published for the first time, without translation, by Henry Savile (1610/12) – his Greek text was reprinted by Fronton du Duc (1616/21) with Latin translation by a Carthusian monk Gottfried Tilmann; in 1724 Bernard de Montfaucon undertook another edition of the *Commentary* as part of John Chrysostom's *Opera Omnia*, the second edition of his text was later reprinted by Jaques Paul Migne in *Patrologia Graeca*.[4] A modern critical edition of the *Commentary* as well as its study was undertaken by Jean Dumortier.[5]

There are nine Greek manuscripts from the 10th to the 16th century preserved in European collections. All of them contain the 8 first chapters of the *Commentary* only, and two manuscripts – *Marcianus gr. 87* from approximately the 12th cent. and *Vaticanus Ottobonianus gr. 7* from after 1543 (the latter bearing witness of textual dependence on the former and belonging to the same group of texts) – preserved a final note, which reads: 'Up to here one finds this initial part of the [work] by the blessed and most holy Archbishop of Constantinople John Chrysostom presented in Greek characters, and from here it is [written] with signs (διὰ σημείων)'.[6] J. Dumortier suggested that the word 'signs' (σημεῖα) indicates symbols used in shorthand record of the work, which would then reflect the long tradition of applying this term to tachygraphy.[7]

Indeed, one of the earliest examples of use of the expression διὰ σημείων is attested in Cicero's *Letter to Atticus* (XIII 32. 3; 45 BCE) where he uses this

[3] See Mauritius Geerard, Franciscus Glorie, *Clavis Patrum Graecorum* (Turnhout, 1987), 5, 126-7: *In Isaiam*.

[4] *Τοῦ ἐν ἁγίοις Πατρὸς ἡμῶν 'Ιωάννου ἀρχιεπισκόπου Κωνσταντινουπόλεως τοῦ Χρυσοστόμου τὰ εὑρισκόμενα*, ed. Henry Savile (Etonae, 1610/12), 1, 1016-86; *ibid.* (Etonae, 1612), 8, col. 133-42 (notes by H. Savile, Johann Andreas Bose, Thomas Allen); *Sancti Patris nostri Ioannis Chrysostomi archiepiscopi Constantinopolitani, Homiliae et Commentarij in Psalmos Dauidis, in Esaiam, et de aliquot alijs Prophetarum locis*, ed. Fronton du Duc (Lutetiae Parisiorum, 1616/21), 3, 640-767; *Τοῦ ἐν ἁγίοις Πατρὸς ἡμῶν 'Ιωάννου τοῦ Χρυσοστόμου τὰ εὑρισκόμενα πάντα*, ed. Bernard de Montfaucon (Parisiis, 1724), 6, 1-95; 2nd ed.: [same title] (Parisiis, 1835), 6, 1-108, this edition was reprinted with supplement in PG 56, 11-94.

[5] *Jean Chrysostome, Commentaire sur Isaïe*, ed. Jean Dumortier, SC 304 (Paris, 1983).

[6] Ἕως ὧδε ἐν ἑλληνικοῖς γράμμασιν εὕρεται ἐντεθεῖσα ἡ προθεωρία αὕτη παρὰ τοῦ μακαρίου καὶ ἁγιωτάτου τοῦ ἀρχιεπισκόπου Κωνσταντινουπόλεως 'Ιωάννου τοῦ Χρυσοστόμου ἀπὸ δὲ ἐντεῦθεν διὰ σημείων, *Commentaire sur Isaïe* (1983), 11.

[7] Jean Dumortier, 'À propos du Commentaire sur Isaïe de Saint Jean Chrysostome', *REG* 95 (1982), 174-7; J.B. Dumoriter, 'La version arménienne du Commentaire sur Isaïe de Jean Chrysostome', *SP* 17,3 (1982), 1159-62; *Commentaire sur Isaïe* (1983), 11-4.

Greek expression (along with other Graecisms) which must have been well familiar to him as well as to his addressee.[8] There is a discussion in literature (mainly, among German scholars of the beginning of the 20th century) whether or not Cicero's διὰ σημείων meant shorthand in this particular case.[9] The polemics was summarised by Herbert Boge who concluded that the expression must have been used by Cicero in the sense of 'hints' rather than tachygraphy;[10] likewise D.R. Shackleton Bailey interpreted διὰ σημείων in his edition of Cicero's *Letters to Atticus* as 'in abbreviation'.[11] Nevertheless the use of this Greek idiom for tachygraphy supported by O. Morgenstern, F. Preisigke and V. Gardthausen seems to be better reasoned and more plausible.

An additional argument in favour of Cicero's familiarity with tachygraphic signs is provided by Plutarch's biography of Cato the Younger. Here we find the description of Cicero as a consul having arranged Cato's speech in the Senate against the supporters of Catiline to be recorded by clerks taking shorthand notes, and even having instructed them in tachygraphy:

> This is the only speech of Cato which has been preserved, we are told, and its preservation was due to Cicero the consul, who had previously given to those clerks who excelled in rapid writing instruction in the use of signs, which, in small and short figures, comprised the force of many letters; these clerks he had then distributed in various parts of the senate-house. For up to that time the Romans did not employ or even possess what are called shorthand writers, but then for the first time, we are told, the first steps toward the practice were taken' (Cato Min. 23, 3-4).[12]

[8] '*Et quod ad te <de> decem legatis scripsi parum intellexi<sti>, credo quia διὰ σημείων scripseram*', *Cicero's Letters to Atticus*, ed. David Roy Shackleton Bailey (Cambridge, 1966), 5, 176-9.

[9] There were three main opinions: O. Morgenstern, F. Preisigke and V. Gardthausen clearly stated that διὰ σημείων meant here nothing but tachygraphic signs: Otto Morgenstern, 'Cicero und die Stenographie', *Archiv für Stenographie* (hereafter *Arch. Sten.*) 56 NF 1 (1905), 4-6; Friedrich Preisigke, 'Das σημεῖον', *Arch. Sten.* 55 NF 1 (1905), 305-12; Victor Gardthausen, 'Geschichte der griechischen Tachygraphie', *Arch. Sten.* 57 NF 2 (1906), 3-5. P. Mitzschke assumed that these might be digits: Paul Mitzschke, 'Zu Ciceros Ausdruck "διὰ σημείων": I', *Arch. Sten.* 57 NF 2 (1906), 227-8; while W. Weinberger proposed the meaning 'hints': Wilhelm Weinberger, 'Zu Ciceros Ausdruck "διὰ σημείων": II', *Arch. Sten.* 57 NF 2 (1906), 228. According to some other scholars, σημεῖα here might have had a meaning of cryptograms, Julius Woldemar Zeibig, *Geschichte und Litteratur der Geschwindschreibkunst* (Dresden, 1878), 26; Karl Faulmann, *Geschichte und Litteratur der Stenographie* (Wien, 1895), 13.

[10] Herbert Boge, *Griechische Tachygraphie und Tironische Noten: Ein Handbuch der antiken und mittelalterlichen Schnellschrift* (Berlin, 1973), 43-45.

[11] *Cicero's Letters to Atticus* (1966), 179, 351.

[12] τοῦτον μόνον ὧν Κάτων εἶπε διασῴζεσθαί φασι τὸν λόγον, Κικέρωνος τοῦ ὑπάτου τοὺς διαφέροντας ὀξύτητι τῶν γραφέων σημεῖα προδιδάξαντος ἐν μικροῖς καὶ βραχέσι τύποις πολλῶν γραμμάτων ἔχοντα δύναμιν, εἶτα ἄλλον ἀλλαχόσε τοῦ βουλευτηρίου σποράδην ἐμβαλόντος. οὔπω γὰρ ἤσκουν οὐδ' ἐκέκτηντο τοὺς καλουμένους σημειογράφους, ἀλλὰ τότε πρῶτον εἰς ἴχνος τι καταστῆναι λέγουσιν, *Plutarchi vitae parallelae*, ed. Konrad Ziegler (Lipsiae, 1964), 2/1, 50; English text is quoted from *Plutarch's Lives*, with an

A similar expression διὰ σημείου can be found in a private letter of 27 AD (Oxyrhynchus papyrus 293), although its exact meaning here remains unclear.[13] Later on, the word σημεῖον and its derivatives became clearly associated with tachygraphy. Thus, another Oxyrhynchus papyrus (724; 155 AD) being a curious example of a contract of apprenticeship to a shorthand writer, contains various forms of the words σημεῖον and σημειογράφος.[14] Along with two other nouns, ταχυγράφος and ὀξυγράφος, the word σημειογράφος was widely used to designate a shorthand writer, as appears from the tombstone inscriptions from Eumeneia (Işikli, Denizli Province, Western Anatolia, Turkey) and Amisos (Samsun, Samsun Province, Black Sea Coast, Turkey) dating back to the 2nd or 3rd century AD.[15] In some treatises from the Galenic corpus (*e.g.* in *De libris propriis, De praegnotione ad Epigenem,* and *De propriorum animi cuiuslibet affectuum dignotione et curatione*) one can find a clear statement (with minor variants) on tachygraphy: 'διὰ σημείων εἰς τάχος ἠσκημένῳ γράφειν' ('to write fast with [shorthand] signs').[16] Finally, it is noteworthy that Diogenes Laërtius (II 48) uses the derivative participle ὑποσημειωσάμενος when describing Xenophon taking notes, presumably shorthand ones, of Socrates' speeches.[17]

There are some pieces of evidence that tachygraphy was a form of preservation and circulation of some canonical and patristic texts. Socrates Scholasticus, Sozomen and others left numerous accounts on the work of tachygraphs taking notes during the debates at the councils and writing down sermons as they were pronounced by preachers, particularly by St John Chrysostom.[18] The very title of Chrysostom's cycle of 34 homilies on *Hebrews* can provide a clear evidence of preservation of his works in the form of tachygraphic record and its subsequent publication by another person. The title reads: 'The Commentary on the Epistle to Hebrews [of Our Holy Father Saint John Chrysostom] edited according

Eng. trans. by Bernadotte Perrin (Cambridge and London, 1919), 8, 289-91. See also H. Boge, *Griechische Tachygraphie* (1973), 88-90; *Commentaire sur Isaïe* (1983), 12, ref. 1.

[13] οὐδεμίαν μοι φάσιν ἀπέστειλας περὶ τῶν ἱματίων οὔτε διὰ γραπτοῦ οὔτε διὰ σημε<ί>ου…, *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, ed. Bernard P. Grenfell and Arthur S. Hunt (London, 1899), 2, 293.

[14] *Ibid.* (1904), 4, 204-5.

[15] H. Boge, *Griechische Tachygraphie* (1973), 82-3, 132.

[16] *Ibid.* 92-3.

[17] Καὶ πρῶτος ὑποσημειωσάμενος τὰ λεγόμενα εἰς ἀνθρώπους ἤγαγεν, Ἀπομνημονεύματα ἐπιγράψας, *Diogenis Laertii Vitae philosophorum*, ed. Miroslav Marcovich (Stutgardiae, 1999), 1, 126.

[18] Alfred Wikenhauser, 'Der hl. Chrysostomus und die Tachygraphie', *Arch. Sten.* 58 NF 3 (1907), 268-72; *id.*, 'Beiträge zur Geschichte der Stenographie auf den Synoden des vierten Jahrhunderts n. Chr.', *Arch. Sten.* 59 NF 4 (1908), 4-9, 33-9; *id.*, 'Kleine Beiträge zur Geschichte der antiken Stenographie', *Arch. Sten.* 62 NF 7 (1911), 1-6, 57-64. See further discussion on the subject in the article of Nikolai Lipatov-Chicherin, 'Preaching as the Audience Heard it', *SP* 64 (2013), 277-97.

to the [tachygraphic] signs after his death (lit. 'falling asleep'), by Constantine, a priest in Antioch'.[19] Likewise, the copyist of Chrysostom's *Commentary on Isaiah*, who left the above-mentioned note, most probably used the expression διὰ σημείων to refer to a shorthand record. But this conclusion still leaves some questions which we'll discuss below.

The Armenian translation of the *Commentary* was published in 1880 on the basis of a considerably damaged manuscript on cotton paper written in 'middle erkat'agir' of approximately the 12th century, which was said to be preserved in the Mekhitarists' collection in Venice (Saint Lazarus Island in the Venetian Lagoon).[20] The manuscript is mutilated, lacking the introduction, chapters I 1 – II 1; XXI 2 – XXX 5, and the final chapters LXV – LXVI. Three other manuscripts from the Armenian Patriarchate in Jerusalem containing different parts of the *Commentary* became later known and filled some lacunae in the previously published text.[21] Few years after the first edition A. Tiroyan published the Latin translation of the whole *Commentary* (with the exception of chapters XXI 2 – XXX 5 and LXV – LXVI) having borrowed the Latin text of I 1 – VIII 10 from Montfaucon's edition.[22] Following the Mekhitarists's notes in the edition of the *Commentary*, N. Akinian showed that the Armenian text is quite archaic and goes back to the 5th century.[23]

[19] [Τοῦ ἐν ἁγίοις Πατρὸς ἡμῶν Ἰωάννου ἀρχιεπισκόπου Κωνσταντινουπόλεως τοῦ Χρυσοστόμου] ἑρμηνεία εἰς τὴν πρὸς Ἑβραίους Ἐπιστολήν, ἐκτεθεῖσα ἀπὸ σημείων μετὰ τὴν κοίμησιν αὐτοῦ, παρὰ Κωνσταντίνου πρεσβυτέρου Ἀντιοχείας (PG 63, 9-10); see also: Jean Dumortier, 'Une énigme chrysostomienne: le commentaire inachevé d'Isaïe', in *Universitas: Philosophie, Théologie, Lettres, Histoire, Questions d'aujourd'hui*, *MSR* 34 (1977), 43-7.

[20] *Երանելիոյն Յովհաննու Ոսկեբերանի Մեկնութիւն Եսայեայ մարգարէի* (Վենետիկ, 1880) (*Blessed John Chrysostom's Commentary on the Prophet Isaiah* [Venice, 1880]). According to N. Akinian, description of this manuscript is included in an unpublished catalogue of the Venetian collection, however for the time being I was unable to identify it in Sarghissian's published catalogue. See Basile Sarghissian, *Grand catalogue des manuscrits arméniens de la bibliothèque des PP. Mekhitaristes de Saint-Lazar*e, vol. 2 (Venise, 1924) (in Armenian).

[21] MSS 327 (Maku, 1406 AD), 1853 (no date), and 2837 (Calcutta, 1847 AD); Norair Bogharian, *Grand Catalogue of St James Manuscripts* (Jerusalem, 1967) (in Armenian), 2, 200-1 (MS 327); *ibid*. (1972), 6, 236-8 (MS 1853); *ibid*. (1979), 9, 50-1 (MS 2837); see also [Anon.], 'Անտիպ մասեր Ոսկեբերանի Եսայեայ ոսկեդարեան թարգմանութենէն', *Սիոն* 7 (1933) ('Unpublished parts of the Golden Age [*i.e*. 5th century – N.S.] translation of Chrysostom's [Commentary] on Isaiah', *Sion* 7 [1933]), 330-7; Աբգ. Աւետիսեան, 'Յովհաննու Ոսկեբերանի Եսայեայ մեկնութեան հայ թարգմանութեան նորագիւտ մասը…', *Սիոն* 9 (1935) (Abg. Avetisean, 'The newly discovered part of John Chrysostom's Commentary on Isaiah', *Sion* 9 [1935]), 21-24; *Commentaire sur Isaïe* (1983), 12-3, n. 2

[22] *In Isaiam prophetam interpretatio nunc primum ex Armenio in Latinum sermonem a patribus Mekitharistis translata* (Venetiis, 1887).

[23] Ներսես Ակինեան, 'Յովհաննու Ոսկեբերանի Եսայեայ Մեկնութիւնը հայ մատենագրութեան մէջ', *Handes Amsorya*, *ZAPh* 48 (1934), 43-55; summary: Nerses Akinian, 'Des hl. Johannes Chrysostomus Kommentar zu Isaias in der armenischen Literatur', *ibid*., 96; *Commentaire sur Isaïe* (1983), 14.

The problem of authenticity of the Armenian section of Chrysostom's *Commentary* became a subject of discussion soon after its publication. In 1900 Prof. Ivan Troitskiy of the St Petersburg Ecclesiastical Academy wrote in his introduction to the Russian translation of the entire work of Chrysostom that the two parts of the *Commentary* were not composed simultaneously.[24] Already Le Nain de Tillemont and Montfaucon assumed that its first section was composed by Chrysostom in the time before his priesthood, *i.e*. before 386 AD.[25] Troitskiy suggested that Chrysostom stopped this work after his ordination and returned to it many years afterwards, during his exile to Asia Minor in 404-407.

According to Troitskiy, the authenticity of the entire *Commentary* is unquestionable. There are features in the Armenian section which are very characteristic of indisputable works of Chrysostom, such as criticism of heretics – Eunomius and Macedonius, of Judaism, and also of luxury, riches, as well as profligacy and other sins. There are some common places in the *Commentary* and Chrysostom's homilies on *Matthew* and *Epistles of St. Paul*. The opinion was shared by L. Dieu who came to the same conclusion on the authorship of the *Commentary* in 1914 (although his article was published in 1921).[26] Dieu paid special attention to the exegetical method of Chrysostom, which is more elaborate in the Armenian section where Chrysostom uses widely the versions of Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion as well as the Hebrew Bible. This means, first, that he might have had Origen's *Hexapla* at hand, and second, that he considerably developed his method of exegesis and acquired more experience in it.

Jean Dumortier in his articles as well as in the critical edition of the Greek section expresses a doubt about the authenticity of the Armenian part.[27] His main argument is a note found in the Venetian Armenian manuscript after chapter VIII 10: 'Up to here we have found the writing of blessed John in his own hand in Greek'.[28] According to Dumortier, this is a partial translation of the note found in the two Greek manuscripts (although it doesn't include its second part with the key expression 'διὰ σημείων') indicating that the *Commentary* after VIII 10 was preserved in the form of shorthand record in the Greek protograph, just like the exegetical homilies on the *Epistle to Hebrews*.

[24] *Творения святого отца нашего Иоанна Златоуста, архиепископа Константинопольского, в русском переводе* (С.-Петербург, 1900) (*The Works of Our Holy Father Saint John Chrysostom Translated into Russian* [St Petersburg, 1900]), 6, 1, V-VIII.

[25] Louis-Sébastien Le Nain de Tillemont, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire ecclésiastique des six premiers siècles* (Paris, 1706), 11, 90; Ἰωάννου τοῦ Χρυσοστόμου τὰ εὑρισκόμενα πάντα (1835), 6, II.

[26] L. Dieu, 'Le commentaire arménien de S. Jean Chrysostome sur Isaïe (ch. VIII-LXIV) est-il authentique?', *RHE* 17 (1921), 7-30.

[27] J.B. Dumortier, 'La version arménienne' (1982), 1162; *Commentaire sur Isaïe* (1983), 11-4.

[28] 'Մինչև ցայսմայր գտաք իւրով ձեռովք գրեալ Եբաեելոյն Յոհաննու (sic! – N.S.) յուսարէն։', *Յովհաննու Ոսկեբերանի Մեկնութիւն* (1880), 102. '*Hactenus invenimus scriptum graece ipsismet manibus S. Joannis Chrysostomi*', *In Isaiam prophetam interpretatio* (1887), 123.

However, unlike the latter, the *Commentary on Isaiah* VIII 10 – LXVI remained unknown and unpublished in the Greek tradition and there is no other evidence of survival of its Greek text in any form (either shorthand or not). It seems to me doubtful that no one took responsibility and was able to transcribe and publish this important exegetical work of such an authority as John Chrysostom, which circulated in the form of shorthand record. It should also be pointed out that, as far as I am aware, neither part of the *Commentary* exists in Syriac translation.

On the other hand, the full text of the *Commentary* was well known to the medieval Armenian writers such as David K'obayrec'i (12th cent.) and George of Skevra, or Skevrac'i (13th cent.) who quoted and used it substantially in their catenae and commentaries on *Isaiah*.[29] At the time of his exile in Cucusus when Chrysostom most probably wrote or dictated the second part of his *Commentary*, he could have lived in the Armenian-speaking environment. Soon after the completion of his work it subsequently could have been brought down to Armenia where it was translated in the course of the 5th century, probably by Eznik Kołbac'i.[30] As a result both the early section and the later one were preserved in Armenian translation. It is notable that this was exactly during the period of Chrysostom's exile that Mesrop Maštoc' has undertaken his expedition to Northern Mesopotamia and presumably created the Armenian alphabet there. Thus it is difficult to say whether the Armenians used the newly introduced letters of Mesrop's alphabet or another writing system, which was in use before the creation of the new alphabet. We can surmise that the protograph of those Greek manuscripts which contain the note and are textually separated as a particular group could have originated in the Armenian milieu and contained both the Greek text of chapters I 1 – VIII 10 and a record of the *Commentary* from the chapter VIII 11 onwards made by Armenians in whatever script they were using at that period and which they could easily decipher. A later Greek copyist unfamiliar with these letters could have interpreted them as regular tachygraphic signs (which he apparently didn't know either), thus creating certain confusion. However, without thorough study of the Armenian manuscripts containing the text of the *Commentary* it is not possible to make any definitive conclusions.

Closely related to the *Commentary on Isaiah* are John Chrysostom's six homilies on king Uzziah, properly entitled '*In illud: Vidi Dominum*', or in full, *'On the words "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon the throne high and lifted up" (Isa. 6:1)'* (CPG 4417). The original Greek text

[29] These works can be found, in particular, in manuscripts 1758 (1281 AD) and 365 (1299 AD) from St James's Monastery (the Library of the Armenian Patriarchate) in Jerusalem. See William F. Macomber, *Final Inventory of the Microfilmed Manuscripts of the St James Monastery*, Jerusalem (Provo, 1995). See also L. Dieu, 'Le commentaire arménien' (1921), 12.

[30] Mesrop Djanachian, 'Les arménistes et les mékhitaristes', in *Armeniaca: Mélanges d'études arméniennes publiés à l'occasion du 250e anniversaire de l'entrée des pères mekhitaristes dans l'Ile de Saint-Lazare (1717-1967)* (Venise, 1969), 409.

of all the six homilies has fortunately survived in a number of manuscripts from the 9th to the 16th century. The *editio princeps* was produced by H. Savile (1611/1612); the next edition prepared by F. du Duc included the Greek text of Savile as well as the Latin translation of the homilies by Erasmus (homilies 1-5) and the editor himself (homily 6); the next considerable edition was prepared by B. de Montfaucon (1724) and his text was included in the PG.[31] The critical edition was undertaken by J. Dumortier in 1981.[32] Although the homilies are quite well-studied, there still remain some textual problems in them.

Researching textual history of the cycle, Dumortier highlighted three layers, or stages, in accordance with the original quantity and sequence of the homilies. The initial layer consisted of four homilies: 2, 3, 5, and 6 which were pronounced in Antioch in the course of 386-387 AD, as it was demonstrated by Le Nain de Tillemont.[33] This archaic tradition is attested by the Armenian translation of the 5th century. Intermediate or second layer is characterised by adding homily 1 to the original collection of four homilies, although this stage is purely hypothetical as it has no surviving manuscript evidence. The third and final layer is represented by all known Greek manuscripts as they contain six homilies: 2, 3, 5, 6 plus 1 and 4, though their order differs.[34]

Dumortier's reconstruction of the earliest stage in the textual history of the homilies is based on the evidence of the Armenian translation. The text of all four sermons along with some other Chrysostom's homilies was published by the Mekhitarists in 1861.[35] The order of the homilies on Uzziah here follows that of Montfaucon's edition which is also evident from the concordance in the end of book (p. [920-921]). Dumortier mentions three manuscripts in Venice which became the basis of the 1861 edition.[36] Although the language features of the translation may place it in the 5th century, the possibility that the manuscripts themselves can be dated to such an early date should be ruled out. The earliest dated Armenian manuscript is from 862 AD (Four Gospels, the Mekhitarists' collection, Venice), and it is highly probable that undated early manuscripts and fragments, for the most part, belong to the time no earlier than the 9th century (with the exception of the newly rediscovered Greek-Armenian

[31] *Ἰωάννου τοῦ Χρυσοστόμου τὰ εὑρισκόμενα* (1611/1612), 5, 127-60; *Ioannis Chrysostomi…, Homiliae et Commentarij* (1616/21), 3, 833-94; *Ἰωάννου τοῦ Χρυσοστόμου τὰ εὑρισκόμενα πάντα* (1724), 6, 94-144; 2nd ed.: [same title] (1835), 6, 110-66; reprinted in: PG 56, 97-142.

[32] *Jean Chrysostome, Homélies sur Ozias (In illud, Vidi Dominum)*, ed. by Jean Dumortier, SC 277 (Paris, 1981).

[33] Le Nain de Tillemont, *Mémoires* (1706), 11, 39-42, 559-61 (n. 16-7).

[34] *Homélies sur Ozias* (1981), 30-1. See also Jean Dumortier, 'Les homélies sur Ozias *In illud Vidi Dominum* PG LVI 97-142', *SP* 12 (1975), 284-93.

[35] *Յովհաննու Ոսկեբերանի Կոստանդնուպօլսի եպիսկոպոսապետի ճառք*, [ed. by Łevond M. Ališan] (Վենետիկ, 1861) (*Sermons of John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople* [Venice, 1861]), 385-422.

[36] *Homélies sur Ozias* (1981), 20, 30-1.

papyrus from approximately the 6th century).[37] In the catalogue of manuscripts in the Mekhitarists' collection in Venice there are two manuscripts containing the homilies on Uzziah. One is No. 212 of the 13th century which contains homily 6 entitled here 'On the Seraphim and on repentance'; and another – No. 228 of 1847 AD (copied from certain 13th century manuscript) containing homily 3 'On the words which said: "The heart of Uzziah was lifted up"…', and homily 6 'On the words: "And [it] was in the year when Uzziah died" and on repentance' (see the titles from the 1861 edition in Appendix 1).[38] Thus the three presumably old Armenian manuscripts which include the text of the four homilies (2, 3, 5 and 6) still need to be identified and explored.

Another illustration of the initial phase in the history of the cycle on Uzziah is provided by the Syriac translation (neither mentioned in CPG nor used in the previous research of the homilies). I came across this Syriac text while working on the 8th century manuscript of the *Homiliae cathedrales* by Severus of Antioch dispersed between two manuscript collections in St Petersburg (Russian National Library, Syriac N.S. 10; Institute of Oriental Manuscripts, Syr. 35).[39] One part of the *Homiliae cathedrales* manuscript in the Russian National Library contains 24 leaves bound together in random order and among them I identified a leaf (fol. 24) written in the same estrangela script but with minor palaeographic differences, which let me propose an earlier date for this folio. On the other hand, the contents as well as stylistic features of a patristic text preserved on the folio proved that in no way it could be a sermon by Severus of Antioch. Soon it turned out to be the middle section of homily 5 on king Uzziah by John Chrysostom and it equally became clear that this leaf belongs to the late 6th-7th century collection of sixteen Chrysostomian homilies in Syriac translation (Russian National Library, Syriac N.S. 12).[40] This manuscript, in its turn, was bound together with a collection of homilies by St Gregory of Nazianzus – both of them were brought to St Petersburg by Constantine Tischendorf in the middle of the 19th century.

The manuscript consists of 169 parchment folios (plus one folio bound within a different manuscript) (264 × 170 mm). It contains three homilies on king Uzziah (2, 3 and 5, according to the Greek sequence) as well as six

[37] Michael E. Stone, Dickran Kouymjian, Henning Lehmann, *Album of Armenian Paleography* (Aarhus, 2002), 59-60.

[38] B. Sarghissian, *Grand catalogue* (1924), 2, 224 (No. 119), 447 (No. 55-6); see also J. Muyldermans, 'Répertoire de pièces patristiques d'après le catalogue arménien de Venise', *Le Muséon* 47 (1934), 287.

[39] Natalia Smelova, 'Palaeography and Textual Study of some Estrangelo Manuscripts in St Petersburg', in *Actes du 10e Symposium Syriacum (Granada, septembre 2008)*, PdO 36 (Kaslik, 2011), 453-67.

[40] Нина В. Пигулевская, *Каталог сирийских рукописей Ленинграда*, Палестинский сборник 6/69 (Москва-Ленинград, 1960) (Nina V. Pigulevskaya, *Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts in Leningrad*, Palestinskiy Sbornik 6/69 [Moscow and Leningrad, 1960]), 95-9.

homilies 'On the priesthood', a word against Gainas (sermon '*Cum Saturninus et Aurelianus*'), the 'Letter of consolation' and some other sermons. The table of contents (fol. 1v) has the title: ܗܕܐ ܣܦܪܐ ܕܡܪܝ ܝܘܚܢܢ ܐܦܣܩܦܐ ܕܩܣܛܢܛܝܢܘܦܠܝܣ ܕܒܗ ܟܬܝܒ ܐܝܟ ܕܐܬܡܠܝ. ('In this volume are contained various sermons of blessed Mar John, bishop of Constantinople'). In the erased colophon (fol. 169r) I was only able to make out the Lord's prayer in Syriac from a few scarcely readable words, but we don't have the date or the name of the scribe so far. The manuscript contains plenty of corrections (previous words or lines erased with new text written above them) – some of them were made in the same time when the manuscript was written, but some are obviously later. Moreover, it is clear that the first four quires of this manuscript, which include three sermons 'On the priesthood', are probably somewhat later than the rest of it, they are written in a different hand and with a different ink containing carbon black pigment. The layout of the text on those pages is also somewhat different.

Another evidence for the Syriac translation of the homilies on Uzziah is the British Library manuscript Add. 14612 – a West Syrian anthology from the late 6th or early 7th century.[41] It is a bulky parchment volume of 255 folios. The collection is entitled ❖ܗܕܐ ܣܦܪܐ ܕܡܡܠܠܐ ܕܡܦܫܩܢܐ ܕܡܪܝ ܝܘܚܢܢ ܐܦܣܩܦܐ ܕܩܣܛܢܛܝܢܘܦܠܝܣ ܕܒܗ ܟܬܝܒ ܐܝܟ ܕܐܬܡܠܝ (ʻA volume of exegetical homilies[42] of the Divine Teacher Saint John, Bishop of Constantinople') (fol. 1v), although it includes not only exegetical works and not only by Chrysostom. There are plenty of extracts from both Syriac and Greek authors: Ephrem the Syrian, Isaac of Antioch, Basil the Great, Gregory of Nazianzus and Gregory of Nyssa, Epiphanius, Cyril of Alexandria, as well as Jacob of Sarug (Jacob of Batnae), Philoxenos of Mabbug and Severus of Antioch. It also includes five letters of Macarius and a fragment of the *Ecclesiastical History* by Theodoret. All these works are arranged according to certain theological topics but the general plan behind the composition still remains obscure. The scribal note (fol. 255r) informs that the scribe's name is Theoctistus (ܬܐܘܩܛܝܣܛܘܣ), but here, again, no date is given. The British Library manuscript contains three homilies on King Uzziah (2, 3 and 5) grouped together (fol. 201r-213v) and the final sixth homily entitled 'On the Seraphim' presented separately (fol. 235v-240r) after the 'Letter of consolation' and a number of other exegetical texts of Chrysostom.

The collation of the two manuscripts has shown that they both include the same Syriac version (translation) of the Chrysostomian homilies on Uzziah and even the same recension with minor variants. However, they demonstrate no

[41] William Wright, *Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London, 1871), 2, 696-701 (DCCLIII).

[42] The word ܦܫܩܢܐ, lit. 'interpretation', is widely used in West Syrian homiliaries where it usually designates 'exegetical homily'.

direct connection with each other. In many cases the manuscript from St Petersburg adds some auxiliary words missing from that of the British Library – this mainly applies to the personal pronouns and the verb ܐܡܪ. Sometimes the gender of a demonstrative pronoun is erroneously changed from masculine to feminine (ܗܢܘ – ܗܕܐ); and there are variations in using adjectives, *e.g.* ܥܬܝܩ instead of ܥܬܝܩܐ. Such is the nature of the most variant readings. Judging by its contents, the homiliary from St Petersburg may be of Melkite rather than West Syrian origin and although its exact provenance is unknown it may well have been brought by C. Tischendorf from St Catherine's Monastery on Sinai.

The titles of the homilies are identical in both Syriac manuscripts (with the only variant) although they differ from those in the Greek and Armenian versions (the latter renders the original text very precisely, although it is difficult to say whether the titles as they appear in the 1861 edition were taken from manuscripts or they were corrected by the editors in accordance with Montfaucon's Greek text). A list of comparative titles (see Appendix 1) shows clearly that the three homilies on Uzziah (2, 3 and 5) in Syriac tradition were supposed to be placed one after another and testify to the initial phase in the textual history of the Uzziah cycle.

One of the most representative features in patristic translations is the way of quoting the Bible. The New Testament quotations in the Syriac text of the homilies do not correspond entirely to any of the existing Syriac versions, thus it is difficult to say whether the phraseology is more likely to follow the *Vetus Syra* or Pešiṭta – this can be illustrated by a free quotation from *John* 5:43 included in homily 2 (see Appendix 2). Both Syriac manuscripts provide a curious reading – the expression ܒܫܡ ܐܒܝ (‘in the name of my father’) is rendered as ܒܫܡܝ ܐܒ (‘in my name, [that of] my father’). However, in this case it seems to be a scribal error rather than a questionable theological interpretation.

The Old Testament quotations are even more fundamental and representative as some of them provide the subject for the homilies. The quotation from *Isa*. 6:1-2 in homily 2 corresponds to the Pešiṭta almost perfectly with the exception of one notable case. In the description of the Seraphim who are present and standing ܥܠܘܗܝ ܥܠ (‘above Him’) (Pešiṭta; *Isa*. 6:1-2), it is interpreted in the homily as ܘܣܒܝܒܘܗܝ (‘around Him’) in accordance with the expression κύκλῳ αὐτοῦ in the Septuagint and the Greek homily which renders the LXX text precisely (see Appendix 2). ܥܠܘܗܝ ܥܠ can be potentially understood as ‘above it’ (*i.e*. the throne), since Syriac ܟܘܪܣܝܐ is masculine. The only clue here is provided by the LXX text – as we read in the previous passage: ὁ οἶκος τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ, then αὐτοῦ in the following verse should also refer to God rather than His throne.

Quite different is the character of quoting of the 2*Chr*. (2*Paralipomenon*) 26:16, where the actual story of King Uzziah is narrated: ‘When he [King Uzziah] was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he transgressed against the Lord his God, and went into the temple of the Lord to burn

incense upon the altar'. Here homilies 3 and 5 follow two different sources rather than the Pešiṭta version of the 2*Chr*. – first, the Greek text of the homilies plus the LXX, and second, the Pešiṭta text of *Ps*. 130:1 (see Appendix 2). Besides many differences in phraseology, one of the key words ἡ καρδία is interpreted in the Pešiṭta as ܪܘܚܐ (spirit) while everywhere else it is translated literally as ܠܒܐ ('heart').

The question of style and dating of the Syriac translation of Chrysostom's homilies on Uzziah can be approached using the criteria proposed by Sebastian Brock.[43] The translation is quite accurate and precise though the Syriac sentences do not follow the structure of the Greek ones – they are restructured quite often to such an extent that the translation may be characterised as close paraphrase. In the same time, the translation is not expanded considerably with the interpreter's own commentaries just like some other early patristic translations.[44] Thus I can suppose that it cannot be later than the 6th century and probably not earlier than the late 5th century (although this is a tentative dating). Another important question which is still to be examined is which of two textual families (established by Dumortier) served as a basis for the existing Syriac version.[45] At the moment the homilies on Uzziah were identified in two Syriac manuscripts only, although the possibility of finding another recension in unexplored manuscripts cannot be excluded. One should consider a greater number of manuscripts containing Chrysostom's other exegetical homilies, especially his *Homilies on John* where, as Jeff Childers showed it, reflections of at least three Greek recensions can be identified.[46]

Coming back to the history and structure of the Uzziah cycle we can conclude that the Syriac tradition definitely testifies to the initial stage in the formation of the cycle which goes back to the late 5th-6th century when three homilies (2, 3 and 5) were in circulation all together, closely related to each other and in the only Syriac translation. The sixth homily, although it was translated presumably at the same time, was preserved independently. The Syriac manuscripts dating to the late 6th-7th century are the earliest pieces of material evidence for the text of the homilies as the Armenian manuscript tradition still remains obscure and needs further examination.

[43] Sebastian Brock, 'Towards a History of Syriac Translation Technique', in *III Symposium Syriacum (1980): Les contacts du monde syriaque avec les autres cultures (Goslar, 7-11 Septembre 1980)*, ed. René Lavenant, Orientalia Christiana Analecta 221 (1983), 1-14; reprinted in Sebastian Brock, *Studies in Syriac Christianity* (Hampshire, 1992).

[44] David Taylor, 'The Syriac versions of St. Basil's De Spiritu Sancto', *SP* 27 (1993), 105-12, esp. 110.

[45] *Homélies sur Ozias* (1981), 30.

[46] See the article by Jeff Childers, 'Chrysostom in Syriac Dress', *SP* 67 (2013), 323-32 (this volume), as well as some other works of this author, *e.g*. 'Chrysostom's Exegetical Homilies on the New Testament in Syriac Translation', *SP* 33 (1997), 509-16; *id*., *Studies in the Syriac versions of St. John Chrysostom's Homilies on the New Testament: with special reference to Homilies 6, 20, 22, 23, 37, 62, 83, and 84 on John*. D.Phil. thesis (Oxford, 1996) (unpublished).

Appendix 1:
Greek, Armenian and Syriac titles of the homilies on Uzziah

[Homily 2][47]

Εἰς τὸ προφητικὸν ῥητόν· 'Καὶ ἐγένετο τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ, οὗ ἀπέθανεν Ὀζίας ὁ βασιλεύς [εἶδον τὸν Κύριον καθήμενον ἐπὶ θρόνου ὑψηλοῦ καὶ ἐπηρμένου]', καὶ ὅτι οὐ δεῖ χρόνον, οὐδὲ στοιχεῖον ἐν παρατρέχειν τῶν [θείων] Γραφῶν.

Ի մարգարէական բանն·'Եւ եղեւ 'ի տարւոջն յորում մեռաւ Ոզիա արքայ'· եւ եթէ ոչ ժամանակաւ եւ զգրով միով զանց առնել պարտ է զգրոց:

('On the prophetic words: "And [it] was in the year when King Uzziah died" and that it is proper to neglect neither the time nor a single letter of the Scriptures').

ܒܪ ܡܠܦܢܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܥܙܝܐ ܒܫܢܬ ܡܘܬܗ ܕܐܡܪ ܕܝܬ ܠܢ ܕܠܐ ܢܫܬܘܩ ܒܛܦܫܐ ܙܒܢܐ ܕܟܬܒ ܒܗ ܘܠܐ ܢܫܬܘܩ ܒܐܘܬܝܐ ܕܟܬܒ ܒܗ ܘܠܐ ܢܫܬܘܩ ܒܐܘܬܝܐ ❖ ܕܟܬܒ ܒܗ

('Also a homily on what the prophet said: "[It] was in the year when King Uzziah died" and that it is proper for us neither to leave out imprudently the time when the Holy Scriptures were made known nor to ignore letters (whatever is written) in them' [variant in Syr. N.S. 12: ܕܟܬܒ ܒܗ ܐܦ ܚܕ ܐܘܬ a single letter in them]).

[Homily 3]

Εἰς τὴν ῥῆσιν τῶν Παραλειπομένων τὴν λέγουσαν· ' Ὑψώθη ἡ καρδία Ὀζίου' καὶ περὶ ταπεινοφροσύνης, καὶ ὅτι χρὴ μὴ θαρρεῖν τὸν ἐνάρετον, καὶ ὅσον κακὸν ἡ ἀπόνοια.

Ի բան Մնացորդացն որ ասէ եթէ· 'Բարձրացաւ սիրտն Ոզիայ'· եւ յաղագս խոնարհութեան· եւ եթէ պարտ է ոչ վստահանալ յառաքինութիւն, եւ որքան չար է ամբարտաւանութիւն:

('On the words of the Paralipomenon which said that "the heart of Uzziah was lifted up", and about humility, and that it is proper not to rely on [someone's] virtues, and [on] how harmful arrogance is').

ܥܠ ܡܠܬܐ ܕܐܡܪ ܒܣܦܪ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܐܬܪܡ ܠܒܗ ܕܥܙܝܐ ❖ ܕܐܬܪܡ ܠܒܗ ܕܥܙܝܐ ܥܠ ܡܠܬܐ ܕܐܡܪ ܒܣܦܪ ܕܡܠܟܐ

('Homily on the word said in the Book of Chronicles: "The heart of Uzziah was lifted up" and on humility, and that one should not rely on [one's] righteousness, and on how strong the pride is').

[47] In Appendix 1 the Greek titles are taken from J. Dumortier's edition, *Homélies sur Ozias* (1981), 82 (hom. 2), 104 (hom. 3), 178 (hom. 5), 202 (hom. 6); variants are added in square brackets from the edition of H. Savile, *'Ιωάννου τοῦ Χρυσοστόμου τὰ εὑρισκόμενα* (1611/1612), 5, 151 (hom. 5), 155 (hom. 6). The Armenian titles are quoted from the edition *Յովհաննու Ոսկեբերանի … ճառք* (1861), 385 (hom. 2), 392 (hom. 3), 404 (hom. 5), 412 (hom. 6); I also used Garegin Zarbhanalean, *Catalogue des anciennes traductions arméniennes (siècles IV-XIII)* (Venise, 1898) (in Armenian), 596. The titles in Syriac are taken from Syr. N.S. 12, fol. 84r (hom. 2), 88v (hom. 3), 96r (hom. 5), and Add. 14612, fol. 201r (hom. 2), 204r (hom. 3), 209v (hom. 5), 234v (hom. 6).

[Homily 5]

Εἰς τὰ ὑπόλοιπα τοῦ Ὀζίου.
[Variant title: Εἰς τὸ ῥητόν τοῦ προφήτου Ἡσαίου ὁ λέγον· ‘ Ἐγένετο τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ, οὗ ἀπέθανεν Ὀζίας ὁ βασιλεύς, εἶδον τὸν Κύριον’· καὶ ἡ ἀπόδειξις, ὅτι δικαίως ἐλεπρόθη Ὀζίας ἀναξίως θυμιάσας, ὅπερ οὐκ ἔξεστι βασιλεῦσιν, ἀλλ’ ἱερεῦσι].

Ի մնացեալն յաղագս Ոզիայ: (‘On the remaining [narrative] about Uzziah’).

❖ܬܠܝܬܝܐ ܠܥܘܙܝܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܐܝܬܝ (‘The third homily on Uzziah’).

[Homily 6]

Εἰς τὸ ῥητόν· ‘Καὶ ἐγένετο τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ, οὗ ἀπέθανεν Ὀζίας ὁ βασιλεύς’, καὶ περὶ μετανοίας.
[Variant title: Εἰς τὰ σεραφείμ].

Ի բանն ‘Եւ եղեւ ’ի տարւոջն յորում մեռաւ Ոզիաս’ եւ վասն ապաշխարութեան:

(‘On the words: “And [it] was in the year when Uzziah died” and on repentance’).

❖ܫܡܥܘܢ ܐܦ ܡܐܡܪܐ ܥܠ ܕ ܝܘܚܢܢ. ܩܕܝܫܐ ܠܥܘܙܝܐ ܐܝܬܝ ܕܝܘܚܢܢ

(‘Also a homily on the Seraphim by the same Saint John’).

APPENDIX 2:
SOME EXAMPLES OF BIBLICAL QUOTATIONS

John 5:43 (SBL GNT): ἐγὼ ἐλήλυθα ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ πατρός μου καὶ οὐ λαμβάνετέ με· ἐὰν ἄλλος ἔλθῃ ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τῷ ἰδίῳ, ἐκεῖνον λήμψεσθε.

Homily 2[48]: Ἐγὼ ἦλθον ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ Πατρός μου, καὶ οὐκ ἐδέξαστέ με· ἐὰν ἄλλος ἔλθῃ ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τῷ ἰδίῳ, ἐκεῖνον λήμψεσθε.

[Homily 2][49]: ܐܢܐ ܡܝܬܝ ܒܫܡ ܐܒܝ ܘܠܐ ܩܒܠܬܘܢ ܢܝ ܐܢ ܐܚܪܢ ܐܬܐ ܒܫܡ ܕܝܠܗ ܢܩܒܠ ,ܗܘ ܬܩܒܠܘܢ.

John 5:43 (Pešiṭta)[50]: ܐܢܐ ܐܬܝܬ ܒܫܡ ܐܒܝ ܘܠܐ ܩܒܠܬܘܢ ܢܝ ܐܢ ܐܚܪܢ ܐܬܐ ܒܫܡ ܕܝܠܗ ܗܘ ܬܩܒܠ ܐܬ ܗܘ ܬܩܒܠܘܢ.

Isa. 6:1-2 (Pešiṭta): ܒܫܢܬ ܡܘܬ ܥܘܙܝܐ ܚܙܝܬ ܐܢܐ ܐܝܫܥܝܐ ܒܪ ܐܡܘܨ ܕܚܙܐ ܐܬ ܡܪܝ ܝܬܒ ܥܠ ܟܘܪܣܝ ܪܡ ܘܢܫܐ ܘܗܘ ܡܠܝ ܒܗܝܟܠܐ. ܣܪܦܝܢ ܩܝܡܝܢ ܠܡܥܠ ܡܢܗ ܫܬ ܟܢܦܝܢ ܫܬ ܟܢܦܝܢ ܠܟܠ ܚܕ ܘܚܕ ܫܬ ܟܢܦܝܢ ܡܟܣܝܢ ܐܢܦܘܗܝ ܘܒܬܪ ܟܢܦܝܢ ܡܟܣܝܢ ܪܓܠܘܗܝ ܘܒܬܪ ܟܢܦܝܢ ܦܪܚܝܢ ܗܘ ܒܗܘ ܩܪܝ ܘܐܡܪ ܩܕܝܫ ܩܕܝܫ ܩܕܝܫ ܡܪܝ ܨܒܐܘܬ ܡܠܝܢ ܟܠ ܐܪܥܐ ܒܝܩܪܗ.

[48] *Homélies sur Ozias* (1981), 98.
[49] Syr. N.S. 12, fol. 88r; Add. 14612, fol. 203v.
[50] The Sinaitic version sadly has not survived, while the Curetonian text fully agrees here with the Pešiṭta, see George A. Kiraz, *Comparative edition of the Syriac Gospels* (Leiden, 1996), 4, 90.

[Homily 2][51]: ܗܘ ܕܐܡܪ ܠܗ ܐܠܗܐ ܒܫܡܝܐ ܘܒܐܪܥܐ ܐܢܐ ܡܠܐ ܐܢܐ ܐܡܪ ܡܪܝܐ ܐܠܗܝܢ. […] ܐܝܟ ܕܐܡܪ ܒܫܥܝܐ ܢܒܝܐ. ܐܝܟ ܕܚܙܐ ܠܡܪܝ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܒܗܝܟܠܐ. ܘܐܝܟ ܕܚܙܐ ܒܗ ܐܝܠ ܕܡܪܟܒ ܥܠ ܟܪܘܒ. ܘܐܝܟ ܕܚܙܐ ܒܗ ܐܝܠ ܕܡܫܬܡܫ ܒܫܪܦ. ܘܐܝܟ ܕܚܙܐ ܒܗ ܐܝܠ ܕܡܫܬܡܫ ܒܫܪܦ ܒܫܪܦ ܒܫܪܦ. ܘܐܝܟ ܕܐܡܪ ܠܗ ܐܠܗܐ ܒܫܡܝܐ ܘܒܐܪܥܐ ܐܢܐ ܡܠܐ ܐܢܐ ܐܡܪ ܡܪܝܐ ܐܠܗܝܢ.

Isa. 6:1-2 (LXX): Καὶ ἐγένετο τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ, οὗ ἀπέθανεν Ὀζίας ὁ βασιλεύς, εἶδον τὸν Κύριον καθήμενον ἐπὶ θρόνου ὑψηλοῦ καὶ ἐπηρμένου, καὶ πλήρης ὁ οἶκος τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ. καὶ σέραφιν εἱστήκεισαν κύκλῳ αὐτοῦ…

2*Chr*. 26:16 (Pešiṭta): ܘܟܕ ܬܩܦ. ܠܒܗ ܡܛܐ ܠܚܒܠܗܝ ܘܐܬܚܒܠ ܒܡܪܝܐ ܐܠܗܗ ܘܥܠ ܠܗܝܟܠܐ ܕܡܪܝܐ ܠܡܩܛܪ ܩܛܪܐ ܥܠ ܡܕܒܚܐ ܕܩܛܪܬܐ.

[Homily 3][52]: ܡܢ ܒܝܬ ܡܕܒܚܐ ܕܩܛܪܬܐ ܠܐ ܐܬ ܐ.

[Homily 5][53]: ܘܐܬܬܩܦ ܒܠܒܗ ܘܐܬܚܒܠ ܒܡܪܝܐ ܐܠܗܗ. ܘܥܠ ܐܢܐ ܠܐ ܠܡܩܛܪ ܩܛܪܐ ܥܠ ܡܕܒܚܐ ܕܩܛܪܬܐ ܐܠܐ ܐܢܐ ܐܬܐ ܠܗܝܟܠܐ ܕܡܪܝܐ ܐܠܗܗ ܘܐܩܛܪ ܩܛܪܐ ܥܠ ܡܕܒܚܐ ܕܩܛܪܬܐ.

2*Chr*. 26:16 (LXX): Καὶ ὡς κατίσχυσεν, ὑψώθη ἡ καρδία αὐτοῦ τοῦ καταφθεῖραι, καὶ ἠδίκησεν ἐν Κυρίῳ Θεῷ αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὸν ναὸν Κυρίου θυμιάσαι ἐπὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριον τῶν θυμιαμάτων.

See *Ps*. 130:1 (Pešiṭta): ܐܠܗܐ ܠܐ ܪܡ ܠܒܝ ܘܠܐ ܪܡܝܢ ܥܝܢܝ ܘܠܐ ܗܠܟ ܒܪܒܐ ܘܒܦܠܐ ܡܢ.

[Homily 3][54]: ܠܒ ܡܪܝܐ ܠܐ ܪܡ.

Ps. 130:1 (LXX): Κύριε, οὐχ ὑψώθη μου ἡ καρδία…

[51] Syr. N.S. 12, fol. 85v-86r; Add. 14612, fol. 202r.
[52] Syr. N.S. 12, fol. 95r; Add. 14612, fol. 208v.
[53] Syr. N.S. 12, fol. 96v; Add. 14612, fol. 209v-210r.
[54] Syr. N.S. 12, fol. 95v; Add. 14612, fol. 209r.

Jean Chrysostome sur la communion de Judas

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Abstract

The opinions of the Fathers on the question whether or not Jude was present at the Lord's Supper are divided: On the one side John Chrysostom, Augustine and the early Christian Iconography are positive about it; on the other Ephraem the Syriac, Hilary of Poitiers and the *Apostolic Constitutions* deny him being present. Cyril of Alexandria sometimes is in favour, sometimes against his presence. Origen writes that Jude has taken the bread, but has not eaten it. Finally, authors like Theophanes of Nicea evoke a *physical* or *sensible* presence at the Supper only, not a *spiritual* one. Chrysostom himself endorses a tendency already existing in other Fathers. Reacting against a symbolic vision, he introduces a realistic conceptualisation of liturgy, insisting on the *reality* of the eucharistic sacrifice. We need to see, however, whether the Lord's Supper scene already represents the celebration of the Eucharist. If according to John Chrysostom the celebration of the Eucharist is the same as the Lord's Supper and nothing less, how can the presence of Jude be justified? What preoccupies Chrysostom and those who with him defend the position that Jude really took part in the Lord's Supper and communion, it is not so much the fate of Jude, but the pastoral aim with regards the audiences, those who listen, that drive him: that one does not receive the Holy Mysteries for one's condemnation (1*Cor*. 11:27-32).

'Il faut demander à Jésus ce qu'il pensait de Judas, et comment il pouvait l'admettre à la communion par les saintes espèces alors qu'il le savait traître', s'est interrogé récemment Armand Abécassis en désirant donner 'un autre regard sur Judas'.[1]

Cette interrogation est liée avec un autre problème, particulièrement discuté par les Pères de l'Église: Judas a-t-il participé à la Cène ou plus précisément, a-t-il mangé du pain et bu au calice sur lesquels Jésus a prononcé les paroles instituant l'Eucharistie? La question, ainsi posée, relève-t-elle de l'histoire et de l'exégèse des textes ou bien s'agit-il, en fin de compte, d'une question pastorale et liturgique? Outre les progrès considérables que la philologie, la critique littéraire et l'histoire ont accompli dans le cadre de l'exégèse, on sait que la plupart des Pères n'avaient pas toujours l'intention de donner une explication littérale des Écritures. Ils les commentaient le plus souvent en relevant les textes qui s'appliquent le mieux à leur sujet, en tirant des conséquences pratiques pour leur

[1] Armand Abécassis, 'Un autre regard sur Judas', *Sens* 61 (2009), 521-30, 524.

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auditoire. Or pour la question qui nous occupe les auteurs chrétiens ont émis des opinions divergentes, compte tenu de l'intérêt qu'ils avaient comme prédicateurs à faire assister ou non Judas au 'repas mystique'. Ainsi certains Pères soutiennent que Judas n'a pas reçu l'Eucharistie; d'autres au contraire, après St. Jean Chrysostome et St. Augustin, argumentent qu'il avait communié, mais 'indignement'. Enfin, un troisième groupe représenté par Origène et Cyrille d'Alexandrie hésite et se prononce parfois pour, parfois contre. Avec cette question nous rencontrons un problème qui a agité les esprits à toutes les époques.

I. Les évangélistes et Judas

La première Eucharistie, c'est-à-dire les paroles du Christ pendant la Cène 'prenez, mangez, ceci est mon corps' et 'buvez en tous, ceci est mon sang, celui de la nouvelle alliance' fut le premier mystère ecclésial à travers lequel les apôtres eux-mêmes, n'ayant pas reçu un baptême au nom du Christ, entrèrent dans l'église néotestamentaire, dans le Corps du Christ, recevant par ce seul mystère la plénitude de tous les mystères et se tiennent établis dans leur apostolicité.[2] Une première impression d'après les récits évangéliques est que Judas fut aussi participant à l'eucharistie, parce qu'il est l''un des Douze' et 'égal aux apôtres'.[3] Cependant les textes des quatre évangiles ne concordent pas entre eux sur le déroulement de la Cène et cette ambivalence des récits bibliques a suscité un problème théologique.

D'après la description de *Mt* 26:20 et *Mc* 14:18, il semble même que Judas abandonna la maison avant que la Cène n'ait commencé. Il réapparaît à nouveau chez *Marc* en 14:43 pour l'arrestation de Jésus. Mais à quel moment est-il parti pour chercher ses 'alliés' afin de faire arrêter Jésus? Probablement après la fin de la Cène (*Mc* 14:31) ou bien pendant l'attente à Gethsémani (*Mc* 14:32).[4] *Luc* (22:21) quant à lui expose clairement que Judas est parti après l'institution de l'Eucharistie: 'Mais voici: la main de celui qui me livre se sert à cette table avec moi'. *Jean* (13:30) de son côté est le seul qui parle de Judas sortant de la Cène *pendant la nuit*, après avoir pris la bouchée (ψωμίον).[5] Comme il est bien

[2] Pierre dans son discours au début du livre des *Actes*, parlant du successeur qu'il faut trouver à Judas dit: 'Il était compté parmi nous et il avait part au même ministère' (1:17). Pour appuyer sa demande il cite ce verset du psalmiste: 'qu'un autre prenne sa charge d'évêque (τὴν ἐπισκοπὴν αὐτοῦ)' (1:20). Or le ministère de l'apostolicité, c'est-à-dire le caractère *épiscopal*, Judas pouvait seulement le recevoir à l'institution de l'eucharistie; donc il dut y participer.

[3] Voir Serge Boulgakov, 'Judas l'Iscariote – l'apôtre-traître', *Put'* 26 (1931), 3-60, 38 (en russe).

[4] Voir le livre classique de Hans-Josef Klauck, *Judas un disciple de Jésus. Exégèse et répercussions historiques* (Paris, 2006), 65.

[5] Pour une analyse de ψωμίον chez *Jean* ainsi que sur l'enseignement évangélique de la communion de Judas voir Eugen Ruckstuhl, 'Judaskommunion', dans Herbert Haag (éd.), *Bibel-Lexikon* (Einsiedeln, Zürich, Köln, 1956), 866-9, 869.

connu, l'apôtre *bien-aimé* a passé sous silence le récit de l'institution de l'eucharistie pendant la Cène, même s'il est l'évangéliste qui parle le plus de l'Eucharistie ou y fait allusion (notamment *Jn* 6:51-8). Nulle part ailleurs dans le Nouveau Testament, il n'est question de l'éloignement de Judas de la Cène. Ainsi les récits bibliques nous obligent à reconnaitre la participation de Judas dans le mystère eucharistique, même s'il était 'indigne' et 'infidèle', comme le laisseront entendre, par la suite, la plupart des Pères.

II. Témoignages patristiques sur Judas

La génération des Pères postapostoliques ne fut pas intéressée par la personne qui, selon tous les quatre évangiles, a trahi Jésus le jour avant sa mort. Tout cet épisode resta une sorte de 'point sombre' pour la jeune Église qui dut se défendre des attaques des pouvoirs du monde païen. Dès lors, il n'est pas étonnant que la littérature apologétique du II^e^ s. ait soigneusement évité le sujet de Judas qui n'apparaît même pas dans les écrits de saint Justin, Hermas ou Clément d'Alexandrie.

La tradition de l'écartement de Judas de l'assemblée avant que Jésus ne procède à l'institution de l'Eucharistie remonte seulement aux dernières années du II^e^ s. dans le *Diatessaron* de Tatien. Ce dernier a pris en compte le récit de *Jean* 13:30 qui laisse sortir Judas de la Cène. Cela permet de comprendre aussi que l'interprète du *Diatessaron*, St. Ephrem le Syrien, a pu admettre dans ses *Commentaires* (écrits entre 360-370) que Judas n'a pas pris part à la Communion: 'le Seigneur sépara Judas des apôtres, lorsqu'il trempa le pain dans l'eau et le lui donna, car Judas n'était pas digne du pain qui fut donné aux Douze avec le vin: il n'était pas permis que reçût le pain qui sauve de la mort celui qui allait le livrer à la mort'.[6]

Un autre document du christianisme primitif qui exclut Judas de la Cène est celui des *Constitutions Apostoliques* où il est clairement dit que pendant le jeudi de Pâque, les disciples furent tous ensemble auprès du Seigneur, 'à l'exception de Judas', et ils reçurent les saints mystères: 'puis il nous livra les mystères, figures (ἀντίτυπα μυστήρια)[7] de son précieux corps et de son sang précieux, sans que Judas fût avec nous (Ἰούδα μὴ συμπαρόντος)'.[8]

St. Hilaire de Poitiers remet en question aussi l'assistance de Judas au banquet eucharistique: 'Judas est présenté comme un traître, sans lequel la Pâque s'accomplit par la réception du calice et la fraction du pain, car il n'avait pas mérité en effet de communier aux mystères éternels ('*dignus enim aeternorum sacramentorum communione non fuerat*')'.[9]

[6] Éphrem de Nisibie, *Commentaires de l'Évangile concordant ou Diatessaron* XIX 3 (SC 121, 333).

[7] Expression qui relève du vocabulaire eucharistique des *Constitutions Apostoliques*; voir *Les Constitutions apostoliques* II, VI 30,2 (SC 329, 391).

[8] *Ibid*. 251.

[9] Hilaire de Poitiers, *In Matthaeum* II 30,2 (SC 258, 223). Voir aussi Jean Damascène, *Fragmentum in Mt*. 17:5 (PG 96, 1409).

Enfin dans la liste de ceux qui n'admettent pas l'apôtre-traître à la communion, certains ajoutent à tort[10] le nom de Théophylacte d'Ohrid (XI^e s.) qui, en fidèle disciple de St. Jean Chrysostome, dit tout à fait le contraire dans son commentaire sur Matthieu: 'Judas n'est pas devenu plus docile quand il a participé au repas commun; il n'était même pas réprimandé lorsqu'il a entendu "Prenez, mangez", mais il est allé jusqu'à goûter le Corps du Seigneur et il ne s'est toujours pas repenti'. Théophylacte ne fait que constater que 'certains disent que le Christ n'a pas donné les Mystères jusqu'à ce que Judas ne soit parti'[11] et ceci pourrait servir de leçon pour ne pas donner les Mystères à 'ceux qui sont mauvais'.

L'idée exprimée dans les sources citées sur l'absence de Judas de la communion n'est cependant pas fondée sur une tradition écrite, elle se fonde plutôt sur un souci pastoral et ecclésial qui attire l'attention sur l'indignité de Judas dans sa participation au grand mystère (Ephrem et Hilaire). L'absence de tradition historique à ce sujet ainsi que l'opinion plutôt personnelle sur la question chez certains Pères, sont certifiées avec d'autant plus de pertinence dans l'exemple d'un grand partisan de la tradition, St. Cyrille d'Alexandrie qui dans son commentaire sur *Jean*[12], considère la 'bouchée' donnée par le Christ à Judas comme un 'pain de bénédiction' (εὐλογίαν). L'archevêque d'Alexandrie privilégie uniquement cette expression dans ses œuvres, qu'il précise souvent avec un adjectif: 'mystique' (c'est-à-dire réservé aux initiés), 'spirituelle' ou 'vivifiante'.[13] Cependant dans les fragments des commentaires sur Mathieu, St. Cyrille écrit: 'après que Judas soit sorti, le Seigneur a donné aux onze disciples le mystère salutaire'.[14] Cette hésitation de Cyrille est très significative quand on sait qu'à son époque la tradition ecclésiale était déjà en grande partie définie aussi bien du point de vue du contenu que de la forme.

L'archevêque d'Alexandrie serait fidèle, hypothétiquement, à l'enseignement d'un autre égyptien, Origène, qui fut le premier à avoir étudié théologiquement et historiquement le cas de Judas[15] si on ne compte pas les rares mentions d'Irénée de Lyon à l'occasion de la réfutation de la gnose valentinienne.[16]

[10] Louis-Claude Fillion, 'Judas assistait-il à l'institution de la sainte eucharistie?', dans *id*., *Essais d'exégèse* (Lyon, 1884), 311-26, 322.

[11] *In Matth*. 26:26 (PG 123, 444B-C). Voir Theophylact, Archbishop of Ochrid and Bulgaria, *The Explanation of the Holy Gospel according to Matthew*. Trad. du grec par Christopher Stade (House Springs, 2008), 228.

[12] *In Ionn*. 13:27 et 13:30, éd. Philip E. Pusey II (Bruxelles, 1965), 367, 27, 369; 14, 375; 7, 376.

[13] Voir l'étude de Marie-Odile Boulnois, 'L'eucharistie, mystère d'union chez Cyrille d'Alexandrie: les modèles d'union trinitaire et christologique', *Revue des sciences religieuses* 74 (2000), 147-72, 150s.

[14] *In Matth*. 26:27 (PG 72, 451A-B).

[15] Sur ce sujet voir Samuel Laeuchli, 'Origen's Interpretation of Judas Iscariot', *Church History* 22 (1953), 253-68.

[16] Irénée nous rapporte seulement, en réfutant les 'spéculations valentiniennes' que les disciples de Valentin soutiennent que la passion du Seigneur est survenue le douzième mois et a été

Origène consacra tout un chapitre dans ses commentaires sur *Jean*, livre 32, à la question: 'Judas a-t-il absorbé la bouchée (ψωμίον)?'[17] En commentant *Jn* 13:30, il cherche à savoir pourquoi à la suite de 'après avoir pris la bouchée', il n'est pas ajouté 'et l'ayant mangée' et il admet deux solutions 'laissant au lecteur de juger laquelle des interprétations il faut admettre'.[18] La première interprétation consiste à dire que Judas n'avait peut-être pas mangé la bouchée, car Satan, entré en lui, l'a empêché de la manger. La deuxième admet que Judas aurait mangé la bouchée qui était 'de même nature que celle qu'il [Jésus] donna aux autres apôtres', sauf que pour eux la communion fut en vue de leur salut alors que pour Judas, ce fut pour sa condamnation.[19] Origène a ainsi exprimé une opinion personnelle sur la question qui aura une influence importante sur ce qu'on dira de Judas plus tard.

III. Jean Chrysostome sur Judas

Désigné avec raison 'docteur de l'eucharistie', St. Jean Chrysostome accorda une place importante au Mystère de l'eucharistie dans son œuvre et l'aborda dans toutes ses dimensions, y compris la Communion de Judas, même s'il n'a pas écrit de traité spécifique sur l'eucharistie. Il a néanmoins prononcé toute une série d'homélies sur le sujet, notamment les deux *Sur la trahison de Judas*[20], où l'on retrouve l'un de ses meilleurs et plus originaux développements sur l'eucharistie. [21] Son influence postérieure sera moins dans une mystique et plus

causé par le douzième apôtre, c'est pourquoi ils veulent que 'la passion du douzième Éon' soit représentée par Judas. Cependant, à part ce fait, nous ne savons pas grande chose sur la théologie gnostique concernant Judas, Irénée argumente seulement que l'*Éon souffrant* ne peut pas être représenté par Judas, parce qu'il a été rejeté et il n'a jamais été remis au nombre des disciples et c'est Matthias qui a été rétabli à sa place. Voir *Adversus Haereses* II 20,2-5 (SC 294, 203-9).

[17] Origène, *Commentaires sur Jean* V (livres 28 et 32) (SC 385, 317-25).

[18] *Ibid.* 319.

[19] *Ibid.* 319-21.

[20] Il s'agit bien de deux prédications distinctes même si elles sont prononcées le Jeudi Saint. D'après Jacky Marsaux, 'Chrysostome fut amené à prêcher au moins une dizaine de fois le Jeudi Saint'; voir Jean Chrysostome, *L'Eucharistie, école de vie. Sélection de sept homélies sur l'eucharistie*. Introduction, trad., notes et guide thématique et index par Jacky Marsaux (Paris, 2009), 97, n. 1. Nous avons surtout travaillé la deuxième homélie: *De proditione Iudae homiliae* 2 (PG 49, 381-92). Il faut probablement la situer à la même époque que les *Homélies sur la Genèse*, parce que Chrysostome interrompit le cours de trente deux premières homélies *Sur la Genèse* prononcés durant le carême, dont les dernières portèrent sur Abraham, afin d'aborder la question plus importante de la trahison de Judas que 'la circonstance de ce jour [Jeudi Saint]' le 'pousse à parler de la folie de sa témérité'. Si l'on admet la datation communément proposée de 388-9 pour la grande série des homélies *Sur la Genèse*, il semble fort improbable que la deuxième homélie *Sur la trahison de Judas* puisse être postérieure à cette date. Voir l''Introduction' de Laurence Brottier dans Jean Chrysostome, *Sermons sur la Genèse* (SC 433, 11-2).

[21] L'objectif ici n'est pas de faire une synthèse sur la doctrine eucharistique de l'archevêque de Constantinople, ce qui sera une tâche difficile, voire impossible. Un tel exploit a été entrepris

dans le domaine de la liturgie, où l'esprit d'adoration et de *crainte sacrée* devant le mystère, sera si commenté et développé.

La position de l'archevêque de Constantinople sur la communion de Judas est claire, dépourvue de toute ambigüité quant à la participation de l'Iscariote au 'repas mystique': 'Judas était présent avant la trahison et il avait participé à la table sacrée (τῆς ἱερᾶς τραπέζης μετέσχε), et il profita du repas mystique (τοῦ μυστικοῦ δείπνου ἀπήλαυσεν) pour qu'il n'ait aucune excuse'.[22] Le fait d'y avoir participé ne le change pas, Judas reste sur sa 'décision perverse' et c'est encore une preuve de sa présence au repas mystique. Ce même fait est relaté encore dans l'*Homélie 82 sur Matthieu*, où il est dit que 'même en participant aux mystères, il resta ce qu'il était […] s'étant approché, ni la crainte, ni le bienfait, ni l'honneur ne l'avaient rendu meilleur'.[23]

Encore un fait souligné par Chrysostome, c'est que Judas a été admis à la table du Seigneur, en sorte qu'on ne saurait trouver en faveur de celui-ci la plus légère excuse. On retrouve presque la même argumentation chez les moines de Gaza, Barsanuphe et Jean[24] (VI[e] s.): 'pour cela Dieu a lavé les pieds de Judas et il l'a fait participer aux mystères, afin de lui enlever toute excuse, à lui et à ceux qui disent toujours: "S'il l'avait laissé jouir de ces mystères, il ne se serait pas perdu"'. Ensemble avec les autres apôtres, Judas a été convié à la Cène, parce qu'il était 'l'un d'entre les douze' et Chrysostome dira même qu'il était 'du même rang que saint Pierre et saint Jean'.[25] De nos jours encore, on peut lire que Jésus 'l'a appelé et préféré à tous les Judéens, puisque les onze autres disciples étaient tous des Galiléens'.[26]

La participation de Judas est bien réelle avec 'la seule' différence que, pour Chrysostome la *participation* (μετοχή) ne veut pas dire pour autant *communion* (κοινωνία), parce qu'il s'est séparé lui-même du collège des douze par son *libre arbitre*. Le docteur de l'eucharistie donne une excellente image sur la manière dont ce même libre choix avait conduit les uns à servir et à

par Gerardo di Nola en recueillant des textes de Chrysostome, considérés comme 'eucharistiques'. Ce qui est à regretter dans cette édition bilingue (grec-italien), c'est que l'auteur aurait pu commenter davantage les textes chrysostomiens, et développer sa 'doctrine eucharistique', comme le titre du livre le prétend. Voir Gerardo di Nola, *La dottrina eucaristica di Giovanni Crisostomo*, Bibliotheca Patristica Eucharistica 1 (Città del Vaticano, 1997). Sous le titre de *L'Eucharistie, école de vie*, le prêtre catholique Jacky Marsaux a traduit récemment sept homélies 'choisis pour leur intérêt doctrinal eucharistique', dont une est publiée pour la première fois en français, avec un appareil critique et guide thématique bien fournis. Voir J. Chrysostome, *L'Eucharistie* (2009).

[22] Jean Chrysostome, *De proditione Iudae homiliae* 2 (PG 49, 389, n. 5). J. Chrysostome, *L'Eucharistie* (2009), 116.

[23] Jean Chrysostome, *In Matthaeum*, *Hom.* 82 (PG 58, 737-46). J. Chrysostome, *L'Eucharistie* (2009), 123.

[24] Barsanuphe et Jean de Gaza, *Correspondance* II (SC 451, 453).

[25] Ephrem le Syrien, par contre, écrit que l'on considéra Judas 'comme les pieds du corps en tant que dernier des Douze'; voir É. de Nisibie, *Commentaires de l'Évangile* (SC 121, 333).

[26] A. Abécassis, 'Un autre regard sur Judas' (2009), 524.

participer au repas mystique, alors que l'autre avait été conduit à négocier 'le prix du sang du Maître', bien qu'ils aient tous bénéficié des mêmes prodiges et des mêmes enseignements. La différence pour Chrysostome provient 'du libre choix', 'c'est lui qui est à l'origine des mauvaises comme des bonnes actions'.[27] Ainsi le mal de Judas provient de 'sa négligence et [de] son libre choix corrompu'[28] et non pas qu'il ait été abandonné par le Christ. C'est lui-même qui s'est poussé à la trahison de son maître 'sous le jaillissement d'une malice intérieure'.[29]

D'ailleurs toute l'homélie *Sur la trahison de Judas* est construite sur l'opposition entre la chute tragique de Judas et la promotion inespérée de la femme pécheresse. Le souci du grand prédicateur est la responsabilité de chacun devant le mal, et une vigilance devant les 'mystères redoutables'. C'est pourquoi il interpelle les participants à l'eucharistie afin qu'ils examinent leur conscience pour ne pas y participer 'à la manière de Judas': 'approchons tous avec une conscience pure; qu'il n'y ait là aucun Judas usant d'artifice contre son prochain, aucun pervers, personne qui cache du venin dans son cœur'. Celui qui est indigne de participer à la Cène, hier comme aujourd'hui, il est comparable à Judas parce que la Cène accomplie par Jésus avec ses disciples est identique avec l'Eucharistie:

> Celui qui fit cette œuvre au cours de ce repas, la réalise lui-même encore aujourd'hui […]; Qu'aucun Judas ne se présente, aucun ami d'argent. Celui qui n'est pas disciple, qu'il s'en aille. Cette table ne reçoit pas de tels gens […] Le repas ici présent [célébration eucharistique] est le même que celui-là [la Cène] et il n'a rien de moins, car ce n'est pas le Christ qui produit l'un de ces repas et l'homme l'autre, mais le Christ produit celui-ci également.[30]

Chrysostome n'avait pas de scrupules à souligner cette réalité de la communion où 'en recevant le corps et le sang de Jésus-Christ, nous mangeons réellement celui-là même qui est assis au Ciel'.[31]Après ces citations, le problème souvent débattu sur la question de savoir si la Cène décrivit déjà la communion eucharistique, semble être un peu déplacée. Pour résoudre l'énigme de la participation

[27] J. Chrysostome, *L'Eucharistie* (2009), 110-1.

[28] *Ibid*. 103.

[29] *Ibid*. 104.

[30] Jean Chrysostome, *In Matthaeum*, *Hom*. 82,5 (PG 58, 744); J. Chrysostome, *L'Eucharistie* (2009), 139-41. On retrouve la même idée dans *In Matthaeum*, *Hom*. 50,2 et 3 (PG 58, 507): 'Croyez donc que c'est encore ici cette cène où Jésus-Christ était assis avec ses apôtres. Il n'y a nulle différence entre ces deux cènes'. Sur le thème de l'identité entre la Cène et la célébration eucharistique ainsi que sur l'unicité du sacrifice eucharistique, avec de nombreux renvois à Chrysostome, voir l'excellente étude de Georges Florovsky, 'Le corps du Christ vivant. Une interprétation orthodoxe de l'Église', dans Jean-Jacques Von Allmen (éd.), *La sainte Église universelle. Confrontation œcuménique*, Cahiers théologiques de l'actualité protestante 4 (Neuchâtel-Paris, 1948), 9-57, 28-9.

[31] *In Ionn*., *Hom*. 45 (PG 49, 253).

de Judas à la communion, certains auteurs comme Kenneth Hein[32] et Louis-Claude Fillion[33] vont aller jusqu'à distinguer entre un 'betrayal supper' et le 'Last Supper', ou 'souper légal [juif]' et 'banquet sacré' qui ont eu lieu à deux moments différents. Hein admet qu'entre les deux repas se sont écoulées vingt-quatre heures (*sic*). Cette distinction entre les repas, la Cène et l'Eucharistie leur a permis à ces auteurs de conclure que Judas n'était pas présent au moment de l'institution de l'Eucharistie.

IV. *Réalisme eucharistique* vs. Communion 'symbolique'

Cependant, il est absolument certain que dans le Nouveau Testament, le pain et le vin, offerts dans le repas eucharistique, sont le Corps et le Sang du Christ. Ceci est prouvé aussi bien par les paroles de l'institution que par l'enseignement du Discours sur le *Pain de vie* chez *Jean*. 'Ceci est mon corps … ceci est mon Sang' ne peut être interprété qu'à la lettre. D'autre part, le verbe τρώγω, employé dans *Jn* 6:54-8, pour désigner la manducation de la chair du Christ, exclut toute interprétation spirituelle: il a un accent matérialiste prononcé et signifie brouter, ronger, mâcher. On dirait que Jean, en relatant le discours du Seigneur, l'avait choisi avec intention pour insinuer l'idée de la réalité de la communion. Il s'agit d'un *réalisme eucharistique* bien clair et il serait inopportun de parler d'une communion 'symbolique' dans le cas de Judas, comme certains auteurs ont pu admettre (Nicolas d'Andida, voir *infra* et Théophane de Nicée[34], pour ne citer qu'eux).

Le réalisme de l'expérience eucharistique a été maintes fois souligné chez Chrysostome: par exemple dans son *Commentaire de Jean* où il dit qu'il ne faut pas seulement se contenter de regarder [le Christ], mais il faut 'Le prendre dans nos mains, Le manger (φαγεῖν), mettre nos dents sur sa chair (ἐμπῆξαι τοὺς ὀδόντας τῇ σαρκί) et nous unir à Lui de façon la plus intime (καὶ συμπλακῆναι, καὶ τὸν πόθον ἐμπλῆσαι πάντα)'.[35] Ailleurs encore, avec le même souci d'indiquer l'intimité de l'union, il met dans la bouche du Christ ces paroles:

[32] Kenneth Hein, 'Judas Iscariot: Key to the Last-Supper Narratives?', *New Testament Studies* 17 (1970-1), 227-32, 232.

[33] L.-C. Fillion, 'Judas assistait-il à l'institution?' (1884), 316. Il conclut plus loin qu'il est, 'sinon certain, du moins fort vraisemblable que Judas n'assistait point à l'inauguration de la Pâque chrétienne, et qu'il n'attrista point par son odieuse présence ce banquet adorable'. *Ibid.* 325.

[34] 'Judas a touché uniquement le corps du Sauveur, et cela d'une manière sensible, il n'a pas participé à la grâce qui était en lui'. Voir Théophane de Nicée, *Sur la lumière thaborique* I (en grec). Texte éd. par Charalampos Sotiropoulous (Athènes, 1990), 97. Joost van Rossum cite également cet exemple de participation *sensible* de Judas au repas eucharistique chez Théophane de Nicée pour démontrer sa compréhension 'symbolique' de la Communion; voir Joost van Rossum, 'Holy Communion as "Symbol" in Pseudo-Dionysius and Theophanes of Nicea', *SP* 48 (2010), 205-10, 209.

[35] *In Joannem*, *Hom.* 46 (PG 59, 260, n. 3).

'Je suis descendu encore en bas [sur la terre], et je ne me joins pas seulement à toi, mais je pénètre tout ton être, je suis mangé [par toi], je m'amincis progressivement, afin que la fusion, le mélange et l'union soient parfaits (ἡ ἀνάκρασις, καὶ μίξις καὶ ἡ ἕνωσις). Car ce qui s'unit demeure dans les limites de sa propre étendue, alors que moi je ne fais plus qu'un avec toi (συνυφαίνομαι σοι). Je veux que rien ne nous sépare plus, je veux que nous ne fassions plus qu'un (ἓν εἶναι τὰ ἀμφότερα)'.[36]

A la différence de Chrysostome, le commentateur de la liturgie Nicolas l'évêque d'Andida (1063-4) interpréta dans un double sens (explication littérale et interprétation spirituelle) les invocations 'Prenez, mangez' et 'Buvez en tous', surtout le 'tous – πάντες', qui dans le premier cas est omis, alors que pour la communion au sang, il est ajouté:

Ce 'tous' a un double sens, historique (ἱστορικῶς) et en même temps spirituel (πνευματικῶς). Historique, à cause de la dissimulation du traître [Judas] qui s'est passée dans les Mystères [la Cène]; […] Et [le sens] plus spirituel: lorsque tous les disciples [à la Cène] ont reçu le Pain Divin de la main du Christ notre Dieu, et qu'ils ont communié avec la crainte et la foi, seul Judas, en le prenant, le cacha et [le] montrant aux Juifs – exposa le Mystère à la dérision (λαβὼν ἔκρυψε τοῦτον, καὶ τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ἐκφανίσας, τὸ μυστήριον ἐξεπόμπευσε) […]. Quant au Sang Divin, comme tous [les Apôtres] l'ont reçu d'une seule Coupe par les lèvres et la bouche, le sournois [Judas] ne pouvait pas le cacher, mais en communiant ensemble avec les autres il avait bu et c'est pourquoi le Seigneur, qui savait toutes les choses avant même qu'elles ne se produisent, pour le Pain avait omit ce "tous", quand pour la Coupe, il l'avait ajouté [cela], parce que Judas aussi avait communié à elle [la Coupe].[37]

Nous ne connaissons pas les sources de l'auteur concernant le fait que Judas 'avait montré le pain eucharistique aux Juifs'. Origène est le seul dans notre analyse qui parle de la bouchée que Judas n'aurait peut-être pas mangée, ce qui suppose qu'il est probablement sorti avec la bouchée, mais Origène ne dit rien de plus. En tout cas, la prière liturgique ne dit pas que Judas 'a montré' le Mystère aux Juifs, mais qu'il l''a dit', c'est-à-dire *a trahi*, ce qui peut signifier qu'il leur a montré l'endroit où ils peuvent arrêter le Christ, à quoi font allusion les paroles qui suivent sur 'le baiser de Judas'.

Il n'y a rien de tel chez Chrysostome. La participation de Judas a eu lieu sous les deux espèces comme il est certifié aussi dans de nombreuses représentations de l'iconographie ancienne. Judas est même présent parfois dans la composition de la 'Communion des apôtres' (quelques exemples plus tardifs, début du XII^{e} siècle et *suiv*.), qui est une traduction liturgique de la Cène, alors qu'il n'a pas sa place dans cette représentation.[38]

[36] *In ep ad Tim 1*, *Hom*. 15, 4 (PG 62, 586).

[37] Nicolas d'Andida, *Protheoria* (PG 140, 449, n. 25).

[38] L'apparition de cette nouveauté, avec l'introduction de Judas au collège des apôtres qui communient, devrait être recherchée dans le souhait des peintres byzantins de prévenir du danger d'une 'communion pour la condamnation'. La représentation des vêtements différents et du nimbe

Conclusion

Judas a participé à la Cène, mais cela ne lui a été d'aucun profit; cela ne lui garantit pas le salut mais au contraire ne fait que renforcer son délit: la *bouchée* du repas devient le signe de la désunion, sinon le lieu de combat.[39] Chrysostome s'attaque à une manière erronée de vivre le repas chrétien, un peu comme dans le midrash paulinien sur le pain et les viandes du désert: ces nourritures n'empêchèrent pas la mort des pécheurs (1*Co* 10:1-11; 11:30).[40]

Dans une fine analyse des textes scripturaires, menée par un fort souci pastoral, l'archevêque de Constantinople a montré que Judas était comme les autres apôtres, choisi parmi les Douze et aimé par le Christ. Mais l'apôtre-traître se trouve devant un choix, et il choisit de livrer son maître, tout en prenant part au 'repas mystique'. Dans ses homélies, Chrysostome ne donne pas les raisons ultimes du choix de Judas. Pourquoi? Sans doute parce que le mal dans le cœur de l'homme que permet le *libre arbitre* ne s'explique pas. Peu importent les raisons, il s'agit du choix radical, ce qui témoigne de la haute estime que Chrysostome accorde à la liberté humaine dans son approche à la Communion et à la trahison de Judas. La liberté humaine, justement parce qu'elle constitue l'image de Dieu, revêt un caractère absolu. Dans la rencontre entre Dieu et homme, Dieu ne sait pas ce que l'homme décidera jusqu'au bout, parce qu'il ne veut pas le savoir, parce qu'il ne pourrait le savoir qu'en détruisant cette liberté humaine qu'il veut.[41] C'est pourquoi il n'a pas empêché Judas de communier ni de le trahir.

Enfin la 'communion de Judas' est un obstacle pour ceux qui posent cette question, ce n'est pas un problème pour les Pères de l'Église comme Jean Chrysostome, même s'il est possible que la question ait affleuré très rapidement déjà dans la tradition patristique ultérieure. Si l'on considère que le groupe des Douze remonte à la vie du Christ et que Judas en fait partie, tout plaide en

de Judas à Pérachorio (Chypre, 1170), la bouche ouverte et les dents de Judas à Saint-Clément d'Ohrid (Macédoine, 1295) et le nimbe bleu à Volotovo (Novgorod, XV^{e} s.) me semblent justifier cette interprétation. En effet, la présence habituelle de saint Paul dans cette scène indique que l'image n'est pas l'illustration d'un événement historique, mais qu'elle en est un commentaire liturgique. La substitution de Judas à Paul la transforme en une sorte de scène historique, presque un doublet de la Cène, qui a souvent sa place dans la série des scènes de la vie du Christ. Voir à ce sujet Goran Sekulovski, 'Judas a-t-il sa place dans la composition iconographique de la Communion des Apôtres?', dans André Lossky, Manlio Sodi (éds), *Rites de communion. Conférences Saint-Serge LV^{e} Semaine d'études Liturgiques*, *Paris, 23-26 juin 2008*, Monumenta Studia Instrumenta Liturgica 59 (Città del Vaticano, 2010), 211-26, 217-20.

[39] *Jn* 13:18 citant *Ps* 41:10; voir aussi *Jn* 6:66.

[40] Charles Perrot, 'L'eucharistie dans le nouveau testament', dans Maurice Brouard (dir.), *Eucharistia. Encyclopédie de l'eucharistie* (Paris, 2002), 67-97, 93.

[41] Même si Dieu dispose du savoir absolu et il connaît nos choix à l'avance, il accepte que nous agissions contre sa volonté. Cette prescience ne détruit pas la liberté et la responsabilité humaines.

faveur du fait qu'il était naturellement présent aussi lors du dernier repas, et il est inimaginable d'arracher les gestes et les paroles du Christ sur le pain et le vin à ce contexte d'unité. Ainsi, il nous faut comprendre le collège des douze apôtres comme un *ensemble* au moment de l'institution de l'Eucharistie. Une entité unique. Et dans ce corps communautaire, il y a toutes les tendances, y compris celle de la trahison et de la *communion indigne*.

La meilleure réponse à la question du début de notre exposé sur la raison d'admission de Judas à la communion, alors qu'il le savait traître, est, en définitive, celle de Chrysostome:

'Le Christ n'a pas empêché cet homme, alors qu'il connaissait tout, afin que tu apprennes qu'il ne laisse de côté aucun moyen pour aboutir à un redressement. C'est pourquoi, après comme avant, sans cesse, le Christ se rappelait à lui [Judas] et le retenait à la fois par les œuvres et par les paroles, par la peur et par le soin, par la menace et par l'honneur. Mais rien ne délivrait Judas de cette grave maladie'.[42]

[42] *In Matth*., *Hom*. 82 (PG 58, 737). J. Chrysostome, *L'Eucharistie* (2009), 124.

Chrysostom in Syriac Dress

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Abstract

Translated in the fifth century, the Syriac version of John Chrysostom's exegetical *Homilies on John* (CPG 4425) was a source for Chrysostom's continuing *Nachleben* in the broader Syriac interpretive, ascetic, and liturgical traditions. Despite the remarkable age and inherent richness of the version and its surviving witnesses, only preliminary studies have been done so far. Indeed, it has only recently become possible to identify previously unknown manuscripts and fragments containing portions of the text and to 'reunite' formerly separated portions of important early evidence from Sinai. A thorough analysis of these texts helps to clarify their significance as early evidence for Chrysostom's *Homilies* and for multiple avenues of other research across a wide range of interests in Greek and Syriac patristics. In particular, an explicit reference to Chrysostom as a commentator on John in a Syriac Gospel manuscript, alongside an unusual apparatus of divinatory *sortes*, invites investigation. An analysis of the possible connections between the Peshitta manuscript and Chrysostom's *Homilies* further illuminates the impact of this ancient version on the Syriac heritage.

For Chrysostom's 88 exegetical *Homilies on John* (*HJn*; CPG 4425), we have as many as 140 or more Greek manuscripts.[1] Yet the evidence is fairly late: only a handful are as early as the tenth century, one or two from the ninth,[2] and the rest are eleventh century or later – centuries after the Golden Voice had fallen silent. By comparison, the Syriac versional evidence for the same text is

[1] Although the volumes of *Codices Chrysostomici Graeci* (*CCG*) published so far describe 72 manuscripts, some important volumes are yet to appear (see Pierre Augustin, 'Le programme des *Codices Chrysostomici Graeci* [1956-2006]. Un inventaire exhaustif des manuscrits chrysostomiens grecs', in *Le manuscrit dans tous ses états, cycle thématique 2005-2006 de l'IRHT*, ed. S. Fellous, C. Heid, M.-H. Jullien, T. Buquet, *Ædilis*, Actes, 12 [Paris, 2006], 1-3). P.W. Harkins claimed to have known 140 such Greek manuscripts, 87 of which he had personally investigated (P.W. Harkins, 'The Text Tradition of Chrysostom's Commentary on John', in *SP* 8.1, ed. F.L. Cross, TU 92 [Berlin, 1966], 217-8).

[2] *E.g.* the palimpsest Vat. gr. 2400 (see *CCG* 6. 260-62). M.-É. Boismard and A. Lamouille use a Paris manuscript they date to the ninth century, *i.e.* Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Gk. 705 (*Un évangile pré-johannique*. I. *Jean 1,1-2,12*, Études Bibliques, n.s. 17 [Paris, 1993], 1.24). Also, a sixth-century papyrus fragment from the Fayum (P. Gr. Vind. 26132 B; *i.e.* MPER, N.S. IV 54) contains a few lines of an abbreviated Greek text of Homily 29; the fragment comes from a compendium.

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much earlier: beginning in the sixth and seventh centuries. These witnesses preserve the bulk of *HJn* in a form much older than the extant Greek evidence.

I began looking at the Syriac manuscripts some time ago,[3] but only recently has some evidence become accessible or been identified. For instance, what had been catalogued separately turn out to be six parts of the same Sinai manuscript, with portions in London, Birmingham, and at St. Catharine's Monastery.[4] The New Finds of Sinai have yielded another manuscript in four parts, previously unknown.[5] I am now in the process of editing the main manuscripts and collections for a complete edition and translation of the Syriac *HJn*.[6] After briefly highlighting the version's significance for both the Greek and Syriac traditions, the present paper will address a specific question that has arisen in the research, involving an unusual contact point between Chrysostom's *HJn* in Syriac and a singular Peshitta Gospel manuscript equipped with divinatory apparatus.

The Greek tradition of *HJn* is complex and the existing printed editions use only a few manuscripts.[7] As Wendy Mayer has noted, uncertainties regarding the Greek tradition of *HJn* make even the task of establishing provenance tentative.[8] A fuller study and edition of the Greek are needed and the Syriac must play a role. Practically speaking, scholars rely on Migne's unsatisfactory Greek text (PG 59). P.W. Harkins and M.-É. Boismard studied a larger body of Greek witnesses and identified two (Harkins) or three (Boismard) recensions.[9] The following examples illustrate the degree to which the Syriac evidence effectively pushes attestation for particular Greek readings much earlier than the age of the Greek manuscripts themselves will allow on their own:

[3] See Jeff W. Childers, 'Chrysostom's Exegetical Homilies on the New Testament in Syriac Translation', in *SP* 33, ed. E. Livingstone (Leuven, 1997), 509-16.

[4] From the sixth or seventh century: Sinai Syr. 59 + Mingana Syr. 651 + British Library Or. 8607/III + Sinai Syr. M28N + Sinai Syr. Sp. 47 + Sinai Syr. Sp. 48. See Paul Géhin, 'Fragments patristiques syriaques des nouvelles découvertes du Sinaï', *Collectanea Christiana Orientalia* 6 (2009), 77-8; Philothée du Sinaï, *Nouveaux manuscrits syriaques du Sinaï* (Athens, 2008), 377-9; S.P. Brock, *Catalogue of Syriac Fragments (New Finds) in the Library of the Monastery of Saint Catherine, Mount Sinai* (Athens, 1995), 47-9.

[5] From the eighth or ninth century: Sinai Syr. M29N + Sinai Syr. M74N + Sinai Syr. Sp. 74 + Sinai Syr. Sp. 28. See P. Géhin, 'Fragments patristiques syriaques' (2009), 78; Philothée du Sinaï, *Nouveaux manuscrits syriaques*, 381-3, 587-9; S.P. Brock, *Catalogue of Syriac Fragments* (1995), 22-3, 70-1.

[6] A full Syriac edition and English translation is being prepared for publication in the series CSCO.

[7] For an account of the publication history, see P.W. Harkins, 'Text Tradition of Chrysostom's Commentary on John' (1966), 211-4; S.L. Greenslade, 'The Printer's Copy for the Eton Chrysostom', in *SP* 7.1, ed. F.L. Cross, TU 92 (Berlin, 1966), 60-4; F.J. Leroy, 'Les manuscrits de Montfaucon et l'édition de S. Jean Chrysostome', *Traditio* 20 (1964), 411-8.

[8] Wendy Mayer, *The Homilies of St John Chrysostom – Provenance. Reshaping the Foundations*, Orientalia Christiana Analecta 273 (Rome, 2005), 27-9, and n. 24.

[9] P.W. Harkins, 'Text Tradition of Chrysostom's Commentary on John' (1966), 210-20; M.-É. Boismard and A. Lamouille, *Un évangile pré-johannique*. I. *Jean 1,1-2,12*, Études Bibliques, n.s. 18 (Paris, 1993), 2.13-27.

Homily 13 ܥܒܕ ܛܒܐ (a good servant)
σφόδρα φίλος Migne (*Savile et Mss.*)[10]
σφόδρα δοῦλος *Morel.*

Homily 14 ܐܦܝܠܘ ܕܠ ܡܠܬܐ ܕܐܬܝ ܘܠ ܫܒܚ ܠܗ
(but the discussion has extended and its length grown)
ἀλλ' ὁρῶ τὸν λόγον εἰς μῆκος πολὺ ἐκτεινόμενον Migne[11]
ἀλλὰ μακρὸς ὁ λόγος γίνεται καὶ πολὺ τὸ μῆκος *Savil. et Codd cit.*

Homily 18 ܐܡܪ ܠܡ ܕܫܕܪܢ ܐܚܢ ܐܚܘܢ ܕܫܒܚܬܗ ܒܐܘܢܓܠܝܘܢ ܗܘ
(for, 'We have sent our brother', he says, 'whose great praise is in the gospel')
συνεπέμψαμεν γὰρ αὐτῷ, φησίν, τὸν ἀδελφὸν* οὗ ὁ ἔπαινος ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ[12] (B M)[13]
* add ἐν πολλοῖς πολλάκις σπουδαῖον ὄντα (A D C J K N R Migne)[14]

A general pattern of agreement is apparent. Basically, the Syriac tends not to agree with the cluster of witnesses whose text-form is represented in the main text of Migne (PG 59), which both Harkins and Boismard classified as belonging to the latest recension. Instead, it agrees often with the Greek text-form associated with Harkins' early recension and one of Boismard's long recensions. However, as Boismard has noticed and the last example (Homily 18) illustrates, the picture is complicated by *CJn*'s occasional agreements with other patterns of witnesses too.

Despite the many weaknesses in Boismard's study of a portion of one Syriac manuscript (B.L. Add. 14,561),[15] he is certainly correct that the Syriac *HJn* corroborates certain readings in the Greek manuscripts. Furthermore, in places it even preserves original Greek readings that appear to have been lost to the extant Greek tradition. This happens in some biblical citations, where the printed Greek harmonizes its wording to match that of the familiar biblical text; it occurs in the homily text as well, where discrepancies between the Syriac and the Greek cannot be accounted for on the basis of translation style and are likely to be evidence of a distinctive source text, perhaps no longer in the Greek tradition at all. In short, we cannot speak confidently about the text of Chrysostom's *HJn* without including the Syriac evidence.

[10] Greek text and variants are from Migne's edition, *i.e.* PG 59, p. 83, line 20.

[11] Greek text and variants are from PG 59, p. 93, line 5.

[12] Greek text and variants are from M.-É. Boismard, *Un évangile pré-johannique*. I. *Jean 1,1-2,12* (1993), 1.86, lines 167-68 and n. 18.

[13] *I.e.* Boismard's primitive short text: B=Vat. palatinus 32 (10th century); M=Athos, koutloumousiou 32 (10th century).

[14] *I.e.* Boismard's long text Group 1: A=Paris, bib. nat., gr. 705 (9th century), D=Jer. gr. pat., n. 82 (11th century); and his long text Group 2: C=Paris, bib. nat., gr. 707 (11th century), J=Vat., gr. 545 (11th century), K=Moscow, bib. syn., gr. n. 94 (10th century), N=Paris, bib. nat., gr. 713 (11th century), R=Moscow, bib. syn., gr. n. 95 (11th century), Migne.

[15] See J.W. Childers, 'The Syriac Evidence for the "Pre-Johannine Text" of the Gospel: A Study in Method', in *Studies in the Early Text of the Gospels and Acts*, ed. D.G.K. Taylor, Texts and Studies 3.1 (Birmingham, 1999), 49-85.

The value of the Syriac as a witness to the Greek is highly significant. However, we must also consider the place and impact of the version on the Syriac tradition itself. As an instance of Late Antique cross-cultural reception and recontextualization, the Syriac *HJn* puts the voice of Chrysostom into an oriental idiom, effectively naturalizing him as a participant in conversations that were fundamental to the development of the Syriac Christian heritage. It is not surprising that Chrysostom would find a ready welcome in the Syriac community, who are naturally attracted to his practical moralism, ascetic bent, and affinities with the Antiochene exegetical tradition. Furthermore, his tendency to focus on pragmatics rather than finely nuanced theological discussion ensures for him a place across the theological spectrum – miaphysite, dyophysite, and Chalcedonian.

One way to begin charting this impact is to notice where and how the Syriac version makes its appearance within the heritage of Syriac literature. The main manuscripts are all of western origin, from Syrian Orthodox and Melkite collections.[16] Since Philoxenos of Mabbug quotes from the version by 484,[17] in a florilegium of patristic witnesses corroborating his miaphysite Christology,[18] we know the translation was made by the late fifth century – a period that fits the translation style.[19] As in the Greek tradition, in Syriac we see *HJn* being read, excerpted, and adapted to various uses – biblical exegesis, liturgy, theological construction, and pastoral care. West Syrian exegetes who not only refer to Chrysostom's views but draw directly on our version include Moses bar Kepha († 903)[20] and Dionysius bar Salibi († 1171).[21] Various collections draw on this version for ascetic and moral purposes as well,[22] and several homiliaries use it, organizing the excerpts according to the West Syrian liturgical calendar.[23]

[16] Three of them were at Deir as-Suryani in Egypt – from the sixth or seventh century: British Library, Add. 14,561 and 12,161; from the seventh or eighth century: British Library, Add. 14,562. For the Sinai manuscripts, see notes 4 and 5 above.

[17] The quotations have been edited by François Graffin (ed.), *Sancti Philoxeni Episcopi Mabbugensis Dissertationes Decem de uno e sancta trinitate incorporato et passo*, vol. 5, *Appendices*, PO 41.1 (Turnhout, 1982), 116. Philoxenos' extant commentary fragments make no explicit references to Chrysostom, nor do they show signs of direct dependence.

[18] See André de Halleux, *Philoxène de Mabbog. Sa vie, ses écrits, sa théologie* (Louvain, 1963), 233-4, 238; François Graffin, 'Le florilège patristique de Philoxène de Mabboug', in *Symposium Syriacum 1972*, ed. I. Ortiz de Urbina (Rome, 1974), 267-90.

[19] See the detailed analysis of translation style in J.W. Childers, *Studies in the Syriac Versions of St. John Chrysostom's Homilies on the New Testament*, DPhil. diss. (Oxford, 1996), 1.215-97.

[20] *E.g.* Lorenz Schlimme (ed.), *Der Johanneskommentar des Moses bar Kepha*, Teil I: *Einleitung, Text Joh. 1,1-10,21*, Göttinger Orientforschungen: Reihe 1, Syriaca 18 (Wiesbaden, 1978), 106.

[21] *E.g.* Raymond Lejoly (ed.), *Dionysii bar Salibi. Enarratio in Ioannem* (Dison, 1975), 1.73; 2.213.

[22] From the sixth or seventh century: British Library, Add. 14,612; from the seventh century: Vatican syr. 109; from the twelfth century: British Library, Add. 14,732.

[23] From the eighth century: Vatican syr. 253; from the ninth century: British Library, Add. 14,515 and 14,516; from the tenth or eleventh century: Damascus Patriarchate 12/19 and 12/20; from the thirteenth century: British Library, Add. 14,727.

We see a similar but sketchier picture in the East Syrian tradition. *Chronicle of Seert* 1.67 and 'Abdisho's catalogue[24] both list the Syriac *HJn* amongst Chrysostom's works, yet we see its influence long before, in the exegeses of Mar Aba of Kashkar, Catholicos Henanisho I, Isho' bar Nun, and Isho'dad of Merv.[25] However, direct quotations are scarce in extant (often fragmentary) sources. The vast thirteenth-century commentary on the lectionary known as *Gannat Bussame* may have some.[26] One late East Syrian dogmatic collection[27] cites from four homilies in a polemic against theopaschite heretics who reject Christ's duality of natures. This usage would undoubtedly have surprised Philoxenos, who finds in the Syriac Chrysostom a miaphysite ally.

All these witnesses constitute only the vestige of the impact that the anonymous 5th-century Syriac translator had upon a diverse set of enduring traditions. Further research is needed, for which a complete edition will be useful.

A more enigmatic connection to the Syriac *HJn* is implied by a scribal note in a Syriac manuscript of John's Gospel, copied in the sixth or seventh century (British Library, Add. 17,119). Its well-written text is simply that of the Peshitta, the standard Syriac version. However, the manuscript includes a subscription in the original hand, that reads: 'Ended is the Gospel of John the Apostle, son of Zebedee, interpreted/commented upon by John, Bishop of Constantinople, whom by people has customarily been called Chrysostom'.[28] A connection with

[24] Joseph S. Assemani (ed.), *Bibliotheca orientalis Clementino-Vaticanae*, vol. 3, *De scriptoribus syris nestorianis* (Rome, 1725), 24, 26.

[25] See Karl Pinggéra, 'Das Bild des Johannes Chrysostomos in der ostsyrischen Kirche', in *Chrysostomosbilder in 1600 Jahren. Facetten der Wirkungsgeschichte eines Kirchenvaters*, ed. Martin Wallraff and Rudolf Brändle, Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte 105 (Berlin, 2008), 193-211; *id*., 'John Chrysostom in East Syrian Theology of the Late Sixth Century', *The Harp* 28 (2005), 193-201; G.J. Reinink, 'Fragmente der Evangelienexegese des Katholikos Ḥenanišo' I', in *V Symposium Syriacum 1988*, ed. René Lavenant, Orientalia Christiana Analecta 236 (Rome, 1990), 84-7; Corrie Molenberg, 'The Silence of the Sources: The Sixth Century and East-Syrian "Antiochene" Exegesis', in *The Sixth Century – End or Beginning?*, ed. Pauline Allen and Elizabeth M. Jeffreys, Byzantina Australiensia 10 (Brisbane, 1996), 152-5.

[26] See G.J. Reinink, *Studien zur Quellen- und Traditionsgeschichte des Evangelienkommentars der Gannat Bussame*, CSCO 414 (Louvain, 1979), 257-68, 289-90.

[27] Vatican syr. 599, copied in 1871; the companion volume to Vatican syr. 598, and containing material paralleling that in other manuscripts edited for the *Synodicon Orientale* (see A. van Lantschoot, *Inventaire des manuscrits syriaques des fonds Vatican [490-631] Barberini oriental et neofiti*, Studi e Testi 243 [Città del Vaticano, 1965], 131).

[28] ܫܠܡ ܐܝܢܓܠܝܘܢ ܕܝܘܚܢܢ ܫܠܝܚܐ ܒܪ ܙܒܕܝ ܕܦܫܩܗ ܘܦܫܪܗ ܝܘܚܢܢ ܩܫܝܫܐ ܕܩܣܛܢܛܝܢܘܦܠܝܣ ܕܫܡܗ ܕܡܢ ܥܡܐ ܒܫܡ ܩܪܝ ܠܗ ܕܟܪܘܣܛܘܡܘܣ ❖ (f. 82v).

Thereupon follows a slightly unusual doxology: ❖ (‘Praise to God in heaven, and peace on earth, and good hope to people. Amen’, f. 83r). Copied by a certain George, the book came to be in the possession of the monastery of Silvanus near Damascus. In a different hand, probably later, we read that it was purchased by its Abbot for the benefit of the brothers (see W. Wright, *Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum Acquired since the Year 1838* [London, 1870], 1.71).

Chrysostom's *HJn* seems obvious. Furthermore, the term ܦܫܪܐ ('interpretation,' or even 'commentary'), built on the same root as the word rendered 'interpreted' (ܦܫܪ), is the normal title for Chrysostom's *Commentary* (*Homilies*) *on John* in Syriac. Yet the term also shows up repeatedly in an apparatus running throughout the Gospel manuscript. Before some leaves were lost, the manuscript originally had 308 of these rubrics incorporated into the gospel text in red ink. Each begins with the term, ܦܫܪܐ, ('interpretation') followed by a brief statement. There is no apparent connection between the statements themselves and the contents of Chrysostom's commentary. However, the statements do exhibit very strong parallels with other known instances of *sortilegia*,[29] systems of divination by which inquirers received answers to specific questions in the form of oracles keyed to the biblical text. In Greek texts the oracle is introduced by the word *(pros)hermeneia*, *i.e*. 'interpretation' – hence ܦܫܪܐ.

There are indications that the practice was relatively widespread,[30] yet very few examples have survived. One famous set of *hermeneiai* is found in codex Bezae, which has 69 such statements scribbled in rough Greek into the lower margin of Mark's Gospel.[31] Scrivener did not recognize them, describing them as 'moral apophthegms, some of them silly enough',[32] but scholars have since identified their function. The ninth-century Latin biblical manuscript *Sangermanensis primus* (g1; Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale lat. 11553) divides the text of John into 316 sections, 185 of which are accompanied by rough Latin *hermeneiai* written into the margins and keyed to the Gospel text.[33] As part of its apparatus, *Sangermanensis* also includes a wheel divided into eight sections (fol. 89v), each of which is filled with a broken series of numbers leading to 316 – undoubtedly a device to help the diviner select the right oracle. No such device survives in our Syriac Gospel manuscript, though it is worth noting that

[29] These systems have often been referred to summarily, though improperly, as *sortes sanctorum*. See W.E. Klingshirn, 'Defining the *Sortes Sanctorum*', *JECS* 10 (2002), 77-130; also P.W. van der Horst, '*Sortes*: Sacred Books as Instant Oracles in Late Antiquity', in *The Use of Sacred Books in the Ancient World*, ed. L.V. Rutgers, *et al*., Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology 22 (Louvain, 1998), 166-7.

[30] Apart from the vestigial traces of *sortilegia* themselves, repeated ecclesial and monastic proscriptions against various kinds of bibliomantic practices suggest the practice was widespread (see W.E. Klingshirn, 'Defining the *Sortes Sanctorum*' [2002], 78-9, 101-14).

[31] J. Rendel Harris, *The Annotators of the Codex Bezae* (London, 1901), 45-74; B. Outtier, 'Les *Prosermeneiai* du Codex Bezae', in *Codex Bezae. Studies from the Lunel Colloquium, June 1994*, ed. D.C. Parker and C.-B. Amphoux (Leiden, 1996), 74-8. D.C. Parker dates the hand of the *sortes* to 550-650 (*Codex Bezae. An Early Christian Manuscript and Its Text* [Cambridge, 1992], 43, 49), though others date it much later – *e.g*. B.M. Metzger dates it to the ninth or tenth century ('Greek Manuscripts of John's Gospel with "Hermeneiai"', in *Text and Testimony. Essays on New Testament and Apocryphal Literature in Honour of A.F.J. Klijn*, ed. T. Baarda, *et al*. [Kampen, 1988], 165-6).

[32] F.H. Scrivener, *Bezae Codex Cantabrigiensis* (Cambridge, 1864), xxvii.

[33] See J.R. Harris, 'The "Sortes Sanctorum" in the St. Germain Codex (*g*1)', *American Journal of Philology* 9 (1988), 58-63.

the first few original leaves are missing. Several Greek and Greco-Coptic papyri and parchment codices, from the third – eighth centuries, have brief portions of John's Gospel accompanied by *hermeneiai*.[34] A pair of Armenian manuscripts of John also has parallel sets.[35]

A quick comparison confirms that the ܗܪܡܢܝܐ of the Syriac Gospel codex are indeed *hermeneiai* for use in divination – although the Syriac set is much more complete than the Greek, Latin, and Coptic examples and was actually integrated into the Gospel text by the original scribe, not added into the margin as a secondary feature. The interrelationship of much of this material is illustrated in the following table:

MS	Text	Number[36]	Rubric	Oracle
𝔓63[37]	*Jn* 4:10	–	ερμηνια *hermeneia*	εα[ν πι]στευσησ χαρα [σοι γ]ινεται if you believe, there will be joy for you ⲉⲕϣⲁⲛⲡⲓⲥⲧⲉⲩⲉ ⲟⲩⲛ [ⲟⲩ ⲣⲁ]ϣⲉ ⲛⲁϣⲱⲡⲉ ⲛⲁⲕ if you have trust, there will be joy for you
17,119[38]	*Jn* 4:10	ܟܙ 46	ܠܗ ܗܘܐ ܗܝܢܐ ܕܗܝܡܢ ܐܢܬ ܠܟ ܚܕܘܬܐ Interpretation: if you are convinced, there will be joy for you	
Bezae[39]	*Mk* 7	(46)	πρ̄ο̄σερμϊνϊα+ εαν πϊστευσησ χαρα συ εσθω + *prosermeneia*: if you believe, there will be joy for you	
Sang.[40]	*Jn* 4:4	xliii 43		si credideris gloria tibi if you believe, glory to you
Graz[41]	?	(6?)		*et'e hawatas xndasc'es* if you believe, you will rejoice

[34] B.M. Metzger, 'Greek Manuscripts of John's Gospel with "Hermeneiai"' (1988), 162-9; D.C. Parker, 'Manuscripts of John's Gospel with *Hermeneiai*', in J.W. Childers and D.C. Parker (eds), Texts and Studies 3.4 (Piscataway, NJ, 2006), 48-68.

[35] One is an eleventh-century text, the other an eighth-century palimpsest. B. Outtier, 'Réponses oraculaires dans les manuscripts bibliques caucasiens', in *Armenia and the Bible*, ed. C. Burchard, University of Pennsylvania Armenian Texts and Studies 12 (Atlanta, GA, 1993), 181-4.

[36] Some of the oracles include explicit numbering; parenthetical numbers are derived from the sequence of the oracles where explicit numbering is lacking.

[37] Text from O. Stegmüller, 'Zu den Bibelorakeln im Codex Bezae', *Biblica* 34 (1953), 13-22.

[38] British Library, Add. 17,119; text from fol. 11v.

[39] Text from J.R. Harris, *Annotators* (1901), 62.

[40] Text from Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale lat. 11553, fol. 126r.

[41] Graz 2058/2, an eighth-century Armenian palimpsest of John's Gospel; text from B. Outtier, 'Réponses oraculaires' (1993), 182.

Obviously, in all these witnesses the material of the *sortes* draws on an earlier common source, very likely Greek, which undoubtedly owes much to even earlier pagan materials for a *sortilegium*.[42] To produce the form we encounter in British Library, Add. 17,119, the *hermeneiai* were pulled straight into the Gospel text, possibly from a marginal apparatus not unlike that of *Sangermanensis*, whether Greek or Syriac. Yet whereas we have a set of only 185 *hermeneiai* with *Sangermanensis*, a very truncated set of 69 in codex Bezae, and 104 identified in the Armenian palimpsest Graz 2058/2,[43] here we have 308 oracles – less the six that are missing due to absent leaves.

This unique set of Syriac *hermeneiai* deserves further study in its own right.[44] However, we must return to the subject of the Syriac Chrysostom. The Gospel manuscript's explicit reference to Chrysostom's *HJn* is perplexing. What accounts for this unusual copy of John's Gospel in Syriac, whose two outstanding original features are a full system of divinatory *sortes* and an explicit reference to Chrysostom as a commentator on John? Specifically – are the two features related? The use of *sortes* in various forms of Christian divination was fairly well known. Did the sixth- or seventh-century scribe believe that the very *hermeneiai* he copied as integral to the biblical text were somehow connected to Chrysostom's homilies? If so, what would make him think so? A close examination of the Gospel contexts to which the *hermeneiai* are keyed, and the pertinent homily material (in Greek and Syriac), reveals no connection between the content of the oracles and that of the homilies. For example, the aforementioned oracle ('if you are convinced, there will be joy for you') is keyed to John 4 in at least three of the extant sources (𝔓63; British Library, Add. 17,119; *Sangermanensis primus*). Although a thematic connection with the common Johannine language of belief/faith/trust is obvious, the oracle exhibits no distinctive connection with Chrysostom's *Hom. in Joannem* 31, where Chrysostom treats *John* 3:35-4:12. As for the particular codex in question (Add. 17,119), it exhibits no other affiliation with Chrysostom, beyond the cryptic subscription.

That John's Gospel would be the text of choice for such a mystical application is not surprising;[45] numerous examples of the magical use of portions of

[42] *E.g.* the celebrated *Sortes Astrampsychi*, a third-century fortune-telling guide. See J.R. Harris, *Annotators* (1901), 50-6; P.W. van der Horst, '*Sortes*: Sacred Books as Instant Oracles' (1998), 165-6.

[43] Here I am dependent on Erich Renhart at the University of Graz, who is presently working to decipher the palimpsest for publication.

[44] Andreas Jückel has informed me that in his collations of about 30 Peshitta and 15 Harklean manuscripts of John, so far British Library, Add. 17,119 is the only Syriac copy of John to include *hermeneiai*.

[45] Codex Bezae is unique in having its *hermeneiai* with Mark, though its famously 'Western' order of the Gospels puts Mark in the fourth position, and it includes no numbers or other keys tying the oracles to the Gospel text. Outtier's research of Armenian and Georgian sources underscore the frequent use of Psalters as hosts for *hermeneiai* also.

John occur over the centuries, from the use of its opening 'statements of power' in Syriac healing charms, to Augustine's prescription that sleeping alongside a copy of John's Gospel is a better cure for headache than resorting to charms and amulets (*In Joh. tr.* 7.12). The often cryptic and seemingly mystical language of John's Gospel apparently made it especially suitable for magical and divinatory use. Chrysostom recognizes similar bibliomantic practices, though not specifically for John.[46] He argues that since the devil or other evil spirits will not approach a house where a Gospel book is lying, neither would they enter a soul that carries its teachings within (*Hom. in Joannem* 32.3). In another context, he encourages people to write the Gospel into their minds, since many women and children hang Gospels around their necks as amulets (*Hom. ad pop. Ant.* 19.14). Elsewhere, he suggests that people who hang Gospel books by their beds, to accompany their prayers, would be even better served by storing up alms as a defence against the devil *(Hom. in 1 Cor.*, 43.7). Chrysostom does not condemn these bibliomantic practices, though his preferences are clearly for the moral use of scripture. 'Scriptures are divine charms', he says, 'so let us apply to ourselves and to the passions of our souls the remedies to be derived from them' (*Hom. in Joannem* 32.3). Although Chrysostom provides evidence of the common beliefs underlying the mantic use of scripture, so do others, and there is no special connection between such practices and material in *HJn*. The *sortes*' association with John's Gospel, both thematically and in the manuscript tradition, is undeniable; no evidence points to the existence of a connection between the *sortes* and Chrysostom or *HJn*.

When William Wright catalogued British Library, Add. 17,119 in 1871,[47] he was misled by the subscription to assume that the *hermeneiai* (ܗܪܡܢܝܐ) of the *sortes* derived somehow from Chrysostom's ܦܫܩܐ ('Commentary') on John.[48] While the mistake on Wright's part is understandable, it is highly unlikely that the manuscript's scribe had made such a mistake. How could he have missed the true and fairly obvious nature of the popular material before him? Nor is it necessary to propose that he was deliberately trying to sanitize the divinatory material. The extent to which such practices were condemned in the early centuries of Christianity is a controversial one,[49] yet it is clear that the practices continued for centuries, and it seems unlikely that our scribe or editor would

[46] See R. Kaczynski, *Das Wort Gottes in Liturgie und Alltag der Gemeinden des Johannes Chrysostomus* (Freiburg, 1974), 326-9; H.Y. Gamble, *Books and Readers in the Early Church. A History of Early Christian Texts* (New Haven, Conn., 1995), 238-9.

[47] 'There are 308 (ܥܕ) rubrics in the volume, referring, as it would seem from the above subscription, to the homilies of John Chrysostom on this Gospel' (W. Wright, *Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum* [1870], 1.71).

[48] When Pusey collated the manuscript for the 1901 edition of the Peshitta Gospels, no mention was made of this feature (see P.E. Pusey and G.H. Gwilliam, *Tetraeuangelium sanctum iuxta simplicem Syrorum versionem* [Oxford, 1901]).

[49] *E.g.* see the arguments in W.E. Klingshirn, 'Defining the *Sortes Sanctorum*' (2002).

either be utterly ignorant of them and therefore make a nonsense connection with Chrysostom, or attempt to cloak the materials in such a strikingly ineffective way – better to omit the *hermeneiai* altogether.

To return to the question: is there any connection between the two striking features of British Library, Add. 17,119 – the *hermeneiai* and the subscription? Apparently not; they are coincidental features. This conclusion is strengthened by a similar phenomenon in West Syrian Psalters, in which the interpretation of Athanasius on the Psalms is mentioned, yet there is no discernable connection between the material of the Psalter in which the note occurs and the specific contents or structure of Athanasius' Commentary on the Psalms.[50] It is plausible that these biblical codices would include incidental mentions of influential interpreters such as Chrysostom and Athanasius, even if the codices had no substantive connections to the commentaries or homilies of the celebrated interpreters themselves. With respect to the Syriac Chrysostom, British Library, Add. 17,119 is further testimony to the powerful influence of the Syriac version of *HJn* on the exegetical tradition of Syriac-speaking Christians. But the *hermeneia* apparatus of the manuscript has a significance completely disconnected from Chrysostom; as the most complete and legible extant instance of *sortes Biblicorum* known to exist, it invites further study in its own right.

[50] I am indebted to D.G.K. Taylor for this helpful point; see D.G.K. Taylor, 'Psalm Headings in the West Syrian Tradition', in *The Peshitta: Its Use in Literature and Liturgy. Papers Read at the Third Peshitta Symposium*, Monographs of the Peshitta Institute Leiden 15 (Leiden, 2006), 365-78.

Literacy and Book Ownership in the Congregations of John Chrysostom

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Abstract

In his 1989 publication *Ancient Literacy*, William Harris examined Late Antique social and material evidence with a view to establishing the literacy rates of the period. Since Harris did not think the period was characterized by the social structures, ideological commitments, and technological advances necessary for mass literacy, he estimated that no more than 10-15% of the population was literate in Late Antiquity. Since the publication of Harris' work, however, certain scholars have called Harris' figure into question, sometimes by critiquing his methodology and use of evidence, while other times by pointing to his failure to consider the possibility of different types or levels of literacy in Late Antiquity. This essay extends this kind of evaluation of Harris' work by reference to the sermons of John Chrysostom. It argues first that the sermons indicate substantial levels of basic literacy and potential for book-ownership among the Christian populations of late fourth- and early fifth-century Antioch and Constantinople. This is because Chrysostom's frequent praise for the activities of reading and studying Scripture, taken together with a number of other comments he makes about reading, assume the basic literacy of many members of his audience and indicate that they have access to written texts. Moreover the picture of literacy and book ownership potential reflected in the sermons is not in conflict with evidence for book production technology and educational practices in Late Antiquity. Finally it is demonstrated that literacy could indeed take diverse forms in Late Antique culture: According to Chrysostom, the Christian who hears and enacts Scripture is the same as the one who reads it. For all these reasons, Chrysostom's sermons prompt a reconsideration of Harris' figure.

In his work *Ancient Literacy*, William Harris examines Late Antique social and material evidence to determine the literacy rates of the period. Since Harris does not think Late Antiquity was characterized by the technological advances, ideological commitments, and social structures necessary for mass literacy, he estimates that no more than ten to fifteen percent of the population was able to read.[1] Harris' 1989 publication, while often praised for its academic rigor and

[1] Harris says the low levels of literacy are 'entirely to be expected, for each society achieves the level of literacy which its structure and *ethos* require and its technology permits.' As for structure, Harris cites the lack of an adequate system of education and an insufficient demand for a literate workforce; as for ethos, he claims the notion was weakly held that all citizens ought to

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ambitious scope, has also been critiqued by a number of scholars since its appearance, sometimes for methodological reasons, but perhaps most often for its failure to adequately distinguish and account for various levels or types of literacy or ask what 'reading' in fact signified in antiquity.[2] The present essay is an extension of this kind of evaluation. Here Harris' conclusions will be examined in light of what the sermons of John Chrysostom indicate about basic literacy and book ownership in his fourth-century congregations. It will be argued that Chrysostom's sermon references to reading, education and book ownership – especially when seen in the context of the educational practices and book production technologies of Late Antiquity – provide compelling reasons for thinking Harris' estimate of readers is too low, at least in the case of Chrysostom's congregations. It will also be demonstrated that Chrysostom recognizes a type of literacy not considered by Harris yet potentially quite prevalent among the members of Chrysostom's congregations. This, too, is another reason for re-thinking Harris' estimate in light of the various forms of Late Antique literacy.

Chrysostom often speaks as if he is addressing those who can read, and this is reason for thinking there are, in fact, readers among his listeners. For instance, in his first sermon on Lazarus and the rich man, Chrysostom says that after dinner one 'ought not to receive sleep in bed, but undertake prayer and reading of the divine Scriptures'.[3] In his third sermon on Lazarus, he says 'when you are at home, persevere continually in reading the divine Scriptures'.[4] These are exhortations *to* read predicated on the notion that the addressees *can* read.[5]

read and write. Regarding technology, Harris says that book production technology of the period would not have allowed for mass diffusion of written texts. Harris does briefly mention that Chrysostom's congregation may have been 'atypical' regarding its literacy levels. See William V. Harris, *Ancient Literacy* (Cambridge, Mass., 1990), 327-31, and 304.

[2] For instance, Christopher Bruell finds fault with Harris' comparative methodology, which Bruell does not see as adequately accounting for unique aspects of Greco-Roman society (the respect given to the tradition of *paideia*, for example). See Bruell, 'Literacy and Social Class in Antiquity', *The Review of Politics* 52 (1990), 466-9. Other scholars have explicitly or implicitly critiqued Harris by pointing out in their research the existence of various Late Antique literacies. See, for instance, the collection of revised conference papers published as *Ancient Literacies: The Culture of Reading in Greece and Rome*, ed. William Johnson (Oxford, 2009), especially the contributions of Rosalind Thomas on degrees of literacy, Kristina Miller on graffiti as act more than text, and William Johnson on the blurring of boundaries between dialogue and reading in certain literary communities.

[3] John Chrysostom, *First Sermon on Lazarus and the Rich Man*, trans. Catharine Roth, in *On Wealth and Poverty* (Crestwood, 2003), 27.

[4] Chrysostom, *Third Sermon on Lazarus and the Rich Man*, in *On Wealth and Poverty* 58.

[5] One may object that exhortations *to* read do not require that one *can* read. This is correct, but the situation must be considered in the light of the nature of speech acts. An exhortation communicates the desire of the exhorter for the one exhorted, but it is also the means by which the exhorter is attempting to bring his or her particular desire to pass: Exhortations are tools. Thus, if Chrysostom, a gifted communicator, knew his congregation lacked a requisite ability for adhering to the full sense of his desire (that his audience read, at home), but wanted them to carry it

A similar assumption of literacy is found in Chrysostom's instruction on how to make the best use of his preaching:

> I often tell you many days in advance the subject of what I am going to say, in order that you may take up the book in the intervening days, go over the whole passage, learn both what is said and what is left out, and so make your understanding more ready to learn when you hear what I will say afterwards.[6]

Another indication of readers among his congregation is found in Chrysostom's sermon on 1*Corinthians* 7. Here Chrysostom defends himself against those who will accuse him of rushing his exposition of the passage by saying that he has written an entire book on his subject, but of course the defense only works if there are those among his congregation who can read his lengthy treatment.[7] In yet another place, Chrysostom complains that people come to hear the sermon without having read the Scriptural text in advance because, as they say, they have been too busy with things like business, family cares, and 'constant occupation in public and private matters'.[8] But Chrysostom does not mention the most obvious excuse someone might have given for not preparing to hear the sermon: 'I am not able to read.'[9] Finally a very telling statement regarding Chrysostom's view of the abilities of his congregation is found in one of Chrysostom's sermons on *John*. Here he says:

> What then is it that I require of you? That each of you take in hand that section of the Gospels which is to be read among you on the first day of the week, or even on the Sabbath, and before the day arrive, that he sit down at home and read it through, and often carefully consider its contents, and examine well all its parts, what is clear, what obscure, what seems to make for the adversaries (but does not really so); and when you have tried, in a word, every point, so go to hear it read.[10]

This passage represents a high view of the literacy of his hearers: Chrysostom says his congregation is not just to read the Scriptures, but even attempt pre-

out, it is very probable that he would directly exhort his audience to *learn to* read in addition to encouraging them also to read at home. But he does not do the former in any place known to the author (though, as will be seen below, he exhorts his audience to teach others to learn to read). Therefore it is reasonable to think that any exhortation Chrysostom the preacher gives to his audience *about* reading assumes that at least some of his listeners *can* read.

[6] *Third Sermon on Lazarus and the Rich Man* 58. Though Chrysostom does not use the word for reading here, it is hard to see what else he could have in mind in describing the action as 'taking up the book', 'go[ing] over the whole passage', and 'learn[ing] … what is said'.

[7] Chrysostom, *Homily 19 on I Corinthians 7*, trans. Catharine Roth, in *On Marriage and Family Life* (Crestwood, 2003), 41.

[8] *Hom. on Jo.* 11.1, NPNF 14.

[9] The general absence of the illiteracy excuse in Chrysostom's works is noted by Jaclyn Maxwell in her chapter 'Teaching to the Converted', in *Christianization and Communication in Late Antiquity* (New York, 2006), 99. The author gratefully acknowledges the inspiration provided by Maxwell's chapter for her investigation of literacy among Chrysostom's congregations.

[10] *Hom. on Jo.* 11.1, NPNF 14.

liminary exegesis based on a close reading of the text! Such an expectation, taken together with Chrysostom's aforementioned exhortations to read, strongly suggest there were actual readers among the members of Chrysostom's congregations.

Chrysostom's sermons on child rearing provide additional insight into his view of the reading abilities of members of his congregation. In a sermon on *Ephesians* 5 Chrysostom says that virtuous living for any Christian – lay or religious – requires being well versed in Scripture.[11] Children in particular need to know Scripture, first because it teaches them the kind of obedience to parents that allows training in virtue to proceed apace.[12] But Scripture also provides moral directives necessary for helping impressionable children understand what is wicked and foolish in the world. Chrysostom says 'Don't think that only monks need to learn the Bible. Children about to go out into the world stand in greater need of Scriptural knowledge.'[13] Since knowledge of Scripture is essential to moral formation in Chrysostom's system, he insists that children be taught the Bible in two ways, the first of which is through hearing the Scriptures read aloud to them at home.[14] Minimally this indicates Chrysostom assumes that at least someone in the home is able to read. But Chrysostom's sermon suggests he thinks parents themselves can read. This is because the second way Chrysostom says children will become Scripturally knowledgeable is by being made to learn to read the Bible for themselves. Yet earlier in his sermon, Chrysostom insisted that the most effective way of teaching a child virtuous behavior is instruction by example.[15] Therefore it seems proper to interpret Chrysostom's exhortation to parents – 'Let us give them a pattern of life to imitate; from their earliest years let us teach them to study the Bible' – as proof

[11] Chrysostom says: 'If we order our lives in [the way of virtue] and diligently study the Scriptures, we will find lessons to guide us in everything we need!' See *Homily 20 on Ephesians 5:22-33*, in *On Marriage and Family Life* 64, and: 'It is necessary for everyone to know Scriptural teachings, and this is especially true for children. See *ibid.* 67.

[12] Chrysostom argues that knowledge of Scripture is essential to the moral formation of children because the Bible teaches a child to listen to his or her parents: 'The first thing [the child] will hear from [Scriptures] will be, "Honor your father and your mother", and immediately you will begin to reap your reward.' See *Homily 21 on Ephesians 6:1-4,* 67.

[13] *Ibid.*

[14] 'Do you want your child to be obedient? Then from the beginning bring him up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Don't think that it isn't necessary for a child to listen to the Scriptures…' See *ibid.*

[15] That Chrysostom was adamant about children learning to read the Bible is evident by the way Chrysostom echoes parents' responses to his exhortation to Bible-reading: '"He repeats this over and over again", you say, "we are sick of listening to it!"' See *Homily 21 on Ephesians 6:1-4*, 67. As for example being the most effective way of teaching right action, Chrysostom says that the Apostle Paul gives a simple command to children in *Ephesians*: 'Children obey your parents in the Lord' because 'he is well aware that if husband and wife order their lives according to God's law, their children will also submit willingly to the same law.' See *ibid.* 65.

of his assumption that at least some parents in his congregation are readers and are able to teach their children to read.[16]

As for other evidence for readers among Chrysostom's congregation offered by his sermons child-rearing, it is also worth noting that Chrysostom's response to parents' objections to teaching Bible-reading have nothing to do with the difficulty of teaching reading itself. He argues with parents: 'Don't say, "Bible-reading is for monks; am I turning my child into a monk?" No! It isn't necessary for him to be a monk. Make him into a Christian!'[17] This quoted exchange shows that parents' objections to teaching their children to read were moral, not practical, and concerned with Bible-reading, rather than reading in general. Indeed, in all his discussion of the place of Scripture reading in a child's education, Chrysostom only finds it necessary to respond to parents who find a certain kind of reading excessively pious and therefore dispensable. He never pleads with them to expend energy on overcoming obstacles to teaching reading itself, a fact which indicates that finding the means to teaching reading was not itself a great difficulty.

That state of affairs appears corroborated by evidence demonstrating that even middle and lower class members of society may have been able to receive instruction in basic literacy. One recognizes that certain educational opportunities – training in the *protogymnasmata*, rhetoric, and philosophy – do appear to have been available almost exclusively to the rich.[18] In short, what might be called a literary education was overwhelmingly limited to the elites of Late Antique society. But grammar, rhetoric, and philosophy were not the only things to be learned in Chrysostom's day. One could glean from the γραμματιστής in his 'schools of letters', where he taught his students to read through a graded system of memorization of letters, then words, then grammatical units and sentences, building eventually to the comprehension of entire texts. This method of instruction, well documented in the papyrological record, would have allowed students to develop basic literacy suited to reading simple texts, even if such students would not have been comfortable navigating the written form of complex oratory or poetry.[19] As for the question of who was able to attend a school of letters, it is relevant that the γραμματιστής was a poorly

[16] *Homily 21 on Ephesians 6:1-4*, 67.

[17] *Ibid.*

[18] One may wish to consider some members of Jewish communities as an exception to this general rule, insofar as rabbis may be understood to have achieved high levels of literacy without necessarily being members of the class of late antique social elites. For more on Jewish literacy, and therefore the possible differences between Christian and Jewish literacy in Late Antiquity, see Catherine Hezser, 'Jewish Literacy and the Use of Writing in Late Roman Palestine', in *Jewish Culture and Society Under the Christian Roman Empire* (Leuven, 2003), 195. Hezser offers a fuller treatment of the subject in *Jewish Literacy in Roman Palestine* (Tübingen, 2001).

[19] See Roger Bagnall, *Everyday Writing in the Graeco-Roman East* (Berkeley, 2011) and Raffaella Cribiore, *Writing, Teachers, and Students in Graeco-Roman Egypt* (Atlanta, 1996).

paid person of low social status. This could mean the reading teacher and his services were accessible to a broad swath of Late Antique society, with the result that more than a small percentage of the Late Antique population had the opportunity of achieving basic literacy. If so, perhaps Chrysostom's assumptions about his congregation's reading abilities are not incredible. Perhaps they instead offer corroborating evidence for the success of schools of letters.[20]

Chrysostom's sermons assume readers among his congregation and also offer insight into the precise identities of such readers. In his third sermon on

[20] One of Harris' major arguments for low literacy levels in Antiquity is that there was no 'ample and expanding school system' that would allow many people to learn to read, but this does not seem accurate. It is true that nothing like a state sponsored system of education allowing all children equal access to instruction in a standardized curriculum ever existed in Late Antiquity. Nevertheless, sources both literary and archaeological allow scholars to discern four types of Late Antique education each having its own basic aims and methods.

The first type of education was that which a young child received in morals and manners under the care of his or her parent, or under a *pedagogue,* usually a household slave or freedman. In *Against the Opponents of the Monastic Life* 3.12, Chrysostom describes the ideal pedagogue as one 'whose sole task was to form the young man's soul.' Therefore, in *On Vainglory* and *The Right Way to Bring Up Children*, Chrysostom exhorts parents to choose carefully these moral trainers. See Chrysostom, *Against the Opponents of the Monastic Life*, trans. David Hunter, in *A Comparison between a King and a Monk and Against the Opponents of the Monastic Life: Two Treatises* (Lewiston, 1988), and *id*., *On Vainglory* and *The Right Way to Bring Up Children,* trans. M.L.W. Laistner, in *Christianity and Pagan Culture in the Later Roman Empire* (Ithaca, 1951), 85-133.

The second type of education was that which one obtained in basic literacy at school of the γραμματιστής. The *grammatistes* was a person of low status who was paid a small fee for his services, most often by local parents who sent their children to learn with him during the day. He taught functional literacy through a graded program of copying, reciting, and memorizing first individual letters, then syllables, then small words, and finally short sentences often culled from the compositions of famous Greek orators and philosophers. Though it may have taken time, attending the *grammatistes*' 'school of letters' did not require a significant investment of money, and there is good reason to think that many young boys (and perhaps girls) received the kind of training that would allow them to have acquired basic reading and writing skills. Moreover, a child might also have received instruction in basic grammar in the home, either from parents or a private tutor (usually a household slave).

A third kind of education was that which allowed one to obtain a literary education through training in the *progymnasmata,* a series of compositional exercises designed to prepare the student for participation in civic life as an accomplished orator through helping him to become familiar with the works of classical Greek authors. This kind of education in literature, advanced grammar and compositional was accomplished in the school of the grammarian. The fourth kind of education was either an extension of compositional training under a professional *rhetor* or systematic intellectual training under a famed philosopher. It was even more expensive than learning with a grammarian, more time-consuming, and for these reasons, overwhelmingly limited to the elite of society.

For more on the *grammatistes*' 'school of letters', the school of the grammarian, and studies under a rhetor or philosopher, see Henri Irénée Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity*, trans. George Lamb (New York, 1956), Edward J. Watts, 'Academic Life in the Roman Empire', in *City and School in Late Antique Athens and Alexandria* (Berkeley, 2006), 1-23, and Jaclyn Maxwell, 'Teaching to the Converted' (2006), 88-117.

Lazarus and the rich man, Chrysostom recounts the excuses people give him for not studying the Scriptures. Some, he says, protest that they cannot read because they are too involved in attending to the affairs of the law courts; others, the business of the city, still others, the concerns of their wives. Craftsmen tell Chrysostom the practice of their trade leaves them no time for reading. Then there are those who say that raising children or managing the household prevents the study of Scripture.[21] Such a list of excuses demonstrates that those of Chrysostom's congregation who are able to read are minor civic officials, middle-class artisans, craftsman, and even soldiers. As for the question of female readers, Chrysostom's list of excuses may show all readers were male, for he concludes his list of complaints with a catch-all excuse: 'I am a man of the world; reading the Scriptures is not for me.'[22] Still, Chrysostom's list does not entirely rule out the possibility that there were women readers among his congregation, since he does cite the constraints of home management and child-rearing, and women were certainly among his audience.[23] Moreover, a comment of Chrysostom's in his *Homilies on John* demonstrates he expects that some women can read. He says 'the women who sits in her house as in some school of true wisdom, and collects her thoughts within herself, will be enabled to apply herself to prayers, and readings, and other heavenly wisdom.'[24] Chrysostom assumes here that a woman needs space and calm in order to read, not a tutor to teach her to read. Regardless of how common women readers may have been, however, the breadth of social categories reflected in Chrysostom's list of excuses for not reading is reason for increasing one's estimate of the literacy rate among Chrysostom's congregation. Clearly there were those in his audience who did not belong to the elite class and yet are still presumed readers by Chrysostom.

If Chrysostom's sermons provide reasons for thinking basic literacy was not uncommon in his congregations, they also indicate that most of the members

[21] Chrysostom, *Third Sermon on Lazarus* 58.

[22] *Ibid.* Chrysostom's response may reinforce the idea that all his readers were male, since he counters this excuse by saying it is precisely the man so engaged in the affairs of the world that needs the guidance of Scripture, which he imagines as 'full armor' needed to avoid attacks and snares provided by a quarrelsome wife, troublesome children and servants, fellow soldiers, loss of property, effeminate songs, and splendid bodies, all of which seem to be distinctly male concerns.

[23] Some of Chrysostom's frequent complaints are that the men in his audience are there to 'corrupt' females in attendance. See *I Cor Hom. 36*, 5-6 (PG 61, 313-4). Also Jaclyn Maxwell points out that Chrysostom's sermons, especially his *Homilies on Matthew*, indicate that individuals from a variety of social and economic classes made up Chrysostom's congregation: These included soldiers, workmen and artisans, landowners, slaves, women, and children. See J. Maxwell, 'John Chrysostom's Congregation in Antioch,' in *Christianization and Communication* (2006), 65-89.

[24] *Hom. on Jo. 61.3,* NPNF 14. Margaret Amy Schatkin confidently takes this statement to mean there were female readers among the members of Chrysostom's audience. See Schatkin, 'John Chrysostom: Advocate of Biblical Literacy', in *"Historiam prescrutari". Miscellanea di studi offerti al prof. O. Pasquato* (Rome, 2002), 829-38, 836.

of his congregations could have owned material to read – even his congregation in Antioch. In his eleventh homily on the *Gospel of John*, Chrysostom says some people offer the following excuse for not reading: 'They have not the books in their possession.'[25] Chrysostom does not say anything to the rich about this excuse, but he admits that 'many of the poorer sort continually use it'.[26] Thus it appears that the question of who among his congregation may have owned books relates to two issues. The first issue is the percentage of the 'poorer sort' in Chrysostom's congregations. The second is whether being in that category prohibited the purchase of reading materials. Of the first question, in her detailed study of the social composition of Chrysostom's congregation in Antioch, Jaclyn Maxwell concludes that 'the audience went well beyond the confines of the educated upper classes.'[27] This comports with Chrysostom's statement on the demographics of Antioch, given in sermons on *Matthew* delivered there, that most in his congregation, roughly eighty percent, are 'neither poor nor rich, but have a middle place.'[28] If the majority of the members of Chrysostom's Antioch congregation are *not* rich, however, that may explain why Chrysostom heard complaints about not having materials to read, for entire books put into scroll form *were* costly in Late Antiquity, as were large, well-written codices.[29] On the other hand, it is known that early Christians had from

[25] *Hom. on Jo. 11.1,* NPNF 14.

[26] *Ibid.*

[27] For more on the demographics of Chrysostom's congregation, see J. Maxwell, 'John Chrysostom's Congregation in Antioch' (2006).

[28] *Hom. on Matth. 2.3*, NPNF 10. Chrysostom is chastising his congregation for their lack of generosity in sharing with the poor. He says it is shameful the poor suffer when they make up such a small proportion of the population: 'For proof that we do sow sparingly, let us inquire which are more numerous in the city, the poor or rich, or those who are neither poor nor rich, but have a middle place. And as a tenth are the rich, and a tenth the poor who have nothing at all, and the rest of the middle sort, let us distribute the poor among the whole multitude of the city, and you will see the disgrace, how great it is! For the very rich are indeed few, but those after them are many, and the poor much fewer, and nevertheless, although there are many that are able to feed the hungry, many go to sleep in their hunger.'

[29] In the period under consideration, books took two primary forms: the scroll form and the 'leaf' (codex) form. In Classical Antiquity and well into the Hellenistic period, anything considered a true book (a literary work), was put into papyrus (or parchment) scroll form. Publishing a literary work was a time-consuming, error-prone, and largely private affair. This was because all books were hand-copied, and the quality of a text's copy depended on the skills of the scribe, especially his handwriting. This meant that publishing a book (or obtaining a copy of a book) most often involving hiring a trained professional scribe, a βιβλιογράφος, to produce a full text from a shorthand version, from dictation, or from an exemplar. The cost of a book was based on the skill-level of the copyist and the price he demanded for his services. Sometimes the rich were able to employ permanently a slave or freedman as a trained copyist. Cost was also a matter of the material out of which the book was made. Debates over the price of book materials exist, especially regarding the cost of papyrus, though parchment books were assuredly the most expensive type of book (parchment was more difficult prepare and also more durable). As for the matter of the availability of literary books, while a small book trade did exist in Late Antiquity,

an early time shown a preference for using a 'book' form that was comparatively less expensive than either scrolls or fine codices. This was the small 'notebook' codex.[30] There is the possibility, then, that perhaps even middle class Christians could have afforded some portion of Scripture, if it was rendered in the notebook form.[31] And it does appear that Chrysostom's congregations were familiar with the less expensive codex forms of Scriptural texts, for Chrysostom refers to the practice of hanging books of the Gospel by one's bed; as Margret Schatkin has pointed out, these copies are reminiscent of the compact and inexpensive editions of classical texts mentioned by Martial in his *Apophoreta*.[32] Fortunately, however, one does not need to unravel the complex knot of difficulties that is the relationship of Late Antique book cost to income

the overwhelming majority of books were obtained through lending books among friends or associates for the purpose of taking a copy, so that 'publication' often proceeded along social lines. Literary works were not the only written texts in circulation and use however. Businesspersons, tradesmen, educators, and students frequently used 'leaf form' books. These were the progenitors of the codex and were made initially from bound pieces of wood hollowed and filled with wax. These early codices were more like 'notebooks' and not true books, then, in that they were not used for literary works, but rather for commerce and education. They were much simpler affairs, both in content and production; consequently, they were much easier to obtain. For more on the form of books in Late Antiquity, see Harry Y. Gamble, *Books and Readers in the Early Church: A History of Early Christian Texts* (New Haven, 1995), 35-85 especially.

[30] There are several ways in which ancient Christians distinguished themselves from their larger culture in their use of books. First, papyrological evidence from Egypt demonstrates that from an early time Christians overwhelmingly favored the codex for the recording of their texts. The second striking difference noticed by scholars, between antique Christian literary remains and those from their larger cultural context, is that a fine book hand is rarely found in Christian texts before the fourth century. Instead, most Christian texts are written in the informal round script which, outside the Christian context, is usually only found in documentary papyri of the business and legal transactions undertaken by the everyday person, and not literary texts. In other words, Christians seem not to have employed those who could write in a fine, expensive book hand (or they made the copies themselves). Finally, Christian 'books' were usually not tomes of complete works, but pamphlets, containing the text of only a single document, though collections of the letters of the Apostle Paul are a notable exception to this rule (at least until later periods). All such evidence opens up the possibility that Christians would not always have demanded that their Scriptures be recorded in the finest possible books, but were willing to obtain and use cheaper copies of biblical texts. See again H.Y. Gamble, *Books and Readers in the Early Church* (1995) or for specific details on the availability of books in fourth-century Antioch, see A.F. Norman, 'The Book Trade in Fourth-Century Antioch', *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 80 (1960), 122-6.

[31] Here it is worth emphasizing that reading Scripture does not require the possession of an entire Bible. One can imagine a situation, for instance, in which families each own some portion of Scripture that they could then share among themselves. Chrysostom's exhortation in a homily on *Colossians* describing Scripture as several *books*, not a single volume, suggests the possibility of just such an option: 'Procure books that will be medicines for the soul … obtain at least the New Testament – the Apostolic Epistles, the Acts, the Gospels – for your constant teachers.' See *Hom. on Col. 9.1*, NPNF 13.

[32] *In Epistulam I ad Corinthios homilia 43,* 4 (PG 61, 373); Martial, *Apophoreta* 14,184-6. This reference and insight is owed to Schatkin, 'John Chrysostom: Advocate of Biblical Literacy' (2002), 831.

levels, because Chrysostom himself proclaims on whether being less than wealthy prohibits book purchase. After saying that the poorer sort complain of not having Scripture to read, he points out that none of them lack the requisite tools of their trade. He says: 'Is it not then a strange thing that, in the case of tools, to throw no blame on poverty, but to use every means available to overcome obstacles from any quarter, but when we might gain such great advantage [from Scripture], to lament our want of leisure and our poverty?'[33] According to Chrysostom then, not having some copy of Scripture is not a problem of price, but priorities.[34] Whatever the cost of obtaining Scriptural books, Chrysostom thinks even those who are not rich can pay it: This means even the 'middling sort', the very ones making up the majority of Chrysostom's congregation in Antioch.[35] Thus it appears that not only could many of the middle classes read well enough to prepare for sermons, but could afford copies of the texts necessary for such preparation.

Chrysostom's sermons show he assumed there were readers in his audience, demonstrate that those readers belong to a variety of social classes, and indicate that the majority of his congregation – even in Antioch – could afford scriptural 'books' of some kind. Thus it seems that possessing literacy, at least at a basic

[33] He begins, 'I would gladly ask if every one of them does not have all the instruments of the trade which he works at, full and complete, though infinite poverty stand in his way?' See *Hom. on Jo. 11.1*, NPNF 14.

[34] Chrysostom, *Hom. on Jo. 32.3*, NPNF 14. The mis-ordering of desire as the root problem of lack of ownership of Scripture texts is highlighted again in Chrysostom's thirty-second homily on *John*. Here Chrysostom preaches on the story of the Samaritan woman at the well with whom Jesus speaks, and he contrasts her eagerness to hear the words of Christ with the attitude of his congregation towards Scripture. 'We not only do not enquire concerning doctrines, but towards them all our dispositions are careless and indifferent. Therefore everything is neglected. For which of you when in his house takes some Christian book in hand and goes over its contents, and searches the Scriptures? None can say that he does so, but with most we shall find draughts and dice, but books nowhere, except among a few. And even these few have the same dispositions as the many; for they tie up their books, and keep them always put away in cases, and all their care is for the fineness of the parchments, and the beauty of the letters, not for reading them. For they have not bought them to obtain advantage and benefit from them, but take pains about such matters to show their wealth and pride. Such is the excess of vainglory. I do not hear any one glory that he knows the contents, but only that he has a book written in letters of gold.' Again the focus of Chrysostom's censure is upon the priorities of the members of his congregation regarding Scripture. He expects that his congregation could own books, but instead they have spent their money on games. Or if someone does own a book, he has purchased an extremely expensive copy of a text, not to read it, but to boast about its fine form and display it as a symbol of his wealth. Thus, though things could in fact be otherwise, all things – the possession and reading of Scripture – are neglected.

[35] Chrysostom acknowledges that some members of his congregation could not find the means for providing themselves with books when he says that 'even if any should be so poor, it is in their power, by means of the continual reading of the holy Scriptures which takes place here, to be ignorant of nothing contained in them.' So if one was too poor to own a book of Scripture, still Chrysostom expected the poor to know Scripture from hearing it read out in the churches. See *Hom. on Jo. 11.1*, NPNF 14.

level, was not unusual among the members of Chrysostom's congregations.[36] But it was Chrysostom's unique definition of Scriptural literacy that would have truly set his congregation apart in the social-cultural milieu of Late Antiquity. This is because Chrysostom defined literacy in such a way as to allow every person in his congregation to become a 'reader'. He did so by arguing that the attentive hearer of Scripture is the same as its careful reader and by redefining literacy as conforming one's life to Scripture's meaning. In his third sermon on Lazarus and the rich man, Chrysostom praises the reading of Scripture in reference to Jesus' parable, saying 'It is impossible, impossible for anyone to depart without benefit if he reads continually with attention.'[37] But Chrysostom does not mean perusing texts, but participating in the liturgy, as is indicated by the continuation of his speech:

> Look how much one parable has helped us! How much better it has made our souls!',[38]

as if those hearing the scriptural parable in the present public gathering have been the ones 'reading with attention'.

Hearers can be readers. This is especially true because, in Chrysostom's hierarchy of values, the internalization of the written word is superior to its mere external comprehension. In one of his homilies on the *Gospel of John*, Chrysostom alludes to 2*Corinthians* 3:3, in saying he desires that 'letters of Scripture be written on the tablets of the heart'.[39] Chrysostom says one should certainly obtain copies of Scripture, but the point of procuring Bibles to read is internal transformation.[40] He explains:

> I desire that from these books you continually convey the letters and sense into your understanding, that so your mind may be purified when it receives the meaning of the writing.[41]

For Chrysostom then, true reading is comprehending the significance of the words for one's life, and true writing is composing one's soul to mirror that significance. Thus, regardless of reading ability, those who allow Scripture to enter the mind and leave a transforming imprint on the soul are those who are biblically literate. Furthermore, Chrysostom says in several places that the Scriptures were regularly read out in his churches. For instance, he says that

[36] This could be the case even if outside his churches, literacy rates were lower. Christianity may have very well created a culture of literacy – through the liturgy especially, in which all could easily participate – that set the Christian community apart from its wider social contexts, in regards to esteem for and energy spent on learning to read.

[37] Chrysostom, *Third Sermon on Lazarus* 59.

[38] *Ibid*.

[39] *Hom. on Jo. 32.3*, NPNF 14.

[40] Chrysostom follows his comment about writing on the tablets of the hear with the statement 'I say this not to prevent you from procuring Bibles, on the contrary, I exhort and earnestly pray that you do this.' See *Hom. on Jo. 32.3*, NPNF 14.

[41] *Ibid*.

if one should come in here regularly, even though he does not read at home, if he attends to what is said here, one year even is sufficient to make him well versed in the Scriptures because we do not today read one kind of Scriptures, and tomorrow another, but always and continually the same.[42]

This means that all the Christians in Antioch and Constantinople could gain extensive knowledge of Scripture – become in a sense Scripturally-literate – even if they could not actually read.

In Chrysostom's churches being a reader did not make one better or give one any spiritual advantage, nor did a non-reader risk missing any spiritual benefit on account of his illiteracy.[43] This was true in regards to salvation itself, about which Chrysostom said, 'for it is not possible, not possible for anyone to be saved without continually taking advantage of spiritual reading.'[44] Since spiritual reading could be accomplished through participation in public liturgy, then the highest good of Christianity was equally available to all, and any claim to social superiority based on actual literacy was vitiated.[45] Chrysostom's definition of literacy can be seen, therefore, to be a reason for adjusting Harris' estimate, minimally in terms of its social implications, for Chrysostom's preaching presented, as usual, a radical challenge to the value system of Late Antiquity, this time, those that perpetuated social divisions between the educated elite and low-status illiterates. According to Chrysostom, all individuals – whether rich or poor, slave or free, male or female – were able to inscribe the letters of Scripture on the tablets of their hearts, and by continual meditation upon this writing, become equal partakers of the Spirit and life contained therein.[46]

[42] John Chrysostom, *Hom. in Jo. 58.4*, NPNF 14. He also indicates how often there were public readings of Scripture in saying that 'Many people, I am sure, have departed taking a lasting benefit from listening to Scripture … If we do this at each service and do not miss any [readings], the continuity of listening will accomplish some great and noble good in us.' See *Third Sermon on Lazarus* 59.

[43] Chrysostom, *Third Sermon on Lazarus* 58. Perhaps the reason Chrysostom believed that the mere hearing of the Scriptures was as efficacious as it was had to do with his belief about its speaker. He claimed, 'What the Scriptures utter, the Master has uttered … the Master of the angels, the Lord of the dead and the living, Himself has given the Scriptures their authority.' See Chrysostom, *Fourth Sermon on Lazarus* 85.

[44] Chrysostom, *Third Sermon on Lazarus* 59.

[45] There may have been one restriction on such 'education', namely, that only the baptized would be allowed to hear Scripture read out. That is *may* have been the case is sometimes argued from Chrysostom's sermons on Christian initiation where practice of keeping certain teachings from the uninitiated (the *disciplina arcani*) is mentioned. But teaching is different from Scripture reading. Moreover, it is difficult to imagine how such a restriction would have been practically enforced. For Chrysostom's liturgical rites of Christian initiation, see John Chrysostom, '*Baptismal Homily*', trans. Edward Yarnold, S.J., in *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation: The Origins of the R.C.I.A.* (Collegeville, 2001), 150-62.

[46] *Hom. on Jo. 32*.3, NPNF 14; *John* 6:63.

John Chrysostom's Gothic Parish and the Politics of Space

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ABSTRACT

Over the last century, scholars have remained divided over the motivation behind John Chrysostom's establishment of a Gothic parish in Constantinople. Moreover, there has been some confusion over the extent of his control over the parish because of a brief remark made by Synesius. The earlier historiography asserted the orthodoxy of the parish and, as a result, dismissed Theodoret's claim that the bishop sought to win over the remaining Arian Goths. In the recent decades, Theodoret's account has been taken more seriously, even to the point of arguing that all of the Goths in Constantinople were Arian. This paper will argue that the solution – a two-pronged strategy of providing pastoral care for the Nicene Goths and converting the Arian Goths – can be found within Chrysostom's underappreciated *Homilia habita postquam presbyter Gothus* (PG 63, 499-510). It will also argue that, in addition to the strong possibility that Chrysostom utilized Nicene Gothic clergy to control the Gothic parish, Theodoret's account can be useful in discerning another means of controlling it. The mention of the bishop's frequent visits not only depicts his enthusiasm for the mission, but also can be interpreted as a means for continually exerting his personal charismatic authority. Yet, even with the force of his presence and loyal clergy, the combination of the accusation of an Arian takeover by Synesius and the strong rebuttal by Chrysostom's apologists suggests that the parish was contested, at least at some point. Therefore, since it is unlikely that Chrysostom actually made a compromise with Gaïnas, this essay will also propose two scenarios that might explain why Synesius' claim could have gained enough traction to warrant the refutation.

In the late fourth-century, John Chrysostom stood out among his fellow Nicene bishops for his sense of pastoral responsibility for the Gothic community in his city as well as beyond the borders of the Roman Empire. In particular, he is noted for assigning a church in Constantinople to the Goths, furnishing it with Gothic-speaking clergy, and preaching there occasionally with the assistance of a translator.[1] A contemporary, however, has problematized this depiction of orthodox activity. Synesius of Cyrene indicated that the parish was actually utilized by the Arian faction of the Gothic community.[2] This raises two fundamental questions.

[1] Theodoret, *Hist. eccl.* V 30-3 (*Kirchengeschichte*, 2nd ed., ed. Léon Parmentier and Felix Scheidweiler, GCS 44 [Berlin, 1954], 330-3).

[2] Synesius, *De prov.* 114D, 121A-B (*Synesii Cyrenensis opuscula*, ed. N. Terzaghi [Rome, 1944], 63-131).

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What exactly was going on in this parish? And who controlled it? Progress in sufficiently answering these questions over the past century has been slow and, more recently, it has taken a turn in the wrong direction.[3] Therefore, the aim of this essay is to revisit these crucial issues and provide new solutions that advance our understanding of Chrysostom's contested Gothic parish. First, the Gothic liturgy was employed by Chrysostom to provide pastoral care for the Nicene Goths *as well as* to win over the Arian Goths in the city. Second, the Gothic parish was, for the most part, likely controlled through a combination of Chrysostom's personal charismatic authority and his Nicene Gothic clergy. And yet, even if Synesius' claim of an Arian takeover is judged to be an embellishment by a barbarophobe, there are several possible scenarios that might have tested the strength of Chrysostom's control over the parish and, in so doing, made the accusation appear credible enough to warrant the strong rebuttals offered by Chrysostom's defenders.

At the dawn of the twentieth century, Chrysostom scholars seemed to be certain that this church was a Catholic parish for Catholic Goths based upon, as Pierre Batiffol put it, the fact that Chrysostom was preaching to them.[4] This assumption led both Chrysostomus Baur and Alexander Vasiliev to deem Theodoret to be mistaken in his claim that Chrysostom was concerned with converting the Arian Goths.[5] Midway through the century, E.A. Thompson reasserted Theodoret's account of the mission.[6] Since then most Chrysostom scholars have described the Gothic mission in similar terms.[7] The exception is the recent and unsubstantiated claim by Stanislav Doležal that all of the Goths in Constantinople were Arian and that Chrysostom sought not to convert them, but instead 'considered them to be a part of Christendom' and 'he simply looked after all of them.'[8]

It would be a mistake, however, to presume that the former strategy of providing pastoral care for the Nicene Goths and the later plan for using a Gothic liturgy to win over Arian Goths are mutually exclusive. This is evident because both of these agendas are found within Chrysostom's homily to the Goths.[9]

[3] See below.

[4] Pierre Batiffol, 'De quelques homélies de s. Jean Chrysostome et de la version gothique des écritures', *RB* 8 (1899), 566-72, 568.

[5] Chrysostomus Baur, *John Chrysostom and His Time* (Westminster, MD, 1959-1960), III 81; Alexander Vasiliev, *The Goths in the Crimea*, Monographs of the Mediaeval Academy of America 11 (Cambridge, MA, 1936), 33.

[6] E.A. Thompson, *The Visigoths in the Time of Ulfila* (Oxford, 1966), 133.

[7] See, for example, J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, *Barbarians and Bishops: Army, Church, and State in the Age of Arcadius and Chrysostom* (Oxford, 1990), 169; J.N.D. Kelly, *Golden Mouth: The Story of John Chrysostom – Ascetic, Preacher, Bishop* (Ithaca, 1995), 143; Knut Schäferdiek, 'Johannes Chrysostomos und die ulfilanische Kirchensprache', *ZKG* 117 (2006), 289-96, 289.

[8] Stanislav Doležal, 'Joannes Chrysostomos and the Goths', *Graecolatina Pragensia* 21 (2006), 165-85, 171-4.

[9] *Homilia habita postquam presbyter Gothus* (PG 63, 499-510).

On the one hand, the bishop generally praised their barbarian faith and defended their participation in the Nicene church. But, on the other hand, he included at least one anti-Arian remark and emphasized the importance of συγκατάβασις, or divine adaptability, which likely justifies his own use of a Gothic liturgy to convert the remaining Arian Goths in the city. Such a two-pronged pastoral strategy also makes sense in light of the demographics of the Goths living in Constantinople during Chrysostom's episcopate. As I have argued elsewhere, the evidence suggests that it was a sizeable population that consisted of a mix of Arian and Nicene Goths from the Danubian region as well as Nicene Goths from the Crimea.[10] The appeal, of course, for the Arian Goths would have been the convenience of worshipping in their own language within the walls of the city. And for many, this would have probably trumped their preference for a different doxology.[11] It certainly did for the Arian Ardaburs, who demonstrated a similar willingness to attend a Nicene Gothic liturgy in Constantinople just several decades later.[12] Even Chrysostom's decision to assign the Gothic liturgy to St Paul's Church may very well illustrate this two-pronged strategy. In light of his keen sense of symbolism associated with places, this choice not only provided space for his Nicene Goths to worship, but it also conceivably conveyed his hope that the Gothic liturgy might be able to rescue its Arian attendees just as the Nicene relics of St Paul the Confessor reclaimed that very building from its Arian foundations.

When Chrysostom arrived in Constantinople, he brought with him a wealth of experience in defining and controlling sacred space during his time in Antioch. But while his former city had prepared him to deal with competing Christian factions as well as the continuing attraction of its pagan institutions and a vibrant Judaism, the imperial city offered the new challenge of how to provide care for its sizeable and ethnically distinct Gothic population. Factors such as the utilization of a foreign language and the deliberate aim of winning over the heretical Goths must have increased the normal risks involved with the supervision of a church in late antique Constantinople. For example, if his plan succeeded and Arian Goths turned up in significant strength, what was the possibility that he might lose control of the parish? What could be done to prevent this from happening? Here, Theodoret provides a vital, but underappreciated clue. In light of what Wendy Mayer has convincingly demonstrated about Chrysostom's use of the medium of preaching to establish his personal charismatic authority as well as to reassert his power in the event that his audience's loyalty

[10] Jonathan Stanfill, 'Baiting the Hook: John Chrysostom's Defense of His Barbarian Mission', paper given at the 36th Annual Byzantine Studies Conference, University of Pennsylvania, October 2010.

[11] On the negligible difference of Gothic liturgies, see K. Schäferdiek, 'Johannes Chrysostomos' (2006), 290-1.

[12] Rochelle Snee, 'Gregory Nazianzen's Anastasia Church: Arianism, the Goths, and Hagiography', *DOP* 52 (1998), 157-86, 180.

has waned, Theodoret's description of Chrysostom's frequent preaching to the Goths and his use of other, presumably loyal, preachers in his absence not only conveys his enthusiasm for the endeavor, but the tremendous lengths that he took to maintain his control over this parish.[13]

Additionally, since Chrysostom could not be present at all times, it seems reasonable that he would have also depended on his Gothic clergy to enforce Nicene control of the parish. The source of these Gothic priests, deacons, and readers remains unknown, but it is certainly possible that they were a mixture of Nicene Goths who migrated to the city from the Danubian and Crimean regions and former Arian Goths who had converted. An even likelier source is the Gothic monastic community living on the former estate of Promotus and his widow Marsa. That these monks were Nicene is evidenced by their loyalty to Chrysostom during his exile, their involvement in the ecclesiastical affairs of the Nicene Goths in the Crimea, and their association with Marsa.[14] In either case, it seems as though Chrysostom would not have struggled to find loyal Goths that were capable of safeguarding this parish.

Nevertheless, when the Church of the Goths was burned during the Gaïnas crisis of 400, Synesius justified its destruction by emphasizing the 'Scythianizing beliefs' of the Goths worshipping there.[15] Even though many Chrysostom scholars have dismissed this accusation, it seems that his defenders, especially Pseudo-Martyrius, Theodoret, and Sozomen, considered it necessary to rebut the claim by overemphasizing the bishop's refusal to concede a church for Arian worship to the Gothic general Gaïnas. Of course, it is possible that Chrysostom actually agreed to some sort of compromise with the Emperor Arcadius and Gaïnas, and his apologists are merely trying to cover it up.[16] But it seems unlikely that such a strong-willed and stubborn bishop would have made such a concession. There are, however, at least two other scenarios that might explain how, at some point, Chrysostom's control of the Gothic parish might have been challenged in such a way so as to enable Synesius' accusation to gain credibility and, as a result, warrant such a defense. First of all, it could have been a similar situation to that faced by Gregory Nazianzen in July 380, when some Egyptian clerics temporarily took over the Anastasia chapel and consecrated Maximus as their new bishop.[17] Such an event, even if it were short-lived, would have likely been a public relations disaster for Chrysostom and his Gothic mission. Secondly, it is also feasible that the Arian Gothic community in Constantinople supported one or more private house churches.

[13] Wendy Mayer, 'At Constantinople, How Often Did John Chrysostom Preach? Addressing Assumptions about the Workload of a Bishop', *SacEr* 40 (2001), 83-105, 102-3.

[14] See *Epist*. 14 (= *Ad Olymp*. *Epist*. 9.5, SC 13bis); *Epist*. 206-7 (PG 52, 726).

[15] See above.

[16] J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, *Ambrose and John Chrysostom: Clerics between Desert and Empire* (Oxford, 2011), 230-1.

[17] J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, *Barbarians and Bishops* (1995), 159.

Even though these would have been outside of Chrysostom's control, his detractors could have drawn attention to them and his inability to suppress them in order to tarnish his own Gothic parish.[18]

What ultimately became of Chrysostom's Gothic parish, unfortunately, remains shrouded in speculation. It is unlikely that they were ever able to meet in St Paul's Church after its destruction during the Gaïnas' affair, but there is no further evidence of where they might have subsequently worshipped.[19] His correspondence from exile indicates that his concern for his Gothic mission persisted until the end of his own life, but we do not know when the Gothic liturgy was eventually suspended in Constantinople. The parish simply appears to vanish from the historical record. Nevertheless, with this preliminary foundation of what Chrysostom's Gothic parish looked like, we may begin to break new ground on our understanding of the intersection of ethnicity, religious identity, and pastoral care in the late fourth century.

[18] On private house churches in Constantinople, see Kim Bowes, *Private Worship, Public Values, and Religious Change in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, 2008), 103-24.

[19] Wendy Mayer, 'Les homélies de s. Jean Chrysostome en juillet 399: A Second Look at Pargoire's Sequence and the Chronology of the *Novae homiliae* (CPG 4441)', *ByzSla* 60 (1999), 273-303, 297, notes the reconstruction of fire-damaged church buildings in fourth-century Constantinople required approximately ten years.

Chrysostom's Concept of γνώμη: How '*Chosen* Life's Orientation' Undergirds Chrysostom's Strategy in Preaching

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Abstract

This paper develops recent scholarship of Australian scholar Ray Laird in Chrysostom's anthropology, and specifically his view of γνώμη.[1] First, in the light of the ascetic tradition which was so important to Chrysostom, the present author suggests that it is helpful to interpret γνώμη as 'chosen life's orientation' (rather than the bare translation 'mindset' as in Laird). Further, it is argued that Chrysostom's understanding of how γνώμη is shaped, undergirds a number of features of Chrysostom's preaching, such as his use of 'life portraits' of significant figures, and his perpetual interest in the pastoral motivations of biblical writers. The author concludes by considering the possibility of γνώμη as a foundational principle in Chrysostom's preaching method.

Until recently, studies of John Chrysostom's preaching have often focused on his apparent 'moralistic' interests and methods.[2] In any Chrysostom homily much of the last half of the homily addresses particular practical issues. In the 19th century Schaff edition of the homilies, this section is usually labelled 'Moral' and there is no doubt Chrysostom does preach with the goal of his congregation living more godly lives.

But these older accounts of Chrysostom as a moralist have been challenged in recent studies looking for a more profound method. In order to produce better behaviour, 'Goldenmouth' goes beyond 'carrots and sticks' and externals and engages his listeners' humanity at a deeper level.

The goal of this present paper is to briefly reference one important study, and then to make two very modest observations.

Senior Australian scholar Raymond Laird, completed his doctoral dissertation in 2008: *St John Chrysostom and the Γνώμη: The Critical Faculty Accountable for Sin in His Anthropology*. In Laird's view, the foundational

[1] Raymond John Laird, *St John Chrysostom and the Γνώμη: The Critical Faculty Accountable for Sin in His Anthropology* (Australian College of Theology, Th.D. Thesis, 2008).

[2] The term 'moralism' is usually pejorative and means an interest in moral behaviour without an adequate interest in the spiritual roots of moral choice. Note however that writers can use the term positively. Thus for example, Chrysostom was 'one of the greatest pastors and moralists of his time, or indeed, of the whole Church': Pak-Wah Lai, *John Chrysostom and the Hermeneutics of Exemplar Portraits* (University of Durham, PhD Thesis, 2010), 6.

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element in Chrysostom's theological anthropology is the γνώμη, which Laird translates as 'mindset'. Laird argues that for Chrysostom, each person has a mindset, which this paper will interpret later as 'chosen life's orientation'. Each person's mindset provides the trajectory for other life choices. If a preacher can engage the mindset, and so re-shape that trajectory, then excellent life choices will follow.

Here are two quotations summarising Laird's conclusions:

At the end of chapter 2 Laird says,

> If the γνώμη plays such a key role in Divine-human relationships then it must, in Chrysostom's thinking, be the citadel that needs to be taken if the person is to be taken captive by the truth. This is so: in his commentary on Paul's letter to the Galatians, Chrysostom asserts that the point of preaching and teaching is to persuade and grasp the γνώμη of the hearers. The … point is that the place where persuasion is effected is the γνώμη. If one is able to persuade the γνώμη one has taken the person captive.'[3]

At the end of chapter 4, Laird explains,

> Γνώμη, then, occupies a vital, authoritative role in the human psyche according to Chrysostom's usage of the term. It has authority over the body and its members. It has power either to resist or side with conscience. It has authority over desire, wish, and will, and determines free choice. The passions find in it their superior command. It is the locus of a person's attitudes. As the responsible cause of a person's actions, it determines their quality.[4]

Laird's work is outstanding, and all the current paper intends is to offer a small gloss to his translation of γνώμη (that is, an interpretation of it) and also to briefly outline how Laird's work offers a way of understanding Chrysostom's preaching strategy as a whole.

The current paper's first concern then is to discuss Laird's translation of γνώμη, as 'mindset' and offer an interpretation of it. Clearly the current paper cannot canvass all of Laird's arguments, but they are compelling. Nevertheless, it will be argued that 'mindset' does not quite capture the ability of human beings to revise or choose their γνώμη as Laird's own case demonstrates Chrysostom would have it, and so to choose a life-shaping orientation. The solution is to suggest a gloss: 'chosen life's orientation'. This picks up the idea of a chosen trajectory in life which determines other choices.

Mindset – which is Ray Laird's translation – is a relatively recent English word. The 1989 Second edition of the 20 Volume *Oxford English Dictionary* offers its earliest example of the use of mindset in 1934 and defines it as 'habit of mind formed by previous events or earlier environment which affect a person's attitude'.[5]

[3] R.J. Laird, *St John Chrysostom and the Γνώμη* (2008), 57.

[4] *Ibid*. 90f.

[5] 'Mindset', in J.A. Simpson and E.S.C. Weiner (eds), *The Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford, 1989), IX 800.

This definition attributes the origin of 'mindset' to events and environment, but not explicitly to personal choice. Is that an adequate rendering of γνώμη in Chrysostom? In the thought world of Chrysostom, where Christian thinkers were doing battle with deterministic theologies of fate or fortune, this is an important question.[6]

Laird himself offers a rich variety of materials from Chrysostom which support this 'chosen' quality to γνώμη. The current paper simply argues that Laird's final translation 'mindset' does not do justice to this quality of γνώμη which Laird's own work demonstrates.[7]

What is needed is a gloss to Laird's translation. We need to interpret γνώμη as '*chosen* life's orientation'.[8] Chrysostom was in no doubt, and those who read him should be in no doubt, that γνώμη is well capable of self-correction. Some brief evidence for this will follow. However we should also note Chrysostom's own ascetic experiences in his monastic period, and his ongoing ascetic commitments.

Laird dismisses the influence of 'the ascetic years'.[9] He notes that the wilderness years were largely spent memorising the Christian Scriptures, but then observes that γνώμη is only a minor New Testament term. The implication is that Chrysostom would not have re-considered the meaning of γνώμη while he was in the wilderness. Laird also makes a case for the origin of Chrysostom's anthropology in John's rhetorical education, and notes that Chrysostom had completed this formal 'Greek' education before he even embraced monastic Christianity.[10]

In tension with these points, it can be argued that Chrysostom's expression of Christianity was profoundly shaped by the wilderness years. It was not about whether Chrysostom revised the meaning of one word, but whether he revised his approach to life. Beginning with the wilderness years, Chrysostom was clearly an ascetic, and his whole Christian life testified to his belief in self-discipline, self-responsibility, and the possibilities of self-orientation. Of course, we should add that for Chrysostom this is in synergistic co-operation with divine grace.[11]

[6] On Chrysostom's explicit rejection of pagan ideas of 'nativity' [Γένεσις] and 'fate' [Εἱμαρμένη] see for example Homily 1 on 1*Timothy*: John Chrysostom, *Homilies on the Epistles of St Paul the Apostle to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. James Tweed, vol. XIII, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church (Grand Rapids, 1848), 411.

[7] For one example of Laird's acknowledgement of the power on γνώμη of choice: he calls γνώμη a '*deliberated* set orientation of the being', R.J. Laird, *Chrysostom and the Γνώμη* (2008), 36. For another example: 'the mastery of [γνώμη] is completely our own': *ibid.* 138.

[8] Lampe translates γνώμη as having 'many meanings' being: 'mind', 'opinion', 'view, doctrine'; 'will'; and 'decision or judgment': G.W.H. Lampe and Henry George Liddell, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford; New York, 1961), 317f.

[9] R.J. Laird, *Chrysostom and the Γνώμη* (2008), 148.

[10] *Ibid.*

[11] On Chrysostom's vision of the relation between faith and προαίρεσις as reflecting 'a fundamental synergism' and 'a contribution human beings make to salvation itself': Christopher A. Hall, 'John Chrysostom', in Jeffrey P. Greenman and Timothy Larsen (eds), *Reading Romans through*

We will now consider two or three examples of Chrysostom's use of γνώμη which demonstrate the inadequacy of 'mindset' on its own, as a translation. Our interpretation of γνώμη needs to make clear Chrysostom's commitment to a role for a measure of self-determination. It can be surmised that this is partly a rejection of the pagan world's theology of fortune or fate: deterministic views about human potential and freedom. This determinism was also partly shared by Chrysostom's teacher Libanius.[12]

Here now is a brief sample of the evidence. In Homily 76 on *Matthew*, Chrysostom gives teaching from the apocalyptic section in *Matthew* 24. He talks about the suffering of the last days, and how it is inevitable in this coming judgment that human beings will suffer loss and death. So if these things are inevitable,

the Centuries: From the Early Church to Karl Barth (Grand Rapids, Mich., 2005), 50. In the current author's own Presbyterian tradition, Chrysostom's strong emphasis on self-determination is what Calvin critiques as 'being unrestrained in asserting human free will' ('*in praedicando hominis libero arbitrio … immodicus*'), but Calvin graciously defends him as having a pastoral concern to repudiate 'some individuals who used to prattle about fate' ('*erant et nonnulli qui de fato garriebant*'): Ian Hazlett, 'Calvin's Latin Preface to His Proposed French Edition of Chrysostom's Homilies: Translation and Commentary', in *Humanism and Reform* (Oxford, 1991), 146, 149; Ioannes Calvin, 'Praefatio in Chrysostomi Homilias', in *Ioannis Calvini Opera Quae Supersunt Omnia*, ed. Guilielmus Baum, Eduardus Cunitz and Eduardus Reuss (Brunsvigae, 1863), IX 835f. This focus on choice also resonates with recent research into Chrysostom's philosophy of education. Students need habituation, and developing good habits is a pastoral process. At each point his listeners need to actually 'give heed' so as to progress in this. Danassis: 'As educational resources, we can in Chrysostom distinguish the following: 1. Habituation. Chrysostom considered the force of habit to be very effective' ('Als pädagogische Mittel können wir bei Chrys. folgende unterscheiden, 1. Die Gewöhnung. Die Kraft der Gewöhnung betrachtet Chrys. als sehr wirksam'): Antonios Danassis, *Johannes Chrysostomos: Pädagogisch-Psychologische Ideen in Seinem Werk* (Bonn, 1971), 230f. On Chrysostom's appeals to 'attend to his words', R.J. Laird, *Chrysostom and the Γνώμη* (2008), 143. For Chrysostom, the diligence of ἄσκησις offers a natural antidote to the ῥᾳθύμια or 'heedlessness' which is involved in sin: John Chrysostom, *The Homilies of St John Chrysostom on the Epistle of St Paul the Apostle to the Romans*, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. J.B. Morris, W.H. Simcox, and George B. Stevens, A Select Library of the Christian Church: Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers (Peabody, 1994), 427; Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Epistulam Ad Romanos* (PG 60, 507). On the relation between ἄσκησις and ῥᾳθύμια see P.-W. Lai, *Exemplar Portraits* (2010), 189-93.

[12] Libanius in part frames this as a discussion of the relative importance of nature and nurture. Cribiore portrays him as virtually holding to nature determinism. On this basis he acquits himself of responsibility for students who lack talent for him to develop: Raffaella Cribiore, *The School of Libanius in Late Antique Antioch* (Princeton, 2007), 129f., 33. On the relationship of John with Libanius: Jorit Wintjes, *Das Leben des Libanius*, ed. Wolfgang Altgeld *et al*., vol. 2, Historische Studien der Universität Würzburg (Rahden, 2005), 177-90. On the tendency of the Fathers to react against the 'deep-seated fatalism prevalent in many aspects of Hellenistic religion', see John Anthony McGuckin, 'Will', in *The Westminster Handbook to Patristic Theology* (Louisville, 2004), 363f. Note though, Nussbaum's account of potential human freedom in three ancient 'therapeutic' philosophical schools of 'Hellenism'. 'These philosophers claim that the pursuit of logical validity, intellectual coherence, and truth delivers freedom from the tyranny of custom and convention, creating a community of beings who can take charge of their own life story and their own thought': Martha C. Nussbaum, *The Therapy of Desire: Theory and Practice in Hellenistic Ethics*, Martin Classical Lectures (Princeton, 1994), 5.

why not choose to give them up now to Christ, and gain eternal blessing and security in the process? There is nothing to lose which was not going to be lost in any event, and there is so much to gain! A key sentence reads: 'He wills you to do these things by choice [τῇ γνώμῃ], which also you must do by necessity [ἀνάγκῃ].'[13] In this our preacher contrasts γνώμη 'choice' with ἀνάγκη 'necessity'. Certainly this is consistent with Laird's thesis that γνώμη is 'the responsible cause of a person's actions', but it is a 'cause' which prominently involves personal choice. In Homily 43 on *Matthew*, Chrysostom offers another intriguing expression which suggests the significance of choice in γνώμη. In this sermon on *Matthew* chapter 12, Chrysostom interprets Jesus' condemnation of the Scribes and Pharisees, (and contemporary evil doers) as unbelievers 'seeking signs'. He then addresses contemporary sign seekers and makes this telling remark: 'Where now are those that seek signs? Let them hear that a considerate mind is needed… [γνώμης χρεία εὐγνώμονος…]'[14] The expression translated in Schaff as 'considerate mind' goes close to a tautology. As Laird describes it, Chrysostom insists that listeners have a 'well-*gnomed* γνώμη'.[15] But what is this 'gnoming' that is done well? Is it merely 'considerateness' (as in Schaff) or 'a well-disposed mindset, a right-minded, candid, honest γνώμη' (as in Laird)?[16] Liddell and Scott also offer 'wise, prudent, thoughtful'.[17] Lampe adds 'reasonable'.[18] Such talk of wisdom, prudence, thought and reason all suggest careful pondering by the person involved. It is the 'setting' of this mind (to echo Laird), that is done well, and this is done by the mind itself.

Consistent with this idea of personal thought and choice, are the exhortations that follow. Our preacher encourages his listeners not to 'bring on themselves' calamities, or to 'cleave' to former wickedness. A well gnomed γνώμη is more than just considerate or honest. A well gnomed γνώμη consists in wise choices.[19] It chooses actions, and these particular listeners choose well. Whereas Laird's translation 'mindset' is acceptable, a gloss – such as '*chosen* life's orientation' – is needed to do better justice to Chrysostom's affirmation of choice.

A brief paper offers little opportunity for a comprehensive study, but the shape of Chrysostom's life and thought over all suggests that 'chosen life's

[13] John Chrysostom, *Homilies on the Gospel of Saint Matthew*, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. George Prevost, 1994 ed., vol. X, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church (Peabody, 1843-1851; reprint, 1994), 76.4; Iohannes Chrysostomus, *Homiliae in Matthaeum* (PG 58, 699). G.W.H. Lampe and H.G. Liddell, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (1961), 317.

[14] Chrysostom, *Homilies on Matthew* 43.4. Schaff's edition has 'a considerate mind': Chrysostom, *Homilies on Matthew* 276; Iohannes Chrysostomus, *Homiliae in Matthaeum* (PG 57, 461.10).

[15] R.J. Laird, *Chrysostom and the Γνώμη* (2008), 35.

[16] *Ibid*.

[17] Henry George Liddell *et al*., *A Greek-English Lexicon*, Rev. and augm. throughout / ed. (Oxford, 1996).

[18] G.W.H. Lampe and H. G. Liddell, 'Γνώμη', in *A Patristic Greek lexicon* (1961), 561.

[19] Examples are offered of those who 'brought on themselves ten thousand calamities' and of we who 'again cleave unto the same wickedness': Chrysostom, *Homilies on Matthew* 276.

orientation' is required in order to do justice to the element of choice involved in his anthropology, and to the foundational quality of this choice. It is a choice which sets a direction and agenda for everything else. It is not just a mindset, but an overall 'orientation'. In what Laird considers a hendiadys, Chrysostom even refers to ἡ γνώμη as ὁ τῆς ψυχῆς τρόπος – 'the way of the soul'.[20] It is in fact a life orientation or trajectory!

This brief paper's second ambition is to note that the 'life orientation' given by γνώμη makes sense of a number of features of Chrysostom's preaching, such as his use of 'exemplar portraits' of significant figures.[21] It also accounts for Chrysostom's perpetual interest in the pastoral motivations of biblical writers which is why Chrysostom is such a wonderful exegete and why 16th century readers like John Calvin thought so highly of Chrysostom's exegesis.[22] In essence, Chrysostom believes that the γνώμη of one person, is influenced and even transformed by being exposed to another person's firmly held and clearly articulated γνώμη.[23] If you like, what really matters to one person, the trajectory of one person, as it is made explicit, has a power of influence and transformation over what matters to another, their trajectory. Our big passions in life or chosen life's orientations are infectious.[24]

First, in Laird's thesis, note the importance for Chrysostom of wrestling with not only the γνώμη (mindset) of a biblical writer but, in order to exegete that, to search for their διάνοια (intention) and σκοπός (aim). Thus Chrysostom states in his commentary on *Galatians* 1

> This then let us do; for it is not the right course to weigh the mere words, nor examine the language by itself, as many errors will be the consequence, but to attend to the intention of the writer [τῇ διανοίᾳ … τοῦ γράφοντος.] And unless we pursue this method in our own discourses, and examine into the mind of the speaker [τὴν γνώμην

[20] R.J. Laird, *Chrysostom and the Γνώμη* (2008), 32; Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum LXII* 34.46.

[21] P.-W. Lai, *Exemplar Portraits* (2010); Margaret M. Mitchell, *The Heavenly Trumpet: John Chrysostom and the Art of Pauline Interpretation* (Louisville, 2002).

[22] For a brief discussion of this, see Peter Moore, 'Plain Talk with a Gilt Edge: An Exploration of the Relation between "Plain" Biblical Exposition and Persuasion in Chrysostom and Calvin', *Westminster Theological Journal* 73 (2011), 157-72.

[23] Chrysostom's cultural assumptions about the power of exemplar portraits are in part related to the context of Greco-Roman παιδεία as expressed in late Antiquity: P.-W. Lai, *Exemplar Portraits* (2010), 69.

[24] A critical transformative moment for γνώμη is conversion: R.J. Laird, *Chrysostom and the Γνώμη* (2008), 140. Arguably we could explain this as the gospel exposing a faulty γνώμη to the 'life's orientation' of God himself. To put it another way, the sacrificial love of God in the gospel overwhelms the sinner at his conversion and reorients his γνώμη. Similarly, the power of the 'blood of Christ' in Chrysostom's thought comes from its demonstration of Christ's γνώμη reapplied to communicants time after time. In his discussion of this, Laird translates the phrase Τὸ τίμιον αἷμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ as 'the precious blood of Christ': R.J. Laird, *Chrysostom and the Γνώμη* (2008), 141. Perhaps we could render it better 'the *costly* blood of Christ'. The transformative power of the Lord's Supper liturgy is that it is repeated evidence of the sacrificial love of Christ. It gains its power through the display of Christ's γνώμη.

… τοῦ λέγοντος] we shall make many enemies, and everything will be thrown into disorder…[25]

And a little later,

Unless we attend to this rule, we shall not be able to discriminate in these matters…, that is, if we go about to scrutinize the bare facts, without taking into account the intention of the agents [τὴν τῶν ποιούντων γνώμην]. Let us then inquire into the intention of Paul [τοῦ Παύλου τὴν διάνοιαν] in thus writing, let us consider his scope [αὐτοῦ τὸν σκοπόν], and general deportment towards the Apostles, that we may arrive at his present meaning [ἐκ ποίας ἐλέγετο γνώμης].[26]

Sound exegesis of Paul involves considering the intention, goals, and even γνώμη of the apostle.[27] And it seems that this is a general theme in Chrysostom's exegesis. He is always asking: why did the apostle say this, why did the Lord Jesus say this, why did God say this? He consistently interprets any sentence and any paragraph in the light of the overall goals of the words, and of their author. That is just grammatico-historical exegesis and it is wonderfully done.

Add to this a second point. For Chrysostom, teaching is all about shaping the students according to the teacher's own γνώμη, passing on that γνώμη. Laird demonstrates in Chrysostom that teachers strive to pass on their values, because that is their orientation, that is what they give the greatest importance.[28] In Homily 4 on 1*Thessalonians*, Chrysostom explains that there is nothing else that concerns a teacher (οὐδὲν ἂν ἅψαιτο λοιπόν) than that his disciples are proceeding according to the teacher's own chosen life's orientation (κατὰ γνώμην αὐτῷ προχωρῇ).[29]

Thirdly, Chrysostom believes that the teacher's γνώμη, their chosen life's orientation, is grasped by the students not just through passing on precepts but

[25] Commentary on Chapter 1 of *Galatians*: John Chrysostom, *Homilies on the Epistle of St Paul the Apostle to the Galatians and Ephesians*, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. Gross Alexander, vol. XIII, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church (Grand Rapids, 1848), 11; Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Epistolam Ad Galatas Commentarius* (PG 66, 629.14).

[26] Commentary on Chapter 1 of *Galatians*: Chrysostom, *Homilies on Gal and Eph*, 11; Chrysostomus, *Galatas*, 629.20-5.

[27] In similar vein, 'we must not take what is here said literally [τὼν λεγομένων], but get acquainted with the spirit and object [τὴν γνώμην καὶ τὸν σκοπόν] of the speaker, and what he aimed to compass. Which thing I ever entreat [ἀεὶ παρακαλῶ] of your love.' Chrysostomus, *Romanos*, 583; Chrysostom, *Romans*, 488.

[28] R.J. Laird, *Chrysostom and the Γνώμη* (2008), 126-7.

[29] Homily 4 from 1*Thessalonians*: John Chrysostom, *Homilies on the Epistles of St Paul the Apostle to the Philippians, Colossians and Thessalonians*, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. John A Broadus, vol. XIII, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church (Grand Rapids, 1848), 340; Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Epistolam Primam Ad Thessalonicenses Commentarius* (PG 62, 418.31). Chrysostom's use of the spatial term προχωρέω (to go forward, proceed, advance) again affirms the propriety of the spatial metaphor 'orientation' in the gloss 'chosen life's orientation'.

through the shape of the teacher's own life.[30] In his *Galatians* commentary Chrysostom exegetes Paul's talk of apostolic wounds as evidence of the apostolic γνώμη: 'If anyone desires … to thoroughly learn my sentiments' (τὴν γνώμην μου καταμαθεῖν) – or better, chosen life's orientation – 'let him consider my wounds [βλεπέτω τὰ τραύματα], which afford a stronger proof than these words and letters.'[31] So compelling can be a clearly articulated and firmly held γνώμη that it can win over opponents and other observers who come to adopt the same γνώμη.

All this explains Chrysostom's interest in the 'intention' of the apostolic authors, the supremely loving intentions of the sacrifice of Christ, and generally his use of life portraits in preaching. Chrysostom believes that the chosen life's orientations embodied in Christ's sacrifice, Scripture, and the lives of biblical characters and saints, portrayed to his congregation through preaching, have a transformative power upon their chosen life's orientations and will lead not to surface change but re-orientation at a profound level.[32] If all this be so, Chrysostom's examples of, and appeals for, excellent personal choices are not merely moralism, but vital elements in preaching for the thorough transformation of his listeners. His whole preaching strategy is calculated to achieve this.[33]

[30] In Greco-Roman educational theory or παιδεία, the community or πολιτεία passes on its values to succeeding generations, in part through particularly meaningful stories comprised within the community's literary canon. This too, is suggestive of the power of narratives in Chrysostom. Also relevant to this, Lai has shown that Chrysostom portrays the πολιτεία – here meaning 'way of life' – of the angels as something which is experienced by human beings on earth in the church, and in particular in ascetic life styles: P.-W. Lai, *Exemplar Portraits* (2010), 65-7. This also suggests that as a teacher seeks to reproduce the angelic life in the church, there will be power in the heavenly values expressed not only in exemplar story telling, but in the teacher's own 'way of life'.

[31] Chrysostom, *Homilies on Gal and Eph* 47; Chrysostomus, *Galatas* 61, 380.30-5; R.J. Laird, *Chrysostom and the Γνώμη* (2008), 127. See also Matthew Homily 15: 'our actions will persuade them sooner than any discourse' [πρὸ λόγου παντὸς τοῖς ἔργοις ἡμῶν πεισθήσονται]: Chrysostom, *Homilies on Matthew* 99; Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum LVII* 235.4f.

[32] Laird offers an extended treatment of the 'Instruments of Change' and lists them in particular as 'the precious blood of Christ, the divine Scriptures, and almsgiving': R.J. Laird, *Chrysostom and the Γνώμη* (2008), 141. Although Laird only seems to identify preaching with the second of this 'triumvirate' – Scripture – preaching implicitly relates to all three modes. It is in preaching Christ's sacrifice, coupled with participation in the Eucharist (and Chrysostom also connects the two by frequently preaching on the Eucharist) that the blood of Christ is understood, experienced and appropriated. It is in preaching that the Scripture is heard, understood and appropriated. And it is in almsgiving (which seems to be Chrysostom's favourite 'preaching application') that preached principle is most readily experienced as self denying choice. On preaching Scripture, see R.J. Laird, *Chrysostom and the Γνώμη* (2008), 142.

[33] On the importance of γνώμη in Chrysostom's strategy: R.J. Laird, *Chrysostom and the Γνώμη* (2008), 245.

John Chrysostom's Advice to Slaveholders

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Abstract

This study aims to look at the nature of Chrysostom's advice to slaveholders and asks what the implications could be for the everyday life of these slaveholders. It is evident that Chrysostom's vision of the ideal Christian slaveholder had systemic implications; a new facade of violent domination, which would affect drastic changes in the foundations and dynamics of the everyday life of slaves and slaveholders. Chrysostom's advice to slaveholders implies three important discursive shifts in emphasis, from: a) strategic slaveholding to tactical slaveholding; b) public displays of punishment to a private, domesticated disciplinary programme of reform; and c) status-based manumission to manumission based on psycho-theological reform. Notwithstanding these discursive shifts, it would be difficult if not impossible, even for Chrysostom, to escape the classical *habitus* of Roman slaveholding: large-scale slaveholding was still very common; public displays of violence against slaves were still prevalent and sometimes encouraged; and status was still a deciding factor in manumission.

1. Framing Chrysostomic thought on slaveholding

In his extensive study on slavery in the late Roman world, Kyle Harper quotes John Chrysostom as 'an unparalleled source for the realities of Roman slavery'.[1] But Chrysostom's comments on slavery function within complex socio-economic milieux. The transformation of the classical model of civic euergetism to an economic model polarizing rich and poor, as proposed by Veyne,[2] Patlagean,[3] and Brown,[4] has become an attractive sociological trajectory for understanding the late ancient economy. It has prompted numerous investigations into how 'the poor' are constructed by Christian advocates of almsgiving and other quasi-humanitarian practices.[5] It is also within this context that

[1] Kyle Harper, *Slavery in the Late Roman World A.D. 275-425* (Cambridge, 2011), 205.

[2] Paul Veyne, *Le pain et le cirque: Sociologie historique d'un pluralisme politique* (Paris, 1976).

[3] Évelyne Patlagean, *Pauvreté économique et pauvreté sociale à Byzance: 4e-7e siècles* (Paris, 1977).

[4] Peter Brown, *Poverty and Leadership in the Later Roman Empire* (London, 2002).

[5] To mention but a few: Michael J. DeVinne, *The Advocacy of Empty Bellies: Episcopal Representation of the Poor in the Late Roman Empire* (Palo Alto, 1995); Susan R. Holman, *The Hungry Are Dying: Beggars and Bishops in Roman Cappadocia* (Oxford, 2001); Richard Finn,

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Chrysostom's advice to slaveholders should be read, since he included slaves in the wealth that ultimately corrupts the soul.[6] His admonitions to the slaveholders can be classified as principles of property management, which in this case, has an ascetic edge to it.[7] Furthermore, Roman slavery was still in its heyday during Chrysostom's lifetime. The Weberian and Marxist hypotheses of late ancient slavery as a slow decline into medieval serfdom may have received its final death knell from Wickham[8] and Harper.[9] Finally, the 'amelioration' hypothesis often found in Chrysostomic studies on slavery[10] 'has quietly faded from respectability'.[11] Like most late ancient authors, Chrysostom was still very much entrenched in the *habitus* that was the Roman slaveholding culture, and considered it part and parcel of society.[12] An important three-way social intersection is therefore present: a) the shift to an economic model of community; b) an active and potent Roman slave society; and c) Chrysostom's acceptance of slavery as a social institution. It is then from this intersection that Chrysostom's advice to slaveholders should be framed – and from this point we can hopefully push the boundaries of understanding slavery in Chrysostom, and in late ancient Christianity in general.

This study aims to look at the nature of Chrysostom's advice to slaveholders and asks what the implications could be for their everyday life.[13] For the sake

'Portraying the Poor: Descriptions of Poverty in Christian Texts from the Late Roman Empire', in Margaret Atkins and Robin Osborne (eds), *Poverty in the Roman World* (Cambridge, 2006), 130-44; Wendy Mayer, 'Poverty and Society in the World of John Chrysostom', in William Bowden, Adam Gutteridge and Carlos Machado (eds), *Social and Political Life in Late Antiquity*, Late Antique Archaeology 3 (Leiden, 2006), 465-86; Wendy Mayer, 'Poverty and Generosity Toward the Poor in the Time of John Chrysostom', in Susan R. Holman (ed.), *Wealth and Poverty in Early Church and Society* (Grand Rapids, 2008), 140-58; Silke Sitzler, 'Identity: The Indigent and the Wealthy in the Homilies of John Chrysostom', *VC* 63 (2009), 468-79; John H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, *Ambrose and John Chrysostom: Clerics Between Desert and Empire* (Oxford, 2011), 74-6.

[6] Chris L. de Wet, 'John Chrysostom on Slavery', *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* 34 (2008), 1-13; K. Harper, *Slavery in the Late Roman World* (2011), 211-2, 474.

[7] For discussions on Chrysostom and the popularisation of ascetic spirituality, see Peter Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (New York, 1988), 305-22; Blake Leyerle, *Theatrical Shows and Ascetic Lives: John Chrysostom's Attack on Spiritual Marriage* (Berkeley, 2001).

[8] Chris Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages: Europe and the Mediterranean, 400-800* (Oxford, 2005), 154-72.

[9] K. Harper, *Slavery in the Late Roman World* (2011), 497-509.

[10] For instance: Wulf Jaeger, *Die Sklaverei bei Johannes Chrysostomus* (Ph.D. Diss., University of Kiel, 1974); Georg Kontoulis, *Zum Problem der Sklaverei (ΔΟΥΛΕΙΑ) bei den Kappadokischen Kirchenvätern und Johannes Chrysostomus* (Bonn, 1993).

[11] K. Harper, *Slavery in the Late Roman World* (2011), 210.

[12] As demonstrated by Jennifer Glancy, *Corporal Knowledge: Early Christian Bodies* (Oxford, 2010), 48-80; see also Bernadette J. Brooten, 'Introduction', in *ead.* (ed.), *Beyond Slavery: Overcoming Its Religious and Sexual Legacies* (New York, 2010), 1-32.

[13] This study is very much dependant on the methodology of Michel De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, Steven Rendall (trans.) (Berkeley, 1984). For an excellent general discussion of

of brevity, it does not aim to list and discuss all instances of guidance to slaveholders, but rather samples and examines some 'textual milestones' that are representative markers of Chrysostomian thought on slaveholding.

2. From strategic to tactical slaveholding

The Christianization of everyday life should not only be seen as a process of habitualisation.[14] Before habitualisation takes place, several discursive shifts are made in service of constructing an alternate symbolic reality, serving as the backdrop of habitualisation. For this discussion, I propose that the key rhetorical move made by Chrysostom is his radical reduction of the number of slaves to be owned. The *locus classicus* reads:

> … one master need only employ one servant; or rather two or three masters one slave … We will allow you to keep a second servant. But if you collect many, you do it not for humanity's sake, but in self-indulgence … When you have purchased them and taught them trades whereby to support themselves, let them go free.[15]

By reducing the number of slaves, the honour-status and power of the owner is also reduced. Harper states: 'Slaves not only constituted and created honourable wealth, they were visible wealth'.[16] This is evident since it does not only imply a reduction in wealth, but it also limits the channels of mastery, which was the keystone in the formation of masculinity.[17] Having only one or two slaves, for the bourgeois slaveholders in Chrysostom's audience, would be very close to resembling a life of poverty and shame. This resemblance of weakness and shame in a society where honour was constantly under close surveillance[18] could cause great anxiety to the slaveholder. Following De Certeau,[19] I now turn to an unlikely source, namely the military theorist Carl von Clausewitz.[20] De Certeau brilliantly utilizes Von Clausewitz to illustrate the transition of

slavery and everyday (material) life, see Page DuBois, *Slaves and Other Objects* (Chicago, 2008), 35-58.

[14] For the importance of habits and the Christianization of daily life, see Jaclyn L. Maxwell, *Christianization and Communication in Late Antiquity: John Chrysostom and His Congregation in Antioch* (Cambridge, 2006), 144-68.

[15] Chrysostom, *Hom. 1Cor.* 40.5 (PG 61, 353-4); see also *Hom. Eph.* 22.2 (PG 62, 157).

[16] K. Harper, *Slavery in the Late Roman World* (2011), 33; see also Ramsey MacMullen, 'Late Roman Slavery', *Historia* 36 (1987), 359-82; Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (London, 1982), 77-103.

[17] Jennifer A. Glancy, *Slavery in Early Christianity* (Minneapolis, 2006), 25-9; K. Harper, *Slavery in the Late Roman World* (2011), 326-48.

[18] Kate Cooper, 'Closely-Watched Households: Visibility, Exposure and Private Power in the Roman *Domus*', *Past & Present* 197 (2007), 3-33.

[19] M. De Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life* (1984), 37-9.

[20] Carl P.G. von Clausewitz, *De la Guerre*, Pierre Naville (trans.) (Paris, 1955).

strategy into tactics: 'Power is bound by its very visibility,'[21] that is, its representation. In military terms, the more one's forces (or resources) are visibly reduced, 'the more the strategy is transformed into tactics.'[22] Tactics, in contrast to strategy, utilizes temporal rather than spatial requirements.[23] Thus, the slaveholders must now utilize their 'one or two' slaves in a tactical manner, and according to Chrysostom, only for necessity (ἀνάγκη). The term 'necessity' should be understood as those servile actions that would be deemed shameful for free persons to perform, mostly, but not exclusively, relating to sewage and other hygienic services. Priests are allowed to have a slave so that he would not have to perform 'shameful' deeds.[24] Chrysostom vehemently addresses those wealthy slaveholders who ludicrously employ 'herds' of slaves for every type of material and social spatiality – be it at the baths, market, foot of the bed or kitchen (*i.e.* strategic slaveholding).[25] By reducing the number of slaves owned, the wealthy and powerful now become weak by ancient standards. The practice of slaveholding in everyday life is now tactical, based on the optimum and clever utilization of time rather than space. This rhetorical move to a *tactical* 'polemology of the weak'[26] could be bad news for the remaining slaves, who would now be spread very thin in terms of servile responsibility, and mostly performing 'shameful' tasks.

3. Between domination and reformation

Since the very rhythm of everyday life has now shifted from spatial to temporal intensification in this rhetorical *coup d'état*, the visible technologies of domination also need to be adjusted. Chrysostom states: 'To teach or chasten foolish slaves is a great honour, and not a simple praise, when one is able to expel wickedness using private violence [… διὰ τῆς οἰκείας σφοδρότητος…] against those who are the most evil.'[27] The violence of domination is now removed from the public eye and 'domesticated'. The typical slaveholding rhetoric of the morally corrupt slave is commonly used by Chrysostom. Since slaves are a 'troublesome, audacious, impudent, incorrigible race'[28] that requires

[21] M. De Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life* (1984), 37.
[22] *Ibid*. 37.
[23] C.P.G. von Clausewitz, *De la Guerre* (1955), 212-3.
[24] Chrysostom, *Hom. Phil*. 9.4 (PG 62, 251).
[25] Chrysostom, *Hom. Matt*. 12.5 (PG 57, 207); *Hom. Jo*. 79.3 (PG 59, 436); *Hom. Rom*. 4.4 (PG 60, 494), 21.3 (PG 60, 606); *Hom. Eph*. 12.2 (PG 62, 92); *Hom. 1Tim*. 14.3 (PG 62, 575).
[26] M. De Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life* (1984), 39.
[27] Chrysostom, *Hab. Eun. Spir*. 3.7 (PG 51, 287); see K. Harper, *Slavery in the Late Roman World* (2011), 331.
[28] Chrysostom, *Hom. Eph*. 15.2 (PG 62, 109).

punishment and correction, the *domus* also becomes a 'reformatory'.[29] This was also evident in Chrysostom's remark that slaves should be educated (I would prefer, 'rehabilitated') before they are manumitted.[30] The preacher advises again: 'Have you purchased, have you bought your slave? Before all things enjoin him what God would have him do, to be gentle towards his fellow-slaves, and to make much account of virtue'.[31] Domination and violence through fear is still present,[32] but as quiet coercion.[33] Domination shifts from public spectacle to the private domestic reformatory (which was still the object of much surveillance[34]), with a new disciplinary impetus.[35] In the more general context of asceticism, signs are replaced by exercises,[36] such as the study of scripture, singing of hymns,[37] and of course, service to the master.

These insights may help us to understand something more about manumission, beyond its legal and socio-economic dimensions. Chrysostom teaches slaveholders that slavery is the result of sin,[38] which places the human being in a state of captivity. He views slavery as a state of delinquency,[39] hence the strictly regulated carceral system.[40] The hamartiological roots of slavery accorded

[29] This section is especially based on Michel Foucault's views of discipline and punishment: Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, Alan Sheridan (trans.) (New York, 1977), 104-34.

[30] Chrysostom, *Hom. 1Cor*. 40.5 (PG 61, 353-4).

[31] Chrysostom, *Hom. Eph*. 22.2 (PG 62, 158).

[32] Chrysostom, *Hom. Eph*. 20.3 (PG 62, 142), 22.1-2 (PG 62, 156-7); *Hom. Heb*. 4.6 (PG 63, 41); *Esur. Inim*. 3 (PG 51, 176). Domination through fear of hell is also present; see: *Hom. Tit*. 4.3 (PG 62, 685).

[33] The notion of quiet coercion is not alien to ancient thoughts on mastery, and Chrysostom's advice is firmly positioned in the ancient concept of *auctoritas*, which carries a nuance of 'influence' rather than excessive violence (see: *Hom. Col*. 12.1 [PG 62, 383]). Chrysostom states that it is not honourable for the *mater familias* to be mad with rage and to publicly attack her slaves (For a discussion of *auctoritas* see J. Albert Harrill, *Slaves in the New Testament: Literary, Social and Moral Dimensions* [Minneapolis, 2006], 22-30).

[34] Chrysostom, *Hom. 1Cor*. 36.5 (PG 61, 313); *Hom. 1Tim*. 11.1 (PG 62, 553).

[35] Chrysostom understood that physical violence was still very necessary at times; see: *Hom. Matt*. 80.4 (PG 58, 722); *Hom. Act. Apost*. 15.4 (PG 60, 126); *Hom 1Cor*. 14.1 (PG 61, 115); *Hom. Eph*. 16.1 (PG 62, 112); *Compunct. Stel*. 2.4 (PG 47, 417); *Oppug*. 3.3 (PG 47, 352); see also K. Harper, *Slavery in the Late Roman World* (2011), 229-30.

[36] M. Foucault, *Birth of the Prison* (1977), 128.

[37] Chrysostom states that masters should compel slaves to spiritual exercises even if they are unwilling (*Esur. Inim* 3 [PG 51, 176]).

[38] Chrysostom, *Hom. 1Cor*. 19.6 (PG 61, 157); see also Chris L. de Wet, 'Sin as Slavery and/or Slavery as Sin? On the Relationship Between Slavery and Christian Hamartiology in Late Ancient Christianity', *Religion & Theology* 17 (2010), 26-39; Jennifer Glancy, 'Slavery and the Rise of Christianity', in Keith Bradley and Paul Cartledge (eds), *The Ancient Mediterranean World*, The Cambridge World History of Slavery 1 (Cambridge, 2011), 456-81.

[39] Chrysostom, *Hom. Eph*. 15.2 (PG 62, 109).

[40] For a general discussion on carcerality in literary texts, see Monika Fludernik, 'The Metaphorics and Metonymics of Carcerality: Reflections on Imprisonment as Source and Target Domain in Literary Texts', *English Studies* 86 (2005), 226-44.

by authors like Chrysostom highlights the carcerality of slavery, and for Chrysostom, manumission is more concerned with 'rehabilitation' than mere freedom. The emphasis is now, ideally, not on status (although it was still a strong factor), but on psycho-theological reform. True 'freedom' after all, Chrysostom would say, is freedom from sin. In Foucaultian terms, this transforms the slave into the ultimate *délinquant* (rather than a mere *prisonnier*), who should be reformed and reshaped, and the slaveholder into the disciplinarian in service of fashioning docile bodies.[41] The everyday life of the slave is now governed by a new type of surveillance, not only to assure that labour is performed (in the most tactical way possible), but also to monitor rehabilitation. The panoptic gaze of the slaveholder and his surrogates (*e.g.* the *mater familias*, other higher ranking slaves) monitor and observe normality and delinquency, and apply corrective measures accordingly.[42] The concept of mastery is therefore also amended. Unfortunately for the slave, rehabilitation does not necessarily assume manumission. The state burdened the church with overseeing manumission, in essence an issue of the courts and state, and a bishop like Chrysostom, who was now also a quasi-magistrate, could re-imagine manumission as achieving a state of 'normality' and economic stability as a deterrent to poverty.[43] Hence the principle that the slave should not be manumitted before she/he has obtained both virtue *and* a trade. This is why the ceremony of *manumissio in ecclesia* was so different to secular manumission.[44] It was a statement that the church was implementing a new programme of Christian reform.

4. Discursive shifts in Chrysostomic thought on slaveholding

In conclusion, Chrysostom's advice to slaveholders implies three important discursive shifts in emphasis, from: a) strategic slaveholding to tactical slaveholding; b) public displays of punishment to a private, domesticated disciplinary programme of reform; and c) status-based manumission to manumission based on psycho-theological reform. I must stress that these are shifts in *emphasis* – subtle rhetorical moves. It would be difficult if not impossible, even for Chrysostom, to escape the classical *habitus* of Roman slaveholding and common stereotypes in slaveholding rhetoric: large scale slaveholding was still the norm; public displays of violence against slaves were still prevalent and sometimes encouraged; and status was still a deciding factor in manumission.

[41] M. Foucault, *Birth of the Prison* (1977), 135-94.

[42] Chrysostom, *Hom. Eph.* 22.2 (PG 62, 157-8).

[43] For the problem of poverty among freed persons in Chrysostom's writings, see W. Jager, *Sklaverei* (1974), 32-4.

[44] Cam Grey, 'Slavery in the Late Roman World', in Keith Bradley and Paul Cartledge (eds), *The Ancient Mediterranean World*, The Cambridge World History of Slavery 1 (Cambridge, 2011), 482-509.

The scarcity of literary and archaeological evidence from antiquity makes it difficult to determine to what extent Chrysostom's advice was followed.[45] But what is evident is that Chrysostom's vision of the ideal Christian slaveholder had systemic implications, a new façade of domination, which would affect drastic changes in the foundations and dynamics of the everyday life of slaves and slaveholders.

[45] For a general discussion of the impact of Christianity on Roman slaveholding practices, see J. Glancy, 'Slavery and the Rise of Christianity' (2011), 476-80.

Not only *ianua diaboli*. Jerome, the Bible and the Construction of a Female Gender Model

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Abstract

This article presents an overview of Jerome's multifarious use of biblical texts in constructing female gender model. The Bible is referred to by him on different occasions and with various aims. I firstly deal with works pertaining to the Origenist controversy, among which the earliest one is an exegesis of a whole biblical text, Paul's *Letter to the Ephesians*. Then, I consider quotations of single verses or passages, in order to sketch the use of the Bible in polemical works (esp. *Adversus Iovinianum*) and in epistolary portraits of cultured ascetic women. As we shall see, sometimes it is life that exerts its influence over the interpretation of the Bible, and sometimes it is the Bible that seemingly shapes life and its description.

In a recent article[1] I presented a survey of how the Latin Fathers avail themselves of the Bible in constructing female gender models, namely, in texts concerning their discourse about women: how women are 'perceived, interpreted, and … regulated in terms of leading ideas, priorities, assumptions, and interests'.[2] As I tried to set out there, the Fathers' discourse on women is paradoxical. On the one hand, it shows the change brought by Christianity, which from its beginning tends to erase the axiological distinction between the sexes, asserting an equality which is at least a spiritual one (an 'originalissmo femminismo'[3]); on the other hand, woman's *infirmitas* and her subordination to man is taken for granted, according to the views which are typical of antiquity.[4] Hence the most suitable approach to the subject is one which points out contradictions,

[1] Paola Francesca Moretti, 'La Bibbia e il discorso dei Padri latini sulle donne. Da Tertulliano a Girolamo', in Kari Elisabeth Børresen and Emanuela Prinzivalli (eds), *La Bibbia e le donne* (forthcoming).

[2] Gillian Clark, *Women in Late Antiquity. Pagan and Christian Life-Styles* (Oxford, 1993), 2.

[3] Ugo Mattioli, 'La donna nel pensiero patristico', in Renato Uglione (ed.), *Atti del convegno nazionale di studi 'La donna nel mondo antico'* (Torino, 1987), 223-42, 236.

[4] Ugo Mattioli, *'Ασθένεια e ἀνδρεία. Aspetti della femminilità nella letteratura classica, biblica e cristiana antica* (Roma, 1983).

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striving to explain them.[5] This is the general frame in which Jerome himself must be set.

Women were part of Jerome's life:[6] his works are addressed to women, and are suggested, read, preserved, and meditated upon by the female *Kreis* surrounding him, first in Rome and then in the Holy Land.[7] Therefore, feeling it necessary to propose a women's gender model is for him an existential issue, rather than 'merely' a moral or theological one. Moreover, Jerome's view of the female sex is often intertwined with two other subjects which I will not dwell upon extensively: the nature of the resurrected body, which is much discussed within the Origenist controversy, and the apology of asceticism versus marriage.[8]

The Bible is referred to by Jerome on different occasions and with various aims. In what follows, I will start from works pertaining to the Origenist controversy, among which the earliest one is an exegesis of a whole biblical text, Paul's *Letter to the Ephesians* (1). Then, I will deal with quotations of single verses or passages, in order to sketch the use of the Bible in a polemical work (2.1) and in portraits of ascetic women (2.2). Finally, I will draw a brief conclusion (3).

1. Firstly, the issue of the *diversitas sexuum* and its (questioned) eternity. This subject, although seemingly not closely pertinent to the discourse about women's condition on earth, is relevant in order to define the eschatological value of femaleness, also in its physical features: it is relevant to Jerome's appraisal of femaleness at large.

In the *Commentarii in epistolam ad Ephesios* (composed in 386, based on Origen's work) there is a passage about the relationship between man and woman, which establishes the subordination of woman to man (*In Eph.* III 5,21-33 = PL 26, 530A-534B).[9] Woman should be subject to man *in timore Christi* (as

[5] As stated by Monique Alexandre, 'La place des femmes dans le christianisme ancien. Bilan d'études récentes', in Pascal Delage (ed.), *Les Pères de l'Église et les femmes. Actes du colloque de La Rochelle, 6 et 7 septembre 2003* (s.l., 2003), 24-78, 42-3.

[6] Marie Turcan, 'Saint Jerôme et les femmes', *BAGB* 3 (1968), 259-72; Antti Arjava, 'Jerome and Women', *Arctos* 23 (1989), 5-18.

[7] See among others Franca Ela Consolino, 'Modelli di comportamento e modi di santificazione per l'aristocrazia femminile d'Occidente', in Andrea Giardina (ed.), *Società romana e impero tardoantico* (Bari, 1986), I 279-89; Stefan Rebenich, *Hieronymus und sein Kreis. Prosopographische und sozialgeschichtliche Untersuchungen* (Stuttgart, 1992), 154-208.

[8] On the former, see Elizabeth Ann Clark, *The Origenist Controversy. The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate* (Princeton, NJ, 1992); on the latter, David G. Hunter, *Marriage, Celibacy, and Heresy in Ancient Christianity. The Jovinanist Controversy* (Oxford, 2007).

[9] On the controversy between Jerome and Rufinus concerning the interpretation of *Eph.* 5:21-33, see also E.A. Clark, 'The Place of Jerome's Commentary on Ephesians in the Origenist Controversy: The Apokatastasis and Ascetic Ideals', *VC* 41 (1987), 154-71; *ead.*, *The Origenist Controversy* (1992), 121-51; Emanuela Prinzivalli, 'Early Christian Anthropology: Gender Models in Creation and Resurrection', in Kari Elisabeth Børresen (ed.), *Christian and Islamic Gender Models* (Roma, 2004), 63-4. English translation: Ronald E. Heine, *The Commentaries of Origen and Jerome on St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians* (Oxford, 2002).

stated in *Eph*. 5:21), according to the literal meaning of the text; furthermore, the comparison between man, *caput mulieris*, and Christ, *caput Ecclesiae*, allows the interpreter to define this relationship not only as *principatus* and *subiectio*, but also as *sancta … copula*: within it, woman's *spontanea servitus* to her man makes her *coaequalis* to him (*In Eph*. III 5,22-3):

This voluntary servitude will be much greater than a will which has been subjected. By its obedience it begins to be equal to, no rather to reduce to servitude, the one who rules it.[10]

Jerome suggests as well a first spiritual interpretation of the text, taking his cue from *Eph*. 5:28: the subordination of *mulier* to *vir* is compared to that of body to soul, according to which the soul – *i.e*. man – takes care of the body – *i.e*. woman – in view of the resurrection (*ibid*. III 5,25). Jerome is undoubtedly asserting a status of subordination; however, when he adds that woman may 'become man' if she gives up serving the world and begins serving God, he plainly asserts the inherent *coaequalitas* of woman to man (*ibid*. III 5,28):

In fact, a woman also possesses this difference in respect to a man which the body has in respect to the soul in the literal sense inasmuch as a woman is devoted to birth and children. If, however, she should wish to be devoted to Christ more than to the world, she will cease to be woman and be said to be man, because we all desire to attain to 'the perfect man' (*Eph*. 4:13).[11]

Then, according to a second spiritual interpretation, Christ is said to be the husband of a *mulier*, that represents both soul and the Church.[12] Thanks to the overlapping of these three levels (*mulier*, soul, Church), the typically female use of cosmetics to improve physical appearance is interpreted positively (*ibid*. III 5,27):

And because it was said of marriage, he has also beautifully drawn spot and wrinkle from the example of women for the beauty of the Church.[13]

As a result, not only the Church but also the soul should apply make-up to cover its imperfections – just like a woman, who embellishes herself to please her husband (*ibid*. III 5,25):

For just as warts are usually despised on the bodies of women, or wrinkles diminished or freckles altered, and women exert all their effort to remove blemishes and to appear lovely to their husbands, so also souls are to be cleansed of all the filth of sins so that

[10] *'Quae spontanea servitus, quanto magis fuerit voluntate subiecta, tanto esse incipit coaequalis: quinimmo, obsequiis suis in servitutem redigere dominantem.'* The same idea is repeated *ibid*. III 5,24.

[11] '*Nec non et iuxta litteram, quamdiu mulier partui servit et liberis, hanc habet ad virum differentiam, quam corpus ad animam. Sin autem Christo magis voluerit servire quam saeculo, mulier esse cessabit, et dicetur vir, quia omnes «in perfectum virum» cupimus occurrere*.'

[12] The parallel between *mulier-vir* and Church-Christ is drawn throughout the Pauline chapter.

[13] '*Pulchre quoque maculam aut rugam, quia de coniugio loquebatur, de exemplo mulierum ad decorem traxit Ecclesiae*.'

the wrinkles of the old man are stretched out by youth and renewed into a new man from day to day.[14]

Then, while explaining *Eph*. 5:28-9 ('He who loves his wife loves himself, for no one has ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, as Christ does the Church' ['*Qui uxorem suam diligit, seipsum diligit: nemo enim umquam carnem suam odio habuit, sed nutrit et fovet eam, sicut et Christus*']), Jerome introduces an ambiguous sentence, according to which the body, after resurrection, will become soul, and woman man, so that the *diversitas sexuum* will be abolished (*ibid*. III 5,29):

Therefore, let us husbands cherish our wives and let our souls cherish our bodies, so that wives may be brought into the rank of men and bodies into the rank of souls. And may there be no diversity of the sexes at all, but as there is no man and woman among the angels, so also let us, who will be like angels, even now begin to be that which has been promised to us in the heavens.[15]

Here Jerome – as remarked by Elizabeth Clark – 'sow*s* the seeds for accusations of Origenism against himself'.[16] In fact, this passage seemingly states that the resurrection will be only of a 'spiritual body' – not a physical one –, and hence implies the eschatological erasure of sexual distinction.

Lastly we should also notice that in *in Eph*. III 5,33 Jerome remarks that a spiritual interpretation must be applied to the Pauline text *just because* there are women who are much better than their men. Admittedly historical reality exerts influence over the interpretation of the Bible: the contrast between woman's virtue and her subordination to man leads Jerome to think that Paul *must* be speaking allegorically, so that 'man' must mean 'soul', and 'woman' 'body':

If fear of God because of fear of punishment does not permit one who fears to be perfect, how much more will a wife be imperfect who fears not only God but also her husband? For this reason we must inquire whether wife, and the fear belonging to a wife, is to be understood in a fleshly manner, since wives are frequently found who are much better than their husbands. They rule over them, manage the household, educate the children, and maintain the discipline of the family while the husbands revel and run around with harlots. I leave it to the decision of the readers whether these women ought to rule their husbands or fear them.[17]

[14] '*Sicut enim solent in mulierum corporibus vel sordere naevi, vel ruga contrahi, vel lentigo variari: et hoc est omne studium feminarum, ut quod foedare videtur abstergant, et exhibeant maritis corporum venustatem: ita et animae omni peccatorum sorde purgandae sunt, ut ruga veteris hominis iuventa tendatur, et renovetur in novum hominem de die in diem.*'

[15] '*Foveamus igitur et viri uxores, et animae nostra corpora, ut et uxores in viros, et corpora redigantur in animas. Et nequaquam sit sexuum ulla diversitas: sed quomodo apud angelos non est vir et mulier: ita et nos, qui similes angelis futuri sumus, iam nunc incipiamus esse quod nobis in caelestibus repromissum est.*'

[16] E.A. Clark, *The Origenist Controversy* (1992), 122.

[17] '*Si in Deum metus propter timorem supplicii, non sinit eum qui metuit esse perfectum, quanto magis imperfecta erit mulier, non solum Deum, sed etiam virum metuens? Propter quod*

Jerome, in the year 400, returns to the issue of the resurrected body in a famous letter (*Ep.* 84).[18] After quoting – quite surprisingly – his commentary on *Ephesians* as an example of his stand against Origen's doctrine (*ibid.* 2),[19] he defends himself from the charge of Origenism. In chapters 5-7 he argues against the Origenists' view of the *resurrectio corporum*. This wording is quite ambiguous, as *corpus* can be referred both to *caro* (correctly) and to *spiritus* (mistakenly). The Origenists prefer *corpus* because the *resurrectio carnis*, as involving the whole physical body with its members, would entail the use of those members, absurdly including perhaps sexual intercourse (*ibid.* 5):

> And when we inquire whether the resurrection will exhibit anew the hair and the teeth, the chest and the stomach, the hands and the feet, and all the other members of the body, then no longer able to contain their mirth they burst out laughing and tell us that in that case we shall need barbers, and cakes, and doctors, and cobblers. Do we, they ask us in turn, believe that even the reproductive organs of both sexes will be preserved in the resurrected bodies, and men's cheeks will still be rough and those of women smooth, and that sex will differentiate their bodies as it does at present? Then if we admit this, they at once require womb, sexual intercourse, and all the things that lie in the belly and below it. Thus, while they maintain the resurrection of the body as a whole, they deny the resurrection of its separate members.[20]

And this view is endorsed even by some women, whom Jerome mocks. Surprisingly for him, they hope they will be angels in heaven, preferring not to have their physical femaleness preserved (*ibid.* 6):

> For their women finger their breasts, slap their chests, pinch their loins and legs and beardless faces, and say: 'What will a resurrection profit us if these frail bodies are to rise again? No, if we are to be like angels, we shall have even the nature of angels'.

requirendum, an carnaliter uxor intelligenda sit, et uxoris timor, cum frequenter multo meliores maritis inveniantur uxores et eis imperent et domum regant et educent liberos et familiae teneant disciplinam, illis luxuriantibus et per scorta currentibus. Hae viros suos utrum regnare debeant, an timere, lectoris arbitrio derelinquo.' About this passage see A. Arjava, 'Jerome and Women' (1989), 15.

[18] *Sancti Eusebii Hieronymi epistulae*, ed. Isidorus Hilberg, CSEL 54-55-56/1-2 (Vindobonae and Lipsiae, [2]1996). English translation: William H. Fremantle, *Saint Jerome: Letters and Select Works* (New York and Oxford, 1893, repr. 1994), with slight changes.

[19] 'But if men wish to know my real judgement upon Origen, let them read my commentaries upon Ecclesiastes, let them go through my three books upon the epistle to the Ephesians: they will then see that I have always opposed his doctrines' ('*Quodsi volunt super Origene meum scire iudicium, legant in Ecclesiasten commentarios, replicent in epistulam ad Ephesios tria volumina, et intellegent me semper eius dogmatibus contra isse*').

[20] '*Dicentibusque nobis, utrum capillos et dentes, pectus ac ventrem, manus et pedes ceterosque artus ex integro resurrectio exhibeat, tunc vero se tenere non possunt cachinnoque ora solventes tonsores nobis necessarios et placentas et medicos ac sutores ingerunt ultroque interrogant, utrum credamus et genitalia utriusque sexus resurgere, nostras genas hirtas, feminarum leves fore et habitudinem corporis pro maris ac feminae distinctione diversam. Quod si dederimus, statim expetunt vulvam et coitum et cetera, quae in ventre sunt et sub ventre. Singula membra negant et corpus, quod constat ex membris, dicunt resurgere.*'

That is to say they scorn to rise again with the flesh and bones wherewith even Christ rose.[21]

Some years later (402-403), Rufinus, in his *Apologia contra Hieronymum*,[22] reproaches Jerome i) for his carnal view of the *resurrectio carnis* (I 4-8) and ii) for his use of Origen in the above-mentioned passage of his commentary on *Ephesians* (I 23-5).[23]

As for the first issue, he summarizes his opinion as follows, upholding the orthodoxy of the view, supported by Paul (especially 1*Corinthians*), of the resurrection as involving the whole body (*ibid*. I 8):

the body will be whole and complete, having laid aside nothing but its corruption and dishonour and frailty and also having amputated all the imperfections of mortality: nothing of its own nature will be lacking to that spiritual body which shall rise from the dead except this corruption.[24]

Rufinus says that the *mulierculae*, whom Jerome has laughed at, are close to the truth (*ibid*. I 7):

Only, what then, we ask, are we to make of the words of the Apostle: 'It is sown in weakness, it will be raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it will be raised a spiritual body' (1*Cor*. 15:42)? What frailty can you suppose to exist in a spiritual body? It is to rise in power; how then is it again to be frail? If it is frail, how can it be in power? Are not those poor women after all more right than you, when they say that their bodily frailty cannot have dominion over them in the world beyond? Why should you mock at them, when they are only following the Apostle's words: 'This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality' (1*Cor*. 15:54)? The apostles never taught that the body which would rise from the dead would be frail, but, on the contrary, that it would rise in power and in glory.[25]

[21] '*Solent enim mulierculae eorum mammas tenere, ventri adplaudere, lumbos et femina et puras adtrectare maxillas et dicere: «Quid nobis prode est, si fragile corpus resurget? Futurae angelorum similes angelorum habebimus et naturam». Dedignantur videlicet cum carne et ossibus resurgere, cum quibus resurrexit et Christus*.'

[22] Tyrannius Rufinus, *Opera*, ed. Manlio Simonetti, CChr.SL 20 (Turnhout, 1961). English translation: William H. Fremantle, *Life and Works of Rufinus* (Oxford, 1892).

[23] E.A. Clark, *The Origenist Controversy* (1992), 175-7.

[24] '*… totum et integrum corpus, corruptione tantum et ignominia ac fragilitate deposita, atque omnibus mortalitatis vitiis pariter amputatis, ita ut nihil prorsus ex natura sua desit spiritali illi corpori, quod resurget a mortuis, nisi sola corruptio*.'

[25] '*Et ubi est quod dicit Apostolus: «Seminatur in infirmitate, surget in virtute; seminatur corpus animale, surget corpus spiritale»? Quam fragilitatem vis esse in corpore spirituali? Et quod resurget in virtute, quomodo iterum fragile erit? In virtute quid fragile est? Nonne melius dicunt mulierculae quam tu, quae negant ultra fragilitatem corpori dominaturam? Quid illas irrides, quae sequuntur Apostolum dicentem quia: «Corruptibile hoc induet incorruptionem et mortale hoc induet immortalitatem»? Apostoli non docuerunt fragile corpus futurum esse, quod resurget a mortuis, sed e contrario in virtute et in gloria resurrecturum dicunt*.'

As for the second issue, Rufinus (*ibid.* I 25) blames Jerome for presenting Origen's fallacious doctrine about the resurrection in his commentary on *Ephesians*, while both concealing his source and not distancing himself from it. Jerome allegedly asserts the transformation of *corpus* into *anima*, and of women into men. Even the 'origenian' *mulierculae* he has mocked would not agree with his contradictory view:

> And again, if the wives are to be turned into men, according to this suggestion of yours, that there is to be no difference of sex whatever, by which I suppose you mean that the female sex will entirely cease, being converted into the male, and the male sex will alone remain; I am not sure that you would have the permission of the women to speak here on behalf of their sex. But, even suppose that they grant you this, then with what consistency can you argue that the male sex is any longer necessary, when the female is shown not to be necessary? For there is a natural bond which unites the sexes in mutual dependence, so that, if one does not exist, there is no need of the other.[26]

In Rufinus' view, Jerome should have better admitted his ignorance on this point.

Jerome reacts to Rufinus' attack in his *Apologia adversus libros Rufini* (402-404),[27] although, when writing the first two books, Jerome has received only oral reports of his enemy's charges.[28] He (*ibid.* I 28-9) claims to be a commentator, whose task is to collect the different views expressed about biblical texts and to suggest criteria to single out what is true (*ibid.* I 15-6); accordingly, he indicates that the exegesis at issue comes from Origen, and then interprets the Pauline text as referred to man taking care of his woman within marriage, according to a *simplex intellegentia*. He admits taking words from Origen's discourse, but states that they do not refer to the erasure of physical sexual difference, but rather to the abolition of lust and sexual intercourse (*ibid.* I 29):

> When I say: 'We shall begin to be on earth', I do not take away the difference of sex; I only take away lust, and sexual intercourse, as the Apostle does when he says: 'The time is short; it remaineth therefore that those who have wives be as though they had none' (1*Cor.* 7:29); and as the Lord implied when, in reply to the question of which of the seven brothers the woman would be the wife, he answered: 'Ye err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God; for in the resurrection they shall neither marry nor be given in marriage: but they shall be as the angels of God' (*Matth.* 22:29-30). And, indeed, when chastity is observed between man and woman, it begins to be true that there is neither male nor female; but, though living in the body, they are being changed into angels, among whom there is neither male nor female. The same is said by the

[26] '*Quod si hoc vis ostendere, quia sexus quidem femineus interibit ex hoc quod redigetur in virum, solus autem manebit virilis, nescio quidem si haec tibi de se dicere feminarum sexus ipse permittat. Tamen et si ab illis concedatur, quam consequentiam poteris ostendere ibi virilem sexum esse necessarium, ubi femineus necessarius non probatur? Quia naturali quodam vinculo in tantum sexus alter eget alterius, ut, si alter non sit, alterius opus non sit.*'

[27] Hieronymus, *Contra Rufinum*, ed. Pierre Lardet, CChr.SL 79 (Turnhout, 1982). English translation: W.H. Fremantle, *Life and Works of Rufinus* (1892).

[28] As we know from Hier., *Apol.* I 21.

same Apostle in another place: 'As many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ. There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus' (*Gal*. 3:27-8).[29]

Which elements pertaining to a female gender model should we infer from the reading of Jerome's origenist and anti-origenist works?

In the commentary on *Ephesians*, according to Paul and following Origen, he states that woman is subordinate to man, and wife to husband, a view which allows that women, through Baptism, are able to gain spiritual equality with men. Furthermore a positive evaluation of the female gender is given by some scattered remarks, which seem to be inspired by Jerome's actual experience: subordination to man seems to be contrasted with examples of women's moral pre-eminence.

Afterwards, due also to the need to respond to Rufinus' objections, this positive view is explicitly endowed with an eschatological perspective, when the resurrection is plainly reasserted as including the physical body: this in fact would entail that physical femaleness will not be erased, but will be maintained forever in the resurrected body.

2.1. Let us now consider *Adversus Iovinianum*,[30] composed in 393. Scripture plays quite an important role, being expounded for the polemical aims of the treatise.

In the first book Jerome aims to uphold the value of virginity versus marriage, endorsed by his adversary Jovinian: according to Jerome, *Gen*. 1:28 ('Be fruitful, and multiply' ['*Crescite et multiplicamini*']), which justifies marriage, must no longer hold sway, for it has been overcome by Paul's assertions in 1*Cor*. 7 (especially 1*Cor* 7:29: 'The time is shortened, that henceforth both those that have wives may be as though they had none' ['*Tempus breve est. Reliquum est ut qui habent uxores, sic sint tamquam non habentes*']).

We will not consider chapters 7-15, which are devoted to a quite biased exegesis of 1*Cor*. 7, in the wake of Tertullian; in fact those chapters have been examined accurately by previous scholars, who have pointed out that the biblical

[29] '*«Quando dico: hic esse incipiamus in terris», non naturam tollo sexuum, sed libidinem et coitum viri et uxoris aufero, dicente Apostolo: «Tempus breve est. Reliquum est ut et qui habent uxores sic sint quasi non habeant»; et Dominus, interrogatus in Evangelio cuius de septem fratribus in resurrectione uxor esse deberet, ait: «Erratis, nescientes Scripturas neque virtutem Dei. In resurrectione enim neque nubent neque nubentur, sed erunt sicut angeli Dei in caelo». Et revera ubi inter virum et feminam castitas est, nec vir incipit esse, nec femina, sed, adhuc in corpore positi, mutantur in angelos, in quibus non est vir et mulier; quod et in alio loco ab eodem Apostolo dicitur: «Quicumque in Christo baptizati estis, Christum induistis. Non est Iudaeus neque Graecus, non est servus neque liber, non est masculus neque femina. Omnes enim vos unum estis in Christo Iesu»*.

[30] Ed. PL 23, 205-338. English translation: W.H. Fremantle, *Saint Jerome: Letters and Select Works* (1994), with slight changes.

text has undergone some deliberate alterations.[31] We will rather examine chapter 16. As Jovinian expounds several scriptural examples to defend marriage, from Adam down to the apostle Peter, Jerome reasserts that the precept of *Gen.* 1:28 must be overcome, because marriage is not original to God's image, namely, it does not pertain to human beings in their pre-lapsarian condition. In order to support this view, he quotes an overwhelming number of biblical passages, giving them what we might call an 'ascetic reading' (in Clark's words[32]):

And as regards Adam and Eve we must maintain that before the fall they were virgins in Paradise: but after they sinned, and were cast out of Paradise, they were immediately married. Then we have the passage: 'For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and the twain shall become one flesh' (*Eph.* 5:31, on *Gen.* 2:24), in explanation of which the Apostle straightway adds: 'This mystery is great, but I speak in regard of Christ, and of the Church' (*Eph.* 5:32). Christ in the flesh is a virgin, in the spirit he is once married. For he has one Church, concerning which the same Apostle says: 'Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church' (*Eph.* 5:25). If Christ loves the Church holily, chastely, and without spot, let husbands also love their wives in chastity. And let everyone know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour, not in the lust of concupiscence, as the Gentiles who know not God: 'For God called us not for uncleanness, but in sanctification' (1*Thess.* 4:7): seeing that 'ye have put off the old man with his doings, and have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of him that created him: where there cannot be male and female, Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian and Scythian, bondman and freeman: but Christ is all, and in all' (*Col.* 3:9-11). The link of marriage is not found in the image of the Creator. When difference of sex is done away, and we are putting off the old man, and putting on the new, then we are being born again into Christ a virgin, who was both born of a virgin, and is born again through virginity. And whereas he says: 'Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth' (*Gen.* 1:28), it was necessary first to plant the wood and to let it grow, so that there might be an after-growth for cutting down. And at the same time we must bear in mind the meaning of the phrase, 'replenish the earth'. Marriage replenishes the earth, virginity fills Paradise.[33]

[31] Benedetto Clausi, 'La parola stravolta. Polemica ed esegesi biblica nell'*Adversus Iovinianum* di Gerolamo', *Vetera Christianorum* 32 (1995), 21-60; Elizabeth Ann Clark, *Reading Renunciation. Ascetism and Scripture in Early Christianity* (Princeton, NJ, 1999), 168-9 and *passim*; Yves-Marie Duval, *L'affaire Jovinien. D'une crise de la société romaine à une crise de la pensée chrétienne à la fin du IV^e^ et au début du V^e^ siècle* (Roma, 2003), 103-51.

[32] About the rhetorical and exegetic strategies the Fathers expound to apply an 'ascetic meaning' to biblical texts, see E.A. Clark, *Reading Renunciation* (1999), 104-52.

[33] '*Ac de Adam quidem et Eva illud dicendum, quod ante offensam in paradiso virgines fuerint: post peccatum autem, et extra paradisum protinus nuptiae. Deinde, quod hoc ipsum interpretetur Apostolus: «Propter hoc relinquet homo patrem et matrem suam, et adhaerebit uxori suae, et erunt duo in carne una»; statimque subiungit: «Sacramentum hoc magnum est. Ego autem dico in Christo et in Ecclesia». Christus in carne virgo, in spiritu monogamus. Unam enim habet Ecclesiam, de qua idem Apostolus: «Viri», inquit, «diligite uxores vestras, sicut et Christus Ecclesiam». Si Christus sancte, si caste, si absque ulla macula Ecclesiam diligit, viri quoque in castitate uxores suas diligant, et sciat unusquisque vas suum possidere in sanctificatione et honore, non in passione*

As marriage is not part of God's image, those who are married and those who are not shall live in chastity, so that the *diversitas sexuum* – which subordinates married women – may be cancelled, and woman and man may be equal. Among the strategies for an 'ascetic reading' expounded here, I just remark that *Col*. 3:11 is quoted in a textual form which supports Jerome's view of the spiritual equality of the sexes, as it contains the words *non est masculus et femina*, which are sometimes missing in the scriptural text.[34]

In the same work biblical quotations are used to construct negative female portraits. These are an expected part of the rhetorical invective against marriage to which Jerome devotes himself. See for example the description of wives' vices in chapter 28 of the same book:

> For no one can know better than he [*scil*. Salomon, who is said to have had many brides and concubines] who suffered through them, what a wife or woman is. Well then, he says in the Proverbs: 'The foolish and bold woman comes to want bread' (*Prov*. 9:13 LXX). What bread? Surely that bread 'which cometh down from heaven' (*John* 6:33): and he immediately adds: 'The earth-born perish in her house, rush into the depths of hell' (*Prov*. 9:18 LXX). Who are the earth-born that perish in her house? They of course who follow the first Adam, who is of the earth, and not the second, who is from heaven (1*Cor*. 15:45-7).[35]

The biblical verses are more than mere literary embellishments, as Jerome never gives up his duty as an exegete. The verses of the *Proverbs*, quoted according to the Septuagint (9:13: 'A foolish and bold woman, who knows not

desiderii, sicut et gentes, quae nesciunt Deum: «Neque enim vocavit nos Deus in immunditiam, sed in sanctificationem»: «exuentes nos veterem hominem cum operibus suis, et induentes novum, qui renovatur in cognitionem secundum imaginem Creatoris sui: ubi non est masculus et femina, Graecus et Iudaeus, circumcisio et praeputium, barbarus et Scytha, servus et liber, sed omnia et in omnibus Christus». Imago Creatoris non habet copulam nuptiarum. Ubi diversitas sexus aufertur, et veteri homine exuimur, et induimur novo, ibi in Christum renascimur virginem, qui et natus ex virgine, et renatus per virginem est. Quod autem ait: «Crescite et multiplicamini, et replete terram», necesse fuit prius plantare silvam et crescere, ut esset quod postea posset excidi. Simulque consideranda vis verbi, «replete terram». Nuptiae terram replent, virginitas paradisum.'

[34] The text of *Col*. 3:11 is uncertain. Both the Greek (Eberhard Nestle – Erwin Nestle *et al*., *Novum Testamentum Graece* [Stuttgart, [27]2001], *ad loc*.) and some quotations from the *Vetus Latina* (Hermann Josef Frede, *Vetus Latina. Epistulae ad Philippenses et ad Colossenses* [Freiburg, 1966-71], 481-3) refer to the abolition of the male-female distinction, which does not appear in the Vulgate. Furthermore this distinction is missing in the manuscripts of the *Adversus Iovinianum*, but has been inserted by the editors according to the context and to the commentary which follows the verse (H.J. Frede, *Vetus Latina* [1966-71], 482). About that, B. Clausi ('La parola stravolta' [1995], 34-9) remarks how difficult it is to acknowledge alterations of the biblical text, due to the doubtful reconstruction of both the *Vetus Latina* and the *Adversus Iovinianum* itself.

[35] '*Nemo … melius scire potest quid sit uxor, vel mulier, illo qui passus est. Loquitur ergo in Proverbiis: «Mulier insipiens et audax, inops panis efficitur». Cuius panis? Nempe illius qui «de caelo descendit»; statimque subiungit: «Terrigenae apud eam pereunt, et in profundum inferni incurrunt». Qui sunt terrigenae qui apud eam pereunt? Utique illi, qui sequuntur primum Adam, qui de terra est, et non secundum, qui de caelo est*.'

modesty, comes to want a morsel'[36]; 9:18: 'mighty men die by her, and he falls in with a snare of hell'[37]), are explained by means of two references to the New Testament: in particular, the misogynous meaning of the first one is stressed, because being *inops panis* is grave, but being deprived of Christ – *panis qui descendit de caelo* – is something much more serious.

Afterwards he adds: 'And again in another place: "Like a worm in wood, so a wicked woman destroyeth her husband"' (*Prov*. 12:4 LXX).[38] He presents us with a Latin translation of *Prov*. 12:4b[39] based on the Septuagint: 'A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband; but as a worm in wood, so a bad woman destroys her husband'.[40] The text differs from that of the Vulgate, and Jerome presses the misogynous meaning of the verse in a misogamic direction, due to his translation γυνή-*uxor*.[41]

Then Jerome goes further (*ibid*.):

But if you assert that this was spoken of bad wives, I shall briefly answer: What necessity rests upon me to run the risk of the wife I marry proving good or bad? 'It is better', he says, 'to dwell in a desert land, than with a contentious and passionate woman in a wide house' (*Prov*. 21:19). How seldom we find a wife without these faults, he knows who is married … 'It is better to dwell in the corner of the housetop, than with a contentious woman in a house in common' (*Prov*. 25:24). If a house common to husband and wife makes a wife proud and breeds contempt for the husband: how much more if the wife be the richer of the two, and the husband but a lodger in her house! She begins to be not a wife, but mistress of the house; and if she offend her husband, they must part. 'A continual dropping on a wintry day turns a man out of doors, and so will a contentious woman drive a man from his own house' (*Prov*. 27:15 LXX[42]). She floods his house with her constant nagging and daily chatter, and ousts him from his own home, that is the Church … But who can hide from himself what is thus enigmatically expressed? 'The horse-leech had three daughters, dearly loved, but they satisfied her not, and a fourth[43] is not satisfied when you say: Enough; the grave, and woman's love,

[36] Γυνὴ ἄφρων καὶ θρασεῖα ἐνδεὴς ψωμοῦ γίνεται. English translation: *The Septuagint Version of the Old Testament with an English Translation* (London, 1870).

[37] γηγενεῖς παρ' αὐτῇ ὄλλυνται, καὶ ἐπὶ πέτευρον ᾅδου συναντᾷ.

[38] '*Et rursum in alio loco: «Sicut in ligno vermis, ita perdit virum suum uxor malefica»*.'

[39] Not of *Prov*. 20:5, as indicated by PL.

[40] Γυνὴ ἀνδρεία στέφανος τῷ ἀνδρὶ αὐτῆς· ὥσπερ δὲ ἐν ξύλῳ σκώληξ, οὕτως ἄνδρα ἀπόλλυσιν γυνὴ κακοποιός.

[41] Jerome expounds the ambiguity of the Greek γυνή, which can stand both for *mulier* and for *uxor*; on the issue, see E.A. Clark, *Reading Renunciation* (1992), 115-8.

[42] Again according to the Septuagint: 'On a stormy day drops of rain drive a man out of his house; so also does a railing woman drive a man out of his own house' (Σταγόνες ἐκβάλλουσιν ἄνθρωπον ἐν ἡμέρᾳ χειμερινῇ ἐκ τοῦ οἴκου αὐτοῦ, ὡσαύτως καὶ γυνὴ λοίδορος ἐκ τοῦ ἰδίου οἴκου).

[43] In the Latin text (see below), *quartae* should be corrected into *quarta* (*quartum* in the Vulgate), according to the text of the Septuagint: 'The horse-leech had three dearly-beloved daughters: and these three did not satisfy her; and the fourth was not contented so as to say, Enough' (Τῇ βδέλλῃ τρεῖς θυγατέρες ἦσαν ἀγαπήσει ἀγαπώμεναι, καὶ αἱ τρεῖς αὗται οὐκ ἐνεπίμπλασαν αὐτήν, καὶ ἡ τετάρτη οὐκ ἠρκέσθη εἰπεῖν Ἱκανόν).

and the earth that is not satisfied with water, and the fire that saith not: Enough' (*Prov*. 30:15-6). The horse-leech is the devil, the daughters of the devil are dearly loved, and they cannot be satisfied with the blood of the slain: 'the grave, and woman's love, and the earth dry and scorched with heat' [*ibid*.]. It is not the harlot, or the adulteress who is spoken of, but woman's love in general is accused of ever being insatiable; put it out, it bursts into flame; give it plenty, it is again in need; it enervates a man's mind, and engrosses all thought except for the passion which it feeds. What we read in the parable which follows is to the same effect: 'For three things the earth doth tremble, and for four which it cannot bear: for a servant when he is king, and a fool when he is filled with meat, for an odious woman when she is married to a good husband, and an handmaid that is heir to her mistress' (*Prov*. 30:21-3). See how a wife is classed with the greatest evils. But if you reply that it is an odious wife, I will give you the same answer as before.[44]

The many biblical passages which are quoted here serve to reinforce the violent invective against wives – and hence against marriage; however, in this case no distortion is needed as the misogamic meaning of these texts is self-evident.

2.2. Lastly, we will observe how Jerome uses the Bible in encomiastic female portraits in his epistolary corpus. Obviously, these portraits are not to be taken as literal mirrors of the women they describe. Jerome certainly uses these epistles to establish himself as a scriptural, moral and theological authority, both within and without the circle of his addressees.[45] As David Hunter remarks on

[44] '*Si autem asseveraveris, hoc de malis coniugibus dictum esse, et ego tibi breviter respondebo: Quae enim mihi incumbit necessitas venire in dubium, utrum bona an mala futura sit quam duxero? «Melius est», inquit, «habitare in terra deserta, quam cum uxore litigiosa et iracunda». Quam rarum sit uxorem sine his vitiis inveniri, novit ille qui duxit uxorem … «Melius est habitare in angulo tecti, quam cum uxore maledica in domo communi». Si domus communis mariti et uxoris erigit uxorem in superbiam, et contumeliam viro facit: quanto magis si ditior uxor fuerit, et in domo eius vir manserit! Incipit enim non uxor esse, sed domina; et viro si offenderit, migrandum est. «Stillicidia eiciunt hominem in die hiemali de domo sua, similiter et mulier maledica de propria domo». Assiduis quippe iurgiis et quotidiana garrulitate facit perfluere domum eius, et eiicit eum de aedibus suis, id est, de Ecclesia … Illud vero quis taceat, quod sub aenigmate scribitur? «Sanguisugae tres filiae erant dilectione dilectae, sed istae non saturaverunt eam, et quarta non sufficit dicere "satis est": infernus, et amor mulieris, et terra quae non satiatur aqua, et ignis non dicit "satis est"». Sanguisuga diabolus est, diaboli filiae sunt dilectione dilectae, quae satiari interfectorum cruore non possunt: «Infernus, et amor mulieris, et terra arens, et ignis exaestuans». Non hic de meretrice, non de adultera dicitur, sed amor mulieris generaliter accusatur, qui semper insatiabilis est, qui exstinctus accenditur, et post copiam rursum inops est, animumque virilem effeminat, et, excepta passione quam sustinet, aliud non sinit cogitare. Simile quid et in sequenti parabola legimus: «Per tria movetur terra, quartum autem non potest ferre: si servus regnet, et stultus si saturetur panibus, et odiosa uxor si habeat bonum virum, et ancilla si eiiciat dominam suam». Ecce, et hic inter malorum magnitudinem uxor ponitur. Quod si responderis, sed uxor odiosa, dicam tibi quod et supra*.'

[45] Andrew Cain, 'Rethinking Jerome's Portraits of Holy Women', in Andrew Cain and Josef Lössl (eds), *Jerome of Stridon. His Life, Writings and Legacy* (s.l., 2009), 47-57; *id*., *The Letters of Jerome. Asceticism, Biblical Exegesis, and the Construction of Christian Authority in Late Antiquity* (Oxford, 2009), 68-98 (part of the previous article is republished here).

Jerome's letters, 'not every representation of a woman in the ancient sources gives us access to the presence or experience of "real" women'.[46]

Nonetheless these texts are relevant for our study, because Jerome depicts women as he would like them to be: hence, his letters give evidence of his use of the Bible to construct the female gender model he endorses, however exclusive, elitist, and idealized it may be. I will give here just a few examples.

At the beginning of the celebrated epitaph of Paula (*Ep.* 108, composed in 404), Jerome presents us with Paula herself, who mourns her condition as a pilgrim in this life, longing to reach God, and describes her sorrows in the words of Scripture (*Ep.* 108,1):

… as long as she was in the body she was absent from the Lord (2*Cor.* 5:8) and would constantly complain with tears: 'Woe is me that my sojourning is prolonged, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar; my soul hath been this long time a pilgrim' (*Ps.* 119:5). It was no wonder that she sobbed out that even she was in darkness (for this is the meaning of the word Kedar) seeing that 'the world lieth in the evil one' (1*John* 5:19), and that 'as its darkness is, so is its light' (*Ps.* 138:12), and that 'the light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehended it not' (*John* 1:5). She would frequently exclaim: 'I am a stranger with thee and a sojourner as all my fathers were' (*Ps.* 38:13), and again: 'I desire to depart and to be with Christ' (*Phil.* 1:23).[47]

In chapters 18-9, Jerome, after describing Paula's virtues, presents her quoting the Bible, both to defend herself against those who charge her with 'pride' ('*superbia*') and to face her and her children's illnesses, sorrows, dangers, and loss of possessions.

To Jerome, who suggests 'to give in to rancour' ('*livori esse cedendum*'), as Jacob did with Esau and David with Saul, she answers (*ibid.* 18):

Why may I not by my patience conquer this ill will? Why may I not by my humility break down this pride, and when I am smitten on the one cheek offer to the smiter the other? Surely the Apostle Paul says: 'Overcome evil with good' (*Rom.* 12:21). Did not the apostles glory when they suffered reproach for the Lord's sake? Did not even the Saviour humble Himself, taking the form of a servant and being made obedient to the Father unto death, even the death of the cross (*Phil.* 2:7-8), that He might save us by His passion? If Job had not fought the battle and won the victory, he would never have received the crown of righteousness, or have heard the Lord say: 'Thinkest thou that I have spoken unto thee for aught else than this, that thou mightest appear righteous'

[46] D.G. Hunter, *Marriage* (2007), 75.

[47] '*… quae, quamdiu in corpore fuit, peregrinata est a Domino et voce semper flebili querebatur dicens: «Heu mihi, quia peregrinatio mea prolongata est, habitavi cum habitantibus Cedar, multum peregrinata est anima mea». Et mirum, si planxerit se versari in tenebris – hoc enim Cedar interpretatur –, cum mundus in maligno positus sit? Et «sicut tenebrae eius, ita et lumen eius», luxque in tenebris lucet et tenebrae eam non adprehenderunt. Unde et illud crebrius inferebat: «Advena sum et peregrina sicut omnes patres mei», et iterum: «Cupio dissolvi et esse cum Christo»*.'

(*Iob* 40:3). In the Gospel those only are said to be blessed who 'suffer persecution for righteousness' sake' (*Matth.* 5:10).[48]

In tribulationibus et angustiis she consoles herself by quoting – and interpreting – a verse by *Isaiah* (*ibid.* 18):

'Ye that are weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts, look for tribulation upon tribulation, for hope also upon hope: yet a little, yet a little while must these things be by reason of the malice of the lips and by reason of a spiteful tongue' (*Isa.* 28:9-11). This passage of Scripture she explained for her own consolation as meaning that the weaned, that is, those who have come to full age, must endure tribulation upon tribulation that they may be accounted worthy to receive hope upon hope. She recalled to mind also the words of the Apostle: 'We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope: and hope maketh not ashamed' (*Rom.* 5:3-5), and 'though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day' (2*Cor.* 4:16); and 'our light affliction which is but for a moment worketh in us an eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal but the things which are not seen are eternal' (2*Cor.* 4:16-8). She used to say that, although to human impatience the time might seem slow in coming, yet that it would not be long but that presently help would come from God who says: 'In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee' (*Isa.* 49:8). We ought not, she declared, to dread the deceitful lips and tongues of the wicked, for we rejoice in the aid of the Lord, and we should listen to him who warns us: 'In your patience ye shall win your souls' (*Luke* 21:19), and: 'The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us' (*Rom.* 8:18), and in another place, that we may be patient in all things that befall us: 'He that is patient, is governed with much wisdom: but he that is impatient, exalteth his folly' (*Prov.* 14:29).[49]

[48] '*Cur … non patientia livorem superem? Cur non humilitate frangam superbiam et percutienti maxillam alteram offeram malam dicente Paulo: «Vincite in bono malum»? Nonne apostoli gloriabantur, quando pro Domino sunt passi contumeliam? Nonne ipse Salvator humiliavit se formam servi accipiens et factus oboediens patri usque ad mortem et mortem crucis, ut nos sua passione servaret? Iob, nisi certasset et vicisset in proelio, non accepisset coronam iustitiae nec audisset a Domino: «Putas me aliter tibi locutum, quam ut appareres iustus?» «Beati» dicuntur in Evangelio, «qui persecutionem patiuntur propter iustitiam»*.'

[49] '*«Qui ablactati estis a lacte, qui abstracti ab ubere, tribulationem super tribulationem exspectate, spem super spem, adhuc pusillum et adhuc pusillum propter malitiam labiorum, propter linguam alienam» et Scripturae testimonium in consolationem suam disserebat: ablactatorum esse – eorum, qui ad virilem aetatem pervenissent – tribulationem super tribulationem sustinere, ut spem super spem mereantur accipere «scientes, quoniam tribulatio patientiam operatur, patientia probationem, probatio spem, spes autem non confundat», «quod, si is, qui foris est, noster homo corrumpitur, ille, qui intus est, innovetur». Et «In praesentiarum momentaneum et leve tribulationis nostrae aeternae gloriae pondus operatur in nobis non aspicientibus, quae videntur, sed quae non videntur. Quae enim videntur, temporalia sunt; quae autem non videntur, aeterna sunt». Nec longum fore tempus, etiam si humanae inpatientiae tardum videatur, quin Dei sequatur auxilium dicentis: «Tempore oportuno exaudivi te et in die salutis auxiliatus sum tui». Nec dolosa labia et linguas iniquorum esse metuendas, cum Domino adiutore laetemur et ipsum audire debeamus monentem: «Per patientiam vestram possidebitis animas vestras» et: «Non sunt condignae passiones praesentis saeculi ad futuram gloriam, quae revelabitur in nobis», et*

Neither the loss of her wealth nor the death of her offspring – even that of her beloved, Toxotius – leads her to despair: and in her life, accomplishing God's word with her *virtus* and proclaiming God's word with her mouth are manifestly one and the same thing (*ibid.* 19):

When the exhaustion of her substance and the ruin of her property were announced to her she only said: 'What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?' (*Matth.* 16:26); and 'naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord' (*Iob* 1:21); and: 'Love not the world neither the things that are in the world. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world passeth away and the lust thereof' (1*John* 2:15-7). I know that when word was sent to her of the serious illnesses of her children and particularly of Toxotius whom she dearly loved, she first by her self-control fulfilled the saying: 'I was troubled and I did not speak' (*Ps.* 76:5), and then cried out in the words of Scripture: 'He that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me' (*Matth.* 10:37). And she prayed to the Lord and said: 'Preserve thou the children of those that are appointed to die' (*Ps.* 78:11), that is, of those who for thy sake every day die bodily'.[50]

In Jerome's view the Bible represents Paula's armour, the armour of faith (*ibid.* 19):

These passages and others like them she used as God's armour against the assaults of wickedness, and particularly to defend herself against the furious onslaughts of envy; and thus by patiently enduring wrongs she soothed the violence of the most savage breasts.[51]

In fact (*ibid.* 26):

… no mind was ever more docile than was hers (*Jas.* 1:19). She was slow to speak and swift to hear, remembering the precept: 'Keep silence and hearken, O Israel' (*Deut.* 27:9 LXX). The holy Scriptures she knew by heart.[52]

alibi, ut patienter agamus in omnibus, quae acciderint nobis: «Patiens enim vir multus prudentia; qui autem pusillanimis est, vehementer insipiens».'

[50] '*Quando dispendia rei familiaris et eversio totius patrimonii nuntiabatur, aiebat: «Quid enim prodest homini, si totum mundum lucri fecerit et animam suam damni habuerit? Aut quam dabit homo conmutationem pro anima sua?». Et «Nudus exivi de utero matris meae, nudus et redeam. Sicut placuit Domino, ita factum est; sit nomen Domini benedictum», et illud: «Nolite diligere mundum nec ea, quae in mundo sunt, quoniam omne, quod in mundo est, desiderium carnis est et concupiscentia oculorum et superbia vitae huius, quae non est ex Patre, sed de mundo est. Et mundus pertransiet et concupiscentia eius». Scio ei scriptas infirmitates gravissimas liberorum et maxime Toxotii sui, quem diligebat plurimum. Cumque illud virtute conplesset: «Turbata sum et non sum locuta», in haec verba prorupit: «Qui amat filium aut filiam supra me, non est me dignus», et orans ad Dominum loquebatur: «Posside filios mortificatorum», qui pro te cotidie mortificant corpora sua*.'

[51] '*His et talibus testimoniis, quasi armatura Christi et adversum omnia quidem vitia, sed praecipue instruebat se contra invidiam saevientem et patiendo iniurias furorem gravidi pectoris mitigabat*.'

[52] '*… nihil ingenio eius docilius fuit. Tarda erat ad loquendum, velox ad audiendum, memor illius praecepti: «Audi, Israhel, et tace». Scripturas tenebat memoriter*.'

As Jerome remarks in chapter 28, she keeps familiarity with Christ and the Scriptures until her death.

Now let us turn to the portrait of the cultured and curious Marcella (a 'hieronymized Marcella', called her Andrew Cain)[53], as she is described in letter 127 (dating from 412). In *Ep.* 127,4 her eagerness to study the Bible and to shape her life according to it are shown. Again, the study of the Bible and the ascetic's life are united: on the one hand, to learn and to meditate God's word means to mould one's life according to it; on the other hand, to mould one's life according to it means to interpret the Scripture properly:

> Her delight in the divine Scriptures was incredible. She was for ever singing: 'Thy words have I hid in mine heart that I might not sin against thee' (*Ps.* 118:11), as well as the words which describe the perfect man: 'His delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night' (*Ps.* 1:2). This meditation in the law she understood not of a review of the written words as among the Jews the Pharisees think, but of action according to that saying of the Apostle: 'Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink or what soever ye do, do all to the glory of God' (1*Cor.* 10:31). She remembered also the prophet's words: 'Through thy precepts I get understanding' (*Ps.* 118:104), and felt sure that only when she had fulfilled these would she be permitted to understand the Scriptures. In this sense we read elsewhere that: 'Jesus began both to do and teach' (*Acts* 1:1).[54]

We might notice that, as regards the knowledge of Scripture, the gender model proposed to women in these letters is by no means different from that proposed to men: on the contrary, Paula and Marcella are examples offered to men who are not at all interested, neither in Christian doctrine nor in Scripture.[55] But there is one feature distinguishing Marcella as a female: conscious as she is of the πρέπον, convenience, and of the necessity to obey the Apostle who forbids women to teach (1*Tim.* 2:12), whenever she is asked about a problem – even an exegetical one –, she ascribes the merit of her answer to male teaching (*ibid.* 7):

> … when she answered questions she gave her own opinion not as her own but as from me or some one else, thus admitting that what she taught she had herself learned from others. For she knew that the Apostle had said: 'I suffer not a woman to teach' (1*Tim.* 2:12); and

[53] *The Letters of Jerome* (2010), 93.

[54] '*Divinarum Scripturarum ardor incredibilis, semperque cantabat: «In corde meo abscondi eloquia tua, ut non peccem tibi», et illud de perfecto viro: «Et in lege Domini voluntas eius et in lege eius meditabitur die ac nocte» meditationem legis non replicando, quae scripta sunt, ut Iudaeorum aestimant Pharisaei, sed in opere intellegens iuxta illud apostolicum: «Sive comeditis sive bibitis sive quid agitis, omnia in gloriam Domini facientes» et prophetae verba dicentis: «A mandatis tuis intellexi», ut, postquam mandata conplesset, tunc se sciret mereri intellegentiam Scripturarum. Quod et alibi legimus: «Quia coepit Iesus facere et docere»*.'

[55] As we can argue even from the famous incipit of Jerome's epistle to Principia (*Ep.* 65,1): 'If men asked about the Scriptures, I would not speak to women' ('*Si viri de Scripturis quaererent, mulieribus non loquerer*'; translation mine).

she would not seem to inflict a wrong upon the male sex many of whom (including sometimes priests) questioned her concerning obscure and doubtful points.[56]

In sum, we may apply to Paula, Marcella, and all Jerome's women the exhortation with which he concludes his letter to Demetrias, from 414 (*Ep*. 130,20):

> Love the holy Scriptures, and wisdom will love you. 'Love wisdom, and it will keep you safe. Honour wisdom, and it will embrace you round about' (*Prov*. 4:6-8 LXX). Let the jewels on your breast and in your ears be the gems of wisdom. Let your tongue know no theme but Christ, let no sound pass your lips that is not holy'.[57]

The importance of the Bible in these descriptions of female ascetics is self-evident. Passionate knowledge of Scripture is part of the female gender model proposed by Jerome: the Bible *a priori* shapes life, and *a posteriori* represents a sort of key to the reading of life.[58] Obviously, we may think that we are presented here with portraits which are – at least partially – 'literary', rather than historical, and hence plausible (as some clusters of biblical quotations, put in the mouth of female ascetics, recur elsewhere in Jerome's works[59]). Nonetheless we cannot deny that, in Jerome's view, the Bible represents – or at least should represent – the true heart of those cultured women's lives.

3. In the texts we have examined, sometimes life exerts its influence over the interpretation of the Bible, and sometimes the Bible seems to shape life and its description. On the one hand, Scripture provides Jerome with quotations which can be expounded in order to uphold subordination of woman to man, or to disparage both marriage and the female gender at large; on the other hand, this negative view of the female gender is questioned by the experience of the relationship with actual historical women, to whom a certain *aequalitas* cannot be denied. In sum, Jerome's discourse about women – just like that of the fathers – both shapes the Christians' perception of the female sex and 'respond*s* to what happens',[60] inasmuch as it is influenced by the actual presence of women in their lives.

[56] '*… sic interrogata respondebat, ut etiam sua non sua diceret, sed vel mea vel cuiuslibet alterius, ut et in ipso, quod docebat, se discipulam fateretur – sciebat enim dictum ab Apostolo: «Docere autem mulieri non permitto» –, ne virili sexui et interdum sacerdotibus de obscuris et ambiguis sciscitantibus facere videretur iniuriam*.'

[57] '*Ama Scripturas sanctas, et amabit te sapientia. «Dilige eam et servabit te; honora illam et amplexabitur te». Haec monilia in pectore et in auribus tuis haereant. Nihil aliud noverit lingua nisi Christum, nihil possit sonare, nisi quod sanctum est*.'

[58] Clementina Mazzucco, 'Donne e Bibbia nel cristianesimo tra II e V secolo', in Adriana Valerio (ed.), *Donna e Bibbia. Storia ed esegesi* (Bologna, 2006), 23-49, 30.

[59] But this is another issue, which I hope to examine more closely elsewhere.

[60] G. Clark, *Women* (Oxford, 1993), 2.

‘Perfection Appropriate to the Fragile Human Condition’: Jerome and Pelagius on the Perfection of Christian Life

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Abstract

What does the perfection of Christian life consist in? This article focuses on two great authorities on ascetic life in late 4th-century Rome, Jerome and Pelagius. They both emphasise the importance of permanent dissatisfaction with what one has already achieved and a permanent focus on what is ahead. The main difference between Jerome’s ‘*imperfect perfection*’ and Pelagius’ ‘*nostrumque non progredi, iam reverti est*’ seems to correspond to Jerome’s central interest in the Pelagian controversy, the (im)possibility of sinlessness.

Jerome and Pelagius are usually portrayed as irreconcilable rivals in the Pelagian controversy, or as rivals for the favour of Roman aristocratic women.[1] In this article, however, I would like to focus on the perfection of Christian life as these two authors understand it and on the common features they share.

1. Early Jerome

In his early commentaries on Paul’s letters (386), Jerome explains that the decision concerning one’s destiny is not in the hands of the inscrutable grace of God. We know that God ‘works all things according to the counsel of his will’ (*Eph.* 1:11) and he wants ‘all men to be saved’ (1*Tim.* 2:4). This does not mean that men are necessarily saved, adds Jerome. Necessity excludes the reward; therefore one cannot regard as good what is not voluntary. A human being can be an image of God only when behaving well from freedom, not from necessity.[2]

A similar emphasis on the responsibility of each for his own destiny appears in the *Commentary on Jonah* (396), where Jerome explains God’s unclear or unfulfilled promises. God’s mercy does not consist in the final restoration of

[1] See Augustine, *C. Iul.* II 10,36 (PL 44, 699-700), see Yves-Marie Duval, ‘Pélage est-il le censeur inconnu de l’Adversus Iovinianum à Rome en 393? Ou: du portrait-robot de l’hérétique chez s. Jérôme’, *RHE* 75 (1980), 525-57.

[2] See Jerome, *In Eph.* I 1,11 (PL 26, 454C); *In Philem.* 14 (CChr.SL 77C, 96-7); similarly *Adv. Iov.* 2,3 (PL 23, 299). See my paper ‘Human Freedom according to the Earliest Latin Commentaries on Paul’s Letters’, *SP* 44 (2010), 385-90.

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all things, regardless of one's virtues and vices (a kind of mercy deprived of justice). Confidence in God's mercy is articulated vaguely, because uncertainty concerning salvation rather brings people to repentance. God looks at human deeds and often withholds promised benefits from those who turn to evil, or contrarily does not impose promised punishments when people turn to repentance: '[God] wants penitence of the sinner more than his death, and hence gladly changes his decision when he sees a change in human deeds.'[3] In the *Commentary on Matthew* (398), Jerome reflects on the fact that the gifts given to individual people are far from equal. As he explains in his commentary on the parable of the talents (*Matth.* 25:14-30), the unequal gifts are not a case of injustice, because the effort of the will is more important than the resulting act – in this case, the profit of the landlord.[4] On the other hand, a few paragraphs later, he admits that although the landlord was equally pleased with the efforts of both of his loyal servants, the one who deserved a greater reward was the one who multiplied his master's property to a greater degree.[5] For Jerome, the emphasis on *studii voluntas* as opposed to formal acts is an instance of the superiority of the Gospel over Jewish law. In the Gospel, the effort of the will deserves a reward even if the act itself which a person has decided to carry out is not realised for another reason. In such a case, God will take into account the faith of that person and 'fill in' what was lacking in the act.[6] However, human deeds are not totally insignificant. Prudent virgins (*Matth.* 25:1-13) decorate themselves with faith and acts, says Jerome, while the foolish ones resemble men who confess their faith with their mouths but neglect to act.[7]

2. Late Jerome

A different accent may be found two decades later. In the *Commentary on Ezekiel*, book IV (412), Jerome briefly characterises the cooperation between human will and God's grace.[8] Men cannot count on their merits and virtues but they depend on God's generosity. God's benignity does not negate human freedom but human freedom itself needs God's help, Jerome explains now, and

[3] *In Ion.* 3,10 (CChr.SL 76, 410): '*… et quia mauult paenitentiam peccatoris, quam mortem, libenter mutauit sententiam quia uidit opera commutata*.'

[4] See *In Matth.* IV 25,14-5 (CChr.SL 77, 239).

[5] See *In Matth.* IV 25,26-8 (CChr.SL 77, 242).

[6] See *In Matth.* II 11,30; IV 25,29 (CChr.SL 77, 87; 242-3).

[7] See *In Matth.* IV 25,1 (CChr.SL 77, 236).

[8] This shift therefore precedes the second series of Jerome's correspondence with Augustine (which starts in 415). However, Augustine never received clear answers to his questions concerning the origin of the human soul, the inherited guilt of infants and *sententia Iacobi* (*Ep.* 166 and 167). See Ralph Hennings, *Der Briefwechsel zwischen Augustinus und Hieronymus und ihr Streit um den Kanon des Alten Testaments und die Auslegung von* Gal. *2, 11-14*, VCS 21 (Leiden, 1994), 29-62.

adds a series of biblical references (*Ps.* 126:1; 1*Cor.* 3:7; *Rom.* 9:16; *Luke* 17:10).[9] Salvation depends upon God but human cooperation is necessary. The culmination of salvation is, beyond doubt, an act of God, while it is men's task to try and strive (aided by the grace of God). In one passage, Jerome surprisingly grants men even the 'beginning of good will' ('*initia voluntatis*'); only a few years later (shortly after Jerome's death), this formulation will become the subject of another controversy.

So I opened my mouth, and he gave me the scroll to eat (*Ezek.* 3:2). I opened my mouth, says he, because I was told: Open your mouth and eat. I opened my mouth and the Lord gave me food, as the beginnings of the will are in our power, and the perfection of salvation is given by the Lord. *So it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God who shows mercy*; and yet to will and to run depends on our will.[10]

This shift in emphasis is confirmed in Jerome's last exegetical word, the *Commentary on Jeremiah* (414-417), where he repeatedly writes about the fragile human condition ('*fragilitas humana, fragilis humana condicio*') and remarks that a man is a 'fragile vessel' ('*vas fragile*'), nothing good dwells in his flesh, he does not do what he wants, and longs to be rescued from this body of death.[11]

Jerome's polemics against the Pelagians (414-415) finally put the accent on the limits of human power. Jerome strives to refute the assertion that men are capable of avoiding sin completely and eradicating their desires and that they can easily fulfil all of God's commandments.[12] For which Christian, says Jerome, would not like to be without sin if willing itself were enough?[13] Referring to Paul's epistles, he accentuates the necessity of being aided by God's grace.[14] This does not consist only in the gifts which were given to men in creation as part of their nature, because in such a case, human effort would be enough. God's help is not limited to a single time, but it is constant, and therefore, 'I seek that I may obtain, and when I have obtained I seek again.'[15]

[9] See *In Ezech.* IV 16,14 (CChr.SL 75, 180).

[10] *In Ezech.* I 3,2 (CChr.SL 75, 31): '*"Et aperui os meum, et cibauit me uolumine illo." Ego inquit aperui os meum, quia mihi dictum est: Aperi os tuum et comede. Et aperto ore dominus largitus est cibos, ut initia uoluntatis in nobis sint et perfectionem beatitudinis a domino consequamur: "non est enim uolentis neque currentis, sed miserentis est Dei"; attamen et uelle et currere nostri arbitrii est.*'

[11] See *In Ierem.* 1,9,2; 3,15,2; 6,17,4; 6,20,4 (CChr.SL 74, 10; 129; 304; 309-10).

[12] See *Ep.* 133,1-3 (CSEL 56/1, 241-7); *Adv. Pelag.* prol. 1; 1,7; 2,15 (CChr.SL 80, 3-4; 10; 73-4); *In Ierem.* 4,1,2 (CChr.SL 74, 174). See Mark Sheridan, 'The controversy over ΑΠΑΘΕΙΑ: Cassian's Sources and his Use of them', *Studia Monastica* 39 (1997), 287-310; Michel Spanneut, 'L'*apatheia* chrétienne aux quatre premiers siècles', *Proche-orient chrétien* 52 (2002), 162-302 (for Jerome, 280-1).

[13] See *Ep.* 133,8 (CSEL 56/1, 253).

[14] See *Ep.* 133,6 (CSEL 56/1, 249-51); *Adv. Pelag.* 1,5; 1,28 (CChr.SL 80, 9; 35) with reference to 1*Cor.* 4:7, *Rom.* 9:16 and *Phil.* 2:13.

[15] *Ep.* 133,6 (CSEL 56/1, 250); see the whole passage 133,5-6 (CSEL 56/1, 248-51) and *Adv. Pelag.* 1,1; 1,2; 1,28; 3,11 (CChr.SL 80, 6; 7-8; 35; 111).

3. Jerome's 'imperfect perfection'

Jerome does not deny free choice of the will or the necessity of God's aid, which is why he attributes every good human deed to both the person that acts and to God, who helps them; men cannot rely on their efforts or their merits, but they rely on God's help – which, however, does not contradict the freedom of men.[16] If men cannot achieve complete eradication of desires and permanent sinlessness, what should they strive for? Genuine human perfection, according to Jerome, begins with the acknowledgement of one's imperfection,[17] in the way Scripture calls for it. As the Apostle John advises us, we should admit our sin in order not to deceive ourselves (1*John* 1:8),[18] and then, together with the Apostle Paul, we are to recognise our knowledge as only partial (see 1*Cor*. 13:9-12). Like him, we must never claim that we have reached our goal or achieved perfection, but we should forget the things which are behind us and focus on the things which are ahead (see *Phlm*. 3:12-5), admit our own imperfection and keep in mind that we rather seek than have found ('*magis quaerere quam invenisse*').[19]

The acknowledgement of one's own imperfection is the foundation on which to build the other steps, characterised by a permanent critical approach to what has been achieved and an incessant search for something better: what seemed to be perfect today should be exposed as imperfect tomorrow; one should always strive for something better, move upwards and never stop.

> He [*i.e*. the Apostle Paul] further declares that he always forgot the past, and ever stretched forward to the things in front, thus teaching that no heed should be paid to the past, but the future earnestly desired; so that what today he thought perfect, while he was stretching forward to better things and things in front, tomorrow proves to have been imperfect. And thus at every step, never standing still, but always running, he shows that to be imperfect which we men thought perfect, and teaches that our only perfection and true righteousness is that which is measured by the excellence of God.[20]

In comparison with the perfection of God, human perfection is always imperfect, detached from the ideal of permanent and complete sinlessness (in a similar way,

[16] See *Adv. Pelag*. prol. 2; 1,1 (CChr.SL 80, 5; 6-7); *In Ezech*. IV 16,14 (CChr.SL 75, 180).

[17] *Ep*. 133,6 (CSEL 56/1, 250): '*Haec est in hominibus sola perfectio, si inperfectos esse se nouerint*.'

[18] *Adv. Pelag*. 1,13 (CChr.SL 80, 15). At the same time Jerome answers an objection based on 1*John* 5:18. For Jerome's attempt to harmonise 1*John* 3:9 and 1:8 see *Adv. Iov*. 2,1-2 (PL 23, 295-7) and Eric Rebillard, 'Quasi funambuli: Cassien et la controverse pélagienne sur la perfection', *REAug* 40 (1994), 197-210.

[19] See *Adv. Pelag*. 1,15 (CChr.SL 80, 18-9); *In Ezech*. XIII 44,1-3 (CChr.SL 75, 644).

[20] *Adv. Pelag*. 1,15 (CChr.SL 80, 18-9): '*Et asserit praeteritorum se semper obliuisci et ad priora semper extendi: per quae docet praeterita negligenda et futura cupienda, ut quod hodie perfectum putauit, dum ad meliora et priora extenditur, cras imperfectum fuisse conuincat, atque ita per singulos gradus, dum numquam in statione sed semper in cursu est, imperfectum doceat quod homines putabamus esse perfectum, solamque perfectionem et ueram iustitiam dei tantum uirtutibus coaptandam*.' ET NPNF 2-06, par. 14a, p. 455.

the immutability of God differs from human inconstancy).[21] Jerome's notion of Christian perfection has the form of 'imperfect perfection', as it were, perfection 'according to the poor measure of human frailty',[22] which acknowledges its dependence on God's help and attributes everything to his generosity.[23]

4. Pelagius

The key moment of Pelagius' concept of human freedom is the natural capacity of the will to turn towards one possibility or the other ('*utriusque partis possibilitas*'), which eventually means the ability to do both good and evil. This possibility is a necessary prerequisite of morally attributable good and virtue. Men do not perform good or bad deeds on the grounds of natural necessity ('*necessitas naturae*'), an irresistible external influence or bodily stimuli, but it is always a movement of the will which is the basis of their good and bad deeds – either in agreement with human nature and the will of God, or against them.[24] The possibility of sinning and the possibility of not sinning are, according to Pelagius, the opposite of a double necessity (the necessity of sinning and the necessity of not sinning), which cancels the function of reward and punishment.[25] Pelagius does not claim that any human being can attain lifelong sinlessness (he explicitly denies it);[26] what he regards as essential is the defence of the *possibility* of avoiding sin and the culmination of one's life in righteousness.[27]

[21] *Adv. Pelag.* 2,2-5; 2,30; 3,4 (CChr.SL 80, 54-61; 96-7; 102).

[22] *Adv. Pelag.* 1,15 (CChr.SL 80, 19-20): '*Haec est hominis uera sapientia, imperfectum esse se nosse, atque, ut ita loquar, cunctorum in carne iustorum imperfecta perfectio est … Hoc, inquit, sapiamus, qui uolumus secundum humanae fragilitatis modulum esse perfecti: necdum nos accepisse, necdum comprehendisse, necdum esse perfectos. Et quia necdum perfecti sumus et forsitan aliter sapimus quam poscit uera et perfecta perfectio, si quid aliter sapimus et aliter intellegimus quam dei habet scientia, et hoc nobis dominus reuelabit, ut precemur cum Dauid atque dicamus: "Reuela oculos meos et considerabo mirabilia de lege tua."*'

[23] *Adv. Pelag.* 1,13 (CChr.SL 80, 16): '*Et haec est hominis summa iustitia, quidquid potuerit habere uirtutis, non suum putare esse, sed domini, qui largitus est.*'

[24] Pelagius, *Dem.* 2-3; 7 (PL 30, 17B-18A; 22B); also Augustine, *De nat. grat.* 30,34 (BA 21, 306).

[25] See Robert F. Evans, *Pelagius. Inquiries and Reappraisals* (New York, 1968), 95; Winrich Löhr, 'Pelagius' Schrift *De natura*: Rekonstruktion und Analyse', *RechAug* 31 (1999), 235-94; *id.*, 'Augustin, Pelagius und der Streit um die christliche Lebensform', in Therese Fuhrer (ed.), *Die christlich-philosophischen Diskurse der Spätantike: Texte, Personen, Institutionen* (Stuttgart, 2008), 221-43.

[26] Augustine, *De gestis* 6,16 (BA 21, 468): '*Non autem diximus quod inueniatur aliquis ab infantia usque ad senectam qui numquam peccauerit, sed quoniam a peccatis conuersus proprio labore et dei gratia possit esse sine peccato, nec per hoc tamen in posterum inconuersibilis.*'

[27] See *In Phil.* 4,21 (Souter 416), *In Rom.* 8,3 (Souter 61), *Dem.* 5-7 (PL 30, 19D-22D); *De vita christiana* (PL 50, 390A-C); Augustine, *De nat. grat.* 35,41-36,42 and 61,71-67,80 (BA 21,

The true realisation of human freedom is not sin, but the choice of the good through which men can develop and continue to realise the image of God in themselves.[28] On the contrary, men who repeatedly commit sins are gradually conducted into the slavery of a habit (*consuetudo, longus usus peccandi*, *longa consuetudo vitiorum*), under the influence of which men act almost against their will ('*velut invitus*').[29] The efficacy of sinful habits is also increased by example, by means of which sin spreads both among one's contemporaries and from one generation to another. Even a habitual sin, however, is always an act of a concrete person who thus bears personal responsibility (mainly because such a person has already given in to sin before and quite freely).[30] At the same time, the spreading of sin through example is a manifestation of the solidarity of the human race, though in a negative way, in the relational aspect of sin.[31]

From this situation, humankind was redeemed by Christ and his voluntary death, by means of which people were forgiven their sins, shown the will of God and provided with a new example; he redeemed humankind by means of 'the forgiveness of sins, his teaching and example'.[32] For Pelagius, the forgiveness of sins is closely related to faith and baptism. Men are justified by mere faith ('*sola fide*'), regardless of compliance with the law and regardless of their previous deeds (for which they would rather be condemned instead).[33] The sacrament of justification is represented by baptism, in which men are purified of their previous sins and set free from the dominance of their sinful habit. At the same time, Pelagius puts great emphasis on the practice of Christian life, which must follow the forgiveness of sins. Having received baptism, a Christian is required to perform 'works of righteousness' ('*opera iustitiae*') or 'works of faith' ('*opera fidei*'), without which faith would be dead.[34]

The foundation of Christian life rests on following Christ. Only those men who 'follow the teaching of Christ and imitate his example' may be called

318-22 and 382-400). See also Peter Brown, 'Pelagius and His Supporters: Aims and Environment', *JTS* N.S. 19 (1968), 93-114, 103-4.

[28] See *In Col.* 3,10 (Souter 466); *In Eph.* 4,24; 5,1 (Souter 369; 372); *In Rom.* 8,15 (Souter 64); *Dem.* 19 (PL 30, 33B-C). *In Eph.* 4,24 (Souter 369).

[29] *In Rom.* 7,7.15.18.20.23.24 (Souter 56-60).

[30] *In Rom.* 7,18-20; 11,24 (Souter 59; 90); *In Gal.* 3,11; 5,17 (Souter 319; 336); *Dem.* 8 (PL 30, 23B-D).

[31] The idea of the transmission of a positive example is not developed in Pelagius, and yet its rudiment may be seen in *Dem.* 3 (PL 30, 18C): '*Unde, quaeso, hominibus alienis a Deo placent? Unde autem illis bona nisi de naturae bono? Et cum ista quae dixi, vel omnia in uno, vel singula in singulis haberi videamus, cum omnium natura una sit, exemplo suo invicem sibi ostendunt, omnia in omnibus esse posse, quae vel omnia in omnibus, vel singula in singulis inveniantur.*'

[32] *In 1Thess.* 1,10 (Souter 420): '*Dimittendo peccata et doctrina sua et exemplo ab ira nos iudicii liberavit, quia iam in spe(m) libertatem habemus.*' – See R.F. Evans, *Pelagius* (1968), 106.

[33] *In Rom.* 4,5; 5,1; 10,3 (Souter 36; 41; 81); *In 2Cor.* 5,19 (Souter 261); *In Gal.* 3,26 (Souter 323).

[34] *In Rom.* 3,28; 5,21 (Souter 34; 48); *In Gal.* 3,10b (Souter 319).

'Christians'.[35] All Christians want to 'abide in Christ', and that is why they try to live like Christ (see 1*John* 2:6). They imitate Christ in all aspects so that the life of Christ could be manifested as fully as possible in their own lives.[36] Only those men who follow Christ in all aspects can rightly bear his name. In their lives, Christians are to exceed the virtues of philosophers and Old Testament saints and strive for a church 'without spot or wrinkle' (*Eph*. 5:27).[37] The promises of a heavenly reward and the threat of eternal punishment are supposed to motivate Christians to persevere until the very end.[38]

Perseverance is strongly accentuated by Pelagius. Conversion and baptism in themselves do not guarantee the eternal reward; Pelagius maintains that some of the believers will not be redeemed (namely those who did not persevere). He prompts Christians to act in agreement with the reward which has been promised to them, and he warns them against being content with themselves and against the illusion that perfection can be achieved for good. That is why he encourages them to life-long striving for further progress. It does not suffice to begin a good work, but it must also be accomplished.[39] The striving for perfection must never stop, because 'if we do not proceed, we are already retreating' ('*At ubi coeperimus stare, descendimus: nostrumque non progredi, iam reverti est*').[40]

Comparison and conclusion

As we have seen, both authors accentuate the effort of the will, counterbalanced by the limits of human power and the necessity of the grace of God. These two moments are a prerequisite without which striving for a Christian life would

[35] *De vita christiana* 14 (PL 50, 400A): '*Nec quisquam se Christianum iudicet, nisi qui Christi et doctrinam sequitur et imitatur exemplum*.'

[36] *In Gal*. 2,20; 4,19 (Souter 316; 327); *De vita christiana* 14 (PL 50, 400B-D). See Gisbert Greshake, *Gnade als konkrete Freiheit. Eine Untersuchung zur Gnadenlehre des Pelagius* (Mainz, 1972), 124.

[37] *De vita christiana* 1 (PL 50, 383A-B); *Dem*. 8 (PL 30, 23D); *In Eph*. 5,27 (Souter 378).

[38] *Dem*. 17-18 (PL 30, 31A-33A), *In Eph*. 1,18 (Souter 349-350). See Flavio G. Nuvolone – Aimé Solignac, 'Pélage et pélagianisme', *DSp* 12B (Paris, 1986), 2889-2942, 2931-2.

[39] See *Dem*. 28; 30 (PL 30, 42D-43B; 43D-45A); *De lege divina* 9 (PL 30, 114D-115A); *Cel*. 32 (CSEL 56/1, 355-6); see R.F. Evans, *Pelagius* (1968), 116.

[40] *Dem*. 27 (PL 30, 42B-D): '*Quamdiu sumus in hoc corpore, numquam nos ad perfectum venisse credamus: sic enim melius pervenitur. Tamdiu non relabimur retro, quamdiu ad priora contendimus. At ubi coeperimus stare, descendimus: nostrumque non progredi, iam reverti est. Cesset omnis ignavia, et inutilis de praeterito labore securitas. Si volumus non redire, currendum est … Ergo tu hunc imitare qui dixit: "Imitatores mei estote, sicut et ego Christi". Obliviscere omne praeteritum: et quotidie inchoare te puta: ne pro praesenti die, quo debes servire Deo, praeteritum imputes. Optime quaesita custodies, si semper inquiras. Damnum parata sentient, si parare cessaveris*.' See Georges de Plinval, *Pélage. Ses écrits, sa vie et sa réforme* (Lausanne, 1943), 229.

not make sense and men would not bear responsibility for their works. Even though the initial contexts differ – Jerome is concerned with the role of human effort in contrast to formally judged acts of the law, while Pelagius takes a stand against determinism – both authors aim at a very similar and highly demanding ideal of Christian life.

This life rests on the acknowledgement of one's own imperfection, with Christ as its measure that is to be followed and imitated in all aspects by Christians. We seek but we have not yet found; we strive but we have not yet reached the final goal. This life-long effort is motivated by constant dissatisfaction with one's achievements (without which men stagnate at once) and a permanent search for something better. The result is appropriate to the human condition: that is, perfection 'according to the poor measure of human frailty', in which human efforts and the aid of the grace of God combine.

The main difference between Jerome's and Pelagius' conceptions, as I see it, consists in the issue of the possibility of sinlessness, which played a different role with each author. Whereas Jerome vehemently denies the possibility of sinlessness as blasphemy, putting oneself on a par with God and discrediting the efficacy of the grace of God, for Pelagius the possibility of sinlessness provides an important contrast to the *necessity* of sinning, which would make a Christian life impossible. However, the ideal of a Christian life is described by both authors in a very similar way.

The *Imago Dei* and Salvation among the Antiochenes: A Comparison of John Chrysostom with Theodore of Mopsuestia

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Abstract

Traditional scholarship has often interpreted Antiochene theology through the lenses of the 'Antiochene vs Alexandrian' paradigm. This is certainly the case for the doctrine of the *imago dei*, where Theodore's doctrine is regarded simply as a more extensive development of those of his peers, such as Diodore of Tarsus and John Chrysostom. Yet, when we examine Chrysostom's teachings in detail, it is apparent that he differs significantly from Theodore on this subject. In fact, Chrysostom's teaching on the *imago dei* and its relation to soteriology shows a greater resemblance to the Alexandrian-Cappadocian traditions, with a few of his own insights thrown in. This is to be seen in his belief that the *imago dei* is invisible and may refer to either the male or female, and that Adam was first created immortal. It is also evident in his teaching that the Son of God alone is the exact image of God and the agent of the recapitulation. Furthermore, Chrysostom's *imago dei* doctrine also proves to be unique in its predication of a life of pleasure to the human *telos* and his appropriation of the Jewish-Syriac Christian notions of the robe of glory to depict the pre-Fall Adam. To be sure, Chrysostom and Theodore do share a few theological accents, such as a joint esteem for the role of the body in soteriology and their recognition of the closely knitted relationship between humanity and the cosmos. Nevertheless, it is an open question whether these similarities are uniquely Antiochene. For these reasons, it would be difficult to speak of a homogeneous Antiochene doctrine of the *imago dei*. More importantly, these findings should also caution us that much care is needed whenever we apply the 'Antiochene vs Alexandrian' paradigm, lest it misleads us rather than illuminates.

The Antiochenes and the *Imago Dei*

Traditional scholarship has often regarded the fourth century Antiochenes, Diodore of Tarsus (d. 390), Theodore of Mopseustia (c. 350-428) and John Chrysostom (c. 349-407), as representatives of the so-called 'School of Antioch,' whose exegetical approaches and theologies are largely similar and distinct from those propounded by the 'School of Alexandria'.[1] In recent years, however, this

[1] For the traditional understanding of Antiochene exegesis, see Manlio Simonetti, *Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church: An Historical Introduction to Patristic Exegesis*, trans. John

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'Antioch vs Alexandria' paradigm has been called into question increasingly on both historical and theological grounds. On the theological front, for example, some have begun to highlight the differences between the Antiochenes.[2]

An interesting case in point is McLeod's recent assessment of Theodore's teaching on the *imago dei*. To be sure, McLeod still presumes the above paradigm by arguing that the Antiochenes viewed the *imago dei* as 'the power that God has … officially delegated to man *qua* male to rule over the whole material universe … [and] that women are nevertheless to be considered subordinate to men.' Nevertheless, he also believes Theodore's teaching to be far more developed than those of his peers and is in this way different from theirs.[3] Yet, if one is to set aside the Antiochene vs Alexandrian paradigm, might not a case be made also that the very differences highlighted by McLeod may well be signs of significant differences between the Antiochenes, at least on the subject of the *imago dei*? In this paper, we will argue that the latter is most likely the case for John Chrysostom. Indeed, when we compare Chrysostom's doctrine of the *imago dei* with that of Theodore, it will be seen that his views are not only significantly different from his friend's, but are also similar, in some important aspects, to that of the Alexandrian-Cappadocian traditions, with a few of his own unique insights thrown in. This, in turn, should also caution us against the interpretive bias that may be inherent in the 'Antiochene vs Alexandrian' paradigm. To this end, we will examine Chrysostom's teachings on the *imago dei* before comparing them with that of Theodore. To do so, however, a survey of Theodore's doctrine is called for and it is to this we now turn.

Theodore and the *Imago Dei*

Theodore's conception of the *imago dei*, as McLeod points out, is shaped significantly by Paul's teachings in *Romans* 5 and *Colossians* 1.[4] Firstly, in light of the Adam-Christ typology of *Romans* 5:14 and *Colossians* 1:15's portrayal

A. Hughes (Edinburgh, 1994, 2001), 59, 67. By and large theological studies of the Antiochenes have taken on board this paradigm, such as Russell's study of the Patristic doctrine of deification. See Norman Russell, *The Doctrine of Deification in the Greek Patristic Tradition*, Oxford Early Christian Studies (Oxford, 2004), 237.

[2] Bradley Nassif, for example, notes that, despite their literalistic readings of Scripture, Chrysostom is, nevertheless, far more amendable to allegorical readings of Scripture as compared to Theodore. Bradley Louis Nassif, *Antiochene 'Theoria' in John Chrysostom's Exegesis* (Ph.D., Fordham University, 1991). For historical challenges to this paradigm, see Andrew Louth, 'Why Did the Syrians Reject the Council of Chalcedon?', in R.M. Price and Mary Whitby (eds), *Chalcedon in Context: Church Councils, 400-700* (Liverpool, 2009), 108-9.

[3] McLeod regards Theodore's conception of the *imago dei* as bodily to be a 'fuller explanation than that put forward by the other Antiochenes.' Frederick G. McLeod, *The Image of God in the Antiochene Tradition* (Washington, D.C., 1999), 61, 82.

[4] *Ibid*. 82; Frederick G. McLeod, *Theodore of Mopseustia* (London and New York, 2009), 26.

of Christ as the 'invisible image of God', Theodore would regard the two as God's primary archetypes for humanity.

> Adam is the one who has begun the present life for all. We all are one human being by reason of our nature. For each one of us fulfils a membership role for the common good [in common]. So also Christ is the one who has begun the future life, with all sharing in a common way in his resurrection and, after his ascension, in his immortality, seeing we have become one with him. For each of us has a communal membership role with him due to our actual resemblance [by nature to him].[5]

Herein is also a fundamental difference between the two: Adam is to be the archetype of a humanity that is created *mortal*, while Christ the new archetype would represent and usher in a new *immortal* humanity. For 'just as Adam was the first to originate the state of mortality, our Lord Jesus Christ has begun the second state, that of immortality.'[6]

Secondly, Theodore regards Adam and Christ as the 'bonds of the universe.' As the union of an immortal soul and a visible mortal body', says Theodore, Adam was God's intended means to 'gather all of creation into one "reality", so that, though constituted from different natures, creation might be gathered into this one bond' or 'one cosmic body'. Unfortunately, with Adam's sin, the human soul was detached from the body and Adam's role as 'the bond uniting creation to himself was [thereby] dissolved.'[7] The net result of this was that all humanity was condemned to live out their mortal lives without the hope of immortality. In Christ, however, humanity can be restored by his work of recapitulation, since Christ will raise and make immortal all who are bonded anew to him, the new archetypal *imago dei*.[8]

For Theodore, the corollary of the above is plain. If Adam and Christ are to be the bonds of all things visible and invisible, they must be constituted by both. For this reason, the *image of God* must be bodily and not invisible as many of his contemporaries claim. This, notes McLeod, is also why Christ's work of recapitulation is significant for soteriology. For Theodore:

> Christ in the flesh sums up and recapitulates all created beings within his humanity. As such, his humanity clearly serves as the mediating link or bond with God. Also because of his victory over sin and death, Christ has become the head of a new, immortal existence and the head of his Body, the church, enabling all those united to him, as do the members of any body to their head, to share in his exact union with the Word of God and become children of God … [It is in this way then, he is] the universal mediator and the spokesperson for all creation.[9]

[5] *Comm. Gal.* 3:27-8. Translated by F. McLeod in *Theodore* (2009), 119.
[6] *The Creation of Adam and Eve* (PG 66, 1009). Translated by F. McLeod in *Theodore* (2009), 88.
[7] F. McLeod, *Theodore* (2009), 27-8.
[8] *Ibid.* 28.
[9] *Ibid.* 64-5.

John Chrysostom's view of the *Imago Dei*

Turning to Chrysostom, the *locus classicus* of his teachings on the *imago dei*, as it seems to most scholars, is his *Homilies on Genesis*. For it is here that we find Chrysostom agreeing with Theodore that the *imago dei* of *Genesis* 1:26 denotes the idea of rule (ἀρχή) and authority (ἐξουσία), and refers exclusively to the *anēr*, or male.[10] Nevertheless, Chrysostom recognises that the woman does appropriate Adam's authority to some extent, since he would in a later homily rebuke her for not being satisfied with having 'all the visible things under your [Eve's] own authority and to exercise control over them all.'[11]

Where Chrysostom seems to differ from Theodore is his clear distinction of the image, or *eikōn*, from humanity's 'likeness' (ὁμοίωσις) to God and his conviction that God intended all humanity to become like God, according to the human power (κατὰ δύναμιν ἀνθρωπίνην ὁμοίους ἡμᾶς γίνεσθαι Θεῷ).[12] By using κατὰ δύναμιν ἀνθρωπίνην as a way of describing the human potential for divine likeness, Chrysostom is clearly echoing Clement of Alexandria and, more particularly, Basil of Caesarea's formulation in his *De Spiritu Sancto*, where a Christian is spoken of as ὁμοιωθῆναι Θεῷ, κατὰ τὸ δυνατὸν ἀνθρώπου φύσει, that is, 'to be like God, according to the ability of the human nature.'[13] This similarity between Chrysostom and Basil is by no means surprising since Basil was not only well acquainted with his teacher, Diodore, but also a keen supporter of his bishop and mentor, Meletius, during the ecclesiastical schism at Antioch.[14] More importantly, this similarity between the two also suggests that Chrysostom's doctrine of the *imago dei* and soteriology may be far more in line with the Alexandrian-Cappadocian traditions than that of Theodore.

Our suspicion is confirmed, I think, for three reasons. First of all, when we turn to Chrysostom's discussion of the *imago dei* elsewhere, it is apparent that he disregards the *imago dei* distinctions developed in his *Genesis* homilies and adopts instead the Alexandrian-Cappadocian conception of the male and female as images of God.[15] Thus, when speaking of the training of children, he not only regards the task as the adorning of the 'image of the King of kings, for a

[10] Interpreting *Genesis* 1:26 in the light of 1*Corinthians* 11:7-12, Chrysostom argues that the woman is always subordinated to the man and, therefore, cannot be seen as having authority over all creation. Consequently, the woman cannot be the *eikōn* of God, which refers exclusively to rule and authority. *Hom. in Gen*. 8.9-10 (PG 53, 72); Diodore, PG 80, 107-10; *ibid*. 260-2; F. McLeod, *Image of God* (1999), 59-61.

[11] *Hom. in Gen*. 16.12 (PG 53, 130C). For a more extensive treatment of the relationship between the female and the *imago dei*, see F. McLeod, *Image of God* (1999), 198-211.

[12] *Hom. in Gen*. 9.7 (PG 53, 78B).

[13] *De Sp. S*. I 2.

[14] Basil, *Ep*. 66-9, 80, 82.

[15] The Alexandrians are indebted to Philo for their understanding that the invisible soul, not the body, is the *imago dei*. See Philo, *Op*. 137*; Fug*. 69. N. Russell (2004), 129. For the Cappadocians'

human being is the image of God' (εἰκὼν γὰρ τοῦ Θεοῦ ὁ ἄνθρωπος), but also conceives it as 'rendering [the children] according to the [divine] likeness (τὸ καθ' ὁμοίωσιν ἀποδιδόντες).'[16] When speaking of the use of gold in *Homily* 7 *on 1 Timothy*, he criticises those who hoard it up or 'form it into a chain for the image of God' and advises his listeners to use the gold to free him who is bound and not to bind *her* who is free – a clear association of the image of God, this time, with the female who wears golden jewellery.[17]

Secondly, in his exposition of *Colossians* 1:15, Chrysostom regards the Son as the exact image of the *invisible* God, thereby implying that the *imago dei* is both the Son and invisible:[18]

> While discussing about the worthiness of the Son, Paul says these [words], even as we proclaimed, 'Who is the image of the invisible God?' Therefore, whose image do you say he is? If of God, good – for the Son of God is also God; and he reveals the exact (ἀπαράλλακτον) image of God. Surely, he is exact according to this. […] 'The Image of the Invisible' is itself also invisible, and invisible in like manner, for otherwise it would not be an image. For an image, so far as it is an image, must necessarily be exact.[19]

This, of course, is a stark contrast to Theodore, who is careful in distinguishing between Christ the bodily *imago dei* from the Son of God who assumes Christ's humanity.[20]

Thirdly, Theodore's concept of Christ the *homo assumptus* is evidently absent in Chrysostom's discourse about spiritual progress. Rather, the way Chrysostom depicts the relationship between the body and soul is more akin to the Alexandrian and Cappadocians, since he would treat the soul as superior to the body and the main determinant for spiritual progress and salvation. In his

views on the *imago dei*, see Basil's *Hex*. 9.6, Gregory of Nazianzus' *Or*. 14.14 and Philip Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea* (London, 1994), 340.

[16] *Hom. in Eph*. 21 (PG 62, 154.43-50).

[17] *Hom. in 1 Tim*. 7 (PG 62, 539.1-4). Elsewhere in both *Homily* 7 and 9 on *Colossians*, he unhesitatingly speaks of the poor as 'the image of God.' Later, in *Homily* 12, he takes for granted that the child born out of marriage is 'not a lifeless image, nor yet the image of anything upon earth, but of God Himself, and after his likeness.' *Hom. in Col*. 7, 9 (PG 62, 361.29-30).

[18] For a detailed exposition of Chrysostom's teachings on Christ's divinity, see Melvin Edward Lawrenz, III, *The Christology of John Chrysostom* (Ph.D., Marquette University, 1987), 41-79.

[19] *Hom. in Col*. 3 (PG 62, 317.50-60, 318.44). It seems then that Chrysostom understands 'imaging' as taking on the attributes of that which one is imaging. So, for the Son to be the Image of the Invisible God, he must take on also God's attribute of invisibility. Chrysostom recognises, however, that the attribute of invisibility alone does not make one an image of God. If this is the case, angels would also be counted as images of God. Nevertheless, in the case of the human soul, he believes that its invisible attribute is due to its being the image of God. It should be noted that McLeod interprets this passage incorrectly by taking it to mean that Chrysostom is excluding 'the possibility that image is spiritual in nature.' This, in turn, misleads him to conclude later that Theodore's conception of the *imago dei* as bodily is not only similar to that of Chrysostom, but may be understood as a 'fuller explanation than that put forward by the other Antiochenes.' F. McLeod, *Image of God* (1999), 61, 82.

[20] *On the Incarnation* (PG 66, 991). Translated by McLeod in *Theodore* (2009), 141.

interpretation of *Genesis* 2:7, for example, he would argue that the first man was created from dust, a substance 'more lowly' than even the earth, and was therefore no different from 'the plants and the irrational beings.'[21] Yet, out of His loving-kindness, God decreed that this same creature would be 'a rational being by reason of a soul, by means of which this living thing emerged complete and perfect.' This was accomplished by God breathing 'a vital force', or the human soul, into this 'lifeless shell' so that the body can 'respond to this vital force and obey its will.'[22] Henceforth, the relationship between the body and the soul would be similar to that between a lyre to the musician, where the excellence of the former is found in its subjection to the latter:

> This body created in the Lord's design was [meant to be] like an instrument needing someone to activate it, rather like a lyre that needs someone who can by his own skill and artistry raise a fitting hymn to the Lord through his own limbs, as though by the strings of the lyre.[23]

Apart from these, Chrysostom also differs from Theodore in his understanding of Adam's original mortal state and how it was affected by the Fall. To be sure, Chrysostom would agree with Theodore that mortality, albeit a direct consequence of the Fall, should not be understood in an Augustinian fashion as God's penalty upon Adam's posterity.[24] Nevertheless, he would disagree with Theodore by teaching that Adam was created *immortal* and mortality was introduced only *after* the Fall.[25] This is first hinted of this in his *Homily X on Romans*, where he teaches that 'by Adam's death we all became mortals.' As he sees it, this consequence remains beneficial for human posterity since 'it is not in an immortal body in which we are sinning (τὸ μὴ ἐν ἀθανάτῳ σώματι ἁμαρτάνειν).' Presumably, he who sins in an immortal body would never have a chance for salvation.[26]

For his clearer exposition on this subject, we must turn to Chrysostom's *Homily 17 on 1 Corinthians*, where he reflects on immortality extensively in the midst of his defence of the resurrection. Since the beginning of creation, begins Chrysostom, God has intended humanity to be immortal. This is first

[21] *Hom. in Gen.* 12.12-4.

[22] *Ibid.* 12.15 (PG 53, 103.49-51). Translated by Robert C. Hill in *The Fathers of the Church* 74 (= FC 74) (Washington, D.C., 1985), 166.

[23] *Ibid.* 13.9-10 (Hill, FC 74, 173). For a more detail exposition of the body-soul relationship, see *Hom. in Eph.* 5 (PG 62, 41).

[24] Such a notion is not uniquely Antiochene. Athanasius, for example, is clear that the human being, apart from God will fall into dissolution and die since he is utterly dependent on God for his life. *De inc.* 4.4.

[25] Arguing against an anonymous interlocutor, most likely Jerome or Augustine, Theodore would assert that mortality is a given in human nature, even before the Fall, and should not be regarded as a penal consequence of Adam's sin. Indeed, human immortality is always a *conditional* immortality. PG 66, 1005, 1007. Translated by F. McLeod, *Theodore* (2009), 86-7.

[26] *Hom. in Rom.* 10 (PG 60, 478.5; Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers [= NPNF] I 11, 404).

apparent in the paradox that the God-given servants of humanity, namely, the seas, heaven, earth and so on, could endure far longer than the frail and short-lived humanity. As he sees it, this cannot be God's permanent plan for humanity since God would never make 'the slaves better than the masters.' Instead, an eventual immortality must await humanity through the resurrection.[27]

Moreover, Adam's life in Eden was already no less than a state of immortality. 'For even from the beginning,' Chrysostom notes,

> God was desiring (ἐβούλετο) to make you immortal, but you were not willing. Since the things also of that time were *dark hints of immortality* (ἀθανασίας αἰνίγματα): the communion with God; the absence of uneasiness from life; the freedom from grief, and cares, and toils, and other things which belong to a temporary existence. For Adam had no need either of a garment or a shelter, or any other provision of this sort; but rather was like to the angels; and many of the things to come he foreknew, and was filled with great wisdom … then there was no grief, nor pain, nor lamentation.[28]

More importantly, adds Chrysostom, Adam could never have had a mortal body in the first place, 'for if it [Adam's body] had been mortal before, it would not have undergone death as a chastisement (κολάσεως) afterwards.'[29]

A more conclusive argument, however, is to be found in his *De virginitate*. Here, as in the case of *Homily 17*, Chrysostom again portrays the primal couple as enjoying a blissful state of immortality. Adam and Eve, as he puts it, were virgins to begin with and entirely devoid of 'desire for sexual intercourse, conception, childbirth and every form of corruption.'[30] Indeed, if they had continued in their obedience, their propagation would have followed the way of the angels, that is, without the need of childbirth.[31] Unfortunately, once they

[27] *Hom. in 1Cor.* 17 (PG 61, 143.45; NPNF I 12, 99).

[28] *Ibid.* (NPNF I 12, 99, modified).

[29] Yet, just as we think Chrysostom has presented his views in no less explicit terms, he adds immediately that 'if the expectation (προσδοκία) of immortality alone so lifted Adam; had he been even immortal in reality, to what a pitch of arrogance would he not have proceeded?' Taken on its own, this remark seems to contradict what he just said earlier and puts him in agreement with Theodore, that is, Adam was mortal to begin with. Yet, if we take into consideration the weight of the arguments presented earlier and later in the *De virginitate* (see below), one must conclude otherwise. One can, of course, dismiss this latter remark as simply a rhetorical slip or incoherence on Chrysostom's part. Alternatively, we can postulate that Chrysostom regards Adam's immortality as contingent always to his obedience to God. As long as this is maintained, the primal couple would remain immortal. Once this relationship is broken, however, the couple will be estranged from God. All things would then be ruined and humanity will lapse into mortality. *Ibid.*

[30] *De virg.* 14.3 (Shore, 85); Gregory of Nyssa, *De virg.* 12; Shore, 8-9; Elizabeth A. Clark, *Reading Renunciation: Asceticism and Scripture in Early Christianity* (Princeton, NJ, 1999), 164; Robert Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom: A Study in Early Syriac Tradition* (London and New York, 1975), 304-6.

[31] *De virg.* 14.5-6. See also *Hom. in Gen.* 18.12 (Hill, FC 82, 10-11), where Chrysostom declares, 'from the beginning the practice of virginity was in force; but when through their indifference disobedience came on the scene and the ways of sin were opened, virginity took its leave

disobeyed God, 'this kingly robe [of virginity]' was stripped of them. In its stead, marriage, 'a garment befitting mortals and slaves,' was introduced, along with 'the decay of death, ruin, pain and a toilsome life.'[32] By asserting the virginity of Adam and Eve, Chrysostom is clearly in line with many church fathers, such as Jerome and Gregory of Nyssa, on this matter. Interestingly, his use of the 'robe of glory' motif both here and elsewhere also hints of a possible Jewish-Syriac Christian influence, since the motif is popular among Jewish and Syriac Christian depictions of the primal couple.[33] Most importantly, what we have here also is Chrysostom's belief that the primal couple actually underwent significant physiological changes after their Fall – the disrobing of their robe of glory, the introduction of a robe of mortality, along with the 'decay of death,' and a propagation by sexual intercourse – changes which clearly suggest that the mortal nature of the fallen Adam is not quite the same as that he was created in originally.

Having said this, Chrysostom also proves to be less dualistic than his Cappadocian contemporaries in the way he discusses the role of the body for the primal couple and the idyllic Christian life.[34] This is evident in his portrayal of the pre-Fall couple in Paradise – a portrait that is no less than his eschatological vision for humanity. Time and again, we find him in his *Homilies on Genesis* insisting that the primal couple (and therefore all humanity) should live out their lives in an angelic and *bodily* manner. The latter emphasis on the body, in particular, is well demonstrated in his frequent refrain that God intended the primal couple to enjoy a life of pleasure. Paradise, as he puts it, was the place where Adam's

> way of life should give him much pleasure (πολλήν … τὴν ἡδονήν) and should awaken him to an expression of thanks in consideration of all the kindness he had received without ever doing anything to deserve it.[35]

for the reason that they had proved unworthy of such a degree of good things, and in its place the practice of intercourse took over for the future.'

[32] *Ibid.* 14.5 (Shore, 85-6, modified).

[33] This notion of Adam and Eve as being clad in glory is common among early Jewish and Christian interpreters. The *Apocalypse of Moses* 20.2, whose sources date back to first century AD, speaks of Adam as lamenting the loss of the glory which he was clothed with. 3*Baruch* 4.16 similarly attests that Adam was stripped of the glory of God. Ephrem's hymns also regularly speak of the pre-lapsarian Adam as having a robe of glory. *Hom. in Gen.* 15.14 (Hill, FC 74, 202-3); James L. Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible: A Guide to the Bible as it was at the Start of the Common Era* (Cambridge, MA, 1998), 115-7, 920, 924; Sebastian P. Brock, *The Luminous Eye: The Spiritual World Vision of Saint Ephrem* (Kalamazoo, Michigan, 1992), 85-97.

[34] Like Basil and Gregory of Nazianzus, Chrysostom believes that the practice of asceticism, with the aid of the Spirit, is the sure way by which one develops the divine virtues and becomes like God. He would differ, however, from Gregory of Nazianzus, who would understand deification in terms of the Christian ascetic's union with Christ through self-mortification and, ultimately, a release from his body. N. Russell, *Doctrine of Deification* (2004), 211-3, 216; *Hom. in Gen.* 12.16. *Or.* 4.71.

[35] *Hom. in Gen.* 13.14 (Hill, FC 74, 176).

Nonetheless, Chrysostom is also clear that the *telos* of humanity is not mere hedonism, if we may put it this way. Rather, it is a concurrent ability to transcend the needs of the body and live out a life that is no less superior than the angels in heaven:

> [B]ecause of the soul's being, we who are intertwined with a body can, if we wish and under the influence of God's grace, strive against disembodied powers, can walk on earth as though coursing across heaven, and pass our lives in this manner, suffering no inferiority. [… This happens] when people prove, despite entanglement with a mortal body, to live the same life as those supernal powers, how will they not be deemed worthy of grace from God for keeping untarnished the soul's nobility, though subject to the body's necessities.[36]

To be sure, Chrysostom's conception of humanity as living out an angelic yet bodily life is not quite a Theodorian notion of Christ the *homo assumptus*. Nonetheless, their joint esteem for the body, I suspect, does compel them to affirm a closely-knitted relationship between humanity and creation. This is to be seen in how Chrysostom portrays the consequences of the Fall. With Adam's disobedience, says Chrysostom, disharmony entered human nature and the human passions began to run rampant.[37] A similar disharmony is experienced in the rest of creation, with humanity losing control over most savage animals.[38] By saying this, it appears that Chrysostom has in mind the human being as a microcosm of the cosmos, that is, what happens in the former is analogous to what occurs in the latter. Such an idea seems to parallel Theodore's concept of Adam as the 'one cosmic body', where Adamic sin is understood as similarly introducing chaos and dissolution into creation.

The two Antiochenes' esteem for the body, I believe, is also why Christ's work of recapitulation features large in their soteriological discourse. For Chrysostom, however, the agent of recapitulation is not Christ the *homo assumptus*. Rather, it is the Son of God who takes on 'no other flesh (*sarx*), but this same one which was subdued' so that he might not only conquer sin by the *sarx* but also raise it up and make it immortal.[39]

[36] *Ibid*. 12.17 (Hill, FC 74, 167).

[37] *Hom. in Rom.* 13 (PG 60, 507.54; NPNF I 11, 427).

[38] *Hom. in Gen.* 9.8-10 (FC 74, 121-3).

[39] *Hom. in Rom.* 13. It is noteworthy that Chrysostom uses the titles, 'Christ', 'Only-Begotten' and 'Son of Man' interchangeably in this passage, thereby indicating that the three share the same referent. Moreover, both here and elsewhere, he also uses the words, *sarx* and *sōma* interchangeably as a short-hand for the human nature. Clearly then, the Incarnation is understood by Chrysostom as the Word's assumption of human nature, rather than the theory of *homo assumptus* propounded by Theodore. For a discussion of Chrysostom's use of *sarx*, see J.H. Juzek, *Die Christologie des Hl. Johannes Chrysostomus: Zugleich ein Beitrag zur Dogmatik der Antiochener* (Breslau, 1912), 31; Camillus Hays, 'St. John Chrysostom and the Integrity of the Human Nature of Christ', *Franciscan Studies* 19 (1959), 298-317 and Melvin Edward Lawrenz, III, *The Christology of John Chrysostom* (1987), 114. For a discussion of Diodore and Theodore's Word-Man Christology,

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By now, it should be clear that Chrysostom's teaching on the *imago dei* and its relation to soteriology shows a greater resemblance to that propounded in the Alexandrian-Cappadocian traditions than that envisioned by Theodore. This is to be seen in his belief that the *imago dei* is invisible and may refer to either the male or female, and that Adam was first created immortal. It is also evident in his teaching that the Son of God alone is the exact image of God and the agent of the recapitulation. Furthermore, Chrysostom's *imago dei* doctrine also proves to be unique in its predication of a life of pleasure to the human *telos* and his appropriation of the Jewish-Syriac Christian notions of the robe of glory to depict the pre-Fall Adam. In view of these manifold differences between Chrysostom and Theodore, it should be clear that we cannot speak of a homogeneous Antiochene view of the *imago dei*. Furthermore, even in areas where Theodore and Chrysostom seem to agree, such as their joint esteem for the role of the body in soteriology and their recognition of the closely knitted relationship between humanity and the cosmos, it remains to be established whether these theological accents are uniquely Antiochene. For these reasons then, it seems appropriate to question the value of the 'Antiochene vs Alexandrian' paradigm as a guiding principle for analysing and understanding Antiochene theologies. At least in the case of our present subject, the paradigm has proved to be more misleading than illuminating. Whether this is also the case for other aspects of Antiochene theologies is a question that deserves further investigation.

see Francis Aloysius Sullivan, *The Christology of Theodore of Mopsuestia*, Analecta Gregoriana (Romae, 1956), 182-84; Rowan A. Greer, *Theodore of Mopsuestia: Exegete and Theologian* (London, 1961), 48-65. A more extensive treatment of Theodore's understanding of Christ's humanity is given in Frederick G. McLeod, *The Roles of Christ's Humanity in Salvation: Insights from Theodore of Mopsuestia* (Washington, D.C., 2005).

Creatio ex Terrae: Immortality and the Fall in Theodore, Chrysostom, and Theodoret

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the Antiochene emphasis on the mortal creation of the protoplasts as the primary locus for understanding the relationship between divine foreknowledge and human προαίρεσις, the free choice between good and evil as an innate property of human nature. Paying particular attention to the writings of Theodore of Mopsuestia, John Chrysostom, and Theodoret of Cyrus, the paper argues that, for the Antiochenes, the Fall neither introduced mortality as an ontological change to the human γένος, nor removed freedom of choice from the post-lapsarian condition, but, on the contrary, mortality was at once the consequence of sin and an aspect of humanity's original state. For the Antiochenes, then, mortality is not of one kind in two modes (a natural condition or a penalty) but there are *two* distinct *genera* of mortality: the natural mortality whose origin is in the 'dust of the earth', and a different type, a penal mortality, the punishment for actual sin. This understanding of mortality, creation, and the post-lapsarian condition allowed the Antiochenes to maintain the delicate balance between divine sovereignty, justice, and foreknowledge and human free will.

Immortality and the Fall

In this paper I argue that for Theodore, Chrysostom, and Theodoret, the Fall neither introduced mortality as an ontological change to the human γένος, nor removed freedom of choice, προαίρεσις, from our post-lapsarian condition. This does not mean that the Antiochenes did not take the story of the Fall seriously, but that the story of Adam is not for them the logical *starting point* of the doctrine of humanity but rather the *explicandum* that provides the hermeneutical key for the implications of that doctrine and of human history.[1]

[1] On the contrary, the Greek Fathers, in general, derived much of their anthropology from Christ rather than from Adam, and then applied it retrospectively to Adam as a type of Christ. On Theodore, for example, see Frederick G. McLeod, *The Roles of Christ's Humanity in Salvation: Insights from Theodore of Mopsuestia* (Washington, D.C., 2005), especially 117-8 and 142. Also, McLeod's earlier work, *The Image of God in the Antiochene Tradition* (Washington, D.C., 1999), as well as Richard A. Norris, *Manhood and Christ: A Study in the Christology of Theodore of Mopsuestia* (Oxford, 1963); George Kalantzis, 'Is There Room for Two? Cyril's Single Subjectivity and the Prosopic Union', in *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 52 (2008), 95-110;

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For all three writers under consideration – and for most of the Greek East, one may add – 'it is inconceivable that the divine purpose in creation should be frustrated by the sin of man.'[2] As Theodore exclaimed in his treatise *Against Those Who Assert That Men Sin by Nature and Not by Will*, how can divine providence, foreknowledge, and – by extension – divine sovereignty be so easily thwarted within the 'first six hours' of creation? On the contrary, 'it is certain that if [God] had wanted him to be immortal, not even the intervention of the act of sin would have changed the divine decree, for [God] did not reduce the devil from immortality to mortality, and he was the originator of all evils!'[3]

This argument by no means surrenders the foundational theological principle that death is a punishment for sin, but on the contrary, it assumes it. What it tries to safeguard, however, is divine sovereignty: for if God had created Adam immortal, Theodore argued, he should have remained immortal even in his post-lapsarian state, forever under the punishment of death, with no possibility of redemption – just like the devil. What is at stake here is not just Adam's ontological transformation, but God's justice and sovereignty as well. Since in God's justice death is the appropriate punishment for Adam's sin, and since God foreknew that Adam would 'yield to Satan's wiles, God created man mortal from the start, in order that after man's defection the due penalty – death – might properly and consistently supervene.'[4]

Mortality is at once the consequence of sin *and* an aspect of humanity's original state. The mere fact that Scripture tells us God made Adam '*from the dust of the earth*' should make clear that his body was mortal by nature, from the very beginning.[5] From the moment of his creation Adam was bound to the

Joanne McWilliam Dewart, *The Theology of Grace in Theodore of Mopsuestia* (Washington, D.C., 1971), among others.

[2] R.A. Norris, *Manhood and Christ* (1963), 182. See also Robert C. Hill (ed. and trans.), *Theodoret of Cyrus*, *Commentary on the Letters of St. Paul*. 2 vols. (Brookline, 2001), I 1-25.

[3] Here is how Theodore put it: '[On w]hether God did not know that Adam was going to sin: this should be the response for these exceedingly wise men, that it is most insane even to consider this notion. It is obvious that [God] knew he was going to sin, and that on account of this he would, without a doubt, die. How then is it not suggestive of extreme madness to believe that first [God] made him immortal, for six hours, … but appointed him to be mortal after the sin? Because it is certain that if [God] had wanted him to be immortal, not even the intervention of the act of sin would have changed the divine decree, for [God] did not reduce the devil from immortality to mortality, and he was the originator of all evils!' Marius Mercator has supplied this fragment found in H.B. Swete (ed.), *Theodori episcopi Mopsuesteni: in epistolas B. Pauli commentarii*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1880-1882), II 332f. Also, PL 48, 1055A. Also, Photius, *Bibliotheca*, 177 in PG 103, 513AB, which carries the above title. It ought not be surprising that Theodore had a rather incomplete and cynical understanding of his opponents' actual views since he was getting at least some of his information about the debate from Julian of Eclanum who found refuge in Cilicia following his exile from Italy *ca*. 420 AD.

[4] R.A. Norris, *Manhood and Christ* (1963), 182.

[5] See, Theodore's *Com. on Gen.* 3:19b, 'ὅτι γῆ εἶ καὶ εἰς γῆν ἀπελεύσῃ' in Marius Mercator, *Commonitorium* (PL 48, 1052B-C).

consequences of what God had foreseen he would freely choose to do. But, Adam's natural mortality was devoid of punitive intent, for as Theodore insisted, Adam was 'not under sentence of death' before he actually sinned.[6] Adam was mortal for no other reason than that he had a body. Mortality, then, is not of one kind in two modes (now as a natural condition, now as a penalty) but there are two distinct *genera* of mortality: the natural mortality whose origin is in the 'dust of the earth', and a different type, a penal mortality, the punishment for actual sin.[7] The first is the logical ground for the second and based on God's foreknowledge of Adam's sin, κατὰ προαίρεσιν, chosen freely.

Reading *Rom*. 5:21 Theodore saw the reason why, at the end, God created Adam mortal: because death is not only the just punishment for sin, but also God's provision for Adam's παιδεία in virtue and sin's ultimate expiation through the resurrection, as manifested in Christ:

> This is what [Paul] means by the phrase, *just as sin exercises dominion in death*: that, because we were made mortal [θνητοὶ γεγονότες] we have a greater inclination toward sin. For much of our stumbling happens because of our lust for food and drink, the outside world, and intercourse with women, and most do not stand as they ought to on each of these, but are carried by excess. These things could never be engendered in an immortal nature [ταῦτα δὲ ἀθανάτῳ μὲν οὐκ ἄν ποτε ἐγγένοιτο φύσει] … But because we have been made mortal and such is our nature [ἐπειδὴ δὲ θνητοὶ γεγόναμέν τε καὶ ἐσμὲν τὴν φύσιν], and we suffer untold troubles from the aforementioned passions, and have received great inclination towards sinning from this, he said well that *sin exercises dominion in death*, though that was not the only thing that kept us tied to the inclination toward sin; our own sin was the very thing that forced us to be bound to her [ἁμαρτία], many times even against our judgment, but God's munificence (φιλοτιμία) will hold us in such manner so as to have an immovable reign over us, because having become worthy of eternal life through the resurrection we will be in true and certain righteousness, not accepting [to] sin.[8]

Chrysostom also commented on *Rom*. 5:21 and contrasted the two states of being (though he is not as clear here as Theodore): 'For [sin] cast us out of our present [παρούσης] life, but grace, when it came, bestowed upon us not the present life, but the immortal [ἀθάνατον] and eternal [αἰώνιον] one.'[9] By saying, 'for [sin] cast us out of our *present* life', Chrysostom did not contrast the pre- with the post-lapsarian mode of being, but the life from which sin cast

[6] Marius Mercator, *Commonitorium* (PL 48, 1053C-1054A).

[7] See Eric Phillips, *Man and Salvation in Theodore of Mopsuestia* (Ph.D. diss. Catholic University of America, 2006), 44-9.

[8] Karl Staab, *Die Pauluskommentare aus der Griechischen Kirche: aus Katenenhandschriften gesammelt und herausgegeben*, NTAbh 15 (Münster, 1933), 120-1. In the sense of "not welcoming sin" (ἁμαρτεῖν οὐκ ἐπιδεχόμενοι) (my own trans.).

[9] John Chrysostom, *In Ep. ad Rom., Homily* 10 (PG 60, 479δ΄): Ἐκείνη μὲν γὰρ τῆς παρούσης ἐξέβαλε ζωῆς· ἡ δὲ χάρις ἐλθοῦσα οὐ τὴν παροῦσαν, ἀλλὰ τὴν ἀθάνατον ἡμῖν ἐδωρήσατο καὶ αἰώνιον.

us out with the immortal and eternal life of the future. Chrysostom was much clearer on this point in his homilies on 1 and 2*Corinthians*. In *Homily 17* he commented on 1*Cor*. 6:14 and told his audience: 'Even from the beginning, God desired to make you immortal but you were not willing [even though] there were enigmatic hints of immortality in how things were: the converse with God; the absence of uneasiness from life; the freedom from grief, and cares, and toils, and other things which belong to the temporary condition [τῶν ἐπικαίρων].'[10]

If originally created in a state of immortality Adam and his progeny would have been condemned to a life of sin without the possibility of redemption. In their respective reading of *Genesis* 3, both Theodore and Chrysostom could contemplate unimaginable consequences to such existence. In *Homily 7,* on 1*Cor*. 2:14, Chrysostom argued that, 'if, endowed with a mortal body, [the soul] expected greater things from the false promise of the Devil – (for, '*you will be*', he said, '*like gods*' [*Gen*. 3:5]) – how far would she [(ἡ ψυχή)] had fallen had she received her body also, from the beginning, immortal?'[11] Likewise for Theodore: 'If their flesh had possessed immortality, how should they not the more have supposed that through disobedience they should be gods?'[12] for even God says that now they have indeed '*become like one of us, knowing good and evil*' (*Gen*. 3:22). It seems that both Chrysostom and Theodore assert that mortality was not only the original state of our creation, but that it was even *good* for us.[13] As Theodore saw it, God created humanity mortal because

[10] John Chrysostom, *In Ep. I ad Cor., Homily* 17 (PG 61, 143γ′): Καὶ γὰρ ἐξ ἀρχῆς σε ἐβούλετο ἀθάνατον ὁ Θεὸς ποιῆσαι, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἠθέλησας σύ. Καὶ γὰρ ἀθανασίας αἰνίγματα ἐκεῖνα ἦν, ἡ πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν ὁμιλία, τὸ ἀταλαίπωρον τῆς ζωῆς, τὸ λύπης καὶ φροντίδων ἀπηλλάχθαι καὶ πόνων, καὶ τῶν ἄλλων τῶν ἐπικαίρων (trans. adapted from *NPNF* 12, 99).

[11] John Chrysostom, *In Ep. I ad Cor, Homily* 7.9 (PG 61, 60): Εἰ λαβοῦσα σῶμα θνητόν, ἀπὸ ψευδοῦς ὑποσχέσεως τοῦ διαβόλου προσεδόκησε πολλῷ μείζονα· *Ἔσεσθε* γάρ, φησίν, *ὡς θεοί·* εἰ καὶ τοῦτο ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἔλαβεν ἀθάνατον, ποῦ οὐκ ἂν ἐξέπεσε; (trans. adapted from *NPNF* 12, 38.) Like Theodore, Chrysostom also thought that the soul was created immortal from the beginning, it was united to a body that had the potential for immortality; a potential never actualized until the resurrection of Christ.

[12] Theodore, *Fragm. In Gen.* (PG 66, 640C-D). In R.A. Norris, *Manhood and Christ* (1963), 183.

[13] See Theodore, *In Ep. ad Gal.* 2:15, in H.B. Swete, *Epistolas B. Pauli* (1880-1882), I 25-6: 'Indeed, the Lord God made us mortal according to the present life … Neither indeed does it seem that He did this in contravention of His own decree, simply being moved by anger on account of Adam's sin – it is indecent to conclude this about God – nor as regards the deed that makes us immortal, does He do it because He is led by repentance ['*poenitentia ductus id facit*'], or because later on He wanted to think better of these things. But by indescribable wisdom he made from the beginning all those things that concern us, as it is right that we think about Him, who made us by goodness alone and watched over what He had made. He gave us this present mortal life ['*praesentem hanc uitam mortalem*'], as I have said, for the exercise of virtues and to perform the teaching of those things that befit us.' See also his C*ommentary on Psalm 39 LXX* 38:6a in Robert C. Hill (ed. and trans.), *Theodore of Mopsuestia: Commentary on Psalms 1-81*, *SBLWGW* 5 (Atlanta, 2006).

'God knew that mortality is an advantage for men. For if they remain without death, they will fall everlastingly. Also, it was because it is well for such creatures if, when the body is dissolved in death, the body of sin should be done away together with it.'[14]

In God's goodness and φιλανθρωπία, the argument goes, God made us mortal so that we may be able to escape the tragedy of Eden and participate in the new life, now without end, inaugurated by Christ's resurrection, to which we become κοινωνοί through our baptism (*Rom.* 6:3):

> Or do you not know that baptism makes us partakers of the death of Christ? And as we believe that by being baptized we are buried with him (in the way that is appropriate for us), we also believe that like the Lord who came into a different, new life [εἰς ἑτέραν καινήν τινα κατέστη ζωήν] having risen from the dead, [those who have been baptized] are in the same new life after baptism, being mindful to live in a manner that proves to be worthy of the life into which we believe they have been born through baptism.[15]

Sin, death, and the Descendants of Adam

If, then, Adam and Eve's post-lapsarian mortality was not the result of an ontological change that took place at the moment of their lapse, and if death is the just punishment for sin, one is left to wonder about the overwhelming force of sin and death in the experience of the rest of the human race – their children.

The answer, of course, would be found in *Romans* 5. Theodoret is the most concise on this point: 'Since Adam had sinned and death had occurred through sin, both spread to the race: *death spread to all human beings for the reason that all sinned*. In other words', continues Theodoret, 'it is not because of the sin of the first parent but because of their own that each person is liable to the norm of death.'[16] Like many others before him, Theodoret found the etiology for our deaths in our own sin, not that of the protoplasts.

Theodore's explanation is almost identical in his commentary on *Rom.* 5:14: 'For death is not set as the punishment of this or that kind of sin, but as the punishment of all sin … For since all had sinned – if not with a sin of the same sort as Adam's, then in some way, this one in his fashion, that one in another

[14] Theodore, *Fragm. in Gen.* (PG 66, 640C-D). In R.A. Norris, *Manhood and Christ* (1963), 183.

[15] Theodore, *Com. ad Rom* 6:3, in K. Staab, *Pauluskommentare* (1933), 121.

[16] Theodoret, *Commentary on the Letters of St. Paul*, I 36. Theodoret was well aware that Paul refers here (*Rom.* 5:12) to the etiological story of the Fall in *Genesis* 3, and although he accepted Adam's sin without question, he did not 'see Adam as an antecedent to the pronoun' (Theodoret, *Commentary on the Letters of St. Paul*, I 146[7]).

– it was necessary that death should rule over all in the same way.'[17] Otherwise God's justice would come into question. Chrysostom anticipated the objection: 'What then, says one, am I to do? Must I perish on his account? First of all, it is not on his account, for you have not remained without sin either [οὐδὲ γὰρ σὺ ἀναμάρτητος ἔμεινας] – and even though it may not be the same sort of sin, it is some other which you have committed.'[18] Though he saw the objection (and as a working pastor one might even imagine he heard it uttered numerous times) Chrysostom did not linger on it but moved quickly to the *good news* of having been created mortal: 'And again, you have not been injured by his punishment, but rather, you have received a benefit. For if you had been to remain altogether mortal, then, you might have had a reason to say such a thing. But now you are immortal, and if you will, you may shine brighter than the sun itself.'[19]

Divine Foreknowledge and Human Προαίρεσις[20]

If the first part of the objection could be raised from our common understanding of justice, namely, that it is unjust for one to pay for the sins of another, the second part may be raised from the Scriptures themselves. How is one to understand this 'body of sin' as Paul also calls it in *Rom*. 6:6? Or his cry in *Rom*. 7:24: 'Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?' Bound to this 'body of death', the objection goes, humans are driven to sin *because* of our mortal nature; a wholly righteous life is out of the question. Here too, the objection has been anticipated: 'If I had not received a mortal body', argued his imaginary interlocutor, 'I would not sin!' Chrysostom would not allow such an escape from culpability: 'Mortality then is not the cause of sin, accuse it not: but the wicked will [ἡ πονηρὰ προαίρεσις] is the root of every evil.'[21] By θνητότητα, mortality, Chrysostom was not

[17] Theodore, *Com. ad Rom*. 5:13-4, in K. Staab, *Pauluskommentare* (1933), 119. The translation is from R.A. Norris, *Manhood and Christ* (1963), 181. For a discussion on the hypothesis that if Adam had lived a perfectly righteous life he might have received immortality through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the same reward as the *homo assumptus*, the human nature of Christ received, as well as to the relationship of heredity and the fall, see E. Phillips, *Man and Salvation* (2006), 51-6.

[18] John Chrysostom, *In Ep. I ad Cor., Homily* 17.4 (PG 61, 144δ′).

[19] John Chrysostom, *In Ep. I ad Cor., Homily* 17.4 (PG 61, 144δ′).

[20] For an excellent and concise analysis of free will, especially in regards to *Romans* 9, see J.-N. Guinot, 'Analyse textuelle et libre arbitre: l'exégèse patristique grecque de Rom. 9, 20 aux IIIe-Ve siècles', in *L'Etica cristiana nei secoli III e IV: eredità e confronti* (XXIV° Incontro di studiosi dell'antichità cristiana. Roma, 8-11 mai 1995), *Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum* 53 (1996), 99-115.

[21] John Chrysostom, *In Ep. I ad Cor., Homily* 17.3 (PG 61, 144δ′) (on 1*Cor*. 6:14). It is worth noting here how Chrysostom finishes this line of argument: Διὰ τί γὰρ μηδὲν τὸν Ἄβελ τὸ σῶμα ἠδίκησε; διὰ τί μηδὲν τοὺς δαίμονας τὸ ἀσώματον ὤνησε; Βούλει μαθεῖν, ὅτι οὐ μόνον οὐκ ἔβλαψε τὸ σῶμα θνητὸν γενόμενον, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὠφέλησεν; ἄκουσον ὅσα

referring to an abstract concept of death in general, but specifically to the question posed to him about the θνητὸν σῶμα.

Chrysostom was quite clear on the source of sin when commenting on *Romans*. He used προαίρεσις and its derivatives over 40 times in his *Homilies on Romans* elaborating the concept of free and deliberate choice. The purpose of the Incarnation was neither to 'destroy' nor to 'restore' our nature but rather 'to set our free choice aright'[22] and that because, 'the good things and the bad are not such as are by nature, but by opinion and deliberate choice alone.'[23] 'And yet', Chrysostom continued, 'is it not even on the potter that the honor and the dishonor of the things made of the lump depends, but upon the use made by those that handle them, so here also it depends on the free choice [προαιρέσεως] … Whence then are some vessels of wrath, and some of mercy? Of their own free choice [προαιρέσεως οἰκείας].'[24]

Theodore and Theodoret, too, are equally as clear on the subject as Chrysostom, though for the Mopsuestian, freedom to choose is inexorably connected with rationality, an *eligendi potestas*, 'the capacity to discern among contrary things and to elect that which is greater.'[25] Since reason is the capacity to make moral judgments and moral choices, its perfection is twofold: on the one hand it is the capacity to distinguish between good and evil, and on the other, a voluntary conformity of action. Προαίρεσις is neither arbitrary nor unbound, but a sign of *rationibilium omnium* manifested in practical action and virtue. That is why commenting on *Rom*. 1:24-6, Theodore interpreted Paul's use of

κερδαίνεις, ἐὰν νήφῃς, ἐκ τούτου. Ἀνθέλκει σε καὶ περισπᾷ ἀπὸ τῆς κακίας ὀδύναις καὶ λύπαις καὶ πόνοις καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις τοῖς τοιούτοις. Ἀλλὰ καὶ εἰς πορνείαν ἐξάγει, φησίν; Οὐ τὸ σῶμα, ἀλλ' ἡ ἀκολασία· ταῦτα μὲν γάρ, ἅπερ εἶπον, πάντως τοῦ σώματός ἐστι. Διόπερ οὐκ ἔστιν ἄνθρωπον εἰς τὸν βίον ἐλθόντα τοῦτον μὴ καὶ νοσεῖν καὶ ἀλγεῖν καὶ ἀθυμεῖν· μὴ πορνεύειν δὲ ἔνι. Ὥστε εἰ τῆς τοῦ σώματος ἦν φύσεως καὶ τὰ τῆς κακίας, καθολικὰ ἂν ἦν· τὰ γὰρ φυσικὰ τοιαῦτα, τὸ δὲ πορνεύειν οὐ τοιοῦτον.

[22] See John Chrysostom, *In Ep. ad Rom*., *Homily 11* (on *Rom*. 6:12), *PG* 60, 486. Οὐκ εἶπε, Μὴ οὖν ζήτω ἡ σὰρξ, μηδὲ ἐνεργείτω, ἀλλ' Ἡ ἁμαρτία μὴ βασιλευέτω· οὐ γὰρ τὴν φύσιν ἦλθεν ἀνελεῖν, ἀλλὰ τὴν προαίρεσιν διορθῶσαι.

[23] John Chrysostom, *In Ep. ad Rom*., *Homily* 19 (on *Rom*. 11:24) (PG 60, 591): Οὐ γὰρ φυσικὰ τὰ καλὰ καὶ τὰ μὴ τοιαῦτα, ἀλλὰ γνώμης καὶ προαιρέσεως μόνης. Also, *Homily* 12 (on *Rom*. 8:7), *Homily* 16 (on *Rom*. 9:22-3), *etc*. Commenting on *Rom*. 9:19-26, Origen, too, was quite clear that as J.-N. Guinot, 'Analyse textuelle et libre arbitre', 102, notes, 'Dieu ne condamne pas et ne justifie pas par avance, selon la prescience qu'il aurait de la conduite de chacun; car "l'action de Dieu seule ne peut destiner quelqu'un à l'honneur ou au déshonneur", indépendamment du libre choix opéré par sa volonté (προαίρεσις). Nous ne sommes donc pas faits "vases d'honneur ou vases de déshonneur" sans certaines "causes antécédentes". There 'antecedent causes', for Origen, were to be found with the preexistent souls.

[24] John Chrysostom, *In Ep. ad Rom*., *Homily* 19 (on *Rom*. 9:22-3) (PG 60, 561). Unlike Diodore and Chrysostom who try very hard not to read either divine authorship of evil or a Pauline contradiction in *Rom*. 9:20-3, Theodore's literary analysis of the pericope allows him to read it as a clear demonstration of human free will and, therefore, responsibility for one's actions. See J.-N. Guinot, 'Analyse textuelle et libre arbitre', 106-9.

[25] Theodore of Mopsuestia, *In Ep. ad Gal. 2:15-16*, in H.B. Swete, *Epistolas B. Pauli* (1880-1882), I 26.

active verbs to describe the current state of human affairs upon which the conclusion, διὸ παρέδωκεν αὐτοὺς ὁ θεός, is predicated to mean that: 'Because of this [their behavior] *God gave them over*, instead of forgiving them, so that each would behave in whichever manner each one wanted, not out of necessity but freely making the deliberate choice [οὐκ ἀναγκαστικὴν ἀλλ' ἐλευθέραν ποιήσας τὴν προαίρεσιν] upon which they embarked as each wanted.'[26] Otherwise human beings would not be at all different from the ἄλογα, the irrational beings that are, and indeed cannot but be, ignorant of their own good.[27] Such a state is unfitting for rational creatures, made in the image of God. Theodoret picks up the argument on reason in his own commentary on *Rom*. 9:20ff: 'If you were not independent and had no free will to choose what has to be done, instead being subject to the necessity of the divine will, you would keep silent in the fashion of lifeless things, content with the arrangement. But being endowed with reason [λόγῳ τετίμησαι], you say and do what you please …'[28] To be free to choose is to be fully human.

In the commentary on *Rom*. 11:15, Theodore made this distinction even more explicit:

> For irrational creatures [ἄλογα] everything happens according to nature [φυσικῶς]. They are not able to distinguish evil from good, or to follow what seems good by the power of the will [γνώμη]. Rather they continue of necessity within the bounds of nature. To them, therefore, all law is superfluous, since they can neither learn nor understand anything of that sort. But where rational [creatures] are concerned, the exact opposite is the case. For they are able to distinguish good from evil and also to choose [αἱροῦνται] what seems best by the power of the will. Further, for them the promulgation of law is altogether appropriate, since they can learn from it what is good.[29]

The giving of the Law was based on this principle of reason: that, informed by that law and perfected in the exercise of choice, the rational will has the *auctoritas* to determine its path, either in accordance with God's Law or the desires of the flesh.[30]

Freedom to choose – the means by which reason is educated into perfection – inherently implies, however, an ability to choose wrongly. For Theodore, human προαίρεσις, not divine fore-ordination and arbitrary election, is the element that distinguishes between the righteous and the unrighteous person. As in the case of David, where the divine witness declares that God has 'found a man after my own heart!' (1*Sam*. 13:14), so it is with all who are declared

[26] K. Staab, *Pauluskommentare* (1933), 115.

[27] See *Fragm. In Genesin*. Intro. (PG 66, 633AB). Also, R.A. Norris, *Manhood and Christ* (1963), 131-2.

[28] Theodoret, Commentary on the Letters of St. Paul I 103.

[29] K. Staab, *Pauluskommentare* (1933), 156. The translation is from R.A. Norris, *Manhood and Christ* (1963), 130.

[30] *In Ep. ad Gal. 2:15ff* in H.B. Swete, *Epistolas B. Pauli* (1880-1882), I 28. See R.A. Norris, *Manhood and Christ* (1963), 129-32 for a discussion on Theodore's conception of reason, its freedom and mutability.

righteous by God. A righteous προαίρεσις will manifest itself in a σπουδὴ ἀρετῆς, a zeal for virtue that leads to a virtuous life. Those who with a righteous προαίρεσιν give themselves over to the pursuit of virtue, educated by the law of God, and choose freely to live by God's prescriptions, could properly be called 'righteous'.[31]

Theodoret, too, commenting on *Rom.* 8:30 insists on the principle of the righteous purpose:

> [God] glorified from the beginning those whose purpose [πρόθεσιν] he foreknew … Let no one say, however, the foreknowledge is responsible for them: it was not the foreknowledge that made them like that – rather, God from afar foresaw the future as God … The God of all from a distance knew everything as God; He did not apply pressure to such-and-such a one to practice virtue, nor to another to commit evil.[32]

Of course, such was, for example, the case with Jacob and Esau (*Rom.* 9:10-2). Again Theodoret: 'God did not await the outcome of events, but instead foretold the difference between them while they were still in the womb.'[33] If God could declare a person's righteousness only *a posteriori*, divine foreknowledge would be at stake; if, on the other hand God chose whom God willed in a capricious, arbitrary manner, God's justice would be in question. Theodoret would have none of that, for Scriptures declare that since 'God is righteous, as he certainly is, he gives encouragement to goodness and forbids the opposite, and he commends those who do good and punishes those who willingly embrace evil.'[34]

What then, why Jacob and not Esau? Why love one and hate the other? It seems that the only answer that can possibly maintain the delicate balance between human freedom and God's justice in such an election is that of foreseen merit: '[God] foretold [the outcome of their lives] from knowing in advance their purpose; election, far from being unjust, is in keeping with people's purpose [τῇ προθέσει τῶν ἀνθρώπων] … So, instead of attending to nature, [God] looks for virtue alone … The divine verdict contains no injustice, he is saying [in v. 14]; instead it bears all the marks of justice.'[35]

Sin, therefore, is not a byproduct of our mortal nature, but of our corrupt will.[36] That is why God can keep human beings, each one individually and not just the *massa* of the human race, accountable for their sins: 'You, then, are

[31] See also E. Phillips, *Man and Salvation* (2006), 175.

[32] Theodoret, *Commentary on the Letters of St. Paul* I 95.

[33] Theodoret, *Commentary on the Letters of St. Paul* I 101. Theodore, too, gives a similar account of the story of Esau and Jacob: God chose 'knowing what sort of men they were going to be, and not waiting to decide from their ways, but distinguishing them from long ago … Knowing the way of each man before his birth, He chose those whom He would deem to be worthy' (K. Staab, *Pauluskommentare* [1933], 143). See also Origen, *De princ.* III 1.22.

[34] Theodoret, *Commentary on the Letters of St. Paul* I 95.

[35] Theodoret, *Commentary on the Letters of St. Paul* I 101.

[36] Gerard H. Ettlinger (ed.), *Theodoret of Cyrus, Eranistes* (Oxford, 1975), 69. Theodoret argues the point consistently: in his *Eranistes*, *Dialogue* I 41 Theodoret states clearly that: Ἡ ἁμαρτία οὐκ ἔστι τῆς φύσεως, ἀλλὰ τῆς κακῆς προαιρέσεως.

not constrained by natural necessities nor transgress in defiance of free will; instead you embrace evil willingly, and accept the hardship of virtue of set purpose. The sentence of the God of all is therefore right and just: he justly punishes the sinners for presuming to do this with free will.'[37]

Immortality, Θέωσις, and the Resurrected Life

Immortality, then, is not a guarantor against sin. On the contrary, the devil himself is immortal and yet 'he was the originator of all evils!' Immortality, therefore, cannot be the eschatological hope to which the baptized are called, and resurrection cannot simply imply a movement from the state of mortality to that of ἀθανασία – the Fall could happen all over again. If the synergy of grace and προαίρεσις are the means of human salvation whose archetypical form is found in the person of Christ, then it has to be to him that one would have to turn to find an expression of the form this salvation will take in the *eschaton*. None is more clear on this eschatological transformation than Theodore who, in his *Commentary on the Lord's Prayer and the Sacraments,* writes: 'It is indeed known that the One who at the beginning willed and made us mortal, is the One who is now pleased to make us *immortal*, and the One who at the beginning made us corruptible is the One who now makes us *incorruptible*. He willed at the beginning and made us passible and changeable, and at the end He will make us *impassible* and *unchangeable*.'[38]

These four adjectives, immortal, incorruptible, impassible, and immutable, are all used, in connection to each other – most often – in describing both the resurrected Christ and the ontological transformation anticipated by the faithful. 'Immortality and incorruptibility together have primary reference to bodily well-being. The first is immunity from death, and the second is a little broader – immunity from all bodily dissolution, whether the full destruction of death or the partial destruction of injury or disease. Impassibility and immutability, on the other hand, refer to spiritual well-being. The first is freedom from passions, *i.e.* from the temptations attendant on corruptibility, and the second is freedom from those purely spiritual vices that souls can fall into without any help from bodies at all.'[39] These four form the framework within which salvation is to be understood, and all four are apparent in the resurrection of Christ who won them for humanity. Through their own resurrection, the baptized participate in this salvation in which mere physical immortality is secondary to

[37] G.H. Ettlinger, *Eranistes* (1975), 103, commenting on *Rom.* 9:20-1 and again in the *Quaestiones* 24 (PG 6, 1296): οὐκ ἄρα οὖν ὁ θεὸς αἴτιος τοῦ εἶναι ἡμᾶς ἀγαθοὺς ἢ κακούς, ἀλλ' ἡ προαίρεσις ἡμῶν.

[38] Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Commentary on the Lord's Prayer and on the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist,* in Alphonse Mingana (ed. and trans.), Woodbrooke Studies 6 (Cambridge, 1933), 59, emphasis added.

[39] E. Phillips, *Man and Salvation* (2006), 280.

the happy freedom from sin of the future age.[40] Immortality, incorruptibility, impassibility, immutability are the foundational premises of θέωσις and promise of the *eschaton*: 'After the resurrection', says Theodoret, 'when our bodies have become imperishable and immortal, grace will reign in them, sin then having no place; When the passions come to an end, you see, sin will have no place.'[41]

[40] Joanne McWilliam Dewart, *The Theology of Grace in Theodore of Mopsuestia* (Washington, D.C., 1971), 42.

[41] Theodoret, *Commentary on the Letters of St. Paul* I 75 (on *Rom*. 5:21).

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